Columbus County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Columbus County Attainment Goal: 5,798 (40%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 58,098
2020 Census: 50,623
Change: -7,475

Growth Rate
-12.9% vs. 9.5%
County
State

Median Household Income
$40,712
Child Poverty Rate
28.9%
Households
81%
with Broadband
2020
72%
Home Owners
(2020)
71%
Voter Registration Rate
(2021)
6.3%
Unemployment Rate
(2021)

Educational Continuum
Transition points along the education continuum.

Educational Attainment
Columbus County residents ages 25-44, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Degree</th>
<th>Have Degree or Credential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8,464</td>
<td>3,765</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Numbers may add to more than 100% due to rounding.

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

Postsecondary Completion
48% of Columbus County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary earn a degree or credential within 6 years, below the rural non-metro county average of 55%.

Opportunity Youth
22% of Columbus County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the rural non-metro county average of 15%.

Reading Performance
20% of Columbus County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Reading, below the rural non-metro county average of 24%.

Impact of Covid-19 on Education Pipeline
Covid-19 has affected critical transition points along the education continuum.

K-12 Enrollment (district schools)
-6.7% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20
Postsecondary Enrollment
-13.9% 2021 vs. 2020
Postsecondary Intentions
-9.1% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19
FAFSA Completion
11.9% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19

Data Disruptions
- College-and-Career-Ready in Reading
- College-and-Career-Ready in Math
- Chronic Absenteeism

How students in Columbus County traditional schools are currently doing:
To meet state goals, each year Columbus County needs:

- Columbus County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2022
- 20% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, 1,660 more needed to meet state goal of 72%. 2022
- 23% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, 1,985 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2022
- 83% of 9th graders graduate within four years, 78 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2021
- 25% of students are chronically absent from school, 954 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2021

Columbus County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 353:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

- 59% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2022; 112 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of 80%. 2022
- https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/
- 71% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021
- 50% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021

- 67% of Columbus County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 59% in peer counties.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Columbus County, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Columbus County</th>
<th>North Carolina</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter</td>
<td>(11%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District</td>
<td>(80%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home</td>
<td>(7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private</td>
<td>(2%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.
Columbus County 2022 Attainment Profile

Success of Columbus County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 35% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 7% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 57% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- <5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 95% of college-goers attended an in-state college

- 77% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
- 48% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

Columbus County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 244 Basic Skills
- 1,441 Continuing Education
- 1,368 Curriculum

10% of Columbus County residents have student loan debt; 7% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

80.4% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top areas of misalignment:
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (below bachelor's)
- Business Management & Administration (bachelor's)
- Information Technology (bachelor's)

1,855 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

- 5,664 graduates in 2020
- 56% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- $38,415 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

- 8,319 in Basic Services
- 4,329 in Career Services
- 501 in Education Services

22.0% of young adults ages 16-24 in Columbus County were not working and not in school versus 15.2% in peer counties. 2019

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 Columbus County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Columbus

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