Caldwell County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

**Population Spotlight**
2020 Census: 80,664
2022 Estimate: 80,492

**Growth Rate**
-0.2% vs. 2.5%

**Educational Attainment**
Caldwell County residents ages 25-44, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Level</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Degree</td>
<td>11,003</td>
<td>61.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have Degree or Credential</td>
<td>6,847</td>
<td>38.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

- **Math Performance**
  28% of Caldwell County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the rural - metro county average of 30%.

- **Adult Learners**
  18% of Caldwell County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural - metro county average of 17%.

- **High School Graduation**
  84% of Caldwell County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural - metro county average of 85%.

**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 Caldwell County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Caldwell

**In Hickory Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:**
70.2% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Employment Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchants Distributors Llc</td>
<td>1000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldwell County Schools</td>
<td>1000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC Health</td>
<td>1000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Annual Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Practitioners</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logisticians</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistants</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First-time Curriculum Enrollments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Basic Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Top 3 Employers in Caldwell County**

- Merchants Distributors Llc: 1000+
- Caldwell County Schools: 1000+
- NC Health: 1000+

**Labor Market Alignment**

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

**2030 Proposed Caldwell County Attainment Goal:**
10,959 (Stretch Goal: 11,149)

**2030 State Attainment Goal:**
2 million
Adult Learners
Hickory Sub-Prosperity Zone post-secondary enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- 478 Basic Skills
- 8,660 Continuing Education
- 1,924 Curriculum

9% of Caldwell County residents have student loan debt; 6% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2022

Success of Caldwell County High School Graduates

- 80% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 79% in peer counties. 2022
- 58% 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

- 2,993 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI
- 344 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
- 209 of all college-goers attended Western Piedmont CC

How students in Caldwell County traditional schools are doing:

- 62% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program, compared to 53% statewide; 59 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. 2023
- 26% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 2,799 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
- 28% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 25% statewide; 2,692 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 84% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 97 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 28% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 1,811 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2023

Caldwell County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 333:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties. 2023

2% of students drop out of high school (82 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/