

# Connecticut's Systemic Approach to Addressing Chronic Absence



## 513,513 Students

- 52.5% Students of Color
- 42.4% Eligible for Free/Reduced-Price Meals
- 17.2% with Disabilities
- 9.7% English Learners



## 201 School Districts

- 1,523 Schools/Programs
- 53,435 Certified Staff
- 46,117 Non-certified Staff
- 11.2% Educators of Color

November 30, 2023

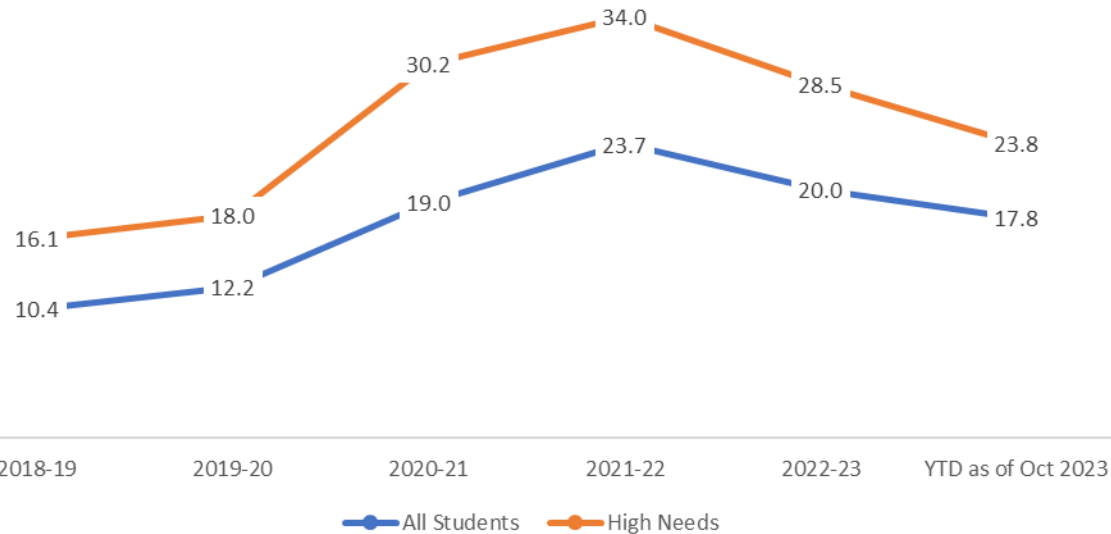
Connecticut State Department of Education



# Attendance Results



**Chronic Absenteeism Trend**  
*Percentage of Students Chronically Absent*



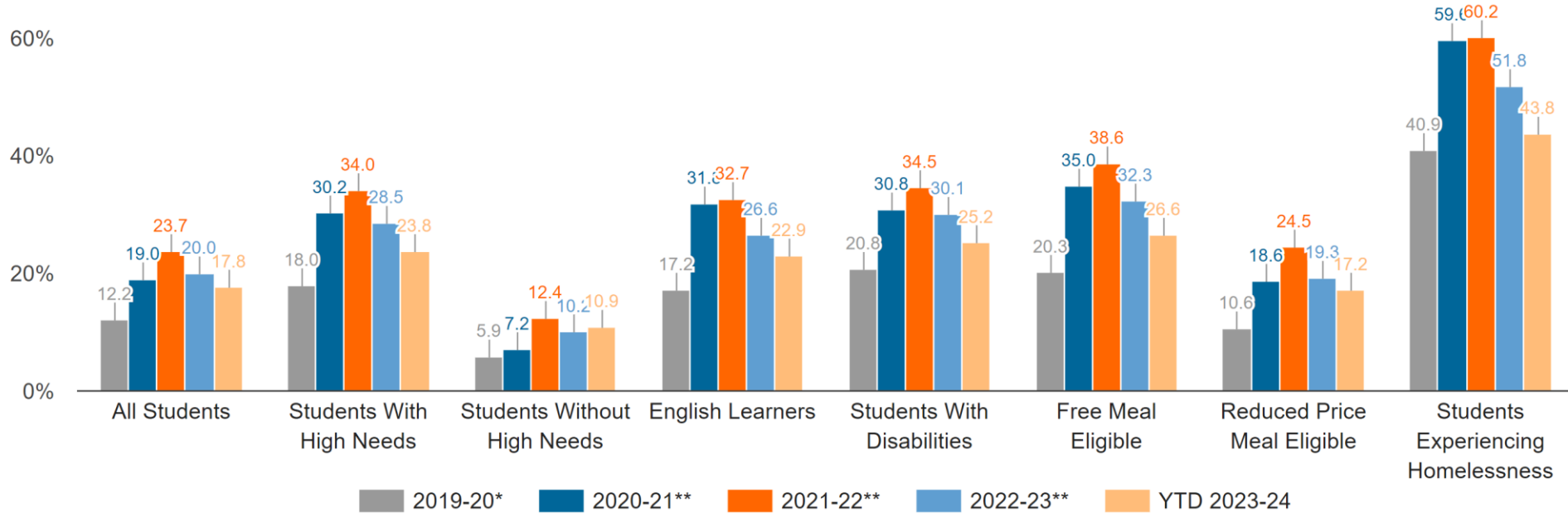
- A student is “in attendance” if present for at least half of the instructional school day
- Chronic absenteeism is missing at least 10 percent of school days (e.g., 18 of 180 days)
- From 2021-22 to 2022-23, chronic absenteeism declined by 3.7 percent for all students and 5.5 percent among students with high needs
- Approximately 18,000 more students attended school regularly in 2022-23 as compared to in 2021-22
- Around 100,000 students were chronically absent in 2022-23
- For 2023-24, YTD rates as of October 2023 are heading in the right direction



# % of Students Chronically Absent YTD as of October 2023



Percentage of Students Chronically Absent by Student Group (YTD as of October 2023 compared to 2022-23, 2021-22, 2020-2021, and 2019-20)



\*Calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020. \*\*Calculations include both in-person and remote days.

# Reasons for Keeping Child(ren) Home

- Major themes around why respondents are keeping children home
- These themes were repeated in the open-ended questions

Family obligations.  
Emergencies (e.g.,  
death in the family),  
vacation, visitors,  
family time

Mental health,  
anxiety

Safety.  
He doesn't want to  
go, he feels safer at  
home. I don't feel  
safe after school  
violence has  
happened

Illness, Chronic  
illnesses, Asthma,  
COVID, allergies

Needing breaks.  
Taking a mental  
health day –  
Sometimes they just  
need a break or a  
breather, burnout

Teachers'  
insufficient  
engagement with  
Spanish-speaking  
students



# Systemwide Structures to Support a Multi-tiered Approach



Systemwide Structures to Support Attendance	Multi-tiered Systems of Support
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use data to inform strategies and interventions (e.g., high school, kindergarten, special education) and foster accountability</li> <li>2. Build awareness and take a positive approach to chronic absence</li> <li>3. Build communities of support for districts by identifying and leveraging bright spots</li> <li>4. Policy guidance that is clear and aligned with research-informed practices</li> <li>5. Cross-agency collaboration (internal)</li> <li>6. State-level teams that include partner agencies, district and family representatives (external)</li> <li>7. Blend funding sources (Title IV, IDEA, ARPA)</li> </ol>	<p>Tier 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EdSight Attendance Data (annual and monthly reports)</li> <li>• School is Better with You Campaign</li> <li>• “Talk Tuesdays” Community of Practice</li> <li>• <i>Prevention and Intervention Guide for Addressing Attendance in Connecticut Schools</i></li> <li>• State Attendance Advisory Team</li> </ul> <p>Tier 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LEAP Grantees(14 districts), LEAP 101 Training for all districts and <i>The LEAP Effect</i></li> <li>• High School and Kindergarten Affinity Groups with SERC</li> <li>• High School Bright Spots Brief (Attendance Works)</li> </ul> <p>Tier 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District-specific attendance training (EdAdvance)</li> <li>• Cross-divisional Teams support to Opportunity Districts</li> </ul>



# The LEAP Effect

Learner Engagement & Attendance Program (LEAP)



## The LEAP Effect

*A collaboration between CSDE, Attendance Works, CREC & EdAdvance*

- [101 Virtual Trainings](#)  
for home visitors free  
of charge through the  
CT Home Visit Hub

[www.ct.gov/LEAP](http://www.ct.gov/LEAP)

