Lee County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Lee County Attainment Goal: 10,102 (58%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 57,866
2020 Census: 63,285
Change: 5,419

Growth Rate
9.4% vs. 9.5% State

2020 Census: 63,285
Change: 5,419

$57,025 Median Household Income (2020)
24.0% Child Poverty Rate (2020)
78% Households with Broadband (2020)
65% Home Owners (2020)
77% Voter Registration Rate (2021)
5.4% Unemployment Rate (2021)

Education Spotlight
2010 Census: 57,866
2020 Census: 63,285
Change: 5,419

9.4% Growth Rate
$57,025 Median Household Income (2020)
24.0% Child Poverty Rate (2020)
78% Households with Broadband (2020)
65% Home Owners (2020)
77% Voter Registration Rate (2021)
5.4% Unemployment Rate (2021)

Top Opportunities for Growth
First-Year Persistence
67% of Lee County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary persist to their second year, below the rural non-metro county average of 73%.

Chronic Absenteeism
34% of Lee County students are chronically absent from school, above the rural non-metro county average of 29%.

FAFSA Completion
51% of Lee County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural non-metro county average of 55%.

Impact of Covid-19 on Education Pipeline
K-12 Enrollment (district schools)
-7.3% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20

Postsecondary Enrollment
-9.5% 2021 vs. 2020

FAFSA Completion
-10.7% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19

Postsecondary Intentions
-24.0% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19

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

College and Career Preparation
211 high school students took at least one AP course (7%) versus 7% in peer counties (2021).

Students in Lee County completed 338 Career and Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics; Architecture and Construction; and Health Science.

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

- 25 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 69%). 2022
- 2,110 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 23%). 2022
- 2,476 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 27%). 2022
- 64 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 87%). 2021
- 2,071 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 34%). 2021

Lee County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 352:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

51% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2022. (176 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of 80%).
https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/

54% 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

56% of Lee County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 59% in peer counties.
Success of Lee County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

• 32% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
• 11% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
• 56% 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

• 67% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
• 54% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

Lee County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

271 Basic Skills
774 Continuing Education
1,755 Curriculum

13% of Lee County residents have student loan debt; 10% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

78.8% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top areas of misalignment:
Health Science (below bachelor’s)
Business Management & Administration (bachelor’s)
Information Technology (bachelor’s)

Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment

Degree Credentials Awarded, 2021
8,066 certificate | 5,938 associate | 16,203 bachelor’s

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

5,511 in Basic Services
3,019 in Career Services
273 in Education Services

9.8% of young adults ages 16-24 in Lee 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 Lee County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Lee

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