New Mexico

New Mexico has a medium-sized rural high school student population; these students make up the strong majority of the state's total high school population.

Size of the Rural Market

71,000+
rural students in grades 9-12[1] throughout the state

up to
71.6%
of the state's public high school students attend schools in rural areas

The majority of NM's rural high schools students is Hispanic (58.4%), and the next largest populations are white (25.2%) and Native American (10.8%).

NM's rural median family income ($37,900) is far below the overall state median income ($46,700). Furthermore, rural NM falls in the bottom quintile for economic mobility, meaning the current generation is very unlikely to out earn their parents.

Statewide Rural Diversity Measures

- White
- Hispanic
- Black
- Asian
- Mixed Race
- Native American/ Pacific Islander

$35,700
median family income in rural parts of the state

41 of 50
economic mobility ranking
(bottom quintile)

High school graduation as well as AP and SAT/ACT participation rates are a useful college preparedness gauge. While data is not available on rural student graduation rates, the state of New Mexico has very weak rates compared to the national rate.

Rural students participate in AP exams and the ACT/SAT at rates lower than their peers across the state, with the ACT/SAT rate being especially low.

Academic Preparedness

High School Graduation Rates
Rural, state, and national averages

71.1% State
84.6% U.S.

College Readiness Indicators

	Rural	State
Share of junior and senior students who take ACT/SAT per year	26.9%	66.1%
Share of rural HS students taking 1+ AP exams per year	7.8%	8.4%

The unemployment rate in rural NM is higher than both the state and national averages, and the data show a weak job market in the rural parts of the state.

Looking at the top industries in rural parts of the state, only the *education, training, and library* category necessarily requires a college degree, at least for the majority of reported roles held. Select roles in other categories (i.e., accounting) may also require a degree.
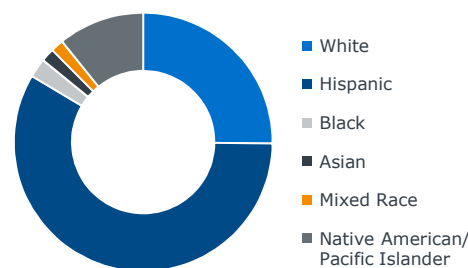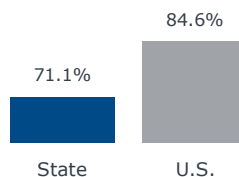
Employment and Industry Context

Unemployment Rates[†]

Unemployment in rural NM is well above the state and national rates.

- Rural
- State
- U.S.

6.0%
4.8%
3.9%
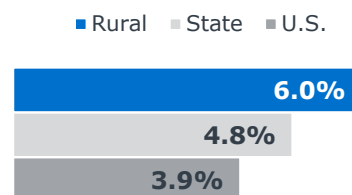
[†] Data as of December 2018

Main Industries in Rural NM

The main industries in the nonmetro areas of the state, excluding retail and food service occupations, are:

- **Office and administrative**
  Secretaries; office assistants; bookkeeping and accounting; store clerks; order fillers

- **Construction and extraction**
  Construction laborers; supervisors; oil and gas laborers; electricians; carpenters

- **Education, training, and library**
  Elementary education; teacher assistants; secondary education; preschool education

1) 2015-16 NCES private school data shows about 1,800 additional rural students in private schools in the state.

Source: See "Data and Methodology" for a full explanation of resources accessed and analyses conducted.

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