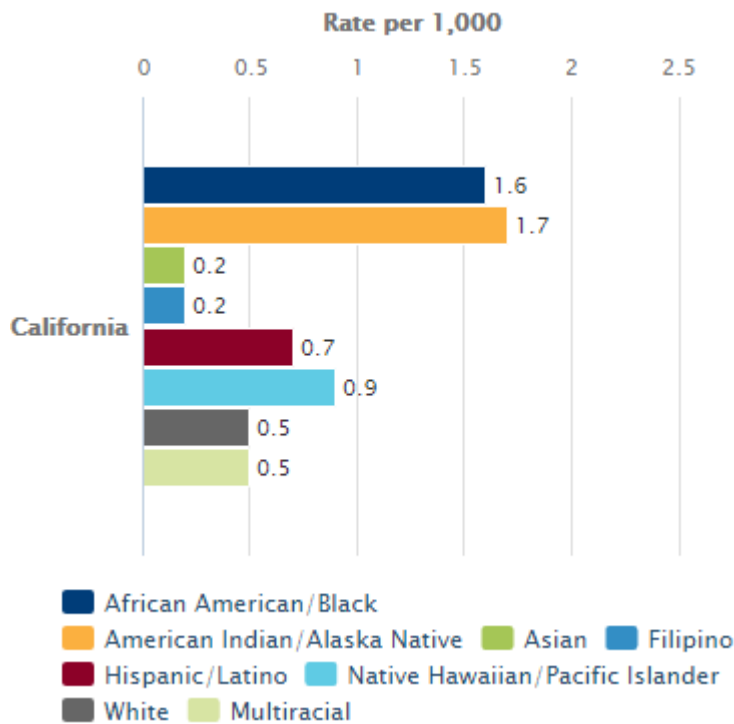


School Attendance and Discipline in California

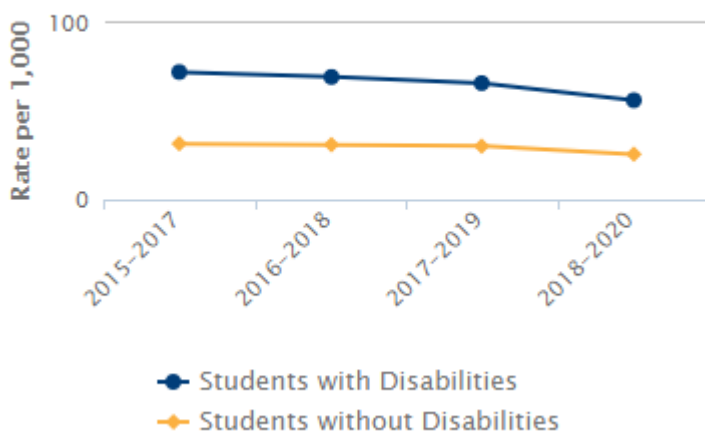
Students Expelled from School, by Race/Ethnicity: 2018-2020



Definition: Number of K-12 public school students expelled from school per 1,000 students, by race/ethnicity (e.g., in 2018-2020, 0.7 per 1,000 Hispanic/Latino students in California were expelled from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [Expulsion Data](#) (May 2021).

Students Suspended from School, by Disability Status
California



Definition: Number of K-12 public school students suspended from school per 1,000 students, by disability status (e.g., in 2018-2020, 56.3 per 1,000 California students with disabilities were suspended from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [Suspension Data](#) (May 2021).

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 suspended and expelled from school, by county and school district, as recorded by the California Dept. of Education; also available are rates by disability status, foster youth status, homelessness status, race/ethnicity, and socioeconomic status
- Estimates of reasons for absence in the previous month and truancy in the previous year among students in grades 7, 9, 11, and non-traditional programs, derived from student reports; these data come from the [California Healthy Kids Survey](#) and are available by grade level, gender, level of school connectedness, parent education level, and sexual orientation
- Staff reports on the extent to which truancy or cutting class is a problem at their school; this indicator comes from the [California School Staff Survey](#) and is available for elementary, middle, high, and non-traditional school staff

Why This Topic Is Important

Regular school attendance is a predictor of academic success. Frequent absences for any reason are linked to negative school outcomes, including lower test scores and higher dropout rates, which can have lifelong effects on employment and earning potential. A child might miss school for many reasons, including excused absences (such as for health or personal reasons), truancy, and exclusionary punishment (suspensions and expulsions). Rates of chronic school absence tend to be higher among students who live in poverty, those with special health care needs or disabilities, youth of color, English learners, homeless students, and children in foster care.

Students who are suspended or expelled are more likely than their peers to have academic problems, drop out of school, and enter the juvenile justice system. In the 2015-16 school year, U.S. public school students lost more than 11 million days of instruction due to suspensions. Suspensions and expulsions disproportionately affect children of color (particularly African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native students), those

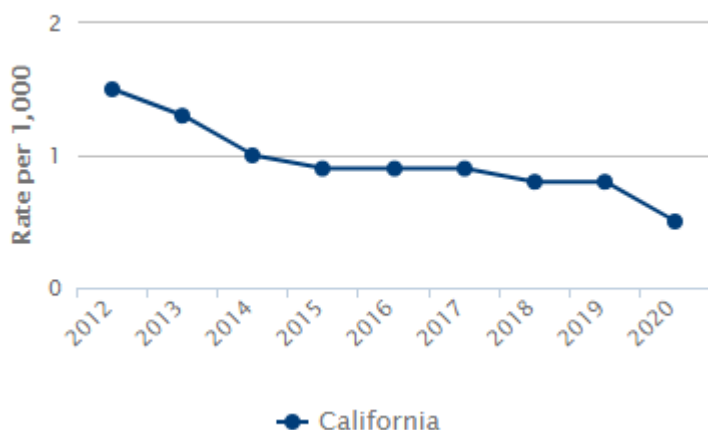
Students Suspended from School: 2020

Locations	Rate per 1,000
Alameda County	23.4
Contra Costa County	32.2
Fresno County	37.6
Kern County	33.2
Los Angeles County	13.3
Orange County	14.6
Riverside County	27.9
Sacramento County	37.8
San Bernardino County	33.9
San Diego County	19.8
Santa Clara County	17.0

Definition: Number of K-12 public school students suspended during the school year, per 1,000 students (e.g., in 2020, 24.5 per 1,000 California students were suspended from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [Suspension Data](#) (May 2021).

Students Expelled from School



Definition: Number of K-12 public school students expelled during the school year, per 1,000 students (e.g., in 2020, 0.5 per 1,000 California students were expelled from school).

Data Source: California Dept. of Education, [Expulsion Data](#) (May 2021).

with disabilities, and LGBTQ youth.

Exclusionary punishment also leads to significant social costs. For example, dropouts resulting from suspensions have been estimated to cost California approximately \$2.7 billion over the lifetime of a single 10th grade cohort. Costs are due in part to lost wages and tax revenue, increased crime, and higher health care expenses.

How Children Are Faring

Nearly 155,000 California K-12 public school students were suspended from school in 2020–25 for every 1,000. Suspension rates vary dramatically across regions with data, from 13 per 1,000 to 62 per 1,000 for counties and from fewer than 3 per 1,000 to more than 150 per 1,000 for school districts in 2020. Statewide, suspension rates by demographic group show disparate disciplinary treatment of students of color (particularly African American/black and American Indian/Alaska Native youth), students with disabilities, homeless students, foster youth, and socioeconomically disadvantaged students. In 2018-2020, socioeconomically disadvantaged students and students with disabilities were suspended at more than double the rate of their peers, and foster youth were suspended at more than four times the rate of non-foster youth.

In 2020, California students were expelled from school at a rate of 0.5 per 1,000, a drop of two-thirds compared with 2012. Among students with disabilities, foster youth, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students of every race/ethnicity for which data are available, expulsion rates decreased between 2015-2017 and 2018-2020. Still, disparities persist. In 2018-2020, rates of expulsion among African American/black (1.6 per 1,000) and American Indian/Alaska Native (1.7 per 1,000) students were more than double the rate for Hispanic/Latino students (0.7 per 1,000), more than triple the rate for white students (0.5 per 1,000), and ten times the rates for Asian American and Filipino students (0.2 per 1,000). The rate at which homeless students were expelled from school was 1.6 per 1,000, up from 1.4 in 2015-2017, and more than double the rate for non-homeless students (0.6 per 1,000).

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

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



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