

Pender County

myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles



Wilmington
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Rural - Metro

Educational Attainment

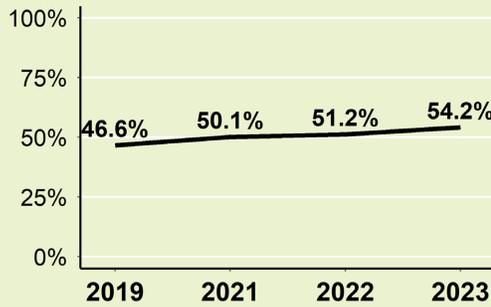
Pender County residents ages 25-44, 2023

Have Degree or Credential
8,424
54.2%

No Degree
7,118
45.8%

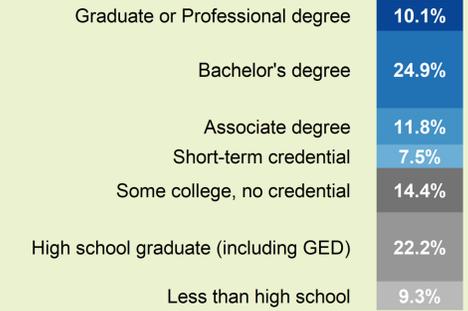
Residents Ages 25-44
15,542

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 Pender County Attainment Goal: 12,441 (Stretch Goal: 12,557)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 60,199
2023 Estimate: 68,521
Change: 8,322

Growth Rate

13.8% vs. 3.8%
County State

Race/Ethnicity

Amer. Indian 0.2%
Asian/Pac. Isl. 0.6%
Black 12.4%
Hispanic 8.5%
Multiracial 3.9%
White 73.9%

\$72,161
Median Household Income (2023)
State: \$70,838

81.8%
Home Owners (2023)
State: 66.3%

69.6%
Households with Broadband (2023)
State: 77.1%

13.6%
Child Poverty Rate (2023)
State: 17.6%

14.9%
Single Parent Households (2023)
State: 17.0%

4.1%
Foreign Born (2023)
State: 9.2%

Top Opportunities for Growth



Family Sustaining Wage

55% of Pender County adults 25-44 earn a family sustaining wage, below the state average of 58%.

In Wilmington Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

81.9%

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

Top Misalignments

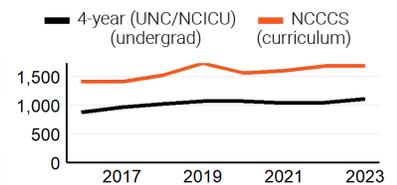
Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- Health Science Jobs > Creds
- Education & Training Jobs < Creds
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Jobs > Creds

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

Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	4.34%
Data Scientists	3.89%
Logisticians	3.52%

Postsecondary Enrollment for Pender County Residents



17 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

5,768 graduates in 2020
65.9% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
\$44,807 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs), 2021

54.8% of adults (ages 25-44) in Pender County earned a family sustaining wage. Peer: 46.7% | State: 57.6%, 2023

11.7% of youth (ages 16-24) in Pender County were Opportunity Youth. Peer: 14.8% | State: 10.3%, 2023

82.1% of adults (ages 25-44) in Pender County participated in the labor force. Peer: 80.7% | State: 84.2%, 2023

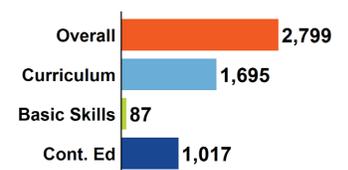
Top 3 Employers in Pender County

Employer	Employment Range
Pender County Board of Education	500-999
Pender County NC	500-999
Wal-Mart Associates Inc	250-499

Top 3 industries in Pender County

Industry	Jobs Percent
Retail Trade	2,147 14.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,114 14.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,763 11.8%

Pender County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023



Pender County is served by:

- Cape Fear Workforce Development Board
- Cape Fear Council of Governments

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top Opportunities for Growth



Adult Learners

14% of Pender County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the state average of 12%.

Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

1,138 certificate | 1,723 associate | 3,764 bachelor's

Adult Learners

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

- 51 Basic Skills
- 866 Continuing Education
- 328 Curriculum

14.4% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 16.0% | State: 11.7%, 2023



14.5% of Pender County residents have student loan debt. 0.3% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2024

Success of Pender County High School Graduates

83.8% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 80.1% | State: 83.8%, 2023

92.9% UNC | 75.2% NCCCS | 84.2% NCICU

57.8% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 57.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

31.4% UNC | 16.4% NCCCS | <5% NCICU

Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 2,417 of all college-goers attended **Cape Fear CC**
- 336 of all college-goers attended **UNC Wilmington**
- 157 of all college-goers attended **East Carolina University**

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

Top Opportunities for Growth

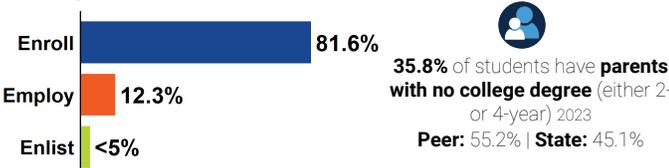


FAFSA Completion

51% of Pender County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - metro county average of 52%.

50.6% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 221 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 52.0% | State: 55.0%

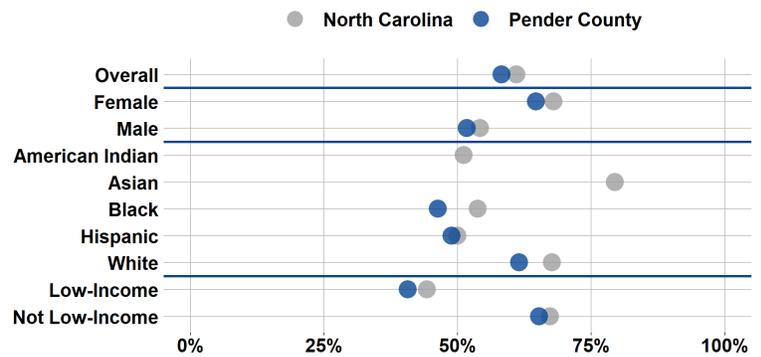
Post High School Graduation Intentions



92.7% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 19 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 85.7% | State: 87.3% 2024

56.5% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 52.0% | State: 59.3% 2023

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Pender County, 2023



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

ACADEMIC READINESS

Top Opportunities for Growth



School Counselors

Pender County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 447:1, above the rural - metro county average of 352:1.

Pender County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). Peer: 61.7% | State: 57.2% 2024

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

Pender County Traditional Public Schools students:

34.0% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 1,962 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 25.3% | State: 29.8%

42.0% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 2,215 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 32.3% | State: 36.5%

27.9% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 1,921 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 27.4% | State: 25.7%

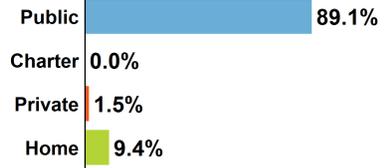
Pender County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 447:1 compared to 352:1 in peer counties. 2024

0.2% of students drop out of high school (8 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide. 2023

School & Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1
 Traditional Public School(s): 19
 Charter School(s): 0
 Private School(s): 3
 Home School(s): 673

12,105 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 5,218 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 584 concentrations. 844 (16.2%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Health Science; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Hospitality & Tourism.

348 (10.7%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).

401 (50.6%) 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/