Burke County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Burke County Attainment Goal: 9,970 (Stretch Goal: 10,206)

Population Spotlight
2020 Census: 87,573
2022 Estimate: 87,881
Change: 308

Growth Rate
0.4% vs. 2.5%

County State

$60,629
Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516

76%
Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%

26.8%
Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%

18.2%
Opportunity Youth Rate (2022)
State: 10.0%

64%
Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%

3.4%
Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

Educational Attainment
Burke County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
12,165
59.3%

Have Degree or Credential
8,363
40.7%

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

FAFSA Completion
54% of Burke County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - metro county average of 58%.

Transition to Postsecondary
48% of Burke County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the state average of 58%.

First-Year Persistence
79% of Burke 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 Burke County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Burke

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)

40% of adults (ages 25-44) in Burke County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Burke County is served by:
Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board
Western Piedmont Council of Governments

UNC System College Enrollment
Curriculum

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NC Community College Enrollment
Curriculum

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

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

Top 3 Employers in Burke County

Employer Employment Range
State Of NC Dept Of Health & Human 1000+
Public School System 1000+
Blue Ridge Healthcare Hospitals 1000+

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

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Basic Skills

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Continuing Education

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**Basic Skills**
8,660

**Continuing Education**
1,924

10% of Burke County residents have student loan debt. 5% of debt holders had student loans in default.

**Success of Burke County High School Graduates**
- 79% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 79% in peer counties. 2022
- 60% 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**
- 2,428 of all college-goers attended Western Piedmont CC
- 377 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
- 301 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

**Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Burke County, 2022**
- 54% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide. 221 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%.
- 67% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 68% in peer counties. 2022
- 48% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 51% in peer counties. 2022

57% of Burke County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 55% in peer counties.

**How students in Burke County traditional schools are doing:**
- Burke County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2023
- 29% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 2,883 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
- 38% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 2,428 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 88% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 70 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 22% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 1,281 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2023
- Burke County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 352:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties. 2023
- 1% of students drop out of high school (51 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2023

**Access to Postsecondary Credits**
- 524 high school students took at least one AP test (14%) versus 8% in peer counties (2023).
- 477 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (54%) versus 43% in peer counties (2023).

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