

11. Education

The quality of an area's educational institutions can be a critical factor in a person's decision on where to live and raise a family. Education is considered one of the most fundamental socioeconomic indicators of a successful life, and a county with substantial, respectable schools is very attractive to parents.

School enrollment for El Dorado County residents has increased by an average rate of 1.6 percent since 1990, although there was a 1 percent decrease in enrollment in the 2002-2003 school year. Dropout rates in El Dorado County and across California are at their lowest in ten years, down to 1.2 percent and 2.7 percent, respectively. SAT scores have remained relatively constant with an increase of twenty points since 1990.

Language and Immigration Trends

California has always been a desired destination for many immigrants. The trends that have become apparent in immigration correspond with the trends seen in the California school systems. These trends also reflect the level of English proficiency that immigrant children are exhibiting. Currently, the number of students enrolled in grades K-12 who are not proficient in the English language is nearing 25 percent. The growth rate of students with limited English skills exceeds the increase in enrollment, and the amount of students who never become proficient in English by the end of high school is alarmingly high.

The majority of the students who enter the school system with limited English proficiency skills are learning English as their second language (ESL). They are not immigrants themselves, but their parents are immigrants, who are often lacking strong, if any, English skills. The most impacted areas are the high-density areas, such as Los Angeles and Sacramento, although all of California is experiencing this phenomenon. The primary language for over 75 percent of the ESL students is Spanish, followed by various Asian languages.

The lack of English proficiency in the United States contributes to problems that will affect these students later in life, such as lower incomes, fewer options for employment, and a depressed labor market. The future of these children depends greatly on the instruction they receive in school.

At this time, ESL students are so severely lacking English proficiency skills that it is difficult for them to succeed in regular school instructional programs. This is largely due to the lack of credentialed teachers working with them, a lack of a specialized curriculum used to provide instruction to them, the poverty levels of ESL families, and the social pressures that these students feel. The goal of California schools is to prevent students from exiting the school system without basic mastery of the English language. The right programs and opportunities should enable the students to achieve exceptional success in the future.

In this section:

School Enrollment	105
High School Dropout Rate	106
Average SAT Scores	107
Academic Performance Index (API)	108
Statewide & Similar Schools Rank	111

Education Starts at Home

While the state and county educational systems are primarily responsible for the education students receive, educational resources provided at home by the parents are also important.

Conditions in the home begin impacting children at an early age and continue influencing them throughout their lives. By examining the educational opportunities at home, it becomes clear which resources a child may be lacking during the developmental stages of educational skills. The two major factors that can determine the success of early childhood education are the amount of education the parents possess and the income level of the family. Parents with a higher education, especially mothers raising children at home, usually produce children who pursue higher educations. If the parents have a strong educational background, they are more likely to take an active role in encouraging learning. The income level can influence the resources available to the child, such as availability of computers as well as parental interaction. Other factors that may determine the success of early childhood development are preschool attendance and English proficiency skills of both the parents and children.

Often, the amount of education a person achieves has a strong influence on occupations, earnings, poverty, and health care.

School Enrollment

Overview

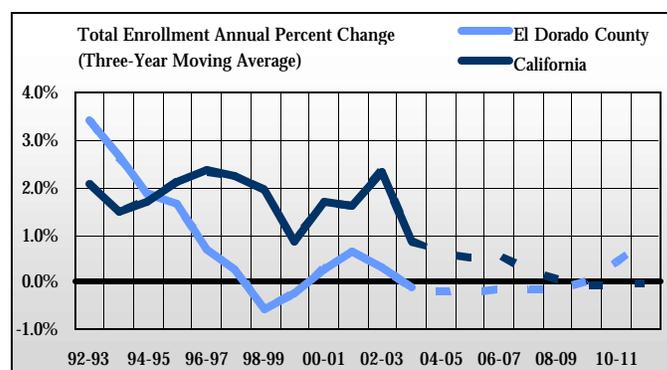
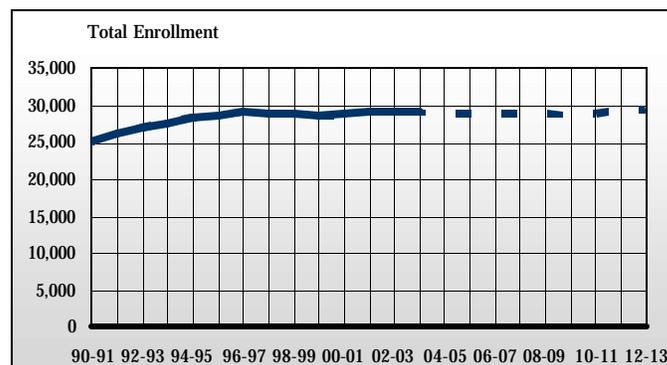
School enrollment data is essential to determine the amount of government funding that schools receive. Funding is based primarily on enrollment and average daily attendance. Enrollment trends over a historical period of time provide insight into a school's financial stability.

Total enrollment as reported by the California Department of Education is shown for the 1990-1991 school year through the 2001-2002 school year. The data was compiled from the California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS). On October 4 of each year, CBEDS records the number of students enrolled in public schools that day. Beginning in 1998, California Youth Authority Schools (CYA) were also included in enrollment figures. CYA schools provide institutional training and parole supervision for juvenile and young adult offenders.

School year	Total enrollment	Annual percent change
1990-91	25,031	n/a
1991-92	26,277	5.0 %
1992-93	27,069	3.0 %
1993-94	27,683	2.3 %
1994-95	28,422	2.7 %
1995-96	28,632	0.7 %
1996-97	29,084	1.6 %
1997-98	29,006	-0.3 %
1998-99	28,864	-0.5 %
1999-00	28,602	-0.9 %
2000-01	28,795	0.7 %
2001-02	29,104	1.1 %
2002-03	29,147	0.1 %
2003-04	29,072	-0.3 %
2007-08(p)	28,894	-0.2 %

Source: California Department of Education

Projection: California Department of Finance



El Dorado County

In the 2003-2004 school year, 29,072 students were enrolled in El Dorado County schools. This number represents a .3 percent decrease from the 2002-2003 year, and enrollment is expected to decrease to 28,894 by 2007. Total enrollment in El Dorado County has increased by almost 4,041 students since the 1990-1991 school year, which is indicative of both a population increase and continued improvement throughout the county's educational system.

High School Dropout Rate

Overview

High school dropout rates measure how many students complete the state-mandated curriculum requirements. In order for a student to be officially designated as a dropout, he/she must have been previously enrolled in any grade level, 7-12, and left school without re-enrolling in another public or private educational institution or school program for forty-five consecutive days. Once a person reaches the age of 21 and has not received a high school diploma or its equivalent, he is no longer included in the data collection.

The calculations also include students who have moved out of the district, state, or country and are not enrolled in an educational program leading to a high school diploma or its equivalent in their new place of residence.

The annual dropout rate is calculated using dropout and enrollment counts from the same year. The number of dropouts in grades 9-12 is divided by the total enrollment in those grades.

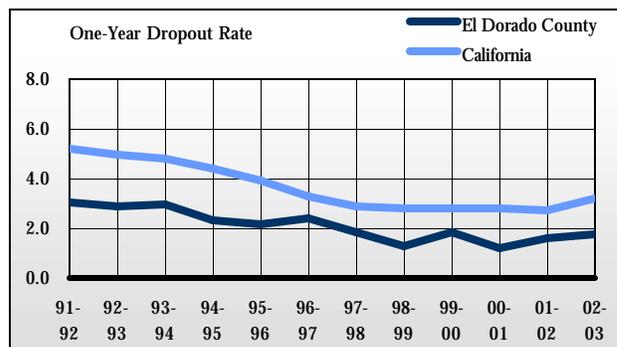
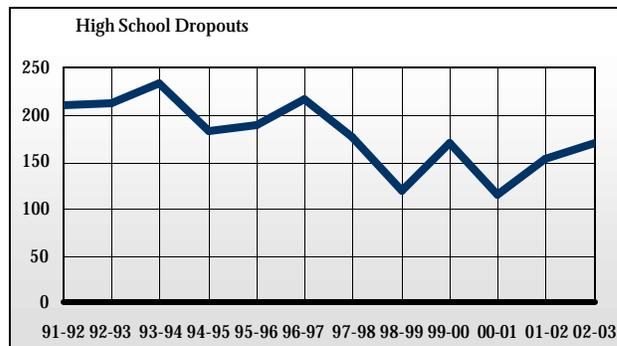
El Dorado County

There were 170 students designated as high school dropouts in El Dorado County in 2002, a rate of 1.8 percent. This number is lower than the California annual average dropout rate of 3.2 percent. Dropout rates in El Dorado County in 2002 were at their highest in the last three years.

High School Dropouts

School year	El Dorado County		California	
	Number of dropouts	One yr. dropout rate	One yr. dropout rate	rate
1991-92	210	3.1	5.2	
1992-93	212	2.9	5	
1993-94	233	3	4.8	
1994-95	184	2.3	4.4	
1995-96	189	2.2	3.9	
1996-97	217	2.4	3.3	
1997-98	176	1.9	2.9	
1998-99	119	1.3	2.8	
1999-00	171	1.9	2.8	
2000-01	115	1.2	2.8	
2001-02	154	1.6	2.7	
2002-03	170	1.8	3.2	

Source: California Department of Education



Average SAT Scores

Overview

As a measure of verbal and mathematical abilities, Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores provide important information about how well schools are preparing students for college. These scores should not be used as a single form of measure to evaluate or rate students, educators, schools, or districts; however, they do provide insight into the education system of a given county or region.

The SAT is designed to measure verbal and mathematical reasoning abilities that are related to successful performance in college, according to the California Department of Education. Academic, demographic, and socioeconomic factors affect the results of the test scores. The largest factor affecting average SAT scores is the number of students taking the test; as the number of test takers increases, scores tend to fall.

Students are required to take the test only if they plan on attending a college that requires it for admission. This is the primary reason the SAT is not an accurate measure of the effectiveness of school curriculum or teaching. If a small percentage of students from a school take the test, then the average score could reflect selective testing; a school may encourage only those students who are identified as high achievers to participate. For this reason, the percentage of students who took the exam is provided.

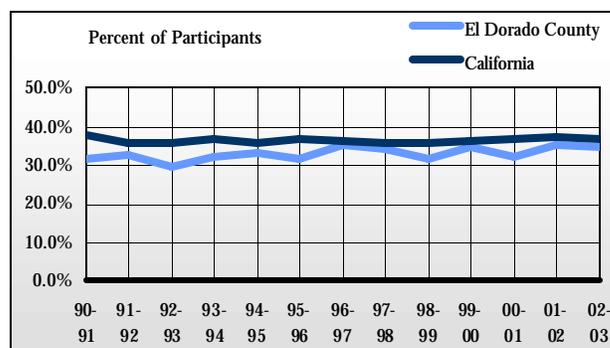
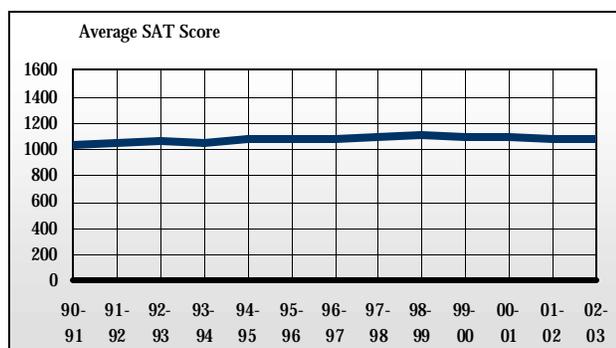
There is a maximum score of 800 on both the verbal as well as the mathematical sections of the SAT. The verbal and mathematical sections are scored and reported separately. The total SAT score is the verbal combined with mathematical section score. The highest possible score a student can receive is 1600.

NOTE: Average SAT scores provide data only for graduating seniors. The scores from students who take the SAT as juniors are included with their graduating class.

Average SAT Scores

Year	El Dorado County		California	
	Percent of students who took the SAT	Avg. SAT score	Percent of students who took the SAT	Avg. SAT score
1990-91	31.6%	1038	37.9%	994
1991-92	32.7%	1045	36.0%	996
1992-93	29.8%	1056	35.8%	994
1993-94	31.9%	1053	37.0%	991
1994-95	33.0%	1070	36.0%	997
1995-96	31.6%	1076	36.7%	1001
1996-97	35.4%	1081	36.2%	1004
1997-98	34.1%	1090	35.9%	1007
1998-99	31.4%	1106	35.9%	1007
1999-00	34.6%	1094	36.5%	1009
2000-01	32.1%	1091	36.7%	1008
2001-02	35.4%	1078	37.3%	1006
2002-03	34.7%	1074	36.7%	1012

Source: California Department of Education



Academic Performance Index (API)

Overview

The purpose of the Academic Performance Index is to measure the academic performance and progress of schools. It is a reliable measure of academic performance and progress because it uses a test that every student is required to take every year beginning in second grade and continuing through eleventh grade. The base year for a school's API result is 2003. These results will be used to monitor academic growth.

The API's main purposes are to rank academic performance, establish growth targets, and monitor progress toward meeting the established goals. The API was established by the Public Schools Accountability Act (PSAA) and signed into law in April 1999. Its aim is to help schools improve the academic achievement of all students.

In 2003, the API was recognized as a measure of Adequate Yearly Progress under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Through this act, school districts, county boards of education, and the state will receive API reports.

The 2003 base API incorporates the results of school performance in California's Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) program, the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), and the California Alternate Performance Assessment (CAPA).

The API is calculated on a scale from 200-1000, using individual student performance on:

- 1) The CAT/6 Survey assesses the achievement of basic academic skills in key subjects that are commonly taught in public schools throughout the United States. The CAT/6 Survey allows us to compare the performance of California students to the performance of students throughout the nation.
- 2) The California Standards Test (CSTs) are the cornerstone of the STAR Program given in English and are designed to tell us how well students are doing with respect to the California academic standards. These academic standards describe what students should know and be able to do at each grade level.
- 3) The CAPA test is available to students with significant cognitive disabilities who are unable to take the CSTs and CAT/6 Survey even with accommodations or modifications. This test assesses how well students have achieved a subset of California academic standards in English-language arts and mathematics.
- 4) State law, enacted in 1999, authorized the development of the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE), which students in California public schools would have to pass to earn a high school diploma. Beginning with the 2005-06 school year, all California public school students are required to pass the CAHSEE and meet all other state and local requirements to earn a high school diploma. The purpose of the CAHSEE is to improve student achievement in high school and to help ensure that students who graduate from high school can demonstrate grade level competency in reading, writing, and mathematics.

The State Board of Education adopted a performance target of 800 for the 1999 API. This target will serve as an interim statewide target until state performance standards are adopted. The annual growth rate target for schools is equal to 5 percent of the distance between a school's API and the interim state performance target of 800. Schools that receive an API less than 800 have a minimum target of a one-point increase. Schools that meet or exceed the interim target must maintain an API of 800.

NOTE: The California Department of Education did not calculate API scores for schools with less than 100 students with valid Stanford 9* test scores, or county administered, alternative, continuation, independent, or community day schools.

*What is tested by the Stanford 9?

READING: Assesses comprehension of three types of reading material: textural (nonfiction, general information); recreational (fiction); and functional (material encountered in everyday life, such as advertisements). Test questions tap various comprehension skills from the basic literal level up to the inferential and critical levels of reading comprehension.

MATHEMATICS: Assesses the ability to compute as well as apply math concepts to problem-solving situations. Skills in interpreting a graph or a chart and in the application of principles of geometry, measurement, and probability also are assessed.

LANGUAGE: Assesses punctuation and capitalization skills and the ability to apply grammatical concepts correctly. Test questions also assess language expression, or the ability to manipulate words, phrases, and clauses, and the ability to recognize correct, effective sentence structure and writing style.

All test questions are in a multiple-choice format.

*Who took the test?

Across the state, 536,254 students in grades 3-12 took the test during the months of March and April, up from 506,000 students last year. Limited English proficient students and special education students with individual education plans that do not require them to take the test were exempt from the test.

NOTE: "A" means the school scored at or above the interim statewide performance target of 800 in 2001.

Academic Performance Index (API)

School	API 2000	API 2001	API 2002	API 2003	API 2004 target
Black Oak Mine Unified					
Creekside Elementary	n/a	n/a	758	771	772
Georgetown Elementary	744	763	738	753	755
Northside Elementary	780	801	774	802	A
Golden Sierra High	700	688	693	700	705
Otter Creek Elementary	878	896	916	953	A
Buckeye Union Elementary					
Blue Oak Elementary	819	822	819	817	A
Brooks (William) Elementary	886	857	849	867	A
Buckeye Elementary	786	784	777	803	A
Silva Valley Elementary	861	859	862	879	A
Camorado Springs Intermediate	807	814	798	811	A
Rolling Hills Middle	850	855	833	864	A
Camino Union Elementary					
Camino Elementary	706	721	748	772	773
El Dorado Union High					
El Dorado High	733	748	695	745	748
Oak Ridge High	779	807	781	812	A
Ponderosa High	758	769	764	792	793
Union Mine High	764	722	729	768	770
Gold Oak Union Elementary					
Gold Oak Elementary	797	782	793	806	A
Pleasant Valley Middle	841	832	814	818	A
Gold Trail Union Elementary					
Sutter's Mill Primary	804	804	738	835	A
Gold Trail Elementary	787	797	785	819	A
Indian Diggings Elementary					
Indian Diggings Elementary	641	705	694	777	778
Lake Tahoe Unified					
Al Tahoe Elementary	613	636	654	683	689
Bijou Community (Elem)	528	558	562	607	617
Meyers Elementary	738	763	754	784	785
Sierra House Elementary	729	792	759	799	800
Tahoe Valley Elementary	n/a	n/a	674	717	721
South Tahoe Middle	657	701	687	707	712
South Tahoe High	656	639	607	648	656

Academic Performance Index (API), cont'd

School	API 2000	API 2001	API 2002	API 2003	API 2004 target
Latrobe Elementary					
Miller's Hill Elementary	859	897	860	906	A
Latrobe Elementary	757	843	835	821	A
Mother Lode Union Elementary					
Brown (Charles F.) Elementary	775	771	777	774	775
Indian Creek Elementary	824	845	840	866	A
Green (Herbert C.) Elementary	752	758	778	808	A
Pioneer Union Elementary					
Pioneer Elementary	733	754	766	818	A
Mountain Creek Middle	759	729	731	774	775
Grizzly Pines Elementary	579	692	748	742	745
Learning With A Purpose	818	804	605	452	469
Placerville Union Elementary					
Schnell (Louisiana) Elementary (Char)	758	775	750	780	781
Sierra Accelerated (Elem)	760	767	757	n/a	759
Markham (Edwin) Middle	764	732	731	730	734
Pollock Pines Elementary					
Emigrant Trail Elementary	720	761	780	769	771
Sierra Ridge Middle	694	720	695	717	721
Pinewood Elementary	815	841	816	816	A
Rescue Union Elementary					
Green Valley Elementary	759	792	790	819	A
Jackson Elementary	881	870	865	871	A
Lake Forest Elementary	881	862	870	889	A
Rescue Elementary	740	752	764	779	780
Marina Village Intermediate	818	804	801	815	A

Source: California Department of Education

Statewide Rank

Overview

The statewide rank is used to demonstrate where each school stands compared to schools throughout the state. The statewide rank compares all schools in the state to each other and then ranks them according to their API scores.

When calculating the statewide rank, schools are ranked separately within each school type: elementary, middle, and high schools. In each of the three categories, schools' API scores are first sorted from lowest to highest and then divided into ten equal groups. The scale for rankings is one through ten, with one being the lowest. Schools receiving a rank of one are in the bottom 10 percent of the state and the schools receiving a score of ten are in the top 10 percent of the state.

Similar Schools Rank

The purpose of the similar schools rank is to provide schools with information that will give them a reference point for judging their academic achievement against other schools facing similar challenges. Schools are able to study the strategies that similar schools with higher rankings are implementing to help improve their own performance.

Several school demographic characteristics form the basis for determining the similar schools comparisons, including student mobility, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, the percentage of fully credentialed teachers, the percentage of teachers holding emergency credentials, the percentage of students learning English as their second language, average class size per grade level, and schools operating on multi-track, year-round educational programs.

Many steps are used to calculate the similar schools rank. Schools were divided into grade level categories (elementary, middle, and high school), assigned a School Characteristic Index, and divided into groups of 100 with similar indices. Once schools were divided into their similar schools groupings, they were ranked within each group by comparing their API scores. The following is a list that describes each rank:

(Each rank applies to elementary, middle, or high schools with similar characteristics.)

9 or 10	Well above average
7 or 8	Above average
5 or 6	About average
3 or 4	Below average
1 or 2	Well below average

Statewide and Similar Schools Rank

School	2003 statewide rank	2003 similar schools rank
Black Oak Mine Unified		
Creekside Elementary	7	1
Georgetown Elementary	6	3
Northside Elementary	8	4
Golden Sierra High	7	4
Otter Creek Elementary	10	n/a
Buckeye Union Elementary		
Blue Oak Elementary	8	2
Brooks (William) Elementary	10	5
Buckeye Elementary	8	4
Silva Valley Elementary	B	B
Camerado Springs Intermediate	9	6
Rolling Hills Middle	10	8
Camino Union Elementary		
Camino Elementary	7	5
El Dorado Union High		
El Dorado High	9	9
Oak Ridge High	10	6
Ponderosa High	10	7
Union Mine High	9	9
Gold Oak Union Elementary		
Gold Oak Elementary	8	6
Pleasant Valley Middle	9	10
Gold Trail Union Elementary		
Sutter's Mill Primary	9	10
Gold Trail Elementary	9	7
Indian Diggings Elementary		
Indian Diggings Elementary	7	n/a
Lake Tahoe Unified		
Al Tahoe Elementary	4	1
Bijou Community (Elem)	1	1
Meyers Elementary	7	1
Sierra House Elementary	8	4
Tahoe Valley Elementary	5	6
South Tahoe Middle	6	6
South Tahoe High	5	3

Statewide and Similar Schools Rank, cont'd

School	2003 statewide rank	2003 similar schools rank
Latrobe Elementary		
Miller's Hill Elementary	10	10
Latrobe Elementary	8	n/a
Mother Lode Union Elementary		
Brown (Charles F.) Elementary	7	5
Indian Creek Elementary	9	10
Green (Herbert C.) Elementary	9	10
Pioneer Union Elementary		
Pioneer Elementary	8	8
Mountain Creek Middle	8	3
Grizzly Pines Elementary	6	n/a
Learning With A Purpose	1	n/a
Placerville Union Elementary		
Schnell (Louisiana) Elementary (Char)	7	5
Sierra Accelerated (Elem)	7	2
Markham (Edwin) Middle	7	6
Pollock Pines Elementary		
Emigrant Trail Elementary	7	7
Sierra Ridge Middle	7	2
Pinewood Elementary	8	n/a
Rescue Union Elementary		
Green Valley Elementary	8	5
Jackson Elementary	10	2
Lake Forest Elementary	10	6
Rescue Elementary	7	2
Marina Village Intermediate	9	6

Source: California Department of Education