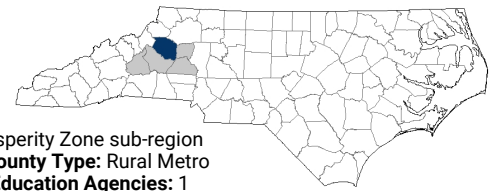


Caldwell County

NC goal: 2 million by 2030
2020 County Attainment Profile



Updated: Aug 12 2020

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.

Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8

High-quality early learning and strong academic progress in early years helps prepare children for future success.



Caldwell County has 23 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 1 or 4% were classified as low performing in 2019.

COUNTY OVERVIEW

Caldwell County is in the **Hickory** Prosperity Zone sub-region. It's one of 28 rural metro counties in NC.

Overall, 4% of 25-44-year-olds in Caldwell County have earned a master's degree or higher as their highest degree; 12% have a bachelor's degree; 12% have an associate degree; 24% have some college, no degree; 30% have a high school diploma; and 17% have less than a high school diploma.

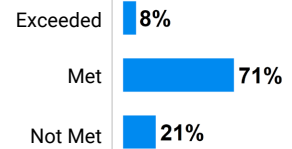
2018 Population	83,291
2030 Population	87,711
K-12 Students (2019)	
Traditional Schools	11,236
Charter/Private/Home	1,386
Median Household Income	\$43,328
Child Poverty Rate	22%
Households with Broadband	75%

How students in Caldwell County traditional public schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, Caldwell County needs:

- **134 more eligible 4-year-olds** enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 46%).
- **1,424 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 46%).
- **2,645 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 35%).

Percent of Caldwell County schools by academic growth status, 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.



To meet state goals, Caldwell County needs:

- **69 more 9th graders** to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 88%).
- **118 more seniors** to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80% vs. 65%).
- **659 more students** to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 17%).



223 students took at least one AP course (6%) versus 10% of peer counties.



1,084 students participated in Career & College Promise programs (30%) versus 18% of peer counties.

Students in Caldwell County completed **471 Career & Technical Education concentrations** in 2019. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Architecture and Construction.

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 Caldwell County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.



Caldwell County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 312:1.

Among Caldwell County high school graduates:

- **57% of graduates** enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 57% of peer counties.
- **70% of students** who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% of peer counties.
- **49% of students** who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 50% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region, 2018-19:

300	individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program.
3,422	Basic Skills enrollments at NC community colleges.
22,503	Continuing Education enrollments at NC community colleges.

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.



12% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 9.4% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region:

Public postsecondary institutions graduate **2,073 students per year**. After 5 years, 82% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of \$33,373.

64% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: **Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** (below bachelor's); **Health Science** (above and below bachelor's); and **Business Management & Administration** (bachelor's).

There are **188,511 job openings** projected between 2017-2026. The top 3 in demand jobs with median wages of \$50,000 or more are: 1) **Registered Nurses**; 2) **First-Line Supervisors of Production and Operating Workers**; 3) **Sales Representatives, Wholesale and Manufacturing, Except Technical and Scientific Products**.

Opportunities for Growth

Compared to rural metro counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Caldwell County to improve future attainment outcomes.



NC Pre-K Enrollment

46% of Caldwell County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural metro county average of 54%.



AP Participation

6% of Caldwell County high school students took at least one Advanced Placement exam, below the rural metro county average of 10%.



First-Year Persistence

70% of Caldwell County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary persist to their second year, below the rural metro county average of 73%.

Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region		
Institution Name	Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18	Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years
Total Enrollments	16,315	52%
Catawba Valley Community College	6,125	62%
Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute	4,636	53%
Western Piedmont Community College	2,306	36%
Lenoir-Rhyne University	1,830	70%
McDowell Technical Community College	1,418	44%

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>

Local Cross-Sector Promising Practice: Caldwell is Hiring

Caldwell is Hiring offers an opportunity for those seeking employment to meet directly with companies that have immediate or soon-to-fill job openings.

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.

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


dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/

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.

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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.

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