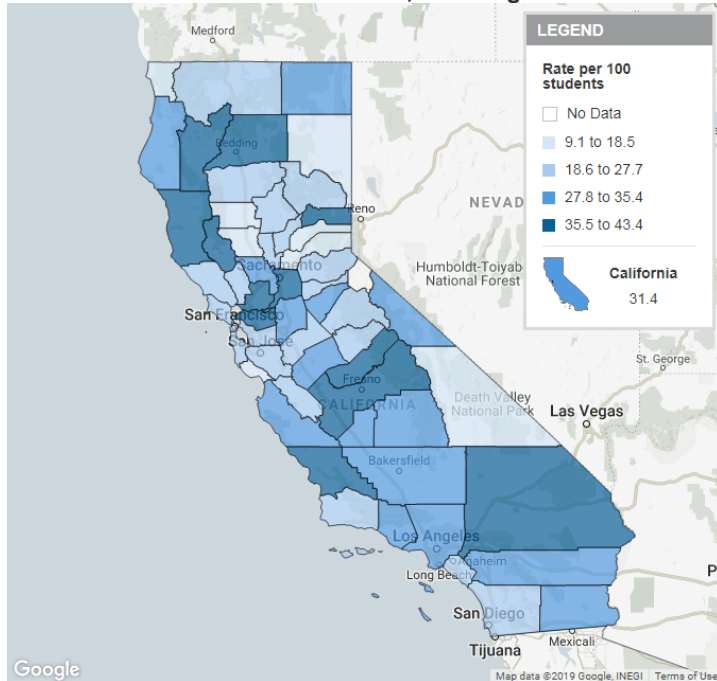


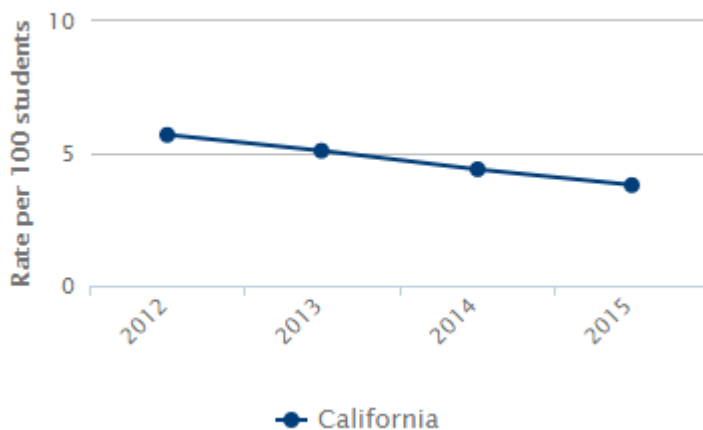
School Attendance and Discipline in California

Students Truant from School: 2015; Showing Counties



Definition: Number of K-12 public school students reported as being truant at least once during the school year per 100 students (e.g., in 2015, 31.4 per 100 California students were reported as being truant at least once during the school year).
Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [DataQuest](#) (Jun. 2016).

Students Suspended from School



Definition: Number of K-12 public school students committing one or more offenses who were subsequently suspended from school per 100 students (e.g., in 2015, 3.8 per 100 California students were suspended from school).
Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [DataQuest](#) (May 2016).

What It Is

Kidsdata.org offers the following measures of school absence and exclusionary discipline:

- The number and rate of K-12 public school students expelled, suspended, and truant from school, as recorded by the California Department of Education
- Estimates of reasons for absence in the past month and truancy in the past year among students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs, derived from student reports*
- Staff reports of the extent to which truancy or cutting class is a problem at their school

Why This Topic Is Important

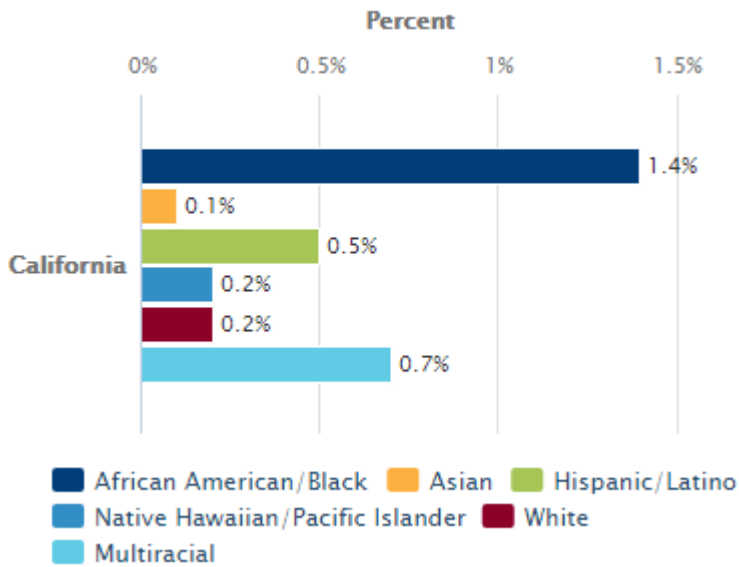
Regular school attendance is a predictor of academic success (1). Frequent absences (excused or unexcused) are linked to negative school outcomes, including lower test scores and higher dropout rates, which can have lifelong effects on employment and earning potential (1, 2). A child might miss school for many reasons, including health problems or other excused absences, unexcused absences (truancy), and exclusionary punishments (suspensions and expulsions).

A growing body of research shows that students who are suspended or expelled are more likely to have academic problems, drop out of school, and enter the juvenile justice system (3, 4). In the 2013-14 school year, 2.8 million K-12 public school students were suspended from school at least once in the U.S., resulting in a significant loss of classroom instruction time (5). Suspensions and expulsions disproportionately affect students of color (particularly African American boys), students with disabilities, and LGBTQ youth (3, 4, 5).

How Children Are Faring

Whether children miss school, along with their reasons for absence, vary by student and family characteristics. According to 2013-2015 estimates, 41% of California students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs with high levels of school connectedness did not miss any school in the previous month, compared with 27% of students with low levels of connectedness. Across groups with data in 2013-2015, common reasons for absence not related to physical illness were lack of sleep, needing to assist family or friends, boredom with school, and feelings of sadness,

Students Missing School in Past Month Due to Suspension, by Race/Ethnicity: 2013-2015



Definition: Estimated percentage of public school students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs who have missed school in the previous 30 days, by race/ethnicity and reason for absence (e.g., in 2013-2015, an estimated 27.8% of Hispanic/Latino students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs in California had missed school in the previous month because of illness).

Data Source: WestEd, *California Healthy Kids Survey*. California Department of Education (Jul. 2017).

Students Expelled from School: 2015

Locations	Number
California	5,692
Alameda County	132
Contra Costa County	74
Fresno County	350
Kern County	198
Los Angeles County	580
Orange County	187
Riverside County	762
Sacramento County	156
San Bernardino County	728
San Diego County	347
Santa Clara County	184

Definition: Number of K-12 public school students committing one or more offenses who were subsequently expelled from school (e.g., in 2015, 5,692 California students were expelled from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, *DataQuest* (May 2016).

hopelessness, anxiety, stress, or anger.

In 2015 more than 2 million California students—almost one-third of public school students statewide—were truant (meaning they missed more than 30 minutes of instruction without an excuse three or more times during the school year). That same school year, more than 243,000 students were suspended and nearly 5,700 students were expelled. The rate of students suspended has declined in recent years, from 5.7 students per 100 in 2012 to 3.8 per 100 in 2015.

Student reports from 2013-2015 show that an estimated 29% of 7th graders, 34% of 9th graders, and 49% of 11th graders in California had skipped school or cut class at least once in the previous year. Across student groups, rates of skipping school at least once were 50% or higher for students in non-traditional programs, students with low levels of school connectedness, and gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. A survey of public school staff from the same period shows that student truancy or class cutting was a moderate or severe problem according to 17% of reports from middle school staff, 46% of reports from high school staff, and 58% of reports from staff at non-traditional schools.

View references for this text and additional research on this topic:

<https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/77/school-attendance-and-discipline/summary>



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