



New York State Comptroller
THOMAS P. DiNAPOLI

Missing School

New York's Stubbornly High Rates of
Chronic Absenteeism

October 2024

Message from the Comptroller

October 2024

The classroom disruptions caused by the pandemic have had a lingering negative impact on New York's students. As schools transitioned back to in-person instruction, chronic absenteeism rates increased sharply and have remained high, especially among vulnerable student populations and in the State's high needs schools. In the 2022-2023 school year, nearly one in three students in the State were chronically absent.



Students need to be in attendance to succeed in school. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to a host of negative educational outcomes including lower grades, lower standardized test scores, and increased risk of dropout. Students who chronically miss instructional time may fall behind, which can impact future learning. Absent students are also not able to access other services provided by schools including health and nutritional programs, or specialized educational programs for English language learners and students with disabilities.

Reaching chronically absent students and their families is not always easy. Parents and caretakers may not always be aware that students are at risk of being chronically absent, and after the pandemic period of remote and hybrid instruction, perceptions of required attendance may have shifted. Attendance suffers when families and caretakers struggle with the routine of school, and many issues such as lack of reliable transportation, working long or irregular hours with little flexibility, and health issues can contribute to the problem.

Reducing chronic absenteeism will be essential for turning around pandemic-era learning loss. Engaging students, families and communities is critical, and while the issue is widespread, it must be addressed one student at a time.

Thomas P. DiNapoli
State Comptroller

Executive Summary

Chronic absenteeism is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as the share of students who miss at least 10 percent of days (typically 18) in a school year. Chronic absenteeism increased during the pandemic and peaked in the 2021-2022 school year. In the 2022-2023 school year, the most recent for which data are available, approximately 1 in 3 New York students were chronically absent from school.

The chronic absenteeism rates were higher for high school students—34.1 percent, 7.6 percentage points higher than elementary and middle schools. A deep dive into the data for high school students in the 2022-2023 indicates:

- Large City (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Yonkers) and Charter Schools had the highest chronic absenteeism rates: 64.2 percent and 52.1 percent, respectively. High schools in these designations also had the greatest increase in chronic absenteeism between 2018-2019 and 2022-2023. New York City schools had a 43.1 percent chronic absenteeism rate in the 2022-2023 school year, an increase of 9.3 points.
- Chronic absenteeism rates are higher in high-need school districts than in low-need districts. High need rural districts had a chronic absenteeism rate of 33 percent, a 10.1 percentage point increase from 2018-2019, and high need urban-suburban districts had a rate of 40.9 percent, an 8.6 point increase from 2018-2019. Low-need districts had a chronic absenteeism rate of 13.4 percent.
- There are racial disparities in chronic absenteeism rates. Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (21.3 percent) and White (24.7 percent) high school students have much lower chronic absenteeism rates than Hispanic or Latino students (43.7 percent) and Black or African American students (46.4 percent).
- Rates are also higher among Economically Disadvantaged students, English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities. In the Large City high schools, the 2022-2023 absenteeism rate for Students with Disabilities was an alarming 71.2 percent.

Reduction of chronic absenteeism has been a point of emphasis at federal, State, and local levels. The New York State Education Department has created the Every Student Present initiative as a public awareness campaign to help parents, school staff and communities understand the impact of chronic absence. The State Education Department should commit to continuing to report chronic absenteeism for schools and school districts as it currently does, to allow parents, policy makers, and concerned members of the public to understand the issue and track the State's and district's progress towards reducing chronic absenteeism rates.

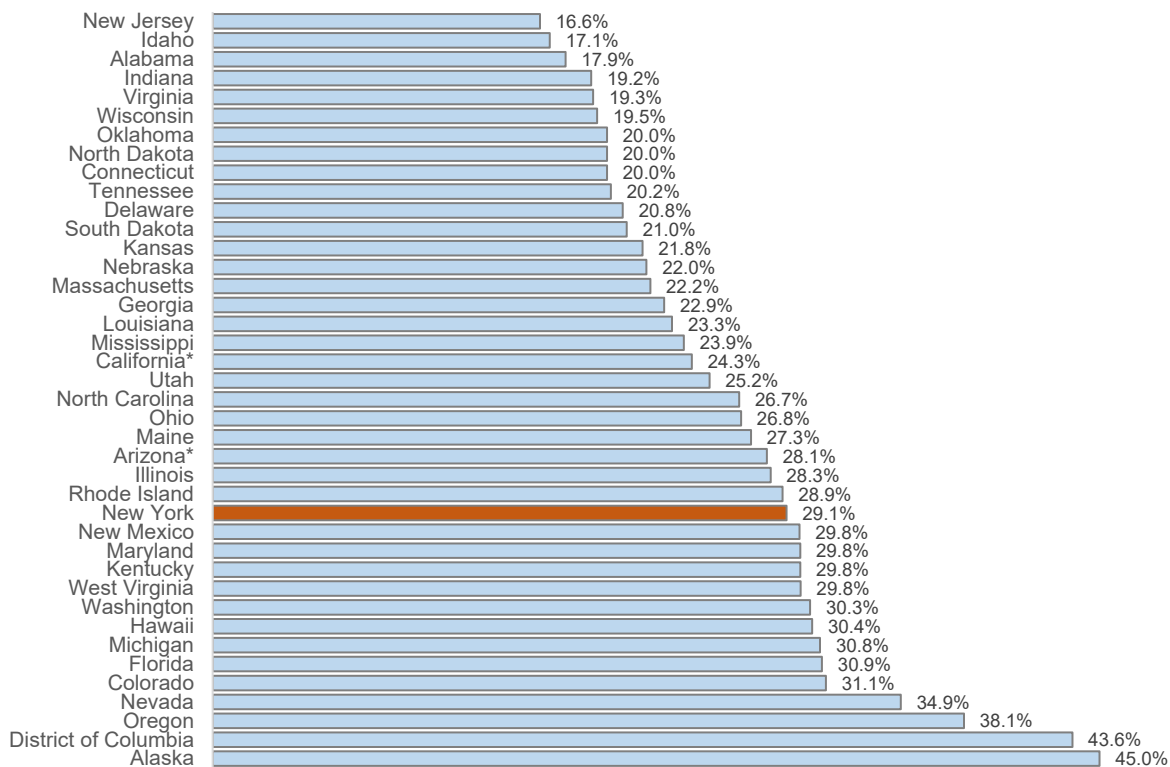
1 in 3 Students Chronically Absent

Good student attendance is integral to academic achievement; students who fail to report to school regularly will typically fail to make adequate academic progress. Chronic absenteeism has been linked to a number of negative outcomes, including lower student performance, social disengagement, and feelings of alienation.¹ By the sixth grade, chronic absenteeism is among the top predictors of grade point average and of dropout.²

Chronic absenteeism is defined by the U.S. Department of Education as the share of students who miss at least 10 percent of days (typically 18) in a school year for any reason, excused, unexcused, or for disciplinary reasons.³ New York State excludes suspensions and extended medical absences from the State's chronic absenteeism calculation, and reports chronic absenteeism rates for high schools and elementary and middle schools annually in the New York State Education Department (NYSED) Report Card database, and on its [data dashboard](#) as a reporting requirement of the federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).

Based on this reporting, almost 1 in 3 students were chronically absent from New York's schools in the 2022-2023 school year. As Figure 1 below shows, of the 39 states and Washington D.C. that report chronic absenteeism rates, New York ranks 27th.⁴ Alaska had the highest rate at 45 percent, while neighboring New Jersey had the lowest rate at 16.6 percent.

Figure 1
Chronic Absenteeism in States that Report Rates, 2022-2023 School Year



Note: All are K-12 rates, except California and Arizona, which only report chronic absenteeism rates for K-8. New York's rate for all students was calculated by using figures reported by NYSED.

Sources: NYSED and other states' education departments

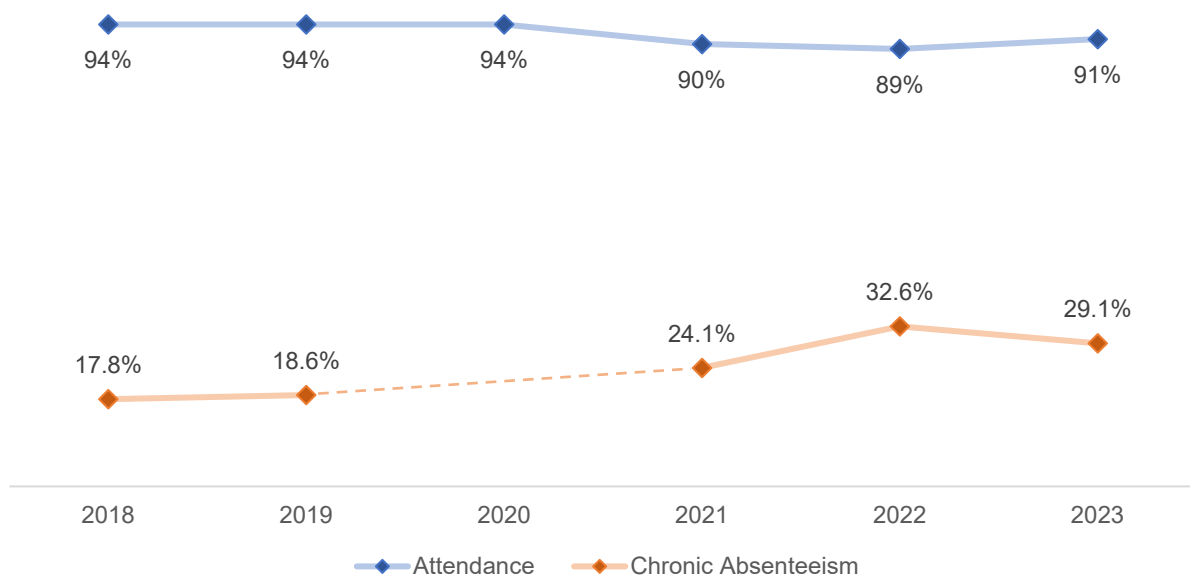
The Pandemic's Impact

Chronic absenteeism differs from the average daily attendance rate, which is the percentage of students, on average, that attend school each day. As shown in Figure 2, daily attendance rates were 94 percent in the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years; approximately 18 percent of students were chronically absent during those years.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced many changes to New Yorkers' day-to-day lives. New York's schools were forced to shift quickly to remote formats, and through the 2020-21 school year, districts continued to utilize a mixture of remote, in-person, and hybrid formats: 61 percent of students were fully remote, 38 percent were in-person, and one percent were hybrid. As parents, students and school personnel contended with the effects of the virus and its impact on learning, chronic absenteeism increased to 24.1 percent in 2020-2021. When fully in-person instruction returned in the 2021-22 school year, chronic absenteeism spiked further with 32.6 percent of students chronically absent—an increase of fully 14 percentage points from 2018-2019.⁵

While the public health emergency remained in effect, many school districts implemented restrictions preventing students who tested positive for COVID-19 from returning to school for a period of time; given the prevalence of the virus, these restrictions likely had a significant bearing on the increase of chronic absenteeism rates. Rates improved in 2022-2023, but remained significantly above pre-pandemic rates. Daily attendance rates decreased during the pandemic, hovering around 90 percent.

Figure 2
New York State All Public Schools Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism Rates, 2017-2018 – 2022-2023 School Years

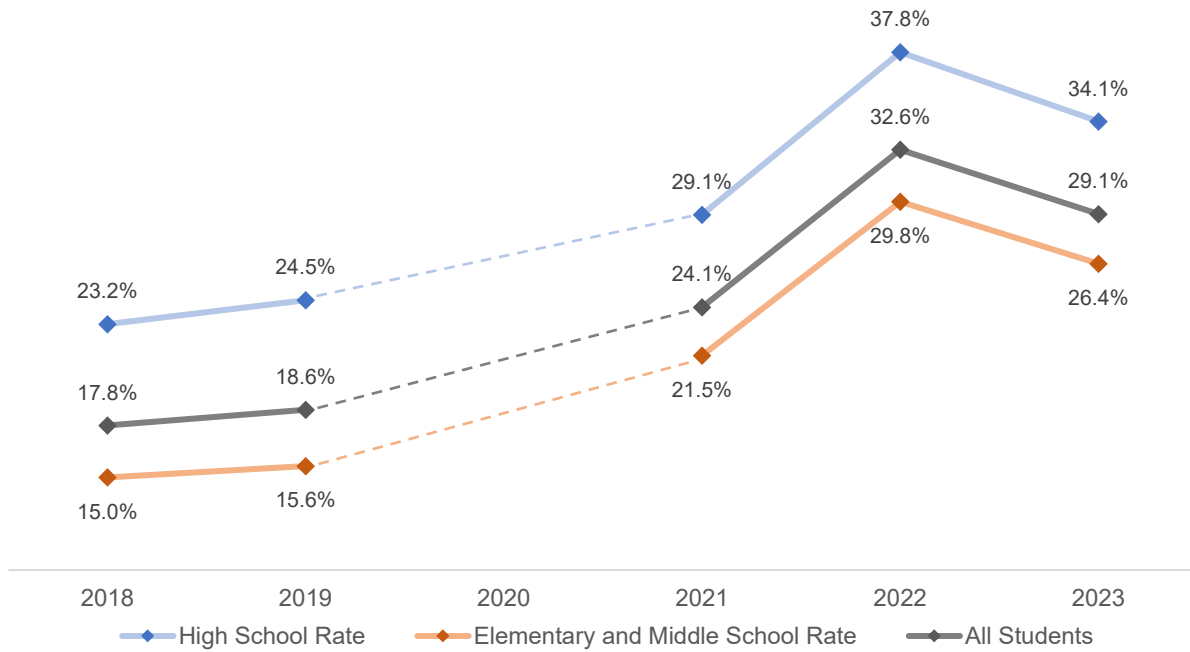


Note: Due to COVID-19, no data were reported for the 2019-2020 school year. The chronic absenteeism rate for all students was calculated using figures reported by NYSED.

Source: NYSED

Chronic absenteeism rates among high schools are also consistently higher than elementary and middle schools. Even prior to the pandemic, nearly 1 in 6 elementary middle school students, and 1 in 4 high school students were missing more than 18 days of a school year. In the 2022-2023 school year, the chronic absenteeism rate in the State’s high schools was 34.1 percent, 7.6 percentage points higher than elementary and middle schools.

Figure 3
New York State Chronic Absenteeism Rates for High Schools and Elementary and Middle Schools, 2017-2018 – 2022-2023 School Years



Note: Due to COVID-19, no data were reported for the 2019-2020 school year. The rate for all students was calculated using figures reported by NYSED.

Source: NYSED

Chronic Absenteeism in High Schools

Because the issue of chronic absenteeism is more severe among high school students, this analysis focuses on those students. NYSED categorizes schools based on a need/resource capacity, “a measure of a district’s ability to meet the needs of its students with local resources.”⁶ These categories are listed in Figure 4.⁷ A majority of New York’s public high school students (52.2 percent) are in high needs districts. New York City high schools have the greatest share of total enrollment (35 percent), followed by Average Need (28.5 percent) districts.

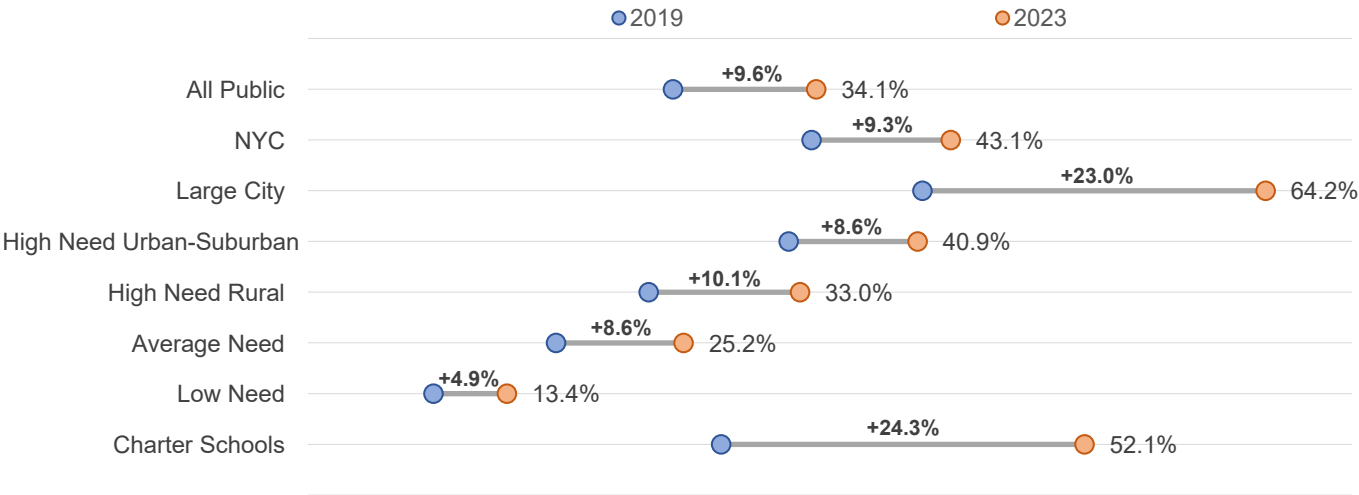
Figure 4
High School Enrollment by Need/Resource Capacity Category, 2022-2023 School Year

Need/Resource Category	Enrollment	Percentage
All Public	805,669	100.0%
High Needs/Resource Capacity	420,681	52.2%
New York City	281,717	35.0%
Large City (Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, Yonkers)	30,152	3.7%
Urban-Suburban	65,873	8.2%
Rural	42,939	5.3%
Average Need/Resource Capacity	229,588	28.5%
Low Need/Resource Capacity	119,194	14.8%
Charter Schools	36,206	4.5%

Source: NYSED

Large City and Charter Schools made up 8.2 percent of high school enrollment, but had chronic absenteeism rates that are much higher than other districts: 64.2 percent and 52.1 percent, respectively. High schools in these designations also had the greatest increase in chronic absenteeism between the 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 school years.

Figure 5
Change in High School Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Needs Category, 2019-2023



Source: NYSED

High School chronic absenteeism rates in the 2022-2023 school year were lowest in low needs districts (13.4 percent). These districts also saw the smallest increase in chronic absenteeism rates from 2018-2019 (4.9 percent). As the needs category of school districts increases, so do the chronic absenteeism rates. In 2022-2023, average need districts had a chronic absenteeism rate of 25.2 percent, an 8.6 point increase from 2018-2019. High need rural districts had a chronic absenteeism rate of 33 percent, a 10.1 point increase from 2018-2019, and high need urban-suburban districts had a rate of 40.9 percent, an 8.6 point increase from 2018-2019. New York City schools had a 43.1 percent chronic absenteeism rate in 2023 and experienced an increase of 9.6 points from 2018-2019.

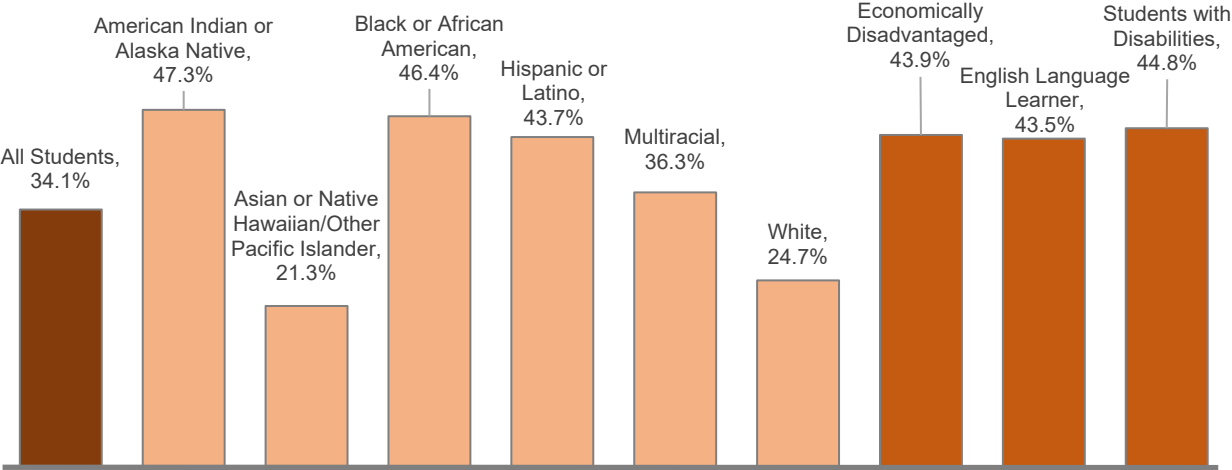
New York State High School Rates by Student Subgroups

Chronic absenteeism rates vary significantly between student subgroups. NYSED reports chronic absenteeism rates by race and ethnicity, as well as for students that are Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners and with Disabilities.

The 2022-2023 data indicate deep disparities. Statewide, Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander (21.3 percent) and White (24.7 percent) high school students have much lower chronic absenteeism rates than others. Hispanic or Latino students (43.7 percent) had a chronic absenteeism rate 9.6 percent higher than the rate for all high school students. Black or African American students (46.4 percent) had a rate that is 12.3 percentage points higher, and American Indian or Alaskan Native students (47.3 percent) had a rate that is 13.2 percentage points higher.

Economically Disadvantaged students (43.9 percent), English Language Learners (43.5 percent) and Students with Disabilities (44.8 percent) also had higher chronic absenteeism rates than the rate for all students in public high schools (34.1 percent) in 2022-2023. NYSED defines economically disadvantaged students as those who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs.⁸

Figure 6
All Public High Schools Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Subgroups, 2022-2023 School Year



Source: NYSED

New York State High School Rates, Subgroups by Setting

Students with disabilities have among the highest chronic absenteeism rates across nearly all categories of schools. In the Large City school districts, the 2022-2023 rate for these students was an alarming 71.2 percent. This may continue to limit the ability to receive needed services, and further contribute to chronic absenteeism for these students.

Figure 7
High School Subgroup Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Needs Category,
2022-2023 School Year

	All Public	NYC	Large City	High Need Urban-Suburban	High Need Rural	Average Need	Low Need	Charter Schools
All Students	34.1%	43.1%	64.2%	40.9%	33.0%	25.2%	13.4%	52.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native*	47.3%	43.3%	53.2%	-	46.9%	-	-	-
Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander*	21.3%	23.4%	50.7%	32.3%	-	15.0%	8.2%	-
Black or African American	46.4%	49.7%	67.1%	41.9%	30.4%	26.3%	10.1%	51.3%
Hispanic or Latino	43.7%	50.2%	67.8%	39.2%	38.2%	29.0%	18.1%	52.3%
Multiracial*	36.3%	38.6%	65.2%	47.9%	17.8%	22.4%	9.9%	-
White	24.7%	35.7%	55.1%	41.1%	30.5%	23.4%	13.2%	25.1%
Economically Disadvantaged	43.9%	46.3%	67.8%	45.1%	41.9%	35.4%	21.1%	53.6%
English Language Learner	43.5%	45.8%	63.8%	41.4%	35.7%	31.5%	19.0%	38.0%
Students with Disabilities	44.8%	55.3%	71.2%	47.0%	36.4%	32.9%	20.3%	57.2%

Note: An (*) indicates not enough reported data to calculate chronic absenteeism rates for some settings.

Source: NYSED

For other students, however, chronic absenteeism rates can vary significantly depending on the need and resource capacity of the school they attend. Economically disadvantaged students who attend low need high schools have a chronic absenteeism rate (21.1 percent) that is three times lower than economically disadvantaged students who attend high school in Large City districts (67.8 percent).

Black or African American high school students statewide had a chronic absenteeism rate 12.3 percentage points higher than the rate for all high school students. In some settings (high need rural, low need and charter schools), however, Black or African American students have lower chronic absenteeism rates than for all students. Additionally, the 2022-2023 rate for Black and African American students in low need high schools (10.1 percent) is lower than white students who go to those same schools (13.2 percent) and 36.3 percentage points lower than the overall rate statewide of Black or African American students (46.4 percent).

Policy Efforts

In March 2024, U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel A. Cardona wrote a letter to the chief state school officers that summarized the challenge of dealing with chronic absenteeism: “Though chronic absence derives from multiple, often interconnected factors, research points to student disengagement, lack of access to student and family supports, and student and family health challenges as significant drivers.”⁹

One of the biggest challenges to addressing chronic absenteeism may be shifting the perceptions of caretakers and parents regarding the importance of school attendance. Policies and practices in place during the pandemic may have made parents more reluctant than in the pre-pandemic period to send children who complain about being ill to school. Some research has found that nationwide, caretakers underestimate their children’s absences, and that less than half of caretakers with children at risk of being chronically absent report being concerned about it.¹⁰ The pandemic may have fostered a sense of regular attendance at school being optional rather than mandatory.

In addition, households of economically disadvantaged students or students in high needs districts may be facing pressures, including housing insecurity or homelessness, that can affect consistent school attendance.¹¹ For example, data reported by the New York City Independent Budget Office show chronic absenteeism rates of more than 56 percent for high school students in temporary housing and 55 percent in low-income neighborhoods in the 2021-2022 school year, rates that are much greater than for students in permanent housing and other neighborhoods.¹²

Failure to attend school may lead to students falling further behind academically, which may then exacerbate absenteeism and limit the ability make up for historic pandemic-era learning losses.¹³ Research from the Council of Economic Advisors has found that absenteeism can account for up to 27 percent and 45 percent of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test score declines in math and reading, respectively.¹⁴ An Office of the State Comptroller [report in 2023](#) reported on the extent of this learning loss in New York.

Federal Efforts

The Biden Administration has made addressing chronic absenteeism one of the focal points of its Improving Student Achievement Agenda and has asked states to develop evidence-based strategies to combat the problem.¹⁵ The U.S. Department of Education’s Student Engagement and Attendance Center (SEAC) offers assistance to states and schools in designing and implementing strategies to improve student attendance and engagement. Secretary Cardona has also recommended investing remaining American Rescue Plan (ARP) funding in evidence-based strategies for improving regular school attendance.¹⁶

New York, 35 other states and Washington DC include Chronic Absenteeism as a metric for improvement in their Every Student Succeeds Act plans. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was passed in 2015, with the goal of providing disadvantaged students with a fair, equitable and high-quality education. State ESSA plans are approved by the U.S. Department of Education, and include goals, indicators, and other components of a state accountability system

to identify schools that require comprehensive or targeted support and improvement and describe the steps that will be taken to improve those schools. Some ESSA programs can provide additional funding through grants, and the approved state ESSA plans and reporting requirements are designed to ensure compliance and accountability.

States

New York State has included chronic absenteeism as a metric in its ESSA plan since the first plan in 2017, and has been reporting rates at elementary and middle schools and high schools in its Report Card data on the [New York State Education Department \(NYSED\) data dashboard](#). Though the State had initially set the long-term goal of reducing chronic absenteeism rates to no more than 5 percent of students statewide in each accountability subgroup within each school, the 2022-23 and 2023-24 school year plans paused that goal in response to the post-pandemic heightened rates.

For the 2023-24 and 2024-25 school years, New York State will not report schools' performance in reducing chronic absenteeism against their baseline, but will rather assign a chronic absenteeism rate achievement level based on their statewide rank for each subgroup in a school, converted to a chronic absenteeism rate achievement level.¹⁷ NYSED has proposed eliminating the chronic absenteeism metric altogether in the 2025-26 ESSA plan in favor of an attendance index rank metric.¹⁸

NYSED has also created the Every Student Present initiative as a public awareness campaign to help parents, school staff and communities understand the impact of chronic absence. Every Student Present provides a framework to build awareness, engage students and families, use data to inform actions and early interventions and provide supports.

Some suggestions from NYSED that school districts can implement to reduce chronic absenteeism are: expanding school breakfast programs as a means of getting students to school each day and on time, introducing intramural sports before school instead of after, having staff greet and welcome students, make class participation a portion of older students' grades, require regular school day attendance to participate in after school programs, share data between schools and after school programs to identify students at risk of chronic absenteeism and provide supports, engage in frequent and positive communications with parents and caregivers, and recognize good attendance and improvements in attendance, not just perfect attendance.¹⁹

Other states have implemented programs to reduce chronic absenteeism that appear to have achieved results. Connecticut, for instance, has invested \$10 million of COVID-19 relief funding on the Learner Engagement and Attendance Program (LEAP) for home visits at 15 districts to engage families of students who are at risk of chronic absence. Within the first nine months of the program, students in grades pre-kindergarten through 5 had an 8 percentage point increase in attendance. Attendance of students in grades 6-12 over the same time increased by 16 percentage points, putting those grade 6-12 students who were served by the program at similar rates to students who were not served.²⁰

Rhode Island has also instituted a statewide strategy. A key element was publicizing real time attendance data through a Student Attendance Leaderboard that displays the percentage of chronically absent students at every Rhode Island Public School. To achieve this, attendance data needs to be sent to the department where it is processed daily. This effort provides real time data for school administrators and communities, increasing accountability. The plan also includes community partnerships, and engagement with faith leaders, business leaders, and other organizations within the communities in addition to engagement with parents. The result has been a nearly 10 percentage point reduction in chronic absenteeism rates statewide, and a significant narrowing of the gap in chronic absenteeism rates between economically disadvantaged students, and those who are not economically disadvantaged.²¹

Local

Some New York School districts have also taken on their own systematic efforts. The Buffalo City Schools District “Equity for All In All That We Do” 2022-2025 Strategic Plan includes a framework for reducing chronic absenteeism.²² The framework is characterized by overlapping tiers of supports and targeted interventions that start with preventative and proactive systems and supports such as setting expectations, acknowledging improvement and reinforcing positive behavior. Higher tiers of interventions and support are data driven and targeted towards at risk groups of students and individuals. Student outcomes are tracked and assessed regularly, and additional supports are put in place as needed.²³

One example of a supportive intervention is that caretakers of students at risk of chronic absenteeism, once identified, are called to an administrative attendance hearing to eliminate barriers to regular school attendance, provide comprehensive support services and assist families in developing connections with the schools. Along with the intervention, supports like a check in/check out are provided, where students at risk of chronic absenteeism are individually greeted and positively acknowledged by an adult in the morning, and at the end of the day, the same adult meets with the student for a supportive farewell. The district also includes parent contacts and calls home to all students who have been absent two or more days in a month to identify any barriers to attendance and to provide assistance to students and their families. In 2021-2022, high school students in the district had a chronic absenteeism rate of 83.4 percent. By 2022-2023, significant progress was made, with the rate declining to 69.5 percent.

The Syracuse City School District made the reduction of chronic absenteeism the number one priority in its 2022-2023 District Comprehensive Improvement Plan.²⁴ To reduce chronic absenteeism, the district has increased and diversified communication and engagement with families utilizing Family Engagement Facilitators through the Office of Family Engagement. Staffing for Program Aides and Attendance Coordinators has been increased, and training provided to all staff on successful family engagement strategies. Attendance teams are coordinated at the district level, and ARPA funding has been leveraged to provide a wide array of supports to students identified as homeless.²⁵ In 2021-2022, the district had a high school student absenteeism rate of 75.5 percent. In 2023, it had decreased to 57.4 percent.

Conclusion

Reducing chronic absenteeism in New York’s schools is not going to be easy, particularly in the schools where the issue is the most acute. Recent data released by New York City in the [Mayor’s Management Report](#) indicate 34.8 percent of students were chronically absent in City fiscal year 2024, down marginally from 36.2 percent in City fiscal year 2023, indicating the persistence of the problem.

Even so, the scope of the problem and its impacts on learning make the issue too costly to ignore. Secretary Cardona has recommended utilizing remaining pandemic relief funding to reduce chronic absenteeism. As of August 31, 2024, of [\\$14.0 billion in Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief \(ESSER\) aid](#) received, New York had just over \$1 billion of unexpended funding remaining, though these funds may already be earmarked for other purposes.

Additionally, Federal ESSA funding can be used to fund programs to address chronic absenteeism through Title I grants for improving academic achievement for disadvantaged students, Title II grants for in-service training of teachers to recognize and address factors that cause or contribute to chronic absenteeism, and Title IV grants for student support and academic enrichment to specifically address health and safety factors that contribute to chronic absenteeism.²⁶ In 2024, the State will receive nearly \$1.5 billion in total Title I funding for local educational agencies²⁷, though not all those funds might be suitable for this purpose.

One common element shared by chronic absenteeism plans is engaging students’ families outside of the school context in a supportive manner. Some use the strategy of “nudging”, sending mail, text messages or phone calls to make caretakers aware that their student is at risk of chronic absenteeism and intervening beforehand. Some strategies, like Connecticut’s, involve home visits, identification of barriers to attendance and identification of resources to assist in overcoming those barriers. Rhode Island’s plan goes further, including local communities in the solution to chronic absenteeism. Engaging students and families is paramount to addressing chronic absenteeism.

Regardless of strategies employed and future changes to New York’s federal ESSA plan, the State needs to continue to track chronic absenteeism on a school, district, and State level, and report the data publicly as it currently does, to allow parents, policy makers, and concerned members of the public to understand the issue and track the State’s and district’s progress towards reducing absenteeism. It is important that the State continue to be transparent about one of the key factors impacting its ability to overcome pandemic era learning losses.

Appendix

Subgroup High School Enrollment by Need Category, 2022-2023 School Year

	All Public	NYC	Large City	High Need Urban-Suburban	High Need Rural	Average Need	Low Need	Charter Schools
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.7%	1.1%	0.6%	0.3%	1.8%	0.4%	0.2%	1.1%
Asian or Native Hawaiian / Other Pacific Islander	10.2%	17.9%	7.9%	4.2%	0.9%	4.0%	13.3%	2.1%
Black or African American	16.5%	23.0%	41.4%	22.0%	3.3%	7.0%	5.4%	49.2%
Hispanic or Latino	29.9%	42.6%	32.2%	45.8%	8.8%	18.4%	16.1%	42.1%
Multiracial	2.8%	1.9%	3.3%	4.0%	3.2%	3.5%	2.7%	1.2%
White	40.0%	13.5%	14.6%	23.6%	82.0%	66.6%	62.3%	4.4%
Economically Disadvantaged	57.5%	76.1%	83.8%	70.2%	56.0%	42.7%	21.3%	83.3%
English Language Learner	12.2%	19.6%	18.2%	21.8%	1.8%	5.6%	4.4%	8.5%
Students with Disabilities	17.4%	18.9%	21.9%	15.9%	18.2%	16.0%	15.3%	19.7%

Source: NYSED

Large City Chronic Absenteeism Rates, 2022-2023 School Year

2023 - Large City Districts	Buffalo	Rochester	Syracuse	Yonkers
All Students	69.5%	71.8%	57.4%	55.3%
American Indian or Alaska Native*	70.7%	-	65.7%	-
Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	57.7%	47.2%	43.6%	35.7%
Black or African American	72.5%	71.1%	57.6%	57.8%
Hispanic or Latino	79.8%	78.7%	65.2%	58.0%
Multiracial	68.2%	78.3%	61.1%	61.3%
White	59.4%	58.1%	55.1%	45.0%
Economically Disadvantaged	74.2%	74.5%	61.8%	57.4%
English Language Learner	69.5%	71.1%	52.5%	58.6%
Students with Disabilities	77.5%	75.6%	63.5%	62.6%

Endnotes

- ¹ Michael Gottfried, *Chronic Absenteeism and Its Effects on Students' Academic and Socioemotional Outcomes*, Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk (JESPAR), 19(2):53-75 April 2014. DOI:10.1080/10824669.2014.962696
- ² University of Delaware Center for Research in Educational and Social Policy, *Chronic Absenteeism and Its Impact on Achievement*, #P18-002.5, June 2018 at https://www.cresp.udel.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/P18-002.5_final.pdf
- ³ U.S. Department of Education ED Facts Submission System, FS195 Chronic Absenteeism File Specifications v18.0, SY2021-22, at <https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww2.ed.gov%2Fabout%2Finit%2Fed%2Fedfacts%2Feden%2Fnon-xml%2Fs195-18-0.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>
- ⁴ Of the 37 States that include chronic absenteeism in their ESSA plans, 32 either use the U.S. Department of Education definition or an equivalent (e.g. reporting the percentage of students that were present for 90 percent of instructional time). California and Arizona report rates for kindergarten through eighth grade. Missouri created a unique metric that is not comparable to other states, and Montana considers “satisfactory attendance” as a student missing five percent or less of the school year. Florida, Louisiana and Kansas report chronic absenteeism rates, but do not include chronic absenteeism in their ESSA plans.
- ⁵ By the 2021-22 school year 98 percent of the State’s instructional time was in person. New York State Education Department (NYSED), Student and Educator Report 2020-21 and 2021-22 at <https://data.nysed.gov/studenteducator.php?year=2021&state=yes> and <https://data.nysed.gov/studenteducator.php?year=2022&state=yes>
- ⁶ NYSED, ESSA Financial Transparency Data Business Rules, accessed August 12, 2024 at <https://data.nysed.gov/businessrules.php?type=expenditures> The capacity index is calculated by dividing the estimated poverty percentage (a weighted average of the 2006-07 and 2007-08 K-6 free and reduced lunch percentage and children age 5-17 in poverty according to the 2000 Decennial Census) by the Combine Wealth Ratio of the district (calculated as the ratio of district wealth per pupil to the State average wealth per pupil).
- ⁷ High Needs/Resource Capacity Urban Districts are all districts with a need/resource capacity index above the 70th percentile that have at least 100 students per square mile, or enrollment greater than 2,500 and more than 50 students per square mile. High Needs/Resource Capacity Rural Districts are districts at or above the 70th percentile that have fewer than 50 students per square mile or fewer than 100 students per square mile and enrollment of less than 2,500. Average Needs/Resource Capacity districts are between the 20th and 70th percentile on the index. Low Needs/Resource Capacity Districts are all districts below the 20th percentile on the index. Charter Schools are independent schools that are tuition-free public schools that receive money from local, state, and federal funds. See NYSED Need/Resource Capacity Categories at <https://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/accountability/2011-12/NeedResourceCapacityIndex.pdf> and New York State Board of Regents and NYSED Charter School Parent Guide at <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/charter-schools/parents-guide-to-charter-schools-in-nys-10-2021.pdf>
- ⁸ NYSED, Glossary of Terms – Report Cards Data, at <https://data.nysed.gov/glossary.php?report=reportcards>
- ⁹ U.S. Department of Education, “Key Policy Letters Signed by the Education Secretary or Deputy Secretary,” March 22, 2024 at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/240322.html>
- ¹⁰ The Brookings Institute. Parents are not fully aware of, or concerned about, their children’s school attendance, March 26, 2024 at <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/parents-are-not-fully-aware-of-or-concerned-about-their-childrens-school-attendance/>
- ¹¹ Brendan Chen, “How Housing Instability Affects Educational Outcomes,” February 28, 2024, *The Urban Institute’s Housing Matters*, <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/how-housing-instability-affects-educational-outcomes>
- ¹² New York City Independent Budget Office, “Attendance and Chronic Absenteeism: Traditional Public Schools 2021-2022 (Only Districts 1-32),” *Education Indicators*, <https://www.ibo.nyc.ny.us/iboreports/student-attendance-2023.html>
- ¹³ Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, Higher Chronic Absenteeism Threatens Academic Recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, Vol. 121 No. 3, January 9, 2024 at <https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2312249121>

- ¹⁴ The White House, “Fact Sheet: Biden Harris Administration Announces Improving Student Achievement Agenda in 2024,” January 17, 2024 at <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2024/01/17/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-announces-improving-student-achievement-agenda-in-2024/>
- ¹⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁶ Miguel A. Cardona, “Key Policy Letters Signed by the Education Secretary or Deputy Secretary,” March 22, 2024 at <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/secletter/240322.html> and; U.S. Department of Education, Student Engagement and Attendance Technical Assistance Center (SEAC) at <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/program-and-grantee-support-services/student-engagement-and-attendance-technical-assistance-sea-center/>
- ¹⁷ New York State 2023-2024 Approved Every Student Succeeds Act Plan at <https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/essa/nysed-essa-plan-2-yr-model-clean-08102023.pdf>
- ¹⁸ NYSED, 2025-26 Redline Draft of the New York State Consolidated Plan Under ESSA, July 9, 2024 at https://www.nysed.gov/sites/default/files/programs/accountability/reimagine-essa-plan-redline_public-comment.pdf
- ¹⁹ New York State Education Department, “Every Student Present: Reducing Chronic Absence,” at <https://www.everystudentpresent.org/reducing-chronic-absence.htm>
- ²⁰ Center for Connecticut Education Research Collaboration, *An Evaluation of Home Visits for Re-Engaging Students Who Were Chronically Absent in the Era of Covid-19*, December 31, 2022 at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/ccerc/reports/ccerc-exec-summary-leap_final.pdf
- ²¹ Liz Cohen, *Team Sport Rhode Island’s Statewide Strategy for Reducing Chronic Absenteeism*, FutureEd, August 2024 at <https://www.future-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/FutureEd-Report-Team-Sport.pdf>
- ²² Buffalo Public Schools, *Equity for All in All That We Do 2022-2025 Strategic Plan* at https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/3927/BPS/3194770/BPS_Strategic_Plan_2022-2025.pdf
- ²³ Buffalo Public Schools, Office of School Climate at <https://www.buffaloschools.org/o/dept-school-climate/page/school-climate>
- ²⁴ Syracuse City Schools, *2022-23 District Comprehensive Improvement Plan*, at <https://www.syracusecityschools.com/tfiles/folder10718/Syracuse%20City%20School%20District%202022-23%20DCIP.pdf>
- ²⁵ Anthony Q. Davis, Syracuse City Schools District, Building Our Future, Testimony to the Joint Legislative Public Hearing 2023-24 Executive Elementary and Secondary Education Budget, February 8, 2023 at https://www.nysenate.gov/sites/default/files/syracuse_city_school_district_23.pdf
- ²⁶ Phyllis W. Jordan, “Tapping Federal Dollars to Reduce Chronic Absenteeism,” FutureEd, September 7, 2018 at <https://www.future-ed.org/tapping-federal-dollars-to-reduce-chronic-absenteeism/>
- ²⁷ U.S. Department of Education, Fiscal Years 2023-2025 State Tables for the U.S. Department of Education, State Tables By Program, accessed September 11, 2024 at <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/statetables/25stbyprogram.xlsx>

Contact

Office of the New York State Comptroller
110 State Street
Albany, New York 12236

(518) 474-4044

www.osc.state.ny.us

Prepared by the Office of Budget and Policy Analysis

Andrea Miller, Executive Deputy Comptroller
Maria Doulis, Deputy Comptroller
Joshua Simons, Policy Director

