INTRODUCTION
From birth to career, there are many opportunities to develop strategies and interventions to increase attainment and improve workforce alignment. Below are some key areas and indicators that highlight where interventions may be possible to improve overall educational attainment outcomes.

COUNTY OVERVIEW
Buncombe County is in the Asheville Prosperity Zone sub-region. It’s one of 16 suburban counties in NC. Overall, 13% of 25-44-year-olds in Buncombe County have earned a master’s degree or higher as their highest degree; 28% have a bachelor’s degree; 9% have an associate degree; 21% have some college, no degree; 20% have a high school diploma; and 9% have less than a high school diploma.

How students in Buncombe County traditional public schools are currently doing:
To meet state goals, Buncombe County needs:
- 473 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 35%).
- 3,154 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 48%).
- 5,356 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 44%).

Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8
High-quality early learning and strong academic progress in early years helps prepare children for future success.
Buncombe County has 50 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 4 or 8% were classified as low performing in 2019.

Ready for College & Career
High school completion is a crucial step on the pathway to postsecondary success or the beginnings of a career. Activities that prepare students to navigate the transition to postsecondary include gaining experience in college-level coursework and applying for financial assistance.

Postsecondary Access and Success
These metrics capture student progression and educational attainment from high school graduation to postsecondary completion. They indicate relative strengths and weaknesses of Buncombe County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.

Labor Market Outcomes
Lack of technical skills and lack of education are among the primary reasons why NC employers struggle to fill vacancies. These metrics capture labor market outcomes among recent graduates, the alignment between postsecondary degree, production and labor market demand, and future job demands.

6.9% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 6.8% of peer counties.

Opportunities for Growth
Compared to suburban counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Buncombe County to improve future attainment outcomes.

NC Pre-K Enrollment
35% of Buncombe County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the suburban county average of 44%.

Transition to Postsecondary
58% of Buncombe County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the suburban county average of 62%.

High School Graduation
87% of Buncombe County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the suburban county average of 88%.

INTRODUCTION
2020 County Attainment Profile
NC goal: 2 million by 2030
Buncombe County
2018 Population 261,065
2030 Population 296,961
K-12 Students (2019) 27,741
Traditional Schools 10,541
Charter/Private/Home $53,960
Median Household Income 17%
Child Poverty Rate 81%
Households with Broadband

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Buncombe County 2020 Attainment Profile

**Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18</th>
<th>Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollments</td>
<td>23,862</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College</td>
<td>10,492</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina at Asheville</td>
<td>4,366</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Ridge Community College</td>
<td>2,812</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isothermal Community College</td>
<td>2,662</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars Hill University</td>
<td>1,343</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montreat College</td>
<td>845</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brevard College</td>
<td>698</td>
<td>87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warren Wilson College</td>
<td>644</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
Enrollments reflect degree- or credential-seeking undergraduate enrollments. The graduate or transfer rate is drawn from IPEDS and represents the share of students who either graduate with a degree or credential from the institution or transfer to another institution within 8 years. The 8-year outcome is the only measure that includes information on transfer out. Detailed data guidance is provided at [http://go.unc.edu/countydata](http://go.unc.edu/countydata).

**Local Cross-Sector Promising Practice: Community Schools**

Working with Asheville City Schools, Buncombe County Schools and a network of more than 50 local service providers, United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County is organizing resources that will support the health, education and financial stability of the whole family and neighboring community. By using our local middle schools as a district-wide hub for services, we can find new ways to address the needs of the community.

We identified this example of an emerging cross-sector promising practice in partnership with local leaders. If you have additional examples you’d like to share with myFutureNC, please respond to this [short survey](https://www.myfuturenc.org).

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

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**ABOUT CAROLINA DEMOGRAPHY**

Located within the Carolina Population Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, we use data and other available research to help you put a face or a story on the population-level changes facing your community. Our analysts provide a full array of demographic data and research services to inform decision making, evaluation, and policy across North Carolina, where we serve organizations and people in all 100 counties.

- nc demography.org
- demography@unc.edu
- @ncdemography

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**ABOUT MYFUTURENC**

MyFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government. Our mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy.

- myfuturenc.org
- facebook.com/myfuturenc
- @myFutureNC