Northwest Prosperity Zone

myFutureNC 2024 Attainment Profiles

2030 Proposed Northwest Attainment Goal: 89,988

Population Spotlight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2022</th>
<th>Change</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>10,439,414</td>
<td>10,698,973</td>
<td>259,559</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alexander County</td>
<td>36,440</td>
<td>36,512</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alleghany County</td>
<td>10,886</td>
<td>11,185</td>
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<td>Ashe County</td>
<td>26,581</td>
<td>27,110</td>
<td>529</td>
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<tr>
<td>Avery County</td>
<td>17,812</td>
<td>17,571</td>
<td>-241</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burke County</td>
<td>87,573</td>
<td>87,881</td>
<td>308</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caldwell County</td>
<td>80,664</td>
<td>80,492</td>
<td>-172</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catawba County</td>
<td>160,609</td>
<td>163,462</td>
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<td>McDowell County</td>
<td>44,577</td>
<td>44,753</td>
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<td>Mitchell County</td>
<td>14,906</td>
<td>15,094</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watauga County</td>
<td>54,077</td>
<td>55,089</td>
<td>1,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilkes County</td>
<td>65,968</td>
<td>65,784</td>
<td>-184</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yancey County</td>
<td>18,470</td>
<td>18,811</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Growth Rate Prosperity Zone: 0.8% vs. State: 2.5%

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

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

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

Foreign Born (2022)
- State: 9%
- State: 9%

Age Structure, 2022

Race/Ethnicity, 2022

Educational Attainment
Northwest residents ages 25-44, 2022

No Degree 78,815 56.1%
Have Degree or Credential 61,636 43.9%

Top Industries in Northwest PZ

Industry Name | Average Employment | Average Weekly Wages |
--------------|--------------------|----------------------|
Health Care and Social Assistance | 33,043 | $1,064 |
Retail Trade | 30,114 | $669 |
Accommodation and Food Services | 23,170 | $387 |
Public Administration | 13,491 | $941 |
Administrative and Support and Waste | 11,326 | $736 |
Management and Remediation Services

Top Job Sectors in Northwest PZ

Job Sector | Average Employment | Average Weekly Wages |
------------|--------------------|----------------------|
Private | 203,410 | $906 |
Local Government | 24,666 | $999 |
State Government | 12,068 | $1,057 |
Federal Government | 1,217 | $1,191 |

In Northwest Prosperity Zone:

84.3% of postsecondary degrees and credentials conferred by regional institutions are aligned with labor market needs.

Top areas of misalignment:
Health Science below bachelor’s and bachelor’s Business Management & Administration bachelor’s Transportation, Distribution & Logistics below bachelor’s

376 Individuals served in an ApprenticeshipNC program in 2020

UNC and NC Community College Outcomes:
7,341 graduates in 2020
72% of 2016 graduates were employed in NC in 2021
$42,094 annual average earnings of graduates employed in NC (includes both part-time and full-time jobs)

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

Note: Numbers may not add up to 100% due to rounding
Success of Northwest High School Graduates

- 80% of students who enroll persist to their second year versus 83% for the state. 2022
- 61% of students who enroll earn a degree or certificate within 6 years versus 59% for the state. 2022

Top destinations of all college-goers, Fall 2023

- 6,413 of all college-goers attended Catawba Valley CC
- 5,174 of all college-goers attended Caldwell CC and TI
- 4,062 of all college-goers attended Wilkes CC

Adult Learners

Northwest resident enrollments in NC Community Colleges, Fall 2022

- 727 Basic Skills
- 11,640 Continuing Education
- 2,331 Curriculum

• 60% of seniors completed the FAFSA in 2023, compared to 62% statewide; 1,077 more need to complete in 2023 to meet state goal of 80%. 2023
• 73% of graduates reported intentions to enroll in a postsecondary institution versus 74% in the state. 2022
• 55% of graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution within 12 months versus 58% in the state. 2022

How students in Northwest traditional schools are currently doing:

To meet state goals, each year Northwest needs:

- 67% of eligible 4-year-olds enrolled in NC Pre-K program, compared to 53% statewide; 242 more needed to meet state goal of 75%. 2023
- 29% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in reading, compared to 30% statewide; 14,880 more needed to meet state goal of 73%. 2023
- 37% of 3-8 graders are earning college-and-career-ready scores (level 4 or 5) in math, compared to 35% statewide; 16,860 more needed to meet state goal of 86%. 2023
- 87% of 9th graders graduate within four years, compared to 87% statewide; 514 more needed to meet state goal of 95%. 2023
- 32% of students are chronically absent from school, compared to 32% statewide; 17,042 less needed to meet state goal of 11%. 2022
- 2% of students drop out of high school (572 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

2% of students drop out of high school (572 total students), compared to 2% statewide. 2022

Degree Credentials Awarded, 2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Certificate</th>
<th>Associate</th>
<th>Bachelor’s</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,483</td>
<td>2,698</td>
<td>4,788</td>
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Postsecondary assets in Northwest Prosperity Zone

Public, 4-year or above
- Appalachian State University

Public, 2-year
- Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, Catawba Valley Community College, Mayland Community College, McDowell Technical Community College, Western Piedmont Community College, Wilkes Community College

Private not-for-profit, 4-year or above
- Lees-McRae College, Lenoir-Rhyne University

Private not-for-profit, 2-year

Postsecondary Enrollment Rates for Select Groups in Northwest, 2022

Note: Outcomes for groups with less than 10 students, <5% or >95% are not displayed.

School Choice

92,315 total students were enrolled in K-12 in Northwest in the 2022-23 school year.

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

Access to Postsecondary Credits

Students in Northwest completed 27,285 Career & Technical Education (CTE) credentials (industry-valued credential data available in Spring 2024) and 3,539 concentrations in 2022. The top three CTE concentrations completed include Human Services, Health Science, and Architecture and Construction.

2,167 high school students took at least one AP course (9%) versus 15% in the state (2022).

4,274 high school students participated in Career & College Promise programs (40%) versus 23% in the state (2022).

For more information about each indicator, including data sources and methodology, visit:

dashboard.myfuturenc.org/county-data-and-resources/