# North Carolina Postsecondary Educational Pipeline Database – Data Guidance

## About

This document outlines the data elements and sources of the variables in the North Carolina Postsecondary Educational Pipeline database. This database was produced by Carolina Demography for the John M. Belk Endowment.

These variables track key indicators of the postsecondary pipeline:

- 4-year high school graduation rate;
- college and career readiness;
- high school graduate intention;
- enrollment at a UNC institution or an NC community college;
- retention at a UNC institution or an NC community college; and
- graduation within 150% of normal time from a UNC institution or an NC community college.

Calculations are included for all derived variables. (Derived variables are variables calculated from the original data). Definitions of terms are provided in **Appendix A**. Data limitations and special notes are provided in **Appendix B**.

## Database Elements

The indicators listed below highlight the major points in the educational pipeline from high school graduation through postsecondary completion. They are critical transition points, and future progress is often dependent on successfully completing each stage in the pipeline. Moreover, they are research-validated; peer-reviewed social science research highlights these transition points as vulnerable periods for students and key opportunities for potential interventions.

## Contact

Questions about the database should be directed to Carolina Demography at demography@unc.edu.

## Temporal, Demographic and Geographic Indicators

The database provides indicators by year, geographic area, sex, and racial/ethnic group.

- **Grade9_year** – initial year of high school enrollment for 9th grade cohort
- **Grade12_year** – high school graduation year of 9th grade cohort
- **GEO** -  geographic area
- **Race** - racial/ethnic group:
    - ALL – All racial/ethnic groups
    - AMIN – American Indian or Alaskan Native
    - ASIA – Asian
    - BLCK – Black or African-American
    - HISP – Hispanic or Latin American
    - MULT – Two or more races
    - PACI – Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    - UNK – Unknown race/ethnicity (UNC and NCCC only)
    - WHTE – White

    Hispanic includes individuals of all races. All other race groups are non-Hispanic individuals.

    Unknown includes individuals in the UNC or NCCC data with no reported race/ethnicity, unknown race/ethnicity, some other race/ethnicity (unspecified), and individuals who are non-resident aliens.

- **Sex** – sex group:
    - ALL -  Both sexes
    - FEM – Female
    - MALE - Male
- **Subgroup** – demographic subgroup:
    - All possible combinations of race/ethnicity and sex. ALL refers to all individuals. Race and sex in combination are coded as RACE_SEX. WHTE_FEM, for example, refers to White Females.
    - AIG – Academically or Intellectually Gifted
    - EDS – Economically Disadvantaged Student (eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch)
    - LEP – Limited English Proficiency
    - SWD – Student With Disability

    Socioeconomic and ability groups (AIG, EDS, LEP, and SWD) are only reported by the Department of Public Instruction.

## Variable Type and Naming Convention

Variables indicating a raw count – e.g. the number of graduates intending to enroll at a UNC institution – are named according to the indicator's contents. This data has typically been provided by an outside organization, such as the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction.

Derived variables– e.g. the percentage of graduates intending to enroll at a UNC institution – begin with the letter "p" and an underscore. This indicates that the variable contains a derived percentage provided by Carolina Demography. Derived variables are calculated by using counts provided elsewhere.

**Note:**  College and Career Readiness indicators include count variables that begin with the letter "d" and an underscore. These indicators refer to a denominator – e.g. total number of students taking the ACT exam. All derived variables have been provided by NC DPI.

# Four-Year Cohort Graduation Rates

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NC DPI) reports the 4-year cohort graduation rates for its grade 12 students at the state, district, and school level. This figure represents the percentage of 9th grade students in a given school year who graduated with a diploma four years later. The cohort also includes students who transferred into the school in the grade appropriate to the cohort and removes students of the cohort who transferred out of the school or who are deceased.

Per NC DPI's definition, dropout students count as non-graduates unless they later enroll in another school and graduate at the same time as their initial cohort. The U.S. Department of Education does not allow states to report students who received a General Equivalency Diploma (GED) as a high school graduate for these calculations, regardless of when the GED was earned.

Cohort graduation variables are available by race alone, sex alone, and socioeconomic and ability groups for years 2006 through 2017.

**Source**: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2018. Longitudinal 4-year Cohort Graduation Rates: 2006 through 2017. Accessed at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/cohortgradrate.

## Variable Table

| VARIABLE TYPE | VARNAME | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|
| Count | hs_cohort | # of 9th grade students (high school cohort) |
| Count | hs_dropout* | # of 9th grade students who drop out or take >4 years to graduate high school |
| Count | hs_numgrad4 | # of 9th grade students who complete high school in four years |
| Ratio | hs_gradrate4 | % of cohort who completed high school in 4 years |

*Indicates derived variable

## Calculations

### Number of High School Dropouts

Total 9th Grade Cohort − 9th Grade Students Who Complete High School in 4 Years

# College and Career Readiness Indicators

The READY Accountability Model is an indicator-based reporting model adopted by the North Carolina State Board of Education during the 2012-2013 school year. These indicators assess students' career- and college-readiness at various stages in elementary, middle, and high school. Data includes the state-administered end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) assessments, postsecondary entrance examinations (ACT and ACT WorkKeys), and high school graduation rates.

The indicators selected for this database have been limited to indicators of grade-level-proficiency on Grade 3 EOG tests and indicators of college- and career-ready performance on Grade 8 EOG tests, the ACT, and ACT WorkKeys exams.

Career and college readiness indicators are available by race alone, sex alone, and socioeconomic and ability groups for years 2013 through 2017. Grade 3 EOG scores for grade-level-proficiency are available by race alone, sex alone, and socioeconomic and ability groups for years 2014 through 2017.

**Note**: there are no derived variables in this section. Therefore, the Calculations section has been omitted for this set of indicators.

**Source**: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2017. State, District, and School Level Drilldown Performance Data. Accessed at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/accountability/reporting/.

## Variable Table

| VARIABLE TYPE | VARNAME | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|
| Count | d_comp3 | Total # of grade3 EOG exams taken |
| Count | d_math3 | All grade 3 students who took the EOG math exam |
| Count | d_read3 | All grade 3 students who took the EOG reading exam |
| Count | d_comp8 | Total # of grade 8 EOG exams taken |
| Count | d_math8 | All grade 8 students who took the EOG math exam |
| Count | d_read8 | All grade 8 students who took the EOG reading exam |
| Count | d_sci8 | All grade 8 students who took the EOG science exam |
| Count | d_ACT_comp | All grade 11 students who took the ACT exam |
| Count | d_ACT_allsub | Total # of ACT subtests taken |
| Count | d_ACT_eng | All grade 11 students who took the ACT English subtest |
| Count | d_ACT_math | All grade 11 students who took the ACT Math subtest |
| Count | d_ACT_read | All grade 11 students who took the ACT Reading subtest |
| Count | d_ACT_sci | All grade 11 students who took the ACT Science subtest |
| Count | d_ACT_write | All grade 11 students who took the ACT Writing subtest |
| Count | d_WK | All grade 11 students who took the ACT WorkKeys exam |
| Ratio | p_WK | % of students earning a Silver certificate or higher on the ACT WorkKeys exam |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Ratio | p_comp3 | % of all EOG grade 3 exams meeting grade-level-proficient benchmark |
| Ratio | p_math3 | % of grade 3 students meeting grade-level-proficient benchmark on EOG math |
| Ratio | p_read3 | % of grade 3 students meeting the grade-level-proficient benchmark in EOG reading |
| Ratio | p_comp8 | % of all grade 8 EOG exams meeting the college-and-career-ready benchmark |
| Ratio | p_math8 | % of grade 8 students meeting the college-and-career-ready benchmark in EOG math |
| Ratio | p_read8 | % of grade 8 students meeting the college-and-career-ready benchmark in EOG reading |
| Ratio | p_sci8 | % of grade 8 students meeting the college-and-career-ready benchmark in EOG science |
| Ratio | p_ACT_comp | % of grade 11 students who earned an ACT composite score which met the UNC minimum admission benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_allsub | % of all ACT subtests that met the subject's benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_eng | % of ACT English subtests that met ACT benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_math | % of ACT Math subtests that met ACT benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_read | % of ACT Reading subtests that met ACT benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_sci | % of ACT Science subtests that met ACT benchmark |
| Ratio | p_ACT_write | % of ACT Writing subtests that met ACT benchmark |
| Ratio | p_WK | % of students earning a Silver certificate or higher on the ACT WorkKeys exam |

# High School Graduate Intentions

Every public and charter high school overseen by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction reports the postsecondary intentions of its high school graduates at the state, district, and school level.

At the state level, intention indicators are available by race alone, sex alone, and by race and sex for years 2006 through 2017.

**Source**: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. 2017. Table 12.1 High School Graduates Intentions (including Summer School). Accessed at http://apps.schools.nc.gov/ords/f?p=145:1.

## Variable Table

| VARIABLE TYPE | VARNAME | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|
| Count | pub4_nc | # of students intending to enroll in an in-state 4-year public institution |
| Count | pub4_os | # of students intending to enroll in an out-of-state 4-year public institution |
| Count | pub4 | # of students intending to enroll in any 4-year public institution |
| Count | priv4_nc | # of students intending to enroll in an in-state 4-year private institution |
| Count | priv4_os | # of students intending to enroll in an out-of-state 4-year private institution |
| Count | priv4 | # of students intending to enroll in any 4-year private institution |
| Count | pub2_nc | # of students intending to enroll in an in-state community college |
| Count | pub2_os | # of students intending to enroll in an out-of-state community college |
| Count | pub2 | # of students intending to enroll in any community college |
| Count | priv2_nc | # of students intending to enroll in an in-state private 2-year institution |
| Count | priv2_os | # of students intending to enroll in an out-of-state private 2-year institution |
| Count | priv2 | # of students intending to enroll in any private 2-year institution |
| Count | trade_nc | # of students intending to enroll in an in-state business or trade school |
| Count | trade_os | # of students intending to enroll in an out-of-state business or trade school |
| Count | trade | # of students intending to enroll in any business or trade school |
| Count | military | # of students intending to enlist in the military |
| Count | job | # of students intending to join the workforce |
| Count | other | # of students intending other non-postsecondary plans (including unknown) |
| Count | notps | # of students intending any non-postsecondary plans |
| Count | totgrad | # of high school graduates |
| Ratio | p_any_2yr* | % of high school graduates with intent to enroll in any 2-year institution |
| Ratio | p_any_4yr* | % of high school graduates with intent to enroll in any 4-year institution |
| Ratio | p_any_ps* | % of high school graduates with any postsecondary educational intent |
| Ratio | p_int_unc* | % of graduates with intent to enroll at a UNC institution (4-year in-state public system) |
| Ratio | p_int_nccc* | % of graduates with intent to enroll at an NCCC institution (2-year in-state public system) |
| Ratio | p_int_priv4_nc* | % of graduates with intent to enroll at an in-state 4-year private institution |
| Ratio | p_int_4yr_os* | % of graduates with intent to enroll at an out-of-state 4-year institution |
| Ratio | p_int_other_2yr* | % of graduates with intent to enroll at any public or private 2-year institution or business/trade school that is NOT an NCCC (public 2-year) institution |
| Ratio | p_int_mil* | % of graduates with intent to enlist in the military |
| Ratio | p_int_work* | % of graduates with intent to find employment or other intention |

*Indicates derived variable

## Calculations

**Any 2-Year Intent:**

$$\left(\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at Any 2-Year Institution or Trade/Business School}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}\right)$$

**Any 4-Year Intent:**

$$\left(\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at Any 4-Year Institution}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}\right)$$

**Any Postsecondary Intent:**

$$\left(\frac{\text{\# of Students With Any Reported Postsecondary Educational Intentions}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}\right)$$

**UNC Intent:**

$$\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at an NC 4-Year Public Institution}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**NCCC Intent:**

$$\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at an NC 2-Year Public Institution}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**In-State Private 4-year Intent:**

$$\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at an NC 4-Year Private Institution}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**Any Out-of-State 4-year Intent:**

$$\frac{\left(\begin{array}{c}\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at an Out-of-State 4-Year Public Institution +} \\ \text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll Out-of-State 4-year Private Institution}\end{array}\right)}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**Any 2-Year Private or Trade School Intent:**

$$\frac{\left(\begin{array}{c}\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enroll at any Private 2-Year Institution +} \\ \text{\# of Students with Intent to Enroll at any Business or Trade School}\end{array}\right)}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**Military Intent:**

$$\frac{\text{\# of Students With Intent to Enlist in the Military}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**Workforce or Other Intent:**

$$\frac{\left(\begin{array}{c}\text{\# of Students With Intent to Seek Employment +} \\ \text{\# of Students With Some Other Non-Postsecondary Plan}\end{array}\right)}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

# Enrollment in the University of North Carolina System

The University of North Carolina System Office provided data on enrollment, retention, and graduation of all first-time North Carolina public high school graduates who enrolled in the fall after graduation.

Student progress is tracked at several key points throughout the pipeline:

- fall enrollment immediately after high school graduation;
- retention after one semester;
- retention after one year; and
- graduation within six years, or 150% of normal time.

Data is available by race alone, sex alone, and by race and sex for years 2007 through 2017, though not all indicators are available for all years.

**Source**: The University of North Carolina System Office. 2018. Special tabulation.

## Variable Table

| VARIABLE TYPE | VARNAME | DESCRIPTION |
|---|---|---|
| Count | unc_enr_fall | # of NC public high school graduates enrolled in Fall Y1 immediately following graduation |
| Count | unc_ret_spring | # of NC public high school graduates who return for Spring Y1 |
| Count | unc_ret_y2 | # of NC public high school graduates who return for Fall Y2 |
| Count | unc_grad6 | # of NC public high school graduates who graduate in 6 years (150% of normal time) |
| Count | unc_loss_spring* | # of NC public high school graduates who do not return for Spring Y1 |
| Count | unc_loss_y2* | # of NC public high school graduates who do not return for Fall Y2 |
| Count | unc_loss_grad6* | # of NC public high school graduates who complete 1+ years, but do not graduate within 6 years |
| Ratio | p_enr_unc* | % of NC public high school graduates enrolled in UNC in Fall Y1 immediately following graduation |
| Ratio | p_unc_ret_spring* | % of UNC fall enrollees who returned for 2nd semester |
| Ratio | p_unc_ret_y2* | % of UNC fall enrollees who returned for 2nd year |
| Ratio | p_unc_grad6* | % of UNC fall enrollees who graduated within 6 years (150% of normal time) |
| Ratio | p_unc_loss_spring* | % of UNC fall enrollees who drop out after 1 semester |
| Ratio | p_unc_loss_y2* | % of UNC fall enrollees who complete 1 year, but drop out before completing 2nd year |
| Ratio | p_unc_loss_grad6* | % of UNC fall enrollees who complete at least 1 year, but do not graduate within 6 years (150% of normal time) |

*Indicates derived variable

## Calculations

### Number of High School Graduates Who Leave Before 2nd Semester

# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 − # of NC DPI Grads Who Returned For Spring Y1

### Number of High School Graduates Who Only Completed One Year

# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned For Spring Y1 − # of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Fall Y2

**Number of High School Graduates Who Completed At Least One Year, but Did Not Graduate in Six Years**

# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned For Fall Y2 $-$ # of NC DPI Grads Who Graduated Within Six Years

**Percent of High School Graduates Enrolled in UNC in Immediate Fall Term**

$$\frac{\text{\# of Recent NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Returned For Spring Semester in First Year**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Spring Y1}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Returned For Fall Y2**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Fall Y2}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Graduate in Six Years**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Graduated in Six Years}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Did Not Return After One Semester**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Did Not Return for Spring Y1}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Did Not Return After One Year**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Did Not Return for Fall Y2}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

**Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Completed 1+ Years, but Did Not Graduate in Six Years**

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Fall Y2, but Did Not Graduate in Six Years}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1}}$$

# Enrollment in North Carolina Community College System

The North Carolina Community College System provided data on enrollment counts and retention and graduation rates of all first-time North Carolina public high school graduates who enrolled in a Curriculum program in the fall after graduation. Additionally, NCCCS provided information on the number of recent high school graduates who enrolled in a Curriculum program at a community college within 16 months of graduation.

Key transition points in the two-year educational pipeline include:

- fall enrollment immediately after graduation;
- fall enrollment within 16 months of graduation;
- retention after one semester;
- retention after one year; and
- graduation within three years or 150% of normal time.

Data is available by race alone, sex alone, and by race and sex for years 2007 through 2017, though not all indicators are available for all years.

**Source**: The North Carolina Community College System. 2018. Special tabulation.

## Variable Table

| VARIABLE TYPE | VARNAME | DESCRIPTION |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Count | nccc_enr_fall | # of NC public high school graduates enrolled in Fall Y1 immediately following graduation |
| Count | nccc_enr_16mo | # of NC public high school graduates enrolled within 16 months of graduation |
| Count | nccc_ret_spring | # of NC public high school graduates who returned for Spring Y1 |
| Count | nccc_ret_y2 | # of NC public high school graduates who returned for Fall Y2 |
| Count | nccc_grad3 | # of NC public high school graduates who graduated in three years (150% of normal time) |
| Count | nccc_loss_spring* | # of NC public high school graduates who did not return for Spring Y1 |
| Count | nccc_loss_y2* | # of NC public high school graduates who did not return for Fall Y2 |
| Count | nccc_loss_grad3* | # of NC public high school graduates who completed 1+ years, but did not graduate within 6 years |
| Ratio | p_enr_nccc* | % of NC public high school graduates enrolled in NCCC in immediate fall term |
| Ratio | p_enr_nccc16mo* | % of NC public high school graduates who enrolled in NCCC within 16 months of graduation |
| Ratio | p_nccc_ret_spring | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who returned for Spring Y1 |
| Ratio | p_nccc_ret_y2 | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who returned for Fall Y2 |
| Ratio | p_nccc_grad3 | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who graduated within 3 years (150% of normal time) |
| Ratio | p_nccc_loss_spring* | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who did not return for Spring Y1 |
| Ratio | p_nccc_loss_y2* | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who did not return for Fall Y2 |
| Ratio | p_nccc_loss_grad3* | % of NCCC Fall Y1 enrollees who completed at least 1 year, but did not graduate within 3 years (150% of normal time) |

*Indicates derived variable

## Calculations

### Number of High School Graduates Who Did Not Return For Spring Year One

# of NC DPI Grads Who Enrolled in Fall Y1 $-$ # of NC DPI Grads Who Returned For Spring Y1

### Number of High School Graduates Who Did Not Return For Fall Year Two

# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Spring Y1 $-$ # of NC DPI Grads Who Returned For Fall Y2

### Number of High School Graduates Who Completed At Least One Year, but Did Not Graduate within Three Years

# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned Fall Y2 $-$ # of NC DPI Grads Who Graduated Within Three Years

### Percent of High School Graduates Enrolled in NCCC in Immediate Fall Term

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 Immediately}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

### Percent of High School Graduates Enrolled in NCCC within 16 Months of Graduation

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 Within 16 Mos. of Graduation}}{\text{Total High School Graduates}}$$

### Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Did Not Return After One Semester

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Did Not Return for Spring Y1}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 Immediately}}$$

### Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Did Not Return After One Year

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Did Not Return for Fall Y2}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 Immediately}}$$

### Percent of Fall Enrollees Who Completed At Least One Year, but Did Not Graduate in Six Years

$$\frac{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Who Returned for Fall Y2, but Did Not Graduate in Three Years}}{\text{\# of NC DPI Grads Enrolled in Fall Y1 Immediately}}$$

# Appendix A: Definitions

**The ACT College Admissions Assessment:** A standardized test used for college admissions with four main sections in Mathematics, Reading, Science, and English, and an optional writing section. It is administered by American College Testing, Inc. Each section is individually scored on a scale of 1-36 and has its own College-Readiness Benchmark Score (not to be confused with NC DPI's college readiness indicators). The composite score is the rounded whole number average of the four sections.

In North Carolina, all Grade 11 students take the ACT exam during the March statewide administration. Test results are used in North Carolina's school accountability program.

**ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores:** These benchmark scores represent the minimum score needed on an ACT subject-area test to indicate a 50% chance or obtaining a B or higher or about a 75% chance of obtaining a C or higher in the corresponding credit-bearing college courses. These scores were empirically derived by ACT, Inc. based on the actual performance of students in college.

Benchmark Scores:

- English: 18
- Mathematics: 22
- Reading: 22
- Science: 23
- STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math): 26

The STEM benchmark, added in 2015, represents a blend of student scores on the science and mathematics exams.

**The ACT WorkKeys Assessment:** A collection of job skills assessments administered by American College Testing, Inc.

Three assessments - Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents - are required to be eligible for the National Career Readiness Certificate.

- Applied Math assessment - measures mathematics and problem-solving skills commonly used in the workplace.
- Graphic Literacy assessment – measures reading and comprehension of graphical information, such as charts and diagrams, that are commonly found in workplace reading materials.
- Workplace Documents assessment – measures reading and comprehension of common workplace written materials, such as email messages, contracts, or legal regulations.

Achievement levels include Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum. Individuals who score a Silver or higher are classified as "Career-Ready."

In North Carolina, the ACT WorkKeys assessment is administered to all students who are identified as Career Technical Education (CTE) concentrators. CTE concentrators have completed or are expected to complete a four-course CTE sequence prior to graduation.

**NC DPI Grade Level Proficient Benchmark Score:** A student must earn at least 3 out of 5 on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) exams to demonstrate grade-level proficiency.

**NC DPI College- and Career-Ready Benchmark Score:** A student must earn at least 4 out of 5 on the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction's End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) exams to demonstrate college- and career-ready proficiency.

**University of North Carolina Minimum ACT Composite Score:** The University of North Carolina System requires that all high school graduates earn a composite score on the ACT exam of at least 17 to be considered for admission to any UNC school. This is the systemwide minimum and individual schools may have higher minimum admission standards.

**"In-State":** An institution located in the state of a student's legal residency. For the purposes of this database, "in-state" refers to North Carolina.

**"Out-of-State":** An institution located in any other state than that of a student's legal residency. For the purposes of this database, "out-of-state" refers to all states other than North Carolina.

**4-Year Public Institution:** A publicly funded college or university that confers degrees at or above the baccalaureate level.

In North Carolina, all public four-year universities are contained within the University of North Carolina System. There are sixteen postsecondary UNC institutions in total.

**4-Year Private Institution:** A privately funded college or university that confers degrees at or above the baccalaureate level.

**Community College:** A publically funded two-year college that confers associate degrees and workforce credentials; may also be known as "Junior College"

In North Carolina, all public community colleges are contained within the North Carolina Community College System. There are 58 NCCC institutions in total.

**2-Year Private Institution:** A privately funded college that confers associate degrees and workforce credentials such as certificates or postsecondary diplomas.

**Business or Trade School:** A college, typically for-profit, offering short-term programs up to two years that confer skilled trade certifications, such as in carpentry or electrical installation.

**Retention:** Continued enrollment within the same institution or university system (institution-focused metric)

**Persistence:** Continued enrollment within any postsecondary institution (student-focused metric)

**Completion:** Completion of a postsecondary degree or credential at the same institution or university system (institution-focused metric)

**Attainment:** Completion of a postsecondary degree or credential at any institution (student-focused metric)

## Appendix B: Data Limitations and Special Notes

1) During the years covered by this data set (2006-2017), there were changes in the reporting of student race/ethnicity. In addition, the ways in which race/ethnicity are reported across institutions are not the same.

   Changes in race/ethnicity reporting
   Initially, all institutions reported five distinct racial/ethnic categories: American Indian, Asian, Black, Hispanic, and White. Beginning in the 2008-09 academic year, the University of North Carolina and North Carolina Community College System began reporting two additional categories: **Multiracial** (two or more races) and **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander**. Previously, individuals who identified as multiracial would have reported the group they most identified with or may have reported "Other Race." Individuals who identified as Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander were classified as Asian.

   These new classifications were not fully introduced at the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction until the 2010-11 academic year.

   Differences in race/ethnicity reporting across institutions
   All students are assigned a racial/ethnic category in the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction data (high school graduation, readiness indicators, and graduate intentions). In contrast, UNC and NC Community College data report some unknown and missing values.

   **Indicators affected:** All

2) The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction suppresses some results to protect the privacy of students, in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines and internal standards. Data results exceeding 95% are top coded at 95%; results less than 5% are bottom coded at 5%. In small cells with fewer than 10 students, no data is provided.

   **Indicators affected**: 4-year Cohort Graduation Rates, College and Career Readiness Indicators, High School Graduate Intentions

   **Note:** Small cell suppression size increased from 5 to 10 during the 2015-2016 school year, so additional data missingness for small groups may be present in data for 2016 and 2017.

3) Data from the University of North Carolina System Office and the North Carolina Community College System were provided through special data requests and will not align perfectly with the public-facing data dashboards.

**Indicators affected:** Enrollment in the University of North Carolina System, Enrollment in the North Carolina Community Colleges System

4) The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction changed the End-of-Grade (EOG) achievement level benchmarks from four achievement levels to five achievement levels between 2012-13 and 2013-14. Levels 3 and 4 (grade-level proficient) in 2012-13 are equivalent to Levels 4 and 5 (college- and career-ready) in 2013-14. As a result, Grade 3 EOG Reading has been omitted for school year 2012-13 due to lack of comparability to later years.

   **Indicators affected**: College and Career Readiness Indicators

5) Institution-Focused Metrics vs. Student-Focused Metrics – retention and completion were used to measure postsecondary enrollment outcomes (see Appendix A for definitions). As a result, any student who transferred out of the UNC or NCCC system will be recorded as a loss, regardless of the individual's final outcomes. Data was limited to the scope of the providing institution.

   **Indicators affected:** Enrollment in the University of North Carolina System, Enrollment in the North Carolina Community College System