

**THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF STRATEGY & OPERATIONS OFFICER**

**Maurice L. Woods
Chief Strategy & Operations Officer**

Signatures on File

March 9, 2015

TO: All Principals

FROM: Maurice L. Woods
Chief Strategy & Operations Officer

VIA: Desmond K. Blackburn, Ph.D.
Chief School Performance & Accountability

SUBJECT: **AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2011-12 through 2013-14**

Student Assessment and Research staff completed an examination of students' attendance in Broward County Public Schools during the 2011-12 through 2013-14 school years. The District's Average Daily Attendance rate (ADA) remained stable at 94% for the three years examined. Centers registered the lowest ADA rates ranging from 71% to 78%.

During the most recent school year, ADA rates were similar for Black students (93.4%), Hispanic students (93.6%), and White students (93.8%). However, when Black students were absent, their absences were more likely to be unexcused (69.4%) as compared to Hispanic (52.1%) and White (39.7%) students. These findings were similar for all three years examined.

Alternative Centers registered the highest rate of absence (43 days per student). High schools averaged the next highest rate at 16 days per student, followed by middle schools (9 days per student), multi-level schools (8 days per student), and elementary schools with 7 missed days per student. A similar trend can be seen when comparing the rate of unexcused absence to excused absence. At centers, 90% of all registered absences (excused, unexcused, and suspension days) were unexcused. High schools had the next largest percentage (62.4%), followed by multi-level schools (55.5%), middle schools (45.6%), and elementary schools (41.1%).

Student Assessment and Research is currently examining the association between absence and academic achievement, and will be issuing a research report addressing this topic in the future.

Questions regarding this report should be directed to **Director Richard Baum, Student Assessment & Research at 754-321-2500**. This memo and report may also be accessed via the Student Assessment & Research website at: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/index.htm>.

DKB/MLW/NB/RGB/SLS/JAC:rs
Attachments

cc: School Board Members
Senior Leadership Team
Directors, School Performance & Accountability



Research Brief

AN ANALYSIS OF STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Student attendance was examined in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) for the three school year period from 2011-12 through 2013-14. This brief summarizes attendance trends, including excused and unexcused absences occurring at both traditional and charter schools.

Data from three school years, excluding summers, were included in this analysis. For each school year, the total population reflects the number of students in grades Kindergarten through 12 who attended a BCPS school for at least five days during the year. Absences are classified according to the following guidelines:

- Excused (i.e., Parent/guardian notified the school),
- Unexcused (i.e., No parent/guardian notified the school), and
- Suspension (Days suspended are included in the total absences, but are not summarized).

Overall Attendance

Figure 1 illustrates the average daily attendance rate (ADA) by school level for the 2011-12 through the 2013-14 school years. Examination of the figure reveals that ADA decreased across school levels from elementary to middle to high school. Centers' rates ranged from 15 to 23 percentage points lower than the District average (94%). Multi-Level schools' ADA rates were similar to that of elementary schools (Appendix A).

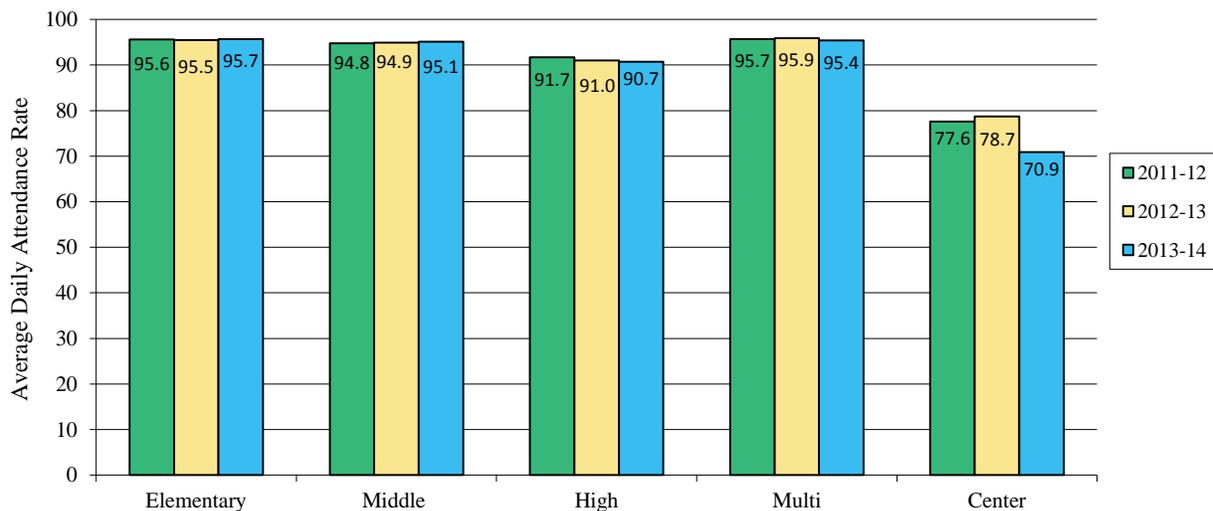


Figure 1. Average daily attendance rate, by school level, 2011-12 through 2013-14.

Figure 2 shows the average number of days absent per student by school type for the three-year period. During the 2013-14 school year, high school students averaged 7-9 more days absent than elementary, middle, and multi-level school students. Elementary school students had the lowest average number of absences. Students at alternative centers averaged more than twice as many days absent than students at the high school level (Appendix B).

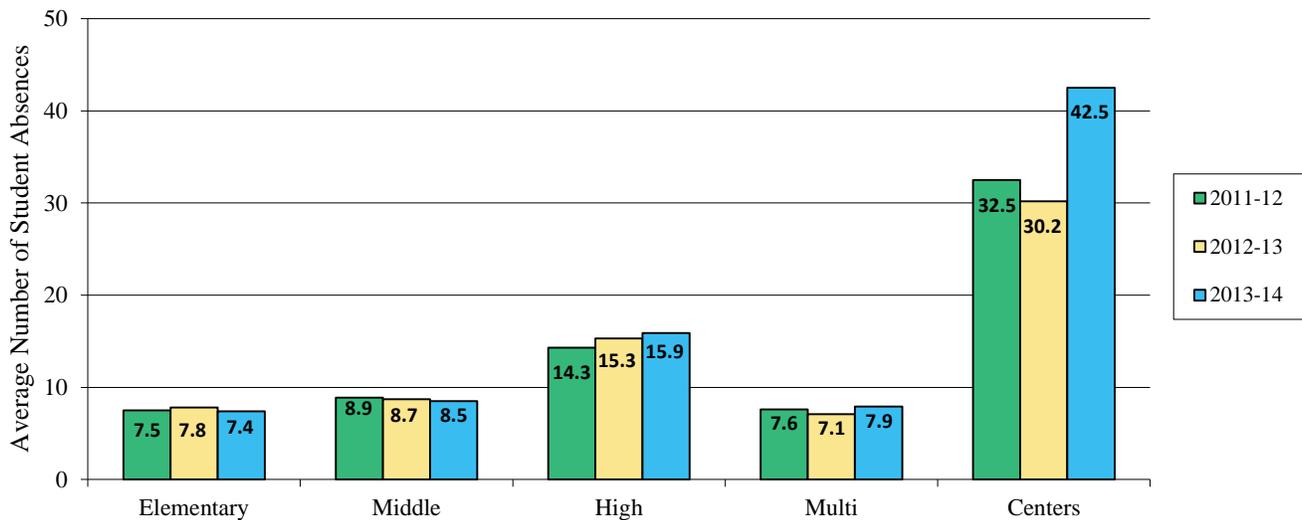


Figure 2. Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2011-12 through 2013-14.

Table 1 displays the average daily attendance rate by students' racial group for the three-year period. **Overall, ADA has remained stable over the past three years.** The data show that Asian students were more likely to be in attendance than all other racial groups (Appendix C).

Table 1
Student Attendance Rates by Students' Racial Group, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Race/Ethnicity	2011-12		2012-13		2013-14	
	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate
Native American	905	93.1	895	92.9	860	92.7
Asian	9,400	95.8	9,456	95.6	9,555	95.5
Black	105,892	94.0	107,505	93.7	106,400	93.4
Hispanic	77,467	93.9	79,161	93.7	81,204	93.6
Multi-Racial	6,985	94.4	7,030	94.1	6,957	94.0
Pacific Islander	229	94.4	240	93.8	297	93.6
White	68,101	94.0	66,849	93.9	64,864	93.8
District	268,979	94.0	271,136	93.8	270,137	93.7

Table 2 below displays the number and percent of students with perfect attendance and students with 15 or more total absences, by school level. For all three school years, centers had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance, followed by multi-level and elementary schools.

Centers also had the highest percent of students with 15 or more absences, followed by high schools and middle schools.

Table 2
Number and Percent of Students with Perfect Attendance and Fifteen or More Absences by School Level, 2011-12 through 2013-14

	2011-12				
	Perfect		15+ Total Absences		Total
	n	%	n	%	N
Elementary	10,527	8.6	16,690	13.7	122,172
Middle	3,761	6.5	10,525	18.3	57,551
High	3,583	4.6	26,898	34.7	77,510
Center	995	19.7	2,824	56.0	5,043
Multi	596	8.9	959	14.3	6,703
2012-13					
Elementary	11,231	9.2	17,661	14.5	121,619
Middle	5,066	8.8	10,138	17.7	57,256
High	3,171	4.1	28,707	37.0	77,541
Center	1,525	27.2	2,958	52.8	5,603
Multi	936	10.3	1,091	12.0	9,117
2013-14					
Elementary	9,229	8.2	14,794	13.1	113,173
Middle	3,756	7.0	8,908	16.6	53,732
High	2,908	3.8	27,870	36.7	76,040
Center	1,253	19.8	4,022	63.6	6,328
Multi	3,282	15.7	3,276	15.7	20,864

Excused/Unexcused Absences

Figure 3 shows the percent of excused and unexcused absences based on the total number of absences, by school level. The data show that the rate of unexcused absence increased as students progressed towards high school. Students enrolled at centers were almost 10 times as likely to be absent without excuse than to have an excused absence (Appendix D).

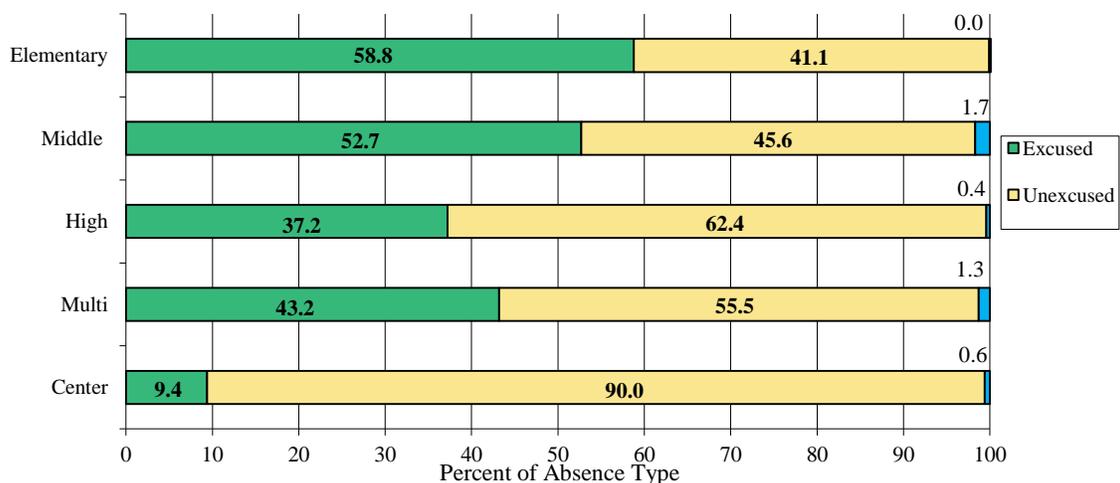


Figure 3. Rate of excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2013-14.

Figure 4 shows the percent of excused and unexcused absences based on the total number of absences, by the three major student racial groups. The data show that although Black, Hispanic, and White students all have a similar average daily attendance rate, Black students registered a higher unexcused to excused absence rate than Hispanic or White students (Appendix E).

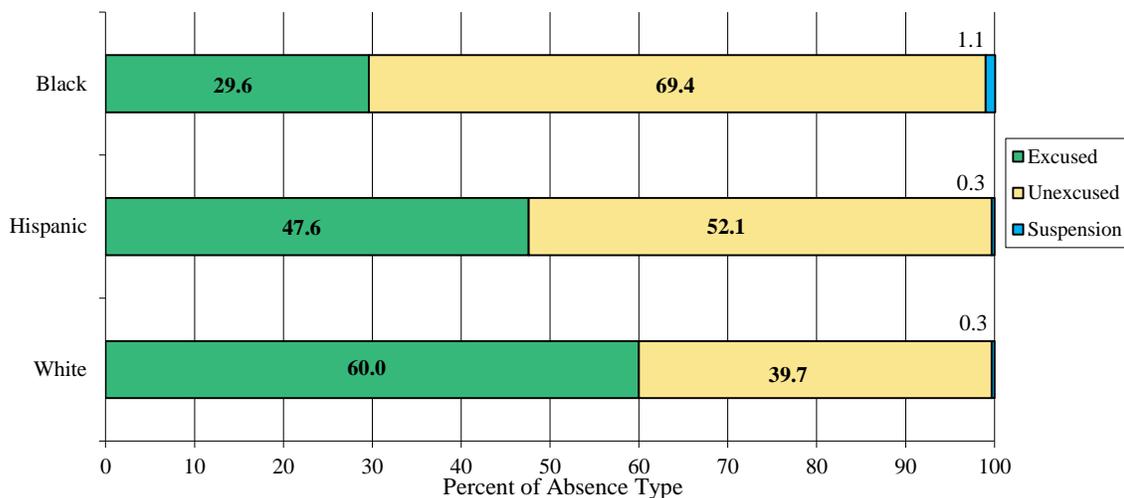


Figure 4. Rate of excused and unexcused absence, by three major racial groups, 2013-14.

Summary

Overall Trends in Attendance

- The District’s average daily attendance rate remained consistent at about 94% from 2011-12 to 2013-14 (Appendix A).
- Attendance was lower (91%) for high schools compared to elementary schools (96%) and Middle School (95%). Attendance at centers was the lowest (71%), representing a decrease in the average daily attendance rate at centers of 6.7 percentage points over the three-year period (Appendix A and Figure 1).
- Students enrolled at centers missed an average of 43 days during the 2013-14 school year. The average high school student missed 16 days, middle school student 9 days, and elementary school student 7 days during the same time period (Appendix B).

Attendance Type

- There was an increase in the number of unexcused absences from 2012-13 to 2013-14 (from 50.7% to 55.9%) (Figure 3 and Appendix D).
- Students were more likely to have absences that were unexcused as they progressed towards the high school level (Figure 3 and Appendix D).
- Students enrolled at centers were about ten times more likely to be absent without excuse than to have an excused absence (Figure 3 and Appendix D).
- Centers had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance, followed by multi-level schools and elementary schools (Table 2).

- Centers also had the highest percent of students with 15 or more absences, followed by high schools and middle schools (Table 2).

Student Subpopulations

- Black, Hispanic, and White students all had a similar average daily attendance rate. This was true for all three school years (Table 1 and Appendix C).
- For the 2013-14 school year, Black students had a higher rate of unexcused absences (69%), compared to Hispanic students (52%) and White students (40%) (Figure 4).
- Students who receive free and reduced lunch (FRL) and students with disabilities (ESE) had about a 1 percent lower average daily attendance rate than their Non-FRL and Non-ESE counterparts (Appendix C).

Discussion

The average daily attendance rate for the three years of this report remained stable. The Student Services department monitors attendance and initiates policy change. In order to increase the students' average daily attendance rate, the department of has taken the following actions:

- Made changes in attendance-taking practices effective as of the beginning of the 4th quarter of the 2013-14 school year
 - Modified attendance rate criteria with students being recorded as present for the day if they are reported present for any class
 - Re-coded Pinnacle and TERMS in order to report attendance rate based on the modification to the attendance rate criteria
- Added additional support staff in 10 pilot schools to
 - Determine best practices in reducing absenteeism
 - Provide attendance data to schools on a regular basis for self-monitoring, and
 - Focus attention on students identified with chronic absences in order to provide direct interventions to the students
- Provided attendance training
 - Held district-wide webinars regarding the importance of attendance
 - Conducted meetings/trainings with the Attendance Leadership Team at each pilot school
- Added Incentives
 - Recognition of schools with the highest average daily attendance rates at the regularly scheduled school board meetings
 - Perfect Attendance Awards by levels presented in May 2015

The Student Services department handles all matters concerning student attendance. This discussion summarizes current initiatives related to student attendance. For further information regarding attendance policies and/or initiatives please contact Laurel E. Thompson, Ph.D., director of Student Services, (754) 321-1550.

Detailed Appendices

(Available On-line at <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/Releases.htm>)

Appendix A:

Average daily attendance rate by school level, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Appendix B:

Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Appendix C:

Average daily attendance rate by students' demographics, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Appendix D:

Total number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Appendix E:

Total number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by race/ethnicity, 2011-12 through 2013-14

Appendix F:

Number of Absences, Average Daily Attendance Rate, and Number of Absences by Absence Type, by School 2011-12 through 2013-14

Prepared by

Jack Ciminera, Database Researcher IV
Sandra Skinner, Ph.D., Research Specialist
Richard Baum, Director

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