



THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA'S TALENT PIPELINE

Educational Attainment Report

September 1, 2021

Report to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the
North Carolina General Assembly pursuant to Session Law 2019-55
House Bill 664 Section 1.(c) as provided by G.S. 120-29.5

myFUTURENC

myFutureNC promotes a shared vision for an education-through-workforce continuum across North Carolina – from early childhood through adulthood. A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, myFutureNC aligns and coordinates local, regional, and state actions that will dramatically increase attainment of valuable credentials and postsecondary degrees. Our work is guided by the **state's goal** to have at least two million North Carolinians between the ages of 25-44 to hold a high-quality credential or a postsecondary degree by 2030 that will lead to a stronger, more competitive, and prosperous North Carolina for all.

Contents

Introduction	3
Measuring Our Progress	6
- Postsecondary Foundations for Success	11
- Academic Readiness	12
- College & Career Access	14
- Postsecondary Completion	17
- Labor Market Alignment	19
A Collective Impact Approach	21
Advocacy & Recommended Actions	25
A Strong Start to Finish	26

Inspiring Hope

2020 will be cemented in our history books forever. While we would be remiss to not acknowledge the challenges of this past year, we want to focus on the hope we have coming out of this pandemic - hope for the future and the shared vision for educational attainment set forth by the myFutureNC Commission.

We are in an extraordinary time in which we can all be positively influenced by the experiences we have encountered over the last year. We can be the generation that learns to persist in the face of difficult situations, demonstrating a new level of grit and determination. In the absence of the pandemic, everything could have remained the same, but the status quo is not good enough for our great state.

Periods of disruption are ideal opportunities for disruptors. We now have a chance to do something transformative to shape the future of our state and citizens forever. We want every North Carolinian to reach their full potential, so let's seize this once in a generation opportunity to maximize the innovation, lessons learned, and outpouring of COVID relief funding to improve the lives of all North Carolinians forever. This is an opportunity to create the future we will all be proud of: your future - my future - our children's futures together.

We are grateful for the broad-based support from our board members, commissioners, private foundations, the corporate community, state and local leaders, and policymakers that will ensure the realization of this shared vision for attainment.

Join us on our journey to reach 2 million by 2030!

Cecilia Holden
President & CEO
myFutureNC

Dale Jenkins
Board Chair
myFutureNC



A Shared Vision for Attainment

myFutureNC has embarked on an ambitious path forward for North Carolina.

We envision an agile education system offering training fully aligned with the labor market. Increased alignment would better prepare students with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed and continuously grow in their chosen field by allowing them to **seamlessly interface and transition from early education all the way to the workforce.**

The demand for more workforce talent presents a significant opportunity to improve postsecondary readiness, access, and completions in North Carolina. This also comes with increased urgency for the State to drive alignment between our education systems and the needs of our businesses and industries.

Although education and workforce governance structures don't naturally foster cross-sector collaboration, our Board of Directors uniquely represents the full education-to-workforce continuum, bringing together leaders from every education sector, the business community, philanthropy, and policymakers. **Together, we are charting the path forward toward the state's shared vision for educational attainment - 2 million by 2030.**

We believe a better educated **North Carolina** is the key to economic prosperity and upward mobility for all citizens.

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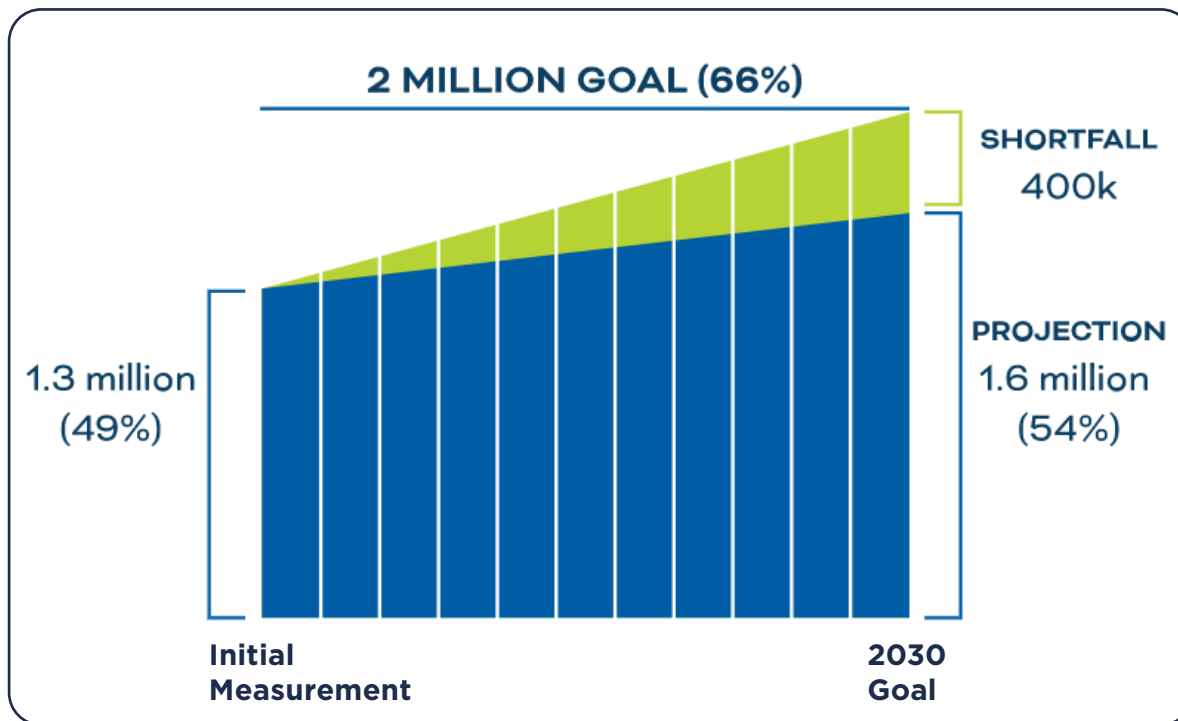
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2030 Attainment Goal

When the myFutureNC Commission set the statewide attainment goal, it projected that North Carolina would fall short by 400k individuals with a high-quality credential or postsecondary degree.¹



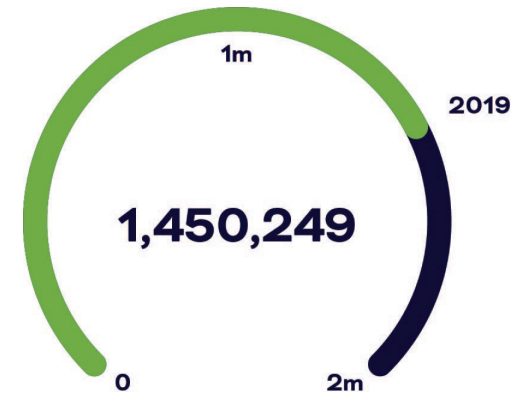
COVID-19 Data Impact

myFutureNC is monitoring the pandemic [impact on data](#) across the education continuum, from Pre-K to career, with specific attention to the 18 educational attainment indicators shown on the myFutureNC state dashboard. COVID-19 disruptions include delays in the availability of National Student Clearinghouse and 2020 Census data and related surveys such as the American Community Survey. **There are four main ways data are impacted:**

1. No data updates are available for metrics such as current College-and-Career-Ready scores in Reading and Math.
2. Data may differ substantially from other years due to COVID-19 impacts, such as chronic absenteeism or FAFSA completion rates.
3. COVID-19 impacted data can affect estimates for future years with direct impacts on indicators such as postsecondary enrollment and disconnected youth.
4. A delayed impact will be seen in some indicators that are not captured in a single year of data, such as high school graduation rates.

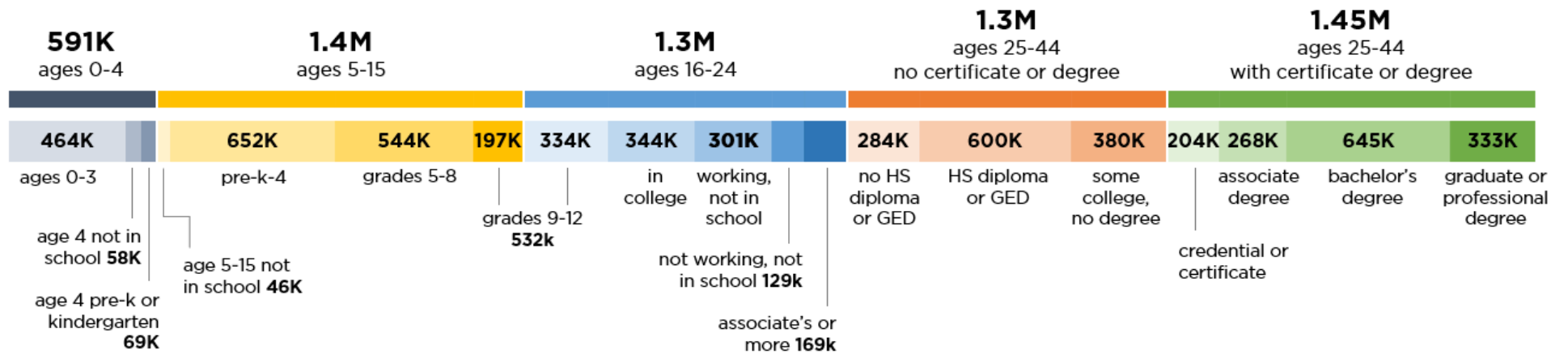
Measuring Our Progress

North Carolina faces a growing need for talent. Two thirds of our jobs require education after high school, yet less than half of North Carolinians have the level required. Based on the most recent data available, in 2019 North Carolina had an estimated **1,450,249²** adults ages 25-44 with a high-quality degree or credential. Based on those projections, North Carolina is **44,000³** below where it needed to be to be on target to the 2 million by 2030 goal.



2019 North Carolina Population by Educational Attainment

[ages 0-44]

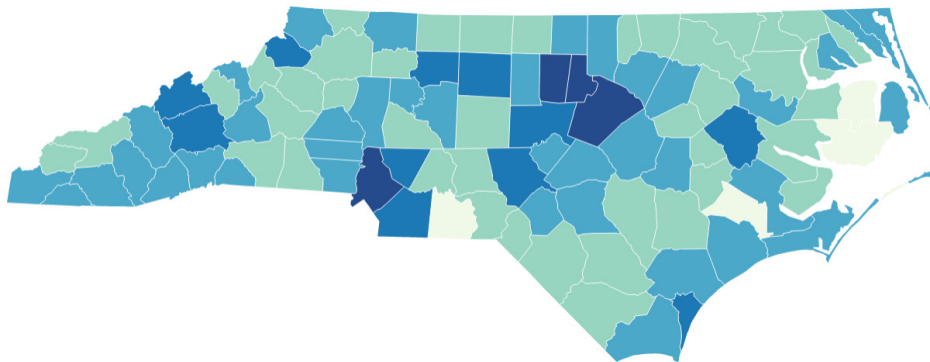
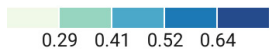


The Urgency for Increased Educational Attainment

The urgency of our work has only been elevated by the pandemic and subsequent economic downturn, but we remain confident that our long-term strategies will be effective towards reaching our goal. We see educational attainment as the short-term recovery strategy and the long-term resiliency plan for our state's economy. It is the measure that will ensure North Carolinians have the skills and education required to navigate a fluctuating economy moving forward. Increasing attainment levels of all North Carolinians is imperative for both educational equity and economic development.

% Age 25-44 with Postsecondary Degree or Credential

53 percent of NC residents age 25 to 44 have a postsecondary degree or credential, according to 2019 data. Counties in the northeast (Hyde, 17%) and southeast (Jones, 27%) have the lower rates, while urban counties (Orange, 76%; Wake, 72%; Durham, 66%; Mecklenburg, 65%) have the highest rates.



Map: Carolina Demography | Source: 2019 5-Year American Community Survey | Created with Datawrapper

COVID-19 Impact

The COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on our education and workforce systems - bringing new challenges and exposing many existing obstacles for students transitioning from high school to college and to the workforce. Yet, **increasing the number of postsecondary certificates, diplomas, and degrees remains essential to meeting the demands of North Carolina's changing workforce.**

Early numbers indicate that too many high school graduates from the Class of 2020 face a real risk of not completing higher education as a result of the COVID-19 impact.

This alarming trend of students not transitioning from high school to postsecondary education comes at a time when a college degree or credential is a key lever to economic mobility. Helping students find their way now is critical to long-term opportunity and prosperity for both the student and North Carolina.

College Applications

↓ 20-30%

2020 vs. 2019⁴

FAFSA Completions

↓ 4.7%

2021 vs. 2020⁵

Undergraduate Enrollment

↓ 3.8%

Spring 2021 vs. 2020⁶

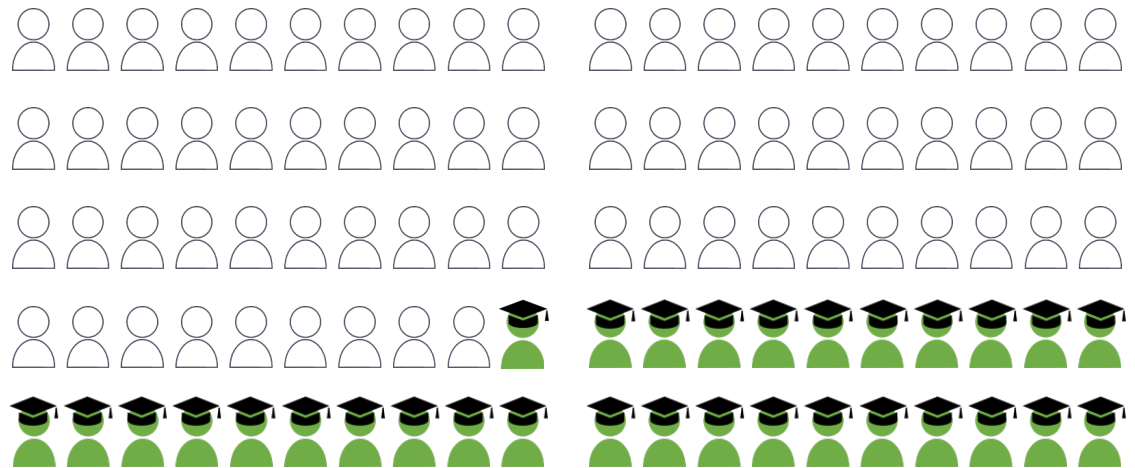
North Carolina is leaving too many students behind.

We are not educating our own to the extent we must. Seventy two percent of ninth graders have the desire to earn a degree or credential, yet sixty percent of North Carolinians with an associate's or higher are born out of state.

It's imperative that we uphold our end of the bargain and deliver on the promise of education. Every part of the educational spectrum, the business community, philanthropy, policymakers, and our communities all have a role to play.

For every 100 students in North Carolina

- 13 do not complete high school on time
- 29 graduate but do not transition to postsecondary programs within 12 months
- 13 enroll but do not return for a second year
- 14 return but do not graduate in 6 years
- only 31** earn a degree or credential within 6 years of graduating high school⁷



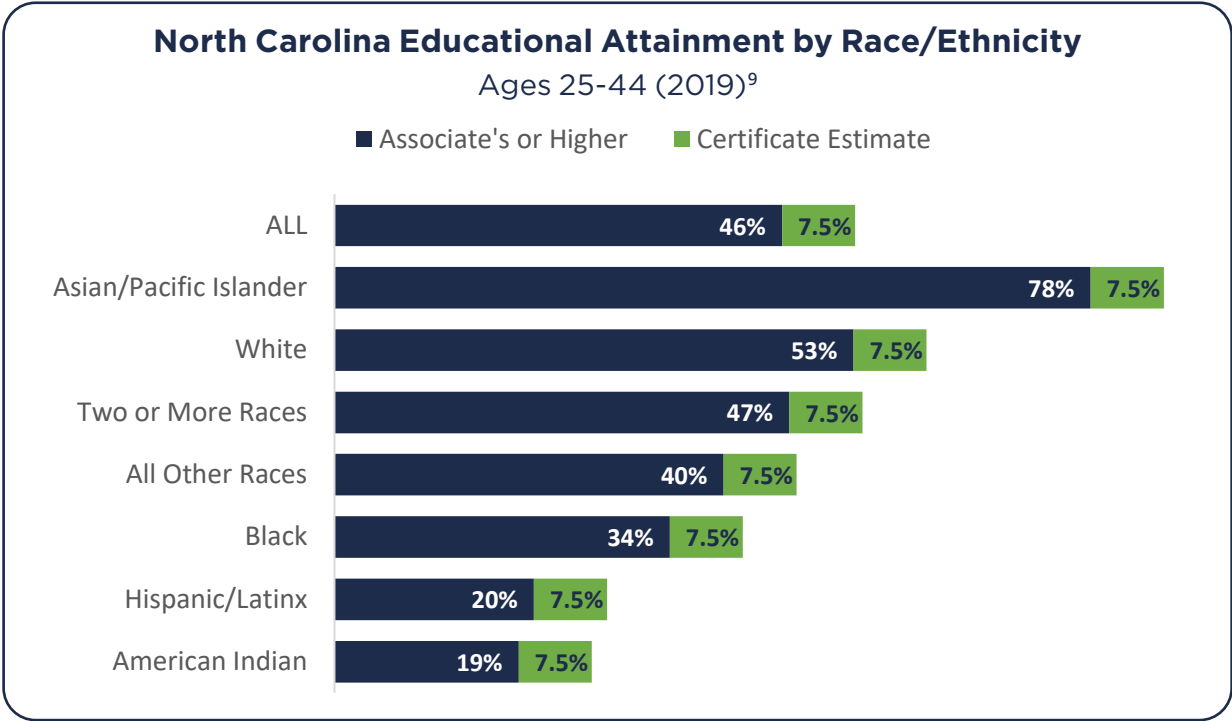
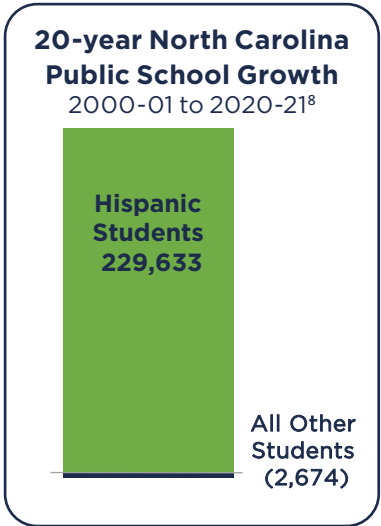


LatinxED, through their Somos Carolina and College y Consejos programs, offers support for Latinx students from 8th grade to college. myFutureNC is supporting LatinxED in the professional development of a network of Latinx education leaders.

Closing the Attainment Gap

To ensure the state remains economically competitive now and into the future, increasing the levels of education after high school for all individuals, but especially first-generation students, students from low-income backgrounds, and Black, Hispanic/Latinx and Native American students, is essential.

The rapidly changing demographic makeup of North Carolina will further elevate this need by the year 2030. Hispanic students have accounted for 101% of the growth in the past 20 years. Based on current attainment rates, 425,000 of the 659,000 Black and Hispanic students enrolled in NC Public Schools will not go on to receive a postsecondary degree or credential.



Our Focus

To close the education attainment gap in North Carolina by 2030, our state must ensure that students have the information, resources, and opportunities they need to prepare for, enroll in, and succeed in college and credentialing opportunities that align with business and industry needs.



Academic Readiness

Building the foundation Pre-K to 12; high-quality early learning and strong academic progress in early years helps prepare children for future success.



College and Career Access

Activities that prepare students to navigate the transition to postsecondary include gaining experience in college-level coursework and applying for financial assistance.



Postsecondary Completion

Student progression and educational attainment from high school graduation to postsecondary completion.



Labor Market Alignment

Alignment between the skills of college graduates and the needs of North Carolina employers.

Postsecondary Foundations for Success

- **Broadband** access, affordability, and adoption
- **Data analysis** of key performance indicators for educational attainment.

Postsecondary Foundations for Success

Our progress will be strengthened by additional attention to two key, cross-goal foundations for success: **broadband access, affordability, and adoption**; and analysis of attainment **data**.

Equitable internet access is crucial.

The pandemic has highlighted internet access as a key component of educational infrastructure. **Broadband access equalizes opportunities** for postsecondary readiness, access, completion, and alignment, regardless of ZIP code. It connects students and adult learners to the preparation and training they need to participate in North Carolina's rapidly-changing economy.

Many communities in North Carolina—most of them rural—have only limited access to broadband, and for those that do have **access, affordability and adoption** rates vary. This gap has become an even greater obstacle to increasing the number of adults with high-quality credentials or degrees as a result of the coronavirus-related school and campus closures that have moved many of our state's learning and training opportunities online.

Longitudinal data systems can provide meaningful information for state leaders charting a path forward.

The North Star for North Carolina's attainment efforts is only as meaningful as the data available to help us track our progress toward reaching that goal. Groups who need access to that data include policymakers, education and workforce leaders, and the thousands of North Carolinians who are working to increase attainment across our state. By many counts our state is a leader in **data collection**; however, none of our Sectors' **data systems** were designed to work together, nor were they tailored to answer questions about the long view of students and progress around attainment.

For North Carolina to successfully **track, analyze, and act on attainment data**, the state must invest in the people, data, and systems necessary to establish good policy and to help guide our path.



Academic Readiness

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Academic readiness continues to be a significant leak in the pipeline from high school to higher education. Too many North Carolina high school graduates are underprepared for completing postsecondary programs, resulting in almost 30% never enrolling, and two-thirds never attaining a postsecondary degree or credential, resulting in high costs for students and institutions, and no degree. Pre-pandemic, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, estimated that ~18,000 students qualified for remediation and the disruptions in learning opportunities caused by COVID-19 will undoubtedly leave more students behind academic readiness levels needed for future success.

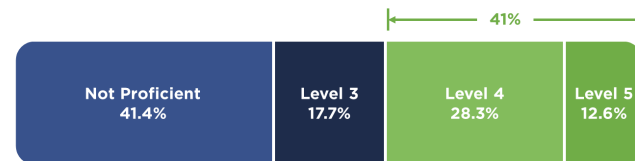
Devastating costs of 'some college, no degree'

National research conducted by Complete College America has shown that only 10 percent of community college students and 35 percent of students at four-year colleges who enroll in a remedial course go on to earn a degree; and worse, approximately 50 percent of all college entrants will take a remedial course, costing students and states nearly \$3 billion in tuition and fees per year.¹²

In 2019, **45%** of North Carolina students in grades 3-8 earned a college-and-career-ready score on the end-of-grade **reading** exam.¹⁰ **2030 Goal: 73%.**



In 2019, **41%** of North Carolina students in grades 3-8 earned a college-and-career-ready score on the end-of-grade **math** exam.¹¹ **2030 Goal: 86%.**



Readiness begins with an effective teacher in every classroom working to create challenging, academically robust educational settings that are staffed by competent, well-trained educators; have the resources necessary for supporting an effective instructional program - from the earliest years of schooling Pre-K through postsecondary education.

Get access to key data on children and students, educators, schools and programs, finance and achievement from Best NC **Facts & Figures: Education in North Carolina.**





Academic Readiness

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Career and College Ready Graduates (CCRG)

aims to reduce and ultimately eliminate the need for remedial education among high school graduates. Grounded in a partnership between the NC Community College System (NCCCS) and the NC Department of Instruction (NCDPI), high school juniors are evaluated to determine college readiness. Students who are not college ready are required to take CCRG English and/or math courses in their senior year of high school. This front-loads the remedial coursework for high school students who are at-risk of not entering credit-bearing courses in a NC Community College System, UNC System, or private postsecondary institution.

Accelerated Learning Opportunities

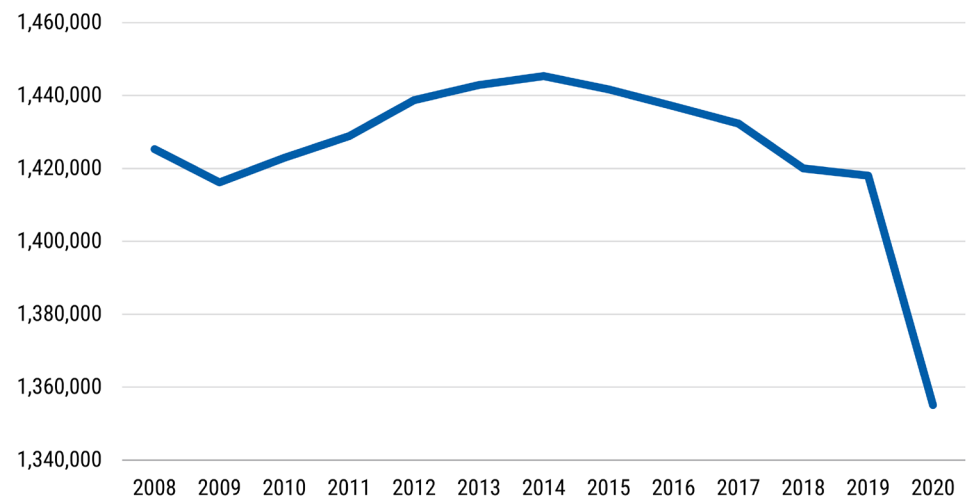
North Carolina has become a leader of the **Cooperative Innovative High School** model across the nation. Increasing access to early college opportunities for at-risk students, first-generation college students, and/of students who would benefit from accelerated learning opportunities, attending a CIHS prepares students for college coursework and helps reduce the cost associated with higher education.

How has COVID-19 affected public school enrollment?

Statewide, Average Daily Membership (ADM) or school attendance, is **down 63,000 students** or **-4.4%** in Month 2 of 2020-21 compared to 2019-20. While some of this decline may be offset by increases in private and home school enrollment, the decline in ADM this past fall was five times larger than the largest decline previously observed.

K-12 enrollments down in North Carolina public schools 63,000 in Fall 2020

Month 2 ADM, 2008-09 to 2020-21



Source: NC Department of Public Instruction

CAROLINA
DEMOGRAPHY

Click [here](#) for more information on public school enrollment.

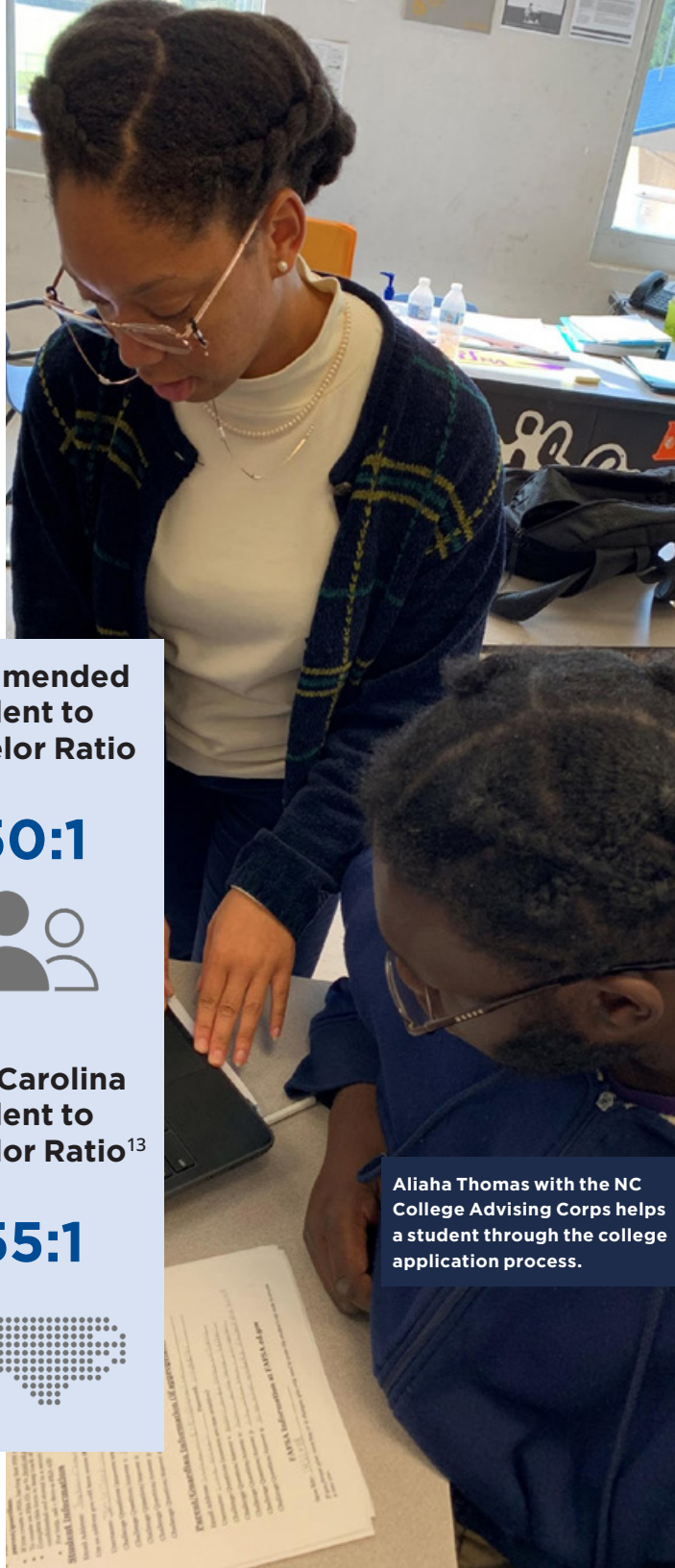
College & Career Access

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Preparation for postsecondary success is only valuable if students know how to and are able to enroll in postsecondary opportunities. In North Carolina, only about three out of five high school seniors apply for federal aid and only two-thirds enroll in postsecondary programs within two years of graduation. Those rates are much lower for underrepresented students and students from rural counties.

College and Career Advising

The college application and enrollment process can be overwhelming for any student but especially difficult for first-generation students. All students can benefit from help in making it to and through college. However, high school and community college advising programs are beyond their maximum capacity. With increased investment and greater access to robust college and career advising services and mentors, students can get the information they need to choose colleges or classes, understand how to pay for postsecondary education, and know where to turn for support. For employers looking for skilled workers, increased investments in advising programs can replenish talent pipelines when students learn more about in-demand careers that pay family-supporting wages, and they have access to supports who can help and encourage them to chart a path to attaining the credentials and degrees required.



**Recommended
Student to
Counselor Ratio**

250:1



**North Carolina
Student to
Counselor Ratio¹³**

355:1



Aliaha Thomas with the NC College Advising Corps helps a student through the college application process.

Early Emphasis on Career Planning

Student entry into most postsecondary career and college pathways often depends on completion of a series of courses, experiences, and explorations that should begin as early as middle school. Having a **Career Development Plan** in place can help students with course selections that will best position them to attain the necessary credentials and degrees to achieve their dreams. However, many younger North Carolina students currently do not have access to high-quality career development advisors, coaches, or counselors to help them construct these plans and navigate the connections between their current school choices and their future postsecondary and career opportunities.

NC DREAM IT. PLAN IT. BE IT.
careers.org

North Carolina's central online resource for high quality job and career information.

my**FUTURE**NC

College and Career Access

WHAT WE ARE DOING

FAFSA Completion is key to postsecondary attainment. Completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required for students to be eligible for federal and state aid, as well as many scholarships. Research shows that the completion of the FAFSA helps increase college enrollment, especially for students from low income households. This is just one step to increase college access and affordability, but it's an achievable one that is available to all students.

According to the National College Access Network, **students who could benefit from financial aid the most are less likely to apply.** Students do not complete the FAFSA because they believe it's too complicated, they don't think they are eligible or they don't even know that financial aid exists. College access and affordability continues to be a hurdle for many students from low-income backgrounds. Completing the FAFSA application is one step closer to creating a more equitable and accessible education landscape.

Building on the success of the FAFSA Frenzy Campaign in June 2020, myFutureNC launched the NC First in FAFSA collaborative to develop a plan to boost FAFSA completion rates. Many partners including Carolina Demography, College Foundation of North Carolina (CFNC), NC State Education Assistance Authority (NCSEAA), NC College Advising Corps, and the Hunt Institute came together to:

- **Set a FAFSA completion goal** tied to existing initiatives and priorities to create momentum
- **Build shared ownership** across K-12 and higher education
- **Create incentives** for local and regional implementation of FAFSA completion strategies
- **Use data** to target supports and transparently report progress
- **Establish partnerships** to provide on-the-ground training and support
- **Spread awareness** about the importance of FAFSA completion



Fayetteville Tech Community College was one of 20 campuses across the state that hosted a FAFSA Drive Into Your Future Event to support students and families safely from their cars.

College and Career Access

WHAT WE ARE DOING

Using data to target supports and transparently report progress, myFutureNC, in partnership with Carolina Demography developed [NC First in FAFSA Tracker](#), a public-facing visual data dashboard to measure FAFSA completion progress and to identify gaps.



97% of North Carolina public high schools have signed FAFSA data sharing agreements.

These data sharing agreements provide authorized users access to student-level FAFSA completion status. No income or Social Security Number data are included in the NCSEAA Finish the FAFSA tool.

FAFSA Priority Districts

Leveraging county attainment profiles and other data-driven criteria, myFutureNC identified 42 priority districts with FAFSA completion rates less than 40 percent, for a targeted approach to engage, train, and create a community of practice for practitioners. Many priority districts represented counties where FAFSA completion was identified as an opportunity for growth on the myFutureNC County Attainment Profiles. At the time of publication, 4 of 10 school districts and 20 of the 40 high schools recognized on the June FAFSA Leaderboard for completion rates and growth were FAFSA Priority Districts and Schools.

North Carolina students are estimated to have left \$107M on the table in federal Pell grants alone in 2020.¹⁴

To incentivize schools, NC First in FAFSA launched the inaugural [FAFSA Challenge](#) this semester to encourage high schools to implement innovative strategies to increase FAFSA completion locally. Winners will be announced in the fall when final high school graduation counts are released.



494 or **75%** of North Carolina public high schools registered for the challenge with representation from **100%** of school districts.



54% of students completed the FAFSA, as of June 30, 2021.¹⁵ Our 2030 goal is 80%.

The added focus on FAFSA through the campaign resulted in increased overall FAFSA completions, raised the awareness of the importance, and laid a foundation for future FAFSA initiatives. However, with the impact of COVID-19, FAFSA completion rates still remain down year-over-year. With the announcement of the **Longleaf Commitment Grant, additional COVID-19 relief, and adult learner initiatives**, an increase in FAFSA completions is anticipated over the remaining summer months.



Postsecondary Completion

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

North Carolinians with a degree or credential beyond high school can earn two to three times as much annually in the course of their career, and are more likely to remain employed during economic downturns. Their financial success helps their families, as well as their communities and the state as a whole.

Postsecondary enrollment is a first step; however, **completion is critical**. Otherwise, students accrue lots of debt and our government appropriates significant funding, but with no return on these investments. Thirty-one percent of high school freshmen complete postsecondary programs or degrees, and many of our most at-risk postsecondary students are only one minor financial setback away from dropping out. Finances and advising are among the potholes in their road. After significant increases over the first decade of the millennium, need-based student aid has flattened, and the availability of college advisors isn't keeping up with student demand.

North Carolina Community College Graduates

collectively earn nearly

\$8 Billion

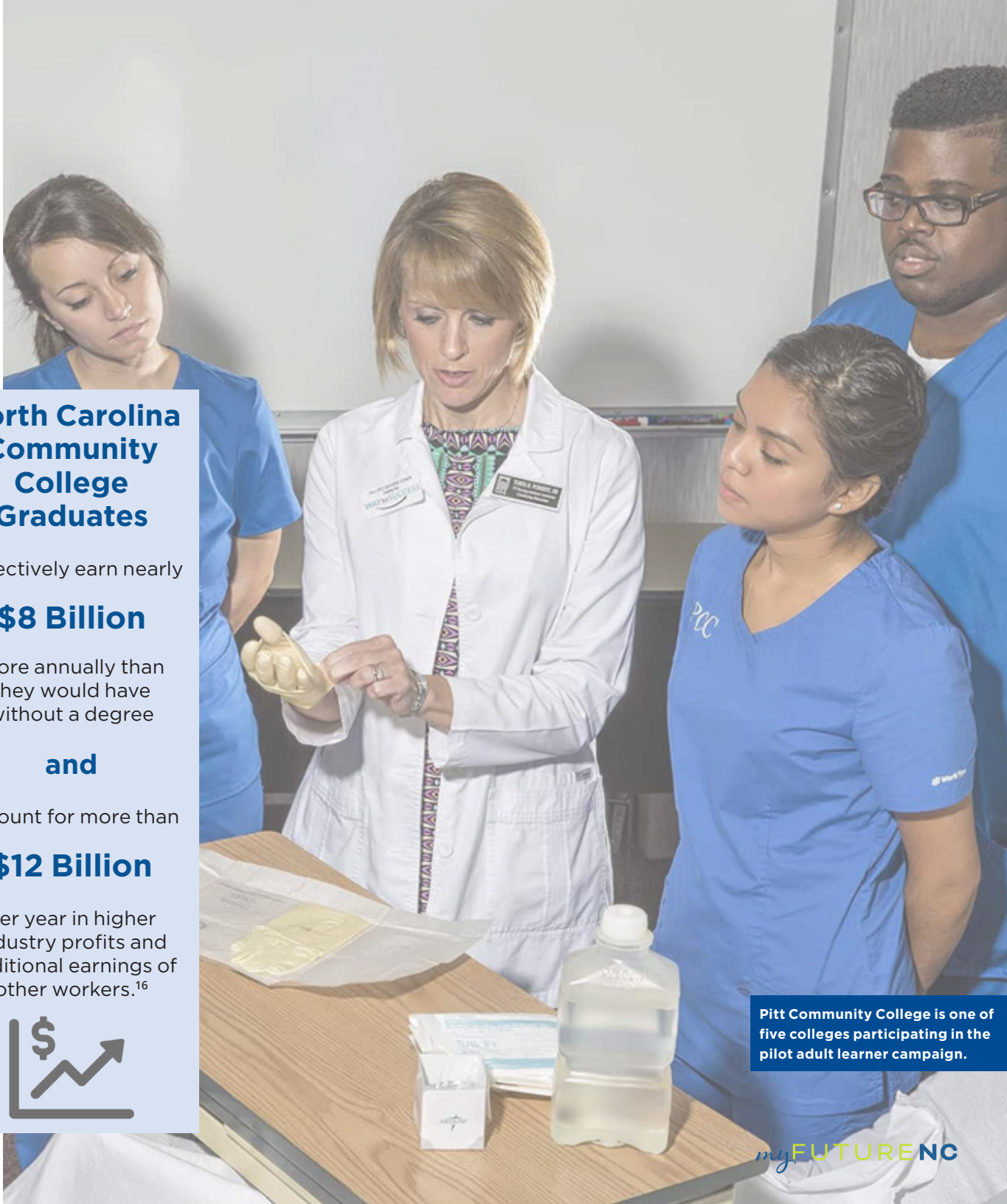
more annually than they would have without a degree

and

account for more than

\$12 Billion

per year in higher industry profits and additional earnings of other workers.¹⁶



Pitt Community College is one of five colleges participating in the pilot adult learner campaign.

Postsecondary Completion

WHAT WE ARE DOING

The Opportunity to Reach Adult Learners

With flattening and declining K-12 student populations, North Carolina will not achieve 2 million by 2030 without also bringing adults back into the education pipeline. North Carolina has approximately **380,000 adults aged 25-44 with “some college, no degree”**, individuals who previously had a dream to attain higher levels of education but for various reasons, stopped out or dropped out of school.

To re-engage these adults, state partners can bring together communities and higher education stakeholders to build on our state’s current strategies for redesigning the current postsecondary landscape, to support adult learners best. This can be accomplished through innovations such as: targeted marketing campaigns; single stop postsecondary navigation tools and other adult learner-focused support and mentoring services; expansion of experience-based credit (including broader credit for prior learning and military experience); consistent and easy to navigate cross-institutional agreements between 2-year and 4-year institutions; expanded online course availability; and better alignment between credential/degree pathways and workforce needs.

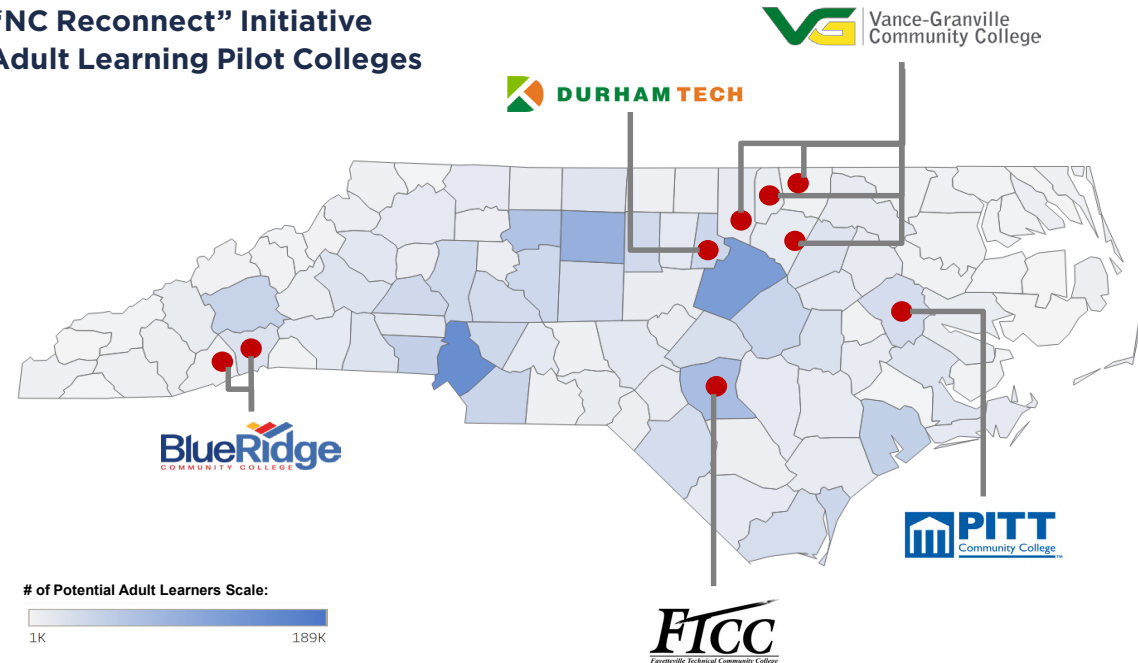
1.3 million

North Carolina adults ages 25-44 do not have a credential or degree, of whom 380,000 have some college but no degree.¹⁷

“NC Reconnect” Initiative

Partnering with five community colleges across the state, leaders from the John M. Belk Endowment, myFutureNC, the North Carolina Community College System, and N.C. State’s Belk Center for Community College Leadership and Research launched a pilot project and Summer 2021 outreach campaign focused on adult learners. This initiative, called “NC Reconnect”, was created to engage adults who have not completed a post-secondary credential and connect them to educational pathways at their local community college that lead to improved career opportunities. The pilot includes supports for a marketing campaign with the tagline **“Better Skills. Better Jobs.”**, direct outreach to previously enrolled students that did not complete, and ongoing institution-led efforts to increase adult learner engagement, completion, and employment opportunities.

“NC Reconnect” Initiative Adult Learning Pilot Colleges



Labor Market Alignment

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT

Fastest-growing jobs require more education

Jobs that require a credential or postsecondary degree are expected to grow at over two times the rate of jobs that do not require degrees or credentials. Statewide, only about **7.5% of working-age adults have earned these non-degree credentials.**¹⁸ In North Carolina, more than one-half of all employers say it is difficult to fill positions—a proportion that has grown steadily for many years—with applicants lacking technical skills and credentials among their top challenges.

With a surge in tech job announcements among many others, workforce development, education, and economic development organizations are hard at work across North Carolina identifying ways to meet the rapidly changing and increasing needs of business and industry. This includes working with employers to identify the critical skills needed to support growth and stability, with a focus on family wage-sustaining careers.



Made in Henderson
County manufacturing
apprenticeship program.

Taylor Shain/EducationNC

Labor Market Alignment

WHAT WE ARE DOING

North Carolina's Workforce

Key leaders from the NC Community College System, the NC Department of Commerce, the NCWorks Commission, the NC Department of Public Instruction, local workforce boards, and the Governor's Office have come together with business leaders to provide a source of high-quality, real-time information on business needs and non-degree credentials they value to inform education, workforce development and economic development efforts; identify high-demand competencies and the valued credentials that reflect those skills, which provide pathways to good jobs for North Carolina citizens; and develop policies and procedures that support access to skills training aligned with identified credentials.

NC Workforce Credentials

NC Workforce Credentials are high-quality, **non-degree credentials** recognized by employers that help workers in North Carolina obtain in-demand living wage jobs.

Essential Credentials

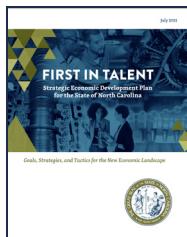


Credentials with pathways leading to sustainable wage careers, such as a vet tech, nurse aide I, pharmacy technician, or construction labor.

Career Credentials



Credentials supporting sustainable wage careers such as a commercial driver's license, law enforcement, lineworker, or HVAC Technician.



Learn more about our aligned efforts in the [NC Commerce Economic Development Strategic Plan](#)

Economic security at risk

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused catastrophic setbacks for business, as it has directly impacted students in K-12 schools and postsecondary institutions. Recognizing North Carolina's declining labor market participation rate, myFutureNC is bringing added focus to the increased number of disconnected youth and adult learner populations to better position the state to meet our educational attainment goal. In turn, this will position these individuals with opportunities for upward mobility and the ability to be a contributor in their local communities and economies.

Opportunity (Disconnected) Youth

More than **141,036** young people between the ages of 16 and 24 are not enrolled in school and either not employed or not in the labor force.¹⁹ Whether they graduated from high school or left without diplomas, many young people with low-income backgrounds suffer from inadequate education that leave them underprepared for postsecondary education or the workplace.

More than **11%** of NC's youth were disconnected prior to the pandemic and that number could **more than triple** as a result of the pandemic.





A Collective Impact Approach to Achieve Our Statewide Educational Attainment Goal

Raising educational attainment statewide requires a better understanding of the full education to workforce continuum to help us identify where our current education efforts need adjustments, where they are working well, or where we need to expand, focus and invest in new and innovative approaches. myFutureNC is working to:

- **Convene & Engage** stakeholders and partner organizations to align efforts towards the statewide educational attainment goal
- Equip local leaders with **Data & Tools** to drive action and decisions
- Lift-up or catalyze cross-sector collaboratives to increase educational attainment with a **State-Led**, but **Locally Driven** approach
- **Advocate** for policy that is supportive of cross-sector priorities and has the greatest impact on statewide educational attainment

Convene & Engage

The work of myFutureNC combines actionable data tools and information to aid in decision making at the state and local levels. Our efforts also support communities to implement and spread practices that accelerate educational attainment outcomes. We catalyze action by building awareness, and convening, engaging, and equipping stakeholders with data, tools, resources, and best practices.

Education Advocacy and Diverse Leadership

ElevateNC

The Hunt Institute partnered with myFutureNC to launch their inaugural forum designed to enhance leadership capacity and to develop statewide community-specific strategies that increase postsecondary attainment.

Listening to the NC-10

In partnership with CREED, Hunt Institute, and EdNC this effort includes conversations with all 10 HBCUs in North Carolina, including the leadership of each college and university, to increase the statewide prominence of the NC10. Through cross-institutional knowledge sharing and by gaining a better understanding of the assets and challenges of these institutions, the ultimate goal will be to increase enrollment and completions of students attending these critical institutions.



Data & Tools

A primary activity for myFutureNC is the development, publishing, and updating of state and local data dashboards that allow stakeholders to measure progress towards attainment milestones.

myFutureNC provides data resources to key stakeholders statewide and across all 100 counties. myFutureNC shares key learnings and insights to accelerate progress and improve systems and practices that will lead to increased attainment.

The goal is to support and encourage county leaders to establish local attainment goals that feed into the 2 million by 2030 statewide goal. Local goal-setting is part of a local strategic planning process to increase attainment in every community. These county attainment profiles serve as a conversation starter to then set goals, establish priorities, and identify target populations.



View the myFutureNC Dashboard, State and County Educational Attainment Profiles, and coming soon, a new county explorer tool.

National Student Clearinghouse Data

A critical piece of the data puzzle for myFutureNC and the state of North Carolina is an annual data pull from the National Student Clearinghouse. This data -- covering 99% of postsecondary students in the U.S -- is vital to understanding how students move to and through our education pipeline and into the workforce. Private funding provided for initial NSC data, and COVID relief funds are being leveraged this year; however, the long-term strategy requires that the NSC data be included as part of the Education Longitudinal Data System.

Throughout 2020-21, myFutureNC worked with local leaders and stakeholders to refine and update the myFutureNC [County Attainment Profiles](#). In partnership with [Carolina Demography](#) and as part of this process, significant time was spent facilitating conversations with cross-sector county-level leaders to seek input on the best process for setting local 2030 attainment goals.

New resources emerged out of these discussions for facilitating sessions focused on setting local attainment goals including:

- [Setting Local Attainment Goals Practice Guide](#)
- [100 County Attainment Goals for 2030 Spreadsheet](#)
- [Setting Local Attainment Goals Presentation](#)
- [Setting Local Attainment Goals Video](#)



The School of Pharmacy and Health Professions Building at Elizabeth City State University is home to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill / ECSU Doctor of Pharmacy Partnership Program.

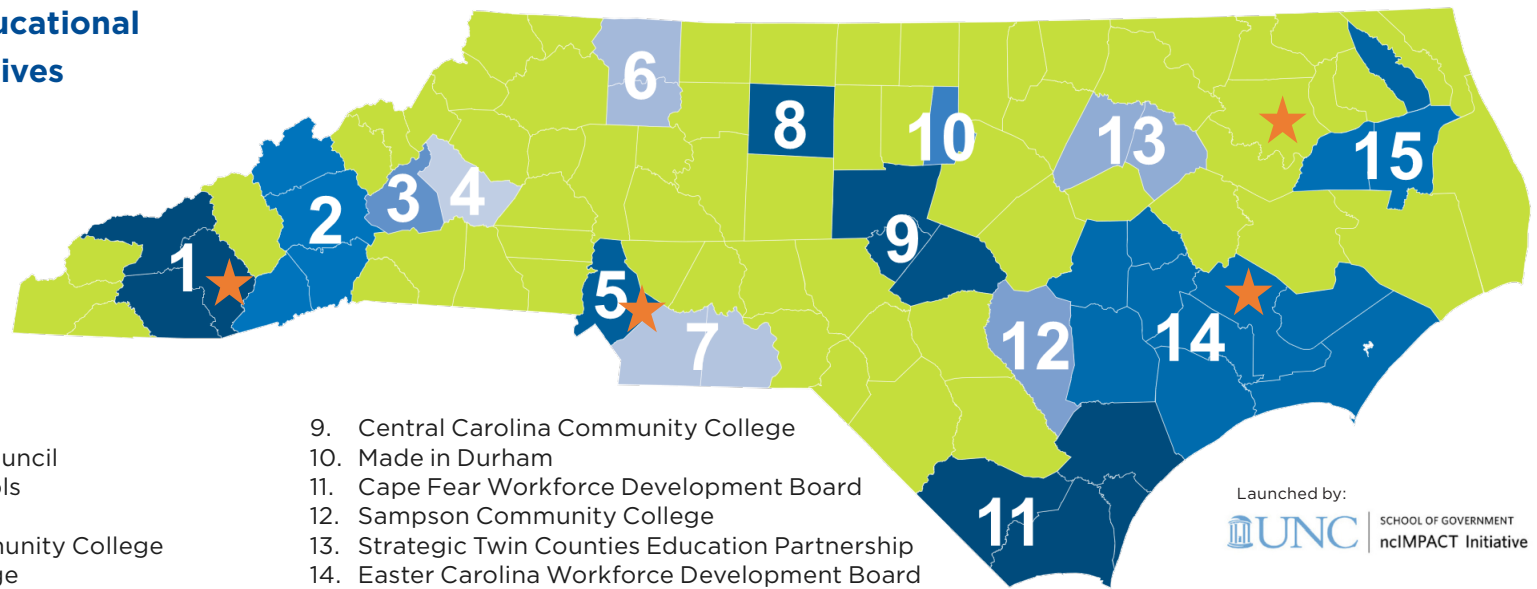
State-Led, Locally Driven

Local collaboratives play a critical role in reaching North Carolina’s educational attainment goal. These collaboratives will establish local goals, and identify strategies and priorities to meet these goals - working as integral myFutureNC partners toward the state’s larger attainment goal.

The nclIMPACT Initiative at the UNC School of Government (nclIMPACT) and myFutureNC are launching a two-year pilot program that supports 15 local educational attainment collaboratives across North Carolina that seek to significantly increase the number of students successfully completing post-secondary credentials of value in the workforce: a degree, credential, or certification. Each team or “collaborative” may cover an individual county, a municipal-county partnership, or a multi-county region. **Overall, the collaboratives cover 38 counties across the state. Our long-term goal is to have collaboratives representing all 100 counties.**

To bolster support, the myFutureNC regional impact team works to engage local communities to support opportunities for growth efforts, utilizing data from resources such as myFutureNC county attainment profiles to initiate conversations around establishing local attainment collaboratives and goals. In addition, myFutureNC is cataloging current local promising practices to support dissemination, scaling, and replication of impactful strategies across the state.

myFutureNC Local Educational Attainment Collaboratives (Inaugural Cohort)



- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. HIGHTS, INC. | 9. Central Carolina Community College |
| 2. Land of Sky Regional Council | 10. Made in Durham |
| 3. McDowell County Schools | 11. Cape Fear Workforce Development Board |
| 4. Work in Burke | 12. Sampson Community College |
| 5. Central Piedmont Community College | 13. Strategic Twin Counties Education Partnership |
| 6. Surry Community College | 14. Easter Carolina Workforce Development Board |
| 7. Wingate University | 15. Elizabeth City State University |
| 8. Community Foundation of Greater Greensboro | |

Launched by:
 SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT
nclIMPACT Initiative

 myFutureNC Regional Impact Managers

Advocacy & Recommended Actions

We put goals into action by making policy recommendations and committing to and advocating for strategies to close the educational attainment gap in North Carolina.

ACADEMIC READINESS

- **Raise awareness of connections between early childhood and attainment** with focus on Pre-K, reading proficiency, training and quality instruction in every classroom
- **Increase Access to Readiness and Remedial Resources** by supporting Cooperative Innovative High School expansion and providing online remedial support for all high schools
- **Expand Support for Remedial Instructors by appointing a Career and College Readiness Effectiveness Coordinator** and providing support for statewide remedial instruction training
- **Increase Remedial Student Success** by enhancing Career and College Ready Graduates program implementation

POSTSECONDARY COMPLETION

- **Reform Public Need-Based Student Aid** by consolidating and simplifying public need-based aid grants and updating state aid outreach efforts
- **Strengthen Postsecondary Student Support** by expanding financial support for students most at risk of failing to complete a high-value degree or credential

FOUNDATIONS FOR SUCCESS

- **Expand Broadband Access** by accelerating support for Broadband infrastructure, providing interim connectivity support for underserved areas, addressing localized online learning needs, and encouraging public-private partnership solutions
- **Improve Broadband Affordability and Adoption** by targeting support for lower-income households
- **Modernize Sector Data Systems** by rapidly upgrading public sector data systems
- **Capture a Broader Array of Cross-Sector Attainment-Relevant Data** by increasing the availability of cross-sector attainment-relevant data and establishing cross-sector data standards
- **Formalize and Strengthen Cross-Sector Analyses** by fully modernizing a state Longitudinal Data System and increasing capacity across Sectors to collect and analyze attainment-relevant data

COLLEGE & CAREER ACCESS

- **Expand Access to Postsecondary and Career Advising** by increasing the availability of college and career development advisors, better coordinating college and career advising efforts, and supporting Student Career Plan development
- **Re-Envision and Expand Access to Postsecondary Financial Aid** by increasing support for FAFSA completion, increasing student financial aid awareness, and providing last-dollar tuition coverage

LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT

- **Increase Supports for Credentialing Students** by expanding enrollment and completion supports
- **Validate High-Quality Credentials and Project Future Credentialing Needs** by formally establishing a North Carolina Workforce Credentials Council
- **Open More Pathways to High-Value Credentials** by developing more high-demand training pathways and identifying long-term funding for the NCCareers Online Portal

Our complete policy briefs and recommended legislative actions are available on our [website](#).

A Strong Start to Finish

There is an urgent need to increase educational attainment across North Carolina. This is both an economic development concern and an educational equity opportunity for our great state. Education is the gateway to economic prosperity and, simply put, it is an imperative that when accomplished, will be transformative.

The business landscape is forever changed from the disruption of the pandemic. Even pre-COVID-19 the state faced a skills gap crisis, and now the urgency for action has been further accelerated in order to meet the state's educational attainment goal of 2 million by 2030. Even more jobs are requiring higher levels of skills and education, and individuals without it are more likely to be unemployed in down economies. In addition, low-income and first-generation college students have been especially hit hard this past year. The personal hardships and instability our students and families have endured has derailed their progress towards completing - let alone starting - their degree or credential. Therefore, it is critical that our systems adjust in response, to realize better outcomes that shape opportunity for increased mobility for all.

North Carolina has one of the most robust education and workforce development infrastructures in the nation, and now we have over \$10 billion in federal COVID relief funds for education alone.²⁰ Let's leverage the Zoom boom and this once in a generation opportunity to provide hope for every citizen. Through increased educational attainment and broadband for all, employers across our great state will be positioned to tap into talent - both urban and rural - that allows every North Carolinian to prosper.

The task ahead is big - one that will take patience and hard work by all of us. This includes collaborating, learning together and leveraging the collective and emerging knowledge, while strategically investing, advocating for, and implementing solutions and policies that lead to lasting change. We didn't get here overnight, and we can't fix this overnight, but we need everyone to make this happen. We all have something to offer - time, talent, financial resources, knowledge and expertise, relationships, business work-based learning opportunities, and so much more. This collective doing is how we transform education for our students today and meet the current and future needs of our businesses and industries.

Together, let's start strong to finish strong by creating the future we will all be proud of for generations to come — my future, your future, our future together.

2 million by 2030



Acknowledgements

Thanks to early and significant venture philanthropy, myFutureNC has embarked on an ambitious path forward for North Carolina. The organization's future strength will come from broad-based investment from private foundations, the corporate community, leaders on the state and local level, and legislative support of local initiatives that will ensure successful implementation of myFutureNC's vision. We are thankful to the following organizations and individuals for their investment in time, talent and treasure:

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Individuals:

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Mark Kingsmore
myFutureNC Board of Directors
myFutureNC Staff

Advisory Board of Commissioners

With a vision for improving postsecondary attainment across North Carolina, the myFutureNC Board of Directors and leadership team formally support the continued development of a diverse group of **Commissioners** representing a breadth of stakeholders as willing advocates for the broader myFutureNC mission.

Endorsements

myFutureNC is proud to have **over 200 organizations** officially endorse the 2 million by 2030 statewide attainment goal. Achieving this goal will only be possible with deep, cross-sector support from state and local leaders and groups in business, education, and government.

Citations

¹ myFutureNC A Call to Action for the State of North Carolina (2019)

² American Community Survey (2019); estimates of credentials or certificates from Lumina/Georgetown evaluation of Current Population Survey

³ Carolina Demography, [myFutureNC Dashboard](#)

⁴ College Foundation of North Carolina (2021). NC Countdown to College.

⁵ National College Attainment Network (2021). Form Your Future.

⁶ National Student Clearinghouse Research Center (2021). Stay Informed.

⁷ Carolina Demography

⁸ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

⁹ American Community Survey (2019); Estimates of credentials or certificates from Lumina/Georgetown evaluation of Current Population Survey

¹⁰ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

¹¹ North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

¹² Complete College America (2012)

¹³ Calculated using data from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

¹⁴ Estimated using average Pell grant amount, percentage of Pell eligible students and number of students who did not complete a FAFSA for 2020

¹⁵ National College Attainment Network (2021). Form Your Future.

¹⁶ North Carolina Community College System (2015)

¹⁷ American Community Survey (2019)

¹⁸ Estimates of credentials or certificates from Lumina/Georgetown evaluation of Current Population Survey

¹⁹ American Community Survey (2019)

²⁰ NC Pandemic Recovery Office (2021)