

FAIRFIELD, LEXINGTON AND RICHLAND COUNTIES

MIDLANDS REGION
COMPREHENSIVE

Local Needs Assessment

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2024

To view the full report, visit www.mebasc.com/PerkinsV-2024

labor market ANALYSIS INFORMATION

- The Midlands Area Career and Technology Education (CTE), representing Fairfield, Lexington, and Richland counties, prepares high school students for college and a meaningful career. CTE offers programming aligned with local labor market data; provides real-world instruction from qualified and credentialed faculty in well-equipped, realistic lab environments to provide hands-on learning; and culminates with a certificate or credential upon completion to be job ready, enter the military, or seamlessly transfer to higher education in a related field.
- In the last twenty years, South Carolina's manufacturing wages have caught up to and surpassed several states with deep-rooted manufacturing industries, such as Michigan and Ohio. (1)
- Between 2020 and 2030, US Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS) projects approximately 60 percent of fast-growing and well-paying jobs, not requiring post-secondary degrees, will be in occupations in Construction & Installation, Maintenance & Repair, and Transportation. (2)
- High growth jobs, requiring a post-secondary degree are in Business, Management, & Sales; Computer & Engineering, and Healthcare lead, with opportunities in Education, Social Service, & Legal and Media, Arts, & Sports. (3)
- During the last two years, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Marketing Management, Surgical Technician, and Behavior Interventionist certificates or credentials have been added to reflect job growth in those sectors.

- The top employment in the Midlands area is in all major occupation groups, except for mining and utilities, adding almost 38,000 more jobs between 2020-2030, at a projected rate of 10.21% over the period. (4)
- The top skills for SC employers, listed in job openings, are Critical Thinking, Active Listening, Speaking, and Reading Comprehension. This correlates with the MEBA CLNA Survey findings, which also included Work Ethic. (5)(6)
- All districts have programs that align with the labor market data with dual enrollment and exemption credit available for transition into higher education.

student performance REQUIRED INDICATORS

- The Midlands Area CTE continues its tradition of exceeding state graduation rate goals with a median graduation rate of 98.4%.
- 98.1% of Midlands Area CTE students are placed in college, the military, or employment upon completion of high school.
- 76.95% Midlands Area CTE students received an industry recognized credential or certificate, which reflects an upward growth trend of 11% in the last two years.



occupational projections IN THE MIDLANDS AREA

Occupation	Base Employment	Projected Employment	Numeric Changes	Percent Changes	Annual Job Openings	Entry Level	Median	Experienced
Total Occupations	371,173	409,069	37,896	10.2%	45,944	\$25,355	\$51,272	\$64,210
Management	22,264	25,045	2,781	12.5%	2,154	\$56,701	\$108,805	\$134,867
Business & Financial Operations	19,198	21,308	2,110	11.0%	1,937	\$42,224	\$70,158	\$84,136
Computer & Mathematical	10,113	11,320	1,207	11.9%	868	\$47,133	\$83,200	\$101,234
Architecture & Engineering	5,514	5,905	391	7.1%	470	\$46,738	\$76,232	\$90,979
Life, Physical & Social Science	2,557	2,852	295	11.5%	262	\$39,374	\$65,645	\$78,770
Community & Social Service	9,019	9,947	928	10.3%	1,037	\$30,763	\$47,154	\$55,349
Legal	4,740	5,201	461	9.7%	393	\$44,408	\$83,221	\$102,648
Educational Instruction & Library	18,834	20,287	1,453	7.7%	1,805	\$30,805	\$56,930	\$69,992
Arts, Design, Entertainment, Sports & Media	4,975	5,486	511	10.3%	569	\$28,226	\$51,958	\$63,814
Healthcare Practitioners & Technical	22,491	27,844	5,353	23.8%	1,937	\$40,477	\$85,488	\$107,973
Healthcare Support	13,265	16,723	3,458	26.1%	2,146	\$23,525	\$32,302	\$36,691
Protective Service	12,116	13,920	1,804	14.9%	1,599	\$24,502	\$39,790	\$47,445
Food Preparation & Serving Related	28,542	32,934	4,392	15.4%	5,754	\$18,720	\$25,771	\$29,286
Building and Grounds Cleaning & Maintenance	12,734	13,958	1,224	9.6%	1,849	\$21,736	\$30,618	\$35,048
Personal Care & Service	8,096	9,639	1,543	19.1%	1,416	\$20,530	\$30,222	\$35,090
Sales & Related	37,767	39,564	1,797	4.8%	5,100	\$21,798	\$42,203	\$52,416
Office & Administrative Support	58,788	59,350	562	1.0%	6,548	\$27,560	\$41,184	\$47,986
Farming, Fishing & Forestry	1,067	1,143	76	7.1%	177	\$25,792	\$37,419	\$54,413
Construction & Extraction	13,518	13,959	441	3.3%	1,385	\$31,221	\$46,675	\$54,413
Installation, Maintenance & Repair	15,332	16,792	1,460	9.5%	1,664	\$32,406	\$50,398	\$59,384
Production	19,798	20,737	939	4.7%	2,285	\$29,037	\$43,534	\$50,773
Transportation & Material Moving	30,445	35,155	4,710	15.5%	4,587	\$24,814	\$37,357	\$43,638

Source: SC 2023 Economic Analysis Report, Figures 40 & 42, SC Department of Employment & Workforce

371,173 TOTAL EMPLOYMENT

1

SIZE, SCOPE & QUALITY

- There are 11 programs that articulate to a 4-year institutions; 20 programs that provide online CTE; and 32 programs that offer a national certification.
- Collaboration with Midlands Technical College (MTC) is producing tangible opportunities for transferring CTE students. There are three dual enrollment programs between the Midlands Area CTE and MTC:
 - Advanced Manufacturing Technology Certificate
 - Public Service Technology Certificate
 - Healthcare Technology Certificate
- All programs meet industry recognized standards, through an accreditation process or by standards identified by business and industry. Each program must be reviewed every five years for student learning outcomes, curriculum, and business/industry standards to ensure relevance.
- Robust articulation between secondary and post-secondary is occurring through dual enrollment and exemption credit. If further education opportunities exist beyond MTC, they coordinate with their 4-year university partners to ensure successful transfers of students and their credits.
- Active advisory boards that exist for every program include local employers, community stakeholders, and school leadership. Changing community needs are driving the need to engage more business and industry leaders through local chambers of commerce and business sector associations.

2

IMPLEMENTING CTE PROGRAMS

- Educators within CTE communicate effectively and work to educate peers outside of CTE, and within the school on terminology and philosophy.
- Efforts to have intentional scheduling and logically sequenced programming outside of CTE and in post-secondary have improved.
- Middle school coursework includes STEM, Computer Science, Introduction to Career Clusters, Family & Consumer Science, Agriculture, Financial Literacy, and a Gateway to Health Science.
- Career Exploration for middle school (6-8th grade) students, parents, and educators has been very successful through industry visits, virtual job shadowing, educational materials, and marketing materials.
- High school credit is offered in middle school for Fundamentals of Computing and Agriculture Science Technology.
- MEBA hosted a career exploration event allowing 8th graders from the region to “explore careers of their interest across the 16-career clusters and to learn about career programs at their high schools and MTC in November 2023.
- The Michelin Scholars Program, which incorporates Youth Apprenticeship and Apprenticeship, is a benchmark for an exemplary education-employer partnership.
- Plans are being made to offer Flex Factor at MTC, which is a STEM education program to acquaint K-12 students with advanced manufacturing technology, entrepreneurship, the education/career pathways to a STEM career.

3

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION & TRAINING

- Recruitment and retention of workers in all industries, including education, continues to be a priority.
- Professional associations and organizations recommendations and word of mouth referrals have yielded excellent CTE instructors, aiding recruitment of qualified faculty.
- Job openings abound for CTE professionals with jobs posted on the state E-Recruitment job board, district website job boards, social media, job fairs, and word of mouth and recommendations from business & industry.
- Retention strategies promoted to CTE faculty are relative programmatic autonomy, industry expertise, excellent professional development, and the ability to shape the future workforce. Additionally, financial incentives, such as extended contracts and stipends, have occasionally been offered.
- High level education administrators visit business and industry monthly to see the work environment and remain aware of workforce trends and partnership opportunities.

4

IMPROVING ACCESS & EQUITY

- MTC recently developed an Open Educational Resources Faculty Learning Community (OER-FLC) collaborating with college leadership, instructional designers, librarians, and faculty to guide the development and adoption of OER materials at the college. OER improves student success through widespread access and affordability to help all students, and by redesigning seven courses, saved over \$800k for students in textbook costs.
- Collaborative efforts continue with the SC Office of Special Education.
- Midlands CTE has offered funding and resources, normally not covered in the program, to provide needed equipment and supplies to students with financial challenges.
- Transportation, while always a challenge, was provided to overcome barriers to work-based learning participation.
- Students can earn money through on-the-job assignments to apply to extra programming costs.
- Counseling and career services are offered to assist special populations at MTC.
- Apprenticeship is a successful pathway to allow students to go to school, earning a paycheck, and gain invaluable work experience simultaneously. Many employers cover tuition and book expenses, as well.



FOOTNOTES

1. Brandon Wilkerson, “What a difference two decades makes: South Carolina manufacturing wages in the lead,” SCDEW, Labor Information Blog, May 28, 2024.
2. Ryan Farrell and William Lawhorn, “Fast-growing occupations that pay well and don’t require a college degree,” Career Outlook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2022.
3. Elka Torpey, “Projected openings in occupations that require a college degree,” Career Outlook, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, September 2021.
4. SC Department of Employment and Workforce, Midlands Workforce Development Area Community Profile, “Labor market projections,” May 22, 2024.
5. SC Department of Employment and Workforce, “South Carolina 2022 Economic Analysis Report”, June 30, 2022.