# Chronic Absenteeism

## At a Glance

### DEFINITION

Chronic absenteeism is defined as a student who misses ten (10) percent or more of his/her enrolled academic year.

**Chronic Absenteeism** ≠ **Truancy**

**Missing School for ANY Reason, Excused or Unexcused, Puts Students at Risk**

❌ Family Vacation

❌ Illness

❌ Didn't Want To Go

❌ Suspension

❌ Doctor's Appointment

2 Absences per month x 9 Months of school
**Likely to fall behind in school**
Photo Source: absencesaddup.org

❌ Slept In

❌ Missed the Bus
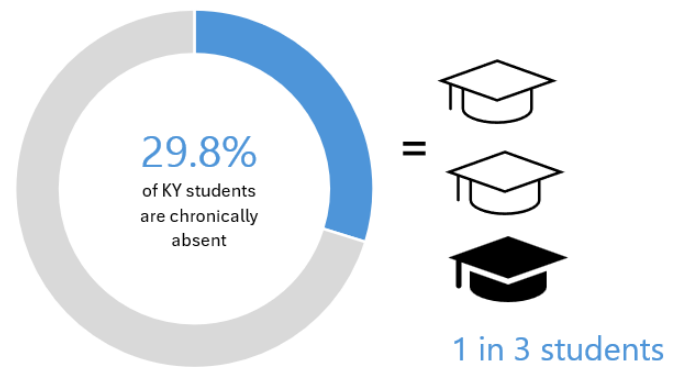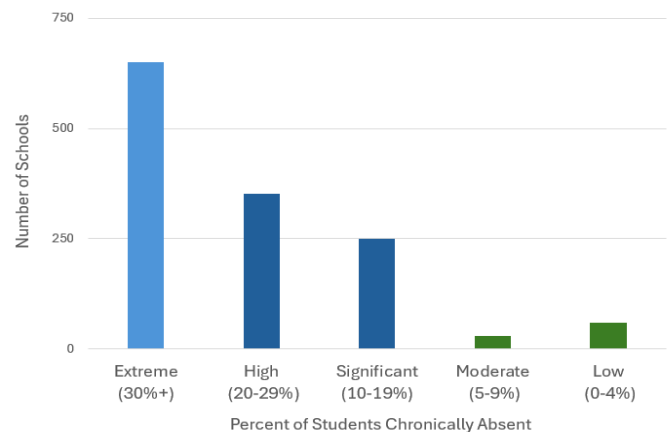
❌ Homelessness

### UNDERSTANDING CAUSES

- ✓ **Misconceptions**: absences are only a problem if they are unexcused; missing two days per month doesn't affect learning; sporadic absences are not a problem; attendance only matters in older grades
- ✓ **Negative School Experiences**: struggling academically or socially; bullying; lack of appropriate accommodations for disability; suspensions/expulsions; negative attitude of parents due to their own school experience
- ✓ **Lack of Engagement**: lack of culturally relevant, engaging curriculum; no meaningful relationships with adults in school; stronger ties with peers outside of school; unwelcoming school climate; failure to earn credits/no future plans; mental health challenges
- ✓ **Barriers**: illness and lack of health, vision, and dental care; unsafe path to school; poor transportation; involvement with child welfare or juvenile justice; trauma

### STATE DATA

Infinite Campus Pathway:
KY State Reporting → KDE Reports → Chronic Absenteeism

**29.8%** of KY students are chronically absent

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**1 in 3 students**

Data from 2022-23 Kentucky School Report Card



Bar chart: Number of Schools vs. Percent of Students Chronically Absent — Extreme (30%+), High (20-29%), Significant (10-19%), Moderate (5-9%), Low (0-4%)

### STRATEGIES FOR SUPPORT

**Know Your Data**

Track students who miss school time for any reason. Early identification of students and trends in absenteeism (e.g., time of year) will help with home communications and specific interventions.

**Communicate with Home**

Write or call families/ caregivers as early as possible with student-specific attendance data to raise awareness. Help with action plans to overcome barriers.

**Identify Root Causes**

Assess prevalent reasons for absences. Create positive home and community partnerships to build support systems health, transportation, school climate, etc.