Ashe County
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

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

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

Growth Rate
County: 2.0% vs. 2.5% State

Median Household Income (2022)
county: $54,379
State: $67,516

Home Owners (2022)
county: 80%
State: 67%

Child Poverty Rate (2022)
county: 17.7%
State: 17.2%

Opportunity Youth Rate (2022)
county: 5.5%
State: 10.0%

Households with Broadband (2022)
county: 72%
State: 77%

Unemployment Rate (2022)
county: 3.4%
State: 3.7%

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%.

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%.

Transition to Postsecondary
57% of Ashe 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 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

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

UNC System College Enrollment Curriculum

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Boone-Wilkesboro Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

Job Title
Nurse Practitioners
Logisticians
Occupational Therapy Assistants

Annual Growth
4%
3%
3%

Top 3 Employers in Ashe County

Employer
Ashe County Board Of Education
American Emergency Vehicles
James R Vannoy & Sons Construction

Employment Range
250-499
250-499
250-499

363 First-time Curriculum Enrollments

570 550 530
2018 2020 2022

Top 3 Employers in Ashe County

Basic Skills

50 75 100
2018 2020 2022

Continuing Education

120 150 180
2018 2020 2022
Adult Learners
Boone-Wilkesboro Sub-Prosperity Zone post-secondary enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022
- 249 Basic Skills
- 2,980 Continuing Education
- 407 Curriculum

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

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%. 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

42% of Ashe County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 55% 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 86%. 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 85%. 2023
• 21% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 290 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2023

Ashe County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 295:1 versus 325:1 in peer counties. 2023

2% of students drop out of high school (20 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/