## High School Graduation in California

### Percentage of Students Graduating High School: 2018; Showing Counties

![Map of California showing graduation rates](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

**Legend:**
- **Percent:**
  - No Data
  - 96.3% to 99.9%
  - 90.0% to 91.6%
  - 81.7% to 87.6%
  - 79.9% to 87.6%

**Definition:** Percentage of public school students from the graduating class who receive a high school diploma (e.g., in 2018, 83% of California students from the graduating class graduated high school).

**Data Source:** California Dept. of Education, *Cohort Outcome Data* (May 2017) & *Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate and Outcome Data* (Jun. 2019).

### Percentage of Students Not Completing High School: 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alameda County</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contra Costa County</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresno County</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kern County</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles County</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange County</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riverside County</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sacramento County</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Bernardino County</td>
<td>9.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego County</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santa Clara County</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition:** Percentage of public school students who do not complete high school with their graduating class (e.g., in 2018, 9.6% of California students from the graduating class did not complete high school).

**Data Source:** California Dept. of Education, *Cohort Outcome Data* (Jun. 2017) & *Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate and Outcome Data* (May 2019).

### What It Is

On kidsdata.org, high school graduation is measured by the number and percentage of public school students from the graduating class (the four-year adjusted cohort) who receive a regular high school diploma. These data are available for the state, counties, and school districts overall and, at the state and county level, by gender and by race/ethnicity.

Kidsdata.org also provides the number and percentage of students who do not complete high school with their graduating class, overall and by race/ethnicity.

### Why This Topic Is Important

Graduating from high school is associated with a range of positive life outcomes, from better employment and income prospects to better health and life expectancy. Although many young people who do not receive a high school diploma go on to earn an equivalency degree, such as a GED, this credential is associated with lower earning potential than a standard diploma.

The benefits of graduating from high school do not stop with the individual; society also benefits in significant ways. For example, if the U.S. reached a 90% graduation rate for just one class of students, it would increase annual earnings by an estimated $3.1 billion. High school graduates also are more likely to vote and less likely to need social services or engage in criminal activity. A recent study estimates that students who drop out of high school are over three times more likely to be arrested by age 18 than those who graduate.

### How Children Are Faring

The graduation rate among California high school students from the class of 2018 was 83%. Across counties with data, four had rates above 90%, while five were lower than 75%. Statewide, girls are more likely to graduate high school with their class than are boys, as are Asian American, Filipino, and white students when compared with their peers in other groups.

More than 48,000 students from California’s class of 2018 did not complete high school with their cohort—nearly 1 in every 10 students. The rate of exit before completing high school varies widely by region and race/ethnicity; e.g., among groups with data from the 2018 class, the percentage of African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native students not completing high school was more than double the percentage of white students and more
Percentage of Students Not Completing High School, by Race/Ethnicity: 2018

![Bar chart showing percentage of students not completing high school by race/ethnicity.]

- **African American/Black:** 16.2%
- **American Indian/Alaska Native:** 7.2%
- **Asian American:** 8.7%
- **Filipino:** 3.2%
- **Hispanic/Latino:** 11.6%
- **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander:** 17.9%
- **White:** 3.2%
- **Multiracial:**

**Definition:** Percentage of public school students who do not complete high school with their graduating class, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2018, 10.8% of Hispanic/Latino students from the graduating class in California did not complete high school).

**Data Source:** California Dept. of Education, [Cohort Outcome Data](Jun. 2017) & [Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate and Outcome Data](May 2019).

View references for this text and additional research on this topic: [https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/21/high-school-graduation/summary](https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/21/high-school-graduation/summary)