



# Supporting School Attendance in a Time of Changing Norms

Focus on the Gap(s)!

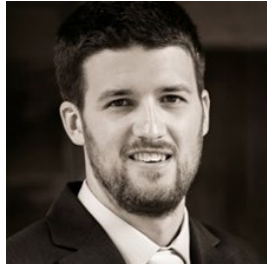
Monday, July 22, 3:00-4:30 PM ET



*Panelist*  
**Hedy Chang**  
Executive Director  
Attendance Works



*Panelist*  
**Denise Forte**  
President & CEO  
The Education Trust



*Panelist*  
**Johann Liljengren**  
Director, Dropout Prevention & Student  
Reengagement  
Colorado Department of Education



*Panelist*  
**Nat Malkus, Ph.D.**  
Senior Fellow and Deputy Director,  
Education Policy Studies  
American Enterprise Institute



*Panelist*  
**Sonja Brookins Santelises, Ed.D.**  
CEO  
Baltimore City Public Schools



*Moderator*  
**John Gomperts**  
Executive Fellow  
Campaign for Grade-Level Reading

# Supporting School Attendance In a Time of Changing Norms

Nat Malkus, AEI  
July 22, 2024



# R2L Chronic Absenteeism Data

2017

2018

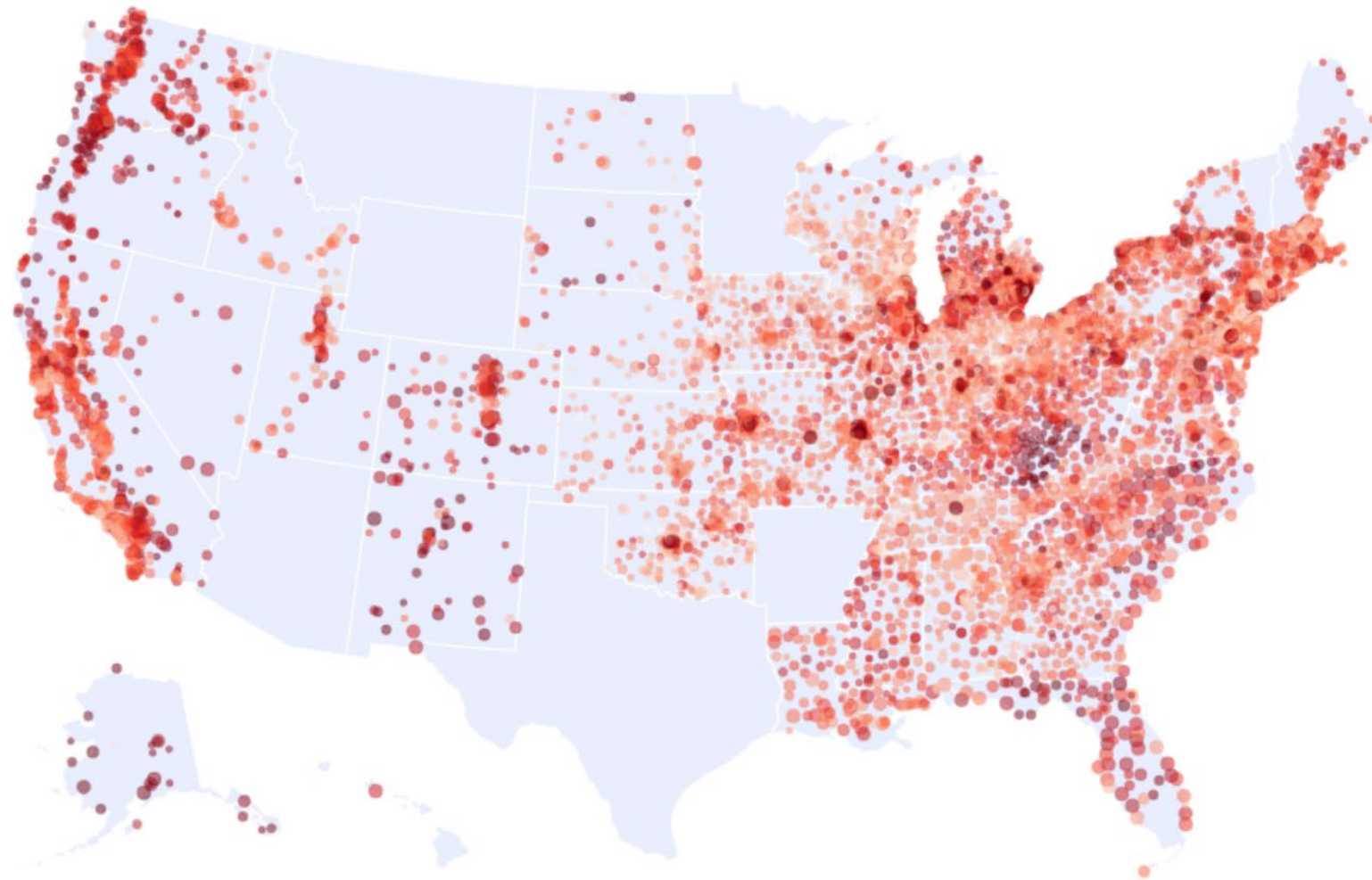
2019

2020

2021

2022

2023



Source: Return to Learn Tracker.

\* Estimates from ED.gov data. ©2024



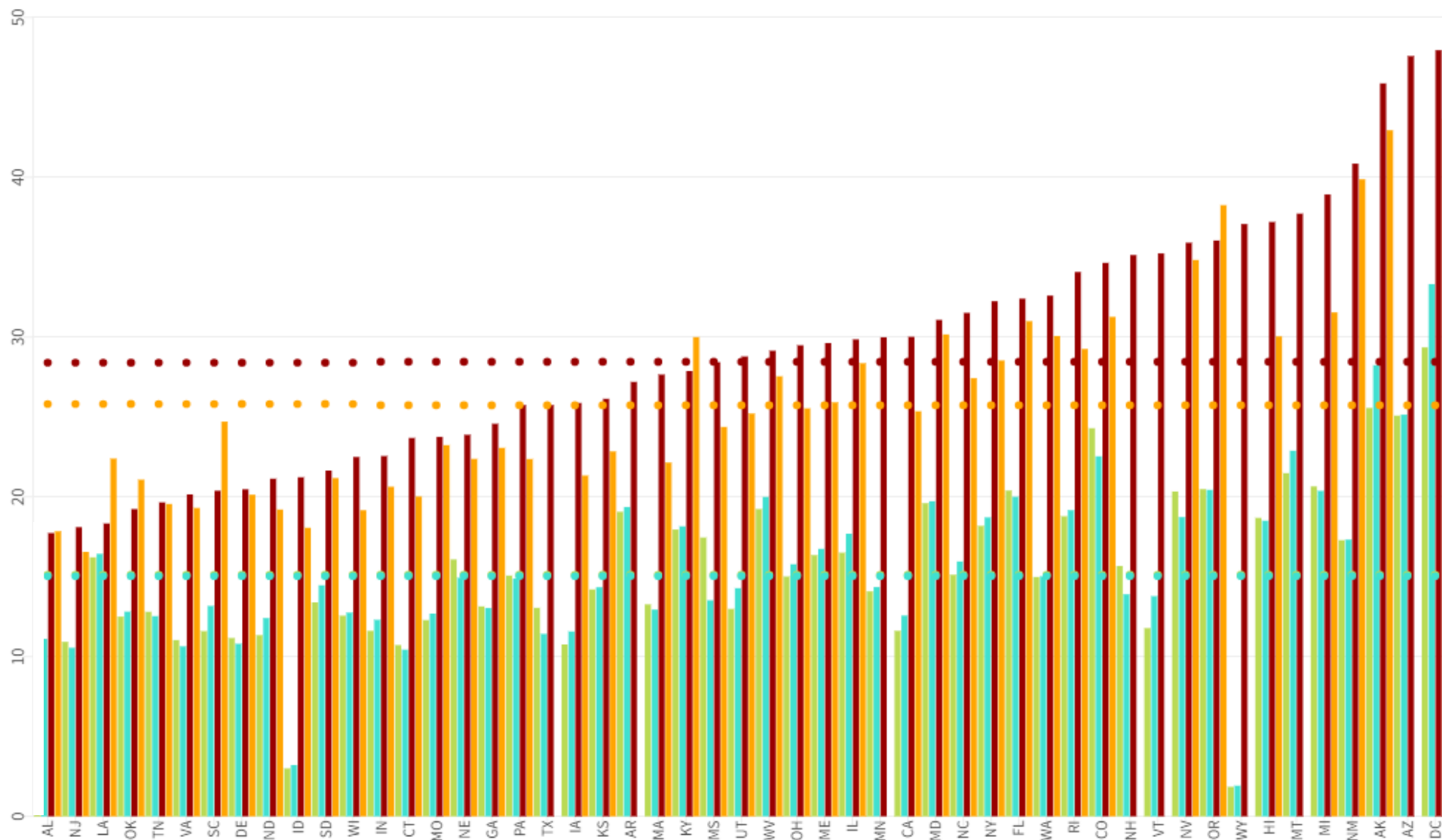
# State Change In Chronic Absenteeism: 2018–2023



4 of 4

**2023:** Despite falling in 37 of 43 states in **2023**, average *chronic absenteeism* remains 71% above pre-pandemic levels, hindering academic recovery.

2018 2019 2022 2023 2018 avg. 2019 avg. 2022 avg. 2023 avg.



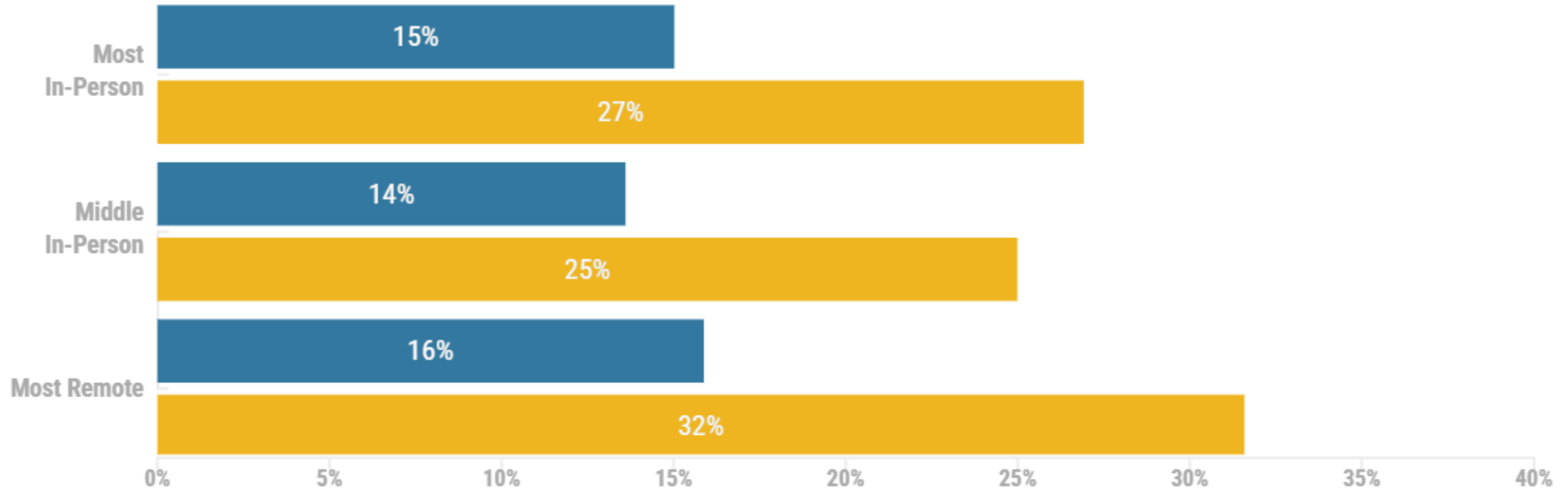
# Chronic Absenteeism by District Type: 2018–2022

District-level data reveal patterns in the kinds of districts that saw greater and lesser changes in chronic absenteeism over time. **Click on the drop down menu below** to see these differences by achievement, size, 2020–21 remote instruction, 2021–22 mask mandates and other factors.

## Chronic Absenteeism by District Type: 2018–2022

In-Person Instruction 2020-21

School Year 2018 2022



Source: [Return to Learn Tracker](#) • ©2023  
More information available at [ReturnToLearnTracker.net/ChronicAbsenteeism](https://ReturnToLearnTracker.net/ChronicAbsenteeism)



**Table 2. Chronic Absenteeism by Student Race: 2020 and 2022**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Percentage- Point Change</b>	<b>Percentage Increase</b>
All Students	14%	29%	15.5	114%
Asian	7%	16%	8.2	112%
Black	19%	39%	20.7	112%
Hispanic	15%	36%	21.1	139%
White	11%	24%	12.8	114%

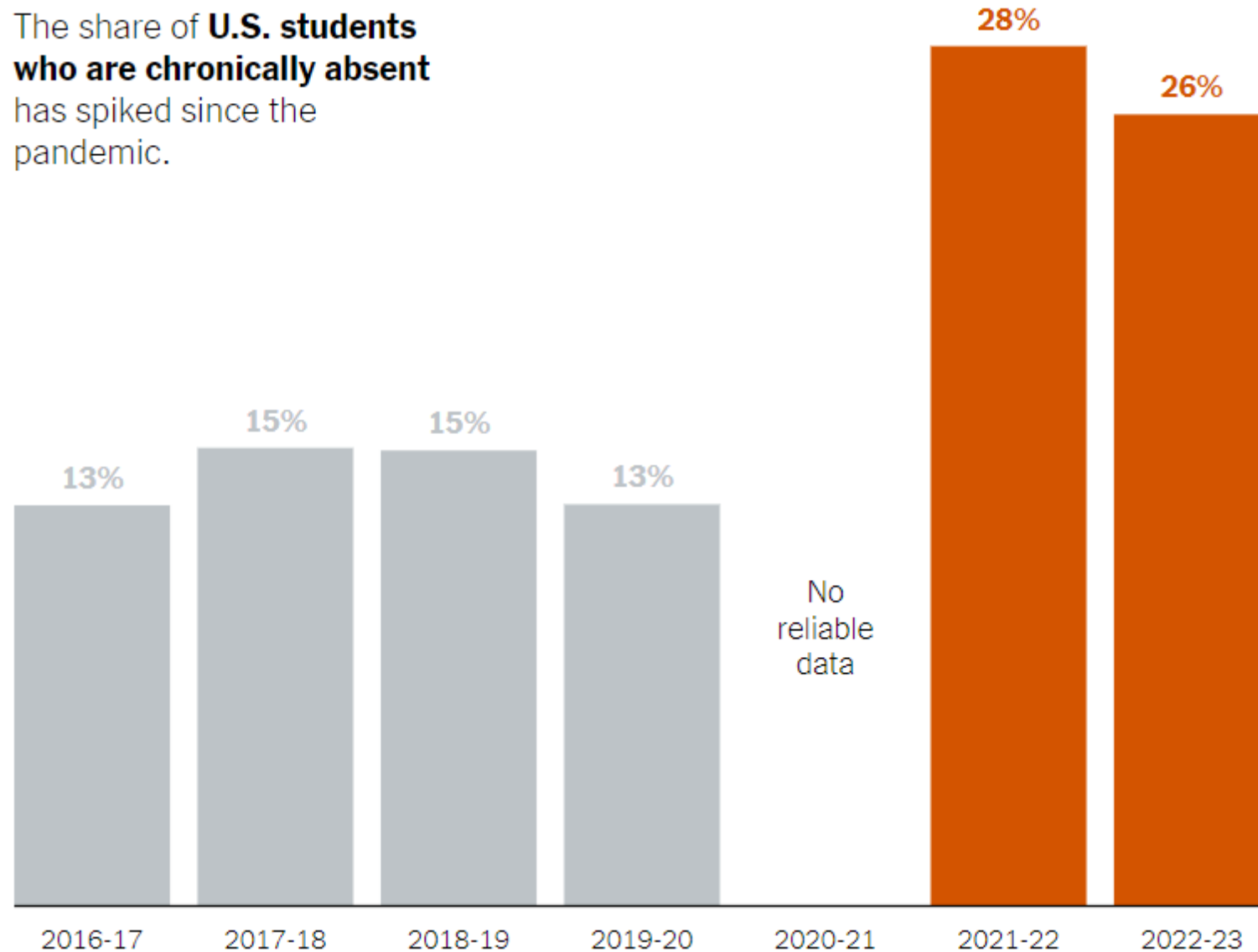
**Table 2. Chronic Absenteeism by Student Race: 2020 and 2022**

	<b>2020</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>Percentage- Point Change</b>	<b>Percentage Increase</b>
All Students	14%	29%	15.5	114%
Asian	7%	16%	8.2	112%
Black	19%	39%	20.7	112%
Hispanic	15%	36%	21.1	139%
White	11%	24%	12.8	114%



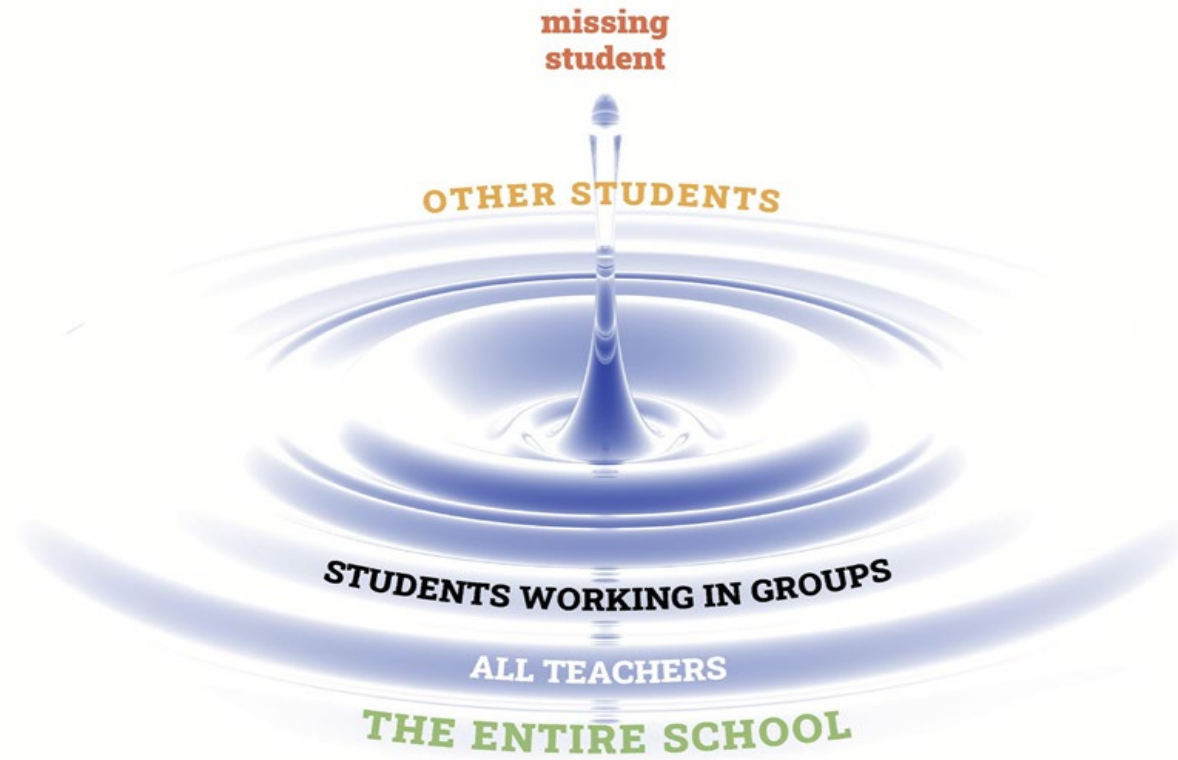
# A Response to Prevent a New Normal

The share of **U.S. students who are chronically absent** has spiked since the pandemic.



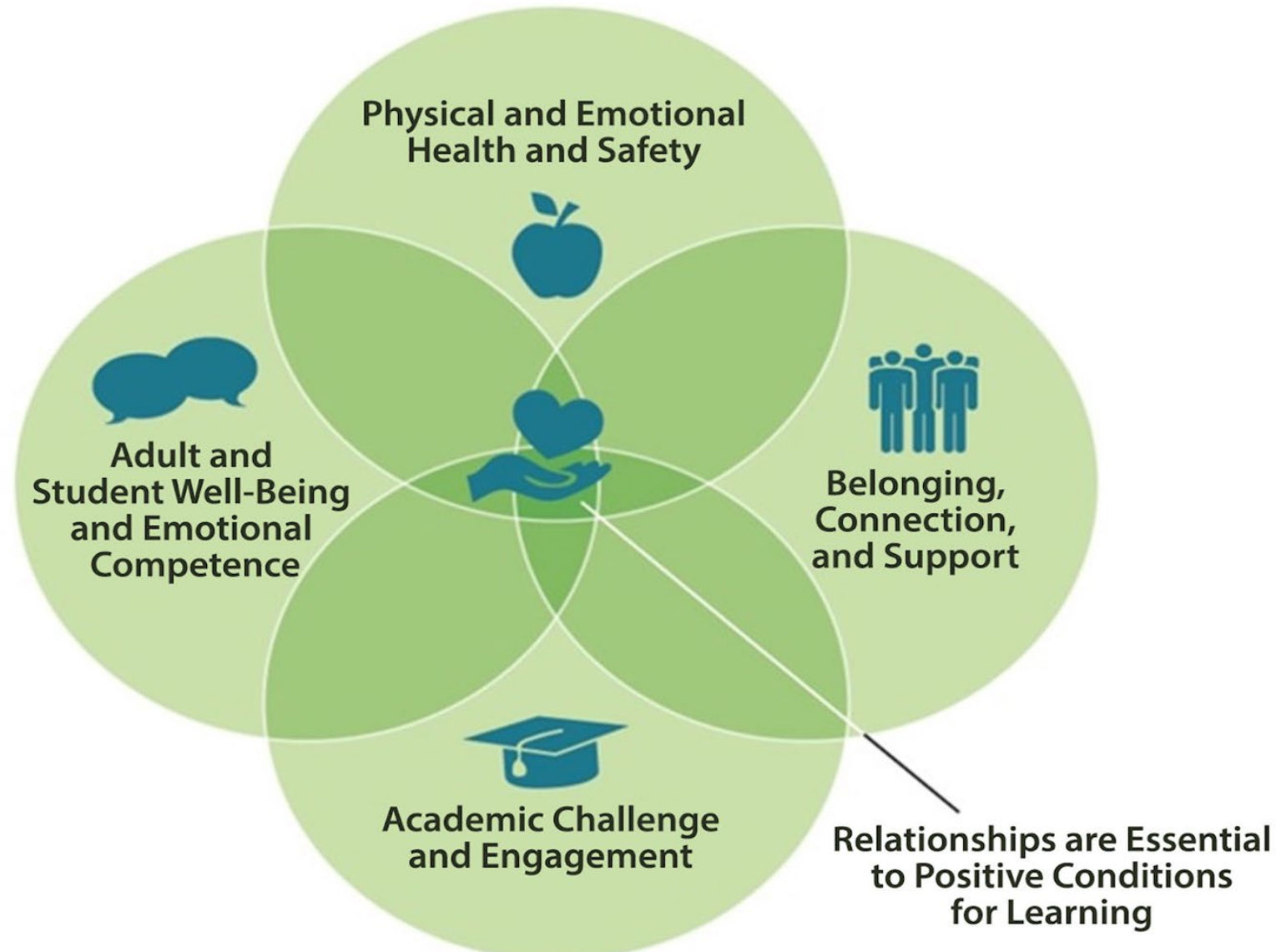


## When a Student Misses School, the Impact Ripples



**66%** of students attend a school with 20% or more absenteeism (SY 2021-22) versus **25%** prior to the pandemic

# High levels of absence reflect an erosion in positive conditions for learning



# The key to reducing chronic absence is addressing what causes students to miss too much school

## Barriers

- Chronic and acute illness
- Family responsibilities or home situation
- Trauma
- Poor transportation
- Housing and food insecurity
- Inequitable access to needed services (including health)
- System involvement
- Lack of predictable schedules for learning
- Lack of access to technology
- Community violence

## Aversion

- Struggling academically and/or behaviorally
- Unwelcoming school climate
- Social and peer challenges
- Anxiety
- Biased disciplinary and suspension practices
- Undiagnosed disability and/or lack of disability accommodations
- Caregivers 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
- Need to work conflicts with 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
- Assume students must stay home for any symptom of illness
- Attendance only matters in the older grades
- Suspensions don't count as absence

<https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/addressing-chronic-absence/3-tiers-of-intervention/root-causes/>

# Cut Chronic Absenteeism by 50% Over 5 Years

- Aspirational, yet Plausible
- A Clear Target
- Adapts to Different Contexts
- Trackable & Accountable
- Comprehensive Effort
- Commitment Over Time



The Education Trust



# Craft Your Engagement and Attendance State Road Map

For more information go to:



# Plenary Sessions

## Supporting School Attendance in a Time of Changing Norms

Monday, July 22, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

## The Promise and Potential of Play-Based Learning

Tuesday July 23, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

## The Influence of SEL: Closing Literacy Gaps in the Classroom

Wednesday, July 24, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

## AI's Gap-Closing Potential: Emerging Opportunities and Challenges

Thursday, July 25, 3–4:30 p.m. ET



# Core Constituency Sessions

## Ready, Set, Go: Two-Generation Approaches for Kindergarten Success

Monday, July 22, 12:30–2 p.m. ET

## A Virtual Gratitude Reception: CGLR Salutes Children's Museums

Tuesday, July 23, 12:30–2:00 p.m. ET

## Building Brighter Futures:

## National Funders Share Insights on Place-Based Strategies

Wednesday July 24, 12:30–2 p.m. ET

## Ready on Day One:

## Tools to Support CGLR Community Coalitions With Preparing for School

Friday July 25, 12:30–2 p.m. ET



# Summer Rebroadcast Schedule

Implementation, Replication, Fidelity: How to REALLY Scale High-Impact Tutoring

Tuesday, July 30, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

Not Without Teachers: Intentional Teacher Development for Improved Student Outcomes

Tuesday August 6, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

Education Recovery Scorecard: Results and Implications

Tuesday, August 13, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

Connecting Communities: National & Local Partners Linking Families to the Internet

Tuesday, August 20, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

Emergent Bi-Linguals & English Language Learners: The Sturdy Bridge Opportunity

Tuesday, August 27, 3–4:30 p.m. ET

Connect  
and  
Engage!



@readingby3rd



@CampaignforGLR



@CampaignforGLR

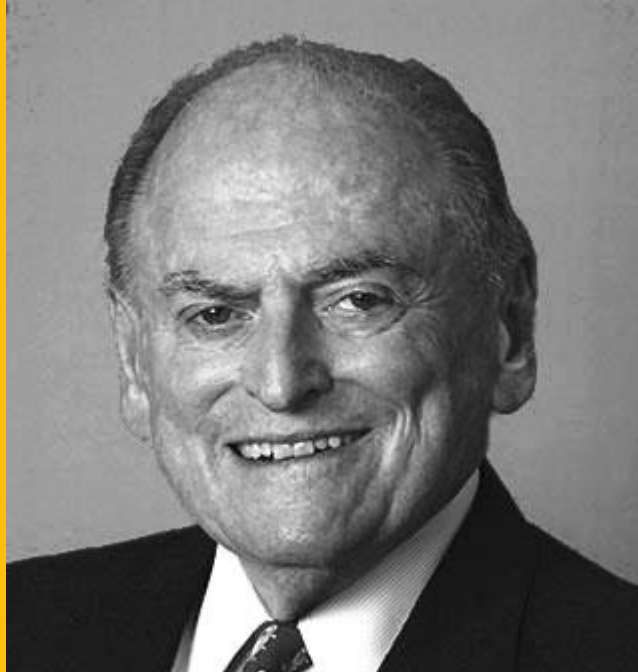
#GLRWeek

#FocusontheGaps

[GLRWeek2024.gradelevelreading.net](https://GLRWeek2024.gradelevelreading.net)

MEET THE MOMENT:  
**FOCUS On The Gap(s)!**

**GLR WEEK 2024**



In Memoriam of a Fierce Champion for Literacy & CGLR

# Bert Berkley

1923-2024

Read more about his work and accomplishments [→](#)



GLRWeek2024.gradelevelreading.net / #GLRWeek #FocusontheGaps