

Cleveland County

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



Charlotte
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural - Non-Metro

Educational Attainment

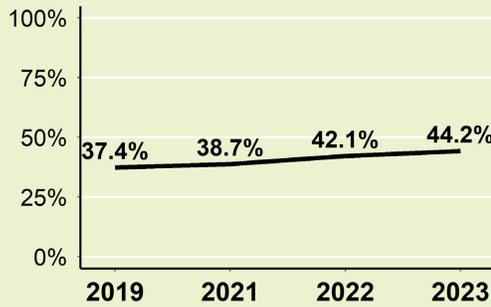
Cleveland County residents ages 25-44, 2023

Have Degree or Credential
10,493
44.2%

No Degree
13,228
55.8%

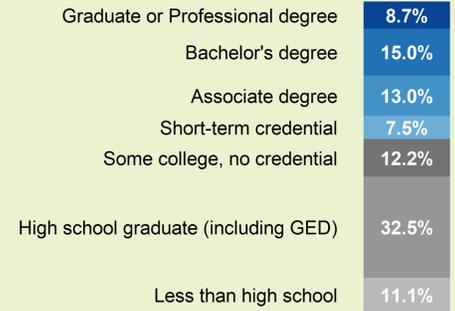
Residents Ages 25-44
23,721

Educational Attainment Trend



Note: 2020 data not shown due to inconsistency

Educational Level Breakdown, 2023



Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

2030 Proposed Cleveland County Attainment Goal: 13,358 (Stretch Goal: 13,576)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 99,526
2023 Estimate: 101,378
Change: 1,852

Growth Rate

1.9% County vs. 3.8% State

Race/Ethnicity

Amer. Indian 0.2%
Asian/Pac. Isl. 1%
Black 18.4%
Hispanic 4.4%
Multiracial 4.8%
White 71%



\$61,411
Median Household Income (2023)
State: \$70,838



70.7%
Home Owners (2023)
State: 66.3%



64.4%
Households with Broadband (2023)
State: 77.1%



27.1%
Child Poverty Rate (2023)
State: 17.6%



21.0%
Single Parent Households (2023)
State: 17.0%



3.0%
Foreign Born (2023)
State: 9.2%

Top Opportunities for Growth



Opportunity Youth

15% of Cleveland County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the rural - non-metro county average of 14%.

In Charlotte Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

79.7%

of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top Misalignments

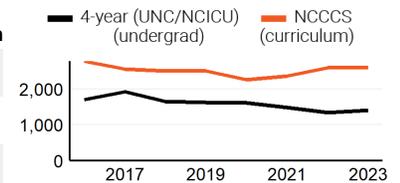
Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- Education & Training Jobs < Creds
- Business Management & Administration Jobs > Creds
- Health Science Jobs > Creds

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Charlotte Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	4.48%
Data Scientists	3.83%
Logisticians	3.62%

Postsecondary Enrollment for Cleveland County Residents



268 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

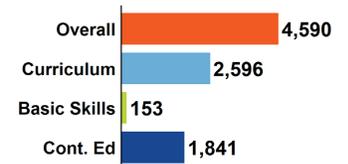
UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

12,495 graduates in 2020
74.0% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
\$45,387 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs), 2021

Top 3 Employers in Cleveland County

Employer	Employment Range
Cleveland County Board of Education	1000+
Charlotte Mecklenburg Hospital	1000+
Wal-Mart Associates Inc	1000+

Cleveland County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023



Top 3 industries in Cleveland County

Industry	Jobs Percent
Manufacturing	7,157 19.5%
Health Care and Social Assistance	5,443 14.8%
Retail Trade	4,261 11.6%

Cleveland County is served by:

- Foothills Workforce Development Board
- Foothills Regional Commission

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

43.1% of adults (ages 25-44) in Cleveland County earned a family sustaining wage. Peer: 40.5% | State: 57.6%, 2023

15.0% of youth (ages 16-24) in Cleveland County were Opportunity Youth. Peer: 13.8% | State: 10.3%, 2023

80.0% of adults (ages 25-44) in Cleveland County participated in the labor force. Peer: 78.3% | State: 84.2%, 2023

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top Opportunities for Growth



First-Year Persistence

81% of Cleveland County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary education persist to their second year, below the state average of 84%.

Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

4,911 certificate | 5,727 associate | 8,744 bachelor's

Adult Learners

Cleveland County Residents Aged 25+ enrolled in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2023

86 Basic Skills

1,570 Continuing Education

744 Curriculum

12.2% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 15.9% | State: 11.7%, 2023



12.1% of Cleveland County residents have student loan debt, 1.5% of debt holders had student loans in default, 2024

Success of Cleveland County High School Graduates

80.9% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 79.6% | State: 83.8%, 2023

91.3% UNC

69.9% NCCCS

87.7% NCICU

57.6% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 55.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

27.9% UNC

16.7% NCCCS

8.0% NCICU

Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 3,510 of all college-goers attended Cleveland CC
- 462 of all college-goers attended Gaston College
- 256 of all college-goers attended Isothermal CC

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

Top Opportunities for Growth

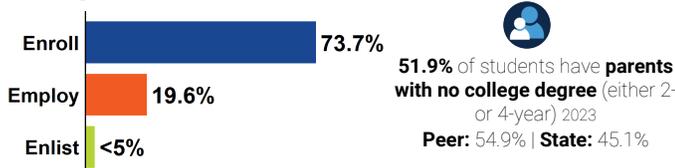


FAFSA Completion

44% of Cleveland County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - non-metro county average of 54%.

43.6% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 327 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 54.0% | State: 55.0%

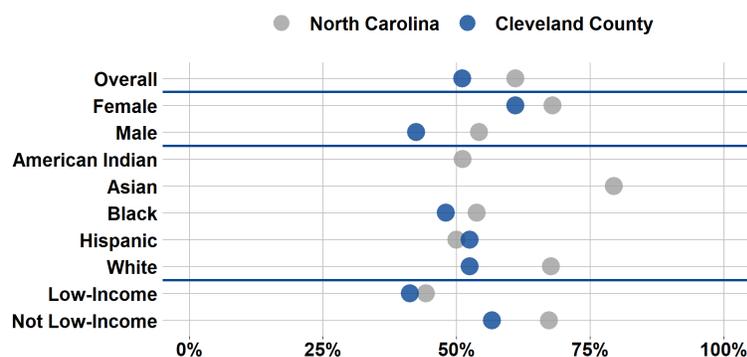
Post High School Graduation Intentions



83.9% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 128 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 85.7% | State: 87.3% 2024

49.4% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 52.6% | State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Cleveland County, 2023



Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

ACADEMIC READINESS

Top Opportunities for Growth



Reading Performance

26% of Cleveland County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Reading, below the state average of 30%.

71.9% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program in 2024. 21 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. Peer: 71.0% | State: 57.2%

Note: Enrollment numbers only include students served by the NC Pre-K Program and may not represent all Pre-K offerings available.

Cleveland County Traditional Public Schools students:

26.4% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 2,913 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 24.5% | State: 29.8%

36.2% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 3,110 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 30.3% | State: 36.5%

24.4% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 1,981 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 27.7% | State: 25.7%



Cleveland County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 302:1 compared to 332:1 in peer counties, 2024

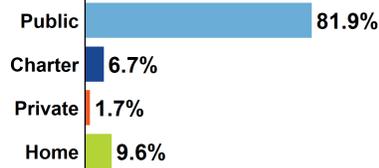


3.4% of students drop out of high school (158 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide, 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1
Traditional Public School(s): 28
Charter School(s): 1
Private School(s): 5
Home School(s): 1,021

16,883 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 2,305 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 860 concentrations. 394 (17.1%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Manufacturing; Human Services; and Health Science.



527 (12.5%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).



504 (49.9%) high school graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs. State: 36.0% (2024).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:

dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/