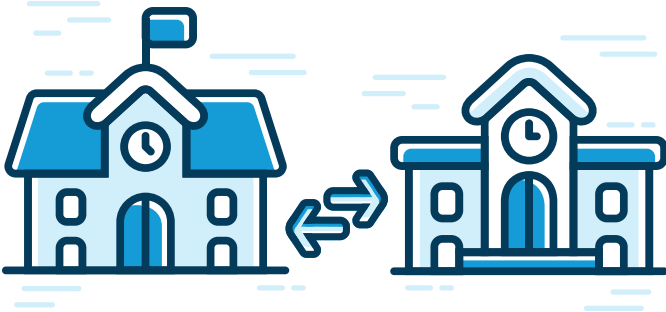


School Mobility for California's Students in Foster Care



31% of students in foster care change schools midyear.

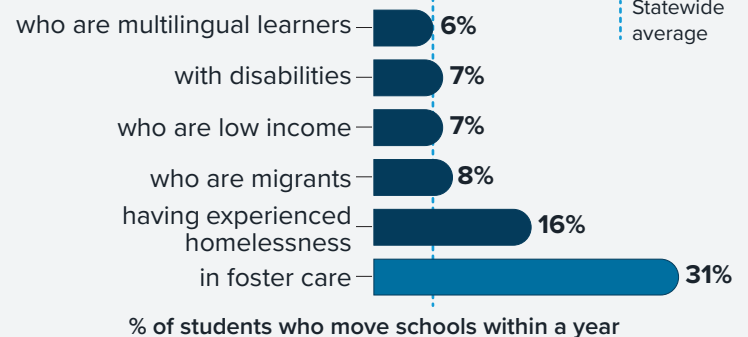
Nearly 40,000 students enrolled in California public schools were in foster care at some point in 2023–24.

This is a decline of **nearly 10,000** since the 2017–18 academic year. About a third of students in foster care face midyear school changes. School mobility is defined as at least one school change during the academic year.¹ Research shows that frequent school moves can lead to lower academic achievement, reduced employment opportunities, and a higher risk of justice system involvement.

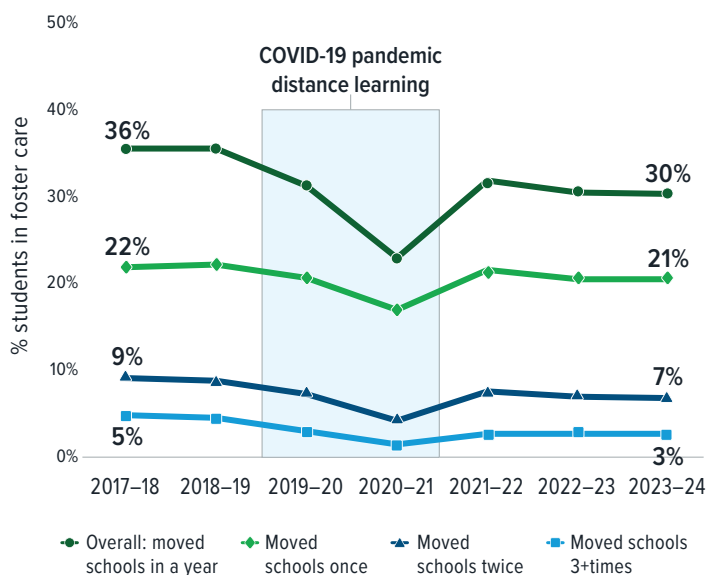
Students in foster care are **5 times more likely to change schools** than the statewide average.

While only **6% of students** statewide experience midyear school moves, the rate **jumps to 31%** among students in foster care—higher than any other vulnerable student group. Notably, **67% of these school** moves are linked to a change in the student's residence.

Students ...



Source: CALPADS, 2017–18 to 2023–24



Source: CALPADS, 2017–18 to 2023–24

School mobility declined from 36% in 2017–18 to 30% in 2023–24. This decrease is due mostly to fewer students making multiple moves a year.

On average, of all students in foster care ...



21%
move
1 time

7%
move
2 times

3%
move
3+ times

This means **1 in 10 students** in foster care moves schools multiple times a year. This represents a drop of 4 percentage points since the 2017–18 school year.

¹For a detailed discussion of how we calculate school mobility, please see Appendix A in *School Mobility for Students in Foster Care*.

Mobility by age group

27%

of TK–grade 5 students in foster care moved schools midyear.

30%

of middle school students in foster care moved schools midyear.

38%

of high school students in foster care moved schools midyear.

High schoolers **change schools midyear** the most, but their moves are less often tied to a change in residence.

Sixty-four percent of high school student moves are linked to a change in residence, compared to **69% in middle school** and **70% in TK–5**. These figures suggest that many within-year high school moves happen for reasons other than residential relocation.

Mobility by race/ethnicity



36%

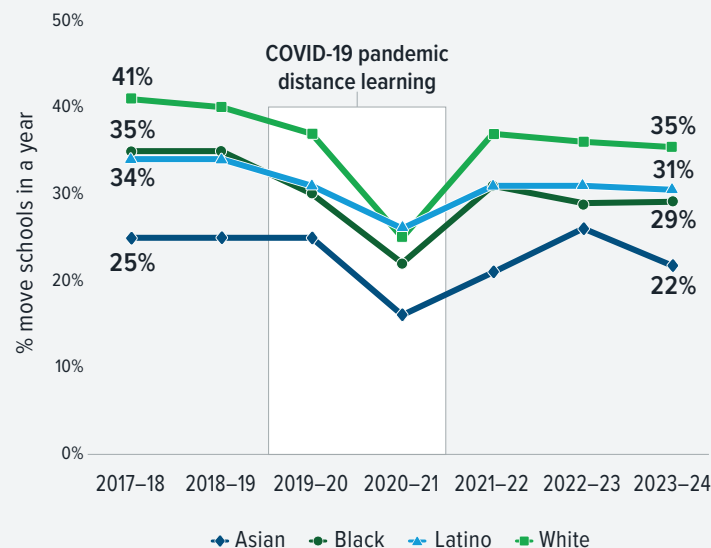
of Black students in foster care switch schools at least once a year

compared to ...

31% of White students in foster care.

30% of Latino students in foster care.

23% of Asian students in foster care.



Source: CALPADS, 2017–18 to 2023–24

Mobility by student needs



Students in foster care who have experienced **homelessness** (at any point in the year, including prior to foster care)

have the highest school mobility rates, with **50% moving schools midyear**. This figure was around **60% pre-pandemic**.



Students in foster care with **disability status** (at any point in the year, including prior to foster care)

had school mobility decrease from **38% pre-pandemic** to **33% post-pandemic**.



Students in foster care with **multilingual learner status** (at any point in the year, including prior to foster care)

had school mobility decrease from **36% pre-pandemic** to **29% post-pandemic**.

For more information, please see [School Mobility for Students in Foster Care](#).

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