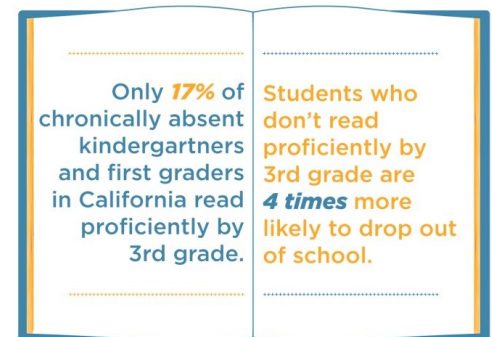


#EVERYKIDCOUNTS: LEGISLATION TO ADDRESS CALIFORNIA'S ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TRUANCY CRISIS

Big Problem

- **250,000** elementary school students in CA are estimated to be **chronically absent** – missing 10% or more of the school year.
- Only **17%** of chronically absent kindergartners and first graders in California **read proficiently** by 3rd grade, compared to **64%** for students with good attendance.
- Students who do not read proficiently by **third grade** are **4xs** more likely to leave school without a diploma.
- **Dropouts** cost CA more than **\$46 billion** each year, including more than **\$1 billion** in juvenile crime costs, **\$22.5 billion in reduced earnings** and **\$8.5 billion in lost economic growth**.

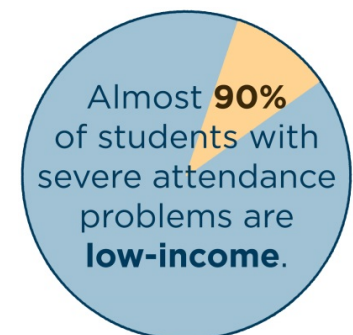


CA's Hidden Crisis

- **1 in 10** districts reported that they **do not know** their chronic absence rate for the 2013-14 school year.
- CA **does not collect** information on students' total absences, chronic absenteeism, or chronic truancy.
- Nearly **half a million** CA students transferred schools last year.
 - **65%** of CA students change schools at least once between 1st-8th grades, and **26%** change schools at least **3xs** during that period.
 - When students move, there is **no state infrastructure** to transfer local attendance records from district to district. As a result, records are often **lost or late**, and the same bad attendance patterns reemerge in the new district.

Impact on Disadvantaged Youth

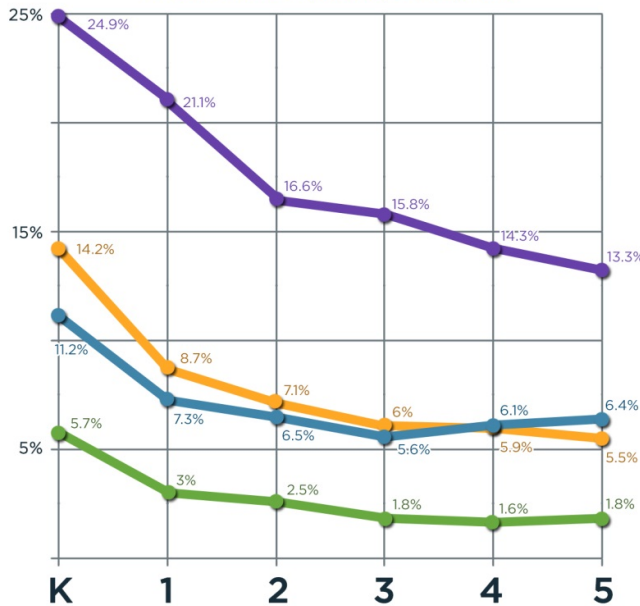
- Almost **90%** of the elementary students with the **most severe attendance problems** – missing **over a month of school** per year – are from **low-income families**.
 - In 2013, almost **15%** of low-income students in California dropped out of school.
- More than **1 in 5 Latino** and **African American** students are chronically absent, **2.5xs** the average for white students.
- **Reading scores** for chronically absent **Latino** kindergartners were **significantly lower** than for their peers of other ethnicities who had missed similar amounts of school.
- Over **18%** of **English learners** were truant and **40,000** EL elementary students were chronically absent in 2013-2014.
 - **English learners** have the **highest dropout rates** in California, exceeding **21%**.
- Youth in **foster care** change placements about **once every six months**, and can change schools **1-2xs per year** on average. They lose **4-6 months** of educational attainment each time they transfer.
 - Approximately **75%** of foster youth perform **below grade level** standards, and by third grade **80%** have had to **repeat a grade** in school.



Chronic Absence Rates

Broken Down by Race and Grade

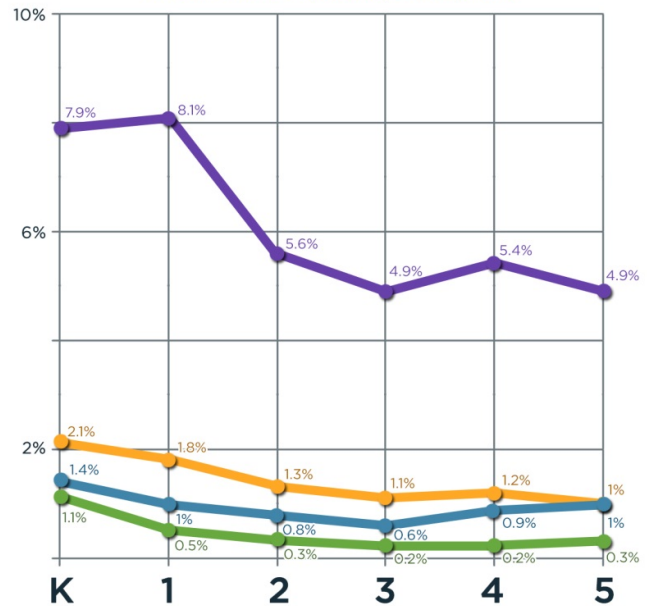
African-American | Latino | White | Asian



Chronic Truancy Rates

Broken Down by Race and Grade

African-American | Latino | White | Asian



Disparities in Discipline Affect Attendance

- African American students missed **over twice as many days of school per student due to suspensions** than white students. This was also true for American Indian or Alaskan Native students.
- The number of school days missed per student due to suspensions was **3x** as high for **special education** students and **5x** as high for **foster** students when compared to all students.



We Can Solve This

- **Every kid counts**, so CA should **count every kid**. Attendance disparities must be a **wake-up call** for local and state policymakers.
- We can give districts better tools to make informed decisions about how to help each child. **AB 1866** (Bocanegra) would enhance the CA Dept. of Education’s student record system to include a student’s attendance, chronic absence and chronic truancy.
 - School districts could count every kid’s attendance over time, no matter where they move. Districts could also track patterns of attendance problems for at-risk students, such as low-income and foster students.
 - Educators could intervene early when a student is at risk of falling behind, before the problem becomes too severe.
- **AB 1672** (Holden), **AB 2141** (Hall, Bonta), and **AB 1643** (Buchanan) would help districts assess which truancy intervention programs work most effectively to improve attendance and encourage adoption of proven models.