

EDUCATION

I.H.H.E.E.L.

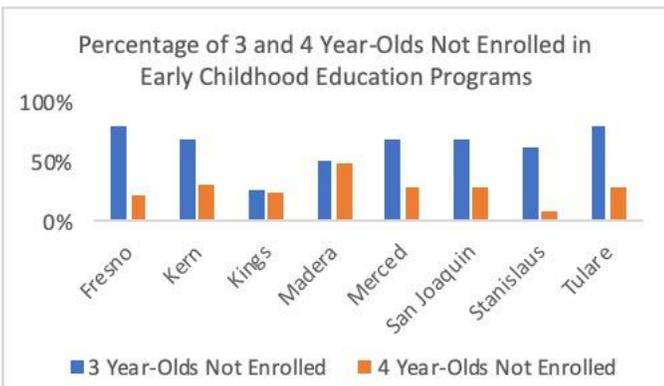
INTRODUCTION

Educational attainment plays a significant role in shaping upward mobility and socioeconomic status. School readiness, access to quality education, and social support for students and families are factors that can reduce disparities in lifelong educational and economic outcomes. This can improve employment opportunities, health, and lifetime well-being.

REGIONAL OVERVIEW

- Many children of color and low-income children in the San Joaquin Valley lack access to critical academic supports that can help reduce disparities in educational outcomes.
- Many children of color and low-income children in the San Joaquin Valley are confronted with significant barriers to achieving academic success, including low enrollment in early childhood education programs, linguistic isolation, and high juvenile felony arrest rates.
- Families in the San Joaquin Valley who speak limited English face language barriers that can lead to student disengagement in the classroom, difficulty communicating with teachers and administrators, and higher risk of language-based discrimination.

EDUCATIONAL SUPPORTS



Source: Anthony, J., et al. 2016. Unmet Need for Preschool Services in California: Statewide and Local Analysis. American Institutes for Research. Values for San Joaquin Valley based on authors' calculations.

Early Childhood Education

Prior to entering kindergarten, it is critical that students have the opportunity to develop the social and academic skills needed to succeed. This development is an important first step to ensuring positive educational outcomes for children. Participation in high-quality early education programs has been shown to positively impact academic achievement, social behavior, and health for at-risk children.ⁱ

However, in the San Joaquin Valley, there is a low level of enrollment of 3 and 4 year-olds in government-funded pre-kindergarten programs such as Head Start, Transitional Kindergarten, and the California State Preschool Program. Almost 75% of income-eligible 3 year-olds and 20% of income-

eligible 4 year-olds are not enrolled in government-sponsored preschool programs. Low enrollment can be an indicator of insufficient program availability, high cost, transportation barriers, and limited information about program eligibility, all of which necessitate place-specific responses. Improving access to early childhood education can help reduce early disparities in cognitive development, providing a stronger start for at-risk children as they enter school.ⁱⁱ

Ethnic Studies Curriculum

Mainstream curricula for K-12 students traditionally prioritize Euro-American history, experiences, and perspectives. Studies show that textbooks and state curriculum frameworks largely reflect this bias, often leading to academic disengagement among students of color.ⁱⁱⁱ For students of color in the San Joaquin Valley, this disengagement may have a negative impact on their educational outcomes. Efforts have been made to implement ethnic studies in K-12 curricula in California, with the goal of engaging all students in the classroom, and therefore supporting improved academic performance for students of color but many districts do not have this kind of curriculum.^{iv}

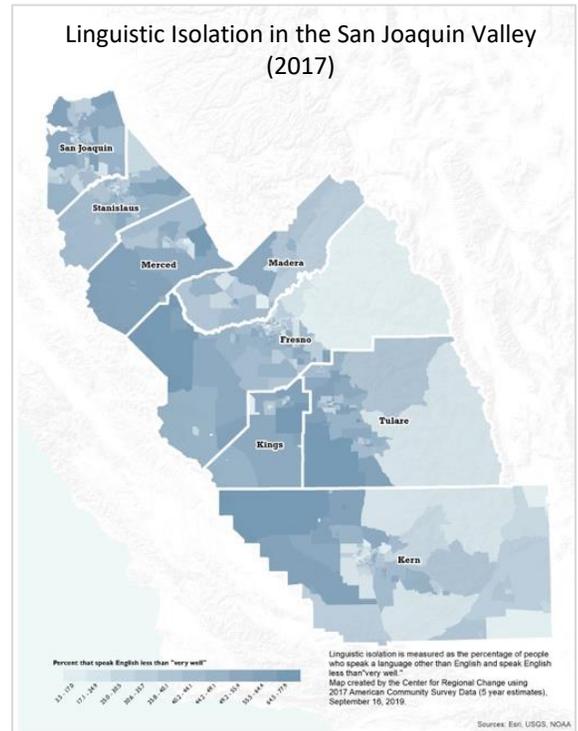
Linguistic Isolation

Across the neighborhoods of the San Joaquin Valley, 3.5% to 77.9% of people speak a language other than English and speak English less than very well, which suggests that these individuals experience a level of linguistic isolation.^v Without proper resources to support populations experiencing linguistic isolation, students can face barriers to classroom engagement and parents may find it difficult to support their children’s learning.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Math and English Language Arts Proficiency

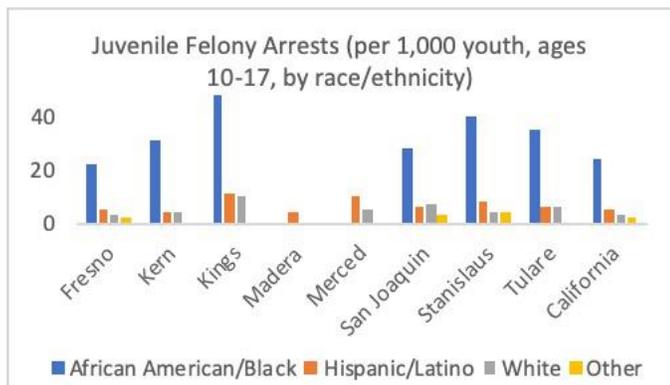
Many children in the San Joaquin Valley do not meet grade-level standards for Math and English Language Arts, scoring lower than the state average on the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress. The scores achieved during the first year of standardized testing in third grade is often an indicator of future educational attainment. Throughout the San Joaquin Valley region, almost all racial/ethnic groups have a lower percentage of students who meet or exceed grade-level standards in Math and English Language Arts compared to the state as a whole.^{vi} The statewide average for each racial/ethnic group ranges from 18% to 72% for Math proficiency and 31% to 75% for English Language Arts proficiency.^{vii}



Disparities exist in proficiency rates across racial/ethnic groups. Across all eight counties in the valley, the proficiency rates are lowest among African-American/Black students, with 18% or fewer students meeting grade-level standards for Math, and 35% or fewer students meeting grade-level standards for English Language Arts.^{viii} Proficiency rates for Hispanic/Latino and American Indian/Alaska Native students follow closely behind.^{ix} For Math, 23% or fewer Hispanic/Latino students and 26% or fewer American Indian/Alaska Native students meet grade-level standards.^x For English Language Arts, 36% or fewer Hispanic/Latino students and 40% or fewer American Indian/Alaska Native students meet grade-level standards.^{xi}

High School Graduation Rates

The graduation rate across the eight counties in the San Joaquin Valley is similar to the state average of 83%.^{xii} However, the percentage of students in each of the eight counties who meet UC/CSU eligibility requirements (ranging from 31.1% to 46.3%) is lower than the percentage of eligible students statewide (50%).^{xiii}



Juvenile Felony Arrests

The juvenile felony arrest rate is higher in many counties in the San Joaquin Valley than in the state as a whole. African American youth are arrested at a higher rate than youth of other racial/ethnic identities. Hispanic/Latino youth also have higher arrest rates than white youth in most counties, with the exception of Kern and San Joaquin County. Juvenile felony arrests in combination with overly punitive, racially-biased school discipline, are major contributing factors of the school-to-prison pipeline for disadvantaged students.

Citations are available at [The Center web site](#).