

# NEVADA KIDS COUNT

## Nevada Education Indicators

### Introduction

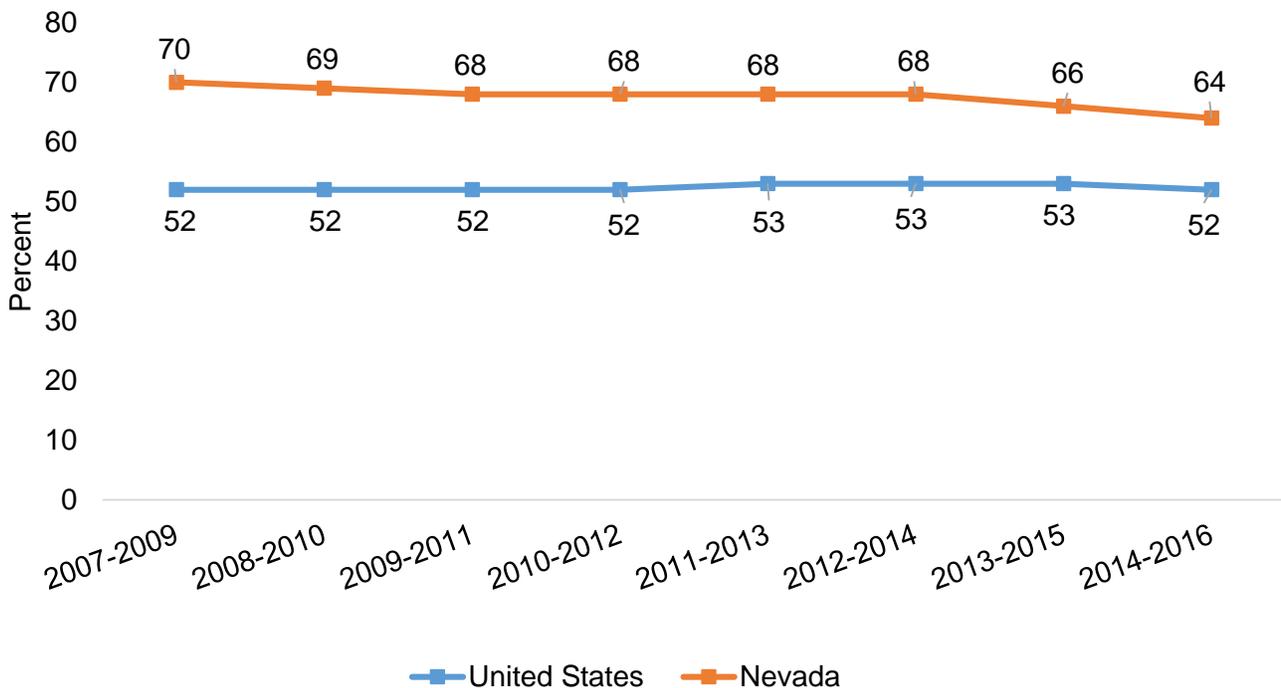
The Annie E. Casey Foundation ranked Nevada 49<sup>th</sup> among the states on its education index in its *KIDS COUNT Data Book 2017*. The education index includes four indicators: young children not in school, fourth graders not proficient in reading, eighth graders not proficient in math, and high school students not graduating on time. This *Newsletter* presents trend data for the four indicators to see if Nevada is making gains in education over time. It also compares Nevada's performance to that of the nation's.

### Young Children Not in School

"Young children not in school" is measured by the share of children ages 3 to 4 not enrolled in school, including nursery school, preschool, or kindergarten, during the previous three months. Sixty-four percent of Nevada children ages 3-4 did not enroll in school during 2014-2016 (Figure 1). This is a 6.0 percentage point drop compared to 2007-2009.

The national average for young children not in school was 52.0 percent in 2014-2016. At 64.0 percent, Nevada statistic is 23.5 percent higher compared to the national average. Young children not in school declined by 8.6 percent in Nevada from 2007-2009, whereas the national average remained remarkably stable.

**Figure 1: Young Children Not in School**



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### High School Students Not Graduating On Time

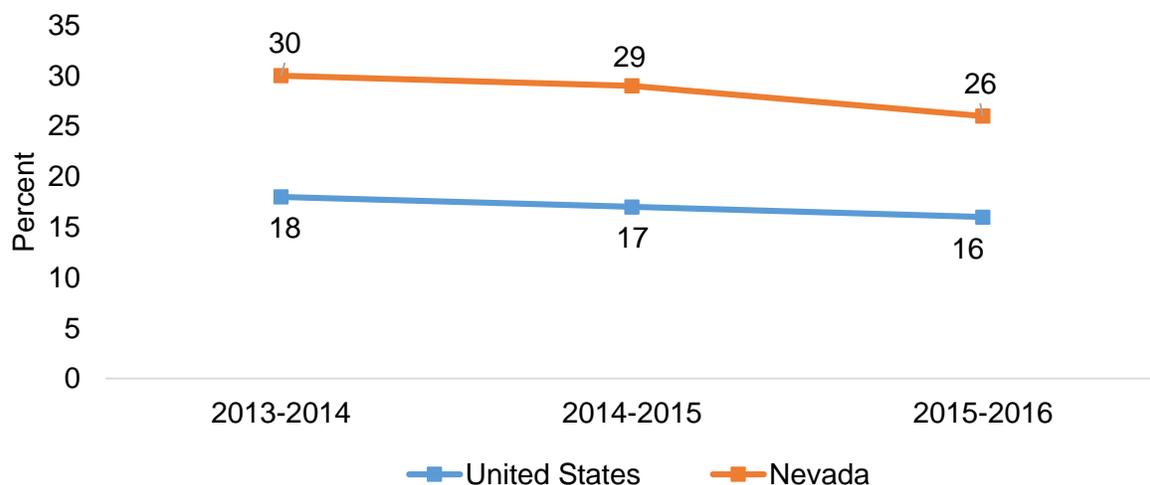
“High school students not graduating on time” is measured by the percentage of students entering the freshman class and not graduating in four years.

In 2015-2016, 26.0 percent of high school students in Nevada did not graduate on time (Figure 2). This is 4.0 percentage points less compared to 2013-2014. Over the years, from 2013 to 2016, high school students not graduating on time exhibits a clear decreasing trend for Nevada.

The national average for high school students not graduating on time is 16.0 percent for academic year 2015-2016, which is 10.0 percentage points lower compared to Nevada. Figure 2 shows that the national average for high school students not graduating on time decreased gradually from 2013 to 2016.

Noteworthy, from 2013 to 2016, the national and Nevada averages for high school students not graduating on time declined by 11.1 percent and 13.3 percent, respectively.

**Figure 2: High School Students Not Graduating On Time**



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### Fourth Graders Not Proficient in Reading

Proficiency in reading by the end of third grade is essential for a child's educational advancement. Children who lack the proficiency of reading but enter the fourth grade are more likely to drop out of high school, which could ultimately affect their career success.

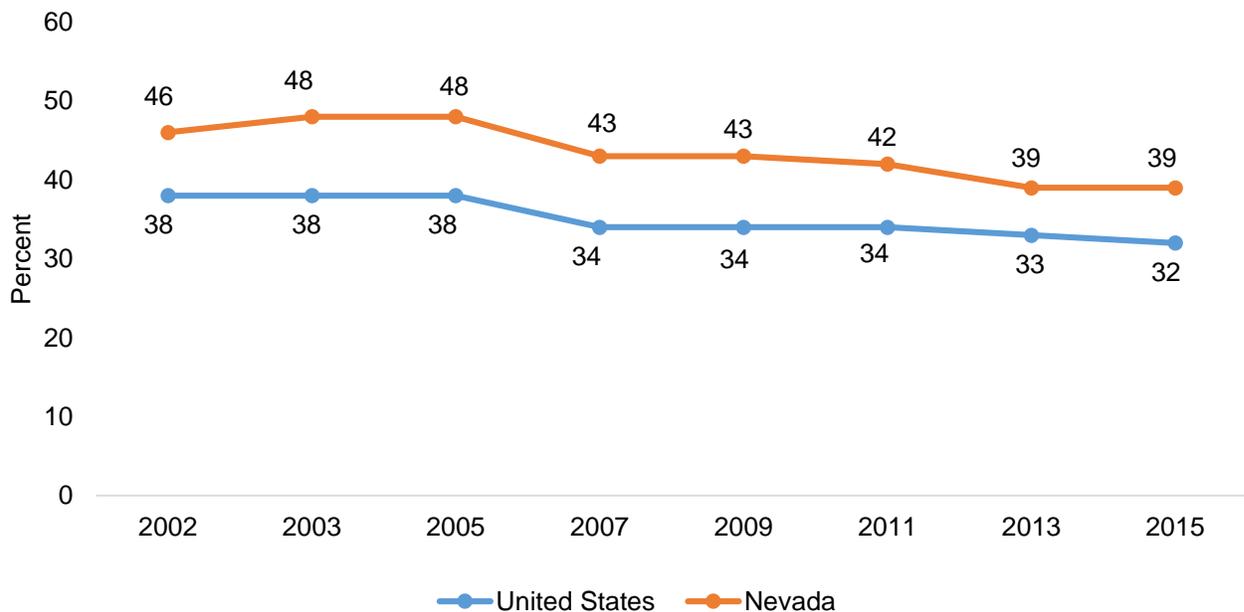
"Fourth graders not proficient in reading" is measured by the basic reading proficiency level from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading test.

In 2015, 39.0 percent of fourth graders in Nevada were not proficient in reading (Figure 3). This is 9.0 percentage points lower than in 2005. Over the decade, 2005-2015, fourth graders' reading achievement has improved in Nevada (Figure 3).

The national average for fourth graders not proficient in reading was 32.0 percent in 2015. At 39.0 percent, Nevada is 22 percent higher compared to the national average.

Over the decade, 2005-2015, the national and Nevada averages of fourth graders not proficient in reading declined by 15.8 and 18.8 percent, respectively.

**Figure 3: Fourth Graders Not Proficient in Reading: 2002-2015**



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### Eighth Graders Not Proficient in Mathematics

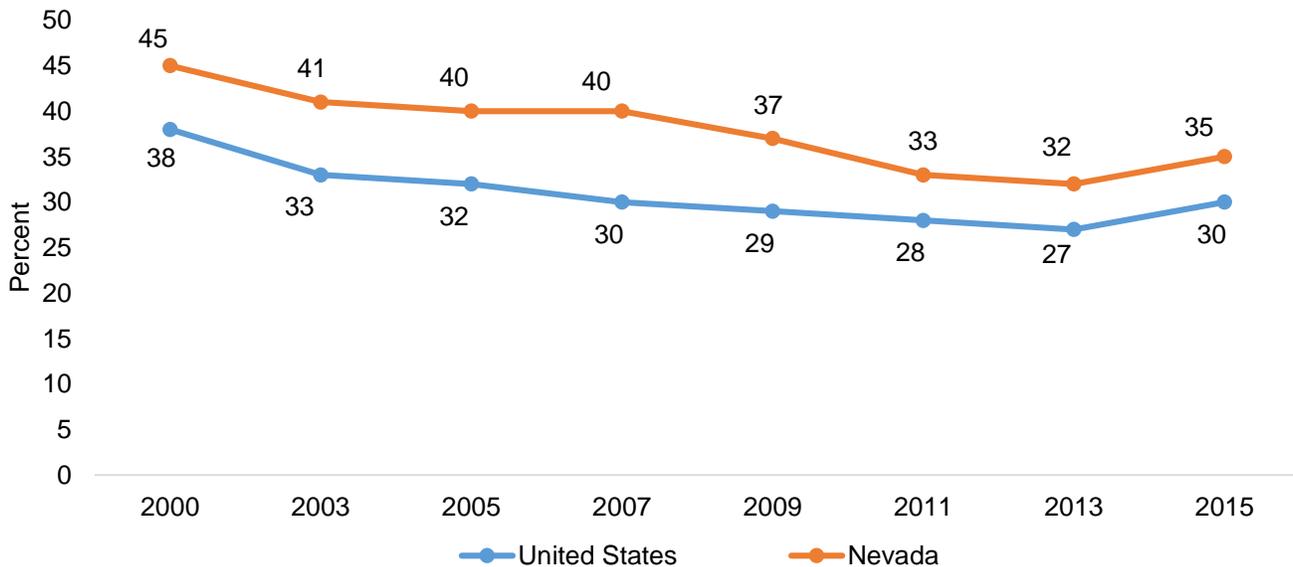
Eighth graders not proficient in mathematics is measured by the definitions of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Thirty-five percent of eight graders in Nevada were not proficient in mathematics in 2015. This is 10 percentage points lower compared to 2000. Over the period 2000 to 2013, eighth graders not proficient in mathematics in Nevada declined by 13.0 percentage points.

The national average for eighth graders not proficient in mathematics was 30.0 percent in 2015, this was 5.0 percentage points lower compared to Nevada.

Over the period 2000-2013, both the national and Nevada's averages for eighth graders not proficient in mathematics declined by 28.9 percent. Finally, in 2015, both the national average and Nevada average of eighth graders not proficient in mathematics increased by 3.0 percentage points compared to 2013.

**Figure 4: Eighth Graders Not Proficient in Mathematics: 2000-2015**



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### Government Funded Programs to Uplift Education

The Nevada Department of Education conducts several programs to enhance education performances of the state.

- ***Victory School Program***

This program is designed to uplift educational achievements of underperforming schools in the poorest zip codes of the state.

- ***Zoom School Program***

The main focus of this program is to improve English language proficiency and, thereby, prepare students to achieve academic success in school.

- ***Read by Grade Three***

This program helps to increase academic achievements of students in reading, starting from kindergarten through third grade.

- ***Great Teaching and Leading Fund***

This program aims to incentivize the professional development of teachers, administrators, and other education-related professionals. Peer-assistance, peer-review programs, leadership training, and development programs are carried out under this program (Nevada Department of Education, 2018).



Clearly all four education indicators discussed in this *Newsletter*, young children not in school, high school students not graduating on time, fourth graders not proficient in reading, and eighth graders not proficient in mathematics, have improved over the last years in Nevada. The education rankings of Nevada, however remain almost stable, since all the above mentioned education indicators have improved at the national level as well. Thus, the education performance gain in Nevada did not alter Nevada's rankings because most states are also improving their performances.

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### References

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### Photo credits

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