

# Gaston County

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



Charlotte  
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region  
Peer County Type: Suburban

## Educational Attainment

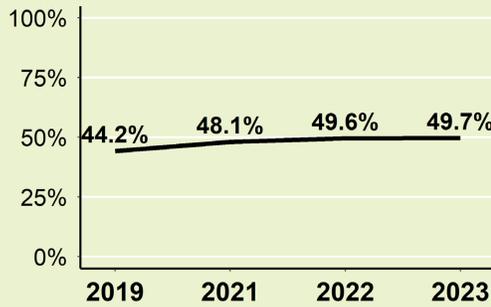
Gaston County residents ages 25-44, 2023

**Have Degree or Credential**  
30,087  
49.7%

**No Degree**  
30,448  
50.3%

**Residents Ages 25-44**  
60,535

## Educational Attainment Trend



Note: 2020 data not shown due to inconsistency

## Educational Level Breakdown, 2023

Graduate or Professional degree	8.9%
Bachelor's degree	21.9%
Associate degree	11.4%
Short-term credential	7.5%
Some college, no credential	15.6%
High school graduate (including GED)	26.5%
Less than high school	8.1%

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

2030 Proposed Gaston County Attainment Goal: 35,691 (Stretch Goal: 36,140)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

## Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 227,943  
2023 Estimate: 237,242  
Change: 9,299

## Growth Rate

4.1% County vs. 3.8% State

## Race/Ethnicity

Amer. Indian	0.2%
Asian/Pac. Isl.	1.6%
Black	17.3%
Hispanic	9.3%
Multiracial	3.4%
White	67.8%

**\$67,076**  
Median Household Income (2023)  
State: \$70,838

**65.8%**  
Home Owners (2023)  
State: 66.3%

**73.4%**  
Households with Broadband (2023)  
State: 77.1%

**16.3%**  
Child Poverty Rate (2023)  
State: 17.6%

**20.3%**  
Single Parent Households (2023)  
State: 17.0%

**5.7%**  
Foreign Born (2023)  
State: 9.2%

## Top Opportunities for Growth



### Opportunity Youth

14% of Gaston County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the suburban county average of 11%.

## 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

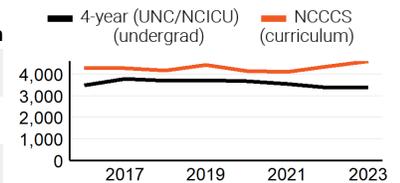
### Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- 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 Gaston County Residents



**669** 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

**53.1%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Gaston County earned a **family sustaining wage**. Peer: 51.8% | State: 57.6%, 2023

**14.4%** of youth (ages 16-24) in Gaston County were **Opportunity Youth**. Peer: 11.2% | State: 10.3%, 2023

**84.9%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Gaston County **participated in the labor force**. Peer: 83.4% | State: 84.2%, 2023

## Top 3 Employers in Gaston County

Employer	Employment Range
Caromont Health	1000+
Daimler Trucks North America LLC	1000+
Gaston County Schools	1000+

## Top 3 industries in Gaston County

Industry	Jobs   Percent
Manufacturing	14,320   18.1%
Health Care and Social Assistance	13,609   17.2%
Retail Trade	10,335   13.1%

## Gaston County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023

Overall	7,872
Curriculum	4,600
Basic Skills	526
Cont. Ed	2,746

## Gaston County is served by:

- Gaston County Workforce Development Board
- Centralina Regional Council

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top Opportunities for Growth



Postsecondary Completion

58% of Gaston County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary education earn a degree or credential within 6 years, below the suburban county average of 61%.

Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

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

Adult Learners

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

313 Basic Skills  
2,470 Continuing Education  
1,103 Curriculum

15.6% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 15.1% | State: 11.7%, 2023



14.3% of Gaston County residents have student loan debt, 1.5% of debt holders had student loans in default, 2024

Success of Gaston County High School Graduates

80.6% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 83.9% | State: 83.8%, 2023

91.9% UNC | 69.1% NCCCS | 82.0% NCICU

57.8% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 61.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

29.5% UNC | 15.5% NCCCS | 6.1% NCICU

Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 6,006 of all college-goers attended Gaston College
- 877 of all college-goers attended Central Piedmont CC
- 727 of all college-goers attended UNC Charlotte

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

Top Opportunities for Growth

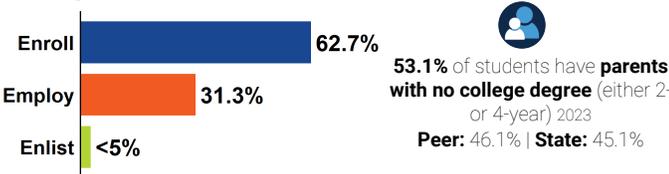


FAFSA Completion

47% of Gaston County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the suburban county average of 55%.

47.4% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 668 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 55.0% | State: 55.0%

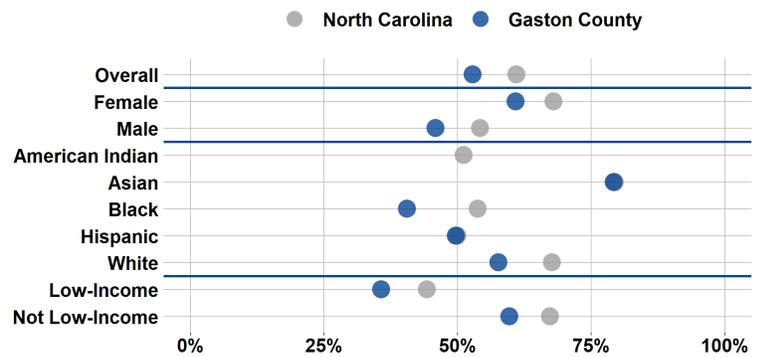
Post High School Graduation Intentions



86.7% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 209 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 88.5% | State: 87.3% 2024

51.1% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 58.8% | State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Gaston County, 2023



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

ACADEMIC READINESS

Top Opportunities for Growth



Math Performance

31% of Gaston County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the suburban county average of 38%.

60.5% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program in 2024. 177 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. Peer: 46.5% | 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.

Gaston County Traditional Public Schools students:

24.5% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 6,649 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 30.8% | State: 29.8%

31.3% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 7,493 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 37.8% | State: 36.5%

23.6% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 4,036 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 23.7% | State: 25.7%

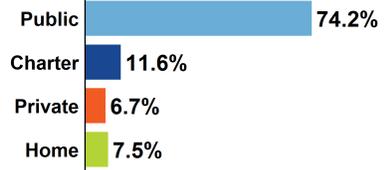
Gaston County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 292:1 compared to 328:1 in peer counties, 2024

3.0% of students drop out of high school (300 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide, 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1  
Traditional Public School(s): 56  
Charter School(s): 4  
Private School(s): 13  
Home School(s): 1,792

40,050 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 7,720 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 1,793 concentrations. 3,196 (41.4%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Arts, Audio/Video Technology, & Communications; Health Science; and Human Services.

958 (10.5%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

782 (35.1%) 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/](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/)