

Catawba County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles



Hickory
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Suburban
Local Education Agencies: 3 (2023)
Charter Schools: 0 (2023)

2030 Proposed Catawba County Attainment Goal: 23,455 (Stretch Goal: 23,775)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 160,609
2022 Estimate: 163,462
Change: 2,853

Growth Rate

1.8% County vs. 2.5% State



\$63,934
Median Household Income (2022)
State: \$67,516



71% Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%



18.8% Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%



15.5% Opportunity Youth Rate (2021)
State: 12.1%



72% Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%



3.4% Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

Educational Attainment

Catawba County residents ages 25-44, 2022

Less than high school High school graduate (including GED) Some college, no credential Short-term credential Associate degree Bachelor's degree Graduate or professional degree



No Degree
20,097
52.8%



Have Degree or Credential
17,951
47.2%



Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

Top Opportunities for Growth

These three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Catawba County to improve future attainment outcomes.



Reading Performance

28% of Catawba County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Reading, below the suburban county average of 31%.



Chronic Absenteeism

34% of Catawba County students are chronically absent from school, above the suburban county average of 30%.



FAFSA Completion

59% of Catawba County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the suburban county average of 62%.

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 Catawba County has been meeting local needs:

https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Catawba

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

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)

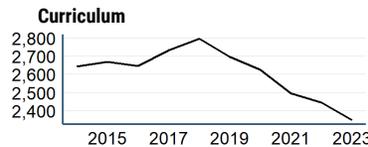


48% of adults (ages 25-44) in Catawba County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

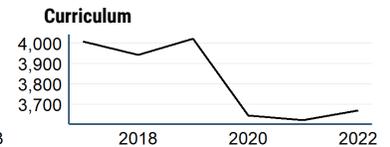
Catawba County is served by:

Western Piedmont Workforce Development Board
Western Piedmont Council of Governments

UNC System College Enrollment



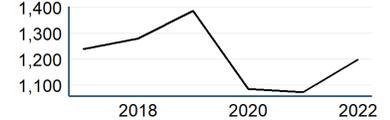
NC Community College Enrollment



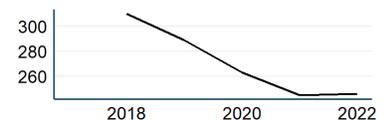
Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Hickory Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

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

First-time Curriculum Enrollments



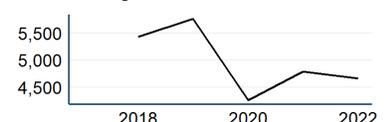
Basic Skills



Top 3 Employers in Catawba County

Employer	Employment Range
Catawba County Schools	1000+
Catawba Valley Medical Center	1000+
Target Stores Div	1000+

Continuing Education



Adult Learners

Catawba County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- 246 Basic Skills
- 4,661 Continuing Education
- 3,672 Curriculum

12% of Catawba County residents have student loan debt; 5% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2022

Success of Catawba County High School Graduates

- 83% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 82% in peer counties. 2022
- 63% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 60% in peer counties. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- 4,598 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
- 429 of all college-goers attended Lenoir-Rhyne University
- 410 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI

59% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 309 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%. 2023

73% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 73% in peer counties. 2022

58% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 57% in peer counties. 2022

55% of Catawba County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 48% in peer counties.

How students in Catawba County traditional schools are doing:

55% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program, compared to 53% statewide; 143 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. 2023

28% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 5,783 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023

37% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 4,842 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023

88% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 135 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023

34% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 5,169 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2022

Catawba County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 335:1 versus 327:1 in peer counties. 2022

1% of students drop out of high school (105 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022

1,720 certificate | 2,199 associate | 327 bachelor's

Postsecondary assets in Hickory Prosperity Zone sub-region

Public, 4-year or above

Public, 2-year

Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Catawba Valley Community College, McDowell Technical Community College, Western Piedmont Community College

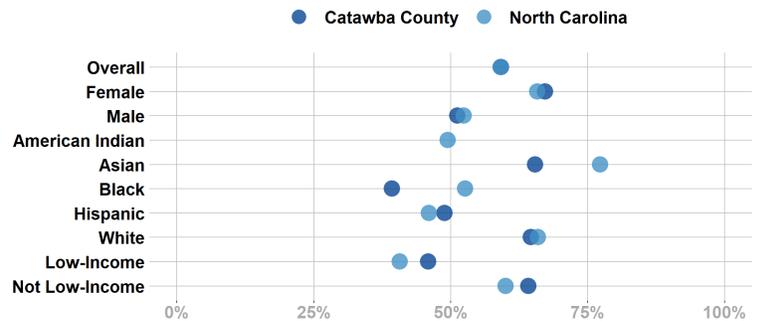
Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above

Lenoir-Rhyne University

Private not-for-profit, 2-year



Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Catawba County, 2022

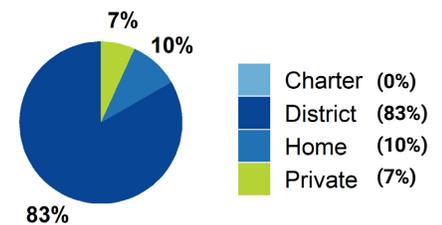


Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

School Choice

26,253 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Catawba County in the 2022-23 school year.

Note: This profile focuses on outcomes of students enrolled in district schools.



Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Catawba County completed 4,790 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and 896 concentrations in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Human Services; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.

673 high school students took at least one AP course (10%) versus 14% in peer counties (2022).

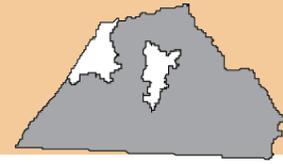
983 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (33%) versus 23% in peer counties (2022).

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

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

City/District School Profile

Catawba County Schools | 2022-2023
 This profile is a supplement to the County Profiles



□ district boundary

Total Schools: 28 **Total Students:** 15,351

ACADEMIC READINESS

How students in Catawba County Schools are currently doing:

- **28%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**, compared to **30%** statewide; 3,147 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; 3,328 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2023
- **87%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**, compared to **87%** statewide; 107 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2023
- **34%** of students are **chronically absent from school**, compared to **32%** statewide; 3,610 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2022



Catawba County Schools has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of **366:1** versus **327:1** in peer districts. 2022

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Catawba County Schools completed **2,403 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024)** and **690 concentrations** in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Human Services; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.



340 high school students took at least one **AP course (7%)** (2022).



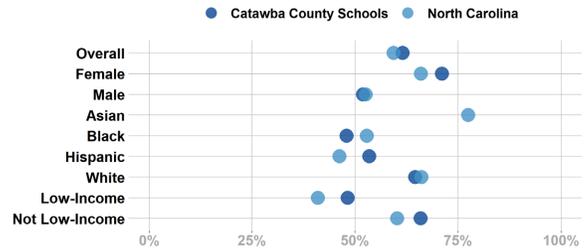
714 high school students participated in **Career & College Promise programs (35%)** (2022).

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

How students in Catawba County Schools are planning for and enrolling in college:

- **57%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2023, compared to **62%** statewide; 248 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2023
- **75%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution. 2022
- **60%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months. 2022

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates (within 12 months) for Select Groups in Catawba County Schools, 2022



Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

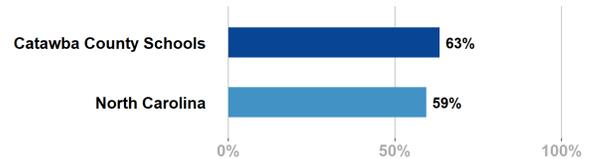
POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- Catawba Valley CC
- Caldwell CC and TI
- Western Piedmont CC

• **85%** of college students **persist to their second year** of attendance. 2022

Percentage of students enrolled in North Carolina postsecondary institution who graduate within 6 years of enrollment, 2022



** Observations <10 or no data available

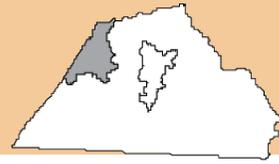
For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:

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City/District School Profile

Hickory City Schools | 2022-2023

This profile is a supplement to the County Profiles



□ district boundary

Total Schools: 10 Total Students: 3,698

ACADEMIC READINESS

How students in Hickory City Schools are currently doing:

- **27%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**, compared to **30%** statewide; 786 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2023
- **33%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**, compared to **35%** statewide; 912 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2023
- **88%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**, compared to **87%** statewide; 21 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2023
- **38%** of students are **chronically absent from school**, compared to **32%** statewide; 1,085 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2022



Hickory City Schools has a **student-to-school counselor ratio of 247:1** versus **327:1** in peer districts. 2022

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Hickory City Schools completed **563 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and 105 concentrations** in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Health Science; and Transportation, Distribution, & Logistics.



171 high school students took at least one **AP course (15%)** (2022).



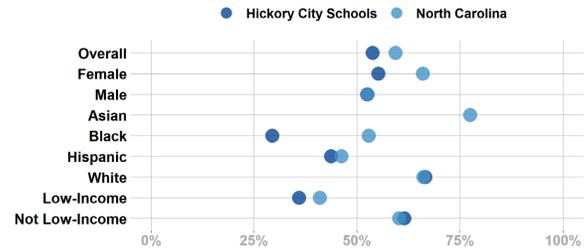
131 high school students participated in **Career & College Promise programs (24%)** (2022).

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

How students in Hickory City Schools are planning for and enrolling in college:

- **64%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2023, compared to **62%** statewide; 37 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2023
- **66%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution. 2022
- **52%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months. 2022

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates (within 12 months) for Select Groups in Hickory City Schools, 2022



Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

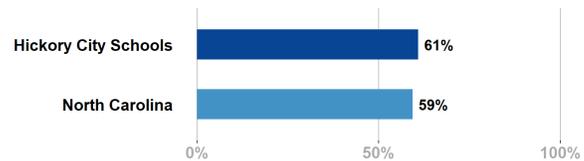
POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- Catawba Valley CC
- Caldwell CC and TI
- Western Piedmont CC

• **79%** of college students **persist to their second year** of attendance. 2022

Percentage of students enrolled in North Carolina postsecondary institution who graduate within 6 years of enrollment, 2022



** Observations <10 or no data available

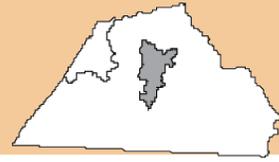
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City/District School Profile

Newton Conover City Schools | 2022-2023

This profile is a supplement to the County Profiles



district boundary

Total Schools: 7 Total Students: 2,725

ACADEMIC READINESS

How students in Newton Conover City Schools are currently doing:

- **26%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**, compared to **30%** statewide; 565 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2023
- **36%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**, compared to **35%** statewide; 602 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2023
- **92%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**, compared to **87%** statewide; 7 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2023
- **27%** of students are **chronically absent from school**, compared to **32%** statewide; 473 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2022



Newton Conover City Schools has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of **341:1** versus **327:1** in peer districts. 2022

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Newton Conover City Schools completed **1,824 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and 101 concentrations** in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Architecture and Construction; Arts, Audio/Video Technology, & Communications; and Human Services.



162 high school students took at least one **AP course (18%)** (2022).



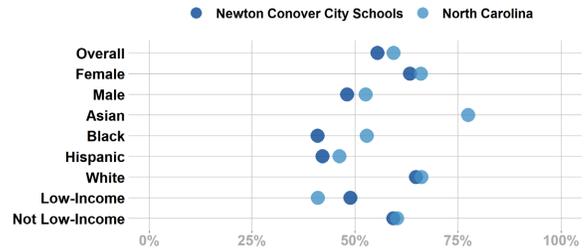
138 high school students participated in **Career & College Promise programs (34%)** (2022).

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

How students in Newton Conover City Schools are planning for and enrolling in college:

- **68%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2023, compared to **62%** statewide; 25 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2023
- **73%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution. 2022
- **54%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months. 2022

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates (within 12 months) for Select Groups in Newton Conover City Schools, 2022



Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

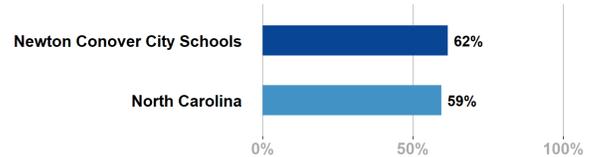
POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- Catawba Valley CC
- Caldwell CC and TI
- Western Piedmont CC

- **83%** of college students **persist to their second year** of attendance. 2022

Percentage of students enrolled in North Carolina postsecondary institution who graduate within 6 years of enrollment, 2022



** Observations <10 or no data available

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