Wayne County

2030 NC Degree Attainment Goal: 2 million (67%)
2030 Proposed Wayne County Attainment Goal: 20,498 (59%)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 122,623
2020 Census: 117,333
Change: -5,290

Growth Rate
-4.3% vs. 9.5%
County State

$52,906 Median Household Income (2020)
30.3% Child Poverty Rate (2020)
88% Households with Broadband (2020)
63% Home Owners (2020)
71% Voter Registration Rate (2021)
5.0% Unemployment Rate (2021)

Population Spotlight
2010 Census: 122,623
2020 Census: 117,333
Change: -5,290

Wayne County residents ages 25-44, 2020

Educational Attainment
No Degree
56.5%
17,364
Have Degree or Credential
43.5%
13,386

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

Earning College Credit in High School
30% of Wayne County graduates participated in the Career & College Promise programs, below the rural metro county average of 43%. Also, 6% of high school students took at least one AP exam, below the peer county average of 9%.

Chronic Absenteeism
42% of Wayne County students are chronically absent from school, above the rural metro county average of 29%.

High School Graduation
82% of Wayne County 9th graders complete high school in 4 years or less, below the rural metro county average of 87%.

Impact of Covid-19 on Education Pipeline
K-12 Enrollment (district schools)
-3.5% 2021-22 vs. 2019-20
Postsecondary Enrollment
-12.2% 2021 vs. 2020

FAFSA Completion
-2.9% 2021-22 vs. 2018-19
Postsecondary Intentions
-9.1% 2020-21 vs. 2018-19

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

How students in Wayne County traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Wayne County needs:

- 157 more eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program (goal: 75% vs. 59%), 2022
- 4,304 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading (goal: 73% vs. 20%), 2022
- 5,008 more 3-8 graders earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math (goal: 86% vs. 24%), 2022
- 195 more 9th graders to graduate within four years (goal: 95% vs. 82%), 2021
- 5,253 more students to attend school regularly (goal: 11% chronic absenteeism vs. 42%), 2021

Wayne County has a student-to-school counselor ratio of 433:1 versus 362:1 in peer counties.

School Choice
21,500 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Wayne County in the 2021-22 school year.

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

Career and College Preparation
289 high school students took at least one AP course (6%) versus 9% in peer counties (2021).

Students in Wayne County completed 669 Career & Technical Education concentrations in 2021. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services; Agricultural, Food, & Natural Resources; and Health Science.

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Wayne County, 2021

Note: Outcomes for demographic groups with fewer than 10 students are not displayed.
**Success of Wayne County High School Graduates**

Top destinations of graduates, 2016-2020
- 31% of college-goers attended a public 4-year college
- 14% of college-goers attended a private 4-year college
- 54% of college-goers attended a public 2-year college
- <5% of college-goers attended a private 2-year college
- 95% of college-goers attended an in-state college
- 75% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 73% in peer counties. 2021
- 60% of students who enroll earn a degree or credential within 6 years versus 57% in peer counties. 2021

**Adult Learners**

Wayne County resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, 2021
- 610 Basic Skills
- 1,789 Continuing Education
- 2,908 Curriculum
- 15% of Wayne County residents have student loan debt; 14% of debt holders had student loans in default. 2020

**In your Prosperity Zone Sub-Region:**

70.5% 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)
- Business Management & Administration (bachelor’s)

117 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

**UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:**
- 1,646 graduates in 2020
- 75% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
- $38,627 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

In 2021 your Workforce Development Board served:
- 11,622 in Basic Services
- 5,489 in Career Services
- 674 in Education Services
- 13.5% of young adults ages 16-24 in Wayne 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 Wayne County has been meeting local needs:
https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/promising-attainment-practices/?wdt_search=Wayne

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