

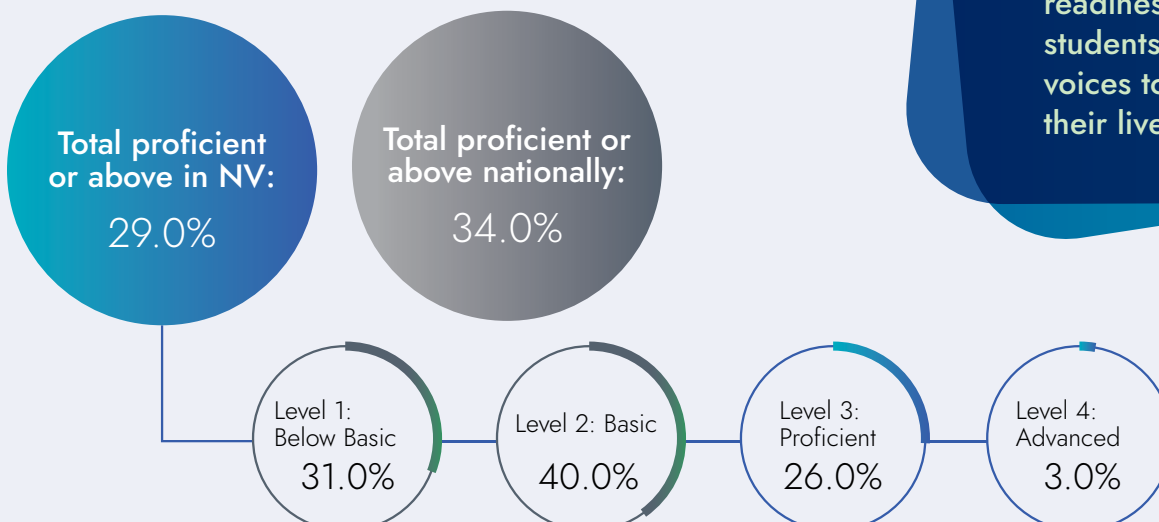
# Nevada Adolescent Literacy Network

## 2016–2019 Student Achievement Data

The Nevada Adolescent Literacy Network (NALN), convened by a collaboration between the Nevada Department of Education and the University of Nevada-Reno, is a committed group of education, literacy, and community leaders who support efforts to advance the language and literacy development of Nevada’s adolescents. The purpose of this infographic is to share a “state of the state” of adolescent literacy in Nevada immediately prior to the COVID-19 school closures. As Nevada moves forward from the impacts of COVID-19, NALN would like to help adolescents, parents, educators, administrators, community partners, researchers, and policymakers understand areas of strength and areas of growth in literacy and academic success for Nevada’s adolescents.

Nationally, state reading proficiency is measured using the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP). The reading assessment is administered to a sample of students in 8th grade.

### 2019 NAEP 8th Grade Reading Proficiency

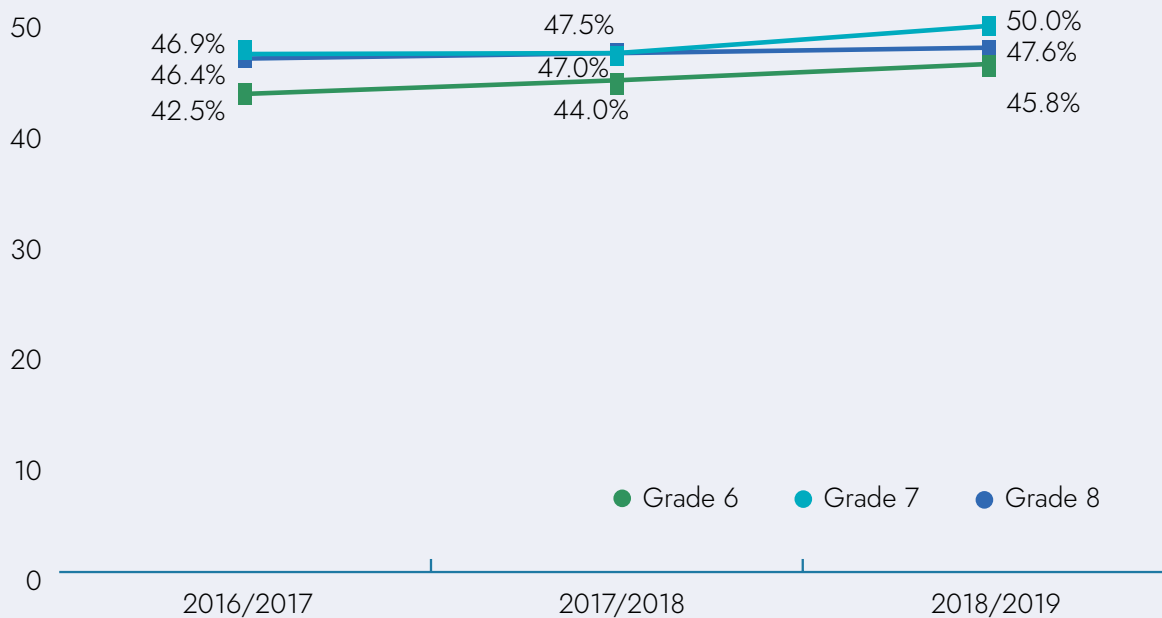


**Adolescents, often defined as students in grades 6–12, face a myriad of changes and challenges.**

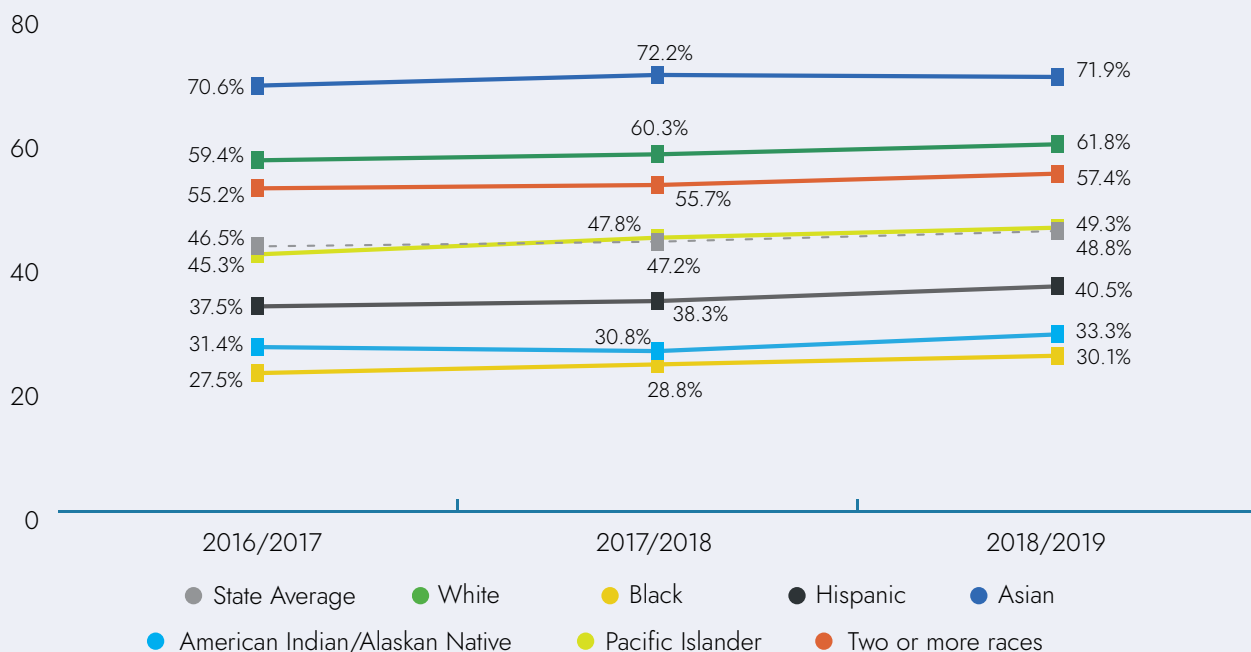
During this time of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth, adolescents learn to interpret the world around them and their place in it. Literacy is crucial to helping adolescents navigate this time. Proficient reading, writing, and speaking skills, as well as the ability to critically examine diverse perspectives are necessary for college and career readiness, and to help students find and use their voices to meet challenges in their lives.

The primary measure of adolescents literacy in Nevada are English Language Arts and Literacy (ELA) scores from the Smarter Balanced Assessment. This assessment is administered to all students in grades 3–8 across the state. The following graphs show grade 6–8 performance in ELA over a three-year period.

### 2016–2019 ELA Scores (% proficient at each grade level)<sup>1</sup>



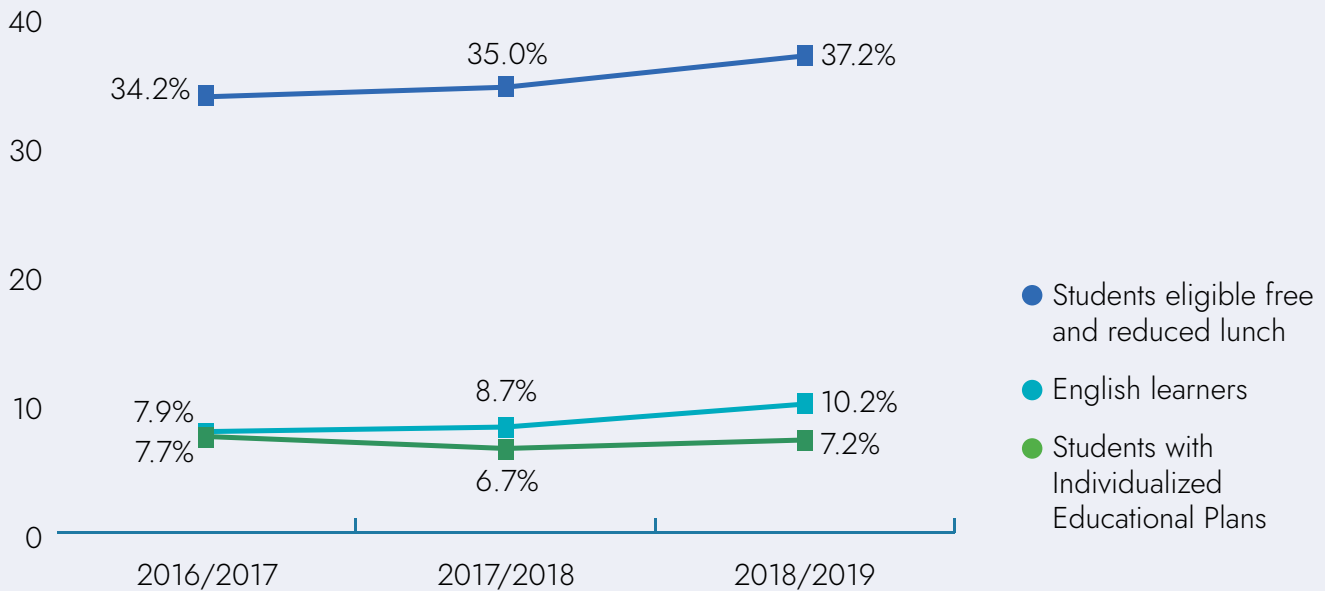
### 2016–2019 Grade 6–8 ELA Scores (% proficient by race/ethnicity)<sup>2</sup>



1 Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Accountability Portal, "Assessment: CRT."

2 Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Accountability Portal, "Assessment: CRT."

### 2016–2019 Grade 6–8 ELA Scores (% proficient by student group)<sup>3</sup>



## Strengths and Challenges from the ELA Data

### Strengths:

- Comparing 2016/17 data to the 2018/19 data, the average percent proficient increased for all racial and ethnic groups, as well as for students eligible for free and reduced-price lunch and English Learner students.
- From 2016 to 2019, White, Black, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander student groups and students eligible for free and reduced lunch all had average increases that were above the state average increase.

### Challenges:

- Although they have shown growth, Black, American Indian/Alaskan Native, and Hispanic students trail behind other student groups in terms of ELA proficiency as of 2018/19.
- English learner students and students with IEPs are the lowest performing groups.

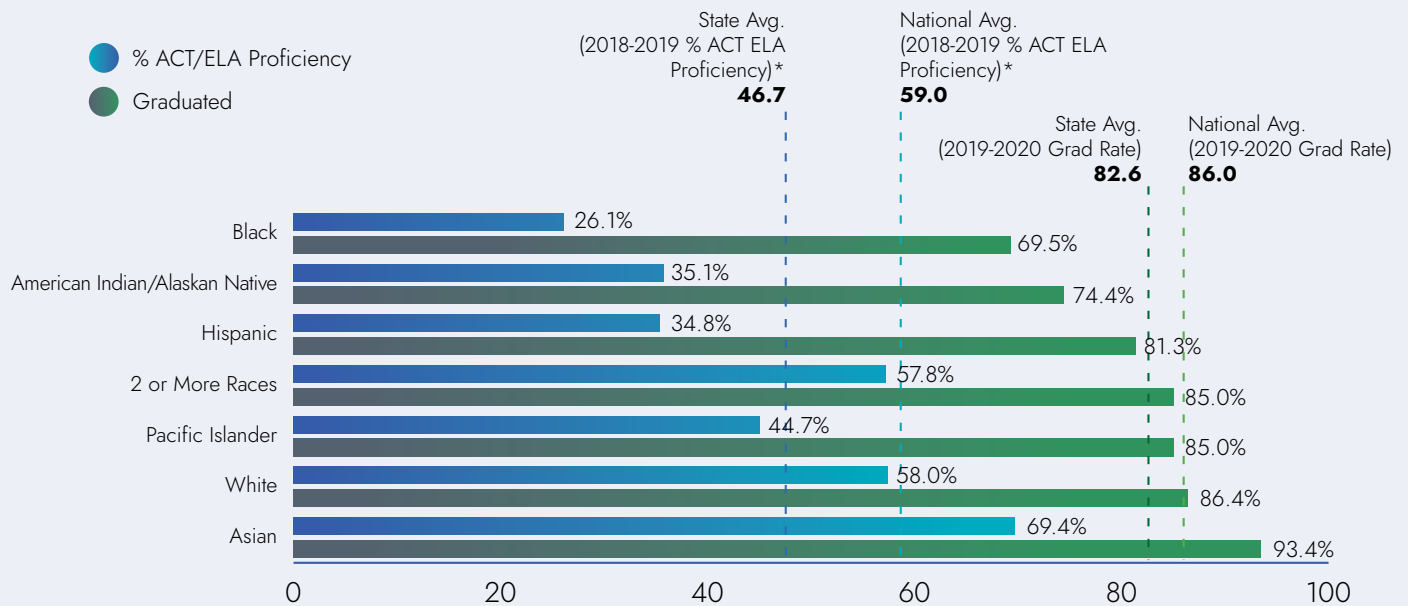
<sup>3</sup> Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Accountability Portal, "Assessment: CRT."

Proficiency in reading and writing, as measured by the ACT, is an indicator for college and career readiness and success.

### 2018/2019 Grade 11 ACT ELA Scores



### 2018/2019 Grade 11 ACT ELA Proficiency Rates and 2020 Graduation Rates by Racial and Ethnic Groups<sup>4,5</sup>



\* Data not reported by all states.

- Overall, the high school graduation rate is below the national average.
- There is a large percentage of students who graduate from Nevada high schools who are not ready for college.

4 Nevada Department of Education, Nevada Accountability Portal, "Cohort 4 Year Graduation Rates (Reported for Prior School Year)," 2018/2019.

5 National Center for Education Statistics Fast Facts, <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=805>.

## What Our Educators and Leaders Have to Say:

The NALN Steering Committee conducted interviews with educators and leaders who work with adolescents around Nevada. Several prominent thoughts were:

### Strengths:

“Adolescents are smart and thoughtful if we provide them the space to be smart and thoughtful.”

“Literacy development is more powerful for teens when the purpose of developing literacy is for them to have more agency in their lives.”

“It may be that advanced language development has decreased in teens, partly due to social media, but teens are more socially aware now than we ever were.”

### Challenges:

“Many of our adolescents only engage in literacy activities so they can pass their classes.”

“Adolescents become disenfranchised without literacy skills and suffer a loss of self-confidence and self-worth. Language and communication are everything.”

### Possible Next Steps/Suggestions:

“My number one wish for supporting adolescent literacy is that we do a better job helping adolescents regulate their distractions.”

“We can motivate students by giving them an opportunity to apply literacy to real world experiences.”

“One way to engage students in language and literacy is for adults [to help teens] to take action on what teens care about, like the environment, women’s rights, and gender issues.”