

High School Dropout and Graduation Information

Nevada

Nevada’s dropout rate for grades 9 through 12 increased from 5.0 percent in 2000-2001 to 6.3 percent in 2001-2002. The graduation rate (high school, adjusted, and adult diploma count divided by a total 12th-grade enrollment count) decreased from 77.2 percent in 2000-2001 to 76.4 percent in 2001-2002.¹ Of the racial/ethnic categories, Hispanics had the highest percentage of high school dropouts followed by blacks (African Americans), Native Americans/Alaskan Natives, whites, and Asians/Pacific Islanders. Additionally, 12th graders were more likely to leave school than students in grades 9 through 11; and males were more likely to dropout than were females.²

Counties

Among the 17 counties in Nevada, the percentage of students in grades 9 through 12 who dropped out of school during the 2001-2002 school year ranged from a low of 0.5 in Douglas County to a high of 11.6 in Storey County. Clark County, the state’s largest school district with 62,665 students enrolled in high school, saw its dropout rate increase slightly over the previous year. Washoe County, on the other hand, the state’s second largest school district with 15,939 students, experienced a decrease.

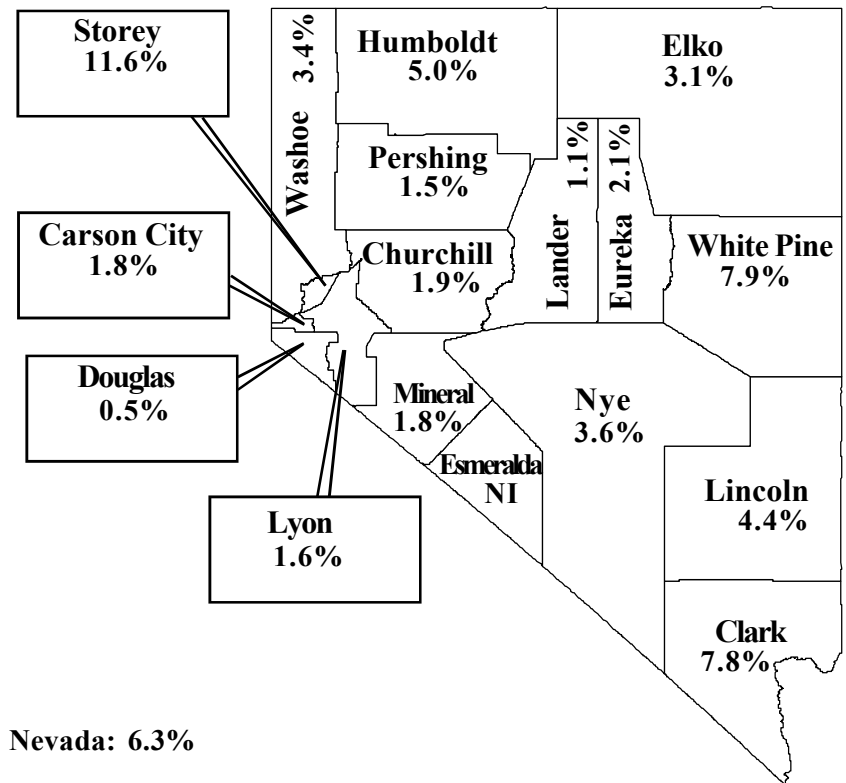
Significant Factors

Having a high school degree will be essential for obtaining good-paying jobs.³ To illustrate, the earnings gap between high school graduates and nongraduates has grown significantly, even over the past few decades. In 1975, the mean earnings of non-high school graduates 18 years and older was \$6,198; whereas, the corresponding figure for a high school graduate was \$7,843, a 26.5 percent difference.⁴ In contrast, the mean earnings of

Definition

Dropouts are students who had withdrawn from school after the first day of fall enrollment, or who had completed the previous school year, but did not return for the start of the new school year.⁵

Nevada Dropout Rate by County: 2001-2002



Note: NI = No Instruction. The Esmeralda School District does not provide instruction for grades 9-12.
Source: Nevada Department of Education, May 2003, *Nevada Public School Dropouts School Year 2001-2002*, by Orval K. Nutting.

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a non-high school graduate in 2001 was \$18,793 and \$26,795 for graduates, a 42.6 percent difference.⁶

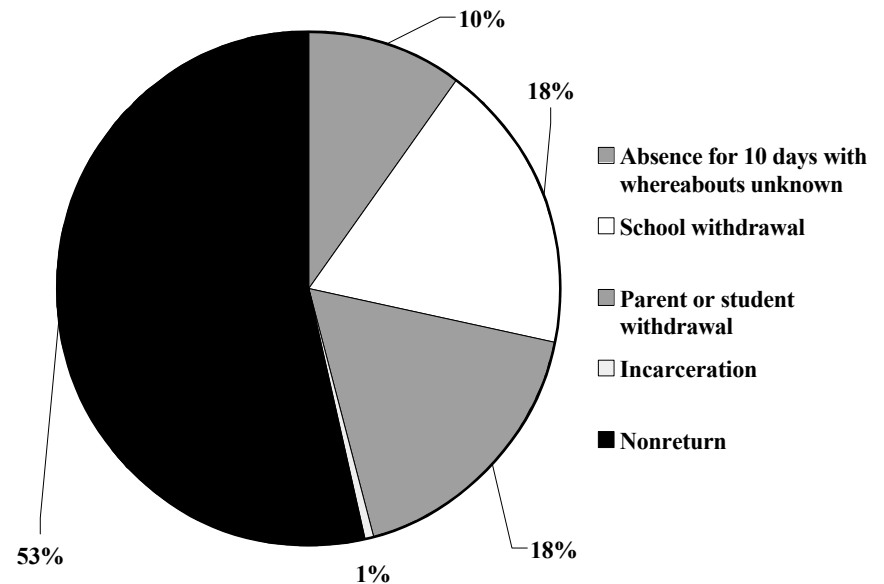
Keeping students in school to realize their full earnings potential has been the topic of many studies. Shore for the Annie E. Casey Foundation summarizes five strategies for reducing the dropout rate:

- “• Make it harder for students to drop out of school
 - Address the underlying causes of dropping out.
 - Address the needs of the groups at highest risk of dropping out.
 - Strengthen school readiness.
 - Strengthen the skills and understanding of the adults who affect teens’ motivation and ability to stay in school.”⁷

Dropout rates will vary depending upon the criteria used to measure them. The Annie E. Casey Foundation, for example, defines dropouts as the percentage of 16- to 19-year-olds who are not enrolled in school and are not high school graduates (students who earned a GED are considered graduates).⁸ They use Current Population Survey data and base their rates on three-year averages. This type of dropout rate is referred to as status rate. Based on these criteria, they estimate Nevada’s high school dropout rate for 2000 at 14 percent.⁹

Nevada KIDS COUNT reports rates using Nevada State Department of Education data. The department uses an event rate which reports the “percentage of students who leave school each year without completing a high school program.”¹⁰ Grades, not ages of students, are used in calculating the rates (see definition page 61), and rates are based on one academic school year, not an average of three years.

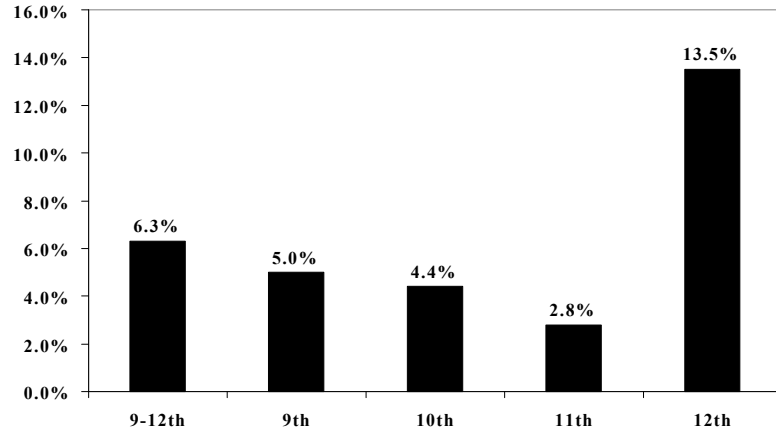
**Nevada Dropouts by Withdrawal Category:
2001-2002**



Note: School Withdrawal = Withdrawal at the request of the school.
 Parent or Student Withdrawal = Withdrawal at the request of the student or the student’s parent/guardian.
 Nonreturn = This is also known as a summer dropout. The student has completed the previous school year, but did not return to school by December 1 of the current year.
Source: Nevada Department of Education, May 2003, *Nevada Public School Dropouts: School Year 2000-2001* by Orval K. Nutting.

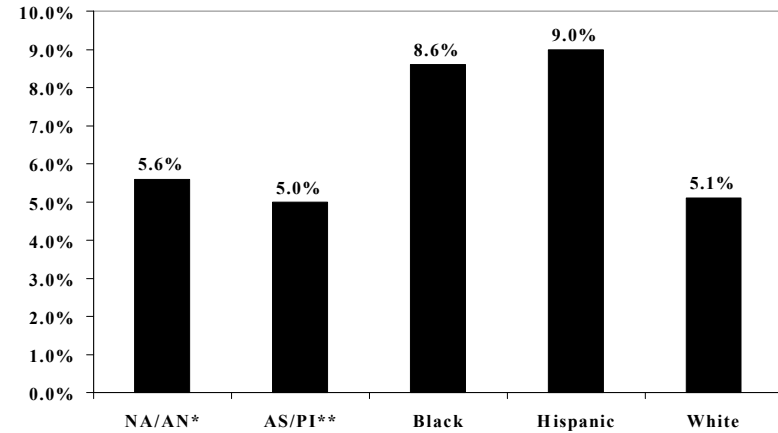
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Nevada Dropout Rates by Grade: 2001-2002



Source: Nevada Department of Education, May 2003, *Nevada Public School Dropouts: School Year 2001-2002*, by Orval K. Nutting.

Nevada Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity: 2001-2002

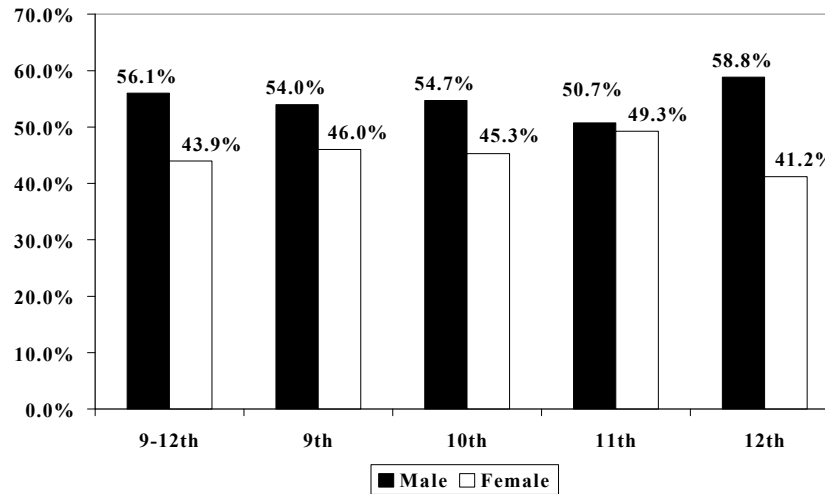


*NA/AN = Native American/Alaskan Native.

**AS/PI= Asian/Pacific Islander.

Source: Nevada Department of Education, May 2003, *Nevada Public School Dropouts: School Year 2001-2002*, by Orval K. Nutting.

Nevada Dropout Rates by Gender: 2001-2002



Source: Nevada Department of Education, May 2003, *Nevada Public School Dropouts: School Year 2001-2002*, by Orval K. Nutting.