Avery County
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Avery County Attainment Goal: 1,782 (Stretch Goal: 1,827)
2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight
2020 Census: 17,812
2022 Estimate: 17,571
Change: -241

Growth Rate
-1.4% vs. 2.5%

County
State

$53,894 Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516

79% Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%

11.8% Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%

5.6% Opportunity Youth Rate (2021)
State: 12.1%

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

3.3% Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

Educational Attainment
Avery County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
2,672
61.3%

Have Degree or Credential
1,688
38.7%

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

FAFSA Completion
58% of Avery County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - non-metro county average of 61%.

Adult Learners
17% of Avery County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural - non-metro county average of 16%.

First-Year Persistence
77% of Avery 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 Avery County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Avery

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 Avery County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Avery 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 bachelor’s

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 Avery County
Employer
Avery County Schools
Dept Of Public Safety
County Of Avery

Employment Range
250-499
250-499
250-499

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

Basic Skills

Continuing Education
92% of Avery County residents have student loan debt; 0% of debt holders had student loans in default.

Success of Avery County High School Graduates

- 77% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% in peer counties. 2022
- 64% 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

- 556 of all college-goers attended Mayland CC
- 109 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI
- 40 of all college-goers attended McDowell TCC

58% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 27 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%.

65% 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 Avery County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 57% in peer counties.

How students in Avery County traditional schools are doing:

- Avery County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2023
- 32% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 429 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
- 41% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 363 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 87% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 11 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 23% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 224 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2022
- Avery County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 223:1 versus 325:1 in peer counties. 2022
- 3% of students drop out of high school (16 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Avery County completed 748 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and 107 concentrations in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Manufacturing; Health Science; and Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics.

85 high school students took at least one AP course (15%) versus 7% in peer counties (2022).

137 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (55%) versus 39% in peer counties (2022).