

Facts and figures about education in the United States

Another school year means many things.

Back-to-school shopping meant \$7.4 billion being spent at clothing stores in August, 2010. Only in November and December were sales significantly higher. Similarly, sales at bookstores in August 2010 totaled \$2.2 billion, an amount approached in 2010 only by sales in January, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The number of children and adults enrolled in school throughout the country in October 2009 – from nursery school to college – was 77 million. They comprised 27 percent of the entire population age 3 and older.

Seventy-four percent of children ages 3-6 were enrolled in kindergarten all day as of October 2009.

The projected number of students to be enrolled in U.S. elementary through high schools this fall is 55.5 million. About 11 percent of them will be in private schools.

Of all those enrolled, 43 percent belonged to a minority population as of October 2009.

Eighty percent of students ages 12 to 17 were academically on-track in 2006, up 8 percentage points from 1998. The odds of being on-track were 48 percent higher for these students if they were in a gifted class and 34 percent higher if they had never been suspended or expelled from school.

In 2009, there were 11.2 million school age children (ages 5 to 17) who spoke a language other than English at home; 8 million of these children spoke Spanish at home.

The average number of children participating each month in the National School Lunch Program in 2009 was 31.1 million.

In 2009, there were 7.2 million teachers in the United States. Almost 3 million taught at the elementary and middle school level. The remainder included those teaching at the postsecondary, secondary, preschool, kindergarten levels, special education and other teachers or instructors.

Average annual salary of public school teachers in California as of the 2007-2008 school year – the highest of any state – was \$65,800. Teachers in South Dakota received the lowest pay – \$36,700. The national average was \$52,800. High school principals earned \$99,365 annually in 2008-09.