

BY THE NUMBERS

N.C. VACCINATION RATES



School vaccination rates are a matter of public record in North Carolina, and per G.S.130A-155(c), public, private and religious schools must file an annual immunization report with the North Carolina Department of Public Health by Nov.1 each year.

That report must contain the following information: the number of children attending the school or facility, the number of children who had not obtained the required immunization(s) within 30 calendar days of their first attendance, the number of children who received a medical exemption and the number of children who received a religious exemption.

The lists that follow were created by The Smoky Mountain News from those reports, which can be found here: www.mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/wcqs/files/201808/2017-2018_kindergarten_immunization_reporting_data_by_school__003_.pdf

The column labeled “percent unvaccinated” is the sum of students receiving a medical exemption (usually because of compromised immune systems), students receiving a religious exemption (no verification from religious authorities is required for such an exemption, only a written statement form a parent or guardian) and students who had not been granted an exemption and still had not been vaccinated in accordance with state law, which mandates MMR, DTP, polio, rubella, mumps, Hib, hepatitis B and chicken pox.

2017-2018 N.C. kindergarten immunization in the WNC region

Most Western North Carolina counties report more unvaccinated students than the statewide average; only Madison, Jackson, Haywood, Graham and Swain counties have fewer unvaccinated students than the statewide average.

County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Buncombe	2,542	9.9%
Cherokee	244	8.6%
Transylvania	278	8.3%
WNC region	6,388	7.7%
Clay	94	7.5%
Henderson	1,124	7.3%
Yancey	176	6.9%
Macon	345	6.7%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%
Madison	195	5.7%
Jackson	303	4.9%
Haywood	656	4.8%
Graham	164	4.3%
Swain	267	3.0%

2017-2018 N.C. kindergarten immunization reporting by school type

Across the state, private and charter schools showed a higher percentage of unvaccinated students than public schools, however, due to their relative scarcity – 428 private schools and 134 charter schools with a total enrollment of about 16,000 – only around 1,300 of these students are unvaccinated, compared to 1,324 public schools with a lower percentage of unvaccinated students but a higher overall number of unvaccinated students, about 5,900.

Type	Number	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Private	428	7,295	8.9%
Charter	134	8,467	7.2%
Statewide	1,886	120,792	5.9%
Public	1,324	104,910	5.6%

2017-2018 N.C. kindergarten immunization reporting by school

In The Smoky Mountain News’ four-county coverage area, most schools have fewer unvaccinated students than the state average. In June, Haywood County Schools created a policy that mandates removing unvaccinated children from schools for 21 days if a case of measles occurs at their school. Shining Rock Classical Academy, a charter school in Haywood County, had the highest rate of unvaccinated students in the county, but refused to comment on whether or not it also had such a policy.

Haywood County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Shining Rock Classical Academy	44	11.4%
Haywood Christian Academy	9	11.1%
Hazelwood Elementary	120	6.7%
North Canton Elementary	62	6.5%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%
Jonathan Valley Elementary	80	5.0%
Clyde Elementary	86	4.7%
Meadowbrook Elementary	52	3.8%
Riverbend Elementary	38	2.6%
Junaluska Elementary	80	2.5%
Bethel Elementary School	84	1.2%
Blue Ridge Adventist Christian School	1	0.0%
TOTAL:	656	4.8%

Jackson County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Victory Christian School	7	14.3%
Smokey Mountain Elementary	37	8.1%
Scotts Creek Elementary	51	7.8%
Summit Charter School	28	7.1%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%
Cullowhee Valley School	63	4.8%
Fairview Elementary School	94	2.2%
Blue Ridge Elementary	23	0.0%
TOTAL:	303	4.9%

Macon County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Cartoogechaye Elementary	62	12.9%
East Franklin Elementary	67	10.4%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%
Iotla Valley Elementary	79	5.0%
Highlands School	25	4.0%
South Macon Elementary	97	3.1%
Trimont	6	0.0%
Nantahala School	9	0.0%
TOTAL:	345	6.7%

Swain County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Swain County East Elementary	64	6.3%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%
Cherokee Elementary School	95	3.2%
Swain County West Elementary	73	1.4%
Mountain Discovery Charter School	20	0.0%
New Kituwah Academy	15	0.0%
TOTAL:	267	3.0%

2017-2018 N.C. kindergarten immunization reporting by county

Buncombe County ranks third overall in North Carolina for the highest percentage of unvaccinated students. By and large, the vast majority of unvaccinated students across the state claim religious exemptions. Only 60 of more than 1,880 North Carolina schools have a higher rate of medical exemption than religious exemption. Across the country, most states allow some form of religious exemption, but the state of New York recently abolished the practice while in the midst a measles outbreak.

County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated	County	Kindergarten students	Percent unvaccinated
Bertie	150	15.3%	Randolph	1,631	4.5%
Hoke	769	10.1%	Graham	164	4.3%
Buncombe	2,542	9.9%	Wayne	1,653	4.2%
Durham	3,699	9.6%	Cleveland	1,144	4.1%
Mecklenburg	13,095	9.5%	Nash	1,025	4.1%
Davie	445	9.4%	Yadkin	393	4.1%
Cherokee	244	8.6%	Bladen	371	4.0%
Gaston	2,801	8.6%	Pasquotank	441	4.0%
Cumberland	4,477	8.5%	Rutherford	763	3.9%
Transylvania	278	8.3%	Cabarrus	3,026	3.8%
Caswell	199	8.0%	Rowan	2,345	3.8%
Polk	157	7.6%	Currituck	296	3.7%
Clay	94	7.5%	Forsyth	4,691	3.7%
Watauga	361	7.5%	Columbus	623	3.6%
Henderson	1,124	7.3%	Wilson	1,072	3.6%
Craven	1,123	7.2%	Chatham	722	3.6%
Perquimans	111	7.2%	Johnston	2,728	3.5%
New Hanover	2,330	6.9%	Alleghany	121	3.3%
Yancey	176	6.9%	Catawba	1,820	3.3%
Mitchell	162	6.8%	Harnett	1,679	3.3%
Gates	120	6.7%	Granville	615	3.2%
Iredell	2,107	6.7%	Carteret	660	3.1%
Macon	345	6.7%	McDowell	413	3.1%
Orange	1,247	6.7%	Swain	267	3.0%
Avery	152	6.6%	Stanly	669	2.9%
Wake	13,572	6.6%	Stokes	431	2.8%
Union	2,912	6.5%	Rockingham	958	2.7%
Sampson	946	6.2%	Halifax	543	2.6%
Edgecombe	653	6.0%	Lee	724	2.6%
Statewide	120,792	5.9%	Camden	122	2.4%
Burke	914	5.9%	Pamlico	131	2.4%
Lincoln	1,012	5.8%	Wilkes	724	2.3%
Onslow	2,406	5.8%	Franklin	644	2.2%
Madison	195	5.7%	Martin	242	2.1%
Lenoir	782	5.6%	Person	440	2.0%
Beaufort	569	5.5%	Anson	262	1.9%
Brunswick	1,063	5.5%	Duplin	732	1.6%
Caldwell	821	5.4%	Montgomery	334	1.5%
Pender	614	5.4%	Jones	82	1.2%
Moore	1,171	5.4%	Surry	777	1.2%
Robeson	1,826	5.3%	Richmond	533	0.8%
Pitt	1,877	5.0%	Northampton	134	0.7%
Davidson	1,876	4.9%	Ashe	218	0.5%
Guilford	6,250	4.9%	Greene	223	0.4%
Jackson	303	4.9%	Chowan	128	0.0%
Vance	714	4.9%	Hyde	49	0.0%
Haywood	656	4.8%	Tyrrell	36	0.0%
Hertford	215	4.7%	Warren	138	0.0%
Dare	409	4.6%	Washington	109	0.0%
Scotland	459	4.6%			