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Trends in Academic Performance in Needles Unified, California

VERSION 2025.1

This report summarizes district-level educational outcomes using data from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA) from 2009-2025. Figures may contain gaps where source data are unavailable.

For more information, please visit edopportunity.org

Report created by the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University in collaboration with the Education Scorecard at Harvard University, using data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Education Data Center. See final page for full information on data sources.



Needles Unified, California



Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2022-2025, by District Socioeconomic Status

Average test scores in grades 3-8 reflect the set of educational opportunities available to students in the district, including those provided by their families, preschools, neighborhoods, and elementary and middle schools.



Note: each bubble is a U.S. school district, with size proportional to district enrollment. Districts in California are highlighted. District socioeconomic status is a composite measure of a district's average family income, parental education, poverty rate, SNAP eligibility rate, unemployment rate, and female-headed household rate. Test scores are measured in grade levels relative to the 2019 national average.

Average Test Scores and Trends, 2022-2025

ALL STUDENTS

	2022-2025 Average Scores	2022-2025 Trend in Test Scores
Needles Unified	-1.73	-0.03
Similar Districts Avg.*	-2.61	-0.01
California	-0.72	0.02

Test scores are reported in grade level units, relative to the 2019 national average. For example, the first row above reads: "Students in Needles Unified performed 1.73 grade levels below the 2019 national average. Test scores in Needles Unified have been changing at a rate of -0.03 grade levels/year since 2022."

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Needles Unified are Arcata Elementary, Pacific Union Elementary, Palermo Union Elementary, Konocti Unified, and Yreka Union Elementary.

STUDENT SUBGROUPS

	2022-2025 Average Scores	2022-2025 Trend in Test Scores
White	-1.60	-0.04
Black	N/A	N/A
Hispanic	-1.77	N/A
Asian	N/A	N/A
Poor	-1.96	-0.04
Non-Poor	-0.65	N/A
Female	-1.55	-0.05
Male	-1.90	-0.01



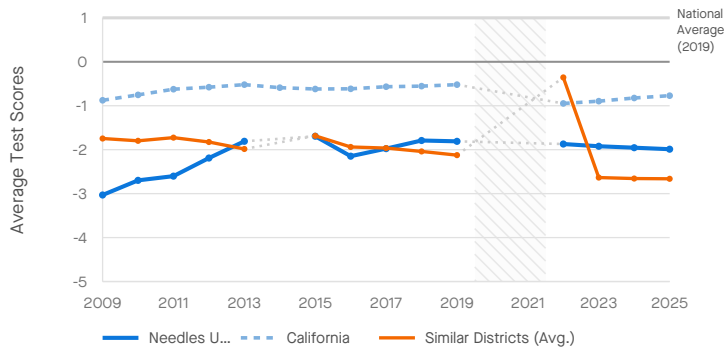
Needles Unified, California

Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2009-2025, by Subject and Student Subgroup

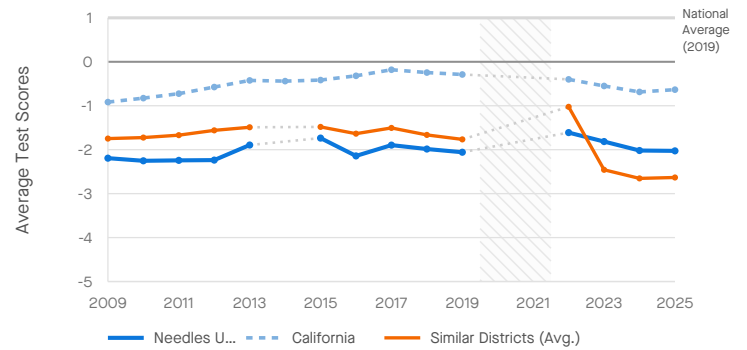


Trends in test scores may reflect changes in school quality, changes in demographics, and/or changes in out-of-school educational opportunities.

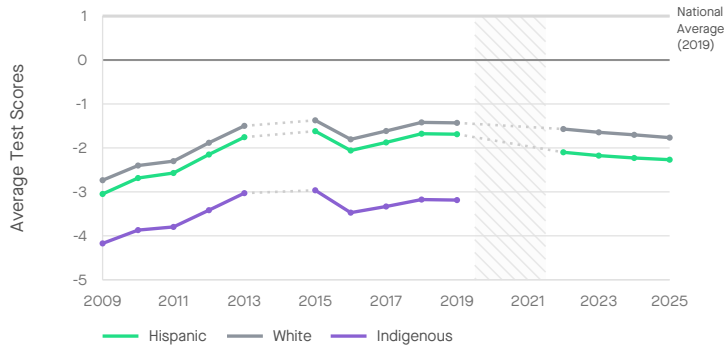
Trend in Math Scores (All Students)



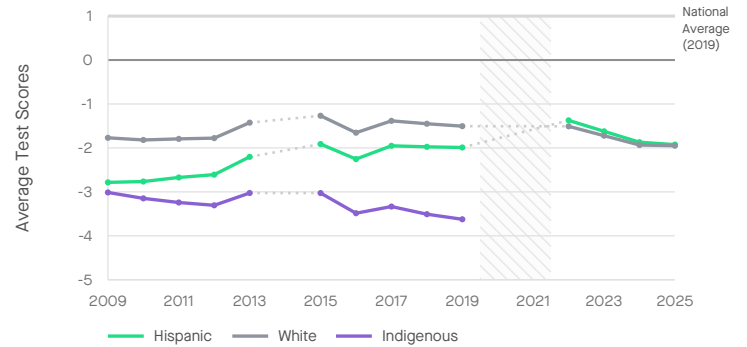
Trend in Reading Scores (All Students)



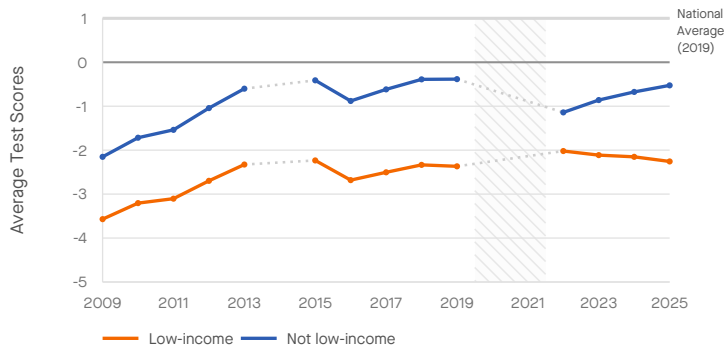
Trend in Math Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



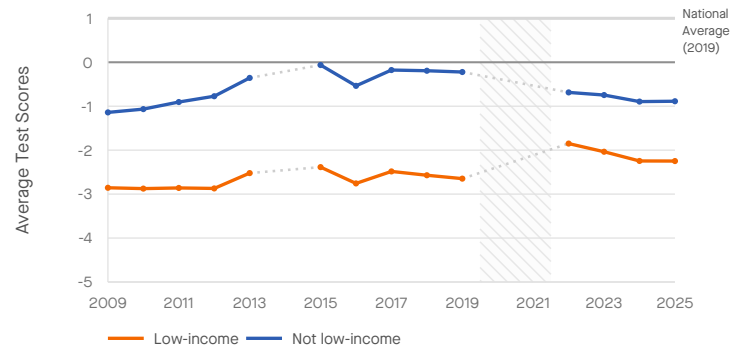
Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



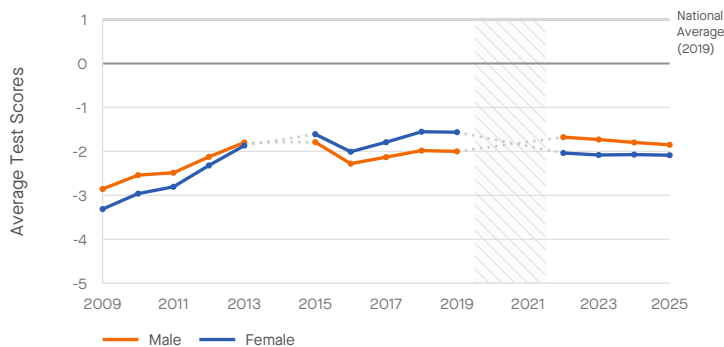
Trend in Math Scores, by Student Income Level



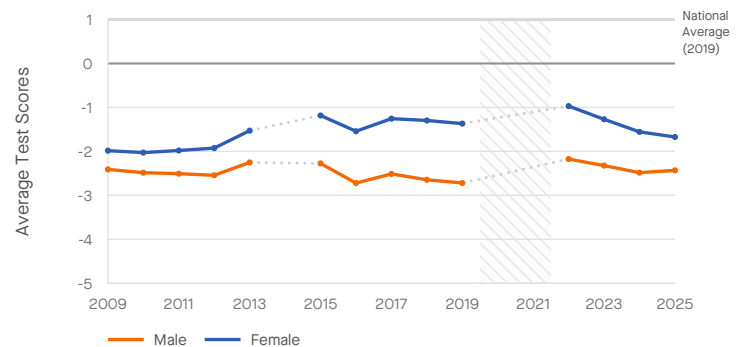
Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Income Level



Trend in Math Scores, by Student Gender



Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Gender

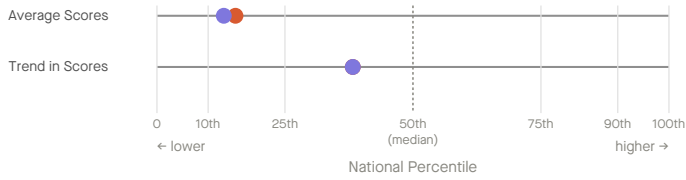


Needles Unified, California

Academic Performance Rankings, 2022-2025, Relative to Other Districts in the U.S.



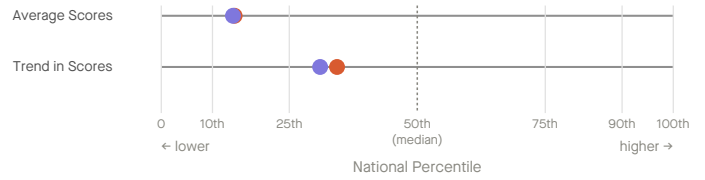
Math Ranks



	Average	Trend
● Needles Unified	8,641 / 10,205 (15th pct)	3,377 / 5,468 (38th pct)
● Similar Districts Avg.	8,873 / 10,205 (13th pct)	3,377 / 5,468 (38th pct)

Needles Unified ranked higher than 15% of districts nationwide in average math performance during the 2022-25 school years (8,641st of 10,205 districts with available data).

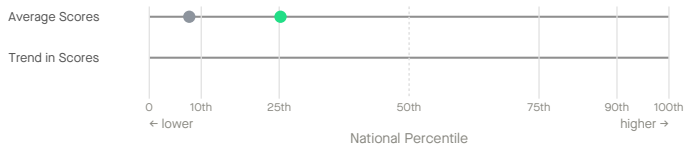
Reading Ranks



	Average	Trend
● Needles Unified	8,633 / 10,076 (14th pct)	3,726 / 5,673 (34th pct)
● Similar Districts Avg.	8,665 / 10,076 (14th pct)	3,913 / 5,673 (31st pct)

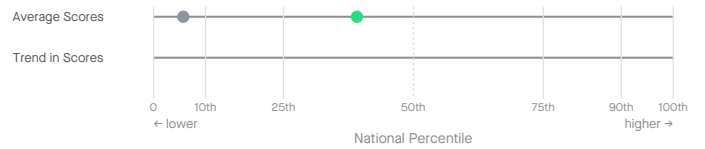
Needles Unified ranked higher than 14% of districts nationwide in average reading performance during the 2022-25 school years (8,633rd of 10,076 districts with available data).

Math Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



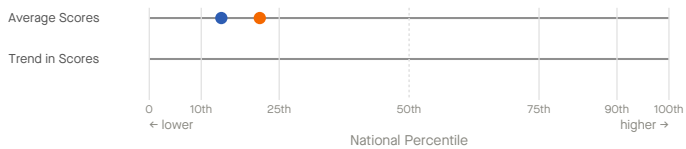
	Average	Trend
● White	8,037 / 8,707 (8th pct)	N/A
● Hispanic	3,426 / 4,583 (25th pct)	N/A

Reading Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



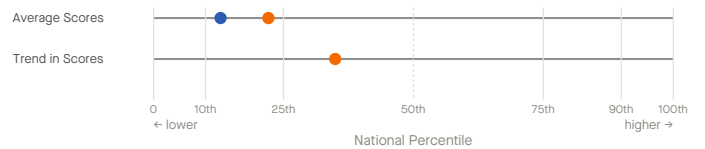
	Average	Trend
● White	8,283 / 8,785 (6th pct)	N/A
● Hispanic	2,838 / 4,662 (39th pct)	N/A

Math Ranks by Income



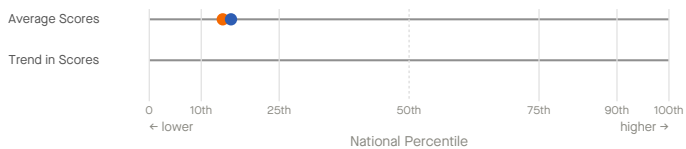
	Average	Trend
● Low-income	6,988 / 8,875 (21st pct)	N/A
● Not low-income	7,312 / 8,489 (14th pct)	N/A

Reading Ranks by Income



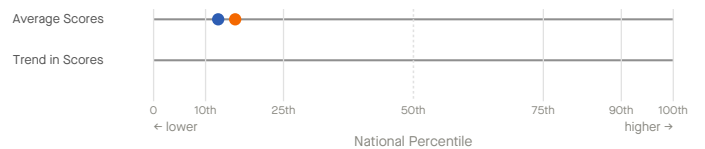
	Average	Trend
● Low-income	7,002 / 8,987 (22nd pct)	2,073 / 3,186 (35th pct)
● Not low-income	7,489 / 8,596 (13th pct)	N/A

Math Ranks by Gender



	Average	Trend
● Female	7,306 / 8,509 (14th pct)	N/A
● Male	7,161 / 8,497 (16th pct)	N/A

Reading Ranks by Gender



	Average	Trend
● Female	7,309 / 8,670 (16th pct)	N/A
● Male	7,577 / 8,652 (12th pct)	N/A

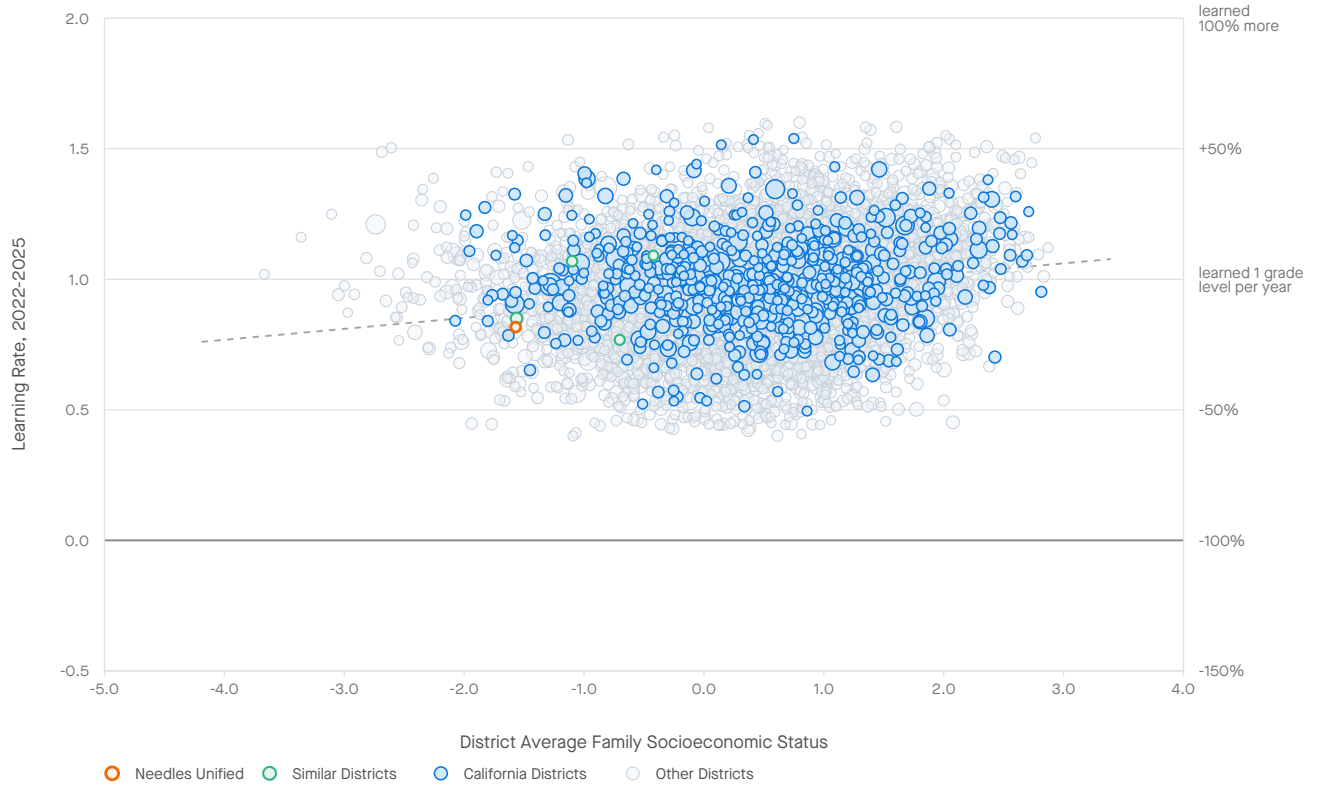


Needles Unified, California



Average Grades 3-8 Learning Rates, 2022-2025, by District Socioeconomic Status

Learning rates measure how much students' scores improve as they progress from grade to grade. They are a better indicator of school quality than average test scores, which are influenced by a range of experiences outside of school.



Note: each bubble is a U.S. school district, with size proportional to district enrollment. Districts in California are highlighted. District socioeconomic status is a composite measure of a district's average family income, parental education, poverty rate, SNAP eligibility rate, unemployment rate, and female-headed household rate.

Learning Rates and Trends, 2022-2025

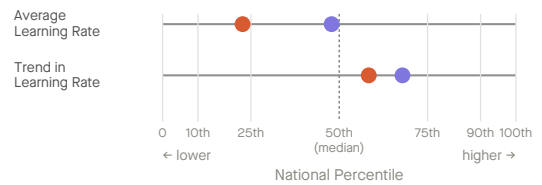
ALL STUDENTS

	2022-2025 Learning Rate	2022-2025 Trend in Learning Rates
Needles Unified	0.82	0.00
Similar Districts Avg.*	0.91	0.00
California	0.98	-0.02

Learning rates are measured in grade levels of skills gained per year and are averaged over math and reading. The national average learning rate is 1.0. For example, the first row above reads: "Students in Needles Unified learned an average of 0.82 grade levels/year during 2022-2025. Learning rates in Needles Unified have been changing at a rate of -0.00 grade levels/year since 2022."

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Needles Unified are Arcata Elementary, Pacific Union Elementary, Palermo Union Elementary, Konocti Unified, and Yreka Union Elementary.

Learning Rate Rankings



	Average	Trend
● Needles Unified	6,303 / 8,147 (23rd pct)	2,527 / 6,065 (58th pct)
● Similar Districts Avg.	4,250 / 8,147 (48th pct)	1,948 / 6,065 (68th pct)

Needles Unified ranked higher than 23% of districts nationwide in average learning rates during the 2022-25 school years (6,303rd of 8,147 districts with available data).



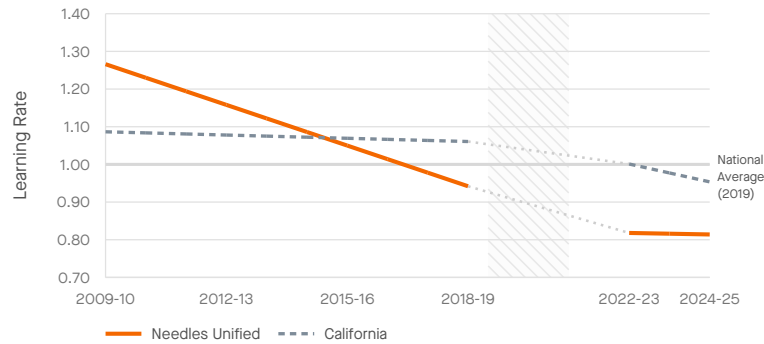
Needles Unified, California



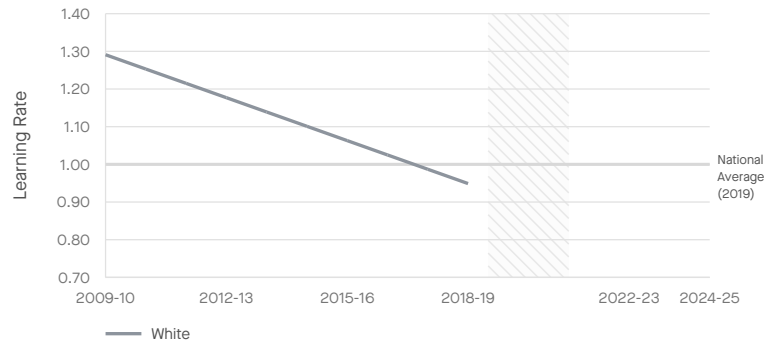
Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Learning Rates, 2009-2025, by Student Subgroup

Trends in learning rates measure how annual learning rates change over time. They are a better indicator of changes in school quality than trends in average test scores, which are influenced by a range of experiences outside of school.

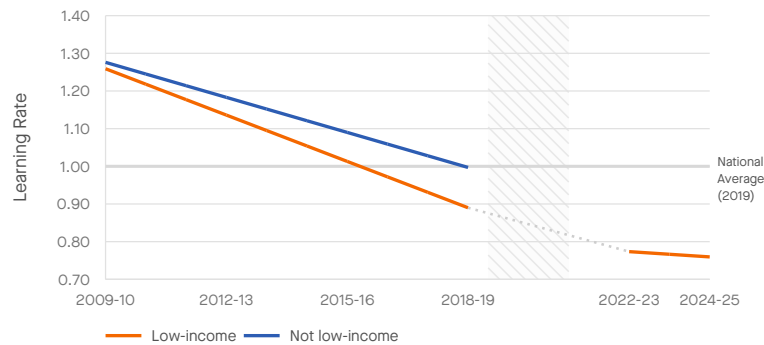
Trend in Learning Rates (All Students)



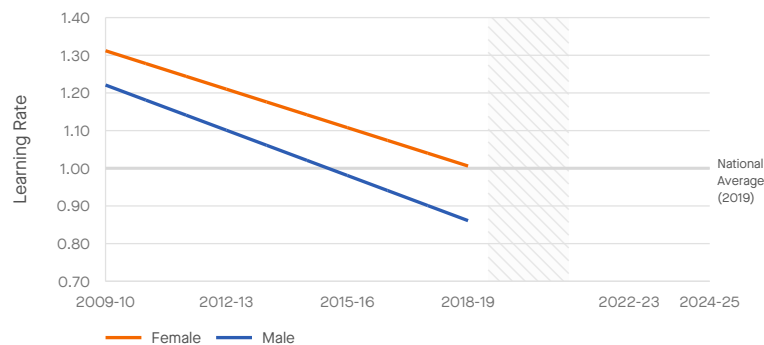
Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Race/Ethnicity



Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Income Level



Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Gender



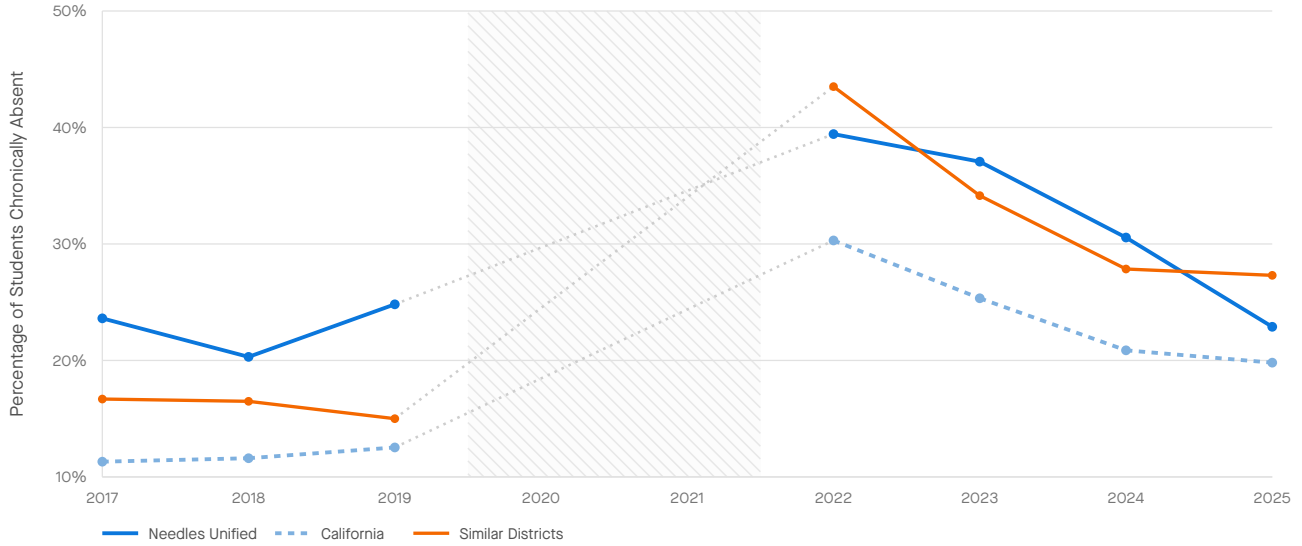
Needles Unified, California



Trends in Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism rates indicate the proportion of students who were absent 10% or more of the school year.

Trends in Chronic Absenteeism



Trends in Chronic Absenteeism

ALL STUDENTS

	2017-2019 Avg. Chronic Absenteeism	2022-2025 Avg. Chronic Absenteeism	Change
Needles Unified	22.9	32.5	+9.6
Similar Districts Avg.*	16.1	33.2	+17.1
California	11.8	24.1	+12.3

*Similar districts are the nearest matches within the same state based on socioeconomic status, demographics, and size. Similar districts for Needles Unified are Arcata Elementary, Pacific Union Elementary, Palermo Union Elementary, Konocti Unified, and Yreka Union Elementary.

Absenteeism data courtesy of [Nat Malkus, American Enterprise Institute](#).



Needles Unified, California



Changes in Average Math Scores in California Districts, 2019-2025 and 2022-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

Change in Math Scores, 2019-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average

Change in Math Scores, 2022-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average



Needles Unified, California



Changes in Average Reading Scores in California Districts, 2019-2025 and 2022-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

Change in Reading Scores, 2019-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average

Change in Reading Scores, 2022-2025



Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average



Needles Unified, California



Change in Chronic Absenteeism in California Districts, 2019-2025, by District Free/Reduced-Price Lunch Eligibility Rate

Change in Chronic Absenteeism, 2019-2025

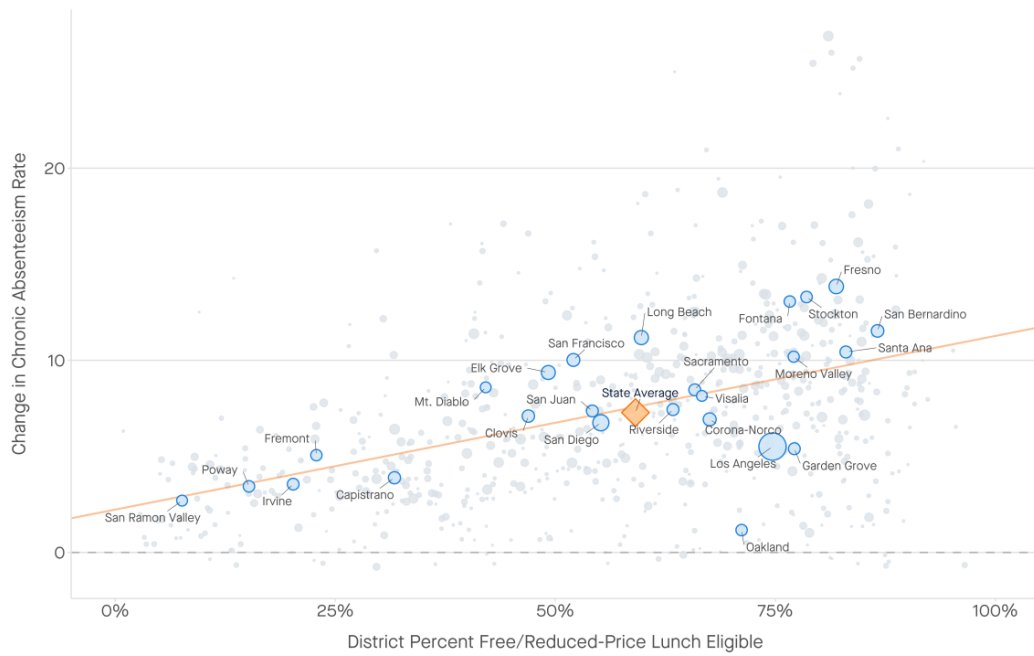


Figure produced by the Center for Education Policy Research at Harvard University

○ Largest Districts ◆ State Average





Notes & Acknowledgments

This report summarizes academic performance in Needles Unified from 2008-09 through 2024-25, using data from the Stanford Education Data Archive (SEDA). SEDA is a national database of U.S. academic performance produced by the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University. The SEDA data are based on the standardized accountability tests in math and reading language arts (RLA) administered by each state to all public-school students in grades 3-8.

The raw test score data used to construct the SEDA 2022-2025 estimates here were graciously provided to us by Emily Oster and Clare Halloran at the [Education Data Center](#). The raw test score data used to construct the SEDA 2009-2019 estimates are available through the [EDFacts](#) data system at the U.S. Department of Education, and were provided to us by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Detailed NAEP data used to harmonize test scores across states was provided by NCES and the National Assessment Governing Board. Chronic absenteeism data were provided by [Nat Malkus at the American Enterprise Institute](#). Funding to construct and analyze SEDA was provided by the Gates Foundation. Funding for the Education Scorecard was provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Joyce Foundation, Kenneth C. Griffin and Citadel Catalyst. The findings and opinions expressed in our research and reported here are those of the authors alone; they do not represent the views of any of the above organizations.

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https://edopportunity.org/reports/trends/2025/CA/report_CA_0626760_needles-unified.pdf

