

High School Dropouts and Graduates

Definition

Percent of Students Who Are High School Dropouts and Graduates

These indicators are defined as the percentage of students enrolled in grades 10-12 who drop out of high school and the percentage of high school seniors who graduated from high school.

Significance

Graduating from high school is an important indicator of a community's success in educating its children. It is also a predictor of adult success. The decline in manufacturing and the increased reliance on an information-based economy will make a high school education even more important in the future.

Risk Factors

Students are more likely to drop out of school when they are poor, live in low-income communities and come from single-parent families.¹ Early warning signs that a student is at risk are the inability to read at grade level, poor grades, truancy, substance abuse and teen pregnancy.²

Impact

- ◆ "High school dropouts have lower earnings, experience more unemployment and are more likely to end up on welfare and in prison than their peers who complete high school or college."³
- ◆ The probability of falling into poverty is three times higher for high school dropouts than for those who have finished high school.⁴
- ◆ Women who drop out of high school are more likely to become pregnant and give birth at a young age, and are more likely to become single parents than women who graduate from high school.⁵
- ◆ A child whose mother dropped out of school is twice as likely to drop out of school as the child of a mother who is a high school graduate.⁶
- ◆ In 1997, high school graduates earned an average of \$7,000 more than high school dropouts (\$22,154 versus \$15,011).⁷
- ◆ Due to changes in the economy, between 1973 and 1995 the average hourly wage, adjusted for inflation, of high school dropouts fell by 23 percent.⁸
- ◆ The high school completion rate for Hispanics in 1996 was only 62 percent, compared with 83 percent for non-Hispanic blacks and 92 percent for non-Hispanic whites.⁹

Nevada

The percentage of students in grades 10-12 who were high school dropouts in Nevada for 1996-1998 was **12.4**. And, **74.4** percent of high school seniors in Nevada who enrolled in high school subsequently graduated.

Counties

Among the 17 counties in Nevada, the percentage of students in grades 10-12 who were high school dropouts from 1996-1998 ranged from a low of 1.3 in Lincoln County to a high of 14.8 percent in Clark County. The percentage of seniors who graduated from high school ranged from a low of 72.3 in Clark County to a high of 95.1 in Storey County.

*** Nevada's 1999 National Rank: 51¹⁰**

*"It's true that education costs money, but so does ignorance. I believe the people of Nevada would rather spend the money now, on our children's education, than spend it later on unemployment, substance abuse counseling, or prison."*¹¹

Governor Kenny Guinn
State of the State Address, 1999

*** Based on teens 16-19 years of age.**

Percent of High School Dropouts and Graduates

Percent of High School Dropouts and Graduates, 1996 - 1998

	Percent of Students in Grades 10-12 Who Were High School Dropouts				Percent of High School Seniors Who Graduated from High School*			
	1996	1997	1998	Average 1996-1998	1996	1997	1998	Average 1996-1998
Carson City	6.8 %	7.5 %	6.1 %	6.8 %	81.7 %	78.9 %	80.9 %	80.5 %
Churchill County	10.5	9.6	8.4	9.5	81.0	80.5	82.3	81.3
Clark County	13.9	15.3	15.2	14.8	70.5	71.3	75.2	72.3
Douglas County	3.8	3.6	6.8	4.8	73.8	78.2	79.0	77.0
Elko County	6.2	6.0	5.7	6.0	85.0	85.8	86.9	85.9
Esmeralda County **	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Eureka County	0.0	0.0	4.8	1.6	82.4	88.5	89.7	86.8
Humboldt County	8.0	6.4	2.9	5.8	81.5	82.6	91.7	85.3
Lander County	9.5	8.1	7.4	8.3	88.2	79.2	78.4	81.9
Lincoln County	1.5	0.9	1.6	1.3	83.0	83.8	102.5	89.7
Lyon County	9.8	9.1	9.5	9.5	82.0	78.5	71.0	77.1
Mineral County	7.3	8.3	6.4	7.3	81.3	75.4	69.5	75.4
Nye County	7.0	8.4	12.9	9.4	80.3	82.1	77.1	79.9
Pershing County	5.5	6.2	1.7	4.5	87.0	88.9	88.6	88.2
Storey County	7.5	6.3	6.0	6.6	103.3	103.5	78.6	95.1
Washoe County	10.6	11.0	9.3	10.3	74.0	74.2	71.9	73.4
White Pine County	2.0	9.5	6.6	6.0	87.1	76.7	101.8	88.5
Nevada	11.9 %	12.9 %	12.5 %	12.4 %	73.4 %	73.8 %	76.1 %	74.4 %

* Columns refer to seniors only

** Esmeralda students (grades 9-12) attend school in neighboring Nye County

Source: State of Nevada Department of Education: Planning, Research and Evaluation Branch, 1996, 1997, 1998