Swain County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Swain County Attainment Goal: 1,475 (45%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 13,981
2020 Census: 14,117
Change: 136

Growth Rate
1.0% vs. 9.5% State

$47,559 Median Household Income (2020)
26.1% Child Poverty Rate (2020)
68% Households with Broadband (2020)
75% Home Owners (2020)
75% Voter Registration Rate (2021)
4.5% Unemployment Rate (2021)

Prosperity Zone Sub-Region
Local Education Agencies: 1
Charter Schools: 1

Waynesville-Franklin
Peer County Type: Rural Non-Metro

Educational Attainment
Swain County residents ages 25-44, 2020

No Degree 63.5% 2,043
Have Degree or Credential 36.5% 1,176

Note: Numbers may add to more than 100% due to rounding

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

High School Graduation
77% of Swain County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural non-metro county average of 86%.

Transition to Postsecondary
44% of Swain County seniors enroll in postsecondary within 12 months of graduation, below the rural non-metro county average of 50%.

Opportunity Youth
20% of Swain County youth ages 16-24 are not working and not in school, above the rural non-metro county average of 15%.

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

K-12 Enrollment (district schools) -4.2% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20
Postsecondary Enrollment -1.5% 2021 vs. 2020

FAFSA Completion -4.7% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19
Postsecondary Intentions -13.1% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19

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

How students in Swain County traditional schools are currently doing:
To meet state goals, each year Swain County needs:

• Swain County has met the goal for Pre-K enrollment (goal: 75% vs. 84%). 2022
• 376 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 24%). 2022
• 449 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 27%). 2022
• 26 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 77%). 2021
• 198 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 22%). 2021

Swain County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 358:1 versus 318:1 in peer counties. 2021

School Choice
2,284 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Swain County in the 2021-22 school year.
Note: This profile focuses on outcomes of students enrolled in district schools.

Career and College Preparation
34 high school students took at least one AP course (6%) versus 7% in peer counties (2021).
72 graduates participated in Career & College Promise programs (65%) versus 49% in peer counties (2021).

Students in Swain County completed 77 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Health Science; Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics; and Human Services.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Swain County, 2021

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

62% of Swain County students have parents with no college degree (either 2- or 4-year) versus 59% in peer counties.
Swain County 2022 Attainment Profile

Success of Swain County High School Graduates

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020

- 40% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 12% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 48% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- <5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 87% of college-goers attended an in-state college

- 77% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
- 55% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 55% in peer counties. 2021

Adult Learners

Swain County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021

58 Basic Skills
381 Continuing Education
459 Curriculum

9% of Swain County residents have student loan debt; 8% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:

81.2% 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)
Education & Training (above bachelor’s)

15 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:

3,111 graduates in 2020
69% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021

$41,526 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:

6,126 in Basic Services
3,913 in Career Services
212 in Education Services

20.3% of young adults ages 16-24 in Swain County were not working and not in school versus 15.2% in peer counties. 2019

Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment

Curriculum

First-time Curriculum Enrollments

Impact of Covid-19 on NC Community College Enrollment

Basic Skills

Continuing Education

Number of Swain County residents employed, January 2020 to March 2022

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

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