

# Chronic Absenteeism

## in Summit County Public Schools

## WHAT IS CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?

Chronic absenteeism (CA) is a problem impacting students and school districts across the United States. CA is defined as 10% of total hours absent with or without legitimate excuse within a single academic year.<sup>1</sup>

Across the nation, there were 14.7 million (29.7%) chronically absent students in the '21-'22 academic year.

Across Ohio, there were 473,233 chronically absent students during the '21-'22 academic year.<sup>2</sup>



## WHAT LEADS TO CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM?

There are many different causes of CA, but primary issues include:<sup>3</sup>

**Barriers to attendance** such as chronic illness, poor transportation options, or inequitable access to needed services.

**Aversion** to school due to academic challenges, unwelcoming school environments, or social challenges.

**Disengagement** from school in response to poor relationships with teachers, a lack of enrichment opportunities, or a lack of academic and behavioral support.

**Misconceptions** about the impacts of absences, such as: "absences are only a problem if they are unexcused."

## EFFECTS OF CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM

Chronic absenteeism is associated with:<sup>4</sup>

- poorer academic outcomes
- an increased likelihood of dropping out of school
- adverse health outcomes
- poverty in adulthood
- increased likelihood of interaction with the criminal justice system

### QUICK STATS<sup>5</sup>

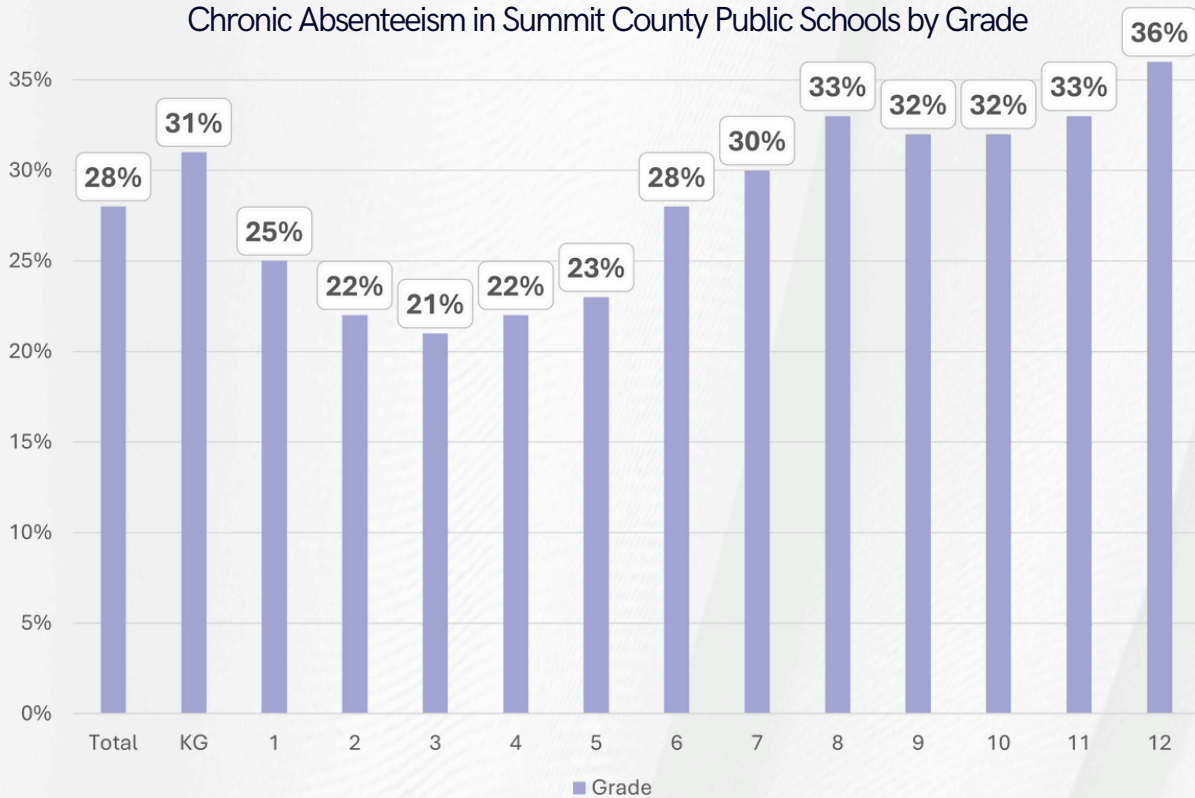
Across Summit County public school districts, **28% of students** were chronically absent during the '22-'23 academic year.

This 28% represents nearly **18,000** students across the county



# WHO IS CHRONICALLY ABSENT?

Chronic Absenteeism in Summit County Public Schools by Grade



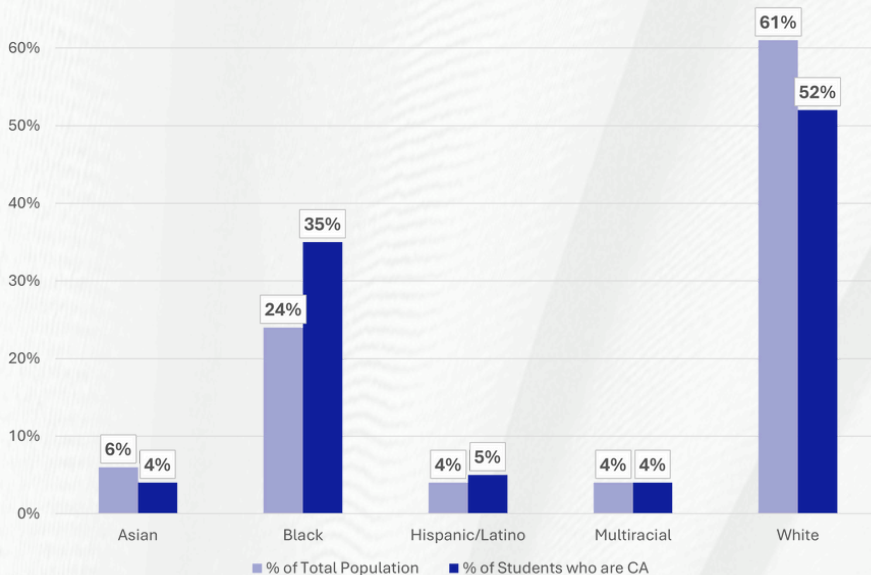
Students from marginalized backgrounds are at higher risk for CA.

Of all chronically absent students, 74% are experiencing economic disadvantage

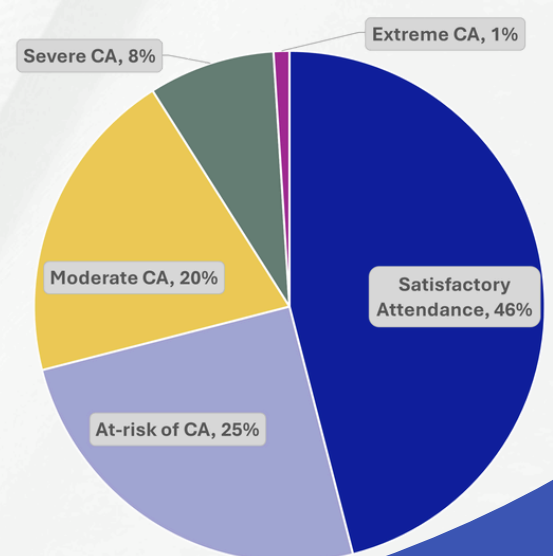
Of students who are experiencing homelessness, 60% are chronically absent

Of students who have an identified disability, 39% are chronically absent

Chronic Absenteeism by Race/Ethnicity in Summit County Public Schools



ODE Attendance Categories, K-12 Students in Summit County Public Schools



# WHAT CAN WE DO?<sup>6</sup>

Attendance Works offers a tiered system for identifying children’s needs as well as identifying the respective supports and interventions necessary for each tier. This tiered approach follows a pyramid-like system where those students at the top are in need of higher cost, individualized support, while those at the bottom receive low cost, universal support.

These approaches, matched with ODE’s attendance categories guide the recommendations listed below.

**CHRONIC ABSENCE: MISSING 10% FOR ANY REASON (12 HOURS [2 DAYS] PER MONTH OR 92 HOURS [18 DAYS] PER YEAR)**

**TIER 3: STUDENTS MISSING 20% OR MORE FOR ANY REASON**

**INTENSIVE INTERVENTION**  
**EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR HOUSING, HEALTH, OR CASE MANAGEMENT TAILORED TO THE NEEDS OF THE STUDENT OR FAMILY, IN ADDITION TO WITHIN-SCHOOL ASSISTANCE**

**TIER 2: STUDENTS MISSING 10-19% FOR ANY REASON**

**EARLY INTERVENTION**  
**FAMILY VISITS, INDIVIDUALIZED STUDENT SUCCESS PLANS, SMALL GROUP INTERVENTIONS, INTENSIVE TUTORING, AND MENTORSHIP**

**TIER 1: ALL STUDENTS AND FAMILIES**

**UNIVERSAL SUPPORTS**  
**RECOGNITION OF IMPROVED ATTENDANCE, CONNECTION TO CARING ADULTS IN THE SCHOOL, PERSONALIZED COMMUNICATION WITH THE FAMILY, AND CLEAR AND CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL SCHEDULE**

## Endnotes:

1. Ohio Department of Education. 2022. *Attendance Support*. <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Student-Supports/Attendance-Support>.

2. Ohio Department of Education. 2023. *Ohio School & District Results 2022-2023*. <https://reportcard.education.ohio.gov>

3. Attendance Works. 2022. *Chronic Absence - Root Causes*. <https://attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

4. Davis, K., Allen-Milton, S., & Coats-Boynton, S. 2019. "Making the Case for Results-Based Accountability as Intervention for Chronic Absenteeism in Schools to Improve Attendance." *Race and Justice*. 9(1), 46-59

5. Data included 62,653 students in Kindergarten through 12th grade who were enrolled in one of sixteen public school districts in Summit County in the 2022-2023 school year and had at least 100 hours of possible attendance (ODE technical documentation [here](#)).

6. Attendance Works. 2018. *Chronic Absence: 3 Tiers of Intervention*. <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/>