Caldwell County

NC goal: 2 million by 2030
2020 County Attainment Profile

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.

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%).

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.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region, 2018-19:
• 300 individuals served in an Apprenticeship 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.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region:
Public postsecondary institutions graduated 2,073 students per year. After 5 years, 82% of 2013 graduates were employed in NC, earning an annual average wage of $33,373.

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%.

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.

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.

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
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Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Undergraduate Enrollments</th>
<th>Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollments</td>
<td>16,151</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catawba Valley Community College</td>
<td>6,125</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute</td>
<td>4,636</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Piedmont Community College</td>
<td>2,306</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lenoir-Rhyne University</td>
<td>1,830</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McDowell Technical Community College</td>
<td>1,418</td>
<td>44%</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: 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/](https://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.

- [ncdemography.org](http://ncdemography.org)
- demography@unc.edu
- @ncdemography

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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