



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# Everyday Counts: Understanding Student Attendance Reporting

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Thursday, May 18, 2017

Morning Session – 9:00am – 12:00pm  
Afternoon Session – 12:30pm – 3:30pm

**Central Connecticut State University**  
Institute of Technology & Business Development

# Just a Few Quick Rules

We thank you for taking the time out of your schedule today to participate in this important training session on student attendance. The rules today are very simple. We ask that each attendee:

1. Be willing to **engage** in today's activities and sessions! (we will learn and have fun!)
2. Ask all questions you may have today around student attendance reporting (we will have segments for Q&A throughout the day)
3. Take what you've learned back to all appropriate staff in your district.
4. Periodically review all resources given today in an effort to help your district report student attendance data correctly and combat chronic absenteeism in your school or district.



# What Are Today's Goals & Objectives

The objective of today's session is to provide training, guidance and helpful information to CT school districts that will assist district and school staff become familiar with State reporting rules around student attendance, learn more about chronic absenteeism and learn best reporting practices from other districts throughout our State.

*Today will review some of the following items:*

- Understanding Student Attendance Measures
  - Average Daily Attendance
  - Chronic Absenteeism
    - Research and Reporting (National and State trends)
    - Truancy\* (Unexcused & Excused Definitions)
- Student Attendance Reporting in PSIS
  - Membership and Attendance Days
  - Accuracy in Reporting
- Clarified State Reporting Guidance (Appendix G)
  - Do's and Don'ts for Reporting Student Attendance
- Chronic Absenteeism Resource Guide

**GOALS &  
OBJECTIVES**



# Why Do Students Miss Days From School?

Let's Hear from You!



# Missing School Is Not Cool

- It's a commonly accepted fact that a student will at some point in their scholastic career miss at least some days from school.
  - We understand that things will happen where a child may not be present in school for whatever reason.
  - Most all will agree that missing school is not a good thing.
  - What we may sometimes underestimate or overlook are just how these accumulated missed days impact students and learning and contribute to the chronic absenteeism problem districts and schools are trying to combat.



# Days Missed Add Up

- Most K-12 academic school years run from September – June
  - 10 months of school in a defined academic calendar year
  - If a student misses just 2 days of school each month they will have missed a total of 20 days for the school year; by most definitions the student would be categorized as chronically absent.





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# **An Introduction to Chronic Absenteeism: Understanding The Measure**

# What is Chronic Absenteeism?

- *Chronic absenteeism* is defined as missing **10 percent or more** of the total number of days enrolled during the school year for any reason. (It includes both excused absences , unexcused absences, out-of-school suspensions and in-school suspensions that last more than one-half of the school day.)

ATTENDANCE  
MATTERS

Missing Just 2 Days Per  
Month Can Affect Your  
Academic Success!



# Chronic Absenteeism: A National Problem

- Recent federal reports and analysis strongly suggest that our nation has a widespread problem with chronic absenteeism.
- According to the US Department of Education more than 6 million students were absent for more than 15 days (3 weeks) during the 2013-14 school year.
  - An estimated 98 million school days missed
  - Approx. 14% of our nations students (1 in 7 students)



# What Does The Research Show?

- Early Schooling
  - A Baltimore study found students identified as chronically absent in both Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten were far more likely to be chronically absent in subsequent school years, retained and show lower achievement (Connolly and Olson, 2012).
  - Students chronically absent in Kindergarten and subsequently in the early elementary grades are less likely to be proficient readers by the time they reach 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.
- Poverty
  - Research on the summer learning loss phenomenon found that students from low socioeconomic backgrounds benefit greatly from going to school; similarly students living in poverty are more likely to be chronically absent for a myriad of health, family and service access issues. (Ready, 2010).
  - Children from low-income families with good school attendance gained more literacy skills than their peers from more affluent homes during Kindergarten and first grade.
- High School Graduation
  - Chronic absenteeism is cited as the strongest predictor for a student dropping out of high school even above disciplinary suspensions, test scores and the student being overage for their enrolled grade and controlling for student demographic indicators (Byrnes & Reyna, 2012).



# What Has Connecticut Learned?

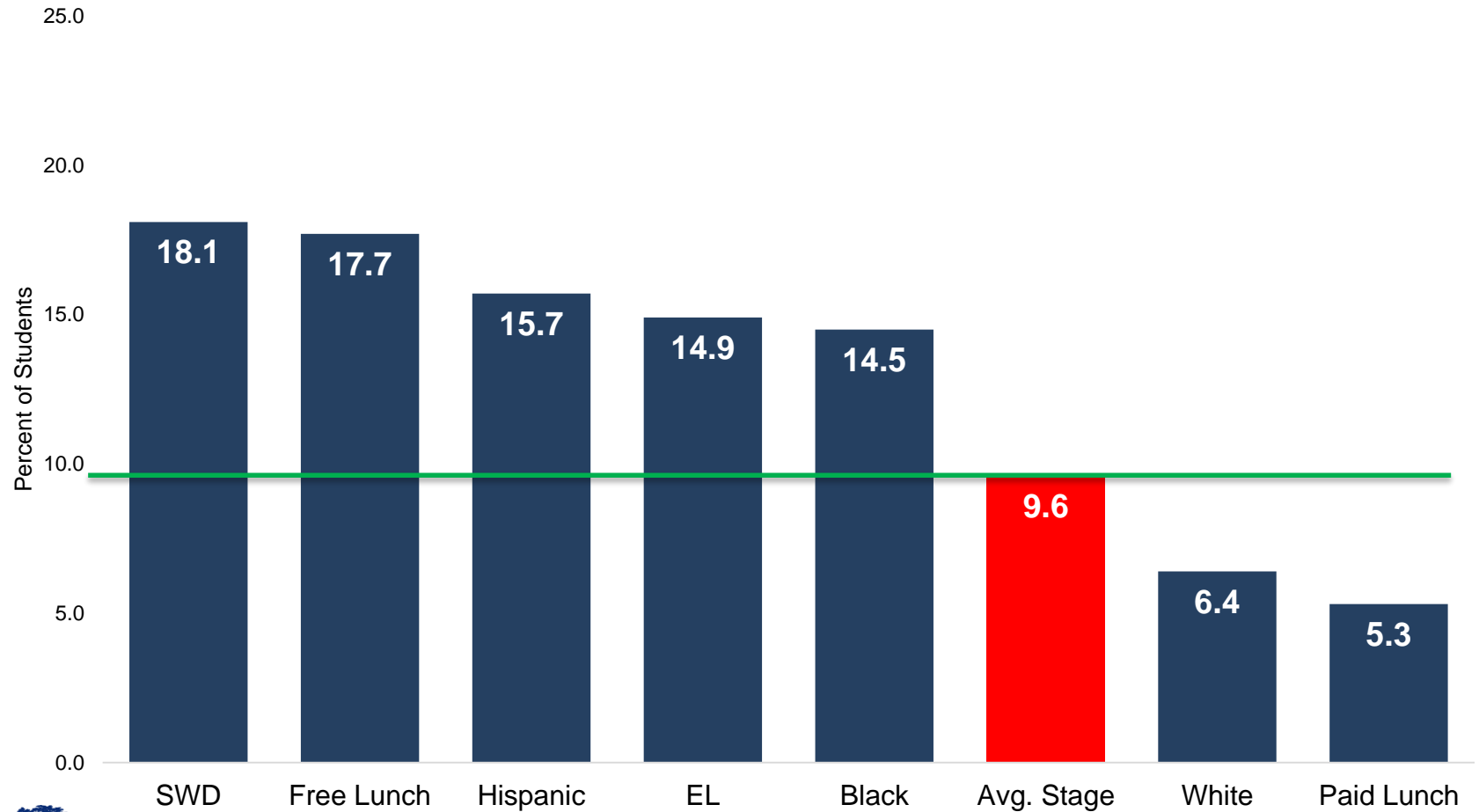
9.6 percent of K-12 students (more than 50,000 students) were chronically absent in the most recent 2015-16 school year.

Over the last 5 years data show that there were slight declines in the absenteeism rates statewide and certain districts show substantial district-wide decreases from year to year.

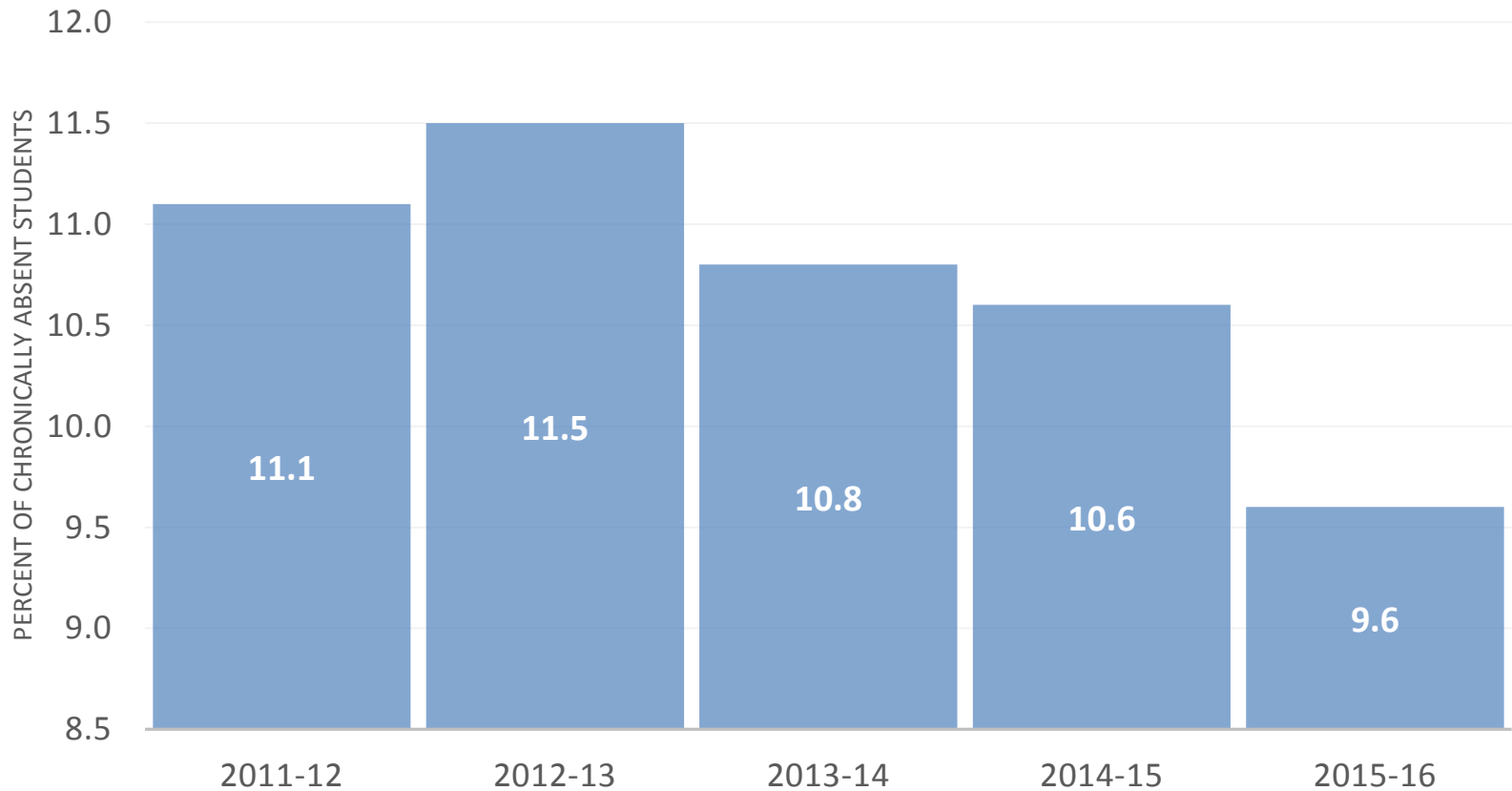
- Significant disparities remain as evidenced by chronic absenteeism rates across subgroups both at the state and district levels.
  - Black/African American and Hispanic of Latino students have higher rates of chronic absenteeism than their White counterparts.
  - English Learners and Students with Disabilities still show high rates compared to their general education peers.
  - Students eligible for free meals are highly more likely to be chronically absent than students not eligible for free or reduced price meals.



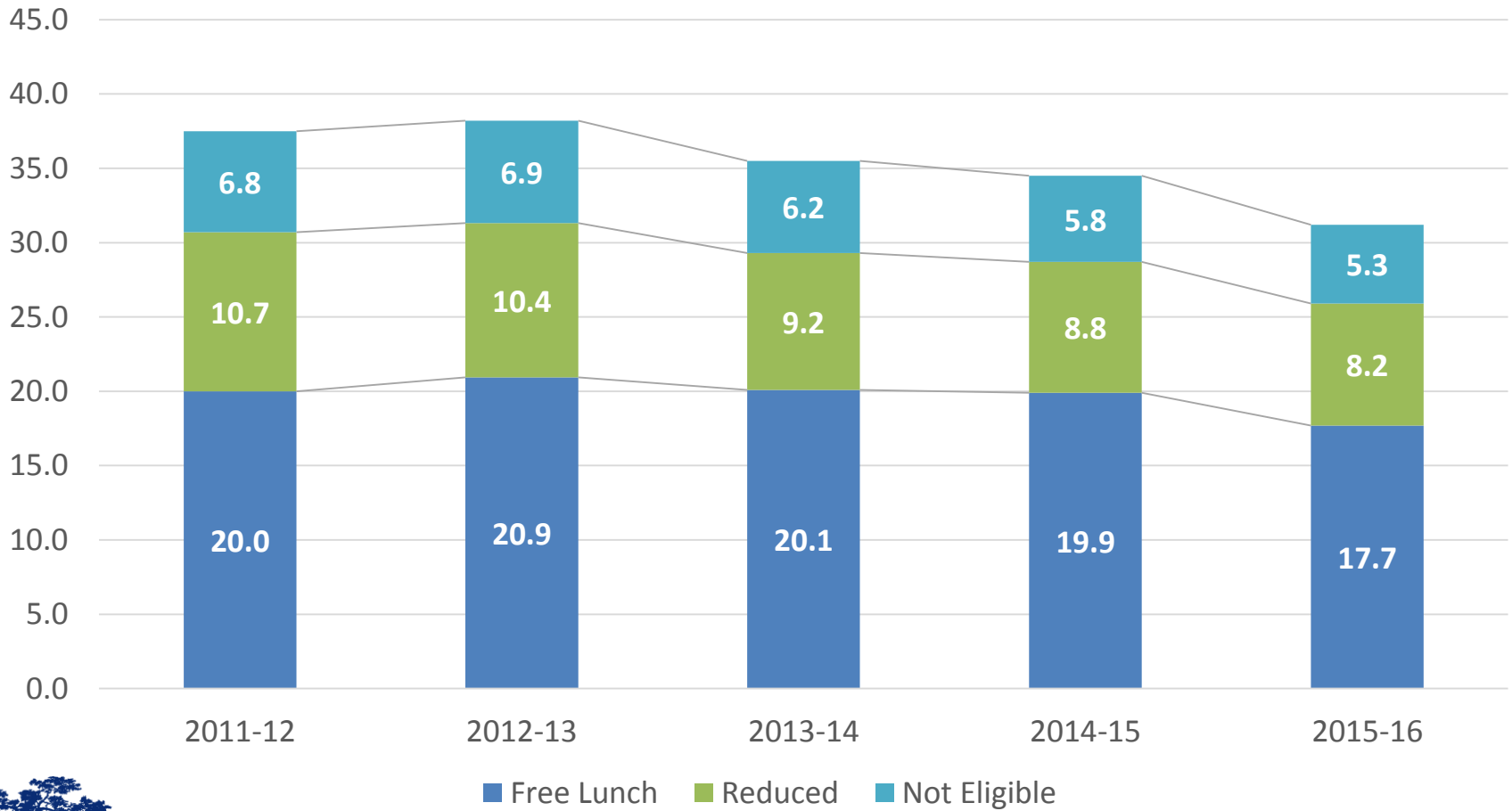
# 2015-16 Statewide Chronic Absenteeism by Selected Subgroups



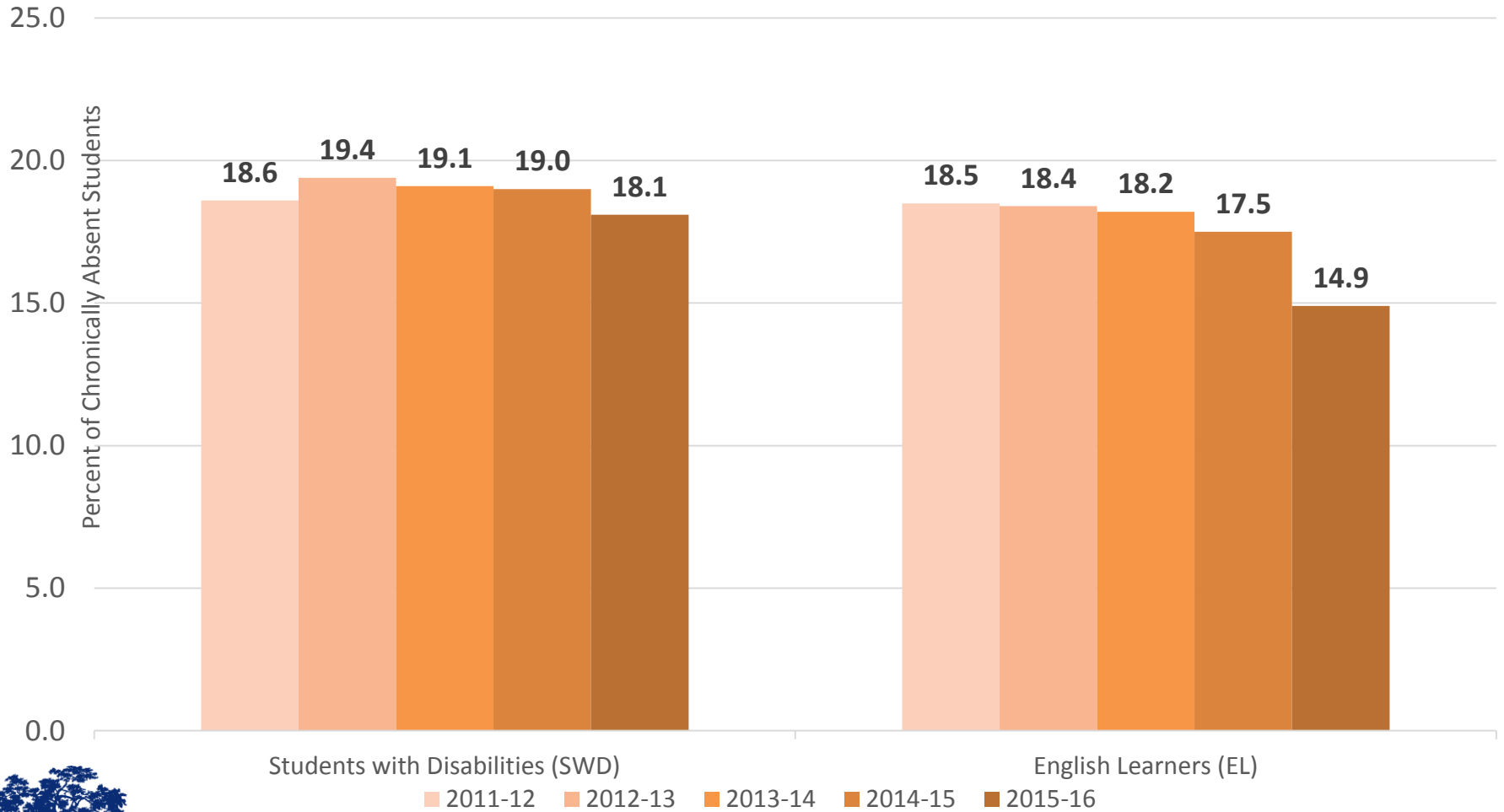
# 5-Year Chronic Absenteeism Trend Analysis



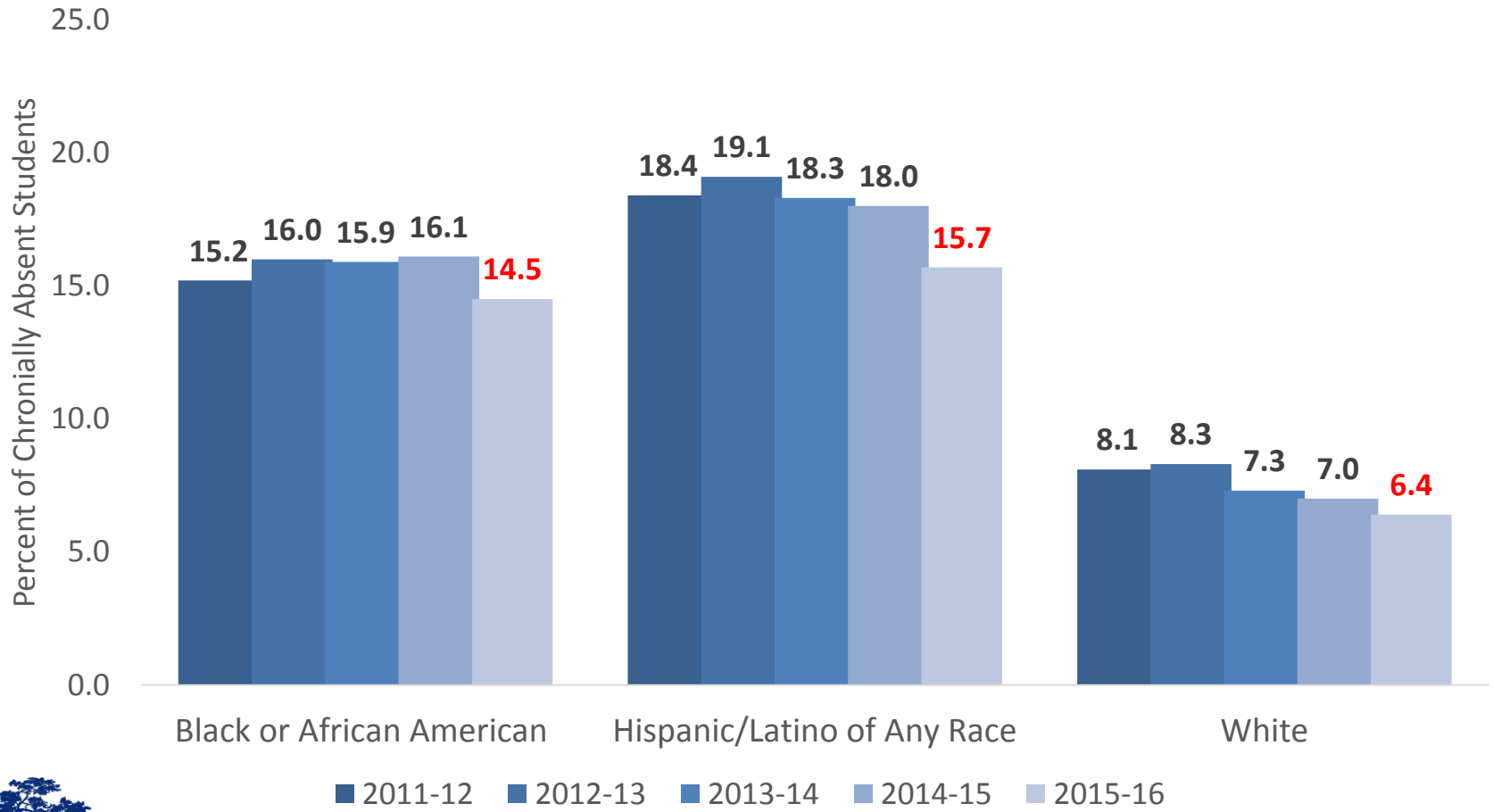
# 5-Year Analysis of Statewide Chronic Absenteeism by Meal Program Eligibility



# 5-Year Analysis of Statewide Chronic Absenteeism by Instructional Programs

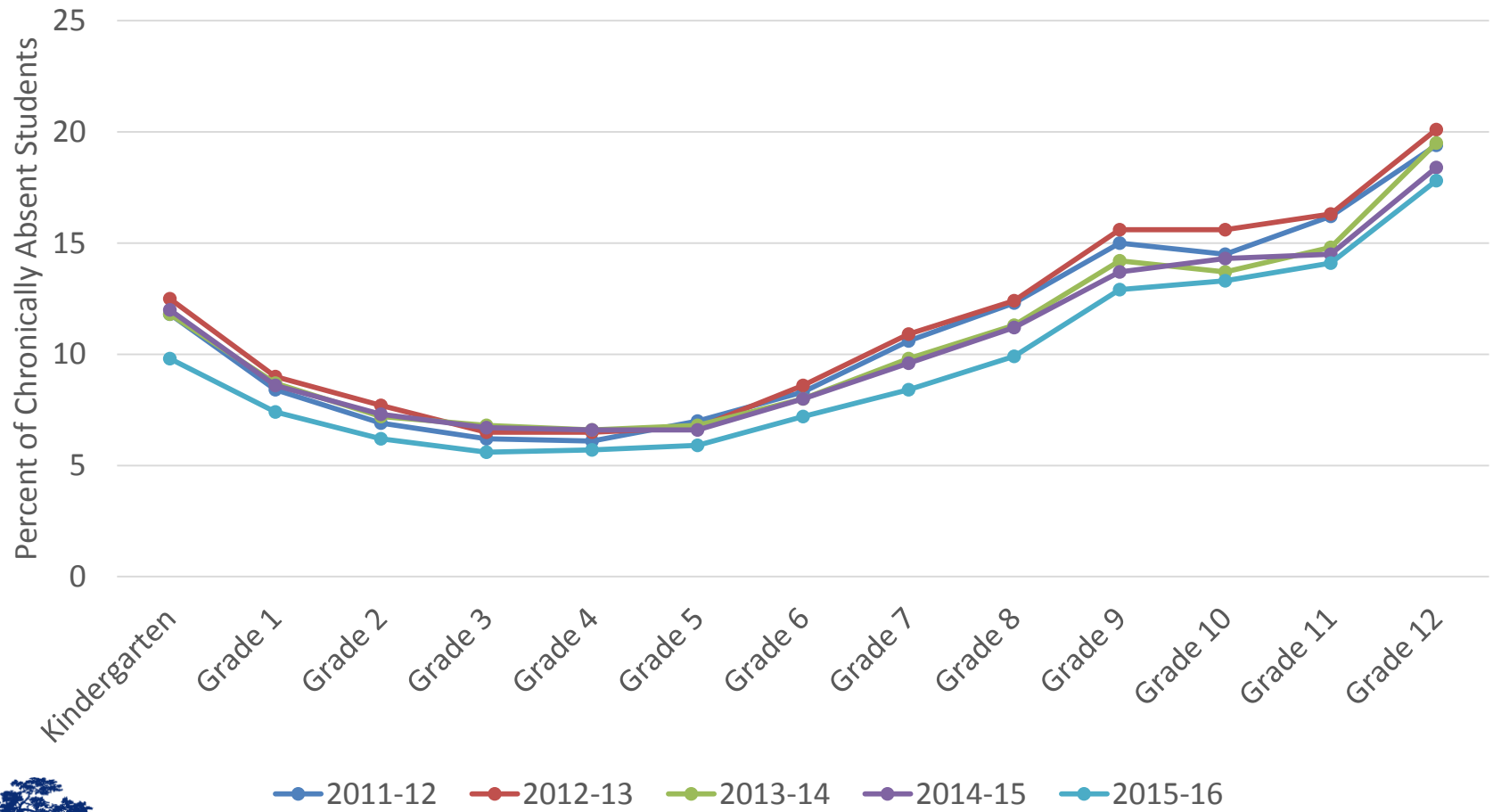


# 5-Year Analysis of Statewide Chronic Absenteeism by Student Race/Ethnicity

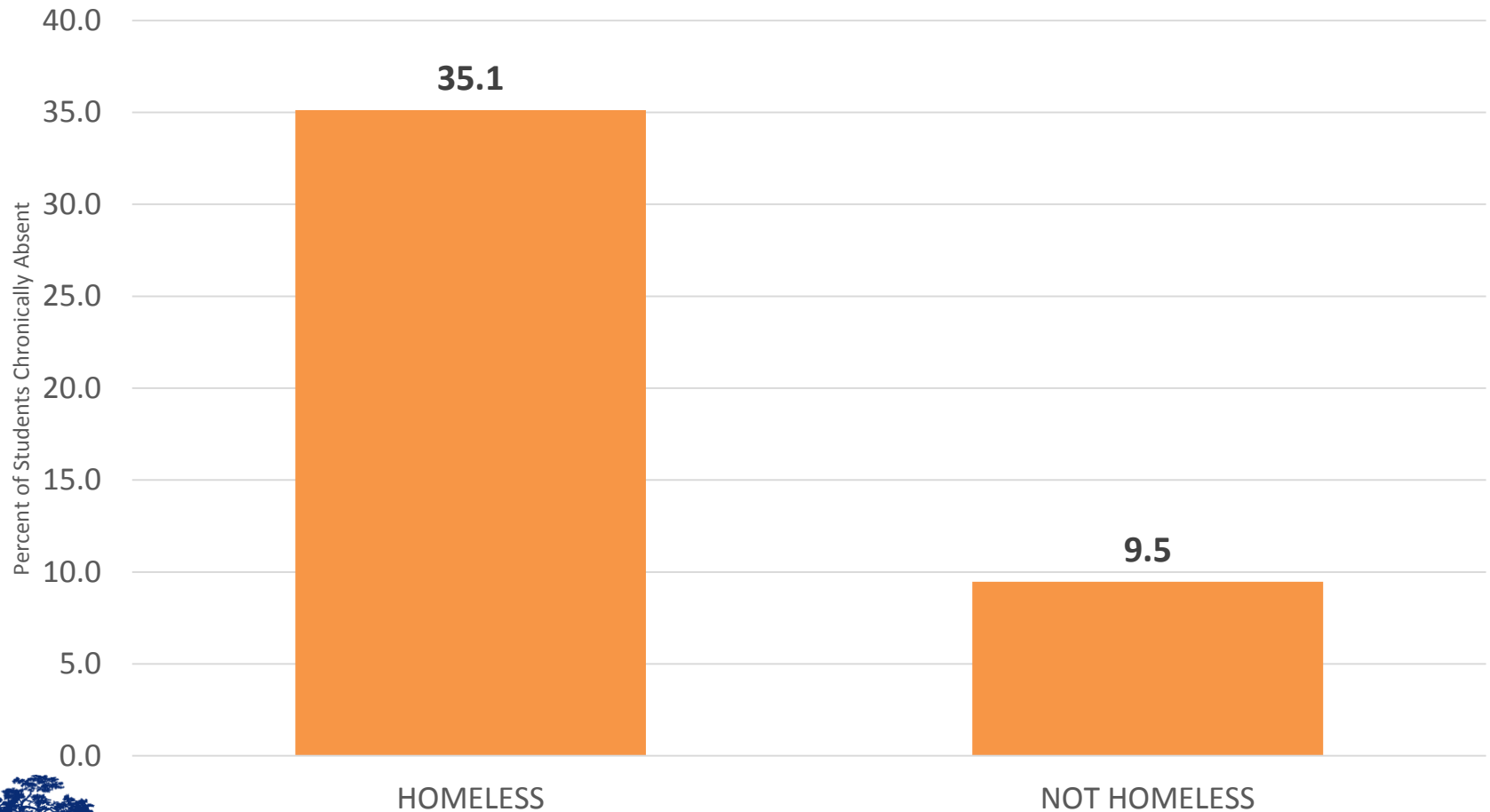




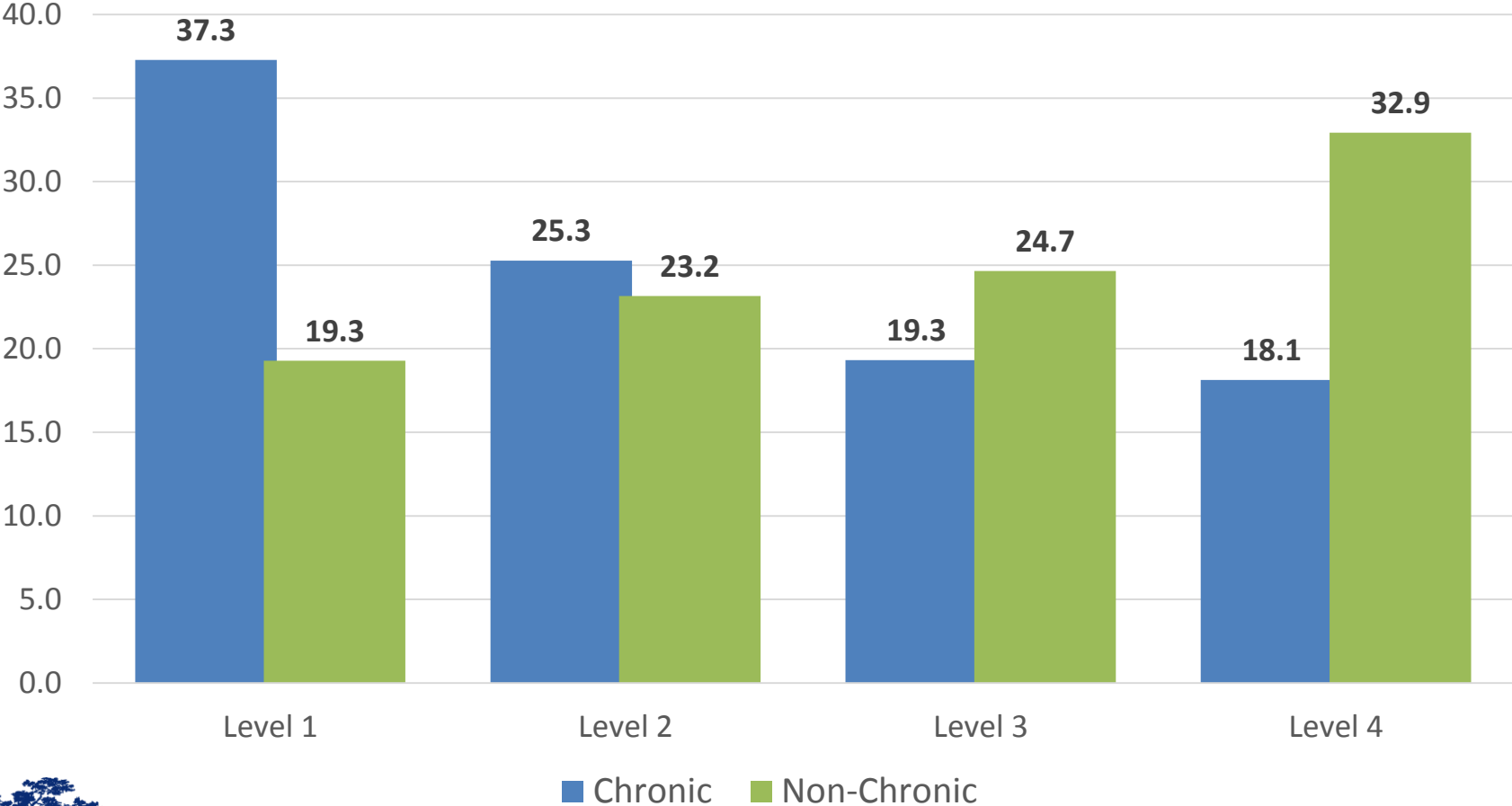
# Chronic Absenteeism by Grade Level (2015-16)



# Chronic Absenteeism & Homelessness (2015-16)



# Chronic Absenteeism in Kindergarten and Grade 3 Reading Performance



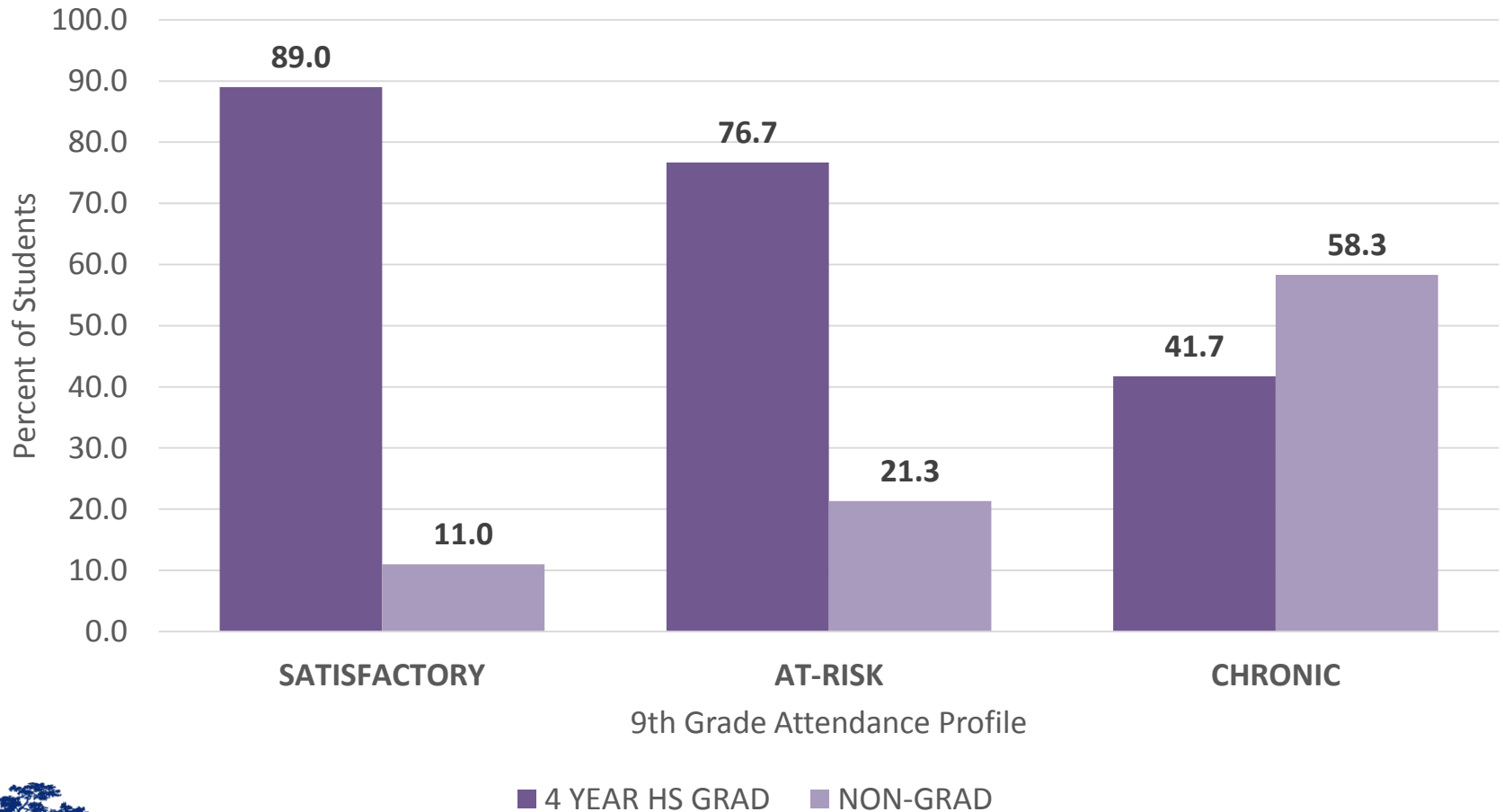
# Chronic Absenteeism and Examined Student Outcomes

To examine various effects of chronic absenteeism and at-risk student attendance patterns, we have categorized students in three groups based on their calculated attendance rate. The three categories are presented below:

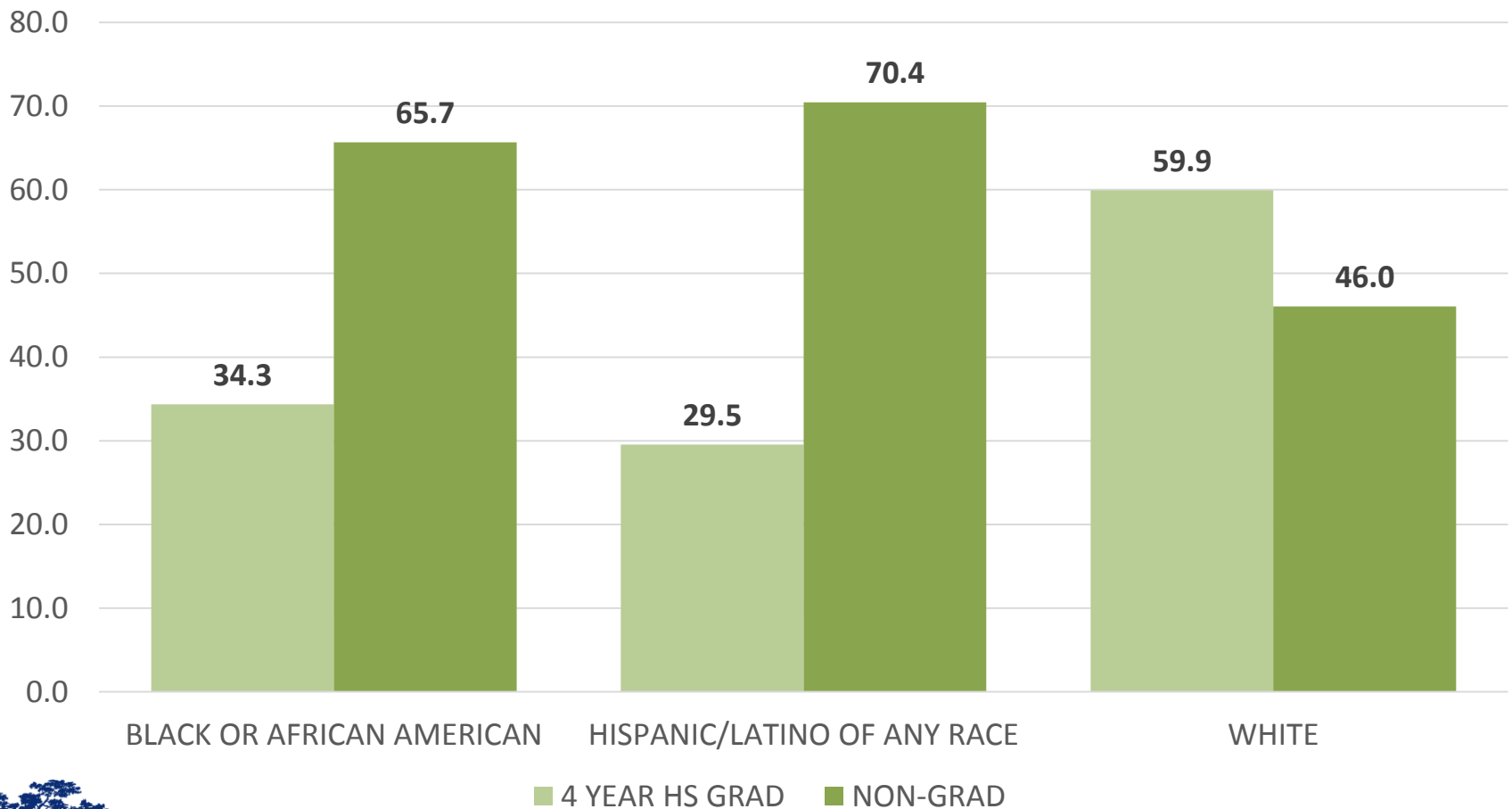
Attendance Rate Level	Definition
Satisfactory	Student attendance rate greater than 95%
At Risk	Student attendance rate between 90-95%
Chronically Absent	Student attendance rate of less than or equal to 90%



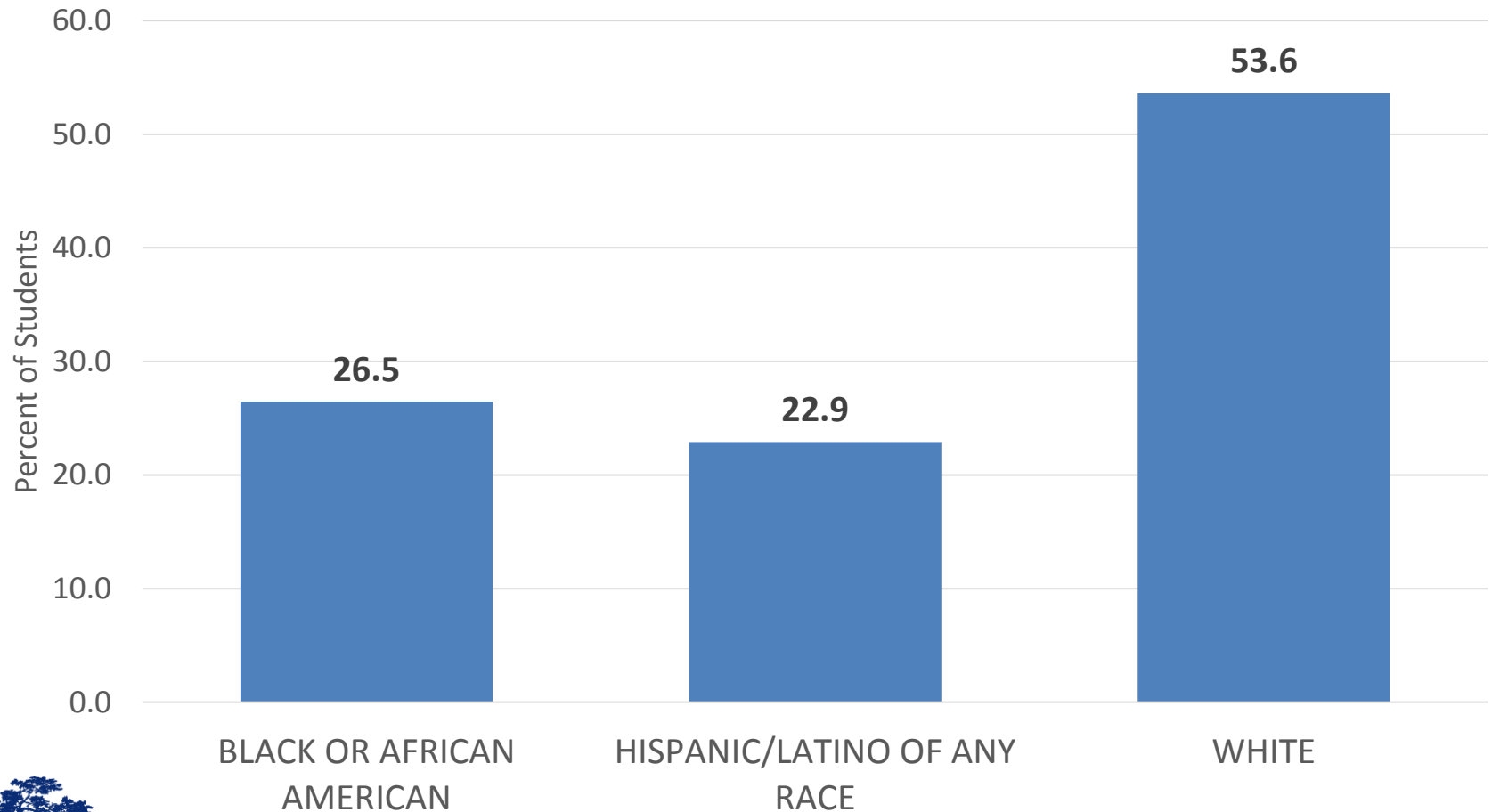
# Attendance in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade and Successful Completion of High School in 4-Years



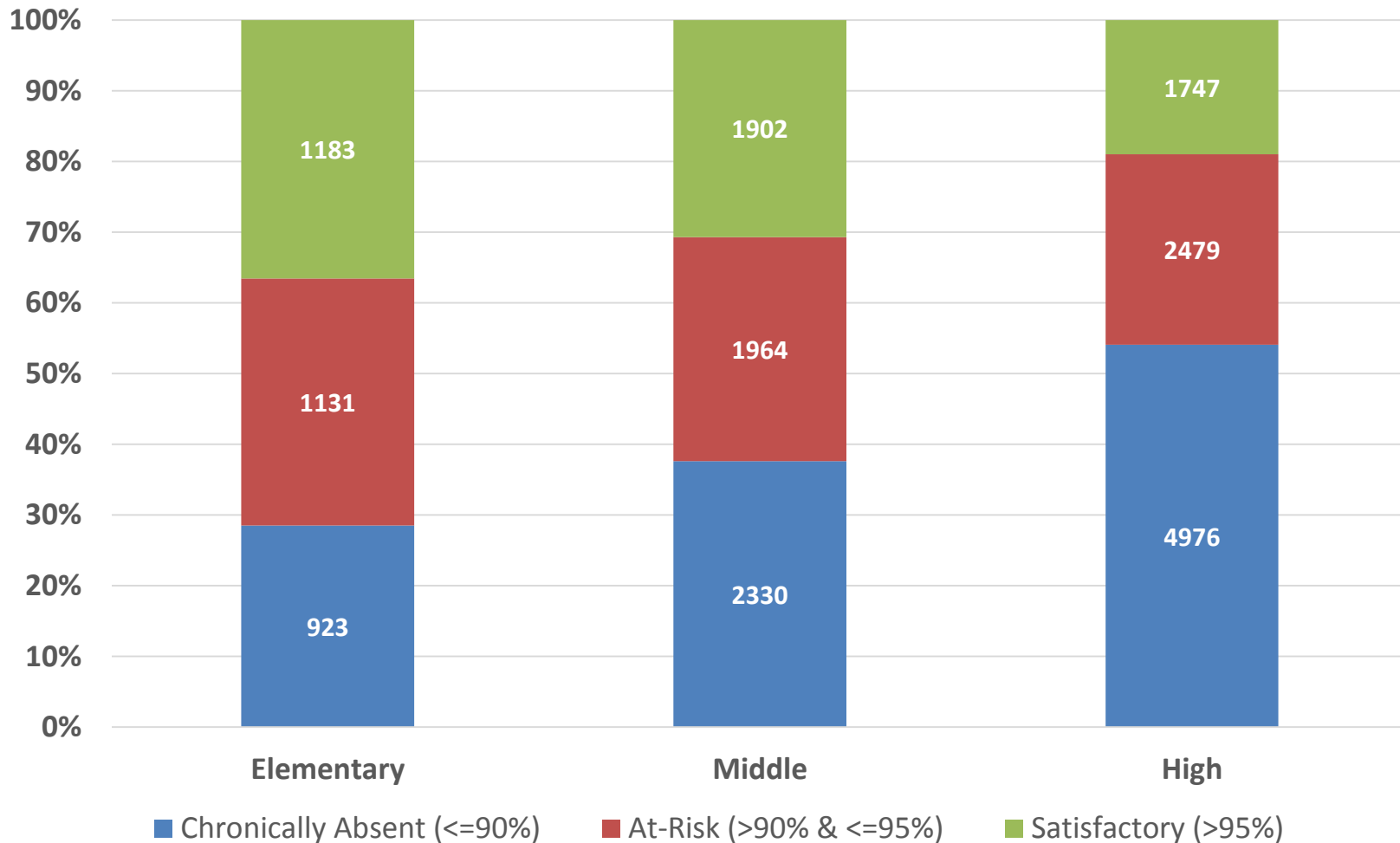
# Attendance in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade and Completion of High School in 4-Years by Race/Ethnicity, 2015-16 Cohort



# Males Chronically Absent in 9<sup>th</sup> Grade and Completion of High School in 4-Years, 2015-16 Cohort

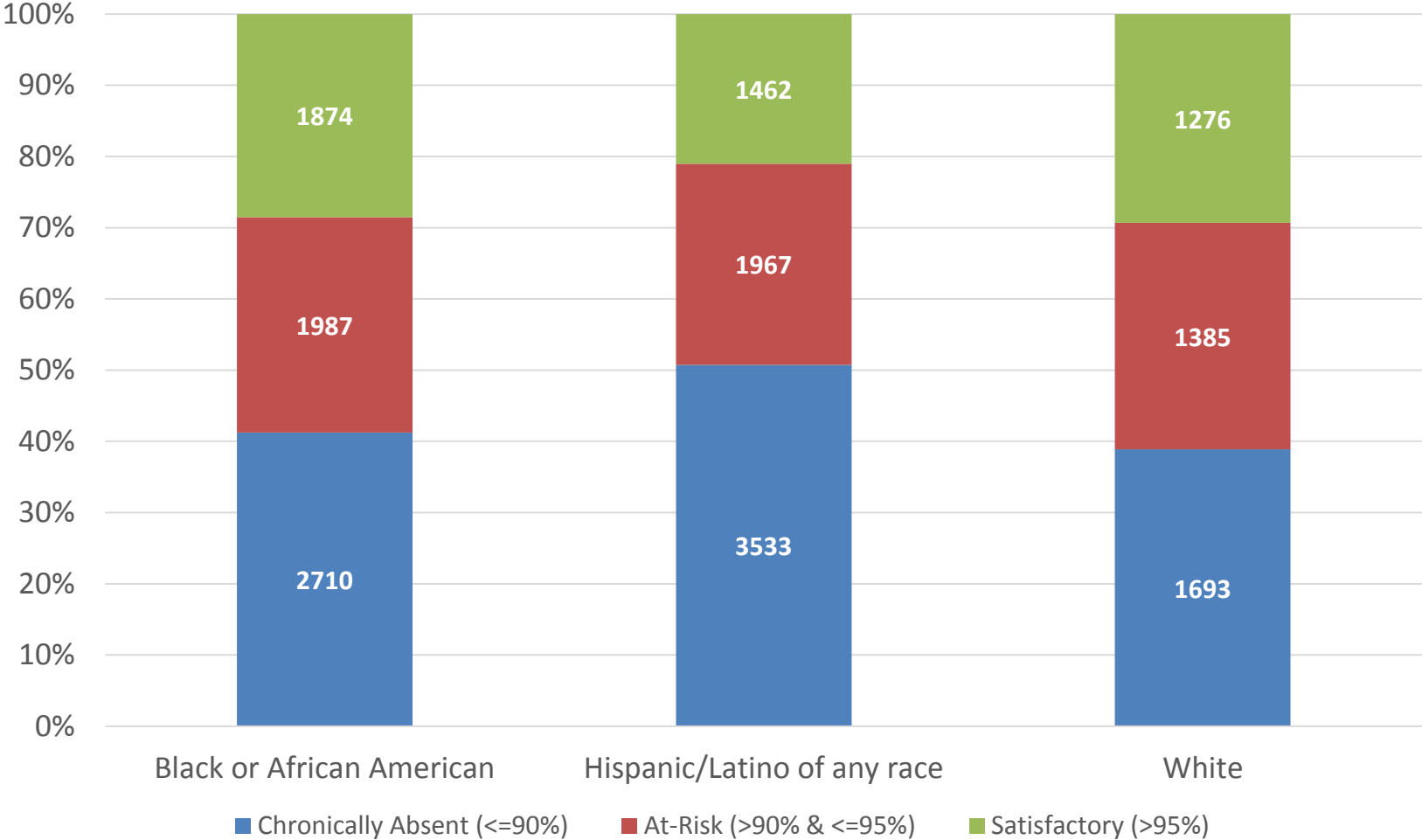


# Attendance of Students Receiving OSS or EXP by Grade Range: Percent of Students (unduplicated), 2015-16





# Attendance of Students Receiving OSS or EXP by Race/Ethnicity: Percent of Students (unduplicated), 2015-16



# Let's Take 5 Minutes for Your Questions!





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# **Why Are We Focusing On Chronic Absenteeism?**

## **An Overview of Student Attendance Measures**

# Why Are We Focusing on Chronic Absenteeism?

- Commonly reported aggregate attendance measures for districts/schools/subgroups (e.g., overall attendance rate) may not adequately highlight the extent of individual absenteeism.
  - *For example, a high school may have an attendance rate of 92% but as many as quarter of their students could be chronically absent.*
  - CSDE recommends tracking attendance and chronic absenteeism on a regular basis throughout the school year can help districts and schools to identify students who need interventions and support services. It is the first step to helping children achieve success in school.



# Alternative Attendance Measures

## District/School Overall Attendance Rate

- The percentage of a school or district's overall student population that are physically present in school on any given day. This measure is not based on an individual student's attendance rate.

## District/School Chronic Absenteeism Rate

- A measure of how many students miss at least 10 percent of days enrolled for any reason including excused and unexcused absences and days absent due to out of school suspensions served.



# Chronic Absence vs. Truancy

## Truancy

- Any intentional, unauthorized or illegal absence from compulsory education.
  - It is absences caused by students of their own free will, and usually does not refer to legitimate "excused" absences, such as ones related to medical conditions.
  - Counts only unexcused absences and emphasizes compliance with district/school rules.
  - *Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.) Section 10-198a (b)(1) and (2)*

## Chronic Absenteeism

- Missing 10 percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled during the school year for any reason.
  - Includes both excused, unexcused reasons for absences.
  - Includes disciplinary absences (e.g. out of school suspensions)
  - Focuses on the premise that by being absent the student is missing valuable instructional hours.

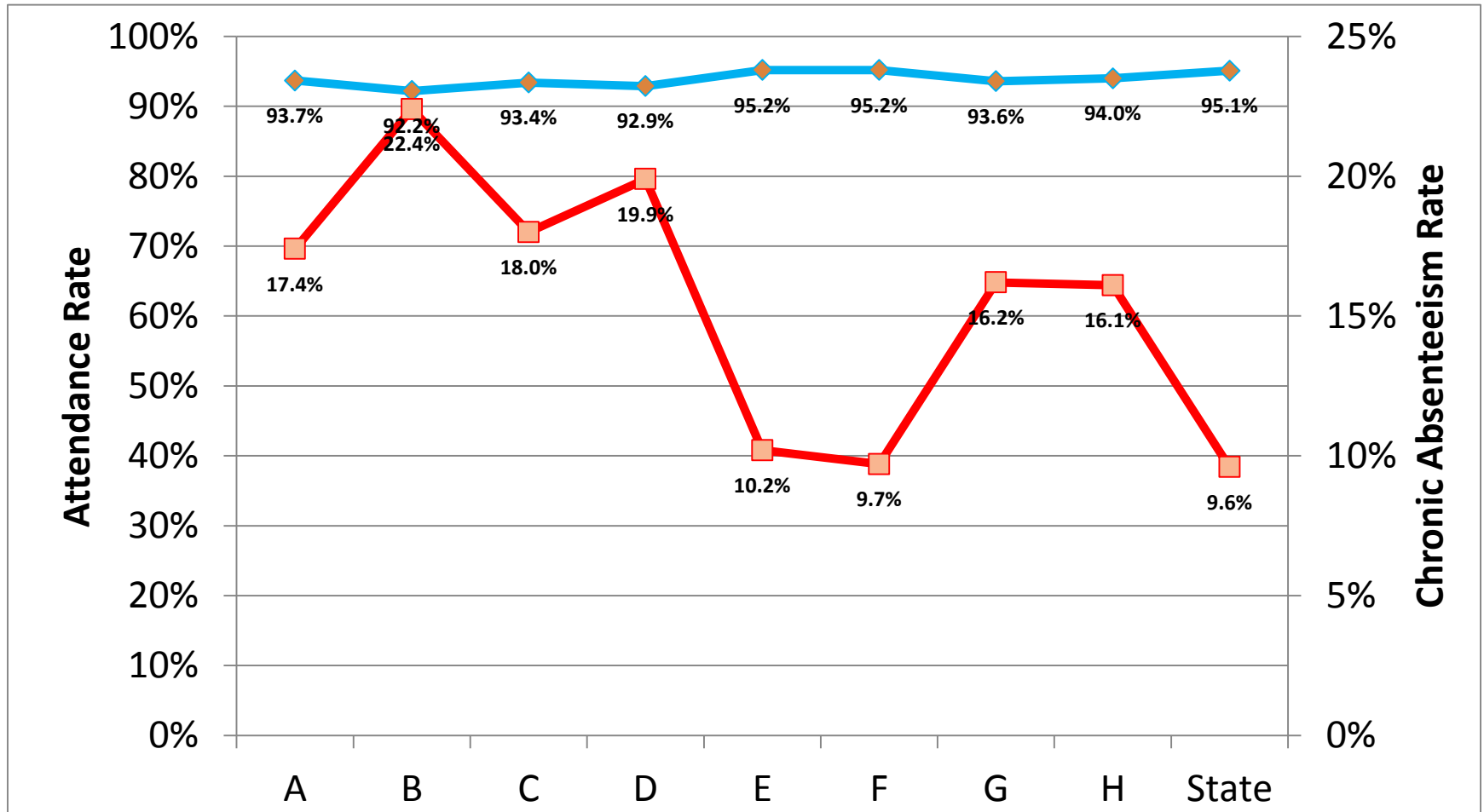


# Some Attendance Measures *May Be* Misleading

- **Average daily attendance** measures the average number of students who show up on any given day.
  - *(If 95% of all students enrolled in a school show up on most all days it would seem there is not an attendance problem; this ignores the percentage of children who may be missing significant amount of school and instructional time).*
- **Truancy** rates only include unexcused absences, while chronic absenteeism includes both excused and unexcused.
  - *(Extant research suggests that student achievement suffers when students loose instructional time no matter the reason for the absence).*



# A Tale of Two Attendance Measures (2015-16)





# Let's Take 5 Minutes for Your Questions!





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# **PSIS Reporting & Calculating Chronic Absenteeism**

# Calculating Chronic Absenteeism

Chronic absenteeism is defined as missing ten percent or greater of the total number of days enrolled in the school year for any reason. It includes both excused and unexcused absences in addition to out of school suspensions and expulsions served.

$$\text{Student Attendance Rate}^* = \frac{\text{Student's Total Days of Attendance}}{\text{Student's Total Days of Membership}}$$

- A student is classified as chronically absent if his/her attendance rate is less than or equal to 90%.
- SDE analyzes chronic absenteeism at the state, district, school, and student subgroup levels.



# Calculating Chronic Absenteeism

$$\text{Student Attendance Rate} = \frac{\text{Student's Total Days of Attendance}}{\text{Student's Total Days of Membership}}$$

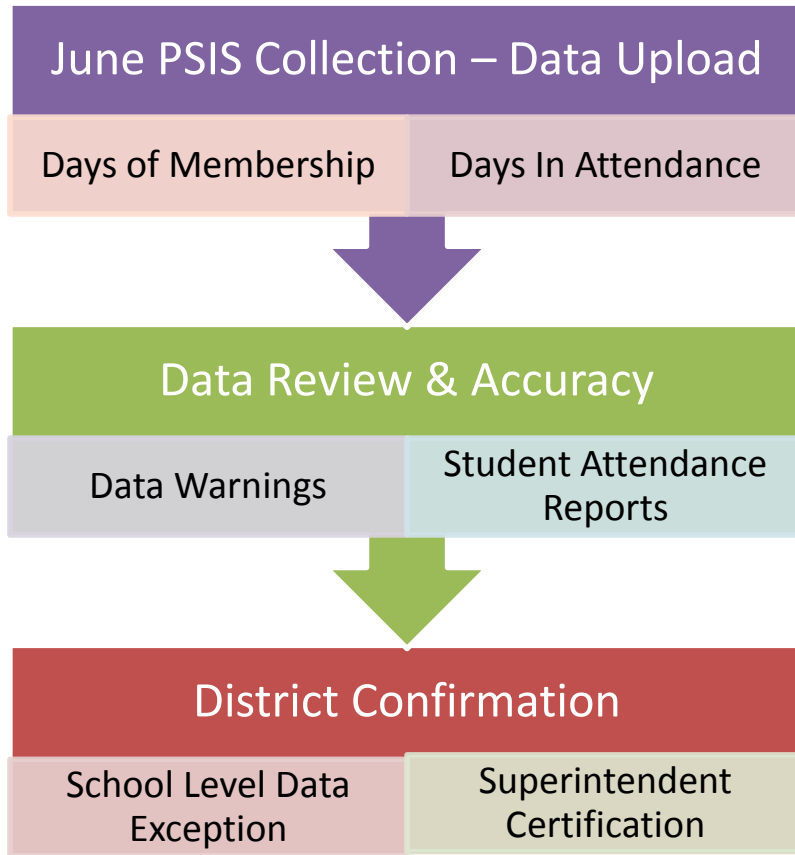
Student Julius Irving is reported with 180 days of membership (enrollment) and 159 days of attendance (days present).

$$\frac{159}{180} = 0.88333 \longrightarrow 0.88 \%$$

Julius's attendance rate is < than 90% and thus the student is chronically absent.



# How Do We Get The Data?



## Data Submission Warnings/Edits

- ✓ The June collection provides student level warnings for each submitted record where the days of membership are set equal to the days of attendance (e.g. perfect attendance).
- ✓ The June collection provides a student level warning for each record where the child is found to be chronically absent.

## Student Attendance Data Reports

- ✓ Attendance by Range Report
- ✓ Attendance Rate by District
- ✓ Attendance Rate by School
- ✓ Chronic Absenteeism by District
- ✓ Chronic Absenteeism by School
- ✓ Chronic Absenteeism Roster

## School Level Data Exception

- ✓ A new school level data exception (#150) required districts to respond accordingly to each instance where a school's chronic absenteeism rate increased or decreased by five percent or more from year to year.

## Certification of Attendance Range Report

- ✓ Every Superintendent is required to verify that the available attendance range report is indeed CORRECT.

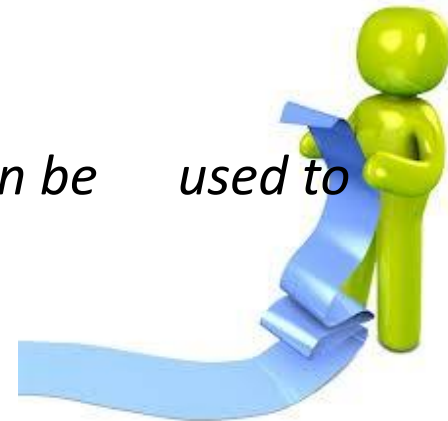




# What are Quality Data?

## Quality Data are:

- Valid  
*The indicator measures what it is intended to measure.*
- Reliable  
*Collected in a manner which produces stable and consistent results across schools and districts.*
- Timely and Accurate  
*Reported and reviewed by due dates.*
- Informative  
*Interesting, thought-provoking information that can be used to drive decision-making.*





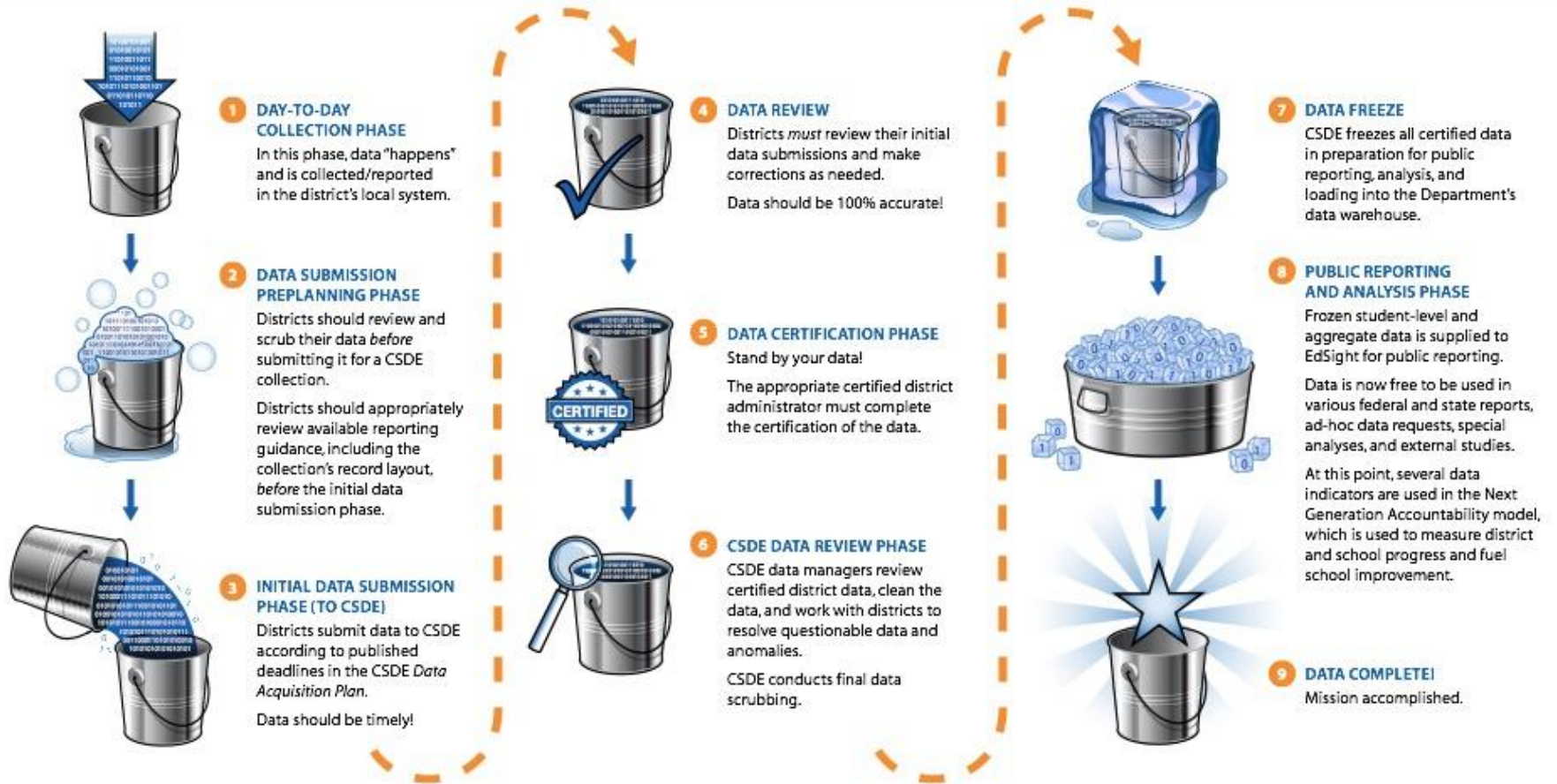
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# The Data Life Cycle

# DATA LIFE CYCLE

The Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) collects vast amounts of data about students, schools, and educators. This information undergoes a rigorous procedure of collection, review, and validation before it is reported to the public. Here's how that process works.





# How Will the Connecticut State Department of Education Use These Data?

- Ad hoc data requests
- Next Generation Accountability Model
- Strategic School Profiles
- School Turnaround Office Reports & Trackers
- Chronic absenteeism data is available on our public reporting portal [EdSight](#); (there are immediate plans to provide student counts for all analysis in addition to standard percentage totals).



# Let's Take 5 Minutes for Your Questions!





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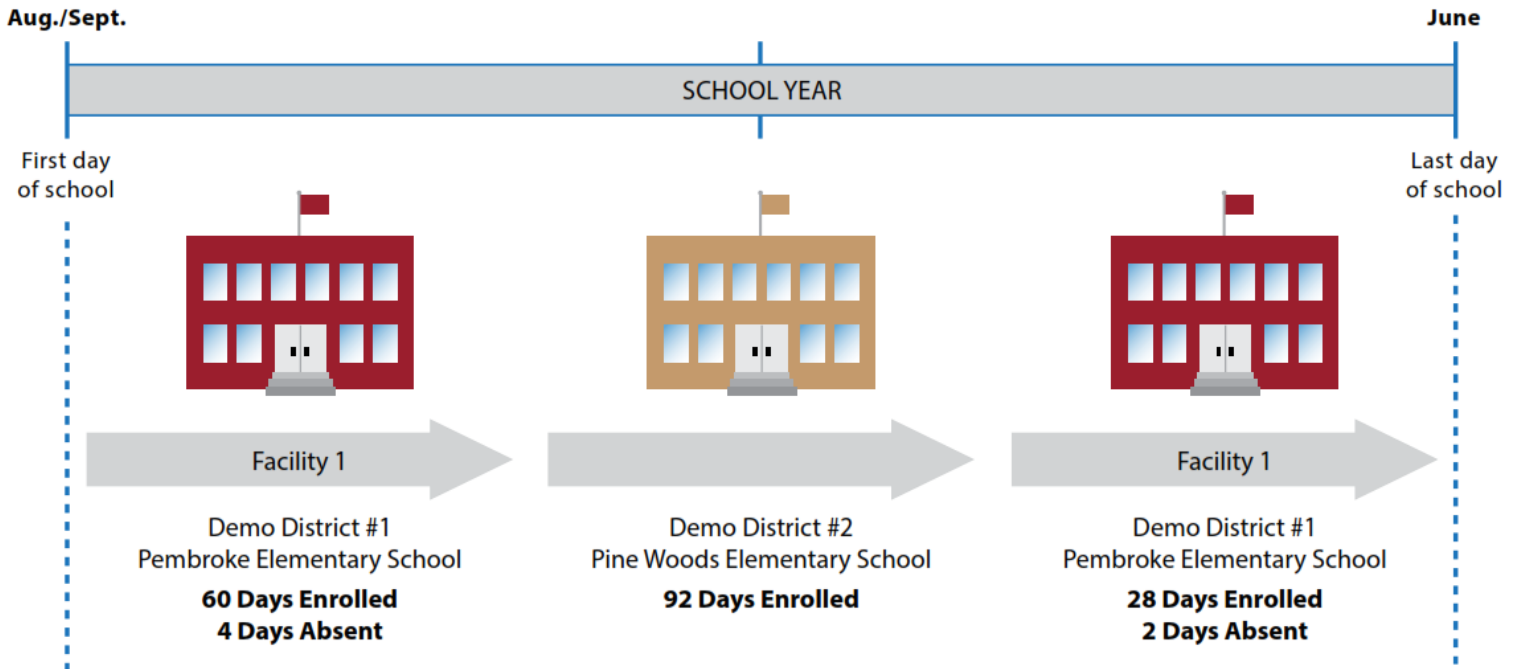
# **PSIS: Membership & Attendance Days**

# Ready...Set...Let's Report!

## When reporting student attendance data in PSIS:

- The Number of Days of Membership and the Number of Days in Attendance should reflect the total number of days enrolled and attend by the student while in their primary school building (facility 1) at any point during the school year.
- In instances where a student has entered and exited the same school building (facility 1) multiple times during the year, the Number of Days of Membership shall be the sum of all days that the student was a member of the primary facility (facility 1) in which they are reported at as of the district's last day of school.

Johnny Jones (SASID 0123456789) enrolled Demo District #1 and attended Pembroke Elementary School (facility 1) for 60 school days at the beginning of the school year. Johnny missed a total of 4 days of school during this period. Johnny was unenrolled from the Demo District #1 and was registered in the neighboring Demo District #2 (Pine Woods Elementary). In the spring of the school year Johnny Jones returns to the Demo District #1 and again attends Pembroke Elementary School until the end of the school year for a total of 28 days. During this time Johnny misses 2 days of school. His attendance should be reported in the June PSIS collection as follows:

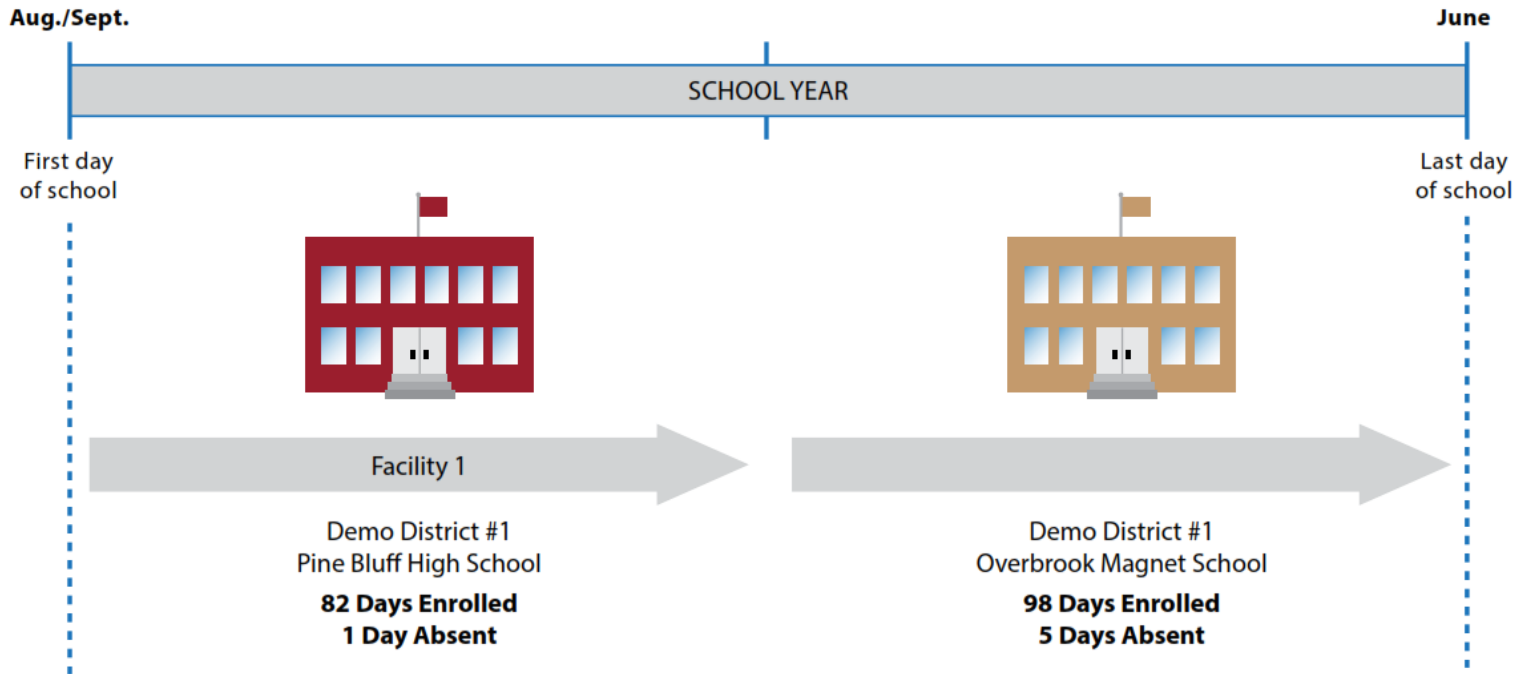


Johnny's attendance should be reported in the June PSIS collection as follows:

**Number of Days of Membership:  $60+28 = 88$**   
**Number of Days in Attendance:  $(60-4) + (28-2) = 82$**



Jane Smith (SASID 9876543210) enrolled in the Demo District #1 and attended Pine Bluff High School (facility 1) 82 school days and was absent for 1 day during this time. Jane transfers to the Overbrook Magnet School in Demo District#1 and remains enrolled at the school until the end of the school year for a total of 98 days. While enrolled at Overbrook Magnet School Jane missed 5 days from school. Pine Oak School District will report Jane’s attendance as follows:



Demo District #1 will report Jane’s attendance as follows:  
**Number of Days of Membership: 98**  
**Number of Days in Attendance: (98-5) = 93**





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# **PSIS: Appendix G (You've Got Guidance)**

# What Is Appendix G?

- Appendix G is one of the appendices included in the PSIS User Reference Guide. This document can be found on the PSIS Public Help Site and can be downloaded and printed (recommended).
- Appendix G provides guidance on report student attendance data in PSIS.
- To improve data quality and the overall understanding of how to appropriately report student attendance data to CSDE, we've improved and clarified the guidance.
- We've vetted draft documentation through staff who represent more than 15 districts and identified CSDE consultants.





# What is “In Attendance”?

- In **January 2008**, the Connecticut State Board of Education adopted the following definition of student attendance:
- A student is considered to be “in attendance” if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. **A student who is serving an out of school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent.**



# General Guidance for Reporting Student Attendance in the Public School Information System

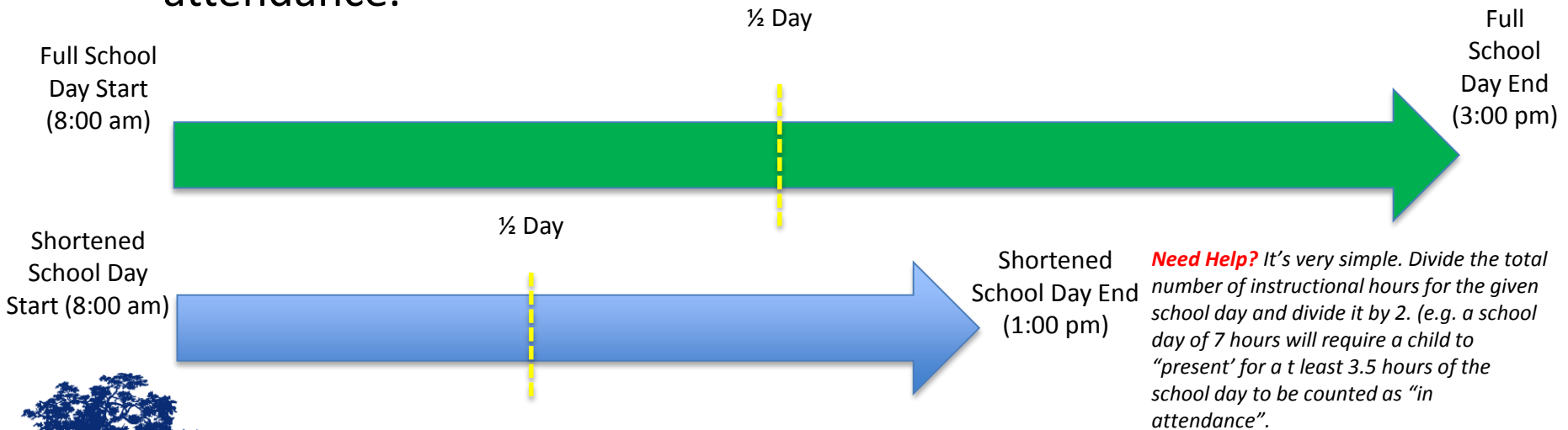
Districts may develop attendance policies (e.g., period-by-period attendance) that differ from State written guidance for their own local reporting purposes.

- However, for reporting student attendance to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE), specifically PSIS (i.e., days of membership, days in attendance), districts **must** adhere to all guidance provided in this appendix of the most recently published *Public School Information System User Reference Guide*.
- Any student who is physically attending their assigned school building (i.e., facility 1) for **at least half** of the instructional school day should be reported as “in attendance” for the purpose of reporting membership and attendance days to the CSDE.



# Handling of Early Dismissal Days

On early dismissal days and all days shortened due to inclement weather, the instructional school day is calculated as the total amount of instructional time provided to students on that school day. For example, if a school is open for four hours due to a shortened or amended school day schedule, a student must be present for a minimum of two hours to be reported as “in attendance.”



# Early Dismissal Days



- On early dismissal days and all days shortened due to inclement weather, the instructional school day is calculated as the total amount of instructional time provided to students on that day.
  - For example, if a school is open for four hours due to a shortened or amended school day schedule, a student **must** be present for a minimum of two hours to be reported as “in attendance.”

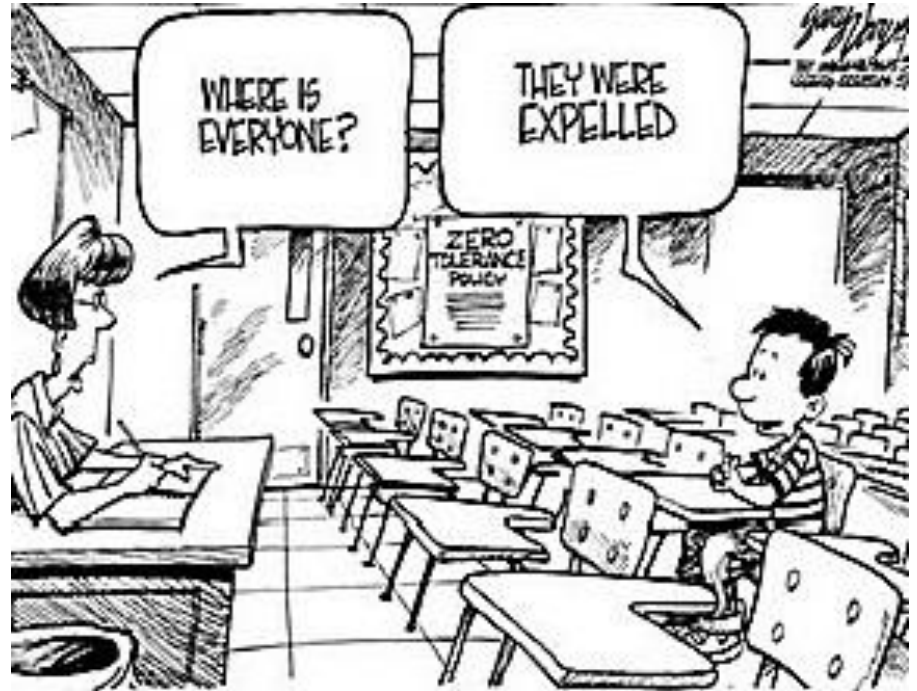
# Handling of In-School Suspension

- Public Act 15-225 (effective July 1, 2015) states that any student serving an in-school suspension that is **at least half** of the school's instructional day is reported as "absent." All students who are serving an in-school suspension that is less than half of the regular school day are reported as "in attendance" as long as they are physically present for **at least half** of the instructional school day.
- Section 2 of Public Act 15-225 states: "Absence" means (A) an excused absence, unexcused absence or disciplinary absence, as those terms are defined by the State Board of Education pursuant to section 10-198b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or (B) an in-school suspension, as defined in section 10-233a of the general statutes, that is greater than or equal to one-half of a school day.



# Disciplinary Absences (out-of-school suspensions and expulsions)

- Students serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion are reported as “absent” except for each day that the student receives an alternative education program for **at least half** of the instructional school day.



# Extended Family Vacations/Travel

- Students missing **more than half** of the instructional school day for the purpose of travel or vacation are reported as “absent.”
  - The fact that a parent or guardian has authorized such absence has no impact on the child being reported as “absent.”
  - In addition, students removed from school for extended stays abroad are reported as “absent” even if the child was provided with supplemental work by their home school in an effort to minimize the child’s missed classroom instruction.



# Extended Family Vacations/Travel

- If a student is actively reported in the PSIS Register Module during the period of any such extended travel abroad or elsewhere, then the local education agency may **not** unenroll the student from the Public School Information System without the appropriate legal authorization of the parent or guardian.
- Connecticut General Statute (C.G.S) §10-184 requires children between the ages 5 and 18 to be enrolled in a public school, unless the parent or person having control of the child is able to demonstrate that the child is receiving equivalent instruction elsewhere. Children going on an extended vacation should not be unregistered from your district





# Data Reporting: Please Follow The Rules

- Districts are **strongly prohibited** from seeking to use the unenrollment of students to favorably report aggregate school- and district-level student attendance measures (e.g., chronic absenteeism rates).
- Pursuant to Connecticut General Statute Section 10-184, only when the child is 17 years old can a parent consent for such child to withdraw from school. For all other school age children under 17, C.G.S. Section 10-184 requires that parents cause their child to attend a public school regularly or show that the child is elsewhere receiving equivalent instruction in the studies taught in the public schools (e.g., through private school, homeschooling, etc.).



# Half-Day Kindergarten Program Enrollment

- Students who attend a half-day kindergarten program should be reported as “in attendance” if the student is present for at least half of that program’s instructional day.



# Homebound Students

- Students who are homebound due to illness or injury are reported as “absent” **unless** they are receiving instruction and/or tutoring from an appropriately certified teacher for a designated amount of time that the school or district deems adequate, which will ensure that the student is able to successfully return to their home school and regular school classroom.

**WARNING:** If an appropriately certified teacher does not provide the student instruction, the student **must** be marked “absent.”

# Medically Fragile Student Populations

## Medical Absences

- Students who are absent from school for medical reasons (e.g., routine medical appointments, chronic illness, hospitalization) are reported as “absent” for each day that they are **not** present for **at least half** of the instructional school day and **not** receiving instruction by an appropriately certified teacher.



# Attendance For Outplaced Students

- Students attending outplaced facilities (e.g., approved private special education facilities, vocational facilities, etc.) **must** be reported in accordance with all written guidance provided in this appendix.



# School Sponsored Activities

- Students participating in a school-sponsored activity during the instructional school day should be reported as “in attendance.” Appropriate examples of such school-sponsored activities include, but are **not** limited to the following:
  - Cooperative work experience programs
  - Community service and/or service-learning programs
  - Field trips
  - District-sponsored activities



# EdSight

## Highlights: Data is just a Click Away!

[www.edsight.ct.gov](http://www.edsight.ct.gov)



# Scavenger Hunt



Prize for the first to find all five answers –  
Please stand up and wave when you've got all five!

1. In 2013-14 what was the statewide chronic absenteeism rate for students with disabilities? English Learners?
2. What was the reported chronic absenteeism rate for the Academy of Information Technology and Engineering (Stamford Public Schools) in 2015-16?
3. Which school in the Bristol Public Schools had the highest chronic absenteeism rate in the 2012-13?
4. What percent of Hispanic or Latino students in Bridgeport were reported as chronically absent in 2014-15?
5. What percent of high-needs students enrolled at Hamden High School were chronically absent in 2015-16?



[EdSight.CT.GOV](http://EdSight.CT.GOV)





# Scavenger Hunt



Prize for the first to find all five answers –  
Please stand up and wave when you've got all five!

1. In 2013-14 what was the statewide chronic absenteeism rate for students with disabilities? English Learners? **19.1%; 18.2%**
2. What was the reported chronic absenteeism rate for the Academy of Information Technology and Engineering (Stamford Public Schools) in 2015-16? **7.0%**
3. Which school in the Darien Public Schools had the highest chronic absenteeism rate in the 2014-15? **Darien High School**
4. What percent of Hispanic or Latino students in Bridgeport were reported as chronically absent in 2014-15? **21.2**
5. What percent of high-needs students enrolled at Hamden High School were chronically absent in 2015-16? **43.3**

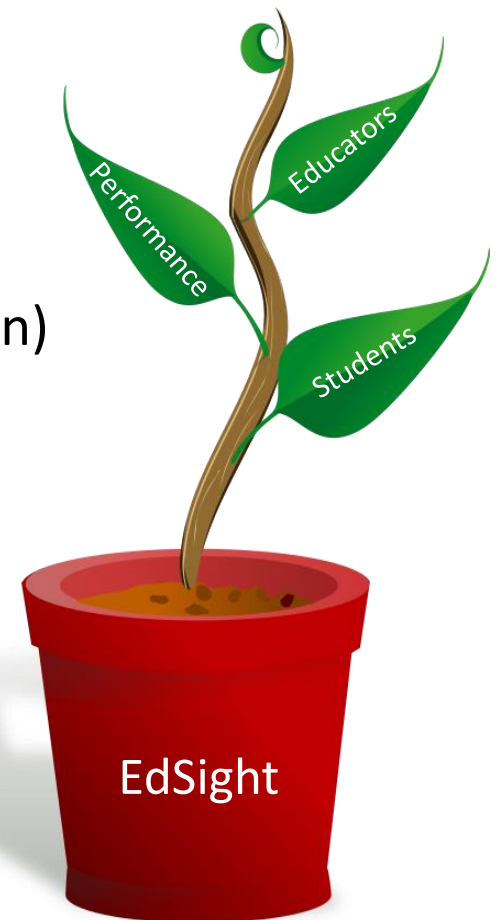


## EdSight.CT.GOV

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# EdSight Continues to Grow

- Monthly releases
  - New reports
  - Enhancements
  - Chronic Student Counts (Coming Soon)
- Suggestions/feedback?
  - Email [EDsight.SDE@ct.gov](mailto:EDsight.SDE@ct.gov)



# MORE QUESTIONS? CONTACT US

**Student Attendance Reporting  
June PSIS Collection:**

[Marquelle.Middleton@ct.gov](mailto:Marquelle.Middleton@ct.gov)

860-713-6877

**PSIS Registration**

[Kendra.Shakir@ct.gov](mailto:Kendra.Shakir@ct.gov)

860-713-6896

**Chronic Absenteeism  
Intervention Strategies**

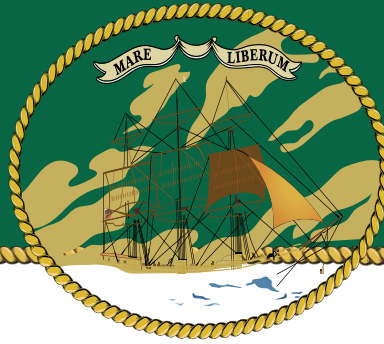
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**New London Public Schools  
Magnet Schools of Excellence**

Efforts to Reduce Chronic  
Absenteeism

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*Transforming our district's culture, practices and performance takes time, support, relentless focus, and the commitment of all partners.*

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# A CALL TO ACTION

- Alliance District Professional Learning Opportunities
- CSDE's Next Generation of Accountability
  - Alignment of District and School Goals
  - Internal System of Accountability
    - District Data Team
    - Central Office as Leader and Supporter of School-Level Teams
  - Use of PowerSchool to Monitor
    - Accurate Data
    - Ongoing Training and Support Secretarial Staff and Faculty

## The Connecticut Next Generation ACCOUNTABILITY SYSTEM



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

In Connecticut, we believe all students have the ability to learn, grow and rise to the challenge of high expectations. The Connecticut Next Generation Accountability System helps us deliver on our promise of a high quality education for all by creating a more comprehensive, holistic picture of how our students and schools are performing.

**Q:** What is the Connecticut Next Generation Accountability System?

**A:** Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System is a broad set of 12 indicators that help tell the story of how well a school is preparing its students for success in college, careers and life. The new system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of district and school performance and incorporates student growth over time.

**Q:** What has changed since the previous accountability system?

**A:** There are two main differences with the new accountability system. First, in addition to measuring academic achievement, the new system also focuses on student growth over time. Measuring growth provides a more accurate picture than just looking at a snapshot in time of student performance. The second big change is that the new accountability system includes additional key indicators, such as chronic absenteeism, physical fitness and arts access. Research tells us that students who attend school on a daily basis and maintain a healthy lifestyle are more likely to graduate and succeed in college. Access to an engaging arts curriculum creates a more well-rounded educational experience.

**Q:** What are the 12 indicators?

**A:**

1. Academic achievement status measured by state assessments
2. Academic growth
3. Assessment participation rate
4. Chronic absenteeism
5. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – coursework
6. Preparation for postsecondary and career readiness – exams
7. Graduation – on track in ninth grade
8. Graduation – four-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – all students
9. Graduation – six-year adjusted cohort graduation rate – high needs
10. Postsecondary entrance rate – all students (college enrollment)
11. Physical fitness
12. Arts access

**Q:** How do we use the accountability system?

**A:** The Next Generation Accountability System will help us measure school and district success toward the goal of providing every student a quality education that prepares him or her for success down the road. Each school will receive a score calculated using a formula that incorporates the accountability system indicators. There will be a tiered system of resources and supports for

continued on next page

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11. Physical fitness
12. Arts access

# GOING IT ALONE

- Identified chronically absent students
- Initiated letters and calls home, however, we focused on *truancy* which diverted us from “turning the curve” on chronic absenteeism
- Implemented strategies that had proven effective in the past with same result (sporadic success)
- Lack of collective effort and the work fell on the shoulders of a few



# GETTING THERE TOGETHER

- Allocated Alliance Funds to partner with Attendance Works - and continue to do – using a shared model of fiscal responsibility and ownership
- Training and Coaching for all Schools AND Central Office
- Developing a system of supports for school personnel
- Expanding responsibilities and repurposing existing school-based teams, e.g. SRBI, PBIS, etc.
- Preparing a city-wide campaign to support children and their families in their understanding of the important of attendance

# CONTINUING THE WORK

- Ongoing collaboration with Attendance Works to ensure systemic change and sustainability of best practices
- Continue the district's chronic absenteeism downward trend
  - 2011-12 – 25.8%
  - 2015-16 – 17.6%

*We are here as learners. We still have work to do.*  
**Our students and their success are our priority.**



CONNECTICUT STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# ***All Students in School & Engaged!*** **Reducing Chronic Absenteeism**

Kari Sullivan  
Connecticut State Department of Education  
May 18, 2017

# Presentation Focus

- Review: Why Attendance Matters
- Review: Connecticut's Chronic Absence Landscape
- Walk-through of New Guidance Tool with Practical Implementation Ideas





## ABSENTEEISM

is a red alert that students will  
dropout of high school

# Why Attendance Matters

# Absences Add Up!

## Absences Add Up!

Chronic absence is defined as missing 10 percent or more of days of school for any reason, including all absences, excused, unexcused, and disciplinary. Being chronically absent has a significant impact on a student's ability to read at grade level, perform academically, and graduate on time.

**Student Attendance Rate =**

Student's Total Days of Attendance

---

Student's Total Days of Membership\*

*\* Student's Total Days of Membership equals the number of instructional days a student has been enrolled in the current school for the current school year.*



# Why is chronic absence an important issue in Connecticut?

National research documents the following negative impact:

- At every age and every stage, chronic absence erodes the academic and social skills needed to succeed in school.
- Being chronically absent has a significant impact on a student's ability to perform at grade level, do well on standardized tests, and graduate on time.
- Children who are chronically absent in both kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read proficiently by the end of third grade.
- By sixth grade, chronic absence is a key early indicator of dropout from high school.
- By ninth grade, attendance may be a better indicator of dropout than eighth-grade test scores.



# High Rates of Chronic Absence



## DID YOU KNOW?

According to CSDE data, 50,376 students were chronically absent from school during the 2014–15 school year. This is just under 1 out of 10 of all students in Connecticut public schools. Some other facts:

- Chronic absence rates are significantly higher in urban districts.
- Chronic absence rates for students eligible for free meals are *more than three times* that of those who are ineligible for lunch subsidies.
- Chronic absence rates for both Black/African American and Hispanic or Latino students are *more than two times* that of White students.
- English learners and Students with Disabilities\* continue to exhibit substantially higher chronic absenteeism rates when compared with their general education peers.

*\* For the purposes of reporting, CSDE defines students with disabilities as any student receiving special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This subgroup does not include students receiving services under Section 504.*

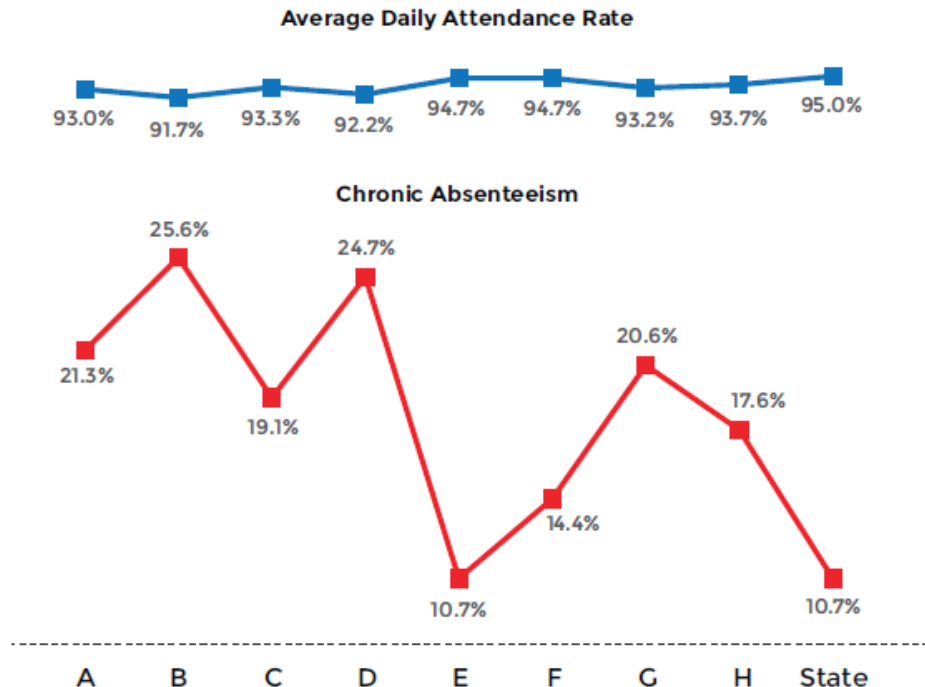
[www.ct.gov/sde/edsight](http://www.ct.gov/sde/edsight)





# Average Daily Attendance vs. Chronic Absence

2013-14 Attendance Rate and Chronic Absenteeism  
(Eight Alliance Districts with Network Schools)



# Chronic Absence vs. Truancy

## TRUANCY

Counts only unexcused absences.  
Emphasizes compliance with school rules.  
Relies on legal and administrative solutions.

VS.

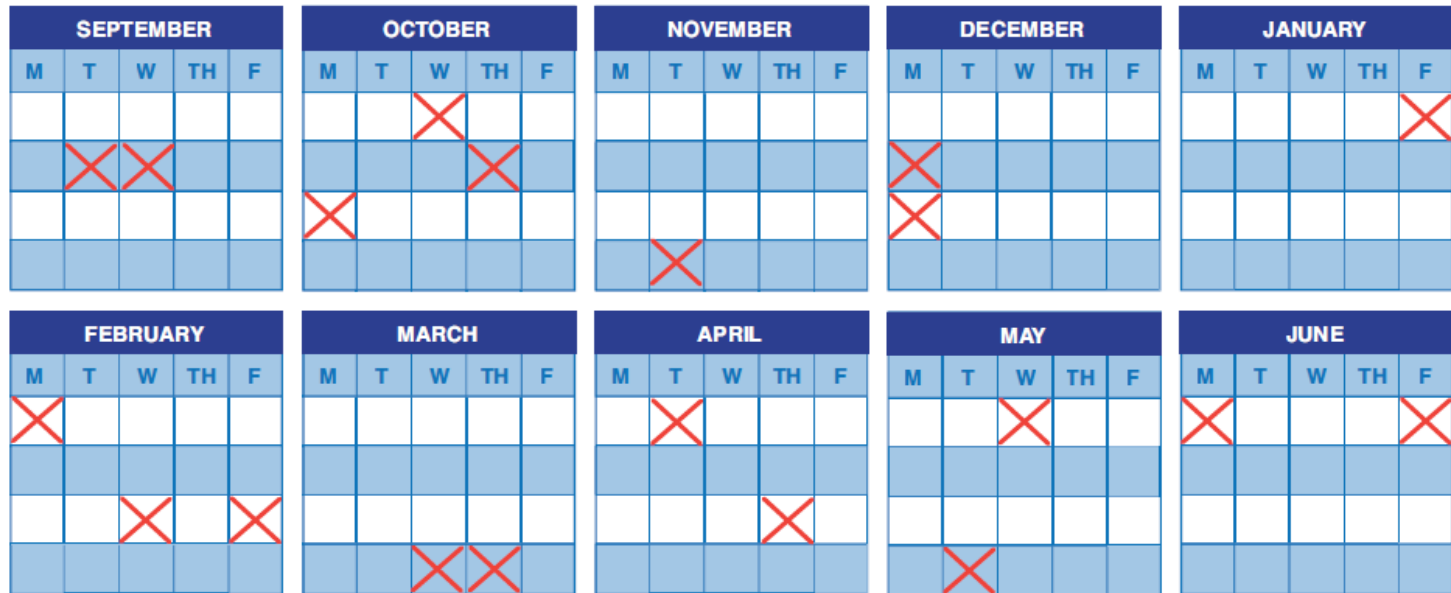
## CHRONIC ABSENCE

Counts all absences: excused,  
unexcused, and suspensions.  
Emphasizes academic impact of missed days.  
Uses community-based, positive strategies.



# Two Days Month is Too Many

## Why We May Not Notice Chronic Absence



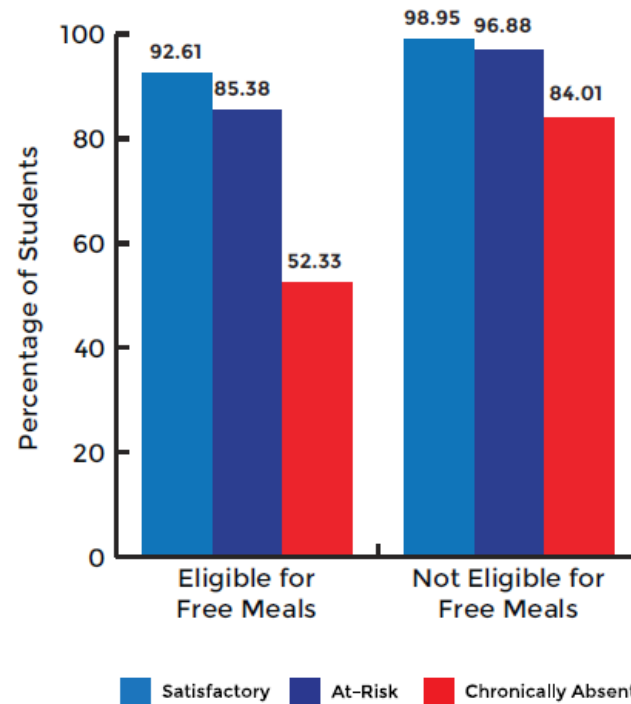
### Absences Add up

Chronic Absence = 18 days of absence = 2 days a month



# Impact of 9<sup>th</sup> Grade Attendance on Four-Year Graduation Rates

Impact of Ninth-Grade Attendance on Four-Year Graduation Rates by Economic Status (Free Meal Eligibility) 2014-15 Cohort



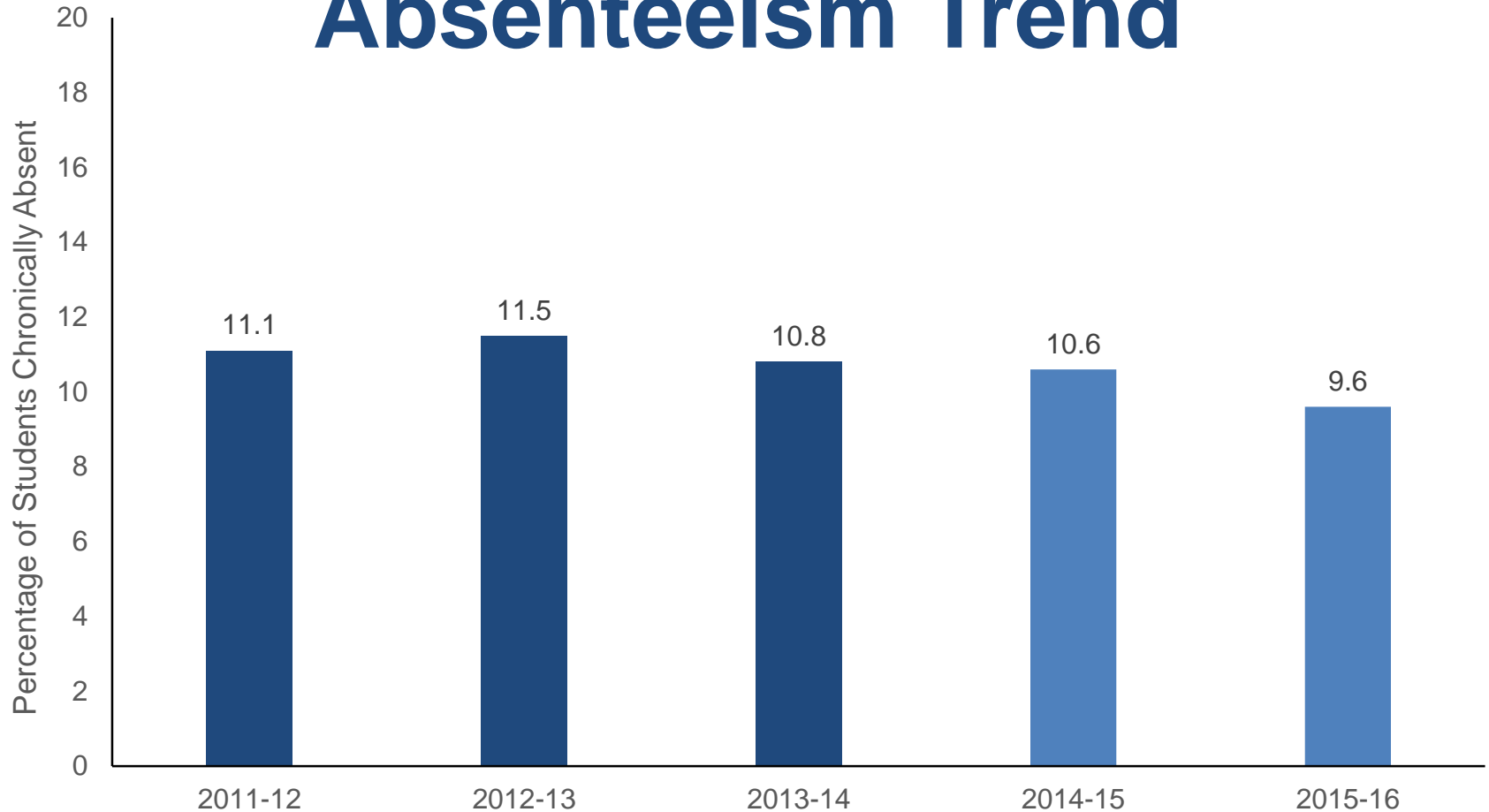
Source: Connecticut State Department of Education,  
Performance Office, 2014



# Connecticut's Chronic Absence Landscape

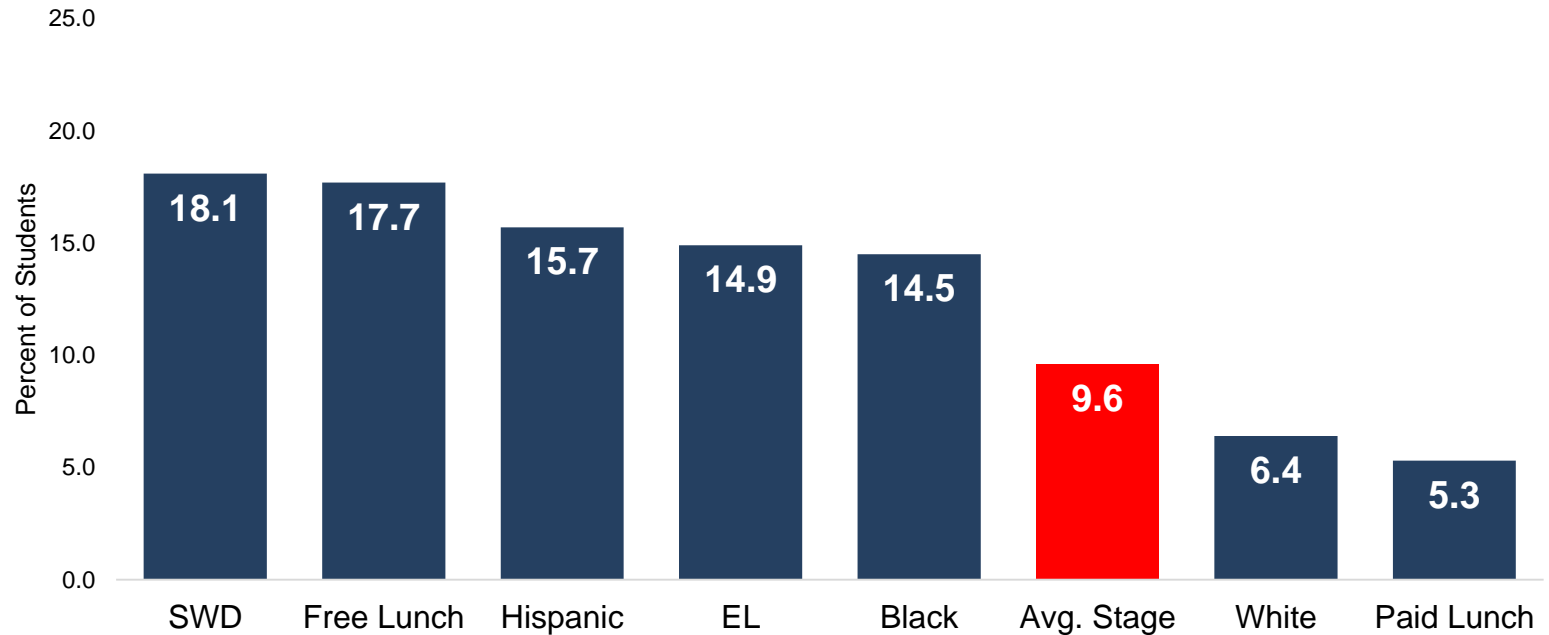


# Statewide Chronic Absenteeism Trend

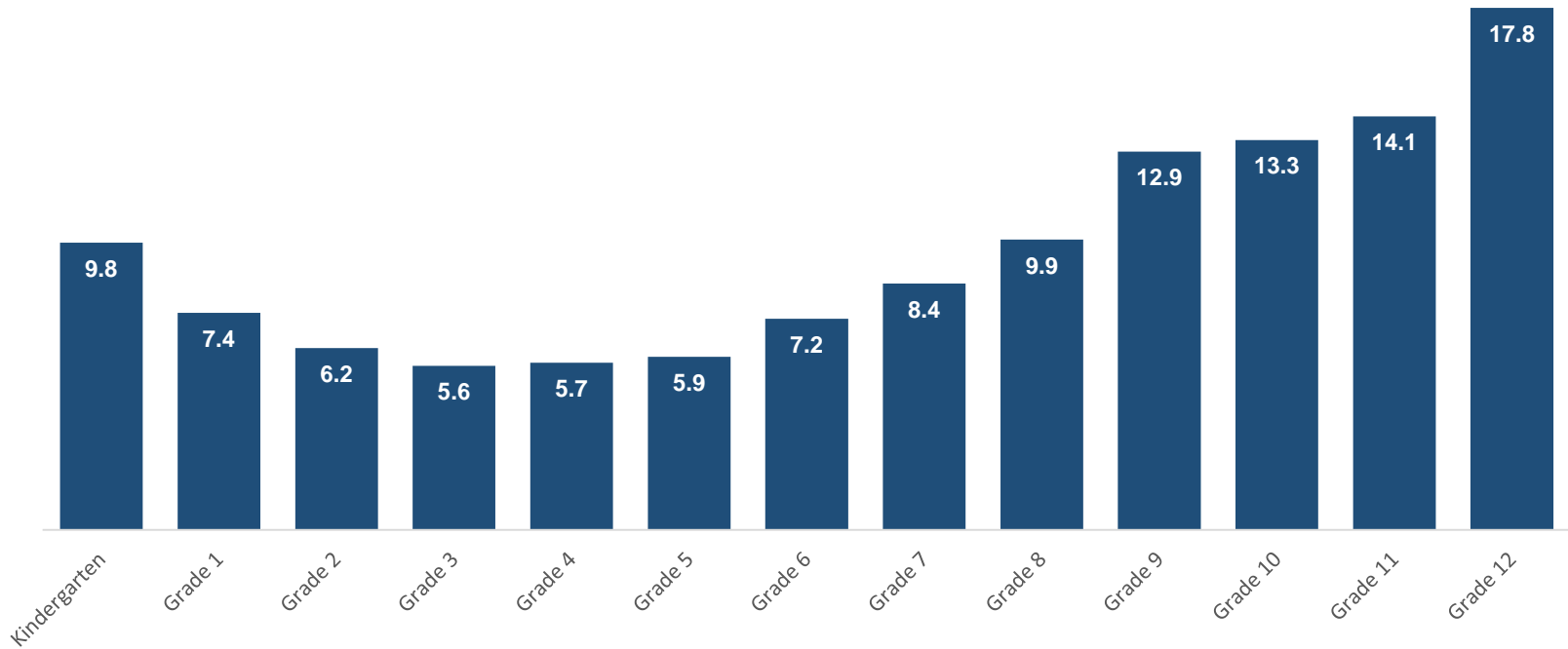


# Who is Chronically Absent?

Snapshot  
Percent Chronically Absent, 2015-16



# Chronic Absence by Grade Level 2015-16





### Connecticut Education at a Glance

- Home
- Related Links**
- +/- Condition of Education
  - Data Dictionary
  - Data Suppression Guidelines
  - Related Links Crosswalk
- Instructional Videos**
- Intro to EdSight

<p><b>NEW THIS MONTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Course Enrollments by Subject Report</li> <li>Attendance Report - High Needs Subgroup Added</li> <li>2017 Discipline Board Presentation</li> </ul>	<p><b>OVERVIEW</b></p> <p><b>206</b> Districts</p> <p><b>1,441</b> Public Schools/Programs</p>	<p><b>STUDENTS</b></p> <p><b>538,893</b> Total Enrollment</p> <p><b>9.6%</b> Chronic Absenteeism Rate*</p>
<p><b>EDUCATORS</b></p> <p><b>52,641.1</b> Certified Staff FTE</p> <p><b>8.3%</b> Minority Certified Staff</p>	<p><b>INSTRUCTION</b></p> <p><b>76.0%</b> Schools Offering AP Courses</p> <p><b>85.1%</b> Students On-Track to Graduation*</p>	<p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <p><b>73.1</b> State Accountability Index*</p> <p><b>87.4%</b> Four-year Cohort Graduation Rate*</p>

2015-16 Next Generation Accountability Results

2015-16 Profile and Performance Reports

\*Metric from Next Generation Accountability

Need Help? CONTACT US

JOIN OUR LISTSERV





# Why are students chronically absent?

# Reasons Students are Chronically Absent

Myths	Barriers	Aversion	Disengagement
Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused	Chronic disease (asthma) or lack of health/dental care	Academic or social struggles	Lack of engaging and relevant instruction
Okay to miss a day here or there	Caring for siblings or other family members	Being teased or bullied	Peer pressure to be with peers out of school vs. in school
Attendance only matters in the later grades	Unmet basic needs: transportation, housing, food, clothing, etc.	Poor school climate or unsafe school	No meaningful relations with adults in school
PK and K are seen as daycare, not learning	Trauma	Parents had negative school experience	High suspension rates and disproportionate school discipline
	Feeling unsafe getting to school		

(Attendance Works, 2014)





Students are more likely to go to school  
**if they know someone cares**  
whether they show up

# Walk-through of New Guidance Tool with Practical Implementation Ideas



**Reducing Chronic Absence  
in Connecticut's Schools:  
A Prevention and Intervention  
Guide for Schools and Districts**

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Why are students chronically absent?	>
Why is chronic absence an important issue for Connecticut?	>
How do we know if chronic absence is affecting learning in our district?	>
What can a district do to improve attendance?	>
What can schools do to improve attendance?	>
Who else can be involved with reducing chronic absence?	>
Resources	>
References	>
Printable version [PDF]	>

# Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut's Schools:

## A Prevention and Intervention Guide for Schools and Districts

April 2017

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



# WEBINAR:

## Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut's Schools

**Are you working to improve student attendance?**

**Are your school and district attendance teams functioning effectively with positive results?**

**Are you seeking information regarding best practices in Connecticut schools and districts?**

Join the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) in a walk-through presentation of its new resource tool: *Reducing Chronic Absence in Connecticut Schools, A Prevention and Intervention Guide for Schools and Districts*.

Section 10-198c(b)(1) and (2) of Connecticut General Statutes requires districts and schools that have high levels of chronic absence to form district and school attendance review teams. While this learning opportunity is open to all, attendance teams are encouraged to participate as a team to maximize learning and team planning.

The webinar will feature Charlene Russell-Tucker, CSDE Chief Operating Officer; Marquelle Middleton, CSDE Associate Education Consultant; and Kari Sullivan, CSDE Education Consultant.

Presented by  
the Connecticut  
State Department  
of Education



**Wednesday,  
May 31, 2017  
2:00–3:30 p.m.**

**REGISTER NOW!**

Visit <https://ctsdeevents.webex.com/ctsdeevents/onstage/g.php?MTID=e4061081651b337368cf47a093aa32aae>

Please be aware that this CSDE webinar session will be recorded and posted for future reference.

**For questions or more information, please contact Kari Sullivan at [kari.sullivan@ct.gov](mailto:kari.sullivan@ct.gov) or 860-807-2041.**

*The Connecticut State Department  
of Education is an Affirmative Action/  
Equal Opportunity Employer.*

# MORE QUESTIONS? CONTACT US

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June PSIS Collection:**

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