



Coffee Chat on Attendance



Welcome and Warm Up!

- First, introduce yourself in the chat! Please share:
 - Your name
 - The Ward you live in
 - Where your child(ren) go to school



Norms for Virtual Meetings

- ✓ **Stay stationary** - we want to be safe! If you are driving, we will move you to the waiting room.
- ✓ Remain **muted** unless talking
- ✓ Make sure your **name** on Zoom is something the **we can recognize you to let you in**
- ✓ **Complete the exit ticket!**

NORMS FOR TODAY:

- *If you tend to be a talker, push yourself to listen more*
- *If you tend to be quieter and often sit and listen, challenge yourself to speak more*



Why does attendance matter?

Attendance Matters

- Students who attend school regularly have **higher levels of achievement** than students who do not.
- Chronically absent children in kindergarten and 1st grade are much **less likely to read at grade level** by the end of 3rd grade.
- By 6th grade, **chronic absence is a warning sign** for students at risk of dropping out of school.
- By 9th grade, good attendance **can predict graduation rates even better** than 8th grade test scores.



Attendance Inequalities

- Black and American Indian students **are far more likely to be chronically absent** than their peers.
- Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are **more likely to be chronically absent** due to factors outside of their control such as housing instability and transportation.
- Bullying and mental and physical health issues can also **increase attendance issues** for students.





DC's attendance policy

DC Attendance Policy

- **OLD:** Before SY 22-23, students in DC **must attend at least 80% of the school day** in order to be counted present for the day.
- **NEW:** Starting in SY22-23, students in DC must **attend at least 60% of the school day** in order to be counted present for the day.
- This means **students can miss up to 40% of the school day** and still be counted present.
- We may see a **decrease in chronic absenteeism** due to this rule change, but students might still miss the same amount of school as they did under the old rule.
- School leaders hope this rule will **encourage students to attend** school, even if late.



DC Attendance Policy

- Skipping a class or being late to school may result in being **counted absent** for the day.
- Absences are only “excused” if they are on a school’s **list of acceptable reasons** (such as illness, death in the family, medical appointment) to be absent.
- Permission from a parent or guardian is **not enough** to be considered “excused.”
- Absences will only be excused if a valid reason is given to the school in a **reasonable amount** of time.



DC Attendance Policy Consequences

- After five unexcused absences, students are required to **have a meeting with a student support team (SST)** to work on their attendance.
- Under DC law, students between the ages of 5 to 13 with **10 or more unexcused absences in a school year** will be referred to the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA).
- This law also requires that students between the ages of 14 and 17 who have 15 or more unexcused absences be **referred to court for possible legal actions against them** and their parents.





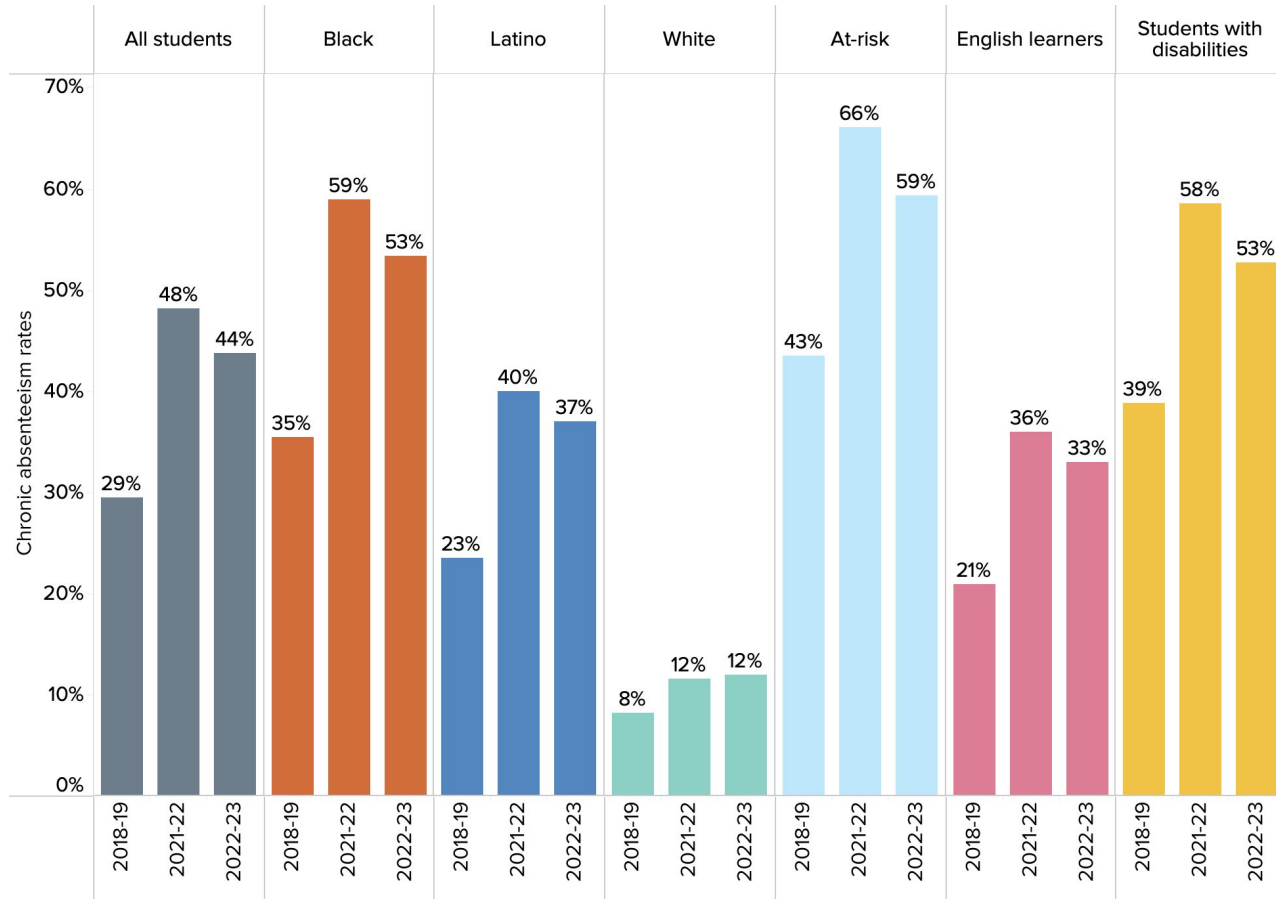
Attendance in DC

Attendance In DC

- In school year 2021-22, attendance declined, as **almost half of students missed 10 percent** or more of the school year.
- Chronic absenteeism, or the **percentage of students missing 10 percent or more of the school year**, rose to 48 percent (up from 29 percent in school year 2018-19). DC School Report Card data show that chronic absenteeism has slightly improved in school year 2022-23 to 44 percent (still 15 percentage points higher than pre-pandemic).
- This uptick was due in part to excused absences related to COVID-19 cases and quarantines, mental health issues, community violence at times, and **other factors related to returning to in-person learning** as families and students were reacclimating to the idea of in-person attendance every day.
- Lower attendance made it **more challenging to reestablish school culture** and **move forward on academic recovery**.
- Chronic absenteeism affects students **abilities to perform academically and increases** their chances of being involved in the justice system.

Attendance In DC by Student Group

Chronic absenteeism rates by student group, 2018-19, 2021-22, and 2022-23 school years

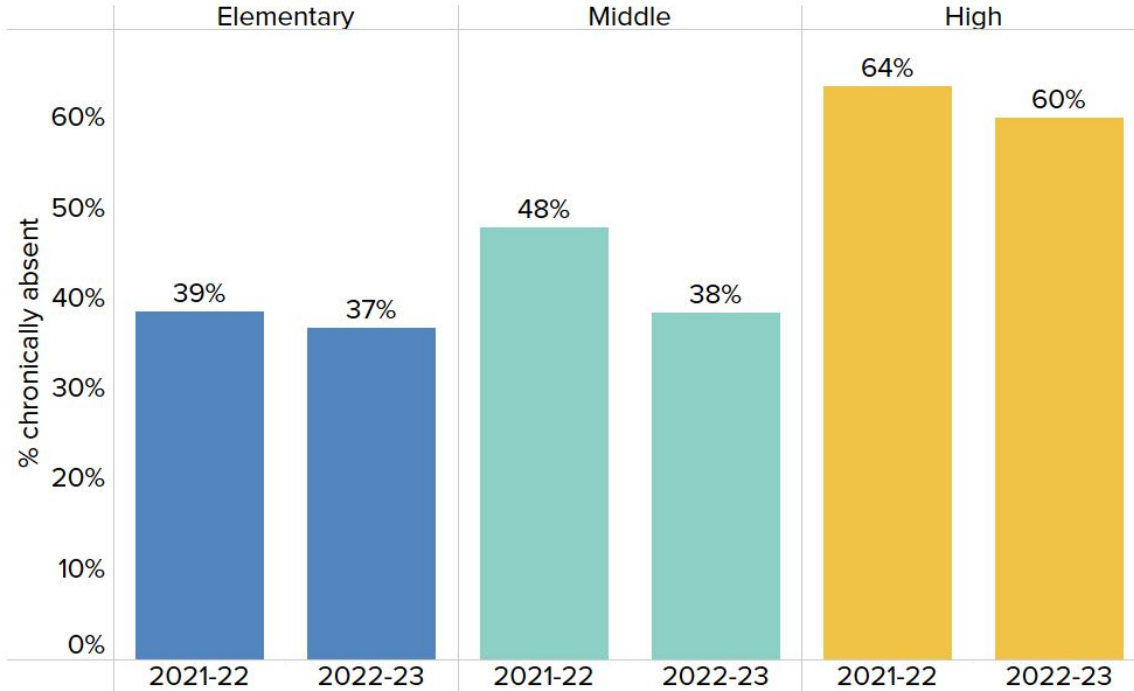


Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), 2023. School Report Card Data. Retrieved from <https://osse.dc.gov/dcschoolreportcard>

Note: For school year 2022-23, the at-risk figure represents students that are economically disadvantaged.

Attendance In DC by Grade

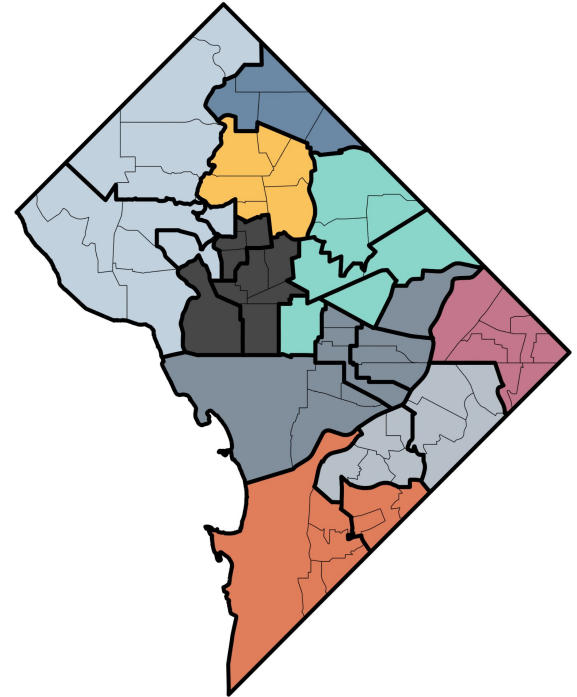
Chronic absenteeism rates in D.C.'s public schools over time, by grade band



Source: Office of the State Superintendent of Education (2023). *DC School Report Card*. Retrieved from <https://schoolreportcard.dc.gov/state/report/explore/102>

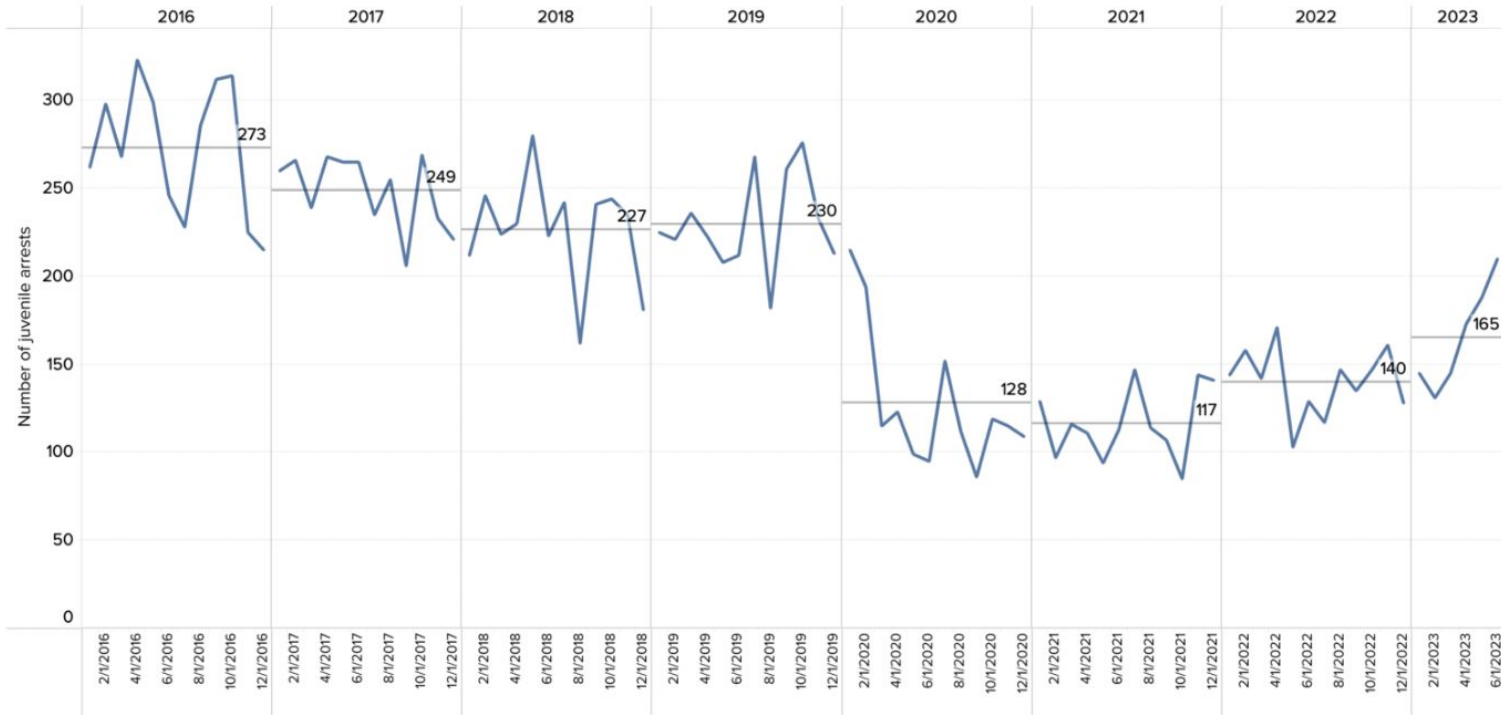
Attendance In DC's High Schools

- High schools in particular **have really struggled with unexcused attendance**, far more than elementary and middle schools.
- For example, **47% of high school students were chronically truant** (10 or more *unexcused* absences) in school year 2022-23. compared to 37% of all students.
- At 4 high schools, more than **80% of students had at least 10 unexcused absences**.
- 9th graders are the most likely to miss the most school, with **31% of 9th graders absent (unexcused and excused) for at least 30%** of school year 2022-23.



Juvenile Justice and Attendance

Number of juvenile arrests in D.C. by month, over time

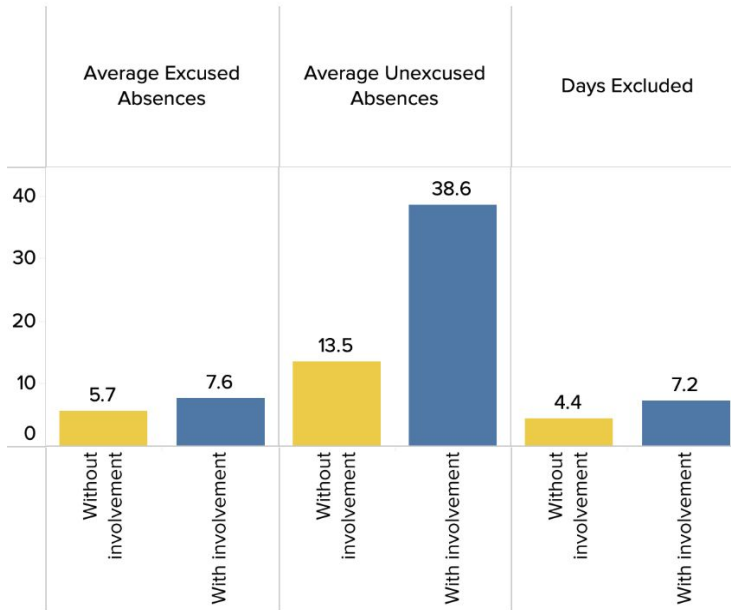


Source: Metropolitan Police Department (MPD). 2023. *Biannual Reports on Juvenile Arrests*. Retrieved from: <https://mpdc.dc.gov/page/biannual-reports-juvenile-arrests>

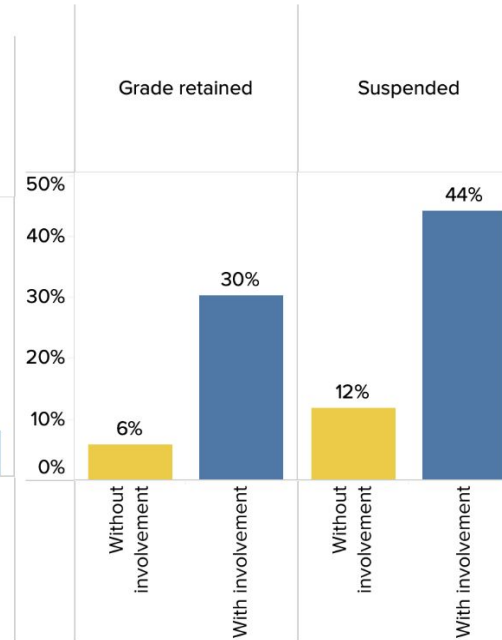
Juvenile Justice and Attendance

Educational experiences of youth with and without juvenile justice system involvement in D.C., school year 2018-19

Days out of school




Percent retained or suspended



Source: Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC). 2022. "A study of factors that affect the likelihood of juvenile justice system involvement." CJCC. Retrieved from <https://cjcc.dc.gov/page/cjcc-research-and-reports-0>





How is DC working to improve attendance?

Improving Attendance

- DC has a citywide initiative called **“Every Day Counts”** that works to increase attendance through a public awareness campaign, a task force coordinating public agencies and stakeholders, and investments in data-driven strategies to increase attendance.
- DC’s Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) **has a program called “Show Up, Stand Out”** to help students with frequent absences attend school.



Improving Attendance

- While mechanisms exist to help improve attendance, **those mechanisms are not always used.**
- Among DCPS schools, there was a compliance rate of **36 percent for making referrals to Court Social services for truancy.**
- **92 percent of truant kids were not served** by the Show Up Stand Out program.
- There was a **57 percent budget cut to truancy reduction** for 23-24.



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
PUBLIC SCHOOLS



Attendance bright spots

DC Bold Schools

- **Bold Schools** are schools that serve mostly certain priority groups of **students** such as economically disadvantaged, students with disabilities, english-language learners, and students of color and outperform schools serving similar groups.
- While not immune to issues with attendance, these schools **had 8 percent lower rates of chronic absenteeism** as similar schools.



Congress Heights
Campus

Center City Public Charter Schools

Character, Excellence, Service

DC Bold Schools

- These schools **focused on improving attendance through family engagement initiatives**, helping to keep families and students informed about community events at the school.
- Some, but not all schools, **also had extended school days** to get more time with students to help fill gaps in attendance.
- These schools **focused on creating a joyful environment** to ensure student wanted to attend school.



Detroit Public Schools

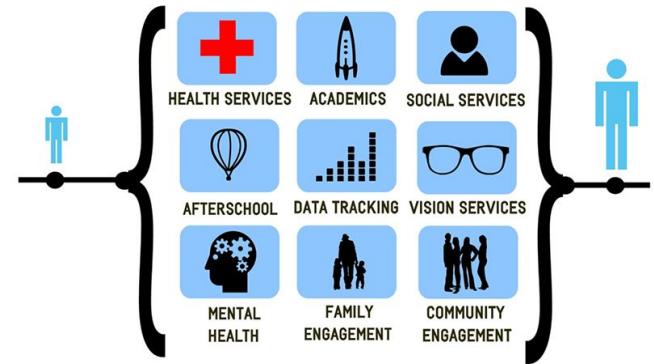
- Detroit Public Schools said many of their issues with attendance stemmed from **student's basic needs not being met.**
- They **improved their attendance** from 77% chronically absent to 68%.
- They have **attendance agents at schools** who are responsible for helping ensure students attend school.
- They have also launched **“Health Hubs” at schools to provide students with basic health needs.**



Community Schools Model

- Community schools are schools that provide students with services and other supports, centering the community around the school.
- Schools may feature health and wellness supports (like doctors, dentists etc.), before and after school programs, and learning opportunities for families.
- Community schools are known to reduce chronic absenteeism.
- For instance, in their first three years of operating, NYC community schools reduced chronic absenteeism by 7.3% in elementary and middle schools and 8.3% in high schools.


new york city
COMMUNITY
schools



Improving Chronic Absence Network

- A network of districts in California **reduced their chronic absenteeism rate from 41 percent to 32 percent** this last year.
- These schools used many strategies including:
 - Sending home “nudge letters” with students
 - Family notifications and attendance meetings
 - Ensuring chronically absent students build relationships with a trusted adult, who nudges them to attend school.





Parent Q&A:
**What questions do you have about
attendance?**



PARENTS AMPLIFYING
VOICES in EDUCATION



Upcoming Events and Opportunities

- Fill out our attendance petition: <https://p2a.co/bqL4Gmx>
- Parents' School Choice Survey Results Panel 12/12 @ 6:30pm SW Library
- Public Hearings:
 - 12/12 - Attendance/Truancy
 - 12/13 - Public Safety & Behavioral Health Services and Support for Youth
- **All Ward Learning Day!**
 - 12/16 - 10:00am - 1:00pm



PICTURE!



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