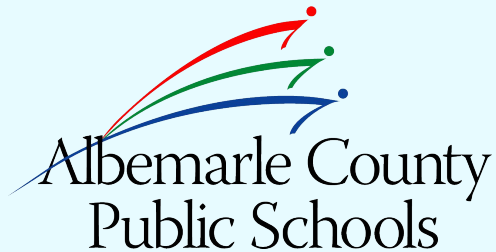




Chronic Absenteeism

“Every Moment Counts, Every Day Matters!”



Agenda

1

Vision & Mission

4

ACPS Plan of Supports

2

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

5

Questions

3

Chronic Absenteeism in ACPS



Strategic Plan: Learning for All

VISION

Our learners are engaged in authentic, challenging, and relevant learning experiences, becoming lifelong contributors and leaders in our dynamic and diverse society.

MISSION

Working together as a team, we will end the predictive value of race, class, gender, and special capacities for our children's success through high-quality teaching and learning for all. We seek to build relationships with families and communities to ensure that every student succeeds.

We will know every student.

VALUES

Equity
Excellence
Family and Community
Wellness

GOALS



Thriving Students



Affirming and Empowering Communities



Equitable, Transformative Resources

“Every Day Matters! Every Moment Counts!
Student, Family, Staff, & Community Relationships Matter!
We will know all stakeholders.
Everybody Matters in ACPS!!!”



What is Chronic Absenteeism?



Chronic Absenteeism as Defined by VDOE:

- ▶ Chronic absenteeism is missing 10% or more of the academic year for any reason, including excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions.
- ▶ Based on a 180-day school year, this is approximately 18 days per year or 2-3 days per month
- ▶ Chronic absenteeism harms all students because the percentage of chronically absent classmates predicts low reading and math achievement for all students.



Reducing chronic absence requires addressing the challenges that keep students from getting to school

Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to tech
- Etc. and many more!

Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or disability accommodations
- Parents had negative educational experiences

Disengagement

- Lack of challenging, culturally responsive instruction
- Bored
- No meaningful relationships to adults in the school (especially given staff shortages)
- Lack of enrichment opportunities
- Lack of academic and behavioral support
- Failure to earn credits
- Drawn to low-wage job vs. being in high school

Misconceptions

- Absences are only a problem if they are unexcused
- Missing 2 days per month doesn't affect learning
- Lose track and underestimate TOTAL absences
- Sporadic absences aren't a problem
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

Rethinking a Deficit Mindset

Access to basic needs:

- Child Care
- Cost of Living
- Employment
- Food Insecurity
- Health Care
- Housing
- Mental Health
- Transportation

IMPACTs



Effects:

- Academic Achievement
- Attendance
- At-Risk Behaviors
- Engagement in School
- Family Involvement
- Social Emotional Well Being



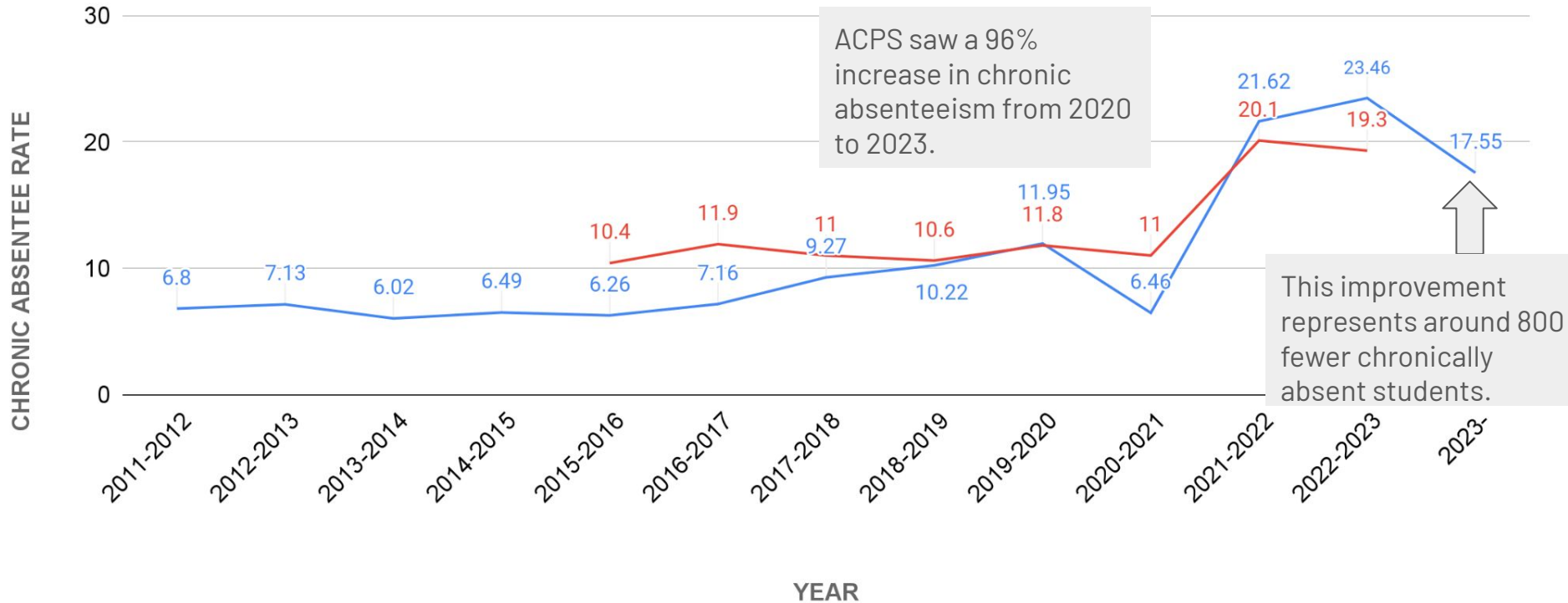
Why Should We Focus on Attendance?

- ▷ **Early warning signs include:** Students need for intensive reading intervention by second grade, not reading on grade level by third grade, failing middle & high school courses, low standardized test scores in 6th grade; increased suspensions; and increased likelihood of dropping out;
- ▷ **Attendance key to achievement:** Exposure to language, time on task, & on-track for success;
- ▷ **Attendance patterns predict college readiness:** Increases likelihood of enrollment & persistence; and
- ▷ **Attendance reflects engagement in learning.**

Chronic Absenteeism: Current State of ACPS

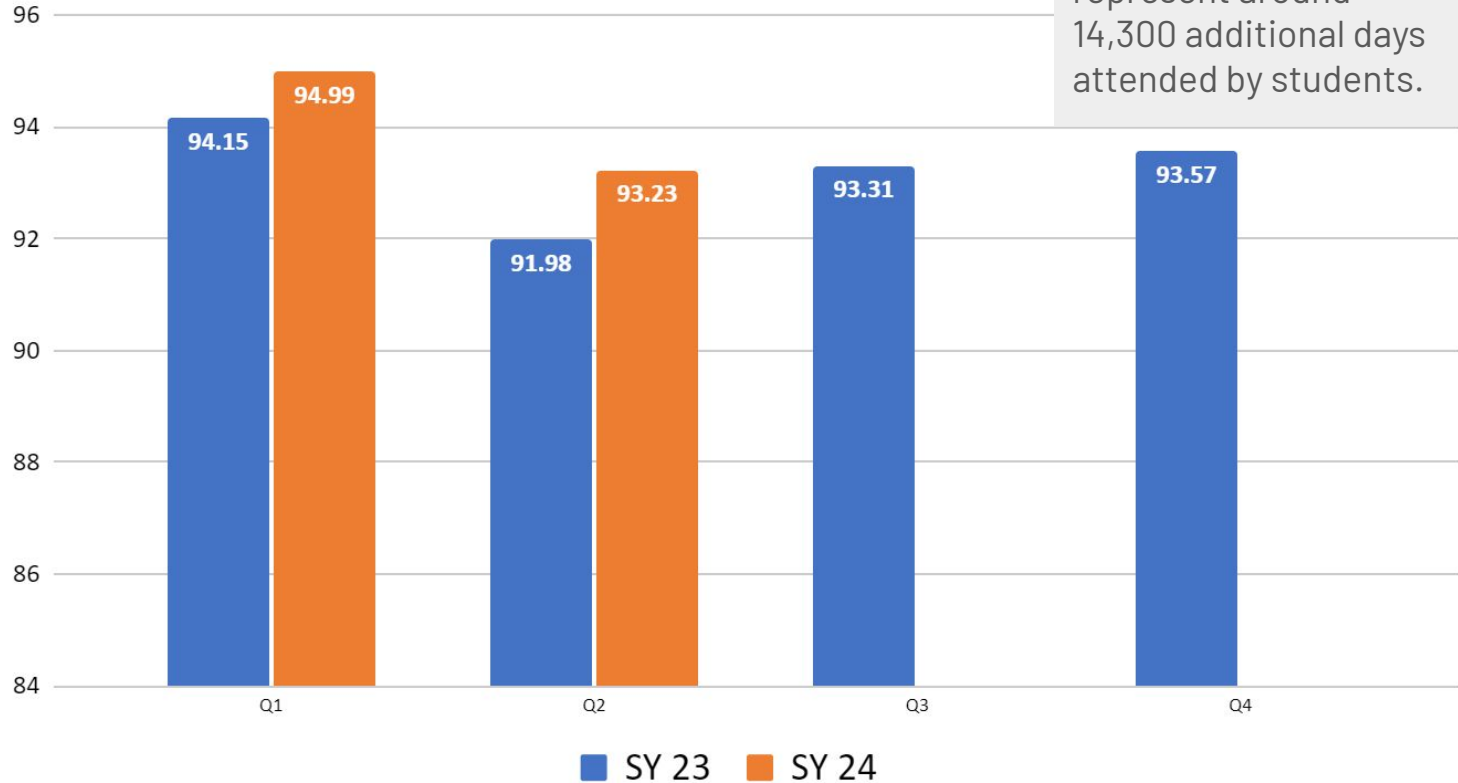
Chronic Absentee Rate in Albemarle County Public Schools 2012 to Present

— ACPS Chronic Absentee Rate — VA Chronic Absentee Rate



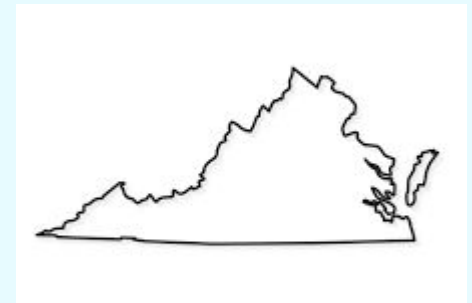
ACPS Quarterly Attendance

Q1 and Q2 changes represent around 14,300 additional days attended by students.

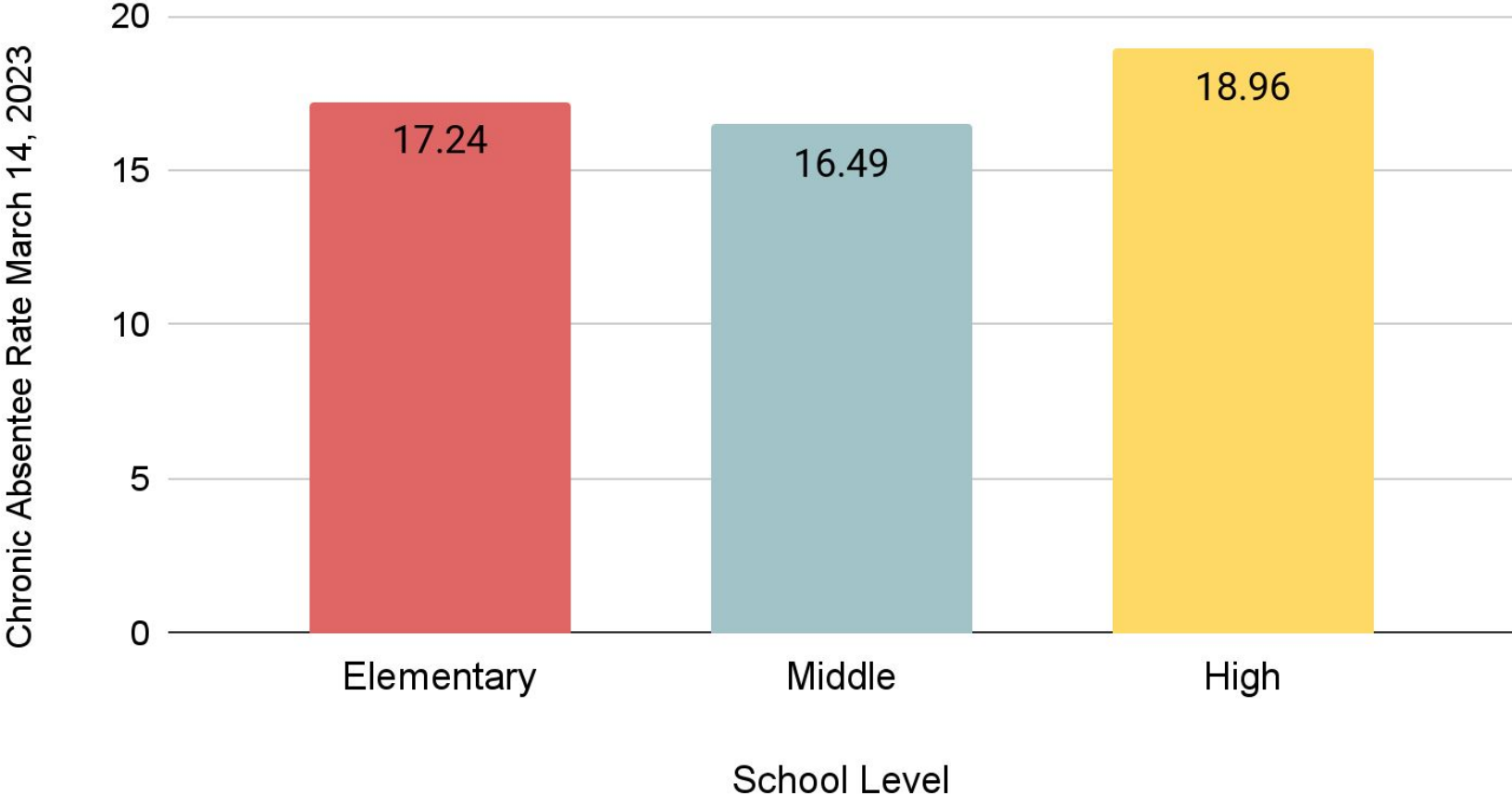


DISTRICT VS. STATEWIDE TRENDS IN CHRONIC ABSENCES

- Prior to the pandemic, ACPS experienced a **91% increase** in its chronic absentee rate from 2016 to 2020, compared to a 13% increase statewide during this time.
- After the pandemic, from 2021 to 2023, ACPS experienced an additional **96% increase** in chronic absenteeism, compared to 64% increase statewise.
- As of March 14th, 2023; ACPS had a **25% decrease** in chronic absences compared to the previous year.

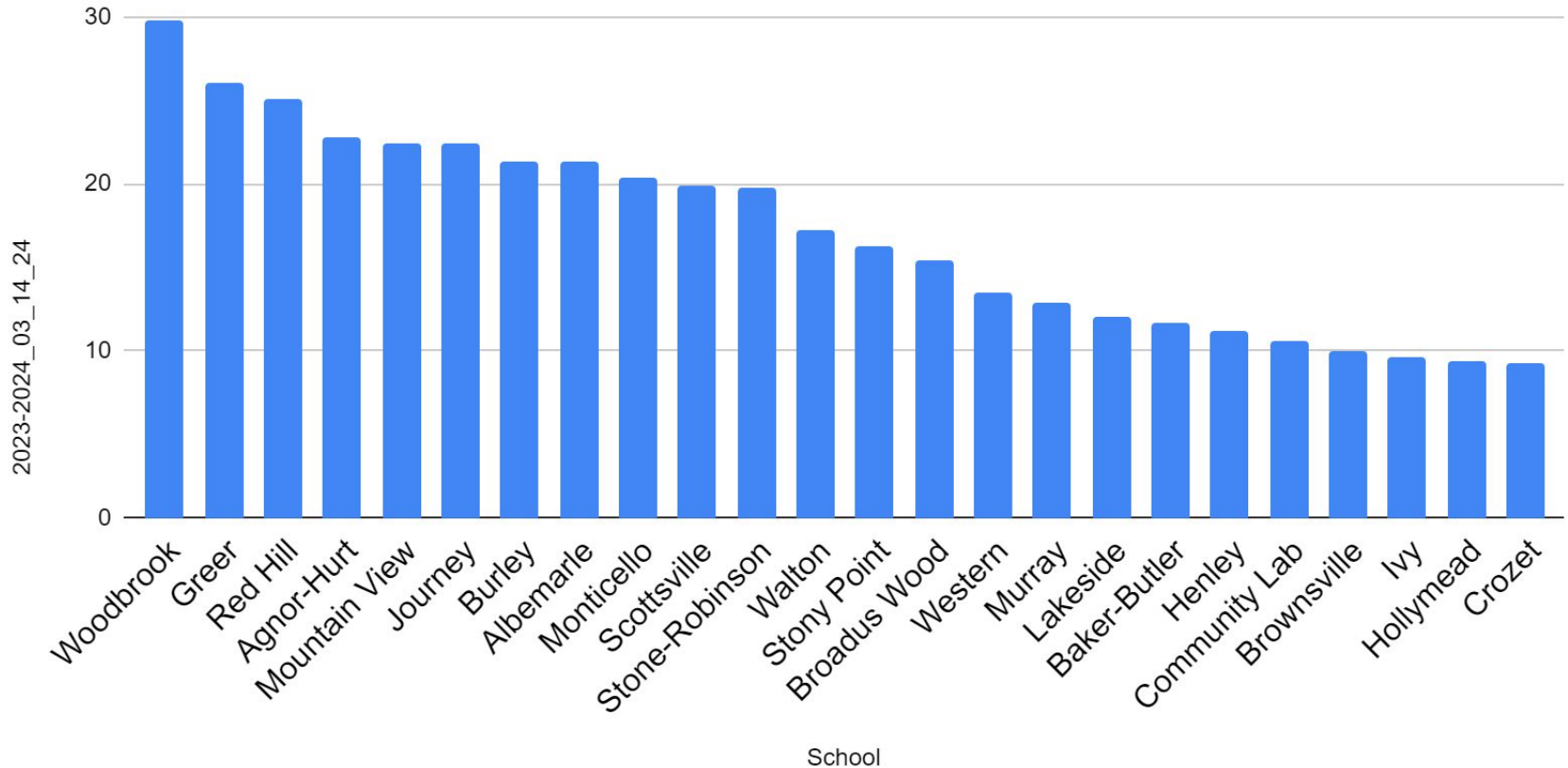


Variation in Chronic Absenteeism by Level

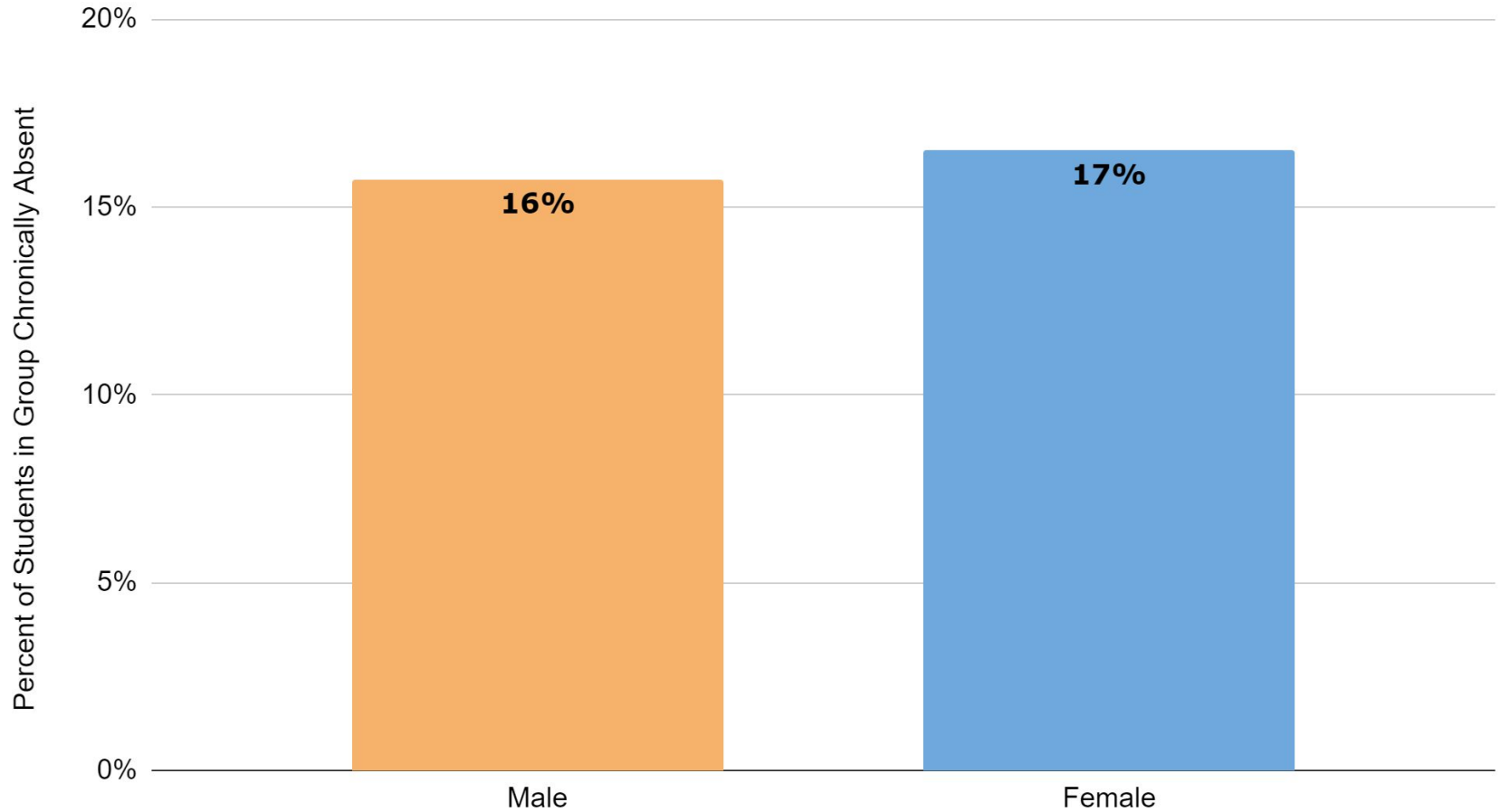


Variation in Chronic Absentee Rate by School

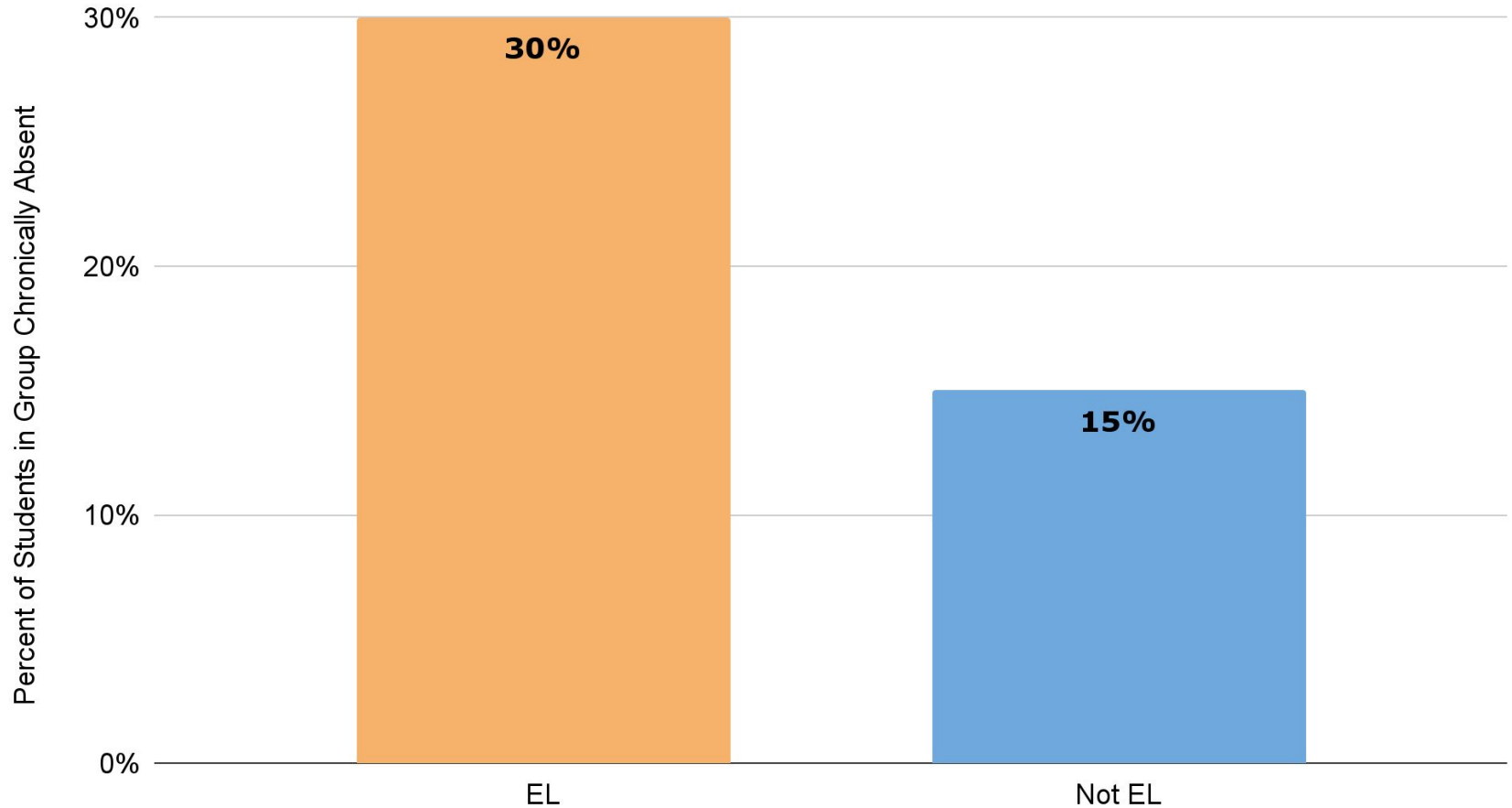
03_14_24



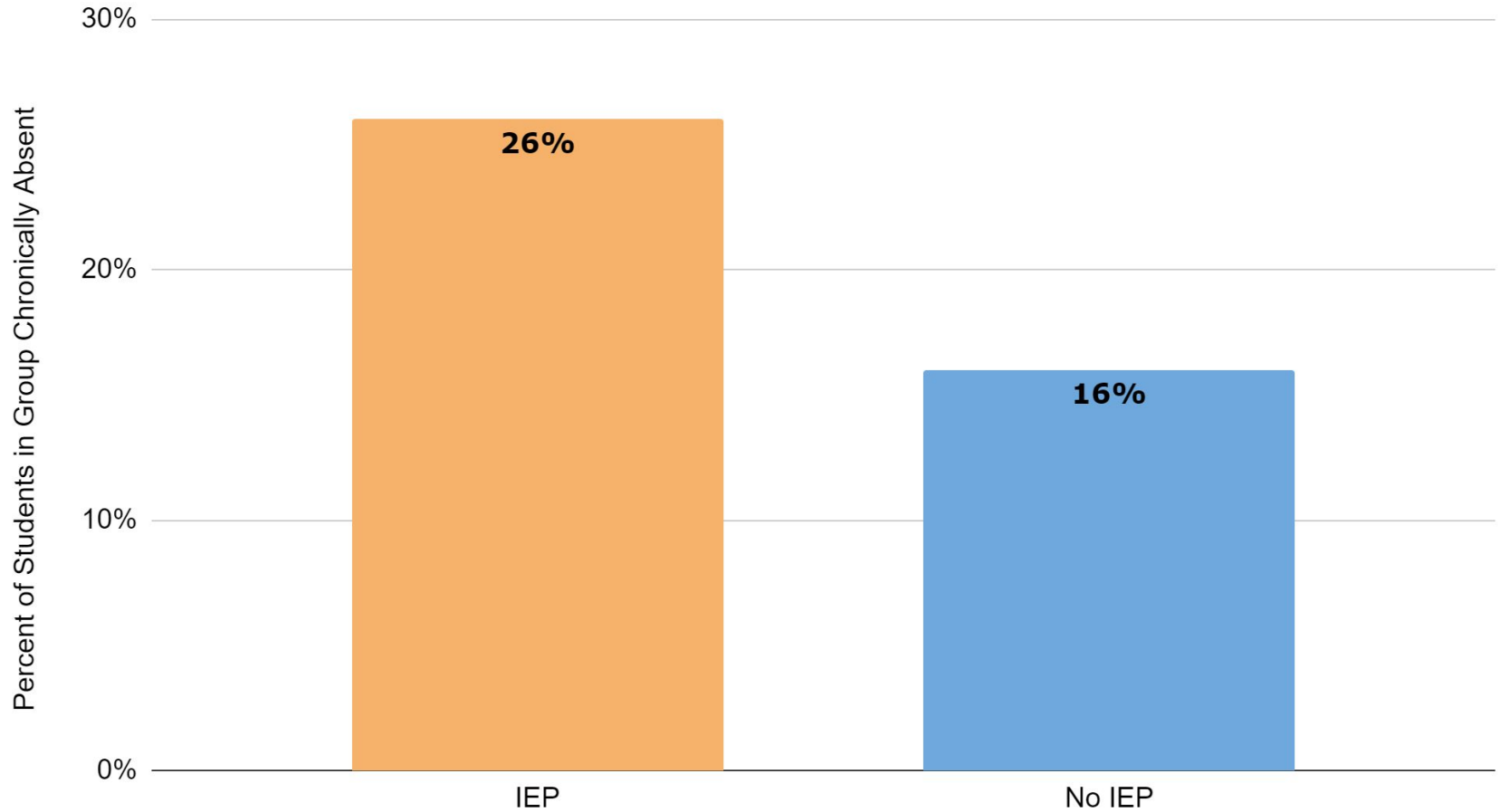
Percentage of Gender Group Chronically Absent 03-25-24



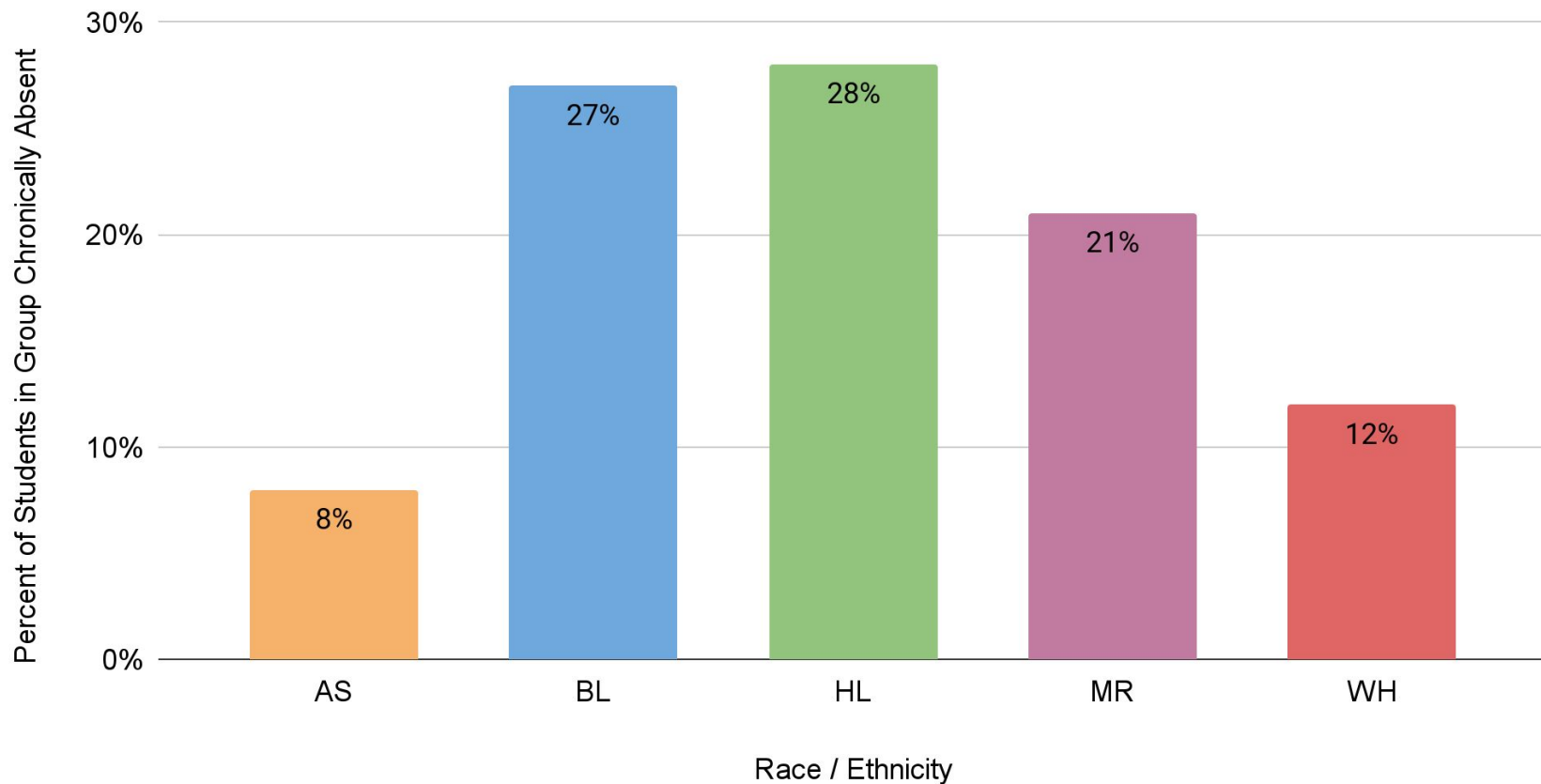
Percentage of English Learner Group Chronically Absent 03-25-24



Percentage of IEP Group Chronically Absent 03-25-24

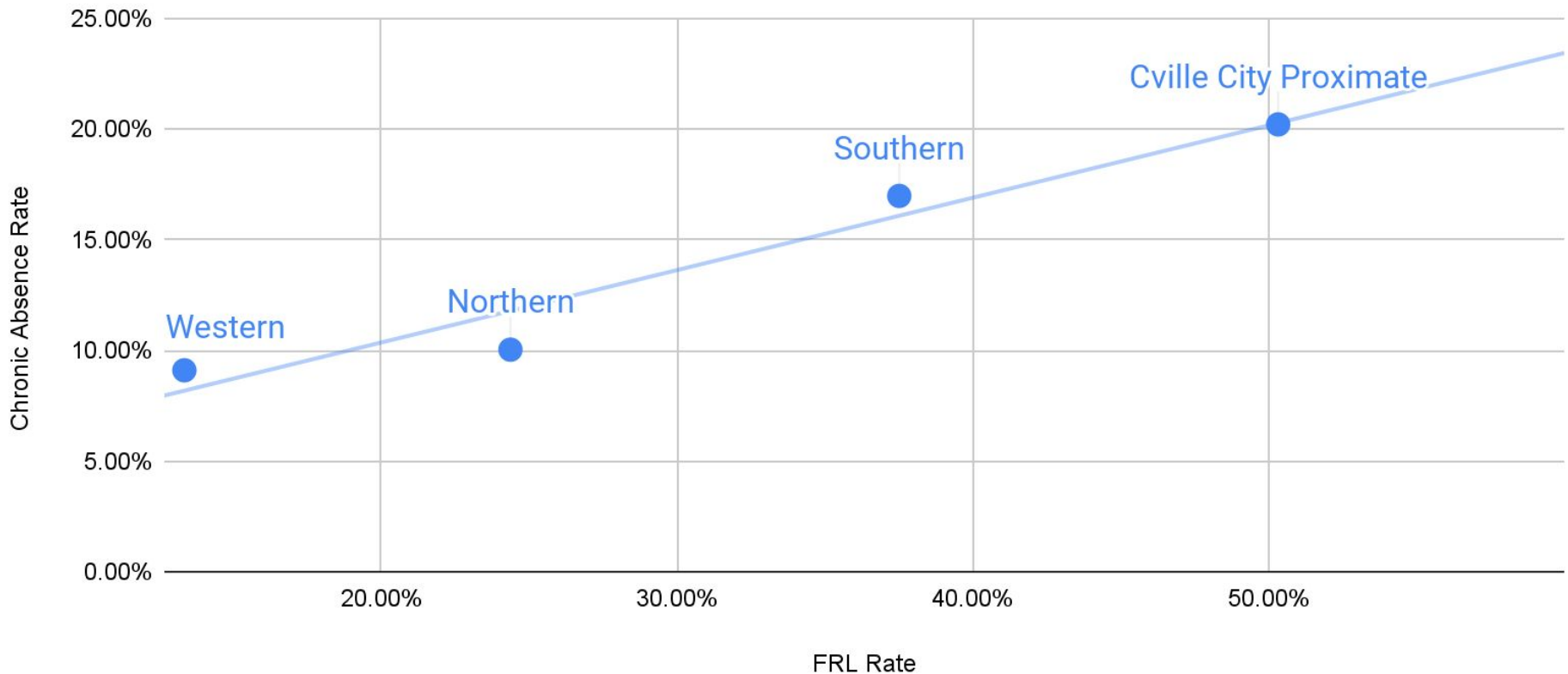


Percentage of each Racial and Ethnic Membership Group Chronically Absent 03-25-24



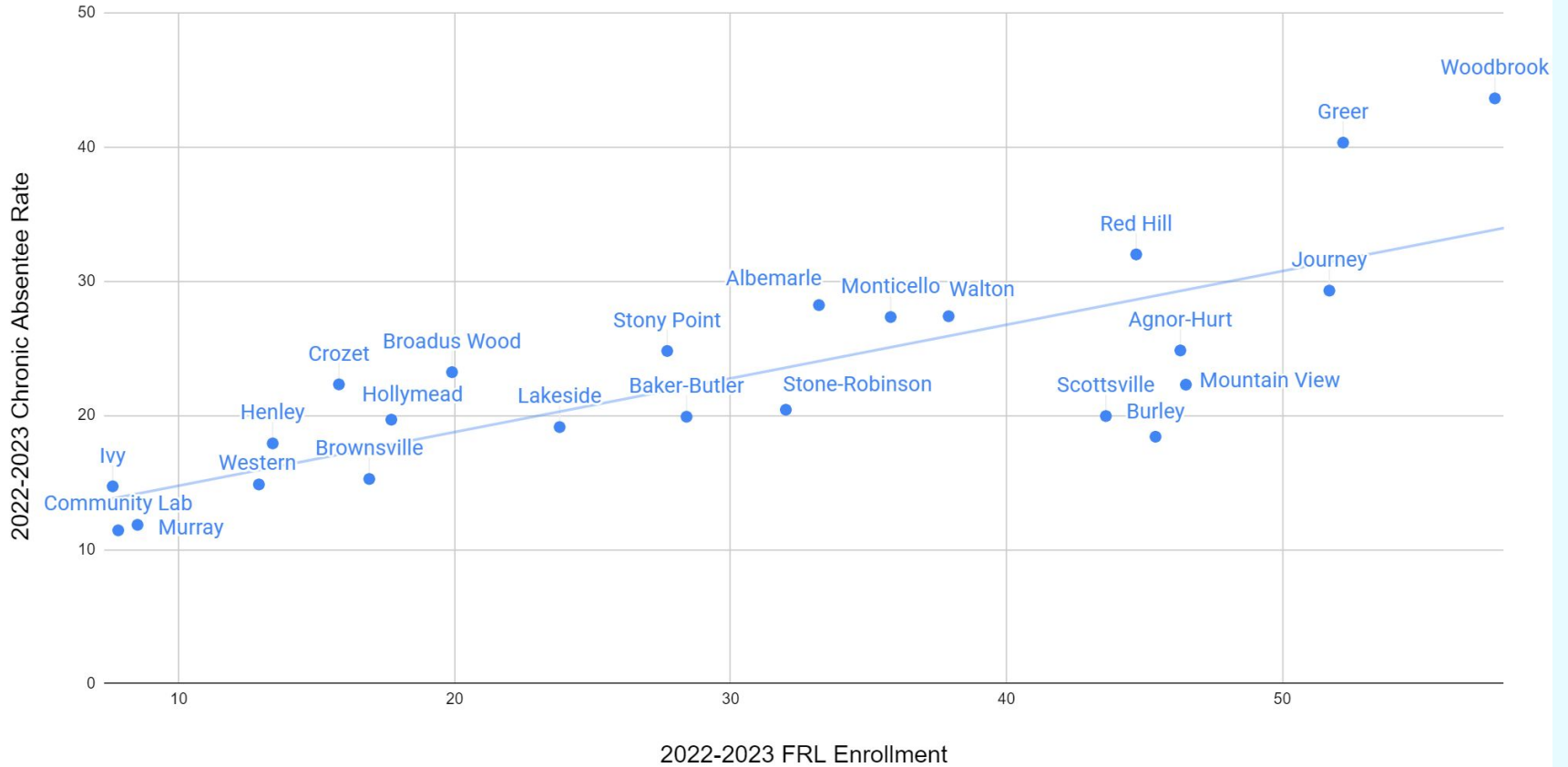
Chronic Absenteeism and FRL Rate by Elementary Region

● Chronic_Absent_Rate_03-24 — Trendline for Chronic_Absent_Rate_03-24

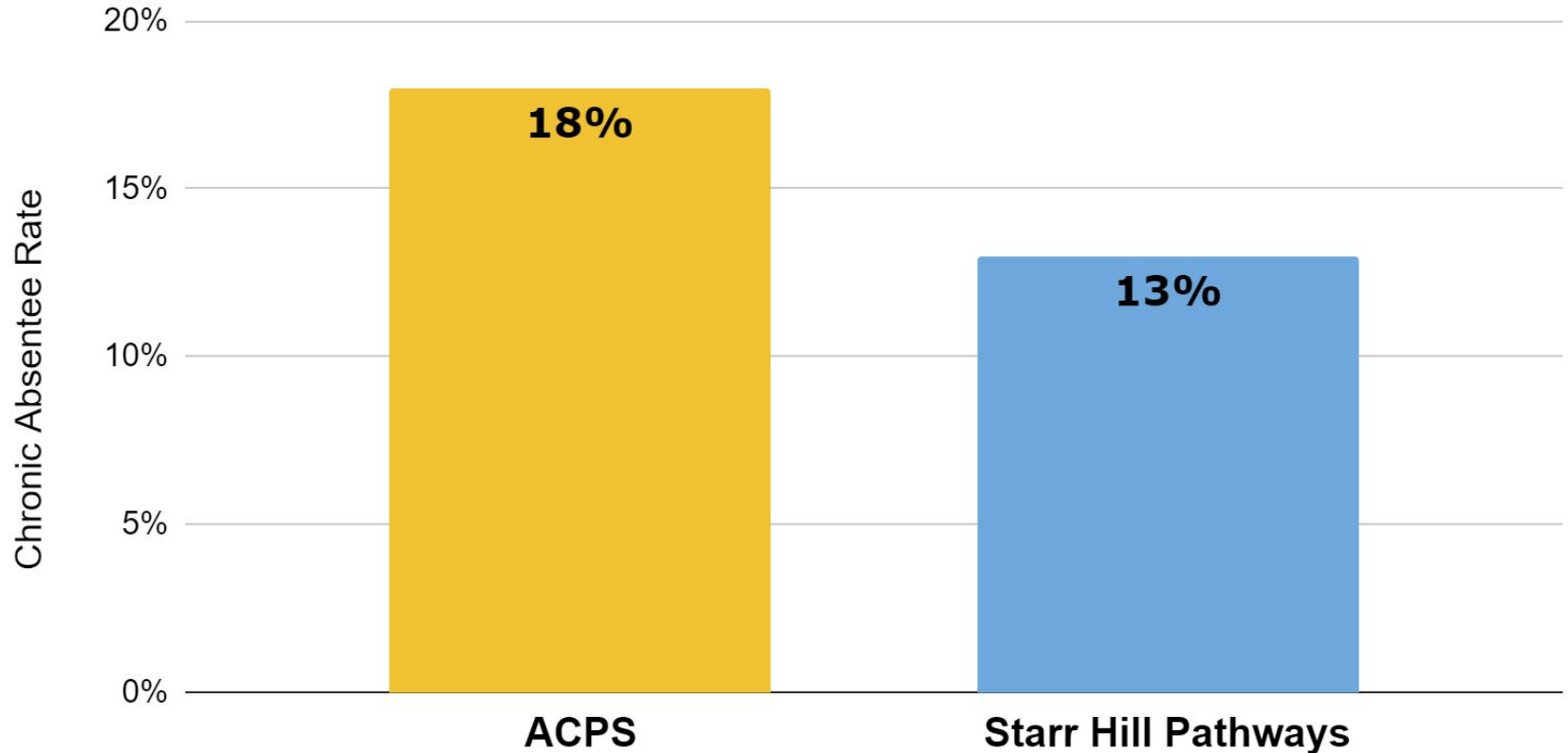


2022-2023 FRL Enrollment vs. 2022-2023 Chronic Absentee Rate

● 2022-2023 Chronic Absentee Rate — Trendline for 2022-2023 FRL Enrollment $R^2 = 0.621$



Chronic Absentee Rate Quarters 1-3 2023-2024



VARIATION IN CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

- Some schools had **three times as many chronically absent students** as others in 2022-2023, ranging from 15% at Ivy Elementary to 44% at Woodbrook Elementary.
- **High Schools had higher rates** of chronic absenteeism than middle and elementary schools.
- Schools in **the Cville City Proximate Region** (Urban Ring) **had the highest levels of need** to improve chronic absenteeism.

Racial & Ethnic Variation in Chronic Absenteeism

- Community and school systems led to **Latino and Black students** being about **twice as likely** as White students to be chronically absent.
- **Economic hardship (FRL) was a strong predictor** of systemic risk for chronic absence.

VARIATION IN CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

- **FRL enrollment is highly correlated with chronic absenteeism**, especially when aggregating schools by geographic region.
- The chart on slide 8 shows **schools that were outliers** when analyzing chronic absenteeism and its relationship to FRL enrollment, e.g. Burley, Mountain View, Scottsville.

Chronic Absenteeism: ACPS Plan of Support for Students & Schools



Division Supports for Schools

- EAB Presentation and PL at beginning of the year
- Expectations around school-based attendance teams
 - All schools have teams
 - Multiple Roles
 - Communication processes have been developed
- PowerSchool training for OAs
- Division level staff attend school-based meetings
- Working to align with new VDOE buy-back plan
- OCE Incentives for staff & students



School-Level Attendance Teams

- School administrator, school counselor, OA, school nurse, SEL coach
- Teams at each level monitor student attendance by recording student absences in PowerSchool. Teams track excused and unexcused absences to determine the course of action for how to help improve a student's absences. This process allows teams to determine when a student's family will receive calls home, letters mailed home, attendance plans, conferences, or involvement from the courts.
- Teams review data and follow prescribed plan for unexcused absences. When discussing excused absences, teams brainstorm ways to provide incentives that are aimed to increase student attendance.



School-Level Attendance Teams

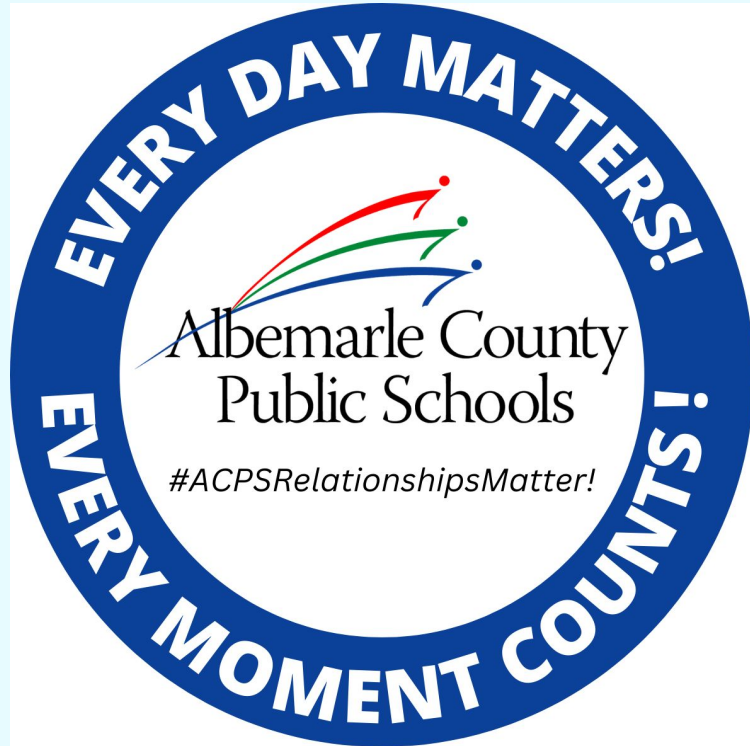
- Families have faced challenges with transportation, work schedules, and student illness.
- Teams report that strong relationships have formed with parents as result of the communication around attendance. Also the efforts around attendance is a school-wide effort.
- Cohorts-To further our work around attendance, central office staff and school administrators from Greer and Red Hill are participating in a nationwide attendance program facilitated by EAB. We are scheduled to start the second cohort with Woodbrook
- Buy-back-Students currently have the opportunity to “Buy-back” up to 15 days for full day absences. An SOP for this process was developed and shared with school administrators.



Communication and Family Engagement

- Bright Arrow messages & nudges to families encouraging school attendance each day;
- Positive video messages from community members
- New website with important attendance information
- Hosted a Community Information Session for families with resources for each school level
- Poster, flyers & magnets sent to each school & families

Profile Schools



- **Greer**
 - One of the greatest improvements in chronic absentee rate from last year to this year among elementary schools.
- **Journey**
 - Success supporting students facing economic hardship in attending school.
- **Albemarle**
 - Strong improvement this year for Gap Group 1 (FRL, SPED, and EL students).

Elementary Schools	CA Rate 2022-2023	CA Rate 2023-2024 03_14_24	Change SY2223 2324
Greer	40.33	26.1	14.23
Woodbrook	43.63	29.74	13.89
Crozet	22.31	9.3	13.01
Hollymead	19.68	9.39	10.29
Stony Point	24.8	16.26	8.54

High Schools Gap Group 1	CA Rate 2022-2023	CA Rate 2023-2024 03_18_24	Improvement SY2223 SY2324
Albemarle	48.78	34.04	14.74
Monticello	41.40	31.79	9.61
Western	39.97	33.01	6.96

GREER Work and Highlights

Whole School

- Daily and personalized communications to families re: attendance. Weekly newsletters to families about that week's schedule and events.
- Personalized letters to every family with updated yearly attendance information. Updates to our website and support for our EL families. School magnets and flyers : when to send students to school and when to stay home.

Attendance Team -

- Weekly meetings focused at the individual student level for both chronically absent and UEX students. Additional individualized communications to families of chronically absent students. Support for students by driving them to/from school in our school van. CHINS, etc. as necessary.

GREER Work and Highlights

Flexile Instruction / Buy Back

- Purpose is to provide opportunities for students to earn back the time while also giving them another reason to come to school.
- Focusing on ~80 students : both *recovering* students who are already chronically absent and *proactively banking time* for students who are close to being chronically absent by the end of the year.

Incentives

- Positive phone calls to families. Attendance chart for classrooms. Pilot program of free Greer Clubs (Art, PE, Dance, Ceramics, Genius Hour, etc) after school to incentivize students to come to school.

Journey Work & Highlights!

❖ **Full School Efforts**

- Pre-service presentation around chronic absenteeism for full staff with monthly updates and tying into relationship mapping with GROWL (Homeroom students)
- GROWL teacher to make first contact and intentionally paying attention to CA students
- 20-day plan cycles all year
- After school tutoring & Saturday school for “buy-back”

❖ **Attendance Team Efforts**

- Jump start last summer: EAB webinar presentation, development of 20-Day plan, etc...
- Weekly data reviews, calls home, home visits
- Celebrations with pizza lunches, certificates
- 1:1 interviews - what's different?

❖ **Implementation of Fun Friday Lunches**

- Celebrating attendance with treats!
 - Jaguar Swag, Oreos, get in free passes to dances and events
- No tardies for the week, no absences for the week, perfect attendance for the month, etc...

Student Success Meetings @ AHS

Weekly commitment, by grade level, to review student attendance & academic progress.

Includes: School & SEL counselors, Social Worker, Administrators, Home/Community/School Intervention Coordinators, Attendance Coordinator

Identified Barriers to Attendance

- Mental health symptoms
- Medical diagnosis
- Getting to school
- Poor academic performance
- Teen parenting
- Family/work obligations
- Poor connection to school

Buy Back Sessions

- Held Thursday afternoons and Saturday mornings
- 16 Sessions Held
- Provide teacher & tutor support
- 229 Students Have Attended
- Over 1,500 absences recovered

Next Steps:

- Focus on providing additional supports to School Administrators to assist in their work with teachers (ie. communication with families concerning chronic absenteeism);
- Work with Equity Center & other community partners to address student/family health needs;
- Pursue Community in Schools (CIS) programming to address social issues and provide enrichment/educational opportunities for students and families;
- Pursue 21st Century Community Learning Center Grant to provide greater access to after school/enrichment programming for students/families; and
- Work with the Albemarle Foundation for Education (AFE) to identify business and community partners to serve as *School Champions* to give their “talent, time, and treasure” to schools.

Questions/Discussion

