

# Pender County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles



Wilmington  
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region  
**Peer County Type:** Rural - Metro  
**Local Education Agencies:** 1 (2023)  
**Charter Schools:** 0 (2023)

2030 Proposed Pender County Attainment Goal: 12,441 (Stretch Goal: 12,557)

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

## Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 60,208  
2022 Estimate: 65,737  
Change: 5,529

## Growth Rate

**9.2%** County vs. **2.5%** State



**\$73,663**  
Median Household Income (2022)  
State: \$67,516



**82%**  
Home Owners (2022)  
State: 67%



**15.8%**  
Child Poverty Rate (2022)  
State: 17.2%



**11.6%**  
Opportunity Youth Rate (2021)  
State: 12.1%



**69%**  
Households with Broadband (2022)  
State: 77%



**3.5%**  
Unemployment Rate (2022)  
State: 3.7%

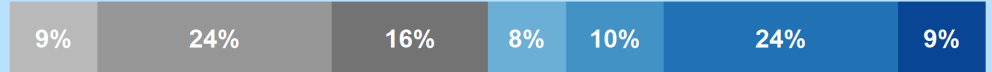
## Educational Attainment

Pender County residents ages 25-44, 2022

Less than high school High school graduate (including GED) Some college, no credential Short-term credential Associate degree Bachelor's degree Graduate or professional degree

**No Degree**  
**7,207**  
48.8%

**Have Degree or Credential**  
**7,567**  
51.2%



Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding

## Top Opportunities for Growth

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



### School Counselors

Pender County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 460:1, above the rural - metro county average of 362:1.



### Chronic Absenteeism

36% of Pender County students are chronically absent from school, above the rural - metro county average of 34%.



### FAFSA Completion

57% of Pender County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - metro county average of 58%.

## 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 Pender County has been meeting local needs:

[https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt\\_search=Pender](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Pender)

## LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

### In Wilmington Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

**83.8%**

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

#### Top areas of misalignment:

**Health Science** below bachelor's  
**Transportation, Distribution & Logistics** below bachelor's  
**Business Management & Administration** bachelor's



**273** Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

### UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

**5,768** graduates in 2020

**66%** of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021

**\$44,807** annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)



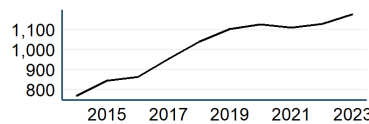
**56%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Pender County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

### Pender County is served by:

Cape Fear Workforce Development Board  
Cape Fear Council of Governments

### UNC System College Enrollment

#### Curriculum



### Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Wilmington Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

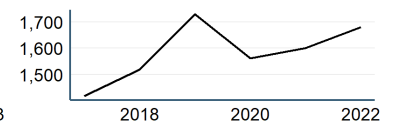
Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	4%
Data Scientists	4%
Web Developers	4%

### Top 3 Employers in Pender County

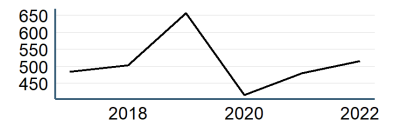
Employer	Employment Range
Pender County Schools	1000+
Pender County N C	250-499
Medical Edge Recruitment Llc	250-499

### NC Community College Enrollment

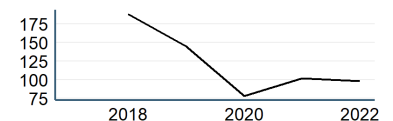
#### Curriculum



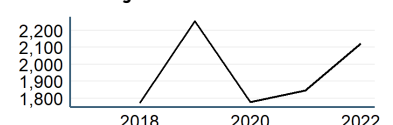
#### First-time Curriculum Enrollments



#### Basic Skills



#### Continuing Education



## Adult Learners

**Pender County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022**

**98** Basic Skills  
**2,122** Continuing Education  
**1,680** Curriculum

**14%** of Pender County residents have **student loan debt**; **6%** of debt holders had **student loans in default**. 2022

## Success of Pender County High School Graduates

- **77%** of students who enroll **persist to their second year** versus **79%** in peer counties. 2022
- **56%** of students who enroll **earn a degree or certificate** within 6 years versus **56%** in peer counties. 2022

## Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- **2,405** of all college-goers attended **Cape Fear CC**
- **80** of all college-goers attended **Coastal Carolina CC**
- **68** of all college-goers attended **James Sprunt CC**

• **57%** of seniors **completed the FAFSA** in 2023, compared to **62%** statewide; 160 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of **80%**. 2023

• **75%** of graduates reported **intentions to enroll** in a postsecondary institution versus **68%** in peer counties. 2022

• **50%** of graduates **enrolled in a postsecondary institution** within 12 months versus **51%** in peer counties. 2022

**39%** of Pender County students have **parents with no college degree** (either 2- or 4-year) versus **57%** in peer counties.

## How students in Pender County traditional schools are doing:

- Pender County has met the goal for **Pre-K enrollment**. (Goal: **75%**). 2023
- **33%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **reading**, compared to **30%** statewide; 2,578 more needed to meet state goal of **73%**. 2023
- **39%** of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in **math**, compared to **35%** statewide; 2,298 more needed to meet state goal of **86%**. 2023
- **94%** of 9th graders **graduate within four years**, compared to **87%** statewide; 11 more needed to meet state goal of **95%**. 2023
- **36%** of students are **chronically absent from school**, compared to **32%** statewide; 2,616 less needed to meet state goal of **11%**. 2022

Pender County has a **student-to-school counselor ratio** of **460:1** versus **362:1** in peer counties. 2022

**1%** of students **drop out of high school** (48 total students), compared to **2%** statewide. 2022

## Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022

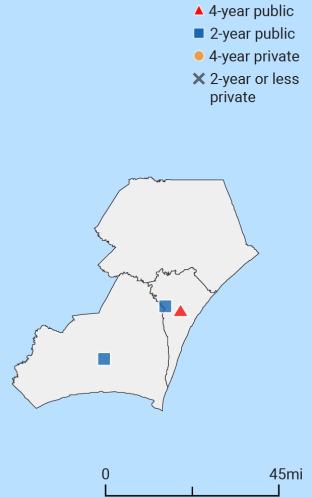
**911** certificate | **1,617** associate | **3,674** bachelor's

## Postsecondary assets in Wilmington Prosperity Zone sub-region

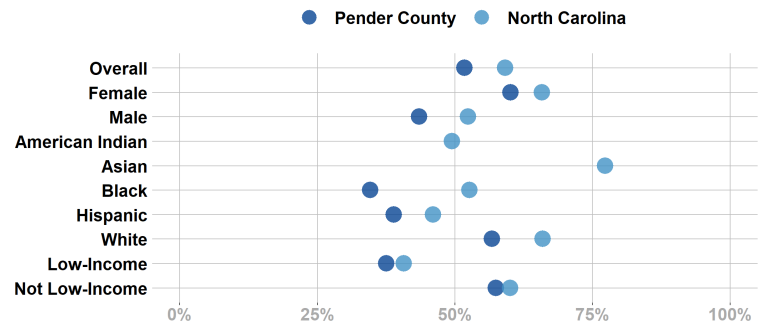
**Public, 4-year or above**  
University of North Carolina Wilmington

**Public, 2-year**  
Brunswick Community College, Cape Fear Community College

**Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above**  
**Private not-for-profit, 2-year**



## Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Pender County, 2022

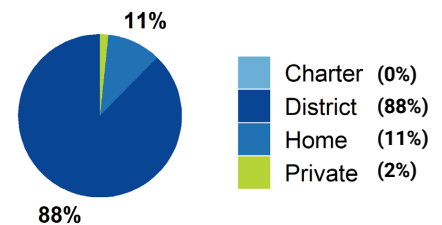


Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

## School Choice

12,154 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Pender County in the 2022-23 school year.

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



## Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Pender County completed **3,675 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials** (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and **409 concentrations** in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; Health Science; and Architecture and Construction.

**293** high school students took at least one **AP course** (**9%**) versus **7%** in peer counties (2022).

**507** high school students participated in **Career & College Promise programs** (**38%**) versus **31%** in peer counties (2022).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:

[dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/)