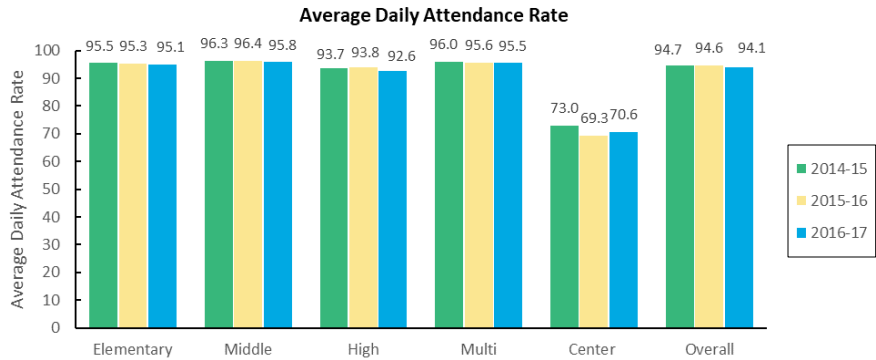


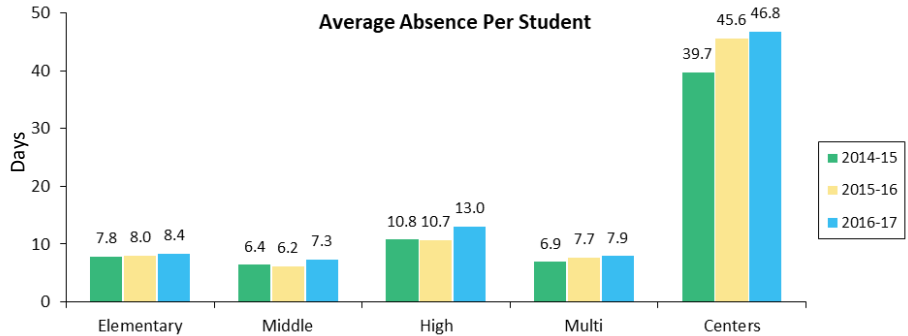
On Average
94%
of students are in school everyday

- The average daily attendance rate remained stable with less than a one percentage point change between 2014-15 and 2016-17.
- Attendance was lower for high schools (93%) compared to elementary schools (95%) and middle schools (96%). Attendance at centers was the lowest (71%).
- Black, Hispanic, and White students had the same daily attendance rate (94%). However, Black students had a higher proportion of unexcused absences (69%) than Hispanic (54%) or White students (40%).
- Average absence per student ranged from 8 at elementary to 47 at centers during the 2016-17 school year.
- Approximately 3 times the amount of excused absent students achieved proficiency scores than unexcused absent students on FSA and EOC assessments in reading and math.
- Middle schools had the smallest proportion of students with chronic or severe chronic absenteeism (10%), followed by multi-level (11%), elementary (13%), high (23%) and centers (72%).

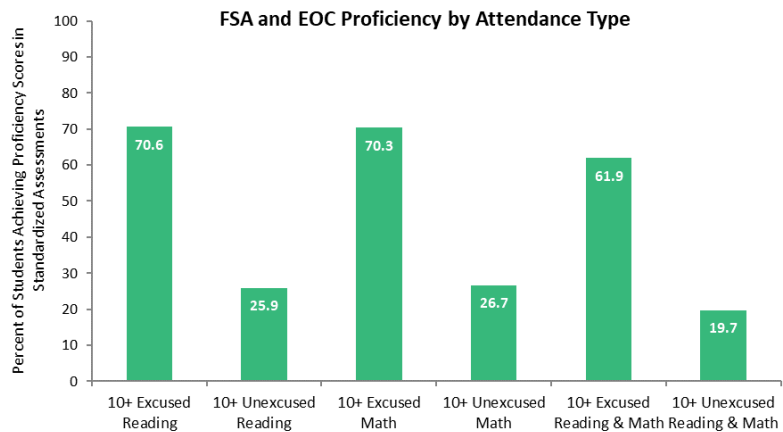
Attendance Rate by School Level



Average Number of Absences per Student



Absence Type and Achievement



Additional Resources

- Detailed school-by-school results: <http://www.broward.k12.fl.us/sar/releases/briefs/AttendanceAppendices2017.xls>
- Information on BCPS's attendance programs: <http://browardstudentservices.com/attendance-campaign-resources/>

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DANIEL GOHL
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

Original Signatures on File

DATE: October 23, 2017

TO: All Principals

FROM: Daniel F. Gohl
Chief Academic Officer

VIA: Valerie S. Wanza, Ph.D.
Chief School Performance & Accountability Officer

SUBJECT: **STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS, 2014-15 THROUGH 2016-17**

Broward County Public School's overall average daily attendance rate (ADA) **remained stable** with less than a one percentage point difference between the 2014-15 (94.7%) and 2016-17 (94.1%) school years. The ADA rate was similar for elementary, middle, and multi-level schools (ranging 95.1% to 95.8%) in 2016-17. High schools were lower (92.6%), and centers showed the lowest ADA rate (70.6%).

During the most recent school year, ADA rates were the same for Black, Hispanic, and White students (94.1%). However, absences varied by type for each group. Of all absences recorded, Black students had the largest proportion of unexcused (compared to excused) absences (68.6%) followed by Hispanic (54.1%) and White students (39.6%).

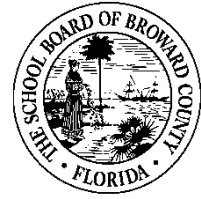
In the 2016-17 school year, students who had 10 or more excused (but no unexcused) absences performed better on both reading and mathematics assessments than did students with 10 or more unexcused (but no excused) absences, with approximately three times the amount of excused absent students achieving proficiency scores than the unexcused absent students.

Broward data for the 2016-17 school year were examined using the attendance categories that align with the School Improvement Plans. The categories are: Satisfactory (0 – 4.9% absences), At-Risk (5 – 9.9% absences), Chronic Absence (10 – 19.9% absences), and Severe Chronic Absenteeism (20% or more absences). For students categorized as having either chronic or severe chronic absenteeism, middle schools had the smallest proportion of students (9.7%), followed by multi-level (11.0%), elementary (13.0%), high (23.0%), and centers (71.7%).

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

RWR/DG/VSW/RGB/SLS/JAC:rs
Attachments

cc: School Board Members
Senior Leadership Team
Directors, Office of School Performance & Accountability
Jody Perry, Director, Charter Schools Support



Research Brief

STUDENT ATTENDANCE IN BROWARD COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2014-15 THROUGH 2016-17

This brief summarizes attendance trends in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) for the three school year period from 2014-15 to 2016-17 at both innovative district and charter schools.

METHOD

Data from all three school years, excluding summers, were gathered from the District’s data warehouse. 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. Student absences are credited to the school the student attended the most during that school year. Absences are classified as excused (parent/guardian notified the school), unexcused (no parent/guardian notified the school), or suspension (external suspension). Results are presented in figures and tables, and additional materials are included in appendices.

OVERALL ATTENDANCE

The overall District average daily attendance (ADA) rate remained stable (94.7% in 2014-15 and 94.1% in 2016-17). Figure 1 illustrates the ADA rate by school level for the three-year period (Appendix A).

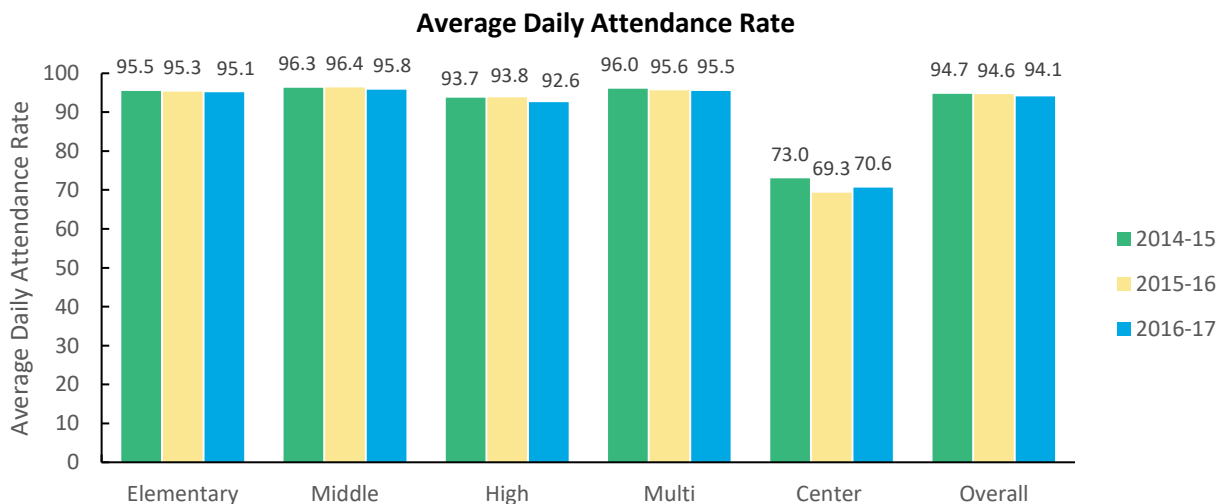


Figure 1. Average daily attendance rate, by school level, 2014-15 through 2016-17.

Figure 2 shows the average number of days absent per student by school level for the three-year period. Historically, high school students averaged more days absent than middle and elementary students. Over the three-year period the average number of recorded absences increased at all school levels. Students at centers averaged more than four times as many days absent than students at the high school level (Appendix B).

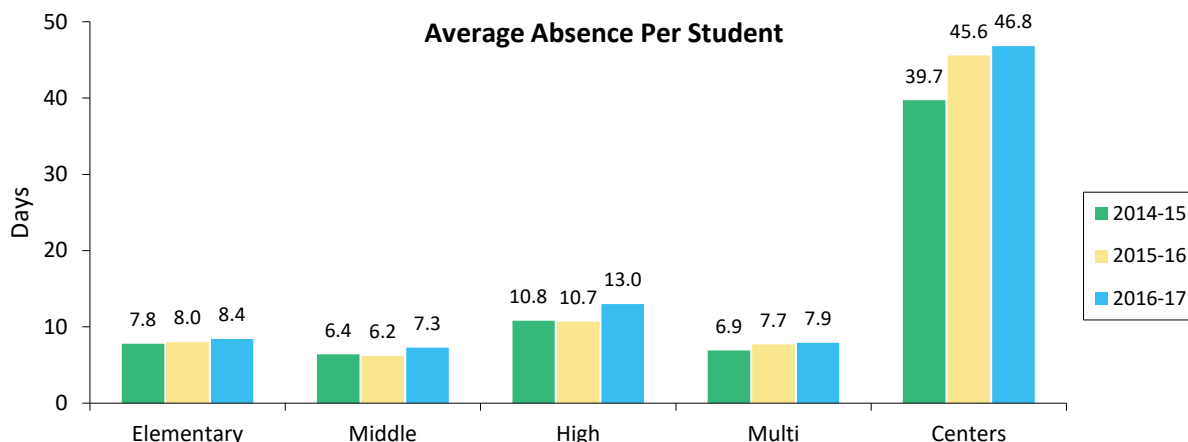


Figure 2. Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2014-15 through 2016-17.

Table 1 displays the average daily attendance rate by race/ethnicity for the three-year period. For the District, the ADA remained stable with less than a one percentage point difference between 2014-15 and 2016-17. Black, Hispanic, and White students all had the same average daily attendance rate (94.1) in the 2016-17 school year. In all three years, Asian students had the greatest average daily attendance rate (Appendix C).

Table 1

Student Attendance Rates by Students' Race/Ethnicity, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Race/Ethnicity	2014-15		2015-16		2016-17	
	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate
Asian	9,634	96.2	9,847	96.1	9,937	95.7
Black	107,736	94.6	107,743	94.5	107,335	94.1
Hispanic	84,785	94.7	88,548	94.7	96,616	94.1
Multi-Racial	7,043	94.8	7,170	94.8	7,327	94.1
Native American	816	94.5	800	94.0	758	93.4
Pacific Islander	360	94.6	409	94.3	411	93.9
White	63,238	94.6	60,963	94.6	58,693	94.1
District	273,612	94.7	275,480	94.6	277,097	94.1

Table 2 displays the number and percent of students with perfect attendance and students with 15 or more total absences, by school level. Middle schools had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance (10%), followed by multi-level schools (9.7%). Elementary, high, and centers all had a similar percent of students with perfect attendance (6.8%, 6.8%, and 7.2%, respectively). Centers had the highest percent of students with 15 or more absences (70.1%). High schools had the next highest (26.4%), followed by elementary (16.3%), multi-level (14.7%), and middle schools (12.6%).

Table 2
Number and Percent of Students with Perfect Attendance and Fifteen or More Absences by School Level, 2014-15 through 2016-17

	No Absences		15+ Total Absences		Total <i>N</i>
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	
2014-15					
Elementary	9,113	7.9	16,712	14.6	114,664
Middle	6,993	13.3	5,523	10.5	52,426
High	6,384	8.3	16,311	21.1	77,336
Center	1,057	15.6	4,454	65.9	6,762
Multi	3,816	17.0	2,883	12.9	22,424
2015-16					
Elementary	8,807	7.7	17,629	15.3	114,907
Middle	7,818	14.8	5,405	10.2	52,830
High	7,737	9.9	15,322	19.6	78,179
Center	878	14.3	4,379	71.5	6,121
Multi	2,901	12.4	3,257	13.9	23,443
2016-17					
Elementary	7,919	6.8	19,010	16.3	116,279
Middle	5,286	10.0	6,665	12.6	52,885
High	5,364	6.8	20,737	26.4	78,503
Center	415	7.2	4,033	70.1	5,754
Multi	2,287	9.7	3,483	14.7	23,676

ABSENCES BY TYPE: EXCUSED, UNEXCUSED, AND SUSPENSION

Figure 3 shows the percent of absences disaggregated by type: excused, unexcused, and suspension, by school level for 2016-17. Centers had the highest percent of unexcused absences (88.7%), followed by high schools (61.7%). The lowest percent of unexcused absences was in middle schools (34.5%; Appendix D).

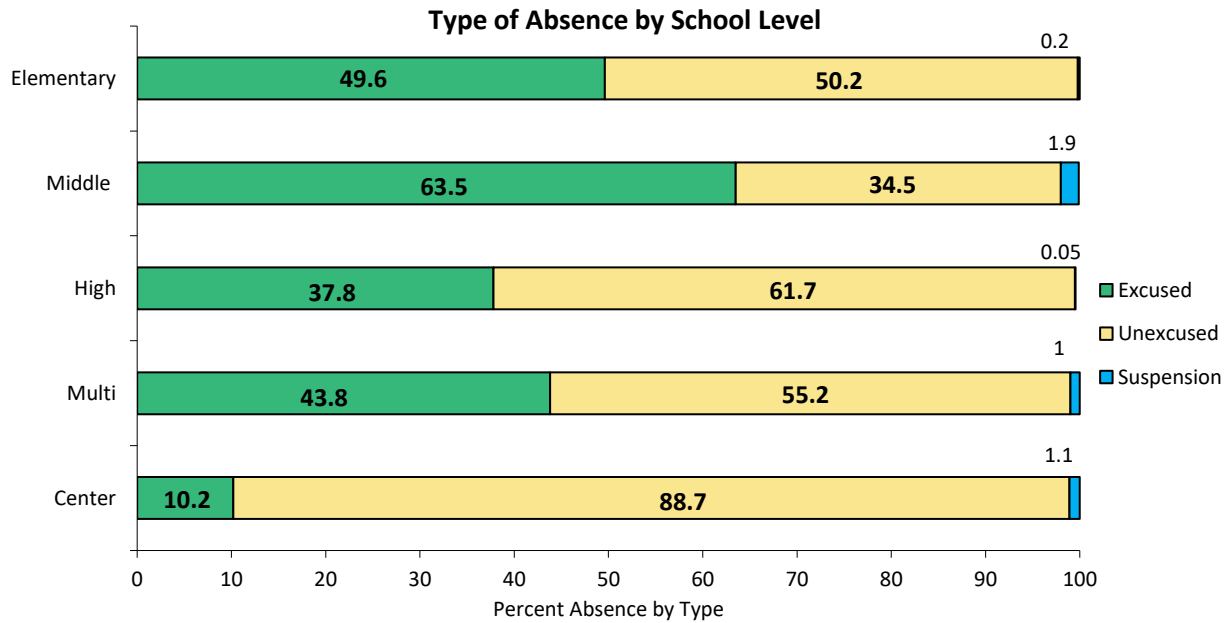


Figure 3. Rate of absence by type and by school level, 2016-17.

Figure 4 shows the percent of excused, unexcused, and suspension data based on the total number of absences, by the largest student racial/ethnic 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 absence percent (68.6%) than Hispanic (54.1%) or White students (39.6%; Appendix E).

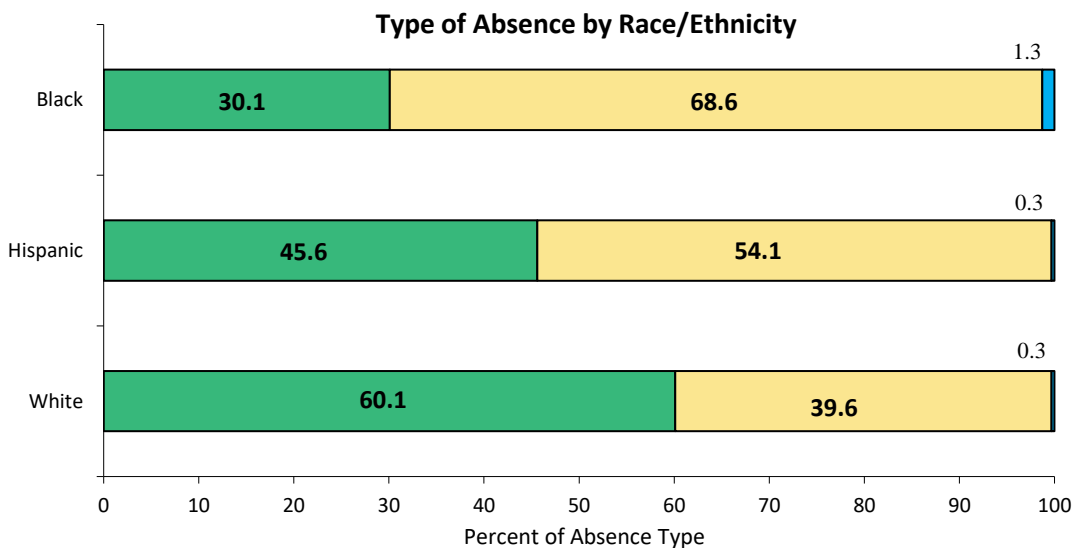


Figure 4. Rate of absence by type and by largest racial/ethnic groups, 2016-17.

ABSENCE TYPE AND ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMANCE

Differences in 2016-17 achievement test performance were explored between students with only excused absences and students with only unexcused absences. For this analysis, two mutually exclusive groups were formed. The 10+ excused group consisted of students identified as having only 10 or more excused, but *no* unexcused absences. The 10+ unexcused group contained only students with 10 or more unexcused, but *no* excused absences. For both groups, reading (Florida Standards Assessments for English language arts, or FSA ELA) and math (FSA mathematics and End of Course exams for Algebra I, Algebra II, and Geometry) were compared.

Whether subject areas were examined separately or together, students who had 10 or more excused absences performed better than did students who had 10 or more unexcused absences. As an example, for reading, 70.6% of students in the 10+ excused group achieved proficiency scores compared to 25.9% of students in the 10+ unexcused group. A similar pattern emerged for mathematics as well as for reading and mathematics combined (Figure 5 and Appendix F).

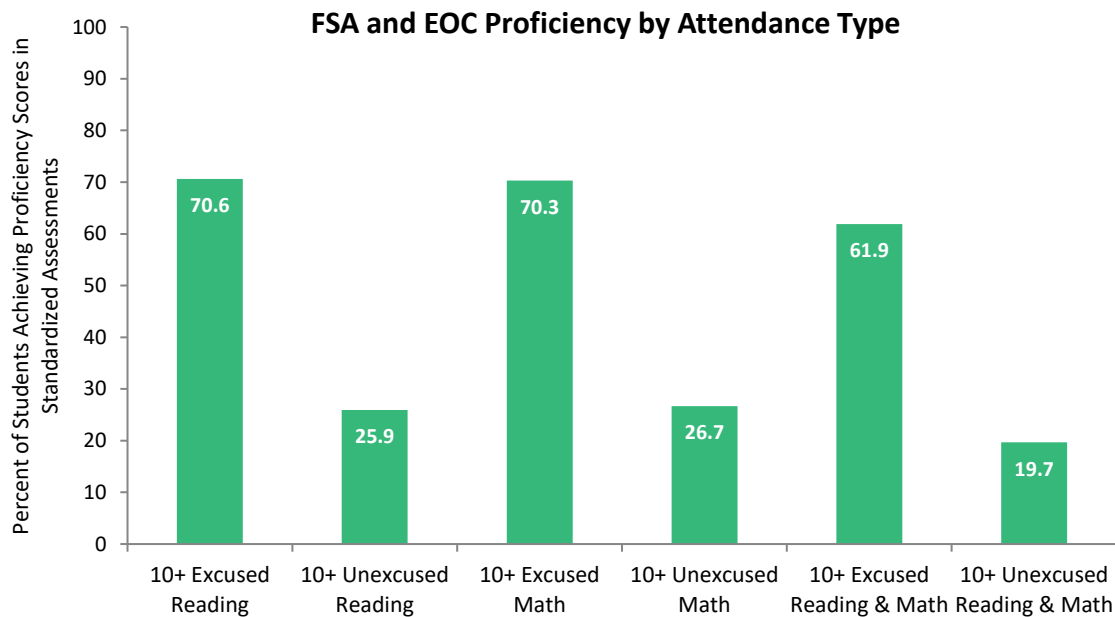


Figure 5. Percent of students proficient on standardized ELA and math assessments (FSA and EOC exams), by absence type for the 2016-17 school year.

ATTENDANCE CATEGORIES IN 2016-17

Passed by Congress in 2015, the federal education law, Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), replaces No Child Left Behind (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). States must include five indicators of school quality, four on academic achievement, and a fifth, non-academic measure. Many states chose chronic absenteeism as the fifth indicator (Jordan & Miller, 2017). Florida’s ESSA plan requires school districts to implement an early warning system which identifies students in K-8 who may need additional support to succeed in school. As part of the early warning system, attendance must be included (Florida Department of Education, 2017).

Broward data for the 2016-17 school year were examined using the attendance categories that align with the School Improvement Plans. The categories are: Satisfactory (0 – 4.9% absences); At-Risk (5 – 9.9% absences); Chronic Absence (10 – 19.9% absences); and Severe Chronic Absenteeism (20% or more absences). For students categorized as having either chronic or severe chronic absenteeism, middle schools had the smallest proportion of students (9.7%), followed by multi-level (11.0%), elementary (13.0%), high (23.0%), and centers (71.7%; Figure 6 and Appendix G).

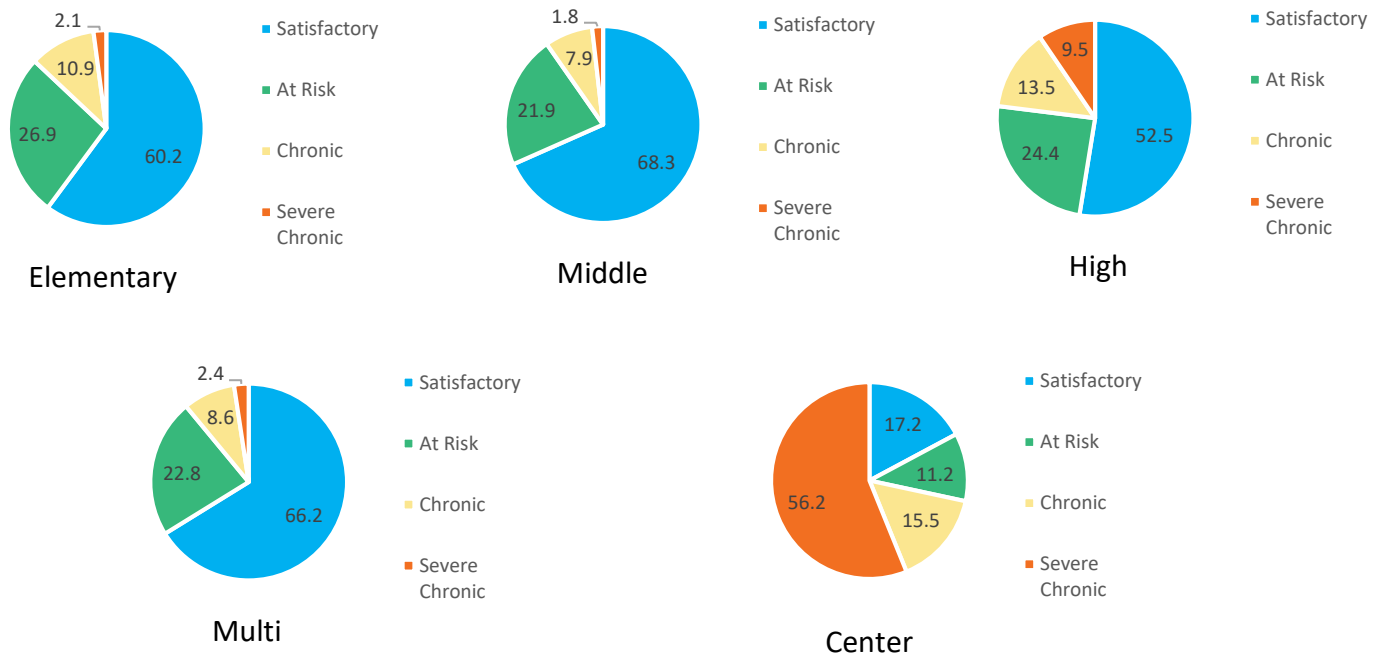


Figure 6. Percent of students absent by school level and attendance category for the 2016-17 school year.

SCHOOL LEVEL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION IN 2016-17

Three years of detailed attendance information at the school level, including absence by type, students with 10 or more unexcused absences, students with 15 or more total absences, the average daily attendance rate, and the average number of absences per student, are available in Appendix H.

SUMMARY

Overall Trends in Attendance

- The District's average daily attendance rate remained stable with less than one percentage point change from 2014-15 (94.7%) to 2016-17 (94.1%) (Figure 1 and Appendix A).
- Attendance was lower for high schools (92.6%) compared to both elementary (95.1%) and middle schools (95.8%). Attendance at centers was the lowest (70.6%); however, this represents an increase in the average daily attendance rate at centers of 1.3 percentage points from the 2015-16 school year to the 2016-17 school year (Figure 1 and Appendix A).
- Students enrolled at centers missed an average of 47 days during the 2016-17 school year. On average, high school students missed 13 days, middle school students 7 days, and elementary school students 8 days during the same time-period (Figure 2 and Appendix B).
- Black, Hispanic, and White students all had the same average daily attendance rate (94.1) in the 2016-17 school year, while in all three years, Asian students had the greatest average daily attendance rate (Table 1 and Appendix C).

Attendance Type in 2016-17

- *Perfect attendance:* Middle schools had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance (10%), followed by multi-level schools (9.7%). Elementary, high, and centers all had a similar percent of students with perfect attendance (6.8%, 6.8%, and 7.2%, respectively (Table 2).
- *Fifteen or more absences:* Centers had the highest percent of students with 15 or more absences (70.1%). High schools had the next highest (26.4%), followed by elementary (16.3%), multi-level (14.7%) and middle schools (12.6%; Table 2).
- *Unexcused absences by school level:* Centers had the highest percent of unexcused absences (88.7%), followed by high schools (61.7%). The lowest percent of unexcused absences was in middle schools (34.5%; Figure 3 and Appendix D).
- *Unexcused absences by race/ethnicity:* Black students had a higher percent of unexcused absences (68.6%), compared to Hispanic students (54.1%), and White students (39.6%; Figure 4 and Appendix E).

Attendance Type and Achievement in 2016-17

- Students who had 10 or more excused (but no unexcused) absences performed better on both reading and mathematics assessments than did students with 10 or more unexcused (but no excused) absences, with approximately three times the amount of excused absent students achieving proficiency scores than the unexcused absent students (Figure 5 and Appendix F).

Attendance Categories in 2016-17

- For students categorized as having either chronic or severe chronic absenteeism, middle schools had the smallest proportion of students (9.7%), followed by multi-level (11.0%), elementary (13.0%), high (23.0%), and centers (71.7%); Figure 6 and Appendix G).

DISCUSSION

The Student Services Department, responsible for monitoring attendance and initiating policy change, has taken the following actions to address attendance in the past school year:

New Position Created: Coordinator, District Attendance

Following the implementation of the Attendance Symposium in September 2016, the School Board approved a position within the Student Services Department to address Tier 1 attendance needs within the District. Responsibilities include: determining pertinent data that can be added to school reports, updating the Attendance Plan Template to align with ESSA guidelines, providing best practices for improving attendance and school reporting, increasing social media presence to promote good attendance (follow @BCPS_180 on Twitter), organizing future Attendance Symposium events, serving as chairperson for the District Attendance Committee, serving on the Reading by Grade-Level Initiative partnering with Children’s Services Council of Broward County, and organizing the annual attendance recognition event, “Evening Among the Stars.” Previously, these duties were distributed among support staff and leaders within the Student Services Department. This new coordinator position provides all schools with additional resources and supports programs within Student Support Initiatives. The coordinator works directly to support program leaders for School Social Work, Family Counseling, HEART (Homeless Education Assistance Resource Team), Foster Care, and Mentoring Tomorrow’s Leaders.

Defining Chronic Absenteeism for Broward County Public Schools

Chronic Absenteeism is when a student misses 10% of possible school days for any reason (including excused absences, unexcused absences, and suspensions). This helps us to use chronic absenteeism as an early warning indicator as early as the 20th day of school. By using a percent as an indicator of chronic absenteeism rather than a fixed number, services and support can be implemented early in the school year. Attendance data are available for all school personnel through BASIS to assist in identifying chronically absent students.

Annual Attendance Plan Template for Schools

During the 2016-17 school year, the Attendance Plan within the School Improvement Plan was revised to provide data that helps schools identify how many students are chronically absent. The revised plan mirrors data collected by the State of Florida for ESSA and categorizes students for attendance as: Satisfactory (0 – 4.9% absences), At-Risk (5 – 9.9% absences), Chronic Absence (10 – 19.9% absences), and Severe Chronic Absenteeism (20% or more absences). All data from the 2016-17 school year were uploaded into the School Improvement Plan prior to the first day of school for 2017-18 and is accessible to the team of stakeholders that develop plans to be shared with the community. The attendance plan is accompanied by a list of resources that include strategies for students at all levels of attendance.

All schools in BCPS provided a representative that attended the training for the School Improvement Plan, which included a comprehensive review of the revisions and updates for the Attendance Plan.

Expanded use of Attendance Success Coaches

ReServe South Florida is an organization that utilizes retired professionals to serve as Attendance Success Coaches. The coaches meet directly with students who were chronically absent during the previous school year. Coaches convey to the students the importance of regular attendance, doing well in school, and getting along with peers. They also give students the opportunity to discuss their feelings about school and academic challenges, and provide students with attention from a caring adult.

Increased Awareness Activities

Several initiatives to promote attendance have been implemented since the 2015-16 school year. In 2016-17, all middle schools, and select elementary and center schools, were provided with materials to promote increased attendance awareness among the students, school, parents and community. Promotional materials included outdoor banners, flyers, pledge cards, lanyards, and stickers for the elementary level. Additionally, the Student Services Department delivered presentations at open houses and community events, and at a board meeting.

During the 2016-17 school year, the Community Foundation of Broward provided 13 middle schools participating in the “School is Cool” grant with funds to support attendance rallies and attendance initiatives. Participating schools utilized incentives for students and actively promoted attendance at community events. September was once again declared “Attendance Awareness Month” at a regularly scheduled board meeting.

Prior to the start of the 2017-18 school year, school social workers delivered newly updated retractable attendance banners for the school’s front office and outdoor mesh banners for

community display to promote the message that “Attendance Counts! All Day, Every Day.” Every public school in Broward County received these promotional materials.

Continuing Student Attendance Recognition

Annually, students with exceptionally high attendance are recognized. Perfect Attendance recognitions are awarded to students who did not miss a day of school for the entire time they were at that school level (elementary, middle, or high). Elementary school students are recognized at the end of 5th grade (including students attending a K-8 school). Middle school students are recognized in 8th grade (including K-8 and 6-12 schools). High school students are recognized in their senior year.

A “Best in Class” attendance recognition is awarded yearly to high school seniors that have been continuously enrolled in a BCPS school from kindergarten through 12th grade, and have the best cumulative attendance in Broward County Public Schools.

Attendance Policy 5.5 and Additional Attendance Information

The complete BCPS attendance policy (Policy 5.5) is available at:

http://browardstudentservices.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Policy-5.5-Attendance-06-21-16.doc_.pdf

The Department of Student Services handles all matters concerning student attendance. For further information regarding attendance policies and/or initiatives please contact Phillip Shaver, Coordinator, District Attendance, Student Services at 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, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix B:

Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix C:

Average daily attendance rate by students' demographics, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix D:

Number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix E:

Number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by race/ethnicity, 2014-15 through 2016-17

Appendix F:

Student achievement by excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2016-17

Appendix G:

Chronic absenteeism by school level and by school, 2016-17

Appendix H:

Number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, students with 10 or more unexcused absences, 15 or more total absences, average daily attendance rate, and average number of absences per student, by school 2014-15 through 2016-17

References

- Florida Department of Education, 2017. Retrieved on October 4, 2017 from <http://www.fldoe.org/core/fileparse.php/14196/urlt/ESSADraftStatePlan.pdf>.
- Jordan, P.W. & Miller, R. (2017, September). Who's in. Chronic absenteeism under the every student succeeds act. Retrieved on October 4, 2017 from <https://www.future-ed.org/whos-in-chronic-absenteeism-under-the-every-student-succeeds-act/>.
- U.S. Department of Education (2017, October 4). Retrieved from <https://www.ed.gov/essa>.

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