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Thank you to our generous funders.

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In a state full of resources, we sometimes forget that our most precious and valuable resource is in homes across Alaska—our children. Alaska’s growth and prosperity is deeply connected to the health and productivity of our children, families, and the communities in which they live. Alaska is home to 187,300 children, and while many of them are thriving, there are just as many who are not.

All families—no matter their education level, economic status, family structure, or where they live—can raise children who thrive. Unfortunately, many of our hard-working Alaskan families are struggling, faced with challenges that prevent them from becoming, and remaining, physically, mentally, and economically self-sufficient.

As a state, we all have a responsibility to ensure our children and families live in safe, stable, and nurturing environments. One of the ways we can ensure we achieve this goal is by allowing data to help tell the story of how we can eliminate the challenges that prevent our families from raising thriving children.

Alaska Children’s Trust (ACT) embraces the belief that all Alaskans have a responsibility to support our children and families, and has adopted a framework that provides the architectural structure Alaska needs to support these families. This framework has six core components:

1. **Foster Data** – data is neutral information that is an essential tool in building the road map to true success.
2. **Advocacy** – ensures legislation that addresses the root cause of trauma and supports resilience is implemented.
3. **Community Investment** – utilizes resources that support efforts to address the social determinants identified by the data.
4. **Strengthen Economic Supports for Families** – lack of resources (i.e. wages, health insurance, transportation) leads to many of the social determinants that create the environment that cultivates unhealthy children. This strategy aims to improve the socioeconomic conditions of families, which tend to have the largest impacts on health.
5. **Education & Life Skills** – increases children’s access to more effective, equitable education, social-emotional learning, and life skills training.
6. **Norms & Values** – aims to strengthen norms and values that support safe, stable, and nurturing environments for children and families.

Kids Count Alaska is an ACT project that supports the first core component of this framework – Foster Data. Kids Count Alaska is part of the national KIDS COUNT program at the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF). The mission of KIDS COUNT is to ensure child advocates, policymakers, and the public have access to high-quality, unbiased data about child well-being. AECF gathers and publishes child well-being data from national and state sources online on the KIDS COUNT Data Center. Currently, the data center houses over 4 million data points at national and local levels. To provide an accessible snapshot of child well-being, KIDS COUNT compiles annual Data Books that describe national and state progress towards selected indicators of children’s economic well-
being, education, health, and family/community context. KIDS COUNT engages in advocacy at the federal level for investments in data collection and provides funding to a network of organizations to gather data and support advocacy at the state level.

**Figure 1. Voices for Alaska’s Children Model**

ACT has operated as Alaska’s KIDS COUNT partner since 2016. Kids Count Alaska is part of the Voices for Alaska’s Children program (Voices) at ACT. Voices is a grassroots community movement focused on continually raising awareness of the needs and challenges of children, youth, and families throughout Alaska. Voices is an independent voice for children; it aims to provide a sustainable and impactful system that allows every voice to be heard during advocacy for policies and decisions that support children. The goal of Voices is to help create a normative shift that ensures children and families live in safe, stable, and nurturing environments.

**Trevor Storrs**
Executive Director
Alaska Children’s Trust
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Executive Summary

KIDS COUNT is a project of the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) that ensures child advocates, policymakers, and the public have access to high-quality, unbiased data about child well-being. Kids Count Alaska is part of the Voices for Alaska Children program at the Alaska Children’s Trust (ACT). The following summary, completed by McDowell Group, presents analysis of national and state-level KIDS COUNT data focused on the education of Alaska children.

All data included here can be found at datacenter.kidscount.org/data#AK. Analysis of this data and more is published in the report 2018 Kids Count: Education available at www.alaskachildrenstrust.org.

Alaska Children

Children make up one-quarter of Alaska’s population.

- Between 2001 and 2016, Alaska’s adult population has increased at a faster rate than its child population, meaning Alaska’s children now comprise a smaller percentage of the state’s population. The Alaska child population will continue to increase modestly through 2045.
- Population changes vary regionally. Over the last 15 years, the child population has increased steadily in the Matanuska-Susitna region, remained about the same in the Interior, Northern region, and Southwest, and decreased in all other regions.
- Most children live in two-parent families, but approximately 60,000 children live with only one parent. Nearly 40,000 single-parent households are headed by women.
- Alaska’s child population is more racially diverse than the adult population.

Education Demographics

- Most children live in homes where the head of household has a high school diploma or GED (55 percent).
- About one-third of children live with householders who have a college or graduate degree (36 percent).
- Six percent of children live in homes where the householder did not graduate from high school.
- Alaska’s per-pupil expenditure ($19,000) is higher than the U.S. average ($12,000).

Early Childhood (Ages 0-4)

- Just under half of children between the ages of 9 and 35 months received a developmental screening during the year (47 percent).
- Fifty-four percent of 3-year-old children have routine care arrangements; of these, 55 percent attend a center, preschool, or Head Start.
Half of mothers not using their preferred care arrangement for their 3-year-old say the cost is too high for the child care they would prefer (51 percent).

Just over half of Alaska 3-year-olds (58 percent) are read to every day.

Seventy-six percent of 3-year-olds watch more than an hour or more of screen time per day.

Only 30 percent of kindergarteners were Kindergarten-ready at the start of the school year.

### School Age (Ages 5-18)

- Most school-age children in Alaska are enrolled in K-12 public school (84 percent).
- Statewide, just under three-quarters of students attend school regularly (74 percent).
- One-quarter of Alaska students are chronically absent from school (26 percent).
- About one-third of Alaska students score at or above proficient on reading and math in 4th and 8th grade.
- During the 2016-17 school year, 32 percent of Alaska high school students earned credit in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.
- 2,003 students dropped out from school during grades 7-12 (3.5 percent) during 2016-2017.
- During the 2016-2017 school year, 7,681 students graduated in four years, for an overall graduation rate of 78 percent.

### Post-Secondary (Ages 18+)

- Less than half of the working age population (25 to 64 years) had a post-secondary degree in 2016.
- In 2016, 20 percent of young adults (ages 18 to 24) without a college degree were neither enrolled in school or currently working.
- Twenty-seven percent of young adults were enrolled in college or had already completed a college degree (21,000 adults) in 2016.
Kids Count Alaska will release a quarterly Kids Count report focused on a core topic. This report, the second of four reports of the 2017-2018 Alaska KIDS COUNT Data Book, focuses on the education of Alaska children and presents analysis of KIDS COUNT data. An executive summary that summarizes the data in this report and an infographic that highlights key findings accompany the report.

Report Structure

Following an introductory letter and the executive summary, this report and all others in the series provide an overview of basic demographic data about Alaska children. Next, this report explores a variety of published indicators that describe the education of Alaska children. The report concludes with a summary of resources to learn more about this topic. A glossary and source notes are included in the Appendices.

Methodology

Information in this report comes from analysis of secondary data publicly available on the KIDS COUNT Data Center. Data denoted by "National KIDS COUNT" are gathered and published by the AECF. Data denoted by "Kids Count Alaska" are compiled from a number of sources and published by Alaska’s Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS). Detailed citations and the original data sources are included as endnotes in the final section of this report. The glossary defines terms used in the indicators; links connect first-used terms to the glossary. A complete list of education indicators available on the Data Center is provided in the Appendices.

The approach for this report included review of all available education data and documentation from the data center, assessment of the quality and limitations of the data, followed by selection of indicators for analysis and inclusion in the report. The selection process prioritized relevant, stand-alone indicators that explored different dimensions of child education. The ACT Kids Count Advisory Committee provided recommendations for data to highlight in this report, and an outside review team contributed to content and the ‘Finding Solutions’ section.

Data Sources

While all data in this report were gathered from the KIDS COUNT Data Center, the following sources were used by National KIDS COUNT and Kids Count Alaska:

- **U.S. Census Bureau** provides demographic data, including age, race, household characteristics, languages spoken, gender, labor force information, income, etc. All census data are gathered as of April 1 every 10 years, and the income data gathered reflects the previous year.

- **Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD)** provides a range of economic data to the public, including population estimates (overall, age and gender, and race), population projections, migration, employment and wages, employers, resident hire, unemployment data, industry and occupational information, workplace safety, cost of living and housing information, workforce training, and local and regional information. The data consider Alaska’s unique patterns, including
seasonal employment, lack of roads, migration, etc., and utilize information only available in Alaska to provide their estimates, such as Permanent Fund enrollment.

- **Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED)** publishes statistics and data reports that cover enrollment, graduation rates, dropout rates, school facilities, special education, assessments and more.

- The **American Community Survey (ACS)** collects a wide range of information about demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics. The ACS produces annual and five-year estimates. It is administered by the U.S. Census Bureau.


- The **Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS)** is a survey sent to mothers with 3-year-old children; about 90 mothers receive the survey each month. It is a follow-up survey to the Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS). CUBS gathers data related to toddler behavior, health, health care access, parenting, and school readiness. For the purposes of this report, survey responses are described using the terms “mothers of 3-year-olds,” “3-year-olds,” and “mothers.”

- Some program-specific data sources are also consulted, such as Head Start.

### Data Notes

#### TIME FRAME

All data reflect the most recent year of available data, usually 2016. Trends were not calculated because statistical variation is not provided for most indicators. When confidence intervals are available on the data center, this is noted in the associated endnote. Occasionally, yearly comparisons are drawn to illustrate relevant changes over time.

#### CHILD POPULATIONS

Interpretation of demographic data can be unwieldy, as data sources categorize and count children in different ways. For example, various sources included in the Data Center define children as “under 18,” “18 and under,” and “19 and under.” As a result, comparison of indicators is not straightforward. For the purposes of readability, all child populations are children under the age of 18 unless otherwise noted.

#### RACE AND ETHNICITY

The KIDS COUNT Data Center provides several indicators by race and ethnicity. While these were reviewed and do show disparities by race/ethnicity, much of the data is incomplete (often suppressed due to large margins of error) and reflects race/ethnicity categories that are no longer standard in Alaska. Race/ethnicity breakouts are presented only where data are complete. Where race data are presented in alone categories (i.e. African American only), populations are typically underestimated and should be interpreted with care.

#### CALCULATIONS

Data included in this report reflects the best available. Calculations with data in this report should be undertaken with care, as data come from multiple sources and reflect different sub-populations and/or total populations of children. For example, some indicators are calculated from the population of children ages 0 to 19, while others begin with a subset of this population, such as children in households or own children (see glossary for...
As a result, counts differ within sections of the report and should be included with each indicator when published elsewhere. Survey data often includes confidence intervals; for ease of readability, confidence intervals are not included in this report.

**REGIONS**

Where presented, regional data are broken into the economic regions used by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, with the exception of the Anchorage/Mat-Su region, which is separated. The following map details the census areas included in each region.

*Figure 2. Geographic Regions*

![Geographic Regions](source: DOLWD)
Approximately 187,300 children between the ages of 0 and 17 lived in Alaska in 2016. Twenty-nine percent were 4 years-old or younger, 39 percent were between the ages of 5 and 11, 16 percent were between the ages of 12 and 14, and 16 percent were between the ages of 15 and 17. Table 1 (next page) provides a detailed breakout of the child population by age.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Available at: KIDS COUNT Data Center

Alaska’s overall population is projected to increase modestly. Including projected births, deaths, in-migrants and out-migrants, Alaska’s population is projected to be 899,825 in 2045. The growth rate is expected to decline from 0.9 percent during 2015-2020 to 0.5 percent in 2040-2045. The following table details projected child population growth by age.

(See table on the following page.)

* See the data notes for a discussion of child populations age break-outs.

** Kids Count: Education of Alaska Children **

---

**Data Snapshot**

- Children make up one-quarter of Alaska’s population (187,300 children).
- Alaska’s adult population has increased at a faster rate than its child population since 1990; children therefore make up a smaller percentage of Alaska’s 2016 population.
- Nearly 40 percent of Alaska children live in Anchorage (81,772 children).
- Approximately 60,000 children live with only one parent. Nearly 40,000 single-parent households are headed by women.
- Population changes vary regionally. The child population has increased steadily in the Matanuska-Susitna region, remained about the same in the Interior, and decreased in all others.
- The Alaska child population is more diverse than the adult population.
- The Alaska child population will increase modestly through 2045.
Table 1. Current (2016) and Projected (2020-2045) Child Population

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>2030</th>
<th>2035</th>
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<td>11,531</td>
<td>11,810</td>
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<td>+1,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>10,864</td>
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<td>11,529</td>
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</tr>
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<td>187,327</td>
<td>195,528</td>
<td>201,398</td>
<td>205,767</td>
<td>210,327</td>
<td>214,738</td>
<td>220,971</td>
<td>+25,443</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kids Count Data Center, Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, and McDowell Group calculations.
Note: Columns may not sum due to rounding.

Children make up about 25 percent of the total population today, compared to 30 percent in 2001. Because the population of adults has increased at a faster rate during the same period, children now make up a smaller percentage of the total population than in 2001. Alaska is the third-youngest state in the country, after Utah and Texas. When viewed regionally, however, the child population has declined since 2001 in all regions, except for the Mat-Su region and the Interior. The child population has increased steadily in the Mat-Su region and remained about the same in the Interior during the same time period.

(See figure on the following page.)
Figure 4. Percent Change in Child Population by Region, 2001 and 2015

Data Source: Alaska DOLWD
Available at: KIDS COUNT Data Center
Note: In this figure, child population includes children ages 0-19.

Over one-third of Alaska children live in Anchorage (39 percent); between 5 and 15 percent of the total child population live in each of the remaining six regions.9

Table 2. Child Population (0-19) by Region, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># of Children (0-19)</th>
<th>Percentage of Child Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>81,772</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf Coast Region</td>
<td>21,027</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior Region</td>
<td>31,041</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat-Su</td>
<td>31,704</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Region</td>
<td>31,041</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Region</td>
<td>31,704</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Region</td>
<td>31,041</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>207,131</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Alaska DOLWD
Available at: KIDS COUNT Data Center
Alaska’s child population is more diverse than the adult population; 50 percent of Alaska children are non-white, compared to only 35 percent of Alaskan adults.† 10,11

### Table 3. Diversity of Alaska Child and Adult Populations, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Child Population (0-17)</th>
<th>Adult Population (18+)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native or American Indian alone</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian alone</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black alone</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or More Race Groups</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White alone</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau
Available at: [KIDS COUNT Data Center](#)

Except for the Southwest and Northern regions of Alaska where children are most likely to be Alaska Native or American Indian, the child population is predominantly White. Since 2001, the child populations in Anchorage, Southeast, Mat-Su, and Gulf Coast regions have become more diverse.

*(See figure on the following page.)*

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†When race data are counted in alone categories, populations are typically underestimated. As a result, reporting race data by “All” categories is standard in Alaska, but not available for all indicators on the KIDS COUNT Data Center. Because different categorizations are used, total counts will differ depending on methodology.

Figure 5. Change in Child Population from 2001 to 2015, by Race/Ethnicity and Region

Figure 6. Household Type 2011-2015
Education
Education Demographics

Data Snapshot

- Most children live in homes where the householder has a high school diploma or GED (55 percent).
- One-third of children live with householders who have a college or graduate degree (36 percent).
- Six percent of children live in homes where the householder did not graduate from high school.
- Alaska’s per-pupil expenditure is higher ($19,000) than the U.S. average ($12,000).

Household Educational Attainment

In 2016, 94 percent of Alaska parents had earned a degree of some kind. Over half of children lived in homes where the head of the household attained a high school diploma or GED (58 percent or 108,000 children). Six percent of children lived in homes where the head of household did not graduate from high school (12,000 children). One-fourth of children lived in homes where the head of household had an Associate or Bachelor’s degree (47,000 children). Eleven percent lived in homes where the head of household had earned a graduate degree (20,000 children).

Figure 7. Children by Household Head’s Educational Attainment, 2016

- Associate degree: 7%
- Bachelor’s degree: 18%
- Graduate degree: 11%
- High school diploma or GED: 58%
- Not a high school graduate: 6%

Data Source: American Community Survey
Available at: KIDS COUNT Data Center

Per-Pupil Educational Expenditure

In 2014 (the most recent year data is available), the per-pupil expenditure for K-12 public schools in Alaska adjusted for regional cost differences was $19,000 compared to the U.S. average of $12,000. Regional variations are calculated using the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Comparable Wage Index. Per-pupil expenditures range from $7,038 in Utah to $19,654 in Vermont.
Early Childhood (Ages 0-4)

Data Snapshot

- Fifty-four percent of 3-year-old children have routine care arrangements; of these, 55 percent attend a center, preschool, or Head Start.
- One-half of mothers not using their preferred care arrangement for their 3-year-old say the cost is too high for the child care they would prefer (51 percent).
- Just over one-half of 3-year-olds are read to every day (58 percent).
- Just under one-half of children between the ages of 9 and 35 months received a developmental screening during the year (47 percent).
- Seventy-six percent of 3-year-olds watch an hour or more of screen time per day.
- Eighteen percent of kindergarteners were kindergarten-ready at the start of the school year.

Early Care and Learning

High-quality early care and learning can pave the way for school readiness and takes place in both the home and community. In-home early care and learning includes care provided by parents or relatives as well as home visiting programs such as Parents as Teachers; Early Intervention; Nurse Family Partnership; and Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program. Community-based early care and learning includes federal and state licensed and regulated child care, Early Head Start, Head Start, pre-elementary, preschool special education, military, and tribal child care. Over one-half of young children are in some form of early care and learning environment. ¹

Child Care Arrangements

In 2016, 54 percent of mothers had routine child care arrangements for their 3-year-old children at some point during the year, and 46 percent of mothers report their 3-year-old currently has routine care arrangements.¹⁹ Of these children, about one-half attend a center, preschool or Head Start (55 percent).²⁰

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4. Child Care Regularly Used for 3-Year-Old Children, 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type of Child Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center, preschool, Head Start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care in relative’s home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care in my home by a relative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care in non-relative’s home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care in my home by a non-relative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS), analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology (MCH-Epi) Unit. Available at: Kids Count Data Center. Note: 2016 data is provisional. Column does not sum to 100% because more than one type of child care may be selected.

¹ The Alaska Early Care and Learning Dashboard, hosted on the threadalaska.org website, provides borough/census area profiles of supply and demand for early care and learning services. For each borough/census area, the dashboard breaks out children who are cared for at home, in licensed early care and learning programs, children in care that is not licensed (such as military care), and children in need of early care and learning services. The dashboard is available at bit.ly/alaskadashboard.
When asked whether they would prefer another form of child care, 14 percent of mothers of 3-year-olds would prefer a different care arrangement for their child.\textsuperscript{21} One-half of these mothers are not using their preferred child care because the cost is too high (51 percent).\textsuperscript{22}

### Table 5. Reason Not Using Preferred Child Care, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason Given</th>
<th>% of Mothers of 3-Year-Olds Not Using Preferred Child Care for This Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cost is too high</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doesn’t fit my schedule</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t afford to stay home</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waiting list too long</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not available in my community</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can’t accommodate special needs</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Alaska CUBS, analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s MCH-Epi Unit.
Available at: Kids Count Data Center
Note: 2016 data is provisional. Column does not sum to 100% because more than one reason may be selected.

### Pre-K Program Enrollment

During 2012-2016, 37 percent of children ages three to four (8,070 children) were enrolled in a pre-K program or school, including nursery school or preschool, during the previous three months.\textsuperscript{23} By region, the percentage of young children enrolled in a pre-K program ranges from 31 percent in Anchorage to 56 percent in Southwest Alaska.\textsuperscript{24} It is important to note that children not in school may be in some other form of early care and learning environment.\textsuperscript{6}

![Figure 8. Young Children (3- and 4-Year-Olds) Enrolled in Pre-K Program by Region, 2012-2016](image)

According to the Alaska Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey (CUBS), 29 percent of Alaska 3-year-old children attended preschool during 2015 and 2016.\textsuperscript{1, 25} Regionally, the percentage of 3-year-old children attending preschool ranges from 16 percent in the Southwest to 43 percent in the Southeast.\textsuperscript{26}

(See figure on following page.)

\textsuperscript{6} CUBS defines preschool as “a structured program run by trained adults.”

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Enrollment differs by poverty status. In 2015, a 200 percent poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children was $48,072. Of children ages three to four below 200 percent poverty during 2012 to 2016, "64 percent were not in school (5,000 children), as compared to 63 percent of young children at or above 200 percent poverty (8,000 children)." While the difference is slight, the effects of not attending school can be lifelong.

**Head Start Enrollment**

Just under 4,000 children from birth to five years were enrolled in Head Start programs (Head Start or Early Head Start) in 2016. Of enrolled children, most are three or four years old.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th># of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3</td>
<td>881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,617</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≥5</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3,779</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Learning at Home**

**Early Literacy**

Children who have access to books and are read to from birth are more likely to succeed academically. Most Alaska 3-year-olds have over 25 children’s picture books at home (75 percent).
In 2016, when asked how much time spent was reading aloud to their 3-year-old the previous day, most mothers reported 30 minutes or more (67 percent). Twenty-four percent of mothers said their 3-year-old was read to less than 30 minutes the previous day; only 9 percent said no one had read to their child.

In 2016, 58 percent of mothers of 3-year-olds said someone in the household read a book or story to their child every day of the week, 24 percent said their 3-year-old was read to between four and six days a week, and 18 percent of 3-year-olds were read to between zero and three days per week. In 2016, over two-thirds of children under age 6 were read to four or more days per week (69 percent).

### Table 7. Reading to 3-Year-Old Child During Past Week, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Days per Week</th>
<th>% of Mothers of 3-Year-Olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Everyday</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 days</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-3 days</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s MCH-Epi Unit. Available at: [Kids Count Data Center](#). Note: 2016 data is provisional.

In 2015 and 2016, 67 percent of 3-year-olds were read to, sang to, or rhymed with every day of the week. Regionally, this percentage ranges from 40 percent in the Northern region to 81 percent in the Gulf Coast region.

### Figure 10. Daily Literacy Activity with 3-Year-Old Child During the Past Week by Region, 2015-2016

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s MCH-Epi Unit. Available at: [Kids Count Data Center](#). Note: 2016 data is provisional. Daily literacy activity refers to reading, singing and/or rhyming every day of the past week.

### Activities

Activities in the home establish norms, build relationships, and develop skills important for learning. In 2016, over one-half of mothers of 3-year-olds reported that someone at home made things, talked about feelings, and/or played counting or number games with their child daily. Eighty-one percent of mothers said that someone at home sits down and shares a meal with their 3-year-old every day.
### Table 8. Activities with 3-Year-Old Child During Past Week, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Days per Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0-3 Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sit down and eat a meal</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about feelings</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Play counting or number games</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build or make things</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s MCH-Epi Unit.
Available at: Kids Count Data Center
Note: 2016 data is provisional.

### Developmental Screening

Early detection of developmental delays leads to the best outcomes for children. During 2016, 47 percent of children between the ages of nine and 35 months received a developmental screening (12,033 children) according to the National Survey of Children’s Health.39 According to CUBS, 77 percent of mothers say they completed a checklist or questionnaire about their 3-year-old child’s development within the past 12 months.40 By region, the percentage of mothers who completed a developmental questionnaire about their 3-year-old child ranges from a low of 47 percent in the Southwest to a high of 83 percent in the Interior.41

### Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that young children between the ages of two and five years limit screen use to one hour per day of high quality programs watched with their parents. While some media can have educational value for children older than 18 months, “[p]roblems begin when media use displaces physical activity, hands-on exploration and face-to-face social interaction in the real world, which is critical to learning.”42 In 2016, when asked to describe how much time their 3-year-old spent watching television, videos, movies or playing video games, three-quarters of mothers reported that their child watched one hour or more of screen time the previous day. 43 Forty-one percent of mothers stated their child watched over two hours of screen time the previous day.44
Table 9. Screen Time for Three-Year-Old Children, 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Screen Time Per Day</th>
<th>% of Mothers of 3-Year-Olds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2+ hrs</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 hrs</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 hr</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Alaska CUBS, analysis by the Alaska Division of Public Health’s MCH-Epi Unit. Available at: Kids Count Data Center
Note: 2016 data is provisional.

Kindergarten Readiness

The Alaska Developmental Profile (ADP) provides a snapshot of children’s development as they enter kindergarten. All kindergarten students, as well as any first-grade students who did not complete the ADP the previous year, are screened at the beginning of each school year. The ADP measures thirteen skill and behavior goals in five domains: physical health and well-being, social emotional development, approaches to learning, cognition and general knowledge, and communication language and literacy. At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, 18 percent of kindergartners consistently demonstrated all 13 goals, and 13 percent consistently demonstrated at 11 or 12 of the 13 goals. Detailed results are presented, where possible, by district in the Appendices.

Figure 12. ADP Results for Kindergarten Students by Region, 2017-2018

Source: Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of DEED data.
Note: Regional analysis excludes school districts with unreliable or unstable statistics are not included.
School Age (Ages 5-18)

Data Snapshot

- Most school-age children in Alaska are enrolled in K-12 public school (84 percent).
- Statewide, just under three-fourths of students attend school regularly (74 percent).
- Just over one-fourth of Alaska students are chronically absent from school (26 percent).
- About one-third of Alaska students score at or above proficient on reading and math in fourth and eighth grade (between 30 and 35 percent).
- During the school year, 32 percent of Alaska high school students earned credit in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program.
- 2,003 students dropped out from school during grades 7-12 (3.5 percent).
- During the 2016-2017 school year, 7,681 students graduated in four years, for an overall graduation rate of 78 percent.

Public School Enrollment

Most school-age children in Alaska are enrolled in K-12 public school (84 percent). Regionally, public school enrollment ranges from 78 percent in both Anchorage and the Mat-Su regions to a high of 99 percent in the Interior. Public school enrollment does not include students enrolled in private schools or home school students who are not reimbursed by the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>% of School Age Children Enrolled in Public School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf Coast Region</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior Region</td>
<td>99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matanuska-Susitna</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Region</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Region</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest Region</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alaska</strong></td>
<td><strong>84%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: DEED and DOLWD
Available at: Kids Count Data Center

Title I School Enrollment

Of the 47,700 pre-K through 12th grade students who attended Title I schools (schools where children are served by public, Title I, Part-A school-wide programs or targeted assistance at any time during the regular school year) in 2014-2015, 42 percent identified as Alaska Native or American Indian (20,000 children). Just under one-third identified as White (14,000 children). The remaining 29 percent identified as two or more races, Asian or Pacific Islander, Hispanic, or Black.
### Attendance

#### Regular Attendance

While daily attendance rates are high, regular attendance rates show that not all students attend school regularly. Statewide, just under three-quarters of students attend school regularly (74 percent). While there is variation within each region’s school districts, average regular attendance rate varies from 55 percent of students in the Northern region to 79 percent of students in Anchorage and Southeast. Detailed regular attendance rates by school district are included in the Appendices.

#### Chronic Absenteeism

During the 2015-2016 school year, over one-quarter of Alaska students were chronically absent from school (26 percent). Chronic absenteeism is defined as absence from school for at least 10 percent of the school days in which a student is enrolled. Regionally, chronic absenteeism ranges from 45 percent in the Northern region to 21 percent in Anchorage and Southeast. Chronic absenteeism rates vary within each region by school districts.

---

### Table 11. Children in Title I Schools by Race/Ethnicity, 2014-2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th># of Children</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native or American Indian</td>
<td>20,002</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>4,223</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1,592</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2,452</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>13,947</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>5,466</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>47,682</strong></td>
<td><strong>99%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: Department of Education EDFacts/Consolidated State Performance Report Available at: Kids Count Data Center Note: Rows do not sum to 100% due to rounding.
Test Scores

Reading Achievement

In 2015, 30 percent of 4th graders attending public school scored at or above proficient on reading achievement, while 70 percent scored below proficient, and 39 percent scored below basic. At the national level, 35 percent of 4th grade students scored at or above proficient.

Student performance varies by school and family income level. Seventy-nine percent of 4th graders at schools that receive Title I funding scored below proficient, compared to 61 percent of students at schools that do not receive Title I funding. Of 4th graders eligible for free and reduced lunch, 83 percent scored below proficient on reading achievement in 2015 compared to 57 percent of 4th graders not eligible for free/reduced school lunch. Nearly all 4th grade English language learners scored below proficient on reading compared to non-ELL students (96 percent compared to 66 percent). While most 4th graders scored below proficient on reading,

---

Figure 14. Chronic Absenteeism by Region, 2015-2016


Test Scores

Reading Achievement

In 2015, 30 percent of 4th graders attending public school scored at or above proficient on reading achievement, while 70 percent scored below proficient, and 39 percent scored below basic. At the national level, 35 percent of 4th grade students scored at or above proficient. At the national level, 35 percent of 4th grade students scored at or above proficient.

Figure 15. 4th Grade Reading Achievement, 2015

Data Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress
Available at: Kids Count Data Center

Student performance varies by school and family income level. Seventy-nine percent of 4th graders at schools that receive Title I funding scored below proficient, compared to 61 percent of students at schools that do not receive Title I funding. Of 4th graders eligible for free and reduced lunch, 83 percent scored below proficient on reading achievement in 2015 compared to 57 percent of 4th graders not eligible for free/reduced school lunch. Nearly all 4th grade English language learners scored below proficient on reading compared to non-ELL students (96 percent compared to 66 percent). While most 4th graders scored below proficient on reading,

---

when viewed by race/ethnicity, Alaska Native and American Indian students are more likely to score below proficient than White students (89 percent compared to 58 percent, respectively).58‡‡

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race / Ethnicity</th>
<th>% Below Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native or American Indian</td>
<td>89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress
Available at: Kids Count Data Center

Reading proficiency does not appear to improve over time. Eighth graders’ reading proficiency levels are nearly identical to 4th graders’ reading proficiency. In 2015, 31 percent of 8th graders attending public school scored at or above proficient, while 69 percent scored below proficient, and nearly a third (29 percent) scored below basic.59 Nationally, 33 percent of students scored at or above proficient.60

Math Achievement

Math proficiency scores are slightly better than reading scores. In 2015, 35 percent of 4th graders attending public school scored at or above proficient, the remainder (65 percent) scored below proficient, and 22 percent scored below basic.61 In the United States, 39 percent of 4th graders scored at or above proficient.62

(See figure on following page.)

‡‡ This level of analysis is not currently available for the other test score indicators.
Eighth grade math proficiency scores are similar to 4th grade math proficiency scores. In 2015, 32 percent of 8th graders attending public school scored at or above proficient, while the remainder (68 percent) scored below proficient, and nearly one-third scored below basic (29 percent). Nationally, 32 percent of 8th graders scored at or above proficient.

In 2015, when viewed by race/ethnicity, 8th grade math achievement scores vary from 55 percent of White students scoring below proficient to 88 percent of Alaska Native or American Indian students.

Table 13. 8th Graders who Scored Below Proficient on Math by Race/Ethnicity, 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>% Below Proficient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native or American Indian</td>
<td>88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress
Available at: Kids Count Data Center
Career and Technical Education

During 2016-2017, 32 percent of Alaska high school students earned credit in a Career and Technical Education (CTE) program. Regionally, this percentage ranges from a high of 46 percent in the Gulf Coast region to a low of 12 percent in Southwest.

Figure 19. High School Students who Earned Credit in a CTE Program by Region, 2016-2017


Note: DEED collects student data from school districts that participate in the federal Carl D. Perkins grant.

Nearly one-fifth of CTE participators (described in Figure 22) go on to concentrate their skills in a single CTE program (19 percent). Of these students, 95 percent graduated with their 4-year cohort in 2016-2017, and 79 percent entered postsecondary training, military services, or employment in the year after they left high school.

School Disciplinary Action

In 2013-2014, the most recent years data is available, 4 percent of public preschool through 12th grade students received in-school suspensions, and 5 percent received out-of-school suspensions (5,537 students and 6,526 students, respectively). During an in-school suspension, a student is removed from his or her regular classrooms for at least half of the day and placed under direct supervision of other school personnel. During an out-of-school suspension, the student is removed from the school premises (sent home or to a behavioral center) for at least half of the day and may or may not receive educational services. Nationally, 5 percent of public preschool through 12th grade students receive in-school suspensions, and 5 percent receive out of school suspensions.

(See table on following page.)
Table 14. School Suspensions by Race/Ethnicity, 2013-2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>In-School Suspension</th>
<th>Out-of-School Suspension</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td># of Students</td>
<td>% of Enrolled Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native or American Indian</td>
<td>1,506</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian and Pacific Islander</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>457</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,973</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>5,537</strong></td>
<td><strong>4%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: U.S. Department of Education / Civil Rights Data Collection
Available at: Kids Count Data Center
Note: Enrollment refers to the unduplicated count of students on the rolls of the school.

During the same time period, the student expulsion rate was 8 per 10,000 students.\textsuperscript{74} An expulsion refers to removal of a student from his or her regular school for the remainder of the school year or longer.\textsuperscript{75} Nationally, the rate is much higher (22 per 10,000 students).

7th-12th Grade Dropouts

During 2016-2017, 3.5 percent of Alaska students in grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school (2,001).\textsuperscript{76} Dropout rates are not the inverse of the graduation rate. The percentage of 7th to 12th grade dropouts is highest in the Southwest region (7 percent) and lowest in the Gulf Coast and Southeast regions (2 percent).\textsuperscript{77} According to DEED, a dropout refers to a student who was enrolled in the district at some time during the school year and whose enrollment terminated. Dropouts do not include graduates, transfers to public or private schools, or transfers to state- or district-approved education programs. Students with absences due to suspension, illness, or medical conditions are not reported as dropouts. Students who leave the school to seek a GED are considered dropouts.

Figure 20. 7th-12th Grade Dropouts by Region, 2016-2017

When viewed by race/ethnicity, 2016-2017 dropout rates vary from 5.9 percent among Alaska Native / American Indian students to 2.1 percent among White students.\textsuperscript{78} When compared to the enrolled student population, students of color comprise a greater percentage of school dropouts. While AN/AI students make up 22.4 percent
of enrolled students in grades 7 through 12, AN/AI students account for 38.1 percent of total dropouts, a
difference of 15.7 percent. In contrast, White students make up 48.7 percent of enrolled 7th to 12th grade
students and account for 29.7 percent of total dropouts, a difference of 19.3 percent.

Table 15. Dropout Rates by Race/Ethnicity and Comparison to Enrolled Student Population, 2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Dropout Rate</th>
<th>% of Total Dropouts</th>
<th>% of Total 7-12th Enrolled Students</th>
<th>Difference Between % Total Dropouts and % Total Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native / American Indian</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>38.1%</td>
<td>22.4%</td>
<td>+15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian / Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>-2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>+2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>7.3%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>+0.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>4.4%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>+2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
<td>48.7%</td>
<td>-19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.5%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).
Note: Due to rounding, columns do not sum to 100 percent.

Figure 21. Race/Ethnicity of Enrolled Student and Dropout Populations (Grades 7-12), 2016-2017

Source: Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED).

**Teens Not in School**

In 2016, 3 percent of Alaska teens age 16 to 19 were not enrolled in high school or high school graduates (1,000
students). Regionally, the percentage of teens not in school and who have not graduated ranged from a low
of 3 percent in Anchorage and the Interior to a high of 9 percent in the Northern and Southwest regions (2012-
2016).

(See figure on following page.)
In 2016, 11 percent of teenagers ages 16 to 19 were not enrolled in school and not employed (4,000 students). Regionally, the percentage of teens not in school and not working ranged from a low of 8 percent in Anchorage to a high of 21 percent in the Northern region (2012-2016).

High School Graduation Rates

Students who graduate from high school in four years are more likely to continue to postsecondary education, are healthier, more employable, and earn higher incomes than students who do not graduate or do not graduate in four years.

On-Time Graduation

During the 2016-2017 school year, 7,681 students graduated in four years, for an overall graduation rate of 78 percent for the 2017 4-year cohort. When viewed by race/ethnicity, Asian and Pacific Islander students are

---

83 The 2017 4-year cohort includes all students who first entered grade nine in 2013-2014, attended a public high school during the cohort period, and did not transfer to a private school or outside Alaska or pass away prior to the end of the 2016-2017 school year (DEED, 2018).
most likely to graduate on time (84 percent), while Alaska Native and American Indian students are least likely (69 percent).87

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alaska Native / American Indian</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian / Pacific Islander</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>78%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: DEED

Not Graduating on Time

In 2015-2016, the most recent years for which data is available, nearly one-quarter of Alaska’s entering freshman class did not graduate in four years (24 percent).88 When viewed by race/ethnicity, Asian and Pacific Islander students are most likely to graduate on time, while Alaska Native and American Indian students are least likely.

Figure 24. High School Students Not Graduating on Time by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-2016

Data Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education. U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core of Data (CCD), State Dropout and Completion Data Available at: [Kids Count Data Center](http://kidscountdatacenter.com)
Data Snapshot

- Less than one-half of the working age population (25 to 64 years) had a postsecondary degree in 2016.
- In 2016, 20 percent of young adults (18 to 24) without a college degree were neither enrolled in school nor currently working.
- Twenty-seven percent of young adults (18 to 24) were enrolled in college or had already completed a college degree in 2016.

Transition to Adulthood

In 2016, 20 percent of young adults ages 18 to 24 without a college degree were neither enrolled in school nor currently working (15,000 Alaskans).89

College Enrollment

In 2016, 27 percent of Alaska young adults (ages 18-24) were enrolled in college or had already completed a college degree (21,000 adults).90 Nationally, this percentage is nearly double. In 2016 across the United States, 49 percent of young adults were enrolled or had already completed college.91 College enrollment refers to any coursework beyond 12th grade including, for example, attendance at a public or private college, university, or professional school (such as law or medical). Individuals enrolled in vocational, technical, or business school such as postsecondary vocational, trade, hospital school, and/or on-the job training are not included in this indicator. Regionally, the percentage of young adults enrolled in college ranges from 5 percent in the Southwest region to 31 percent in the Interior.92***

Figure 25. College Enrollment (Ages 18-24) by Region, 2012-2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf Coast</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interior</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mat-Su</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southwest</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: American Community Survey
Available at: [Kids Count Data Center](http://www.kidscount.org)

*** In areas where universities are located, non-resident students are included in the overall population.
Educational Attainment

During 2012-2016, less than one-half of the working age population (25 to 64 years) had a postsecondary degree (38 percent). Nine percent of working age adults had an Associate degree (35,000 people); nearly one-fifth had Bachelor’s degrees (19 percent or 76,000 people); and 10 percent had graduate degrees (40,000 people). Over one-half of Alaska’s working age population holds a high school diploma or GED (56 percent or 225,000 adults), while the remaining 6 percent did not graduate from high school (26,000 people).

The distribution of degrees varies regionally. In 2016, Anchorage and the Interior had the highest percentages of postsecondary degree attainment (43 percent and 41 percent, respectively). The Northern and Southwest regions had the lowest percentages of postsecondary degree attainment (18 and 17 percent, respectively) and the highest percentages of the working age population without a high school diploma (both 13 percent).

(See figure on following page.)
The educational attainment for the young adult population (ages 25 to 34) in 2016 is similar to the educational attainment of the working age population. Less than one-half of the young adult population has a postsecondary degree. In 2016, 8 percent of the young adult population had an Associate degree (10,000 individuals); 23 percent had a Bachelor’s degree (28,000 people); and 5 percent had a Graduate degree (6,000 individuals). Over one-half of this population has earned a high school diploma or GED (58 percent or 71,000 people). The remaining 6 percent did not graduate from high school (7,000 people).
Finding Solutions

Alaska’s children hold the key to our future. Alaska’s schools must represent a commitment to provide quality education to all children and youth. Working parents, in order to successfully provide for their families, need the peace of mind that comes from knowing that their kids are in a safe and developmentally-appropriate environment. Policymakers need access and capacity to use consistent, high-quality data on how the system is performing plus evidence on what affects student learning and the motivation to work toward the ultimate goal of equipping all children with the skills they need to succeed in their lives. The real work of education improvement must be tackled in every school and every community. The Alaska Children’s Trust suggests the following areas of investment:

- **Available Pre-K** – Pre-K programs should be available to all students in Alaska, especially to those students in low-socioeconomic households. Because early education and care is an investment in long-term outcomes, Alaskans should focus on getting all kids into programmed care. A basic standard for quality needs to be created that allows individual programs to experiment and develop models that work in their communities. Programs should set expectations about outcomes. While early academic skills are crucial for school readiness, young children also need to develop their social and emotional skills, like self-control and cooperation, to be ready for school. The state legislature should explore new funding strategies such as tax credits, taxing districts, social impact bonds, contracts, and grants to fund these programs, and by including Pre-K students in the Base Student Allocation it offers to districts. In addition to helping ensure that children arrive at school ready to succeed, early care and education programs enable parents to meet the financial needs of their families and businesses to attract and retain a high-quality workforce.

- **Restorative Discipline Practices** – All discriminatory discipline practices should be eliminated. The state should embrace a restorative justice approach to discipline in our schools as an alternative to zero-tolerance programs and other types of disciplinary action. Programs should have goals to set policies and implement widespread preventive practices to eliminate expulsion and suspension. Entities should track data on rates of expulsion and suspension, starting in early childhood settings, and ensure that data is disaggregated, at minimum, by gender, race, ethnicity, and disability status to track disparities.

- **Available Developmental Screening** – Developmental screening should be made available to all children. Currently, only 38 percent of children in Alaska benefit from adequate screening. Infants and toddlers with developmental delays or disabilities should be identified and receive early intervention services in a timely manner. Collaborate with community-based service providers, including the child’s medical home, and connect children, families, and staff to additional services and supports as needed.

- **Mentorship & Affirmation** – The growing diversity of Alaska’s population indicates that the state should support strategies to engage children of color, by setting up mentor programs to help students reflect on personal values that reinforce self-worth and affirmation intervention programs.

- **Parent Education Goals** – Encourage parents to invest in their own education goals to provide a better future for their children. Research suggests that parental education is an important and significant predictor of child achievement. Better educated parents have, on average, better educated children. Increasing education today would lead to an increase in a capable workforce and the education of the
next generation, and improve later life outcomes such as health, productivity, and wealth for Alaska children.

- **Graduation Rates** – Develop and implement a plan for children of color to graduate at higher levels by ensuring the money reaches students who need it most. These increases should be steady and predictable, not subject to funding fluctuation. Extra funds should be provided to study the impact and model best practices. The money should be focused at the classroom level to pay, train, and support strong teachers; improve curriculum; and keep class sizes manageable. Defined success should be reexamined to focus on a wider range of outcomes, including wages, health, wellness, and other life outcomes of children and youth.

- **Access to Specialists** – All staff should have access to support from specialists, such as early childhood mental health consultants and behavior coaches. This support provides assistance in identifying needs and referring children, families, or staff for social services as needed; understanding and responding appropriately to children exposed to Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs), traumatic events or stress; developing behavior plans for children who require them; and building greater capacity to prevent and manage challenging behavior, promote social-emotional development, and engage in self-reflective practices to prevent potential biases.

- **Funding** - The state needs to look at funding its educational system in a way that provides what it would take for each child to be successful. Flat funding is not a cut to districts, although there is no increase to deal with inflationary costs. As the cost of energy and health care continue to rise, districts have had to cut program opportunities for students, increase class size, and cut support staff and resources. These outcomes exacerbate efforts to close the opportunity gap, improve the graduation rate, help with chronic absenteeism, or reduce the dropout rates in our schools.
The following resources provide additional information regarding Alaska children’s education and well-being.

These resources and more are available at: [http://www.voicesakchildren.org/publications/](http://www.voicesakchildren.org/publications/).

Please see [www.akresilience.org](http://www.akresilience.org) for resources and information related to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), and look for Alaska ACEs data in the Kids Count Alaska, Health report in summer of 2018.
Appendices
Achievement levels of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) are defined as follows: proficient refers to competency of challenging subject matter, basic refers to partial mastery of prerequisite knowledge, and advanced refers to superior performance. Detailed definitions of achievement levels are available at https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/guides/scores_achv.aspx.

Chronic absenteeism refers to absence from school for at least 10 percent of the school days in which a student is enrolled. The population used to calculate chronic absenteeism (number of students enrolled for 10 or more days) is not the same as the school or district’s enrollment in October. Enrollment accounts for students on a given date.

Developmental screening refers to screener forms filled out by parents of children ages 9 months to 5 years and reviewed by medical providers for concerns related to development, communication or social behavior.

A dropout refers to a student who was enrolled in the school at some time during the school year and left the school at some time during the same period. Dropouts do not include graduates, transfers to public or private schools, or transfers to state- or district-approved education programs. Students with absences due to suspension, illness, or medical conditions are not reported as dropouts. Students who leave the school to seek a GED are considered dropouts.

A family has two or more members who live in the same home and are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.

Head Start programs promote school readiness among preschool-age (3 and 4 years) children in low-income families by providing comprehensive educational, nutritional, health, social and other services to support child development. Early Head Start programs provide services to children ages 0 to 3 and pregnant women.

A household consists of one or more persons living in the same house, condominium or apartment. They may or may not be related.

Nursery school and preschool include any group or class of institution providing educational experiences for children during the years preceding kindergarten. Places where instruction is an integral part of the program are included, but private homes that primarily provide custodial care are not included. Children enrolled in programs sponsored by federal, state, or local agencies to provide preschool education to young children (including Head Start programs) are considered as enrolled in nursery school or preschool.

A primary family refers to a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage or adoption residing together and does not include non-relatives.

Regular attendance is defined as attending school for more than 90 percent of the school days in which a student is enrolled.

Related children in a family include own children and all other children under 18 years old in the household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption.
Children in **single-parent families** are children who live with their own single-parent. Single-parent families may include cohabiting couples but does not include children living with married stepparents. Children who live in group quarters (institutions, dormitories, or group homes) are not included.

Children ages 5 to 19 years old are considered **school age**.

**Title I schools** refer to pre-K through 12th grade schools where children are served by public, Title I, Part-A school-wide programs or targeted assistance at any time during the regular school year. Title I schools with 40 percent or more students from low-income families may use Title 1 funds, along with other Federal, State, and local funds, to operate a school-wide program to upgrade the instructional program for the whole school. Title I schools under the 40 percent school-wide threshold, or that choose not to operate a school-wide program, may offer a targeted assistance program in which the school identifies students who are failing, or at risk of failing, to meet the state’s academic achievement standards.
Following is a list of education indicators available on the KIDS COUNT Data Center. Occasionally, data for an indicator is suppressed due to small sample sizes or large margins of error.

**Table 17. KIDS COUNT Indicator List**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KIDS COUNT Indicators</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population 0-19 by race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population 0-19 by gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population by gender</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDICATORS BY AGE GROUP</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total population by child and adult populations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population by single age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population by age group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult population by age group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OTHER DEMOGRAPHICS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population projections 2020-2045</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDICATORS BY RACE AND ETHNICITY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population by race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult population by race</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child population by race and age group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EARLY CHILDHOOD</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children enrolled in Pre-K program by region (Alaska Kids Count - NEW)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children not in school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young children not in school, by poverty status</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Head Start enrollment by age group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under age 6 in family-based child care</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under age 6 whose family members read to them less than 3 days per week</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under age 6 whose parents had predictive concerns about their development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children under age 6 who received a developmental screening</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 9 months to 35 months who received a developmental screening (NSCH – NEW)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SCHOOL AGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of 9th-12th grade students who drop out of school (maintained by Alaska Kids Count)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of 7th-12th graders who drop out of school (maintained by Alaska Kids Count)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent of school-age children enrolled in public school (maintained by Alaska Kids Count)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school students not graduating on time</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children ages 6 to 17 who repeated one or more grades since starting kindergarten</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who missed 11 or more days of school per year due to illness or injury</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens ages 16 to 19 not in school and not high school graduates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens not in school and not high school graduates by region (Alaska Kids Count - NEW)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens not attending school and not working by region (Alaska Kids Count – NEW)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth graders who are chronically absent from school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who have been suspended from school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children who have been expelled from school</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teens ages 16 to 19 not attending school and not working</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Young Adults

Young adults enrolled in college by region (Alaska Kids Count – NEW)

Educational attainment of population ages 18 to 24 by region (Alaska Kids Count – NEW)

Young Adults Ages 18 To 24 Who Are Enrolled In Or Have Completed College

Persons ages 18 to 24 not attending school, not working, and no degree beyond high school

Educational attainment of population ages 25 to 34

### Test Scores

Fourth grade reading achievement levels

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by school income

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by family income

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by geographic location

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by English language learner status

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by disability status

Eighth grade reading achievement levels

Fourth grade math achievement levels

Eighth grade math achievement levels

Fourth grade writing achievement levels

Eighth grade writing achievement levels

Fourth grade science achievement levels

Eighth grade science achievement levels

### Other Education

Educational attainment of working age population 25 to 64 by region (Alaska Kids Count – NEW)

Children by household head’s educational attainment

Educational attainment of working age population 25 to 64

Children who have difficulty speaking English

Per-pupil educational expenditures adjusted for regional cost differences

### Indicators by Race and Ethnicity

High school students not graduating on time by race and ethnicity

Young children not in school by race

Fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by race

Eighth graders who scored below proficient math achievement level by race

Teens ages 16 to 19 who are not in school and are not high school graduates by race

Children in families where the household head lacks a high school diploma by race and ethnicity

Children in Title I schools by race and ethnicity

Young adults ages 18 to 24 who are enrolled in or have completed college by race and ethnicity

Fourth graders who are chronically absent from school by race and ethnicity

Children under age 6 whose family members read to them less than 4 days per week by race and ethnicity

Children who have been suspended from school by race

Children who have been expelled from school by race

Teens ages 16 to 19 not in school and not working by race and ethnicity

### Indicators by Family Nativity

Children whose parents all have less than a high school degree by family nativity

Children who have difficulty speaking English by family nativity

Table 18. 2017 KIDS COUNT Education Profile, Alaska and United States

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Indicator</th>
<th>Alaska</th>
<th>United States</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Children</td>
<td>Percent of Total Child Population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young Children Not in School</td>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth Graders Not Proficient in Reading</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eight Graders Not Proficient in Math</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>68%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High School Students Not Graduation on Time</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 28. Alaska Developmental Profile Results for Kindergarten Students, 2017-2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>All 13 goals (100%)</th>
<th>11-12 goals (85-92%)</th>
<th>&lt; 11 goals (&lt; 85%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANCHORAGE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anchorage Schools</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>73.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GULF COAST</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kodiak Island Borough Schools</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>68.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kenai Peninsula Borough Schools</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper River Schools</td>
<td>21.9</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>62.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chugach Schools</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>60.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cordova City Schools</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valdez City School District</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTERIOR</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairbanks North Star Borough Schools</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>68.3</td>
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<td>Alaska Gateway Schools</td>
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<td>65.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Delta/Greely Schools</td>
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<td>55.1</td>
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<td>13.1</td>
<td>67.3</td>
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<td>73.1</td>
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<td>Lake and Peninsula Borough Schools</td>
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<td>26.7</td>
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</table>

Source: Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from DEED.
Note: Smaller school districts with unreliable or unstable statistics are not included.
Figure 29. Regular Attendance by Region and District, 2015-2016

Percent of students enrolled full-time for > or = 10 days

Source: Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Data source: Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) for 2015-2016.


4 Population projections 2020-2045. (2017). Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/line/184-population-projections-2020-2045. Data source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. US Bureau of the Census. These estimates were developed using Alaska Permanent Fund Dividend data, information from the Alaska Bureau of Vital Statistics, and survey information as the primary indicators of population change. These population estimates include Armed Forces in Alaska and exclude seasonal populations. The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development provides high, middle, and low scenarios. The data shown here are the middle-level projections.


19 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.

20 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.

21 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.

22 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.


26 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2015 and 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.


28 *Head Start enrollment by age group.* (2018). Published by National KIDS COUNT. Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9766-head-start-enrollment-by-age-group? Data source: Data from the annual Program Information Report (PIR), administered by the Office of Head Start (OHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). The PIR data are compiled for use at the federal, regional, and local levels. The PIR provides comprehensive data on the services, staff, children, and families served by over 2,500 Head Start and Early Head Start programs nationwide. All grantees and delegates are required to submit Program Information Reports for each Head Start or Early Head Start program operated.


31 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.


Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Analysis of data from Childhood Understanding Behaviors Survey data for 2016. Note: 2016 data is provisional.


Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Data source: Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) for 2015-2016.
50 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Data source: Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) for 2015-2016.

51 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Data source: Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) for 2015-2016.

52 Calculations completed by Alaska Division of Public Health’s Maternal and Child Health Epidemiology Unit. Data source: Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) for 2015-2016.


71 Children who have been suspended from school. Published by National KIDS COUNT (2018). Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8831-children-who-have-been-suspended-from-school?

72 Children who have been suspended from school. Published by National KIDS COUNT (2018). Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8831-children-who-have-been-suspended-from-school?

73 Children who have been suspended from school by race. Published by National KIDS COUNT (2018). Available at https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8831-children-who-have-been-suspended-from-school-by-race?


75 Children who have been expelled from school. Published by National KIDS COUNT. (2018) Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/8832-children-who-have-been-expelled-from-school?


81 Teens 16 to 19 not in school and not high school graduates. Published by National KIDS COUNT. (2018) Accessible at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/73-teens-ages-16-to-19-not-in-school-and-not-high-school-graduates? Data source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. These data were derived from American Fact Finder table B14005 (factfinder2.census.gov/).


85 KIDS COUNT. (2018) Available at http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9536-high-school-students-not-graduating-on-time?


93 Educational attainment of working age population 25 to 64 by region. Published by Kids Count Alaska. Available at https://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/9805-educational-attainment-of-working-age-population-25-to-64-by-region? Data source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates for 2012-2016 Table B15001 - SEX BY AGE BY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE POPULATION 18 YEARS AND OVER.


97 How results are reported: scale scores and achievement levels. (2018). National Assessment of Educational Progress. Available at https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/guides/.