

# Pender County


myFutureNC 2025 Attainment Profiles




Wilmington  
Prosperity Zone Sub-Region  
Peer County Type: Rural - Metro

## Educational Attainment

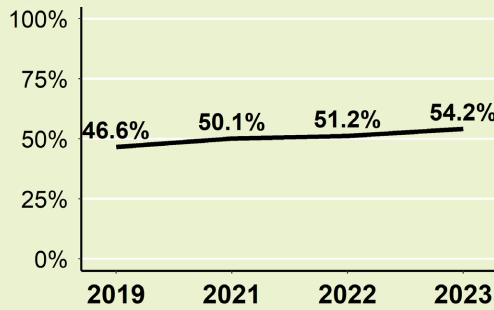
Pender County residents ages 25-44, 2023

 **Have Degree or Credential**  
**8,424**  
54.2%

 **No Degree**  
**7,118**  
45.8%

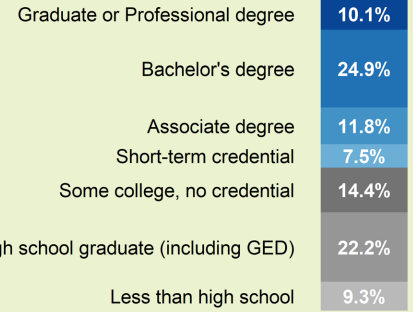
 **Residents Ages 25-44**  
**15,542**

## Educational Attainment Trend



Note: 2020 data not shown due to inconsistency

## Educational Level Breakdown, 2023



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

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

2030 State Attainment Goal: 2 million

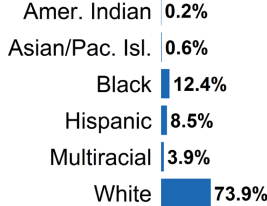
## Population Spotlight

2020 Census: 60,199  
2023 Estimate: 68,521  
Change: 8,322

## Growth Rate

**13.8%** vs. **3.8%**  
County State

## Race/Ethnicity



**\$72,161**  
Median Household Income (2023)  
State: \$70,838



**81.8%**  
Home Owners (2023)  
State: 66.3%



**69.6%**  
Households with Broadband (2023)  
State: 77.1%



**13.6%**  
Child Poverty Rate (2023)  
State: 17.6%



**14.9%**  
Single Parent Households (2023)  
State: 17.0%



**4.1%**  
Foreign Born (2023)  
State: 9.2%

## Top Opportunities for Growth



### Family Sustaining Wage

55% of Pender County adults 25-44 earn a family sustaining wage, below the state average of 58%.

## In Wilmington Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

**81.9%**

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

## Top Misalignments

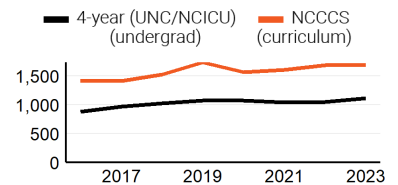
### Job Openings vs. Degrees/Credentials

- Health Science Jobs > Creds
- Education & Training Jobs < Creds
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics Jobs > Creds

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

Job Title	Annual Growth
Nurse Practitioners	4.34%
Data Scientists	3.89%
Logisticians	3.52%

## Postsecondary Enrollment for Pender County Residents





**17** Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2023

## UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

**5,768** graduates in 2020  
**65.9%** 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), 2021

 **54.8%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Pender County earned a **family sustaining wage**. Peer: 46.7% | State: 57.6%, 2023

 **11.7%** of youth (ages 16-24) in Pender County were **Opportunity Youth**. Peer: 14.8% | State: 10.3%, 2023

 **82.1%** of adults (ages 25-44) in Pender County **participated in the labor force**. Peer: 80.7% | State: 84.2%, 2023

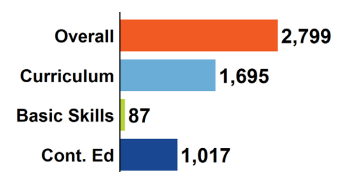
## Top 3 Employers in Pender County

Employer	Employment Range
Pender County Board of Education	500-999
Pender County NC	500-999
Wal-Mart Associates Inc	250-499

## Top 3 industries in Pender County

Industry	Jobs   Percent
Retail Trade	2,147   14.4%
Accommodation and Food Services	2,114   14.2%
Health Care and Social Assistance	1,763   11.8%

## Pender County residents enrolled in NCCCS, Fall 2023



## Pender County is served by:

- Cape Fear Workforce Development Board
- Cape Fear Council of Governments

## Top Opportunities for Growth



## Adult Learners

14% of Pender County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the state average of 12%.

## Degree Credentials Awarded in PZ Sub-Region, 2023

1,138 certificate | 1,723 associate | 3,764 bachelor's

## Adult Learners

Pender County Residents Aged 25+ enrolled in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2023

51 Basic Skills

866 Continuing Education

328 Curriculum

14.4% of residents (aged 25-44) have some college but no degree. Peer: 16.0% | State: 11.7%, 2023



14.5% of Pender County residents have student loan debt. 0.3% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2024

## Success of Pender County High School Graduates

83.8% of students who enroll persist to their second year.

Peer: 80.1% | State: 83.8%, 2023

92.9% UNC

75.2% NCCCS

84.2% NCICU

57.8% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years. Peer: 57.5% | State: 60.0%, 2023

31.4% UNC

16.4% NCCCS

&lt;5% NCICU

## Top destinations of all college-goers, 2023

- 2,417 of all college-goers attended Cape Fear CC
- 336 of all college-goers attended UNC Wilmington
- 157 of all college-goers attended East Carolina University

## Top Opportunities for Growth

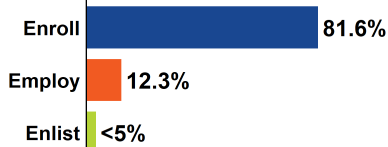


## FAFSA Completion

51% of Pender County high school seniors complete the FAFSA, below the rural - metro county average of 52%.

50.6% of 2024 high school class completed the FAFSA as of Sept. 27, 2024. 221 more need to complete in 2024 to meet state goal of 80%. Peer: 52.0% | State: 55.0%

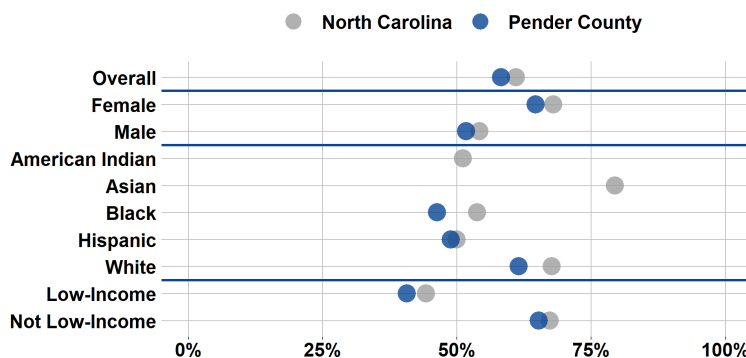
## Post High School Graduation Intentions

35.8% of students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) 2023  
Peer: 55.2% | State: 45.1%

92.7% of 9th graders graduated within four years. 19 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. Peer: 85.7% | State: 87.3% 2024

56.5% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months. Peer: 52.0% | State: 59.3% 2023

## Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Pender County, 2023



Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, &lt;5% or &gt;95% are not displayed.

## Top Opportunities for Growth



## School Counselors

Pender County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 447:1, above the rural - metro county average of 358:1.

Pender County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). Peer: 61.7% | State: 57.2% 2024

Note: Enrollment numbers only include students served by the NC Pre-K Program and may not represent all Pre-K offerings available.

## Pender County Traditional Public Schools students:

34.0% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in reading in 2024. 1,962 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. Peer: 25.3% | State: 29.8%

42.0% of 3-8 graders earned college-and-career-ready scores in math in 2024. 2,215 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. Peer: 32.3% | State: 36.5%

27.9% of students were chronically absent from school in 2024. 1,921 fewer needed to meet state goal of 11%. Peer: 27.4% | State: 25.7%



Pender County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 447:1 compared to 358:1 in peer counties. 2024

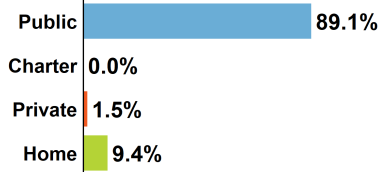


0.2% of students drop out of high school (8 total students), compared to 2.1% statewide. 2023

## School &amp; Student Overview (2024 school year)

Traditional Public School District(s): 1  
 Traditional Public School(s): 19  
 Charter School(s): 0  
 Private School(s): 3  
 Home School(s): 673

12,105 total K-12 students enrolled in schools.



## Pathways to College and Career

Students in traditional public schools completed 5,218 Career &amp; Technical Education (CTE) credentials and 584 concentrations. 844 (16.2%) of credentials were industry-valued in 2023. The top three CTE concentrations: Health Science; Agricultural, Food, &amp; Natural Resources; and Hospitality &amp; Tourism.



348 (10.7%) high school students took at least one AP, IB, or CIE exam. State: 16.8% (2023).



401 (50.6%) high school graduates participated in Career &amp; College Promise programs. State: 36.0% (2024).

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/)