### Educational Attainment

**Gaston County residents ages 25-44, 2021**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Degree</th>
<th>Have Degree or Credential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>48.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30,247</td>
<td>28,021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Data Disruptions

- **College-and-Career-Ready in Reading:** 66% of Gaston County seniors are college-and-career-ready in reading, below the suburban county average of 57%.
- **College-and-Career-Ready in Math:** 87% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, 86% more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2022
- **Graduate within four years:** 87% of 9th graders graduate within four years; 207 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2021
- **Chronic Absenteeism:** 41% of Gaston County students are chronically absent from school, above the suburban county average of 26%.
- **Postsecondary Intentions:** 52% of Gaston County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the suburban county average of 57%.
- **Chronic Absenteeism:** 87% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program; 110 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. 2022
- **FAFSA Completion:** 56% of Gaston County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 49% in peer counties.
- **Graduation, below the suburban county average of 55%:** 46% of Gaston County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the suburban county average of 55%.

#### Top Opportunities for Growth

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

#### Top Opportunities for Growth

- **Impact of Covid-19 on Education Pipeline**
  - Covid-19 has affected critical transition points along the education continuum.
  - **K-12 Enrollment (district schools):** -3.7% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20
  - **Postsecondary Enrollment:** -9.4% 2020-21 vs. 2019-20

#### How students in Gaston County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Gaston County needs:

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#### Career and College Preparation

- **Career and College Promise programs:** 618 graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs (29%) versus 33% in peer counties (2021).

### Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Gaston County, 2021

Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.

#### Gaston County

- **Gaston County:** 1,147 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Health Science; and Arts, Audio/Video Technology, & Communications.
Success of Gaston County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 41% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 16% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 42% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- 5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 91% of college-goers attended an in-state college

- 78% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 77% in peer counties. 2021
- 56% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 60% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

Gaston County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 344 Basic Skills
- 2,613 Continuing Education
- 4,117 Curriculum

- 14% of Gaston County residents have student loan debt; 10% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

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

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