

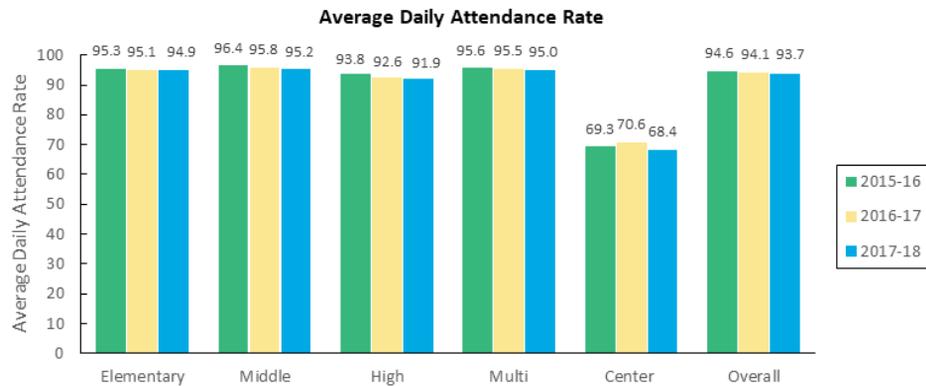
On Average

94%

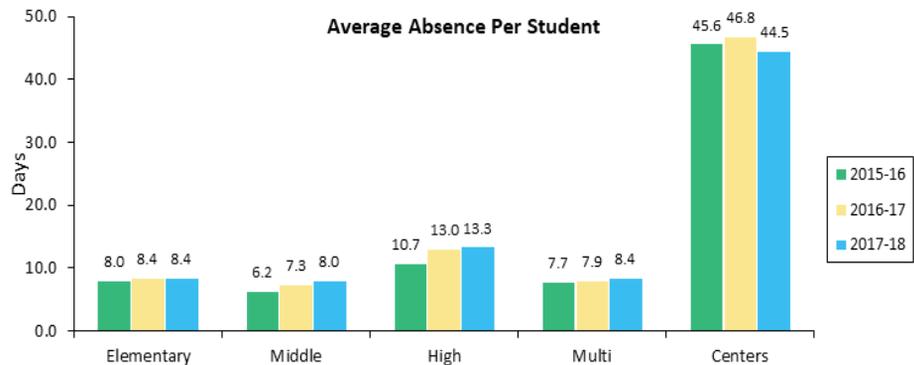
of students are in school everyday

- The average daily attendance rate decreased by almost one percentage point between 2015-16 and 2017-18.
- Attendance was lower for high schools (92%) compared to elementary, middle, and multi-level schools (95%). Attendance at centers was the lowest (68%).
- Black, Hispanic, and White students had the same daily attendance rate (94%). However, Black students had a higher proportion of unexcused absences (70%) than Hispanic (56%) or White students (42%).
- Average absence per student ranged from 8 at elementary schools to 45 at centers during the 2017-18 school year.
- Approximately 2.5 times the amount of excused absent students achieved proficiency scores on FSA and EOC assessments in reading and math than unexcused absent students.
- Middle schools had the smallest proportion of students with chronic or severe chronic absenteeism (12%), followed by elementary and multi-level (13%), high (26%) and centers (76%).

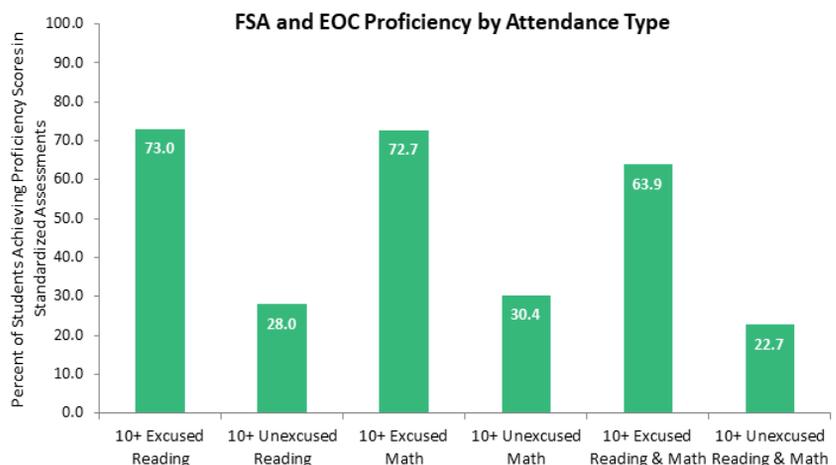
Attendance Rate by School Level



Average Number of Absences per Student



Absence Type and Achievement



Additional Resources

- Detailed school-by-school results: <https://www.browardschools.com/sar>
- Information on BCPS's attendance programs: <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/34787>

THE SCHOOL BOARD OF BROWARD COUNTY, FLORIDA

**DANIEL GOHL
CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICER**

Signatures on File

DATE: October 9, 2018

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, 2015-16 THROUGH 2017-18**

Broward County Public School's overall average daily attendance rate (ADA) decreased by almost one percentage point between the 2015-16 (94.6%) and 2017-18 (93.7%) school years. The ADA rate was similar for elementary, middle, and multi-level schools (ranging from 94.9% to 95.2%) in 2017-18. High schools were lower (91.9%), and centers showed the lowest ADA rate (68.4%).

During the most recent school year, ADA rates were the same for Black, Hispanic, and White students (93.6%). However, absences varied by type for each group. Of all absences recorded, Black students had the largest proportion of unexcused (compared to excused) absences (69.9%) followed by Hispanic (56.0%) and White students (42.1%).

In the 2017-18 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 two and a half times the amount of excused absent students achieving proficiency scores than the unexcused absent students.

Broward data for the 2017-18 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 (11.6%), followed by elementary (13.2%), multi-level (13.4%), high (25.8%), and centers (76.4%).

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: <https://www.browardschools.com/sar>.

RWR/DG/VSW/RGB/SLS/RAA/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 2015-16 THROUGH 2017-18

This brief summarizes attendance trends in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) for the three-school year period from 2015-16 to 2017-18.

METHOD

Data from all three school years, excluding summers, were gathered from the District’s data warehouse for all district schools (district-managed and charter). 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 decreased from 94.6% in 2015-16 to 93.7% in 2017-18. Figure 1 illustrates the ADA rate by school level for the three-year period (also see Appendix A).

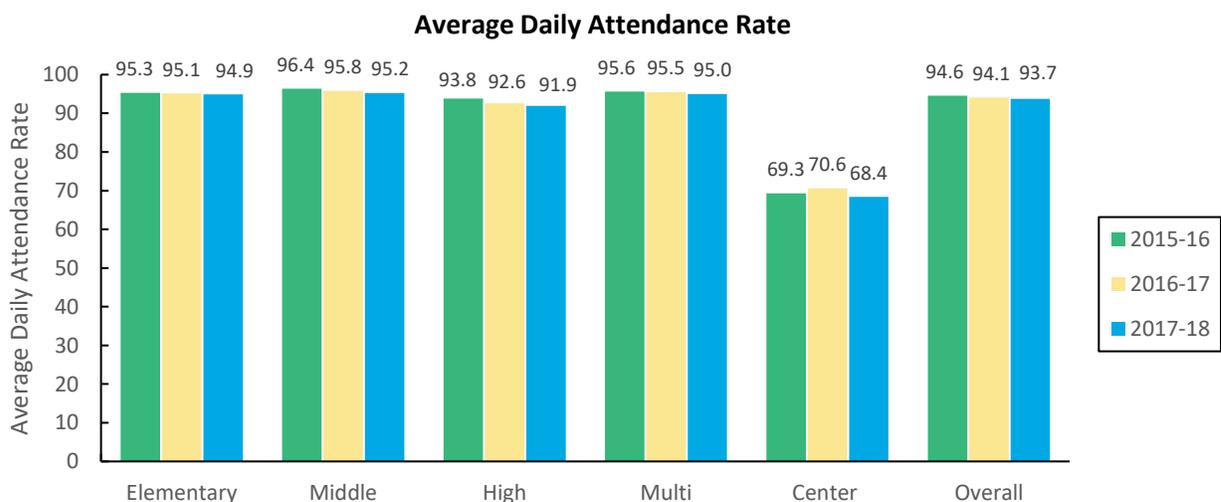


Figure 1. Average daily attendance rate, by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18.

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, elementary, and multi-level students. Over the three-year period the average number of recorded absences increased slightly at all but the center schools. Despite the small drop in absences at the center level, students at centers still averaged more than three times as many days absent than students at the high school level (also see Appendix B).

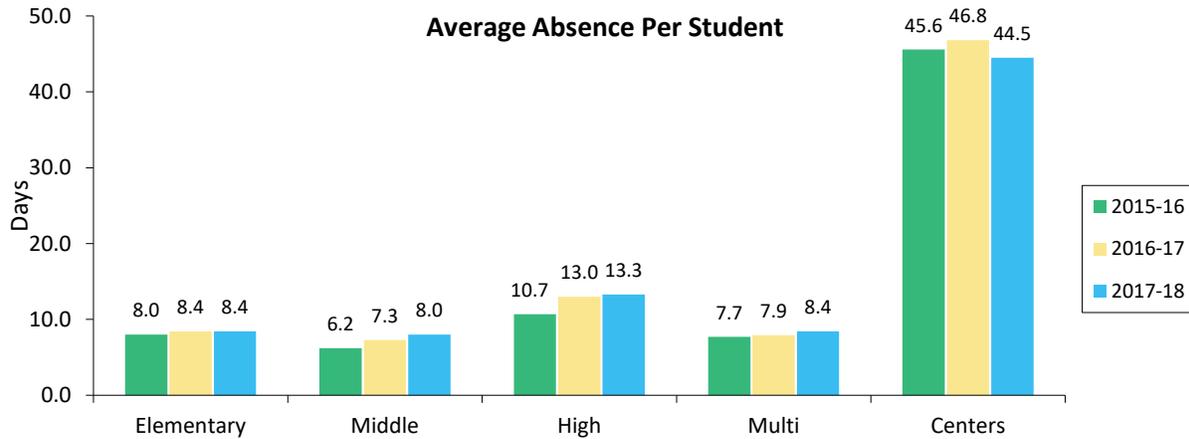


Figure 2. Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18.

Table 1 displays the average daily attendance rate by race/ethnicity for the three-year period. For the District, the ADA decreased with slightly less than a one percentage point difference between 2015-16 and 2017-18. Black, Hispanic, and White students all had the same average daily attendance rate (93.6) in the 2017-18 school year. In all three years, Asian students had the greatest average daily attendance rate (also see Appendix C).

Table 1
Student Attendance Rates by Students' Race/Ethnicity, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Race/Ethnicity	2015-16		2016-17		2017-18	
	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate	Population	Average Daily Attendance Rate
Asian	9,847	96.1	9,937	95.7	9,962	95.6
Black	107,743	94.5	107,335	94.1	106,869	93.6
Hispanic	88,548	94.7	92,616	94.1	95,440	93.6
Multi-Racial	7,170	94.8	7,327	94.1	7,377	93.7
Native American	800	94.0	758	93.4	761	93.0
Pacific Islander	409	94.3	411	93.9	452	93.6
White	60,963	94.6	58,693	94.1	56,399	93.6
District	275,480	94.6	277,097	94.1	277,260	93.7

Table 2 displays the number and percent of students with perfect attendance and students with fifteen or more total absences, by school level. Multi-level schools had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance (9.6%), followed by middle schools (7.4%) and elementary schools (6.7%). High schools and centers had a similar percent of students with perfect attendance (4.9%, and 4.5%, respectively). Centers had the highest percent of students with fifteen or more absences (74.3%). High schools had the next highest (29.8%), followed by multi-level (16.9%), elementary (16.6%), and middle schools (15.0%). Over the three-year period the percent with no absences decreased and the percent with fifteen or more absences increased at all school levels.

Table 2
Number and Percent of Students with Perfect Attendance and Fifteen or More Absences by School Level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

	No Absences		15+ Total Absences		Total
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>N</i>
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
2017-18					
Elementary	7,750	6.7	19,135	16.6	115,103
Middle	4,007	7.4	8,123	15.0	54,295
High	3,886	4.9	23,475	29.8	78,830
Center	237	4.5	3,888	74.3	5,236
Multi	2,293	9.6	4,010	16.9	23,796

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 2017-18. Centers had the highest percent of unexcused absences (89.9%), followed by high schools (63.4%). The school level with the lowest percent of unexcused absences was middle schools (39.6%; also see Appendix D). Over the three-year period the percent of excused absences went down and the percent of unexcused absences went up for all school levels except centers.

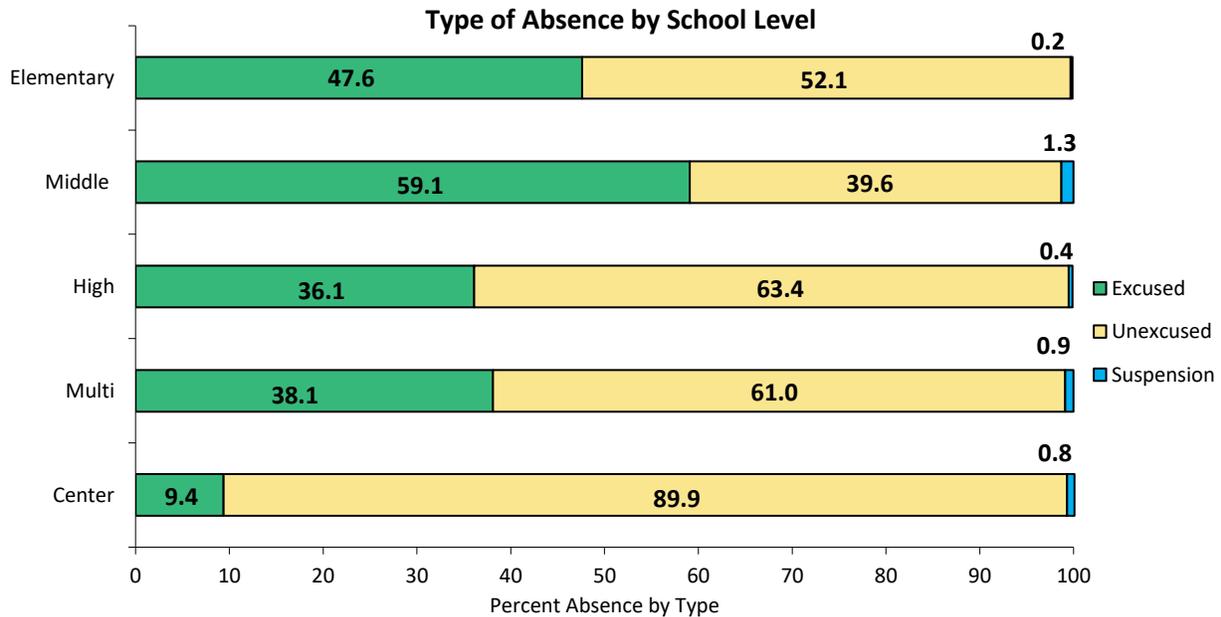


Figure 3. Rate of absence by type and by school level, 2017-18.

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 the same average daily attendance rate (93.6%), Black students registered a higher unexcused absence percent (69.9%) than Hispanic (56.0%) or White students (42.1%; also see Appendix E). Over the three-year period the percent of excused absences went down and the percent of unexcused absences went up for all three racial/ethnic groups.

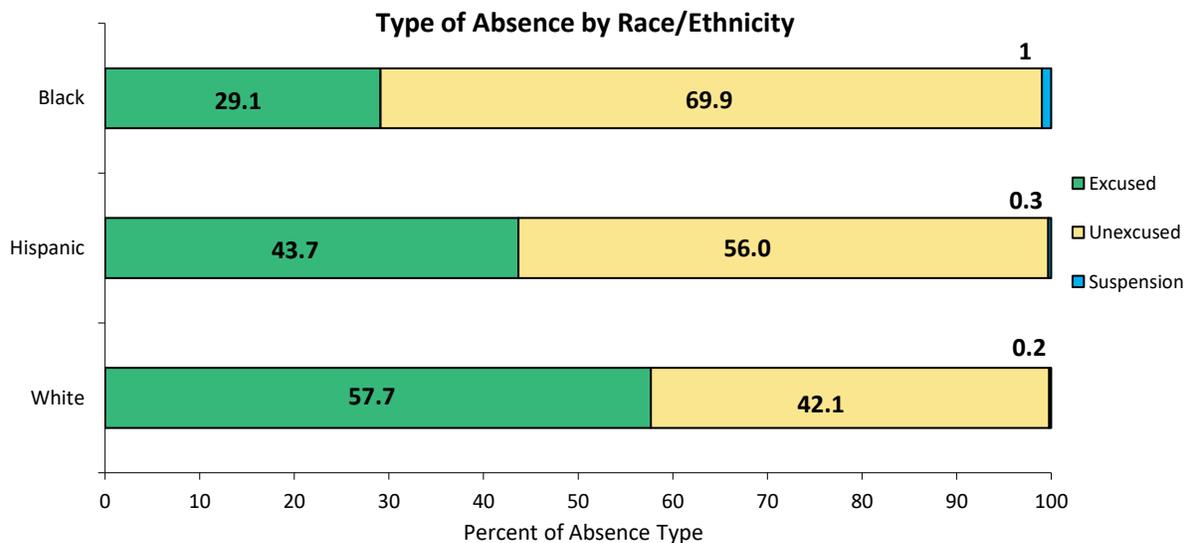


Figure 4. Rate of absence by type and by largest racial/ethnic groups, 2017-18.

ABSENCE TYPE AND ACHIEVEMENT PERFORMANCE

Differences in 2017-18 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 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, 73.0% of students in the 10+ excused group achieved proficiency scores compared to 28.0% of students in the 10+ unexcused group. A similar pattern emerged for mathematics, as well as for reading and mathematics combined (see Figure 5 and Appendix F).

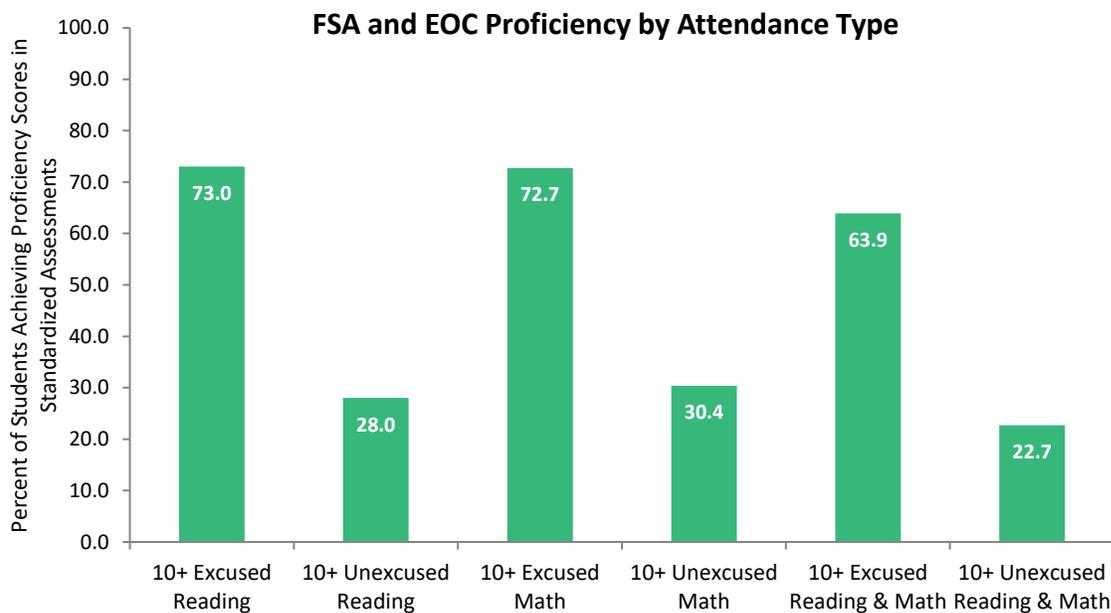


Figure 5. Percent of students proficient on standardized ELA and math assessments (FSA and EOC exams), by absence type for the 2017-18 school year.

ATTENDANCE CATEGORIES IN 2017-18

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 2017-18 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 Absenteeism (10 – 19.9% absences); and Severe Chronic Absenteeism (20% or more absences). Middle schools had the smallest proportion of students categorized as having either chronic or severe chronic absenteeism (11.6%), followed by elementary (13.2%), multi-level (13.5%), high (25.7%), and centers (76.3%); see Figure 6 and Appendix G).

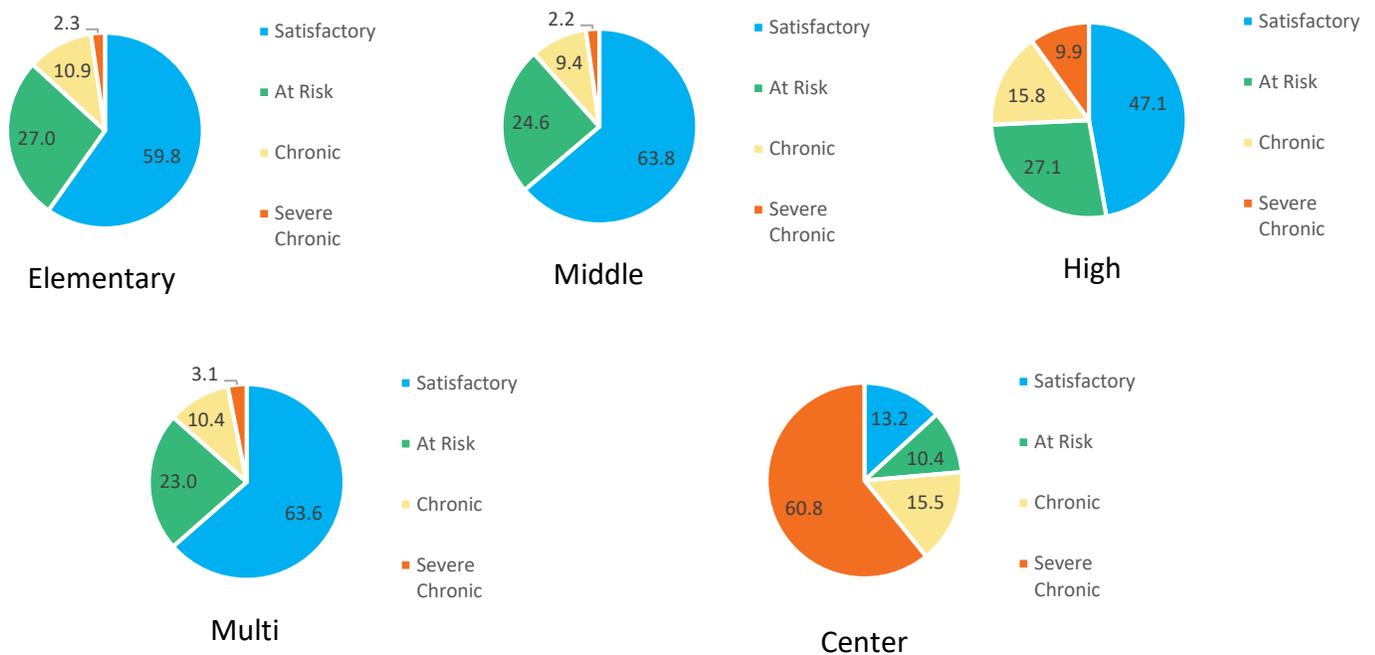


Figure 6. Percent of students absent by school level and attendance category for the 2017-18 school year.

SCHOOL LEVEL ATTENDANCE INFORMATION IN 2017-18

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 decreased by almost one percentage point change from 2015-16 (94.6%) to 2017-18 (93.7%) (see Figure 1 and Appendix A).
- Attendance was lower for high schools (91.9%) compared to elementary (94.9%), middle (95.2%), and multi-level schools (95.0%). Attendance at centers was the lowest (68.4%) (see Figure 1 and Appendix A).
- Students enrolled at centers missed an average of 45 days during the 2017-18 school year. On average, high school students missed 13 days, while middle school students, elementary school students, and multi-level school students missed 8 days during the same time period (see Figure 2 and Appendix B).
- Black, Hispanic, and White students all had the same average daily attendance rate (93.6%) in the 2017-18 school year, while in all three years, Asian students had the greatest average daily attendance rate (see Table 1 and Appendix C).

Attendance Type in 2017-18

- *Perfect attendance:* Multi-level schools had the highest percent of students with perfect attendance (9.6%), followed by middle schools (7.4%) and elementary schools (6.7%). High schools and centers both had a similar percent of students with perfect attendance (4.9%, and 4.5%, respectively (see Table 2)).
- *Fifteen or more absences:* Centers had the highest percent of students with 15 or more absences (74.3%). High schools had the next highest (29.8%), followed by multi-level (16.9%), elementary (16.6%) and middle schools (15.0%; see Table 2).
- *Unexcused absences by school level:* Centers had the highest percent of unexcused absences (89.9%), followed by high schools (63.4%). The lowest percent of unexcused absences was in middle schools (39.6%; see Figure 3 and Appendix D).
- *Unexcused absences by race/ethnicity:* Black students had a higher percent of unexcused absences (69.9%), compared to Hispanic students (56.0%), and White students (42.1%; see Figure 4 and Appendix E).

Attendance Type and Achievement in 2017-18

- 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 two and a half times the amount of excused absent students achieving proficiency scores than the unexcused absent students (see Figure 5 and Appendix F).

Attendance Categories in 2017-18

- Middle schools had the smallest proportion of students categorized as having either chronic or severe chronic absenteeism (11.6%), followed by elementary (13.2%), multi-level (13.5%), high (25.7%), and centers (76.3%; see 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:

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 the percentage of days as an indicator for 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. The School Improvement Plan also provides a snapshot of the first and second semester for the number of students in attendance categories outlined in the Attendance Plan.

Annual Attendance Plan Template for School Improvement Plans

During the 2017-18 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 Absenteeism (10 – 19.9% absences), and Severe Chronic Absenteeism (20% or more absences). All data from the 2017-18 school year are available in the School Improvement Plan prior to the first day of school for 2018-19 and are 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 and sample plans for all school levels (elementary, middle, high, and centers).

All schools in BCPS provide a representative that attends training sessions for the School Improvement Plan. The session includes a comprehensive review of the revisions and updates for the Attendance Plan.

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. The Student Services Department delivered presentations at open houses and community events, and at a School 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.

Members of the District Attendance Committee participated in a special presentation for the August 2017 Regular School Board Meeting for the proclamation of September as Attendance Awareness Month.

The Second Annual Attendance Symposium (started in 2015-16) was scheduled for Wednesday, September 13, 2017 at Bailey Hall (Broward College in Davie). This event was rained out by Hurricane Irma, a category 5 storm as it approached Broward County, FL, which caused schools to close in BCPS from September 7 – 15, 2018. While the event was not rescheduled during the school year, a focus on September as Attendance Awareness Month was notable throughout the District in anticipation of the information and connections that would be shared at the event. Entering the 2018-19 school year, the Second Annual Attendance Symposium is coming back to BCPS at the Broward Center for Performing Arts on September 12, 2018.

Partners for Attendance Recognition and Student Achievement

Broward County is surrounded by major athletic teams that are invested in the South Florida community. The Miami HEAT and the BCPS Attendance Office initiated an attendance incentive for students that attended 95% or more school days in the first quarter of the 2017-18 school year. Students received a certificate and instructions to access discounted tickets in recognition

of their outstanding attendance. More than 2,000 students and families were able to attend Miami HEAT games from November through January due to this partnership.

The Florida Panthers and BCPS Attendance Office worked together to recognize students for attending 95% or more school days during the second quarter of the school year. For this initiative at participating schools, students received a certificate and a special URL to access tickets to games celebrating their school level. The first game scheduled to recognize high school and middle school students was February 21, 2018. This was the first home game after the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. The Florida Panthers dedicated the game to the MSD community and all advertisements were removed from the walls of the rink and replaced with #MSDStrong. Elementary schools were divided into two different nights to accommodate the large number of schools and students that were eligible. The Florida Panthers have continued to support BCPS in many ways that do not include high profile games or media coverage. The mascot, Stanley C. Panther, participated in special recognition events for seniors that had perfect attendance from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Stanley C. Panther also welcomed students with perfect attendance to the “Evening Among the Stars” held at Piper High School.

The Miami Marlins have been the Attendance Program’s longest partner in the sporting arena. Since 2012, the Marlins have provided students with perfect attendance in their school level two complimentary tickets to the current season’s games. This tradition continued for the 2017-18 school year where more than 300 students had perfect attendance for elementary school (K-5), middle school (6-8), or high school (9-12). With new ownership of the Marlins and a special focus on youth programs, the Marlins and J.P. Morgan launched the Baseball for Kids Program on May 1, 2018 and partnered with the BCPS Attendance Program to identify more than 15,000 students with perfect attendance for the 2017-18 school year and provided a code (via District ParentLink) for parents to receive two complimentary tickets to a game during the summer.

Continuing Student Attendance Recognition

The “Evening Among the Stars” is an annual event where students with exceptionally high attendance are recognized. Perfect Attendance certificates are awarded to parents of 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. Since spring of 2012, there were 10 students recognized that achieved perfect attendance for all school years. The 2017-18 school year added six more students to the list for a total of 16 in the seven years of the event.

District Attendance Committee

A committee of stakeholders representing District leadership, principals, teachers, parents, community partners, and safety personnel contribute to the guidance of policy and procedures around Policy 5.5: Attendance. The committee meets each month during the school year to consider current trends in attendance data, community needs, state statutes related to attendance, and school-based considerations for the attendance campaign. For questions related to this committee, contact the Coordinator of District Attendance.

Attendance Policy 5.5 and Additional Attendance Information

The complete BCPS attendance policy (Policy 5.5) is available in English, Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese at: <https://www.browardschools.com/Page/34787>

The Student Services Department 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 online at <https://www.browardschools.com/sar>)

Appendix A:

Average daily attendance rate by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix B:

Average number of absences per student, by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix C:

Average daily attendance rate by students' demographics, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix D:

Number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix E:

Number and percent of excused and unexcused absence, by race/ethnicity, 2015-16 through 2017-18

Appendix F:

Student achievement by excused and unexcused absence, by school level, 2017-18

Appendix G:

Chronic absenteeism by school level and by school, 2016-17 through 2017-18

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 2015-16 through 2017-18

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- 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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