



GENERATED ON APRIL 28, 2026

# Trends in Academic Performance in 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](https://edopportunity.org)

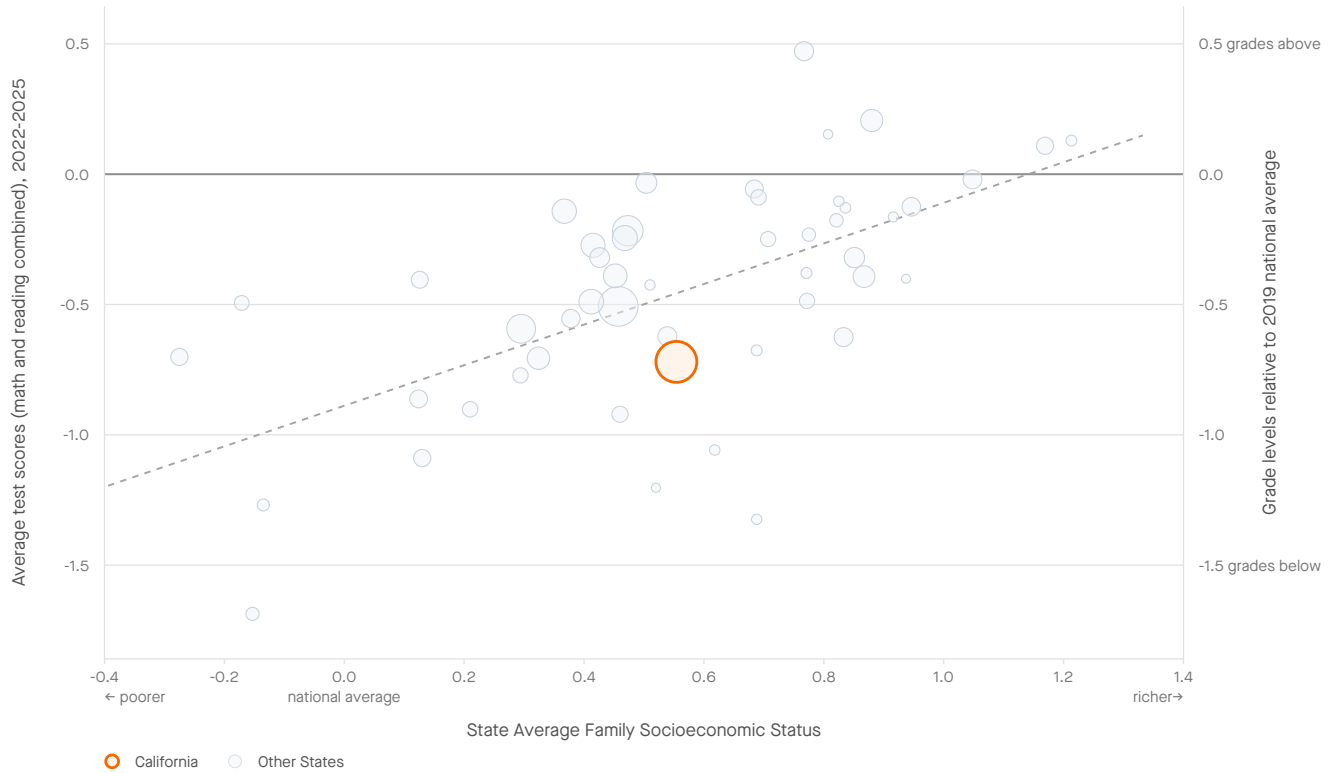
Report created by the Educational Opportunity Project at Stanford University in collaboration with the Education Scorecard at Harvard University, using data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics and the Education Data Center. See final page for full information on data sources.





## Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2022-2025, by State 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. state, with size proportional to state enrollment. State socioeconomic status is a composite measure of 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
California	-0.72	0.02
National Average	-0.46	0.00

Test scores are reported in grade level units, relative to the 2019 national average. For example, the first row above reads: "Students in California performed 0.72 grade levels below the 2019 national average. Test scores in California have been changing at a rate of +0.02 grade levels/year since 2022."

### STUDENT SUBGROUPS

	2022-2025 Average Scores	2022-2025 Trend in Test Scores
White	0.69	0.06
Black	-2.60	0.08
Hispanic	-1.73	0.02
Asian	2.67	0.06
Poor	-1.80	0.06
Non-Poor	1.29	0.13
Female	-0.61	0.03
Male	-0.82	0.06



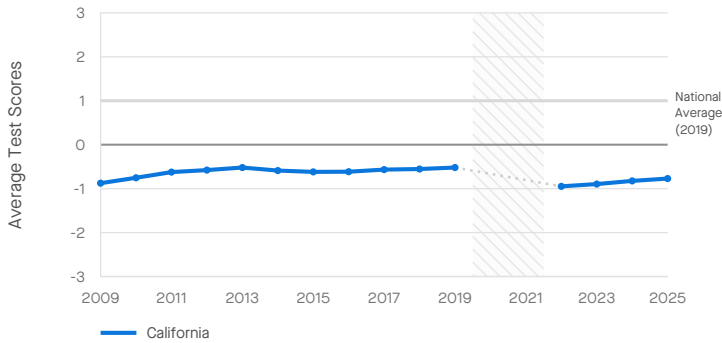
# California



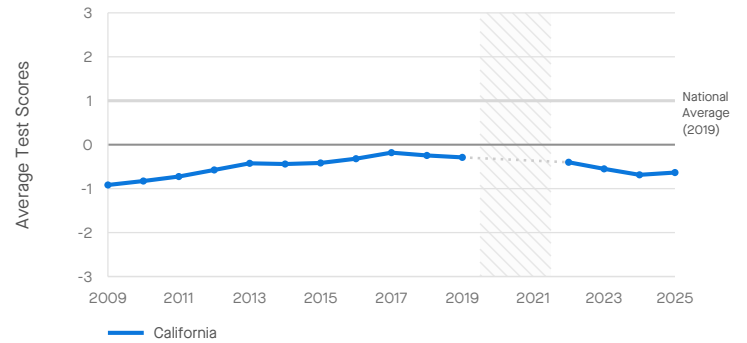
## Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Test Scores, 2009-2025, by Subject and Student Subgroup

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

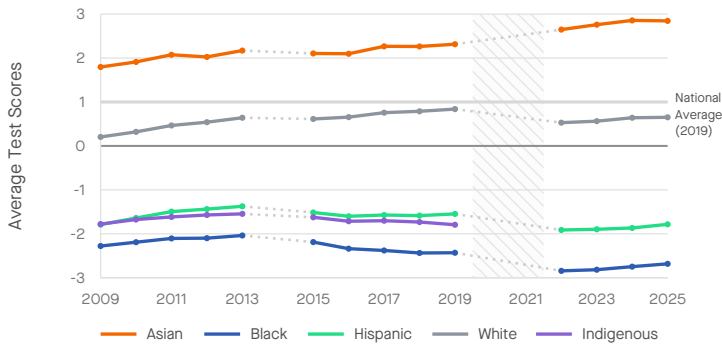
### Trend in Math Scores (All Students)



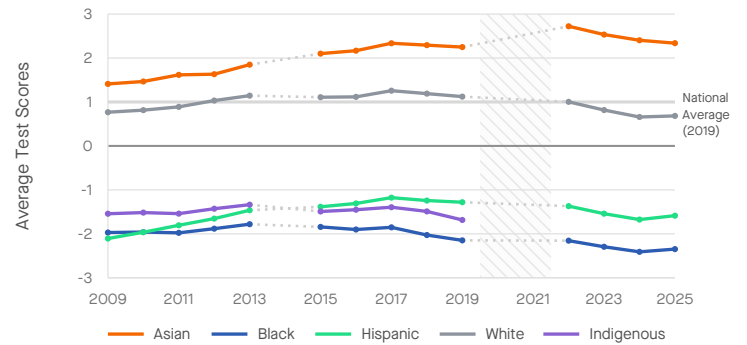
### Trend in Reading Scores (All Students)



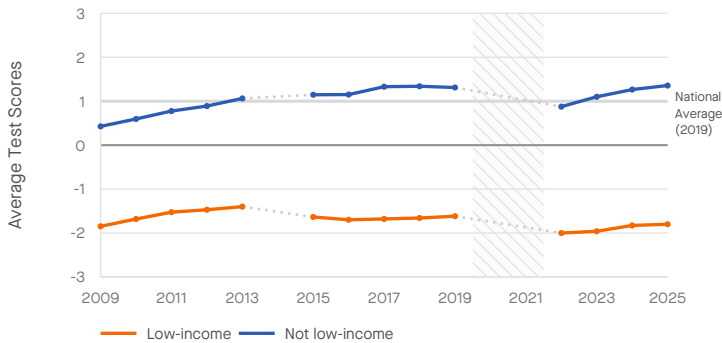
### Trend in Math Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



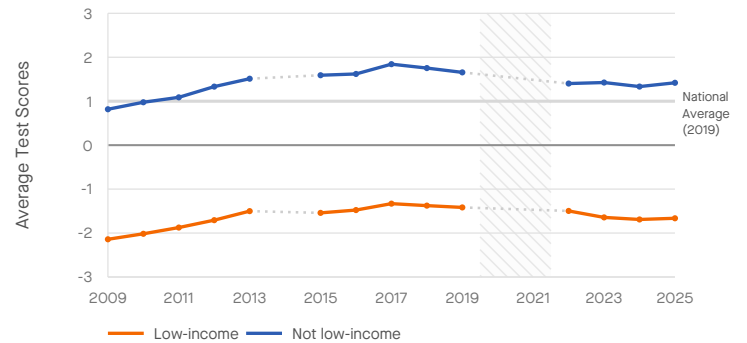
### Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Race/Ethnicity



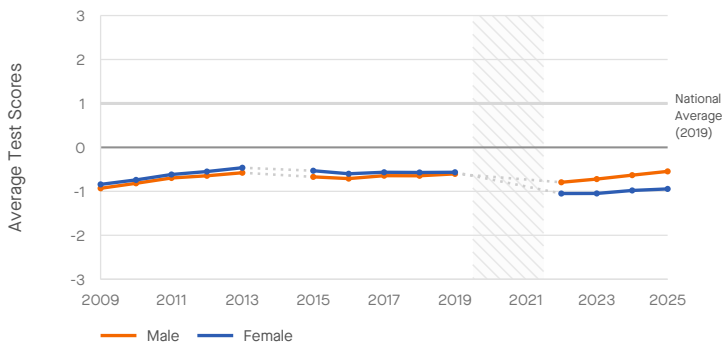
### Trend in Math Scores, by Student Income Level



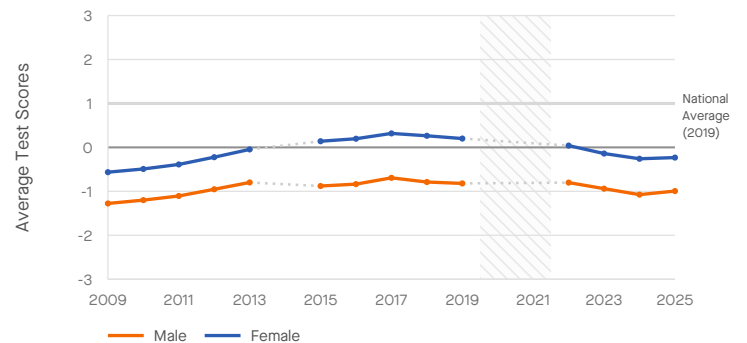
### Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Income Level



### Trend in Math Scores, by Student Gender



### Trend in Reading Scores, by Student Gender

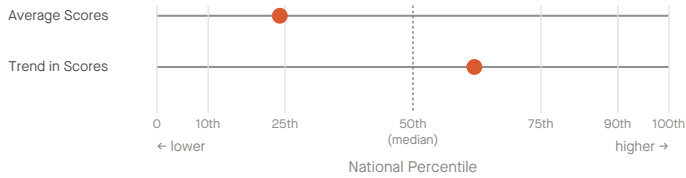


# California



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

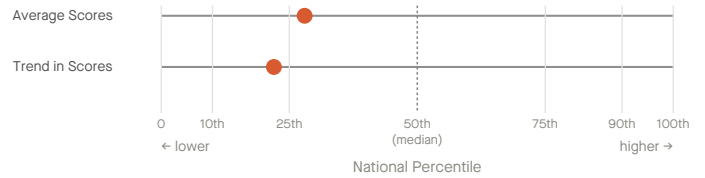
### Math Ranks



	Average	Trend
● California	39 / 51 (24th pct)	20 / 51 (62nd pct)

California ranked higher than 24% of states nationwide in average math performance during the 2022-25 school years (39th of 51 states with available data).

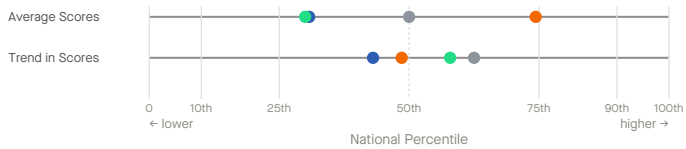
### Reading Ranks



	Average	Trend
● California	37 / 51 (28th pct)	40 / 51 (22nd pct)

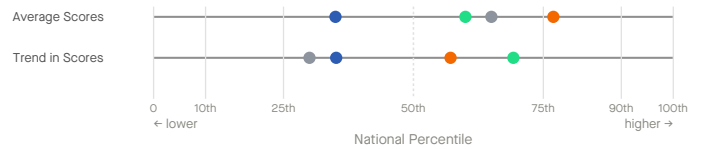
California ranked higher than 28% of states nationwide in average reading performance during the 2022-25 school years (37th of 51 states with available data).

### Math Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



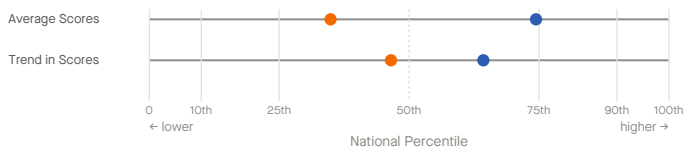
	Average	Trend
● White	21 / 41 (50th pct)	16 / 41 (63rd pct)
● Black	28 / 40 (31st pct)	22 / 37 (43rd pct)
● Hispanic	29 / 41 (30th pct)	17 / 39 (58th pct)
● Asian	11 / 40 (74th pct)	19 / 36 (49th pct)

### Reading Ranks by Race/Ethnicity



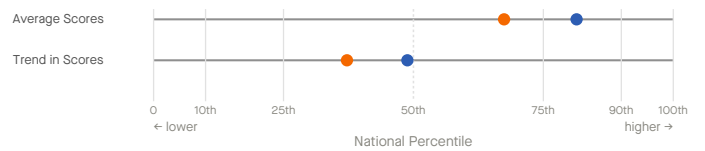
	Average	Trend
● White	15 / 41 (65th pct)	29 / 41 (30th pct)
● Black	27 / 41 (35th pct)	25 / 38 (35th pct)
● Hispanic	17 / 41 (60th pct)	13 / 40 (69th pct)
● Asian	10 / 40 (77th pct)	16 / 36 (57th pct)

### Math Ranks by Income



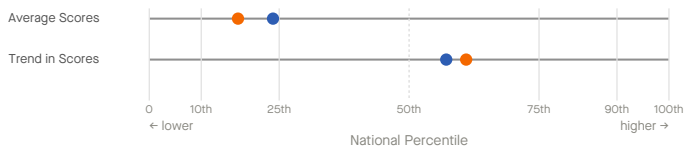
	Average	Trend
● Low-income	29 / 44 (35th pct)	24 / 44 (47th pct)
● Not low-income	12 / 44 (74th pct)	16 / 43 (64th pct)

### Reading Ranks by Income



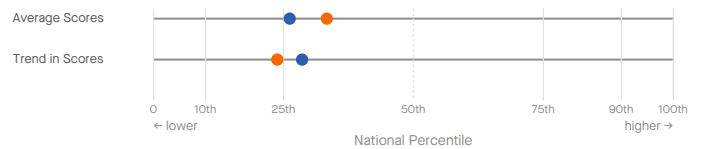
	Average	Trend
● Low-income	15 / 44 (67th pct)	28 / 44 (37th pct)
● Not low-income	9 / 44 (81st pct)	23 / 44 (49th pct)

### Math Ranks by Gender



	Average	Trend
● Female	35 / 42 (17th pct)	17 / 42 (61st pct)
● Male	33 / 43 (24th pct)	19 / 43 (57th pct)

### Reading Ranks by Gender



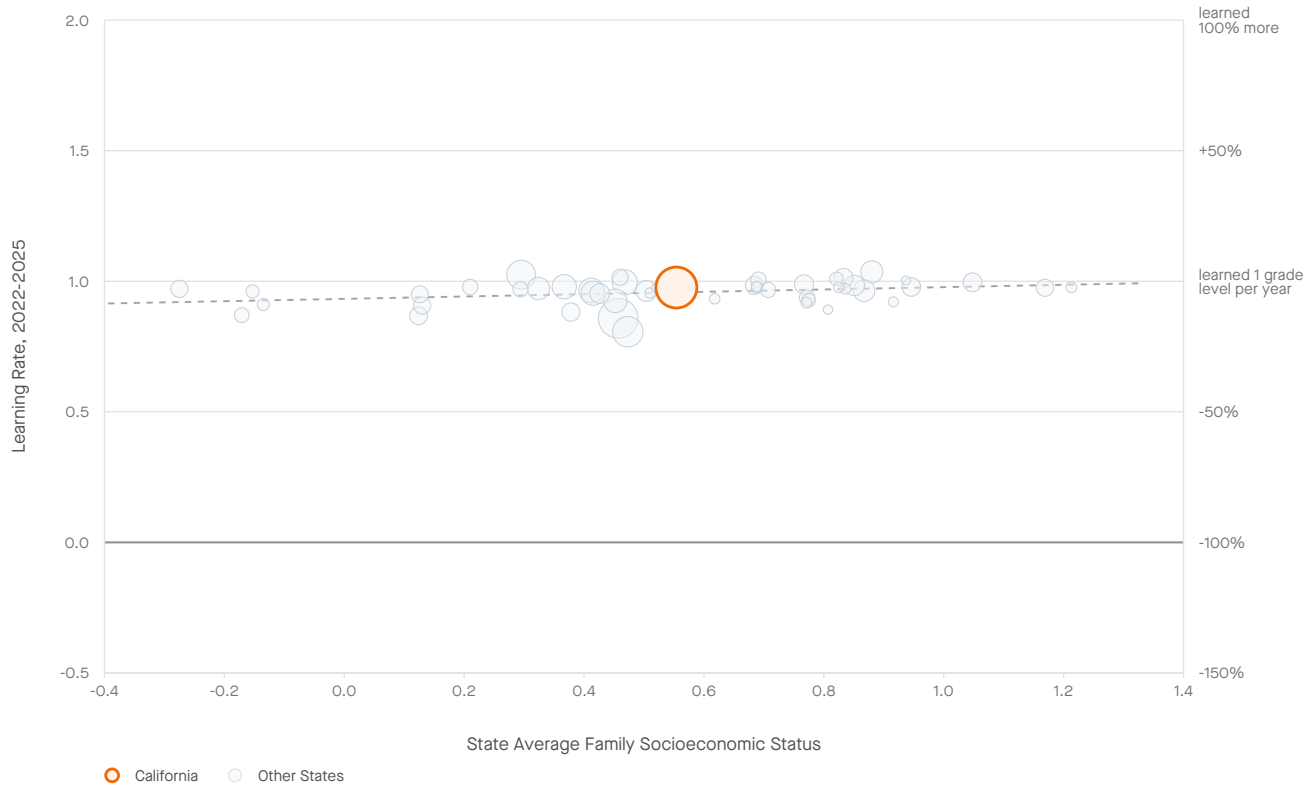
	Average	Trend
● Female	29 / 43 (33rd pct)	33 / 43 (24th pct)
● Male	32 / 43 (26th pct)	31 / 43 (29th pct)





## Average Grades 3-8 Learning Rates, 2022-2025, by State 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. state, with size proportional to state enrollment. State socioeconomic status is a composite measure of average family income, parental education, poverty rate, SNAP eligibility rate, unemployment rate, and female-headed household rate.

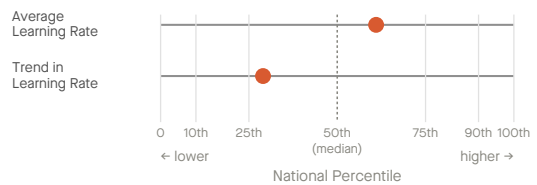
### Learning Rates and Trends, 2022-2025

#### ALL STUDENTS

	2022-2025 Learning Rate	2022-2025 Trend in Learning Rates
California	0.98	-0.02
National Average	0.96	-0.01

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 California learned an average of 0.98 grade levels/year during 2022-2025. Learning rates in California have been changing at a rate of -0.02 grade levels/year since 2022."

### Learning Rate Rankings



	Average	Trend
California	21 / 51 (61st pct)	37 / 51 (29th pct)

California ranked higher than 61% of states nationwide in average learning rates during the 2022-25 school years (21st of 51 states with available data).

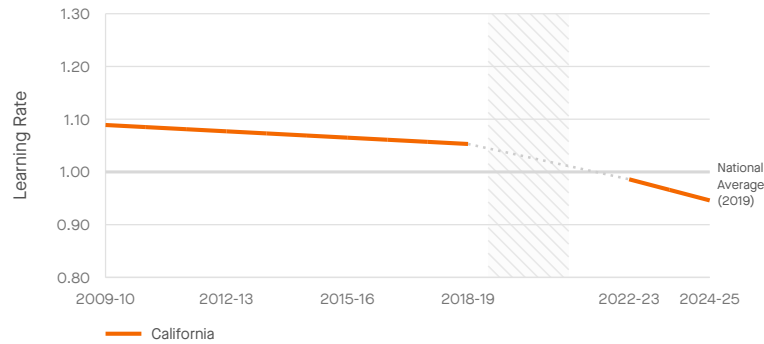




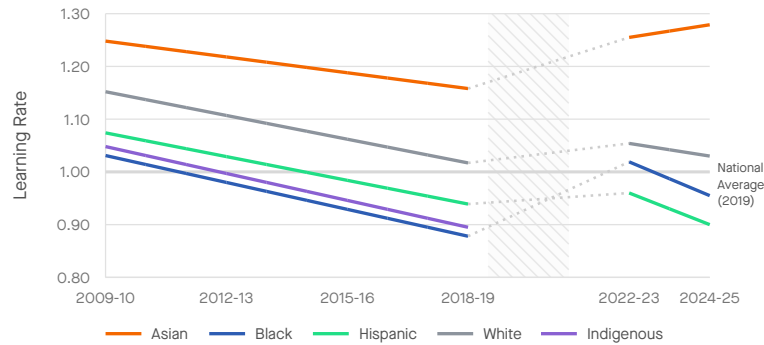
## Trends in Average Grade 3-8 Learning Rates, 2009-2025, by Student Subgroup

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.

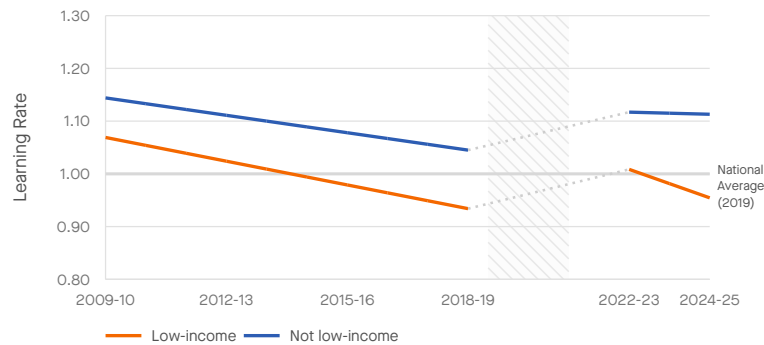
### Trend in Learning Rates (All Students)



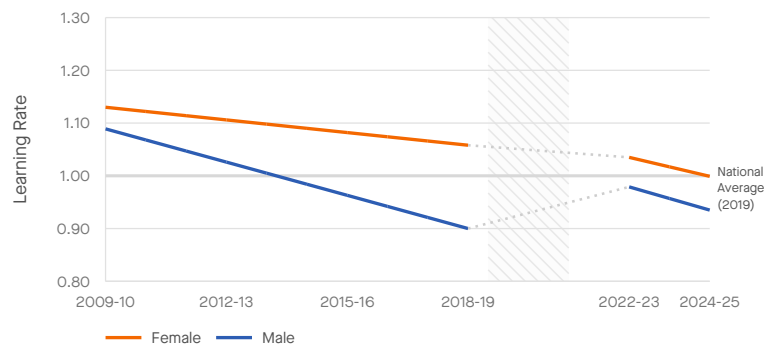
### Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Race/Ethnicity



### Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Income Level



### Trend in Learning Rates, by Student Gender

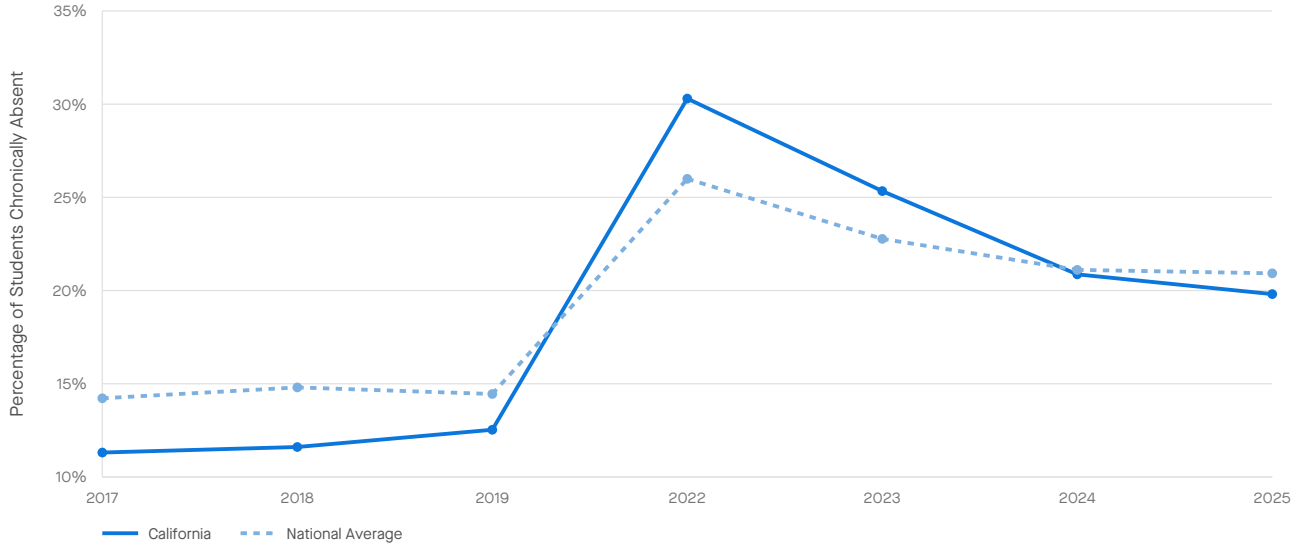




## Trends in Chronic Absenteeism

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
<b>California</b>	11.8	24.1	-0.0
<b>National Average</b>	14.5	22.7	N/A

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





## 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





## 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





## 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 California 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.

### Citation:

Educational Opportunity Project. (2026). "Trends in Academic Performance in California." Report version 2025.1. Available at: [https://edopportunity.org/reports/trends/2025/CA/report\\_CA\\_06\\_california.pdf](https://edopportunity.org/reports/trends/2025/CA/report_CA_06_california.pdf)

