Rutherford County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Rutherford County Attainment Goal: 9,547 (55%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 67,810
2020 Census: 64,444
Change: -3,366

Educational Attainment
Rutherford County residents ages 25-44, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No Degree</th>
<th>61.8%</th>
<th>9,047</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have Degree or Credential</td>
<td>38.2%</td>
<td>5,598</td>
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Growth Rate
-5.0% vs. 9.5%

$44,004 Median Household Income (2020)
23.8% Child Poverty Rate (2020)
82% Households with Broadband (2020)
72% Home Owners (2020)
72% Voter Registration Rate (2021)
6.5% Unemployment Rate (2021)

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

NC Pre-K Enrollment
60% of Rutherford County eligible 4-year-olds are enrolled in NC Pre-K, below the rural non-metro county average of 68%.

School Counselors
Rutherford County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 349:1, above the rural non-metro county average of 318:1.

Adult Learners
18% of Rutherford County adults 25-44 have some college, no degree, above the rural non-metro county average of 17%.

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

K-12 Enrollment (district schools)
-3.1% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20

Postsecondary Enrollment
1.1% 2021 vs. 2020

FAFSA Completion
-9.5% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19

Postsecondary Intentions
-6.0% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19

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

How students in Rutherford County traditional schools are currently doing:
To meet state goals, each year Rutherford County needs:
• 67 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 60%), 2022
• 1,550 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 27%), 2022
• 1,910 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 29%), 2022
• 40 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 88%). 2021
• 1,206 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 27%). 2021

Rutherford County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 349:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

School Choice
10,798 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Rutherford County in the 2021-22 school year.

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

Career and College Preparation
165 high school students took at least one AP course (7%) versus 7% in peer counties (2021).
268 graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs (50%) versus 49% in peer counties (2021).

Students in Rutherford County completed 367 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Architecture and Construction; and Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Rutherford County, 2021

Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.

ACADEMIC READINESS

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

54% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2022. (141 more need to complete in 2022 to meet state goal of 80%).
https://www.myfuturenc.org/ourwork/first-in-fafsa/

77% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 69% in peer counties. 2021

54% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 50% in peer counties. 2021

55% of Rutherford County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 59% in peer counties.
Rutherford County 2022 Attainment Profile

Success of Rutherford County High School Graduates
Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020
- 28% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 13% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 59% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- <5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 93% of college-goers attended an in-state college

- 75% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
- 59% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners
Rutherford County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021
- 157 Basic Skills
- 1,072 Continuing Education
- 1,619 Curriculum

11% of Rutherford County residents have student loan debt; 6% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

71.6% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top areas of misalignment:
- Health Science (all levels)
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics (below bachelor’s)
- Finance (bachelor’s)

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)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:
- 6,325 in Basic Services
- 2,960 in Career Services
- 200 in Education Services

13.7% of young adults ages 16-24 in Rutherford County were not working and not in school versus 15.2% 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 Rutherford County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Rutherford

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