Cleveland 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.

COUNTY OVERVIEW
Cleveland County is in the Charlotte Prosperity Zone sub-region. It’s one of 50 rural non-metro counties in NC. Overall, 8% of 25-44-year-olds in Cleveland County have earned a master’s degree or higher as their highest degree; 12% have a bachelor’s degree; 11% have an associate degree; 25% have some college, no degree; 30% have a high school diploma; and 15% 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.

Cleveland County has 27 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, 2 or 7% 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.

How students in Cleveland County traditional public schools are currently doing:
To meet state goals, Cleveland County needs:
- 118 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 59%).
- 1,905 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 45%).
- 2,625 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 48%).

To meet state goals, Cleveland County needs:
- 92 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 88%).
- 321 more seniors to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80% vs. 68%).
- 751 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 16%).

Students in Cleveland County completed 848 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2019. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; Health Science; and Manufacturing.

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 Cleveland County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.

Cleveland County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 338:1.

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.

8.3% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 8.9% of peer counties.

Opportunities for Growth
Compared to rural non-metro counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Cleveland County to improve future attainment outcomes.

FAFSA Completion
48% of Cleveland County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural non-metro county average of 55%.

NC Pre-K Enrollment
59% of Cleveland County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural non-metro county average of 64%.

CCP Enrollment
19% of Cleveland County high school students participated in the Career & College Promise program programs, below the rural non-metro county average of 22%.

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Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18</th>
<th>Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollments</td>
<td>107,538</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Piedmont Community College</td>
<td>29,552</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina at Charlotte</td>
<td>27,078</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rowan-Cabarrus Community College</td>
<td>7,939</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaston College</td>
<td>7,333</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mitchell Community College</td>
<td>4,188</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Piedmont Community College</td>
<td>3,935</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleveland Community College</td>
<td>3,883</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanly Community College</td>
<td>3,837</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wingate University</td>
<td>2,729</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardner-Webb University</td>
<td>2,454</td>
<td>71%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnson &amp; Wales University-Charlotte</td>
<td>2,080</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens University of Charlotte</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>91%</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

Local Cross-Sector Promising Practice: Cleveland County Dual Enrollment Program

Career and College Promise (CCP) Program provides opportunities for eligible high school students to take tuition-free, college courses for dual credit (credit in the high school and college at the same time). Taking CCP courses accelerates completion of college certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees that provide entry-level job skills and/or lead to college transfer credit.

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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@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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