Mecklenburg County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Mecklenburg County Attainment Goal: 299,257 (74%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 919,628
2020 Census: 1,115,482
Change: 195,854

Growth Rate
21.3% vs. 9.5%

Median Household Income (2020)
$72,340

Child Poverty Rate (2020)
16.2%

Households with Broadband (2020)
92%

Home Owners (2020)
56%

Voter Registration Rate (2021)
83%

Unemployment Rate (2021)
4.9%

Charlotte
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Peer County Type: Urban
Local Education Agencies: 1
Charter Schools: 38

Educational Attainment
Mecklenburg County residents ages 25-44, 2020

No Degree
34.1%
118,707

Have Degree or Credential
65.9%
229,684

Less than high school
9%

High school graduate (including GED)
14%

Some college, no credential
11%

Short-term credential
8%

Associate degree
7%

Bachelor’s degree
34%

Graduate or professional degree
17%

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

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

NC Pre-K Enrollment
30% of Mecklenburg County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the urban county average of 40%.

FAFSA Completion
58% of Mecklenburg County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the urban county average of 62%.

Transition to Postsecondary
57% of Mecklenburg County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the urban county average of 62%.

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

K-12 Enrollment (district schools)
-4.4% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20

Postsecondary Enrollment
-7.2% 2021 vs. 2020

FAFSA Completion
-4.0% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19

Postsecondary Intentions
-3.0% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19

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

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

• 2,696 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 30%). 2022
• 29,050 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 28%). 2022
• 33,338 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 35%). 2022
• 1,296 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 84%). 2021
• 20,817 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 26%). 2021

Mecklenburg County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 244:1 versus 294:1 in peer counties. 2021

41% of Mecklenburg County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 40% in peer counties.

58% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2022. (2,081 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of 80%).
https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/

79% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 81% in peer counties. 2021

57% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 62% in peer counties. 2021

41% of Mecklenburg County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 40% in peer counties.

School Choice
193,390 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Mecklenburg County in the 2021-22 school year.

Note: This profile focuses on outcomes of students enrolled in district schools.

Career and College Preparation
10,663 high school students took at least one AP course (25%) versus 25% in peer counties (2021).

Students in Mecklenburg County completed 4,164 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Hospitality & Tourism; Marketing; and Health Science.

1,626 graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs (17%) versus 17% in peer counties (2021).

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Mecklenburg County, 2021

Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.
Success of Mecklenburg County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 51% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 14% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 34% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- <5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 82% of college-goers attended an in-state college

- 79% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 81% in peer counties. 2021
- 59% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 62% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

Mecklenburg County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

- 2,788 Basic Skills
- 5,067 Continuing Education
- 15,523 Curriculum

- 20% of Mecklenburg County residents have student loan debt; 10% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

82.2% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top areas of misalignment:
- Business Management & Administration (bachelor’s)
- Information Technology (bachelor’s)
- Finance (bachelor’s)

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)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

- 23,005 in Basic Services
- 9,901 in Career Services
- 841 in Education Services

- 10.0% of young adults ages 16-24 in Mecklenburg County were not working and not in school versus 9.2% 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 Mecklenburg County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Mecklenburg

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