Cleveland County
myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Cleveland County Attainment Goal: 13,358 (Stretch Goal: 13,576)
2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

Population Spotlight
2020 Census: 99,521
2022 Estimate: 100,670
Change: 1,149

Growth Rate
1.2% County vs. 2.5% State

$53,170 Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516

70% Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%

30.0% Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%

16.0% Opportunity Youth Rate (2022)
State: 10.9%

61% Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%

3.8% Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

Growth Rate
1.2% County vs. 2.5% State

Educational Attainment
Cleveland County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree
13,486
57.9%

Have Degree or Credential
9,814
42.1%

High school graduate (including GED)
32%

Some college, no credential
13%

Short-term credential
8%

Associate degree
12%

Bachelor’s degree
14%

Graduate or professional degree
8%

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

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

FAFSA Completion
58% of Cleveland County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - non-metro county average of 61%.

NC Pre-K Enrollment
66% of Cleveland County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural - non-metro county average of 68%.

High School Graduation
84% of Cleveland County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural - non-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 Cleveland County has been meeting local needs: https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Cleveland

In Charlotte Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:
80.4%
of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

4,230 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
12,495 graduates in 2020
74% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$45,387 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

41% of adults (ages 25-44) in Cleveland County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Cleveland County is served by:
Foothills Workforce Development Board
Foothills Regional Commission

Top areas of misalignment:
Business Management & Administration
Finance
Information Technology

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

Job Title
Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners
5%
Data Scientists
4%
Logisticians
4%

Top 3 Employers in Cleveland County

Employer
Employment Range
Attn: Tabitha Evans
1000+
Wal-Mart Associates Inc.
1000+
Atrium Health
1000+

Labor Market Alignment

Carolina Demographics
myFutureNC 2030
2 million by 2030
John M Belk Endowment
UNC Population Center
Cleveland County 2024 Attainment Profile

**Adult Learners**

Charlotte Sub-Prospertity Zone post-secondary enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- 2,910 Basic Skills
- 29,351 Continuing Education
- 8,357 Curriculum

11% of Cleveland County residents have student loan debt. 11% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2022

**Success of Cleveland County High School Graduates**

- 77% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% in peer counties. 2022
- 56% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2022

**Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023**

- 3,783 of all college-goers attended Cleveland CC
- 474 of all college-goers attended Gaston College
- 218 of all college-goers attended Isothermal CC

- 58% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 205 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%. 2023
- 66% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 68% in peer counties. 2022
- 51% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 52% in peer counties. 2022

52% of Cleveland County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 55% in peer counties.

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**Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022**

- 6,906 certificate
- 6,066 associate
- 9,125 bachelor's

**Postsecondary assets in Charlotte Prosperity Zone sub-region**

- 4-year private
- 2-year public
- 2-year private
- X 2-year or less

**Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Cleveland County, 2022**

- Male
- Female
- Overall
- American Indian
- Asian
- Black
- Hispanic
- White
- Low-Income
- Not Low-Income

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

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**How students in Cleveland County traditional schools are doing:**

- 66% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program, compared to 53% statewide; 61 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; 3,678 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; 3,206 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 84% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 135 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 27% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 27% statewide; 2,415 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2023

Cleveland County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 306:1 versus 325:1 in peer counties. 2023

3% of students drop out of high school (118 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2023

**School Choice**

- 16,793 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Cleveland 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 Cleveland County completed 2,305 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (394 (17%) were industry-valued credentials) and 860 concentrations in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Manufacturing; Human Services; and Health Science.

548 high school students took at least one AP test (12%) versus 8% in peer counties (2023).

542 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (53%) versus 51% in peer counties (2023).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:
dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/