

# 2026

## Educational Attainment Profile Data-Guidance

CAROLINA  
**DEMOGRAPHY**

*my***FUTURE NC**  
*2 million by 2030.*



**John M Belk**  
Endowment  
ELEVATE THROUGH EDUCATION

 **UNC** | CAROLINA  
POPULATION CENTER

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## About

This page outlines the data elements and sources of the variables in the myFutureNC County Attainment Profiles. These profiles, available as PDFs via the <https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org> website, were produced by Carolina Demography for myFutureNC.

The attainment profiles include many data elements, including county demographics, educational performance indicators, and labor market outcomes. In addition to the indicators on the published profile, this data file contains select county indicators that align with data reported in the state attainment dashboard (where available), as well as contextual information that has been included based on conversations with county leaders. This data file also contains data for multiple years for many indicators and provides details by demographic subgroups where available.

Researchers from Carolina Demography at UNC-Chapel Hill's Carolina Population Center identified the best source of data for each indicator by consulting with experts from the UNC System, the NC Community College System, North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, the NC Department of Public Instruction, the NC Department of Commerce, and the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

Carolina Demography will provide updated data for each indicator as it becomes available. In most cases, new data will be available annually; the timing of the update differs depending on the indicator.

This document provides detailed information for each indicator.

## Suggested Citation

Carolina Demography. *myFutureNC Attainment Dashboard: County Database: 2026 [dataset]*. Chapel Hill, NC: Carolina Population Center, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## Contact

Questions about this data should be directed to Carolina Demography at [demography@unc.edu](mailto:demography@unc.edu).

## Creating County-Level Data

Much of the data used in this file is provided for Local Education Agencies (LEAs) based on reports from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. Many of the indicators—such as College-and-Career-Ready in Math—are reported as a percentage of students achieving a certain outcome (INDVALUE) with a denominator (INDDEN). We converted these data to numerators (INDNUM) by multiplying the denominator by the reported rate and rounding the result.

NCDPI applies bottom codes for values less than 5% and top codes values of 95% or higher; we used proportions of 0.05 and 0.95 in these cases. We also suppressed counts of lower than 10. These suppression rules have been applied to all outcomes (INDTYPES) that come from or are derived from NCDPI School Report Cards, or the National Student Clearinghouse:

<b>INDTYPES with the suppression rule applied:</b>	
<b>INDTYPE</b>	<b>SOURCE</b>
ABSENT	NC DPI School Report Card
ACGR4	NC DPI School Report Card
ACT	NC DPI School Report Card
ACT4B	NC DPI School Report Card
ACTEN	NC DPI School Report Card
ACTMA	NC DPI School Report Card
ACTRD	NC DPI School Report Card
ACTSC	NC DPI School Report Card
AP	NC DPI School Report Card
AP_PLUS	NC DPI School Report Card
CCP	NC DPI School Report Card
CTE	NC DPI School Report Card
PS_INTENT_ENLIST	NC DPI School Report Card
RDGS	NC DPI School Report Card
MAGS	NC DPI School Report Card
ENROLL12	National Student Clearinghouse
GRAD6	National Student Clearinghouse
PER1	National Student Clearinghouse

There are 115 LEAs in North Carolina; each LEA was assigned to a county based on its geographic location. County indicators were calculated by aggregating the numerators and denominators for each indicator for all LEAs within the county and recalculating the rate (INDVALUE).

## AP Participation Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school schoolers who took at least one [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#) examination.

### Source

Data on AP participation was obtained from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [School Report Cards](#). Final average daily membership data was obtained from [NCDPI](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

AP	Advanced Placement
----	--------------------

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The data was calculated by dividing the total number of AP participants by final ADM.

The AP participation rate was calculated by the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of AP participants}}{\text{Month 9 ADM (grades 9 – 13)}}$$

## AP/IB/CIE Participation Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school schoolers who took at least one [Advanced Placement \(AP\)](#), [International Baccalaureate](#), or [Cambridge International Education](#) examination.

### Source

Data on AP/IB/CIE participation was obtained from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [School Report Cards](#). Final average daily membership data was obtained from [NC DPI](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

AP_IB_CIE	Advanced Placement/International Baccalaureate/Cambridge International Education
-----------	--

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The data was calculated by dividing the total number of AP/IB/CIE participants by final ADM.

The AP/IB/CIE participation rate was calculated by the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of AP + IB + CIE participants}}{\text{Month 9 ADM (grades 9 – 13)}}$$

## Broadband Access

Percentage of households with broadband access.

### Source

Data for all counties is available from the U.S. Census Bureau's 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) in Table 28008: Presence and Types of Internet Subscriptions in Household and Table 28009 (by race/ethnicity).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

BRDBND_HH POP	Household Population with Broadband Access (5-Year ACS)
------------------	---

### Demographic Information Available

- Race/ethnicity
  - Note: all race groups *except* for WHITE include Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals for this data

### Calculations

The broadband access rate was calculated by dividing the number of households with broadband by the total number of households.

$$\% \text{ Broadband Access} = \frac{\# \text{ of households with broadband}}{\text{Total \# of households}}$$

## CCP Participation Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school graduates who took at least one college course at a community college or university.

### Source

Data on CCP participation for high school graduates was obtained from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [Report to the North Carolina General Assembly](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

CCP	College & Career Promise Participation
-----	--

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The data was calculated by dividing the total number of high school graduates who participated in CCP by the total number of graduates.

The CCP participation rate was calculated by the following equation:

$$\frac{\text{Total number of graduates who participate in CCP}}{\text{Total number of graduates}}$$

# Child Poverty Rate

The percentage of children under 18 living in poverty.

## Source

Data for all counties is available from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) in Table B17001: Poverty Status by Sex by Age. Tables B17001A-B17001I provide details by race and ethnicity. For the state indicator, the 1-Year American Community Survey is used.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

CHILDPOV	Child Poverty Rate (5-Year ACS)
----------	---------------------------------

## Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/ethnicity
  - Note: all race groups except for WHITE include Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals for this data
- Sex by Race/Ethnicity

## Calculations

The child poverty rate was calculated by dividing the number of children ages 0-17 living in poverty by the total number of children ages 0-17 for whom the poverty rate was calculated.

## Chronic Absenteeism

Percentage of public K-13 students who missed more than 10% of school days in a school year.

### Source

The data on chronic absenteeism comes from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [School Report Cards](#).

Note: attendance data for 2019-2020 was no longer required starting in March 2020, which may make data for this year inconsistent with prior years.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

ABSENT	Chronic Absenteeism
--------	---------------------

### Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/Ethnicity
- Economic disadvantage
- Disability status
- Limited English proficiency

### Calculations

This was a direct download from NC DPI.

## College-and-Career-Ready in Math

Percentage of North Carolina students in grades 3-8 who earned a college-and-career-ready score on the End-of-Grade Math exam.

### Source

Data for [student performance](#) is reported by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI). Students are classified as “college-and-career-ready” if they score at a Level 4 or higher on the End-of-Grade Math exam.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

MAGS	College-and-Career-Ready in Math
------	----------------------------------

### Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/Ethnicity
- Economic disadvantage
- Disability status
- Limited English proficiency
- Other, including academically and intellectually gifted, homeless, and military connected

### Calculations

This is a direct download from NC DPI.

# College-and-Career-Ready in Reading

Percentage of North Carolina students in grades 3-8 who earned a college-and-career-ready score on the End-of-Grade Reading exam.

## Source

Data for [student performance](#) is reported by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI). Students are classified as “college-and-career-ready” if they score at a Level 4 or higher on the End-of-Grade Reading exam.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

RDGS	College-and-Career-Ready in Reading
------	-------------------------------------

## Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/Ethnicity
- Economic disadvantage
- Disability status
- Limited English proficiency
- Other, including academically and intellectually gifted, homeless, and military connected

## Calculations

This is a direct download from NC DPI.

# CTE Concentrators

Number of Career & Technical Education (CTE) concentrations completed by North Carolina public high school schoolers. Industry Valued Credentials are obtained from the North Carolina Workforce Credentials Advisory Board. Only individual credentials are reported.

## Source

Data on CTE concentrators was obtained from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction [School Report Cards](#). Industry Valued Credentials were obtained from NCDPI Office of CTE.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

CTE	CTE Concentrators
CTE_CRED_IND_RATE	Percent of Industry Valued CTE Credentials Earned

## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

$$\% \text{ of Industry Valued Credentials} = \frac{\# \text{ of Earned Credentials that are Industry Valued}}{\text{Total Earned Credentials}}$$

## Educational Attainment

Percent of North Carolina 25-44-year-olds with a specific level of education, such as an associate degree or higher.

### Source

Data for all counties is available from the U.S. Census Bureau's 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) in Table B15001: Sex by Age by Educational Attainment for the Population 18 Years and Over.

**Note:** The sum of county values will differ from the state-level values in the state database and the state attainment profile. This is because they come from different data sources. State values are drawn from the 1-Year ACS microdata ([PUMS](#)), whereas the county and regional attainment profiles are drawn from 5-Year ACS. To understand the difference between single year and multi-year estimates, click [here](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

EDUC_ANYPSD	Educational Attainment: Any Postsecondary Degree or Credential (includes nondegree credential estimate) (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_AA	Educational Attainment: Associate Degree (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_BA	Educational Attainment: Bachelor's Degree (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_HS	Educational Attainment: High School or Equivalent (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_LTHS	Educational Attainment: Less than High School (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_MAPL	Educational Attainment: Master's Degree or more (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_SCND	Educational Attainment: Some College, No Degree (5-Year ACS)
EDUC_STC	Educational Attainment: Nondegree credential

**Note:** This data includes an estimate of the share of adults with a high-quality nondegree credential. Statewide, the [Lumina Foundation](#) estimates roughly 7.5% of NC adults hold a high-quality nondegree credential. These individuals were removed from the "some college, no degree" population in EDUC\_SCND.

### Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Age
- Sex by Age

### Calculations

Individuals were classified based on their self-reported highest level of education:

- Less than High School includes the following responses:
  - “Less than 9<sup>th</sup> grade”
  - “9<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade, no diploma”
- “High school graduate (includes equivalency)”
- “Some college, no degree.”
- Non-degree credential
  - The estimated 7.5% of individuals who have a postsecondary nondegree credential or certificate were removed from “some college, no degree”
- “Associate degree”
- “Bachelor’s degree”
- “Graduate or professional degree”

The share of 25-44-year-olds with a specific level of education was calculated by dividing the estimated number of adults ages 25-44 with that level of education by the total number of adults 25-44.

$$\text{Educational Attainment Rate} = \frac{\text{\# of 25 to 44 with specific level of education}}{\text{Total \# of adults 25 to 44}}$$

In the database the shares of adults 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, and 45-64 are also available by sex for counties. The calculation is the same as for 25-44-year-olds but with different subgroups. Further breakdowns are available for the state:

- Five-year age breakdowns by
  - Sex
  - Race/ethnicity by sex
  - NC-born and Not-NC born by sex
  - For some values there are suppressed.

## Enrollment in Postsecondary Within 12 Months

Percentage of North Carolina public high school graduates who enroll in any postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation.

### Source

The data for postsecondary enrollment is calculated using individual student-record data for high school graduates from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction matched with postsecondary enrollment records from the National Student Clearinghouse.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

ENROLL12	Enroll in Postsecondary within 12 months (recent HS Graduate)
----------	---

### Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/ethnicity
- Economic Disadvantage

### Calculations

The postsecondary enrollment rate is defined as the number of high school graduates who enroll in any postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation, divided by the total number of high school graduates. A student is considered enrolled within 12 months if they enroll in postsecondary education before August 14th of the calendar year following their graduation year.

Graduation Year Classification:

- Students graduating between September 1st and December 31st of year X are classified as part of the X+1 graduating class.
  - *Example: A student graduating on October 15, 2019, is part of the 2020 graduating class and has until August 14, 2021, to enroll.*
- Students graduating between January 1st and August 31st are classified within the same calendar year.
  - *Example: A student graduating on May 14, 2020, is part of the 2020 graduating class.*

Enrollment Window:

- Graduates have until August 14th of year X+2 to be classified as enrolling within 12 months. Those who enroll in postsecondary education before graduating (early enrollment) are also included in this classification.
- In summary, students graduating between September 1st of year X and August 31st of year X+1 are part of the X+1 graduating class and must enroll by August 14th of year X+2 to be counted.

$$\text{Enroll within 12 months rate} = \frac{\text{\# HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months}}{\text{\# HS graduates}}$$

Data is suppressed for groups where fewer than 10 students were in the denominator.

## First-Year Persistence Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school graduates who enroll in any postsecondary institutions within 12 months of graduation who continue to a second year of enrollment.

### Source

The data for the first-year persistence rate is calculated using individual student-record data for high school graduates from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction matched with postsecondary enrollment records from the National Student Clearinghouse.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

PER1	First-Year Persistence
PER1_NCCCS	First Year Persistence   Enrollment within 12 months at NCCCS
PER1_UNC	First Year Persistence   Enrollment within 12 months at UNC
PER1_NCICU	First Year Persistence   Enrollment within 12 months at NCICU

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The number of high school graduates who continue to a second year of postsecondary enrollment is divided by the total number of high school graduates who enrolled in any postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation.

See [Enrollment within 12 Months](#) for denominator details. If a student enrolls within 12 months and re-enrolls at any post-secondary institution between August 15<sup>th</sup> (the day following the final day to be classified as enrolling within 12 months) and August 14<sup>th</sup> of the following calendar year, that student is classified as persisting to the second year.

While the National Student Clearinghouse data covers nearly all public and non-profit private institutions nationally (about 98% of all enrollments nationwide), the NSC data has less coverage of for-profit institutions.

$$\text{First Year Persistence Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ of HS graduates who continue to 2nd year of postsecondary}}{\# \text{ HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation}}$$

$$\text{First Year Persistence Rate NCICU} = \frac{\# \text{ of HS graduates who continue to 2nd year of postsecondary}}{\# \text{ HS graduates who enroll in an NCICU within 12 months of graduation}}$$

$$\text{First Year Persistence Rate NCCCS} = \frac{\# \text{ of HS graduates who continue to 2nd year of postsecondary}}{\# \text{ HS graduates who enroll in an NCCCS within 12 months of graduation}}$$

$$\text{First Year Persistence Rate UNC} = \frac{\# \text{ of HS graduates who continue to 2nd year of postsecondary}}{\# \text{ HS graduates who enroll in a UNC System within 12 months of graduation}}$$

Data is suppressed for counties where fewer than 10 students were in the denominator.

Note that first year persistence by sector is only available for county in the Data Attainment Summary.

# FAFSA Completion Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school seniors completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid ([FAFSA](#)).

## Source

Detailed North Carolina data on FAFSA completion was obtained from [Federal Student Aid](#); school enrollment data was obtained from the [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction](#). Data is a direct download from [College for North Carolina](#) (CFNC).

**Note:** Overall, FAFSA completion rates are underestimated and may impact certain areas or schools more than others. High schools with fewer than five FAFSA completers are not reported by Federal Student Aid. For more information about the FAFSA completion, click [here](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

FAFSA	FAFSA Completion Rate (September)
-------	-----------------------------------

## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

Data is a direct download from [College for North Carolina](#) (CFNC).

## Family-Sustaining Wage

Percentage of North Carolina 25-44-year-olds earning a living wage. A living wage is defined here as earning a family income equivalent to 300% or more of the federal poverty line.

### Source

Detailed data on family income is from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Data for all counties is available in the [5-Year ACS](#) in Table B17024: Age by Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months.

**Note:** The sum of county values and state data profile will differ from the state-level values in the state dashboard. This is because they come from different data sources. State values are drawn from the 1-Year ACS microdata (PUMS), whereas the county and state one pagers are drawn from 5-Year ACS data. To understand the difference between single year and multi-year estimates, click [here](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

FAM300	Family Sustaining Wage (5-Year ACS)
--------	-------------------------------------

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The family-sustaining wage rate was calculated by dividing the estimated number of adults ages 25-44 with family incomes above 300% of the federal poverty line by the total number of adults ages 25-44 for whom the poverty status was determined.

$$\text{Family – Sustaining Wage Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ 25 – 44 with family incomes} > 300\% \text{ FPL}}{\# \text{ 25 – 44 for whom poverty status is determined}}$$

## First-Generation in College

The share of children ages 0-17 who would be first-generation in college, i.e., no parent or guardian has a 2 year or 4 year degree.

### Source

Data on first-generation in college children are from custom estimates developed using the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey data (ACS) and population estimates. Full details are available [here](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

FIRSTGEN	Percent of children who would be first-generation in college
----------	--

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

See detailed methodology linked above.

# Foreign-Born Population

The percentage of population who are foreign-born.

## Source

Data for all counties is available from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 5-Year American Community Survey (ACS) in Table B05003. For the state indicator, the 1-Year American Community Survey is used.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

FBORN	Percent Foreign-Born (5-Year ACS)
-------	-----------------------------------

## Demographic Information Available

- Sex

## Calculations

The percent foreign-born was calculated by dividing the number of residents who are foreign-born by the total number of residents.

$$\% \text{ Foreign – Born} = \frac{\text{Total population who are foreign – born}}{\text{Total population}}$$

## High School Graduation Rate

The percentage of public high school students who graduated in 4 years or less.

### Source

Detailed North Carolina data was downloaded from the [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction \(NC DPI\)](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

ACGR4	High School Graduation Rate (NC DPI)
-------	--------------------------------------

### Demographic Information Available

- Race/ethnicity
- Economic disadvantage
- Disability status
- Limited English proficiency
- Other, including academically and intellectually gifted, homeless, and military connected (NC DPI data only)

### Calculations

This is a direct download from the NC Department of Public Instruction ([methodology](#)).

# High School Drop Out Rate

[A "dropout" is an individual who:](#)

- i. was enrolled in school at some time during the reporting year;
- ii. was not enrolled on day 20 of the current year;
- iii. has not graduated from high school or completed a state or district approved educational program; and does not meet any of the following reporting exclusions:
  - 1. transferred to another public school district, private school registered with the NC Department of Non-Public Education, home school registered with the NC Department of Non-Public Education, or state/district approved educational program (not including programs at community colleges)
  - 2. temporarily absent due to suspension or school approved illness, or
  - 3. death.

## Source

Detailed North Carolina data was downloaded from the [Discipline, ALP and Dropout Data | NC DPI](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

DROPOUT	% of 9-13 graders who drop out
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic information available.

## Calculations

This is a direct download from the [NC Department of Public Instruction Discipline, ALP and Dropout Annual Reports](#).

## Home Ownership Rate

Percentage of households that are owner-occupied.

### Source

Data on home ownership is from the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS). Data for all counties is available in the [5-Year ACS](#) in Table B25003: Tenure. For the state indicator, the 1-Year American Community Survey is used.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

OWN	Home Ownership Rate (5-Year ACS)
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### Demographic Information Available

- Race/ethnicity
  - Note: all race groups except for WHITE include Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals for this data

### Calculations

$$\text{Home Ownership Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ owner occupied households}}{\text{Total \# occupied households}}$$

## K-13 Students: Charter Schools

Total number of K-13 students enrolled in a charter school.

### Source

Information on K-13 enrollments in charter schools was downloaded from NC DPI's [Statistical Profile Online](#). Additional data used for the charter profile indicators comes from the NC DPI individual level demographic file.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

K13_CHARTER	K-13 Students: Charter Schools
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available. For charter profiles, demographic information is available for K-5, 6-8 and 9-13 grade groups for race/ethnicity and EDS status.

### Calculations

Each charter school was assigned to a county based on its geographic location. The county total represents the sum of all charter schools within the county.

The denominator (INDDEN) represents the total number of students enrolled in LEA, Charter, Home, and Private schools.

## K-13 Students: Home Schools

Total number of K-13 students enrolled in home schools.

### Source

The number of K-13 students enrolled in [Home Schools](#) is an estimated provided by the Division of Non-Public Education at the Department of Administration.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

K13_HOME	K-13 Students: Home Schools
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

This is a direct download from the Department of Administration.

The denominator (INDDEN) represents the total number of students enrolled in LEA, Charter, Home, and Private schools.

## K-13 Students: Local Education Agencies

Total number of K-13 students enrolled at North Carolina district (LEA) public schools (NC DPI).

### Sources

This data is from NC DPI's [Statistical Profile Online](#): Table 10. Pupils in Membership by Race and Sex. Additional data used for the charter profile indicators comes from the NC DPI individual level demographic file.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

K13_LEA	NC DPI Total Enrollments (K-13)
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available. For charter profiles, demographic information is available for K-5, 6-8 and 9-13 grade groups for race/ethnicity and EDS status.

### Calculations

The total number of DPI students in grades K-13 represents the sum of students in all grades, from Kindergarten through Grade12 (including a small amount of students classified as Grade 13).

The denominator (INDDEN) represents the total number of students enrolled in LEA, Charter, Home, and Private schools.

## K-13 Students: Private Schools

Total number of K-13 students enrolled in private schools.

### Source

Data on the number K-13 students enrolled in [Private Schools](#) comes from the Division of Non-Public Education at the Department of Administration.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

K13_PRIV	K-13 Students: Private Schools
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

This is a direct download from the Department of Administration.

The denominator (INDDEN) represents the total number of students enrolled in LEA, Charter, Home, and Private schools.

# Labor Force Participation Rate

Percentage of North Carolina 25-44 year-olds in the labor force.

## Source

Data on labor force participation are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Data for all counties is available in the [5-Year ACS](#) in Table B23001: Sex by Age by Employment Status for the Population 16 Years and Over.

**Note:** The sum of county values and state data profile will differ from the state-level values in the state dashboard. This is because they come from different data sources. State values are drawn from the 1-Year ACS microdata (PUMS), whereas the county and state one pagers are drawn from 5-Year ACS data. To understand the difference between single year and multi-year estimates, click [here](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

LF2544	Labor Force Participation Rate (25-44) (5-Year ACS)
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## Demographic Information Available

- Sex

## Calculations

Individuals were identified as being in the labor force if they reported being employed or unemployed.

The labor force participation rate was calculated by dividing the estimated number of adults ages 25-44 who are in the labor force by the total number of adults ages 25-44.

$$\text{Labor Force Participation Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ 25 – 44 adults unemployed or working}}{\text{Total \# 25 – 44 adults}}$$

# Median Household Income

The median household income by county.

## Source

The median household income by county can be obtained from the Census Bureau's Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE) Program [here](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

MEDHHINC	Median Household Income
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

For county and state, this is a direct download from the Census Bureau's SAIPE program. For councils of governments, prosperity zones, and workforce development board the median household income is calculated by using the county median household incomes.

# NC Community College Enrollments

Unduplicated 12-month enrollments, by program type, in NC Community Colleges.

## Source

NC Community Colleges [dashboards](#) on student, program, and course enrollment.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

NCCC_BS	NC Community College Basic Skills Enrollments
NCCC_CE	NC Community College Continuing Education Enrollments
NCCC_FTCU	First-Time NC Community College Continuing Education Enrollments
NCCC_CU	NC Community College Curriculum Enrollments

## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

This was a direct download from the NC Community College System.

## NC Pre-K Enrollment

The percentage of eligible North Carolina four-year-olds enrolled in North Carolina’s public pre-kindergarten program (the [NC Pre-K Program](#)).

### Source

NC Pre-K enrollments were provided by the [North Carolina Division of Child Development and Early Education \(NC DCDEE\)](#) at the Department of Health and Human Services. Carolina Demography estimated the number of eligible four-year-olds using population estimates from the [North Carolina Office of State Budget and Management](#) (for the 2025 profiles, the [U.S. Census Population and Housing Estimates](#) were used) and poverty status for the child population was obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 5-Year American Community Survey (Table B17024: Age by Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

PREK	NC Pre-K Enrollment
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The NC Pre-K enrollment rate reflects the total number of NC Pre-K enrollments divided by the estimated number of eligible 4-year-olds. This estimate was developed for each North Carolina county through the following steps:

- Used adjustment factors to allocate regionally reported NC Pre-K enrollments to their constituent counties.
- Used the 5-Year American Community Survey data to determine the county percentage of children under 6 in families earning less than 200% of the federal poverty line, following [guidance](#) that this is a good proxy for the income-eligibility threshold for NC Pre-K. We use the 5-Year American Community Survey from 2019.
- Estimated eligible 4-year-old population by multiplying the number of 4-year-olds in each county by the estimated proportion of young children in families with incomes <200% of the poverty line.
- Calculated NC Pre-K enrollment rate by dividing county NC Pre-K enrollments by county eligible 4-year-olds.

$$\text{NC PreK Enrollment Rate} = \frac{\text{\# of NC PreK enrollments}}{\text{Total \# of eligible 4 year olds}}$$

# Opportunity Youth

Percentage of North Carolina 16-24-year-olds not in school or working (full or part time). This figure includes incarcerated youth who are not enrolled in school.

## Source

Data on opportunity youth are from custom estimates developed using the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey data (ACS) and population estimates. Full details are available [here](#).

**Note:** The sum of county values will differ from the state-level values on the state dashboard. This is because they come from different data sources. State values on the state dashboard are drawn from the 1-Year ACS microdata (PUMS), whereas the county one pagers are drawn from estimates built with 5-Year ACS microdata. To understand the difference between single year and multi-year estimates, click [here](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

OPPYOUTH_1624	Opportunity Youth (16-24) (5-Year ACS)
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

Individuals were identified as being opportunity youth if they were not enrolled in school and were either unemployed or not in the labor force. The opportunity youth rate was calculated by dividing the estimated number of youth ages 16-24 not working and not in school by the total number of youth ages 16-24.

$$\text{Disconnected Youth Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ 16 – 24 not working, not in school}}{\text{Total \# 16 – 24}}$$

## ACT Performance

Percentage of North Carolina 11th grade students meeting certain standards on the ACT, such as an [ACT Composite score](#) of 17 or above (the UNC minimum admission requirement). For the years 2022 to 2024, a composite score of 19 or above what the UNC admission requirement.

### Source

Data for [student performance](#) is reported by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

ACT	ACT Performance
ACT4B	ACT: Met college-readiness benchmarks on all subtests (excludes Writing)
ACTEN	ACT: Met college-readiness benchmark on English subtest
ACTMA	ACT: Met college-readiness benchmark on Math subtest
ACTRD	ACT: Met college-readiness benchmark on Reading subtest
ACTSC	ACT: Met college-readiness benchmark on Science subtest
AWA	ACT WorkKeys: Silver or better ("career-ready")

### Demographic Information Available

- Sex
- Race/ethnicity
- Economic disadvantage
- Disability status
- Limited English proficiency
- Other, including academically and intellectually gifted, homeless, and military connected

### Calculations

This is a direct download from NC DPI.

# Postsecondary Enrollment Rate

Percentage of 18-24-year-olds enrolled in a postsecondary institution (college or graduate school).

## Source

The data on postsecondary enrollment comes from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Data for all counties is available in the [5-Year ACS](#) in Table B14004: Sex by College or Graduate School Enrollment by Type of School by Age for the Population 15 Years and Over.

**Note:** The sum of county values and state data profile will differ from the state-level values in the state dashboard. This is because they come from different data sources. State values are drawn from the 1-Year ACS microdata (PUMS), whereas the county and state one pagers are drawn from 5-Year ACS data. To understand the difference between single year and multi-year estimates, click [here](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

ENRL18	Postsecondary Enrollment (5-Year ACS)
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## Demographic Information Available

- Sex

## Calculations

Individuals were identified as being enrolled in college or graduate school if they reported being enrolled in school and specified one of the following enrollments during the last three months:

- “College undergraduate years (freshman to senior)”
- “Graduate or professional school beyond a bachelor’s [degree](#) (for example: MA or PhD program, or medical or law school)”

The postsecondary enrollment rate was calculated by dividing the estimated number of adults ages 18-24 enrolled in college or graduate school by the total number of adults 18-24.

$$\text{Postsecondary Enrollment Rate} = \frac{\text{\# 18 – 24 adults enrolled in college or graduate school}}{\text{Total \# 18 – 24 adults}}$$

# Postsecondary 6-Year Completion Rate

Percentage of North Carolina public high school graduates who enroll in any postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation who earned a degree or credential within 6 years.

## Source

The postsecondary completion rate is calculated using individual student-record data for high school graduates from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction matched with postsecondary enrollment records from the National Student Clearinghouse.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

GRAD6	Postsecondary 6-Year Completion Rate
GRAD6_NCICU	Postsecondary 6-Year Completion Rate at NCICU
GRAD6_UNC	Postsecondary 6-Year Completion Rate at UNC
GRAD6_NCCCS	Postsecondary 6-Year Completion Rate at NCCCS

## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

The number of high school graduates who earned a postsecondary degree or credential within 6 years is divided by the total number of high school graduates who enrolled in any postsecondary institution within 12 months of graduation. A student has until August 15<sup>th</sup> 6 years following their HS graduation year to be classified as graduating within 6-years. For example, if someone graduates in the class of 2015, they have until August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021, to be classified as graduating within 6 years.

See [Enrollment within 12 Months](#) for denominator details. Degree or credential receipt was defined as the first degree or credential awarded to the student (from any institution) that occurred within 6 years of the date of first enrollment.

$$\text{Postsecondary Completion Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ HS graduates who earn postsecondary award within 6 years}}{\text{Total \# HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation}}$$

Data is suppressed for counties where fewer than 10 students were in the denominator.

$$\text{Postsecondary Completion Rate NCICU} = \frac{\# \text{ HS graduates who earn postsecondary award within 6 years at NCICU}}{\text{Total \# HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation}}$$

$$\text{Postsecondary Completion Rate UNC} = \frac{\# \text{ HS graduates who earn postsecondary award within 6 years at UNC}}{\text{Total \# HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation}}$$

$$\text{Postsecondary Completion Rate NCCCS} = \frac{\text{\# HS graduates who earn postsecondary award within 6 years at NCCCS}}{\text{Total \# HS graduates who enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation}}$$

Graduate within six years by sector is only included for county and only reported in the Attainment Data Summary.

# Postsecondary Intentions

The share of high school graduates reporting intentions to enroll in postsecondary education, work, or enlist after high school.

## Source

Information on K-13 enrollments in charter schools was downloaded from NC DPI's [Statistical Profile Online](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

PS_INTENT	Postsecondary Intentions (total, not included in 2025 update)
PS_INTENT_ENROLL	Postsecondary Intentions: Postsecondary Enrollment
PS_INTENT_EMPLOY	Postsecondary Intentions: Join the Labor Force
PS_INTENT_ENLIST	Postsecondary Intentions: Enlist in the Military

## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

Students were identified as having postsecondary intentions if they reported intentions to enroll in postsecondary education, work, or join the military.

$$\text{Postsecondary Intention Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ of graduates with specific postsecondary intentions}}{\text{Total \# of HS graduates}}$$

# Single-Parent Households

Percentage of households headed by an unmarried parent (“single parent”).

## Source

Data on labor force participation are from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS). Data for all counties is available in the [5-Year ACS](#) in Table B11001: Household Type (Including Living Alone). For state, the 1-Year American Community Survey is used.

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

SPHH	Single-Parent Household Rate (5-Year ACS)
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## Demographic Information Available

- Race/ethnicity
  - Note: all race groups *except* for WHITE include Hispanic and non-Hispanic individuals for this data

## Calculations

Note: Unmarried parents living with a cohabiting partner are classified as single parents in the American Community Survey tables.

$$\text{Single Parent Household Rate} = \frac{\# \text{ single parent households}}{\text{Total occupied households}}$$

## Student Debt

Share of households with student debt and, among those with student debt, the share with debt in default.

### Source

Urban Institute [Debt in America](#) (December 2024 data download).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

DEBT_STUD	Percent with student debt
LOAN_DEF	Percent of student debt holders with student loan debt in default

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

This is a direct download.

# Student-to-School Counselor Ratio

The number of K-13 students per school counselor.

## Source

Information on the number of school counselors was downloaded from the [North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's Statistical Profile](#) (Table A6. Public Personnel Summary). The total number of students was also obtained from NC DPI (variable K13\_LEA).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

GUIDANCE	Student-to-School Counselor Ratio
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

The total number of students was divided by the total number of school counselors. Rounded to the nearest integer.

$$\text{Student to School Counselor Ratio} = \frac{\text{Total \# of K – 13 students}}{\text{Total \# of school counselors}}$$

## Total Number of UNC and NCCC Graduates

The total number of UNC and NCCC graduates (combined) provided at the sub-prosperity zone level.

### Source

The number of UNC and NCCC graduates combined can be obtained from the North Carolina Department of Commerce TOWER [dataset](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

PUBGRAD	Total UNC and NCCC graduates
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The total number of UNC and NCCC graduates was calculated using information in the NC TOWER datasets for both UNC and NCCC.

Each UNC and NCCC institution is assigned to a county according to the location of its main campus (using IPEDS directory information). Sub-prosperity zones, as defined by the [NC Department of Commerce](#), were used to define regions.

The total number of UNC and NCCC graduates in the sub-prosperity zone was calculated by aggregating the graduates of all institutions in the sub-prosperity zone through the following equation:

$$\text{Total UNC and NCCC Graduates by Sub PZ} = \sum_{k=1}^n \text{Graduates}_k$$

## Adult Learners Enrolled at NCCCS

The total number of students aged 25+ enrolled at NCCCS.

### Source

Custom table from Elizabeth Stoddard at NCCCS. A custom table was created to analyze student age and county of residence. Observations where the county of residence is listed as "Unknown" or "Out of State" are excluded from the analysis.

Adult student counts are categorized by course of study, which includes Basic Skills, Curriculum, and Continuing Education. Since students may enroll in multiple courses of study, classification follows these rules:

- Students enrolled in Curriculum and any other category are classified as Curriculum.
- Students enrolled in Continuing Education and Basic Skills are classified as Continuing Education.

This classification ensures consistency in reporting and prevents double-counting across categories.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

NCCC_BS_ADULT	Adults (25+) enrolled in Basic Skills
NCCC_CE_ADULT	Adults (25+) enrolled in Continuing Education
NCCC_CU_ADULT	Adults (25+) enrolled in Curriculum

### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

This is a direct download.

## UNC and NCCC Graduates: Employed in NC after 5 Years

The percentage of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years provided at the sub-prosperity zone level.

### Source

The percentage of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years can be obtained from the North Carolina Department of Commerce TOWER [dataset](#).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

EMP5	UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The percentage of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years was calculated for 2021 using information on 2019 graduates in the NC TOWER datasets for both UNC and NCCC.

Each UNC and NCCC institution is assigned to a county according to the location of its main campus (using IPEDS directory information). Sub-prosperity zones, as defined by the [NC Department of Commerce](#), were used to define regions.

The percent of all UNC and NCCC graduates employed in North Carolina within the sub-prosperity zone was calculated by aggregating outcomes for all institutions in the sub-prosperity zone through the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} & \text{Percent of UNC and NCCC Graduates Employed in NC by SubPz} \\ &= \frac{\sum_{k=1}^n \text{EmployedGraduates}_k}{\sum_{k=1}^n \text{TotalGraduates}_k} \end{aligned}$$

# UNC and NC Graduates: Wages after 5 Years

The mean wages of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years provided at the sub-prosperity zone level.

## Source

The percentage of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years can be obtained from the North Carolina Department of Commerce TOWER [dataset](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

WAGE5	UNC and NCCC Graduates: Average Wage after 5 Years
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

The average wages of UNC and NCCC graduates employed in NC after 5 years was calculated for 2020 using information on 2016 graduates in the NC TOWER datasets for both UNC and NCCC.

Each UNC and NCCC institution is assigned to a county according to the location of its main campus (using IPEDS directory information). Sub-prosperity zones, as defined by the [NC Department of Commerce](#), were used to define regions.

Average wages of all employed UNC and NCCC graduates within the sub-prosperity zone were calculated by aggregating outcomes for all institutions in the sub-prosperity zone through the following equation:

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{Average Wages of UNC and NCCC Graduates by Sub PZ} \\ &= \frac{\sum_{k=1}^n (\text{MeanWage}_k \times \text{EmployedGraduates}_k)}{\sum_{k=1}^n \text{EmployedGraduates}_k} \end{aligned}$$

## Top Employers

The top five employers in each county, by size of employment.

### Source

NC Commerce Demand Driven Data Delivery (D-4), Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([QCEW](#)). Using the most recent second quarter.

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

TOP_EMP	Top Employer by Size of Employment
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

This is a direct download.

## Top Industries

Top industries in each county by size of employment. Includes all sectors of the labor force and using NAICS Level 2 digits. Using the most recent second quarter.

### Source

NC Commerce Demand Driven Data Delivery (D-4), Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages ([QCEW](#)).

### Indicator Variable Name and Definition

TOP_IND	Top Industries by Size of Employment
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### Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

### Calculations

The top three industries are found by ranking the industries by average employment.

$$\text{Share of Industry over Total Industries} = \frac{\text{Total employment in industry}}{\text{Total employment in all industries}}$$

# Population Estimate

Most recently released estimated total population.

## Source

The U.S. Census Bureau's [Population and Housing Estimates](#).

## Indicator Variable Name and Definition

POP	Total Population (Estimate)
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## Demographic Information Available

No demographic details available.

## Calculations

For the total population estimate, this is a direct download. Population growth from 2020 to most recent year is calculated by:

$$\text{Growth over time} = \frac{\text{Population July 1 (current year)} - \text{Population April 1, 2020}}{\text{Population April 1, 2020}}$$

Note that the population growth can be negative.