Polk County

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Polk County Attainment Goal: 3,478 (Stretch Goal: 3,506)

Population Spotlight
2020 Census: 19,330
2022 Estimate: 19,986
Change: 656

Growth Rate
3.4% vs. 2.5%

County vs. State

$61,585 Median Household Income (2022)
State: $67,516

77% Home Owners (2022)
State: 67%

13.5% Child Poverty Rate (2022)
State: 17.2%

14.0% Opportunity Youth Rate (2021)
State: 12.1%

61% Households with Broadband (2022)
State: 77%

3.8% Unemployment Rate (2022)
State: 3.7%

Educational Attainment
Polk County residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree 1,708 (48.1%)
Have Degree or Credential 1,841 (51.9%)

High School Graduation
82% of Polk County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural - non-metro county average of 85%.

First-Year Persistence
78% of Polk County high school graduates who enroll in postsecondary persist to their second year, below the state average of 83%.

Opportunity Youth
14% of Polk County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the state average of 12%.

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 Polk County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Polk

In Asheville Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:
72.1% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

636 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
3,023 graduates in 2020
69% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$35,824 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

43% of adults (ages 25-44) in Polk County earned a family sustaining wage, 2022

Polk County is served by:
Foothills Workforce Development Board
Foothills Regional Commission

Top 3 Five-Star Jobs in Asheville Prosperity Zone Sub-Region

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Title</th>
<th>Annual Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurse Practitioners</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logisticians</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physician Assistants</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top 3 Employers in Polk County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employer</th>
<th>Employment Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Polk County Public Schools</td>
<td>250-499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acts Inc</td>
<td>250-499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>County Of Polk</td>
<td>250-499</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

Basic Skills

Continuing Education
9% of Polk County residents have student loan debt. 9% of debt holders had student loans in default.

Success of Polk County High School Graduates
• 78% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 78% in peer counties. 2022
• 64% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023
• 450 of all college-goers attended Isothermal CC
• 168 of all college-goers attended Blue Ridge CC
• 34 of all college-goers attended Asheville-Buncombe TCC

How students in Polk County traditional schools are doing:
• Polk County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment. (Goal: 75%). 2023
• 47% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 375 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
• 45% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 396 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
• 82% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 25 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2022
• 19% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 170 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2022
• Polk County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 223:1 versus 325:1 in peer counties. 2022
• 3% of students drop out of high school (18 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

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