**INTRODUCTION**
From birth to career, there are many opportunities to develop strategies and interventions to increase attainment and improve workforce alignment. Below are some key areas and indicators that highlight where interventions may be possible to improve overall educational attainment outcomes.

**COUNTY OVERVIEW**
Orange County is in the Raleigh-Durham Prosperity Zone sub-region. It’s one of 16 suburban counties in NC. Overall, 32% of 25-44-year-olds in Orange County have earned a master’s degree or higher as their highest degree; 28% have a bachelor’s degree; 6% have an associate degree; 14% have some college, no degree; 13% have a high school diploma; and 7% have less than a high school diploma.

**Building the Foundation: Pre-K to 8**
High-quality early learning and strong academic progress in early years helps prepare children for future success.

Orange County has 30 public schools with performance grades. Of these schools, none were classified as low performing in 2019.

**Ready for College & Career**
High school completion is a crucial step on the pathway to postsecondary success or the beginning of a career. Activities that prepare students to navigate the transition to postsecondary include gaining experience in college-level coursework and applying for financial assistance.

To meet state goals, Orange County needs:
- **76 more 9th graders** to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 90%).
- **268 more seniors** to complete the FAFSA (goal: 80% vs. 61%).
- **67 more students** to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 11%).

Students in Orange County completed 457 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2019. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; Health Science; and Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics.

**Postsecondary Access and Success**
These metrics capture student progression and educational attainment from high school graduation to postsecondary completion. They indicate relative strengths and weaknesses of Orange County at each stage of the postsecondary pipeline.

Orange County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 292:1.

Among Orange County high school graduates:
- **72% of graduates** enroll in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 62% of peer counties.
- **88% of students** who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% of peer counties.
- **71% of students** who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 54% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region, 2018-19:
- 2,661 individuals served in an Apprenticeship program.
- 12,867 Basic Skills enrollments at NC community colleges.
- 67,583 Continuing Education enrollments at NC community colleges.

**Labor Market Outcomes**
Lack of technical skills and lack of education are among the primary reasons why NC employers struggle to fill vacancies. These metrics capture labor market outcomes among recent graduates, the alignment between postsecondary degree production and labor market demand, and future job demands.

3.1% of teens ages 16-19 are not working and not in school versus 6.8% of peer counties.

80% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs. The top gaps are: Information Technology (bachelor’s); Marketing (bachelor’s); and Finance (bachelor’s).

There are 1,166,888 job openings projected between 2017-2026. The top 3 in demand jobs with median wages of $50,000 or more are: 1) Registered Nurses; 2) Software Developers, Applications; 3) General and Operations Managers.

**Opportunities for Growth**
Compared to suburban counties and the state, these three areas represent the biggest opportunities for Orange County to improve future attainment outcomes.

5% of Orange County high school students participated in the Career & College Promise program programs, below the suburban county average of 12%.

61% of Orange County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the state average of 64%.

55% of Orange County 3-8 graders earn college-and-career-ready scores in Math, below the state goal of 86%.

**How students in Orange County traditional public schools are currently doing:**
To meet state goals, Orange County needs:
- **Orange County has met the goal for eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 87%).**
- **1,358 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 58%).
- **2,878 more 3-8 graders** earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 55%).

To meet state goals, Orange County needs:
- **2,166 students** took at least one AP course (35%) versus 17% of peer counties.
- **324 students** participated in Career & College Promise programs (5%) versus 12% of peer counties.

In your Prosperity Zone sub-region, 2018-19:
- 2,878 more 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in Math (goal: 86% vs. 58%).
- 2,166 students took at least one AP course (35%) versus 17% of peer counties.
- 324 students participated in Career & College Promise programs (5%) versus 12% of peer counties.
Largest postsecondary institutions in your Prosperity Zone sub-region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution Name</th>
<th>Undergraduate Enrollments 2017-18</th>
<th>Graduate or Transfer in 8 Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Enrollments</td>
<td>139,487</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wake Technical Community College</td>
<td>29,480</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina State University at Raleigh</td>
<td>27,424</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill</td>
<td>19,773</td>
<td>96%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Durham Technical Community College</td>
<td>8,049</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duke University</td>
<td>7,504</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina Central University</td>
<td>7,165</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strayer University-North Carolina</td>
<td>6,998</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Carolina Community College</td>
<td>6,811</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Johnston Community College</td>
<td>5,343</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campbell University</td>
<td>5,183</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vance-Granville Community College</td>
<td>4,014</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meredith College</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
Enrollments reflect degree- or credential-seeking undergraduate enrollments. The graduate or transfer rate is drawn from IPEDS and represents the share of students who either graduate with a degree or credential from the institution or transfer to another institution within 8 years. The 8-year outcome is the only measure that includes information on transfer out. Detailed data guidance is provided at http://go.unc.edu/countydata

Local Cross-Sector Promising Practice: Durham Tech Promise Fund
With the Durham Tech Promise, recent high school graduates in Durham and Orange counties can receive up to $1,000 each year for two years of tuition and fees. We identified this example of an emerging cross-sector promising practice in partnership with local leaders. If you have additional examples you’d like to share with myFutureNC, please respond to this short survey.

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

ABOUT CAROLINA DEMOGRAPHY
Located within the Carolina Population Center at UNC-Chapel Hill, we use data and other available research to help you put a face or a story on the population-level changes facing your community. Our analysts provide a full array of demographic data and research services to inform decision making, evaluation, and policy across North Carolina, where we serve organizations and people in all 100 counties.

ncdemography.org
demography@unc.edu
@ncdemography

ABOUT MYFUTURENC
MyFutureNC is a statewide nonprofit organization focused on educational attainment and is the result of cross-sector collaboration between North Carolina leaders in education, business, and government. Our mission is to prepare North Carolina for the future by empowering individuals, strengthening communities, and ensuring our economic viability in a global economy.

myfuturenc.org
facebook.com/myfuturenc
@myFutureNC