Alexander County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Alexander County Attainment Goal: 4,753 (Stretch Goal: 4,842)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 36,440
2022 Estimate: 36,512
Change: 72

Growth Rate

0.2% vs. 2.5%

County State

$67,717 81%
Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516

19.9% 16.7%
Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 12.1%

62% 3.2%
Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%

Educational Attainment

Alexander County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
5,454 63.1%

Have Degree or Credential
3,191 36.9%

GDP

Top Opportunities for Growth

These three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Alexander County to improve future attainment outcomes.

NC Pre-K Enrollment
35% of Alexander County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural-metro county average of 59%.

First-Year Persistence
75% of Alexander County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary persist to their second year, below the state average of 83%.

Transition to Postsecondary
52% of Alexander County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the state average of 58%.

Promising Attainment Practices

The new Promising Attainment Practices Database is a curated, searchable, and filterable collection of about 250 county, region, and state-level initiatives and programs that directly address various components of the state’s attainment challenge. The Database allows local and regional initiative leaders and other stakeholders to identify groups across the state who are developing or operating initiatives designed to boost attainment.

Follow link to discover how Alexander County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Alexander

In Hickory Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

70.2%
of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

359Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

2,139graduates in 2020

80%of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021

$37,952annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

45%of adults (ages 25-44) in Alexander County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Alexander County is served by:
Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board
Western Piedmont Council of Governments

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

Job Title Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners 4%
Logisticians 3%
Physician Assistants 3%

Top 3 Employers in Alexander County

Employer Employment Range
Alexander County Schools 500-999
Craftmaster Furniture 500-999
The Mitchell Gold Co 500-999

UNC System College Enrollment

NC Community College Enrollment

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

Basic Skills

Continuing Education

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Basic Skills
1,420
Continuing Education
674

8% of Alexander County residents have student loan debt. 9% of debt holders had student loans in default.

Success of Alexander County High School Graduates

• 75% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 79% in peer counties. 2022
• 62% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 56% in peer counties. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

• 953 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
• 133 of all college-goers attended Mitchell CC
• 103 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022
1,720 certificate  2,199 associate  327 bachelor’s

Postsecondary assets in Hickory Prosperity Zone sub-region

Public, 4-year or above
Public, 2-year
Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Catawba Valley Community College, McDowell Technical Community College, Western Piedmont Community College
Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Private not-for-profit, 2-year

57% of Alexander County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 57% in peer counties.

How students in Alexander County traditional schools are doing:

• 35% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program, compared to 53% statewide; 78 more needed to meet state goal of 80%.
• 30% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 1,128 more needed to meet state goal of 73%.
• 39% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 941 more needed to meet state goal of 86%.
• 85% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 43 more needed to meet state goal of 95%.
• 17% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 257 less needed to meet state goal of 11%.

Alexander County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 269:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties.

3% of students drop out of high school (46 total students), compared to 2% statewide.

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit: dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/