

# **Chronic Absenteeism**

Mid-County Citizens Advisory Board  
January 16, 2025

# Key Attendance Definitions

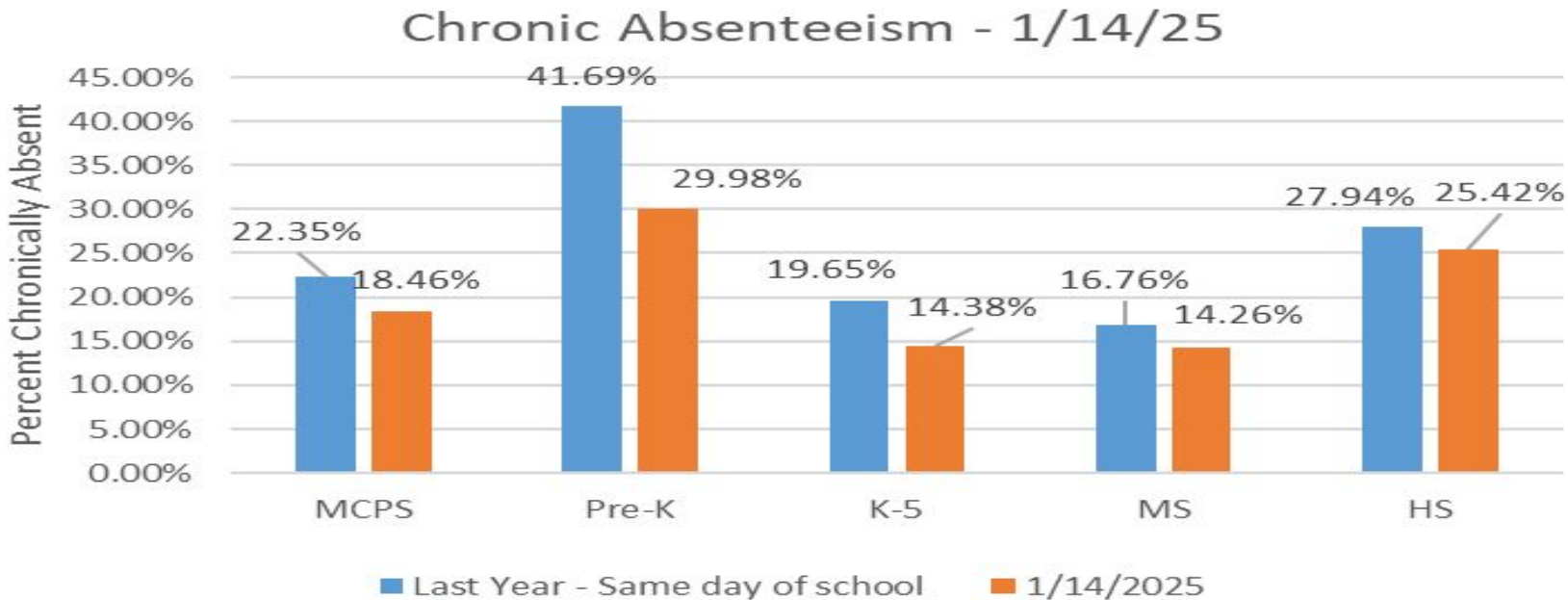
<b>Chronically Absent</b>	<b>A student who misses 10% or more of the days they are enrolled, regardless of reason</b> <b>18 or more days absent in a school year</b> <b>About 2 days absent per month from September to June</b>
<b>Truant</b>	<b>A student who is absent, unexcused, for 20% or more of the days they are enrolled</b>

MCPS is focusing efforts on **chronically absent** students using preventative, problem-solving, and trauma-informed strategies, with an emphasis on family and student engagement, in alignment with Maryland State Department of Education accountability measures.

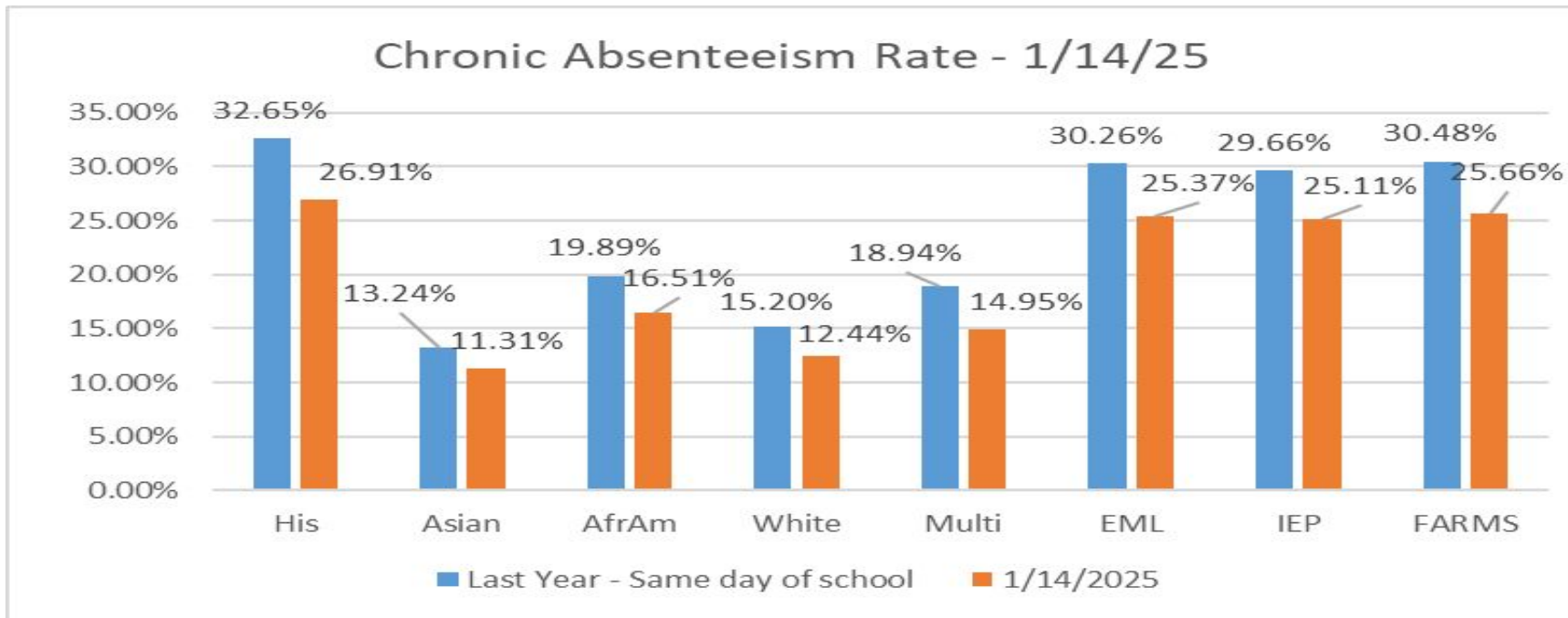
## Chronic Absenteeism is Persistent; Why?

- The pandemic and online learning platforms **shifted the culture** around the value of in-person attendance.
- Youth **mental health** crisis.
- Some students do not see themselves in their school community; they **do not feel welcome**, do not see themselves in the curriculum, and have **no sense of belonging**.
- Public school is an **antiquated system**; the day-to-day student experience has not really changed in over a hundred years.
- Attending school is a **luxury for some students** - and may involve choosing between learning or supporting their family.

# Attendance Data



# Attendance Data



NOTE: These data are unofficial and are pulled from the MCPS attendance dashboard; H-Hispanic/Latino; BI/Afr/Am- Black or African American; Multi- 2 or More Races; EML- Emergent Multilingual Learners; IEP- Individualized Education Program; FARMS- Free and Reduced-price Meals System

# Attendance Strategies That Are Making an Impact

**Positive messaging**  
around the  
importance of  
attendance

Addressing **school  
and classroom  
culture and climate;**  
fostering welcoming  
learning environments

**Specific Focus on  
attendance** in the  
School Improvement  
Plan; Well-being  
Goals

Ongoing, **real-time  
attendance data  
analysis** and action  
via Student  
**Well-being Teams**

Central Office  
**Accountability  
Structures and  
Processes;** Weekly  
school monitoring and  
targeted support

**Student - Parent -  
Community**  
engagement and  
**partner**  
collaboration

# Why Students Disengage from Learning

- Not experiencing success in learning = Give up
- Not having a good relationship with the teacher = React/Resist
- Not connected with a supportive group of friends = Isolated/Alienated

# Personalized Reengagement

- Individual conferences
- Immediate opportunities for change of image
- Add some extra caring support
- Do more to account for individual differences
- Positive activities when not in school
- Keep making them feel cared about and positively special



# Other Topics from the Advisory Board

- Resources/Support
- Attendance Tracking/Technology
- Attendance Policies, Changes, and Enforcement
- Stakeholder Engagement
- School-Specific and System-Wide Concerns
- Broader System Challenges
- Creative and Future Solutions

**Questions?**  
**Thank you!**