Ashe County
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

Population Spotlight
2020 Census: 26,581
2022 Estimate: 27,110
Change: 529

Growth Rate
2.0% County
2.5% State

$54,379 Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516
80% Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%
17.7% Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%
5.8% Opportunity Youth Rate (2021)
State: 12.1%
72% Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%
3.4% Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

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

Educational Attainment
Ashe County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
3,206 56.1%
Have Degree or Credential
2,504 43.9%

Top Opportunities for Growth
These three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Ashe County to improve future attainment outcomes.

Adult Learners
20% of Ashe County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural - non-metro county average of 16%.

Chronic Absenteeism
38% of Ashe County students are chronically absent from school, above the rural - non-metro county average of 35%.

First-Year Persistence
80% of Ashe 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 Ashe County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Ashe

In Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:
83.4% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

17 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
5,202 graduates in 2020
69% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$44,421 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

37% of adults (ages 25-44) in Ashe County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Ashe County is served by:
High Country Workforce Development Board
High Country Council of Governments

2030 Proposed Ashe County Attainment Goal: 4,133 (Stretch Goal: 4,177)
2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Job Title Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners 4%
Logisticians 3%
Occupational Therapy Assistants 3%

Top 3 Employers in Ashe County
Employer Employment Range
Ashe County Board Of Education 250-499
American Emergency Vehicles 250-499
James R Vannoy & Sons Construction 250-499

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

UNC System College Enrollment
Curriculum

NC Community College Enrollment
Curriculum

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

Basic Skills

Continuing Education
7% of Ashe County residents have student loan debt; 11% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2022

Success of Ashe County High School Graduates

- 80% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% in peer counties. 2022
- 71% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- 900 of all college-goers attended Wilkes CC
- 100 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI
- 13 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC

- 64% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 31 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80% in 2023.
- 69% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 68% in peer counties. 2022
- 57% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 52% in peer counties. 2022

44% of Ashe County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 57% in peer counties.

How students in Ashe County traditional schools are doing:

- Ashe County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2023
- 36% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 597 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
- 46% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 484 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 88% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 16 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 38% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 745 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2022
- Ashe County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 295:1 versus 325:1 in peer counties. 2022
- 4% of students drop out of high school (33 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

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