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 vs. State

Median Household Income (2022)
Alexander County: $67,717
State: $67,516

Home Owners (2022)
81%
State: 67%

Child Poverty Rate (2022)
19.9%
State: 17.2%

Opportunity Youth Rate (2022)
6.7%
State: 10.9%

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

Unemployment Rate (2022)
3.2%
State: 3.7%

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

Educational Attainment
Alexander County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
5,454
63.1%

Have Degree or Credential
3,191
36.9%

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%.

Earning College Credit in High School
42% of Alexander County graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs, below the rural-metro county average of 43%. Also, 8% of high school students took at least one AP exam, below the peer county average of 8%.

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%.

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.

Top areas of misalignment:
- Health Science: bachelor’s and below bachelor’s
- Business Management & Administration: bachelor’s
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics: below bachelor’s

359 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
2,139 graduates in 2020
80% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$37,952 annual 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

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First-time Curriculum Enrollments
2018 2020 2022
240 180 200

Basic Skills
2018 2020 2022
60 50 40

Continuing Education
2018 2020 2022
1,500 1,400 1,300

Top 3 Employers in Alexander County

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

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

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

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Adult Learners

Hickory Sub-Prosperity Zone post-secondary enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- **478** Basic Skills
- **8,660** Continuing Education
- **1,924** Curriculum

8% of Alexander County residents have student loan debt. 9% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2022

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

- **58%** of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 75 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%. 2023
- **70%** of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 68% in peer counties. 2022
- **52%** of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 51% in peer counties. 2022

56% of Alexander County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 55% 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 75%. 2023
- **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%. 2023
- **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%. 2023
- **85%** of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 43 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- **21%** of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 470 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2023

Alexander County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 269:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties. 2023

- **3%** of students drop out of high school (40 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2023

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

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