

January 2024

Enrollment and Demographic Snapshot of Students in Schools included in California's Dashboard Alternative School Status (DASS), 2018-19 School Year

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This brief provides a state-level snapshot of the size and demography of student enrollment in schools on the state accountability dashboard for schools with alternative school status (DASS) during the 2018-19 school year. These schools include Continuation High Schools, county- and district-operated Community Day Schools, Court Schools, and other public schools, including charters, that obtain "alternative school" status by application to the [California Department of Education](#).

Key Takeaways:

- In 2018-19, DASS schools enrolled more than 13% of all high school students in grades 10-12.
- Census Day enrollment (first Wednesday of October) captures only 64% of cumulative enrollment in DASS Schools over the course of a school year.
- English learners represent a higher proportion of DASS enrollments (17%) than they do in the all high schools group (10% in grades 10-12).
- One quarter (24%) of students in DASS schools are Redesignated Fluent English Proficient (RFEP).
- DASS schools enroll about twice the proportion of students identified as foster youth or homeless as are enrolled in the all high schools group.
- DASS schools enroll proportionally more students identified for special education services (16% of cumulative enrollment) than in the all high schools group (12% of cumulative enrollment).
- More than 20% of youth enrolled in Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools are identified for special education services. Taken together, youth in foster care and those identified for special education services account for 41% of youth in Court and Youth Authority Schools

About the California Alternative Schools Data Series

The California Department of Education (CDE) identifies more than 970 public alternative schools across the state. Most of these are high schools designed to meet the needs of credit-deficient and other youth, over age 16 who are vulnerable to dropping out of school before completing minimum requirements for a diploma or completion certificate. In the 2018-19 school year, California's alternative schools enrolled approximately 13% of youth in public school grades 10-12 (9th graders are generally not eligible for voluntary enrollment in alternative schools). Some alternative schools, including Continuation Schools, District or County Community Day Schools and Court Schools are legislatively defined, while others may apply for alternative school status if they meet the minimum criteria set by the State Board of Education (SBE) for the enrollment of youth at risk of dropping out of school. California law stipulates that alternative schools will offer more intensive services and accelerated credit-earning opportunities that will afford enrolled students a renewed path to graduation. Currently, the SBE is considering new or additional accountability metrics for alternative schools that align with federal law, Local Control Accountability Plans (LCAPs), and will promote continuous program improvement.

Series Editor: Jorge Ruiz de Velasco

Number of Students (Grades 10-12) and High Schools, by School Type

Table 1. Number of Students and Schools in California during the 2018-19 school year

	All High Schools	All DASS High Schools	Community Day Schools	Continuation Schools	Charter Schools	Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools	Other Alternative Schools by Application (non-Charter)
Number of Students on Census Day Enrollment	1,457,174	124,588	12,690	50,148	39,617	3,446	781
Number of Students Cumulative Enrollment*	1,503,843	195,835	22,186	77,915	71,704	11,863	1,301
Increase in Cumulative Enrollment from Census Day	3%	57%	75%	55%	81%	244%	67%
Census Day Enrollment as a percentage of Cumulative Enrollment	97%	64%	57%	64%	55%	29%	60%
Number of schools	2,665	937	170	430	114	66	7
Average number of students by school type	611.95	236.94	139.03	186.23	676.32	222.47	188.57
Average calendar days of enrollment for students by school type							
All Students	221.26	160.25	127.83	170.05	156.15	58.40	179.31
Only Students Enrolled between 1-44 days	21.81	22.43	22.38	22.91	23.51	16.58	19.74
Only Students Enrolled for 45 days or more	236.09	185.38	158.11	189.89	186.76	114.80	211.26

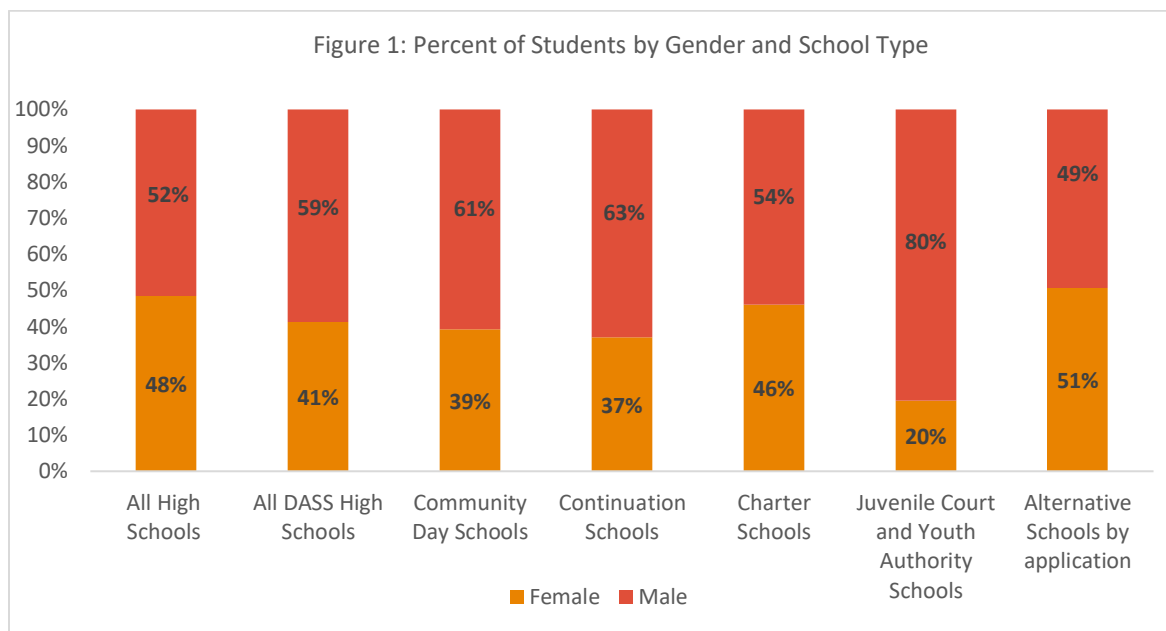
Note: Includes all high school students in grades 10 through 12 observed during the 2018-19 school year and who were enrolled from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019 (to exclude summer school).. Data from the California Department of Education DataQuest and the CALPADS data reporting repository. The Census Day Enrollment Data can be retrieved at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/filesenr.asp>. Census Day enrollment in the Continuation High Schools includes only those students enrolled on census day at a school with a CDS Code registered as a Continuation School. *To avoid counting the same student twice, we only consider the last DASS school the student attended.

In the 2018-19 school year, 1,503,843 students were enrolled in California in grades 10-12; out of these students, 195,835 enrolled in DASS Schools at some point during the school year. DASS Schools represented over 13% of the cumulative enrollment in California for grades 10-12.

California reported 2,665 active high schools, including charters; out of these, there were 937 DASS high schools. On average, California high schools, including charters, enrolled 612 students per school, while there were 237 students per DASS school. On average, California high school students in grades 10-12 were enrolled in school for 221 days from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019. Meanwhile, in the DASS schools, students were enrolled on average for 160 days. Average days of enrollment are lowest for youth in Juvenile Court, Youth Authority, and Community Day schools.

In addition, Table 1 shows the variance between Census Day Enrollment (First Wednesday of October) and the Cumulative Enrollment of each school type. In the all high school group, grades 10-12, the cumulative and Census Day enrollments varied by about 3% in 2018-19. By contrast, DASS schools face a 57% variation in their cumulative enrollment relative to their Census Day enrollment. This inflow and outflow of students is especially high in DASS Charter Schools, which encounter a variation of almost double their Census Day enrollment, and in Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools, where the number of new students enrolled in a year is almost four times higher than their Census Day Enrollment.

Gender



Note: Includes all high school students in grades 10 through 12 observed during the 2018-19 school year and who were enrolled from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019. Data from the California Department of Education DataQuest and the CALPADS data reporting repository.

*To avoid counting the same student twice, we only consider the last DASS school the student attended.

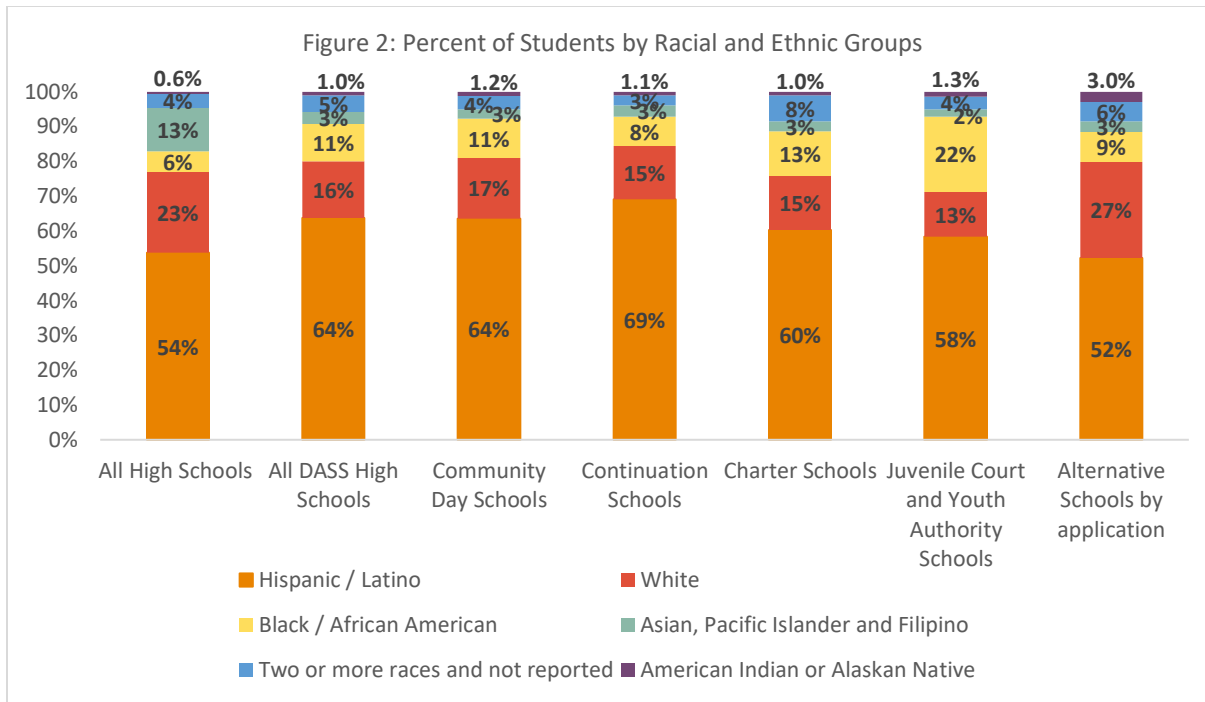
Gender representation in DASS and non-DASS high schools appear to be generally comparable, except in Continuation High schools, where more than 3 of 5 students identify as male (63%), and in Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools, where 4 of 5 students identify as male (80%).

Race/Ethnicity

Table 2. Percent of Students by Race and School Type

Race/Ethnicity	All High Schools	All DASS High Schools	Community Day Schools	Continuation Schools	Charter Schools	Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools	Other Alternative Schools by Application
Black / African American	5.9%	10.7%	11.3%	8.3%	13.0%	21.5%	8.6%
Hispanic / Latino	53.7%	63.7%	63.6%	69.1%	60.3%	58.3%	52.3%
Asian	9.2%	2.1%	1.7%	1.8%	1.6%	1.1%	2.1%
Pacific Islander	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.3%
Filipino	2.9%	0.9%	0.5%	0.9%	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.6%	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.3%	3.0%
Two or more races	3.1%	2.9%	2.8%	2.2%	3.7%	2.7%	4.1%
White	23.2%	16.3%	17.4%	15.4%	15.5%	13.0%	27.4%
Not Reported	1.0%	1.9%	1.0%	0.7%	3.9%	0.9%	1.5%

Note: Includes all high school students in grades 10 through 12 observed during the 2018-19 school year and who were enrolled from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019. Data from the California Department of Education DataQuest and the CALPADS data reporting repository. *To avoid counting the same student twice, we only consider the last DASS school the student attended.



Compared to the all high schools group, alternative schools enroll a higher percentage of Black, Hispanic/Latinx, and American Indian or Alaskan Native students, and a smaller percentage of Asian and White students. Specifically, Continuation High Schools have the highest statistical overrepresentation of Hispanic/Latinx students (69%) compared to 54% in grades 10-12 of the all high schools group, while Juvenile Court and Youth Authority schools have the highest statistical overrepresentation of Black students (22%) compared to 6% in the all high school group.

English Learner Status

Table 3. Percent of Students by English Learner Status

EL Status	All High Schools	All DASS High Schools	Community Day Schools	Continuation Schools	Charter Schools	Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools	Other Alternative Schools by Application
English Only	46%	51%	50%	43%	60%	58%	59%
Reclassified As Fluent English Proficient (RFEP)	31%	24%	21%	29%	20%	17%	23%
English Learner	10%	17%	18%	18%	16%	19%	14%
Not Reported	12%	8%	11%	9%	4%	6%	4%

Note: Includes all high school students in grades 10 through 12 observed during the 2018-19 school year and who were enrolled from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019. Data from the California Department of Education DataQuest and the CALPADS data reporting repository. *To avoid counting the same student twice, we only consider the last DASS school the student attended.

Figure 3: Percent of Students by English Learner Status in All High Schools

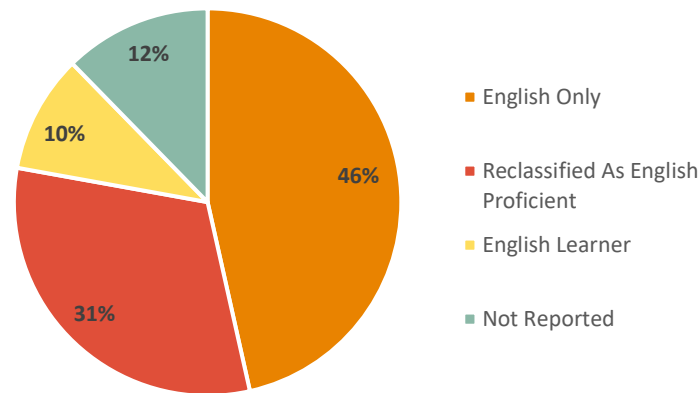
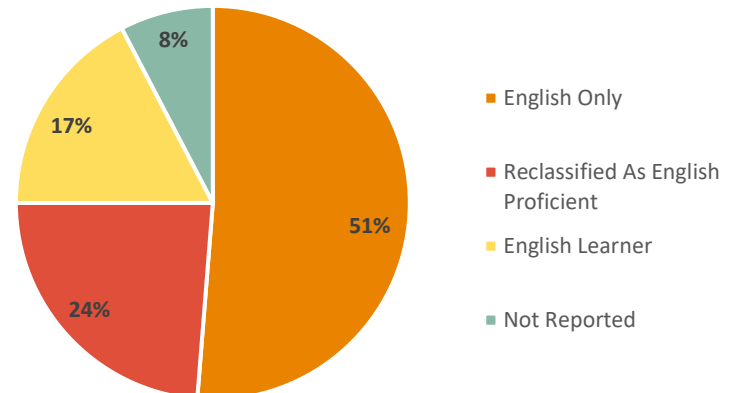


Figure 4: Percent of Students by English Learner Status in DASS Schools



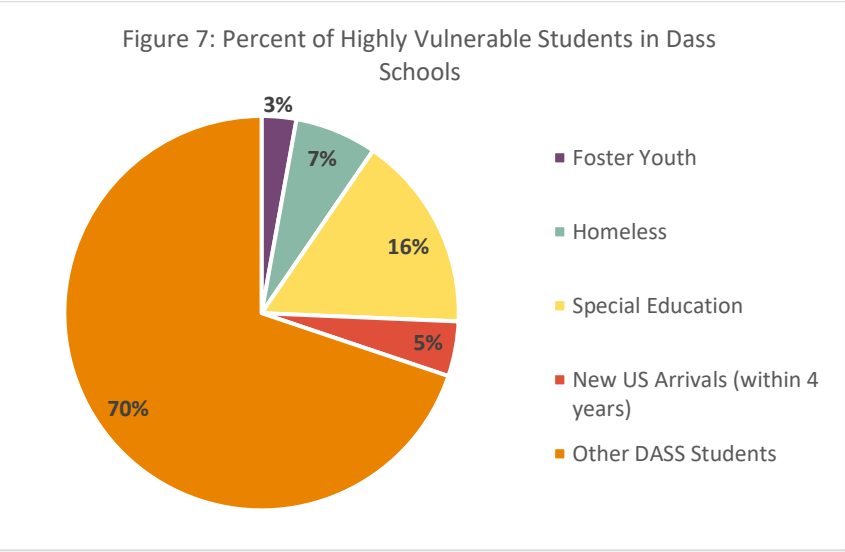
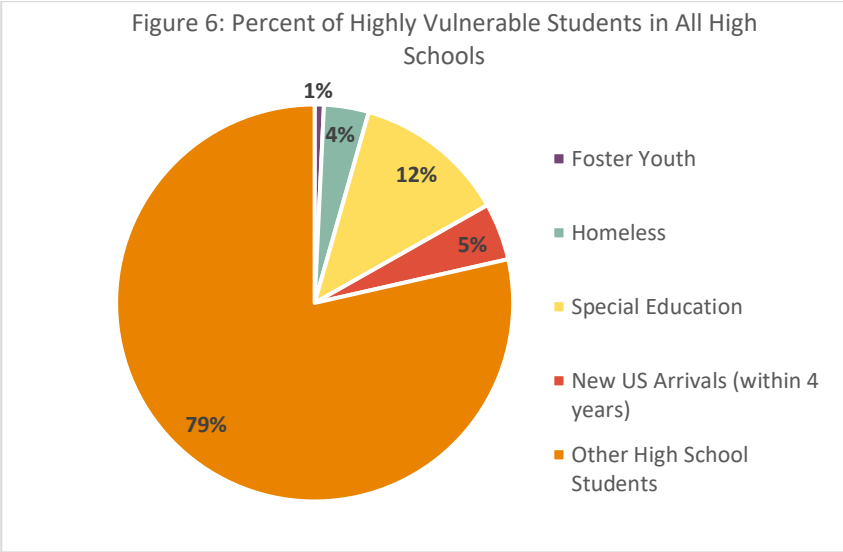
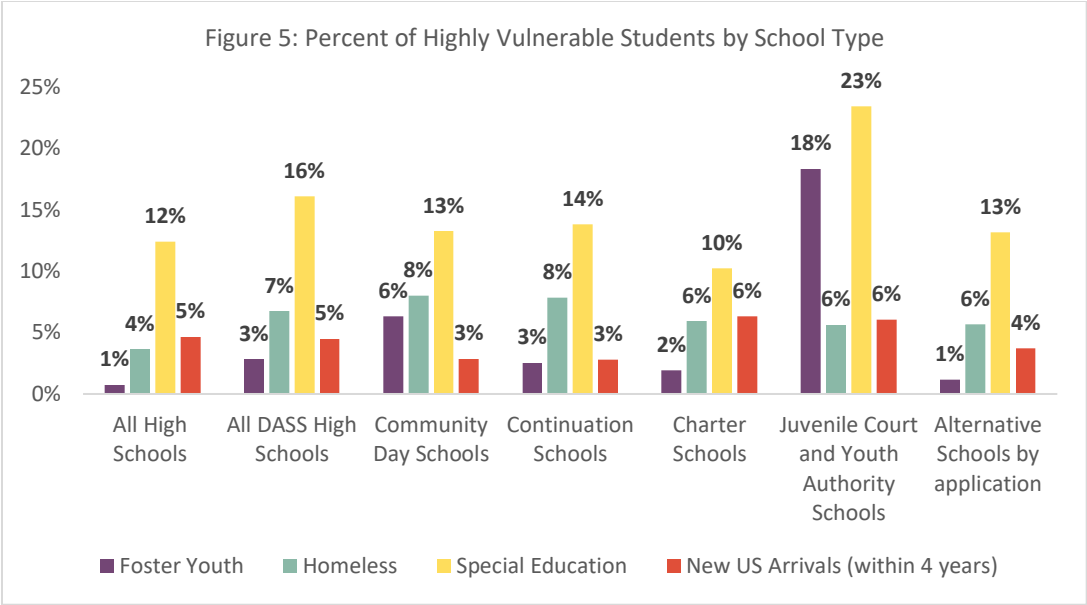
Community Day, Continuation, and Juvenile Court and Youth Authority schools enroll the highest proportion of English Learners, ranging from 18% to 19% of the students classified as English learners compared to 10% in the all high schools group. Taken together, English Learners and RFEP students comprise almost one-half (48%) of students in Continuation High Schools compared to 41% of all California public school students in grades 10-12.

Highly Vulnerable Students

Table 4. Percent of Highly Vulnerable Students by School Type

	All High Schools	All DASS High Schools	Community Day Schools	Continuation Schools	Charter Schools	Juvenile Court and Youth Authority Schools	Alternative Schools by Application
Foster Youth	1%	3%	6%	3%	2%	18%	1%
Homeless	4%	7%	8%	8%	6%	6%	6%
Special Education	12%	16%	13%	14%	10%	23%	13%
New US Arrivals (within 3 years)	4%	4%	2%	2%	5%	5%	3%
New US Arrivals (within 4 years)	5%	5%	3%	3%	6%	6%	4%

Note: Includes all high school students in grades 10 through 12 observed during the 2018-19 school year and who were enrolled from August 16th, 2018 to June 30th, 2019. Data from the California Department of Education DataQuest and the CALPADS data reporting repository. *To avoid counting the same student twice, we only consider the last DASS school the student attended.



DASS schools enroll twice the proportion of students identified as foster youth and almost twice the proportion of students identified as homeless relative to the all high school group. Additionally, DASS high schools enroll a greater proportion of students identified in need of special education services relative to the all high school group. Students in need of special education services or in foster care are statistically overrepresented in Juvenile Court and Youth Authority schools. Taken together, youth in the foster care system and youth identified for special education services account for 41% of youth in Court and Youth Authority schools. Additionally, Community Day Schools enroll a greater proportion of youth in foster care or who are identified as homeless relative to all the all high schools group and other DASS schools.