HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES IN CLARK COUNTY

UNITED WAY OF SOUTHERN NEVADA COMMUNITY REPORTS
Graduation rates in Nevada and Clark County are lower than the United States as a whole.

The state had the lowest graduation rate in the country in 2012-2013 (63%), a figure that improved in 2015-2016 but still falls behind the national graduation rate.

Clark County School District (CCSD) is the largest school district in Nevada and the fifth-largest in the United States, serving over 320,000 students at 357 schools. The district has improved its graduation rate in recent years, which reached 74% for the Class of 2016.

How can Clark County improve its graduation rates?

- Clark County School District has a graduation rate of 74% (2015-2016 school year)
- Magnet / CTA schools have some of the highest graduation rates in Clark County
- Achievement gaps in graduation rates exist for male, Hispanic, Black, low-income, English language learning, and special education students
- Families, schools, policymakers, and community members all have a role to play to improve the success of students
- Local programs have made progress toward improving graduation rates and reducing achievement gaps
WHAT ARE CLARK COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES?

The eight magnet schools and career and technical academies (CTA) have the highest graduation rates in Clark County School District (CCSD). These schools draw students from across the county and provide specialized career-focused science, technology, engineering and math (STEM); arts; and vocational programs.

There are 36 neighborhood schools in CCSD, drawing students from specific geographic zones. Six neighborhood high schools have graduation rates below the CCSD average (74%).

Graduation rates vary considerably across the district’s other high schools. Other high schools include adult education, special education, high school for new arrivals to the United States, online courses, and credit-bearing coursework taken at the College of Southern Nevada. College-bound students taking courses through the College of Southern Nevada graduate at near-perfect rates. In addition, schools serving adult learners, special education students, non-traditional students, and new arrivals to the United States have lower graduation rates.
Graduation Rates in Clark County’s Neighborhood Schools

Five of the six high schools with graduation rates below 74% draw students from North Las Vegas and areas east of Las Vegas Boulevard.

Achievement gaps are one of the most visible types of educational disparity. Nevada has the lowest graduation rate in the country for Black students, as well as the second-lowest for English Language Learners (ELL). For ELL, Black, and Hispanic students, achievement gaps in high school perpetuate cycles of poverty and widen already-existing socioeconomic differences. Parents and caregivers that read to their children when they are young give them substantial advantages in the areas of language acquisition, literacy development, achievement in reading comprehension, and general success in school. Youth in poverty don’t have access to supplementary developmental activities (e.g., sports, arts, volunteering, academic) outside of school like more affluent classmates.

CCSD data from the 2014-2015 school-year show that female students graduate at higher rates than male students. Asian, white, and Pacific Islander students graduate at rates above the CCSD average. Substantial achievement gaps also exist for special groups of students. Schools providing career and technical education programs have high graduation rates, while low-income students (e.g., free/reduced lunch), English language learners, and students that require an individual plan graduate at the lowest rates.

Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Special Populations

Female students, Asian and white students, and students enrolled in career and technical education have high graduation rates.

GENDER, RACE/ETHNICITY, AND SPECIAL POPULATIONS

Female students
- Graduation Rate: 76%

Male students
- Graduation Rate: 68%

Race/Ethnicity Graduation Rate
- Asian: 85%
- White: 80%
- Pacific Islander: 74%
- Hispanic: 68%
- Black: 58%

Special Group Graduation Rate
- Career / Technical Education: 85%
- Free / Reduced Lunch: 65%
- English Language Learners: 52%
- Individual Education Plan: 28%

Graduation Rates
- At / Above USA: 80% to 100%
- At / Above Clark County: 74% to 81%
- Below Clark County: 0% to 73%
WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Clark County’s experience with low graduation rates and high achievement gaps impacts all members of our community. Working together, we can make considerable progress toward ensuring that everyone has access to opportunity.

HOW CAN WE BRIDGE THE GAP?

Schools
School staff and administrators can implement policies that proactively support student success. Some strategies might include screening for needed social services and supports, establishing family centers at schools, and hiring staff with relevant language skills.

Families
Families can create a home environment that supports learning. In addition to reading together, parents and their children should also participate in school-related meetings and find resources provided by their schools like music, art, sporting, and cultural events.

Community Members
Members of the community can volunteer at school-related events and stay informed of what’s going on across the school district. Strengthening school-community ties is an effective and research-supported way to improve student academic achievement.

Policymakers
Policymakers and funders can identify and support a diverse set of initiatives that strengthen student success. Particular focus may be placed on evidence-based program models to reduce achievement gaps and increase graduation rates.

LIFETIME WAGES

Lifetime wages for adults with high school diplomas are approximately $300,000 more than students who did not graduate from high school. College graduates make $1.2 million more.

The difference in median annual family income between families headed by those without a high school degree and those headed by individuals with bachelor’s degrees was $68,600.

Research shows that individuals with higher levels of education have better health outcomes, are less likely to be incarcerated, and decrease the costs of taxpayer-funded social supports.

Even more, the children of high school graduates are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, creating a positive inter-generational cycle of improvement and impact.

Failure to complete high school has real economic consequences for individuals, families, and society. In particular, education marks a distinction between middle class families and those in poverty.

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Local programs to meet local challenges

There are a variety of effective and evidence-based approaches to improving high school achievement that are currently being implemented across Southern Nevada. Youth development programs, work supports like child care subsidies, and education and training programs can help improve financial well-being and stability for parents, particularly as their children work toward successfully completing high school. United Way of Southern Nevada is leading, supporting, and partnering on programs across the age spectrum that are actively working to improve high school graduation rates and close achievement gaps.

WHAT’S WORKING IN SOUTHERN NEVADA?

COMMUNITIES IN SCHOOLS
Coordination of social services ensures the specific needs of individual students are met, from mentoring and college visits to counseling and food support.

- 95% of CIS students are promoted to the next grade
- 90% of seniors graduate

PRE-K SCHOLARSHIPS
Scholarships, family engagement, and teacher training ensure our youngest children are getting the strongest foundation for lifelong education and learning.

- 718 children have received full-day early education scholarships
- 20 centers received support, training, and professional development

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT RESOURCE CENTERS
Centers enhance the home-school connection by ensuring that students at risk of dropping out and their families have the resources they need to stay on track to graduate.

- 9,555 students and families prepared together for an on-time graduation
- 1,227 students graduated that were identified as most at risk of dropping out

FULFILLMENT FUND
Classroom instruction, one-on-one college counseling, and experiential learning show students how a college education can change their lives.

- 340 seniors supported at select schools with a 97% graduation rate
- 93% of students have been accepted to college
- 97 scholarships for college-bound students

United Way of Southern Nevada

Nevada

Communities
In Schools
TAKE ACTION TODAY

GIVE
United Way of Southern Nevada provides a convenient way for you to support organizations, volunteers, and advocates working together to improve our community. Visit uwsn.org/give to donate today.

ADVOCATE
UWSN offers channels to advocate for education at local, state, and federal levels. Visit uwsn.org/advocate to learn more.

VOLUNTEER
UWSN connects volunteers to organizations that support mentoring, participation in after-school programs, and support youth sports and academic activities. Visit uwsn.org/volunteer to learn about volunteer opportunities across the community.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Nevada Education Data
Find data related to high school achievement, from graduation rates to testing results. nevadareportcard.com

UWSN Education Programs
Learn more about how United Way’s programs are actively working to improve graduation rates. uwsn.org/education

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