

GROTON BOARD OF EDUCATION
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MINUTES
APRIL 17, 2023 @ 6:00 P.M.
CENTRAL OFFICE, ROOM 11

MEMBERS PRESENT: Kim Shepardson Watson-Chairperson, Andrea Ackerman-Vice Chairperson (remote), Dean Antipas, William Horgan, Liz Porter, Beverly Washington (remote), Jay Weitlauf (remote)

MEMBERS ABSENT: Matthew Shulman, Rita Volkmann

ALSO PRESENT: Phil Piazza, Laurie LePine, Lauren Casini, Ted Keleher

I. CALL TO ORDER - Chairperson Kim Shepardson Watson called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF MARCH 20, 2023 MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: Ackerman, Horgan: To approve the COW minutes of March 20, 2023.
PASSED - UNANIMOUSLY

III. DISCUSSION RE: ATTENDANCE DATA (Attachment #1)

Dr. Piazza introduced Lauren Casini, the new Student Information Data Manager. Dr. Piazza and Ms. Casini gave an overview of the PowerPoint presentation of the Attendance Report for 2022-2023. Mrs. LePine gave an overview of the Staff Attendance section. Different sections generated in depth discussion by the Board, e.g., Chronic Absenteeism by School. Board members requested additional information:

- Mrs. Washington requested having Social Workers come to a COW to provide information on their efforts regarding absenteeism.
- Mr. Weitlauf requested a further breakdown of the data relative to the percentage of military students.

MOTION: Watson, Porter: To add the discussion regarding the MRMS cafeteria ceiling incident.
PASSED – UNANIMOUSLY

Dr. Piazza read the letter sent to parents by Principal Wheeler regarding the cafeteria ceiling incident.

Mr. Antipas asked if the same situation exists at TRMS. Mrs. Shepardson Watson shared that Mr. Kilpatrick had noted that there was no longer a warranty from the Groton 2020 project and that he will be checking the TRMS cafeteria ceiling.

IV. REVIEW REFERRAL TRACKING SHEET

The Board reviewed the Referral Tracking Sheet.

ADD under Finance/Facilities: R2023-10 - Discussion of going to electric school busses

VI. REVIEW BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING TEMPLATE

Mrs. Shepardson Watson explained that the purpose of the Board of Education Meeting Template is to ensure that matters of the Board of Education are handled in a timely fashion. An item was added for the month of December under Regular BoE Meeting – If necessary, vote on any new curriculum.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Ackerman, Horgan:

To adjourn at 7:52 p.m.

PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Groton Board of Education Attendance Report

April 17, 2023



Our Goal

To increase student and staff attendance through consistent and proactive practices

Student Attendance

Truancy

- ❖ Counts unexcused absences
- ❖ 4 unexcused absences in a month OR 10 unexcused absences in a year

Educational Impact

- ❖ Foundational gaps in learning
- ❖ Academic Failure
- ❖ Greater risk for drop-out & juvenile delinquency

Chronic Absenteeism

- ❖ Counts ALL absences- excused AND unexcused
- ❖ Missing 10% of the school year for any reason (including disciplinary)
- ❖ Factored in to our **D**istrict's **A**ccountability **I**ndex



Improving Attendance: One Step at a Time

Connect with appropriate community resources as needed

Parent meetings after the 10th absence to determine root cause

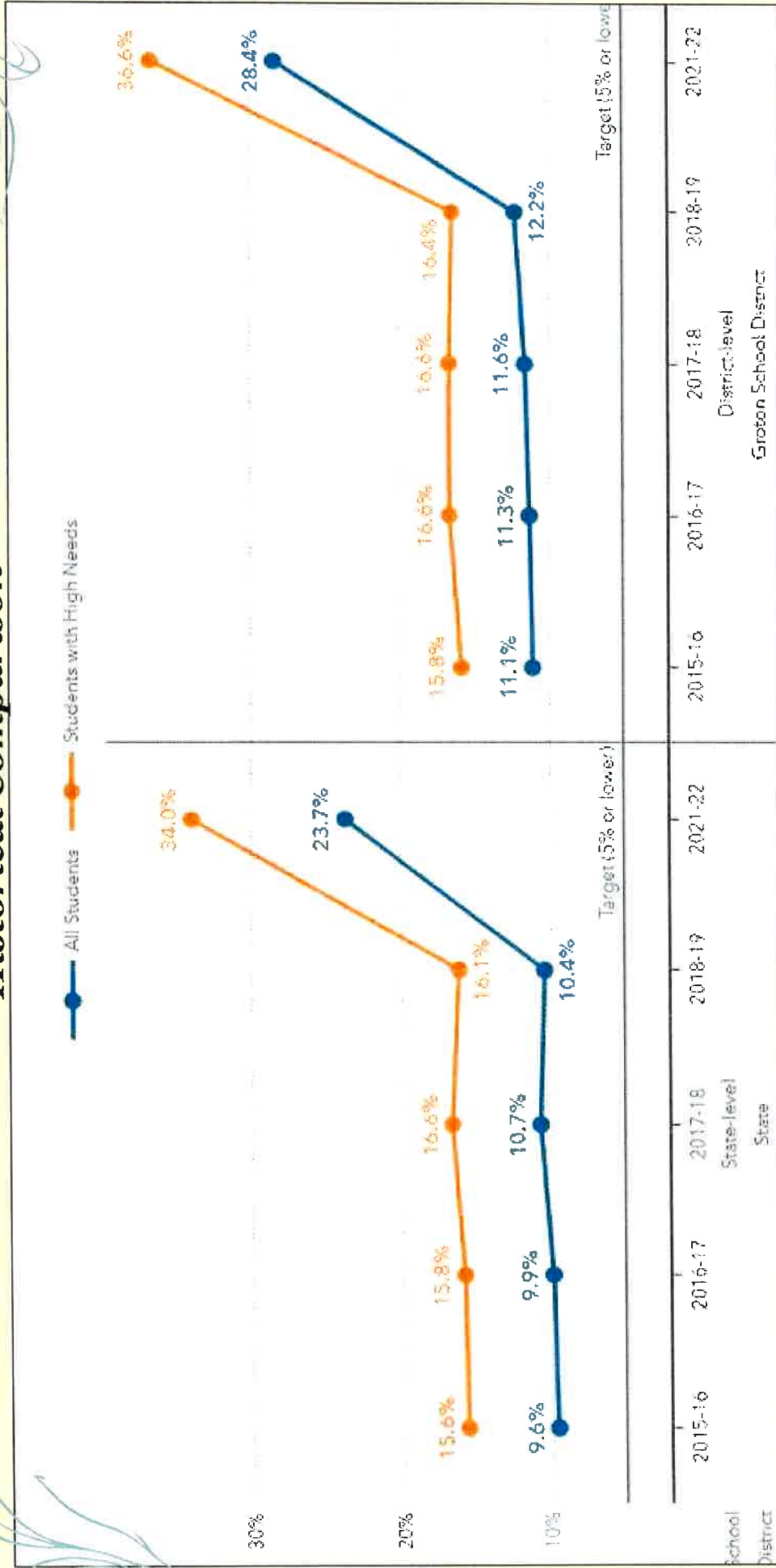
Attendance letters sent home by the 4th unexcused absence in a month or by the 10th unexcused absence in the school year

Regular attendance monitoring across all grade levels with supporting documentation

Calibrating attendance reporting across the district

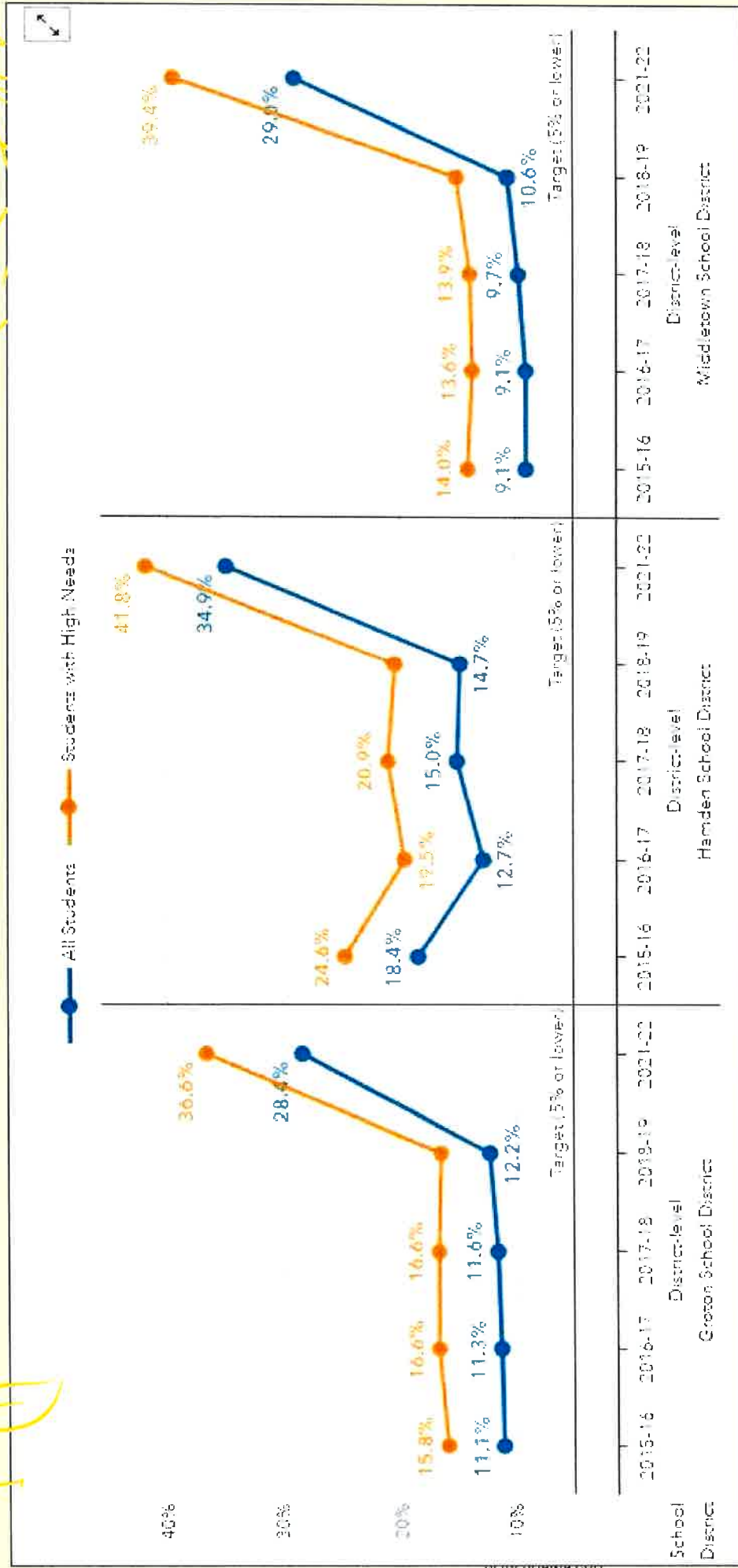
Chronic Absenteeism: State vs. Groton

Historical Comparison



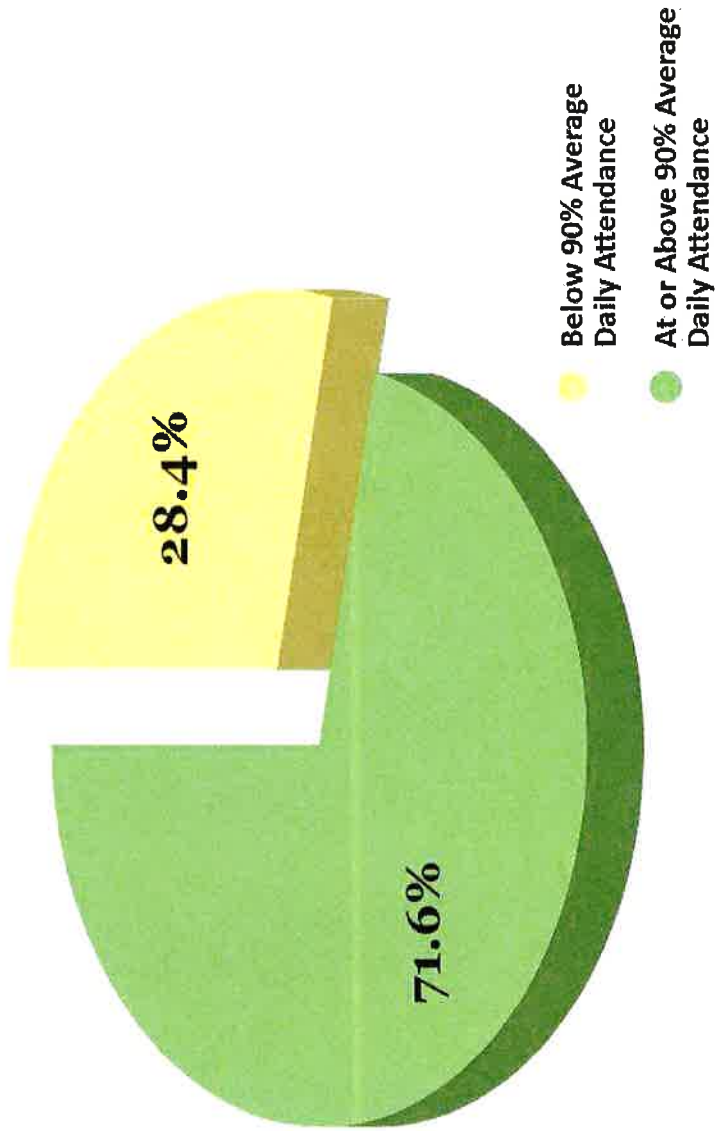
Chronic Absenteeism: A Comparison of Like Districts

Historical Comparison



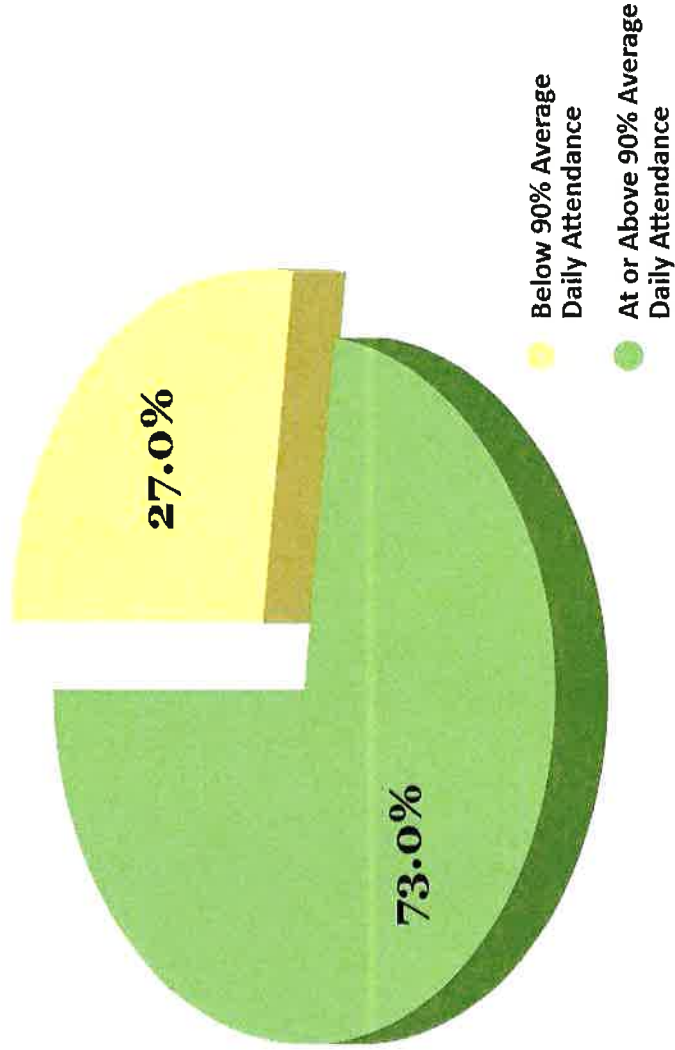
District-Wide Attendance

2021-2022



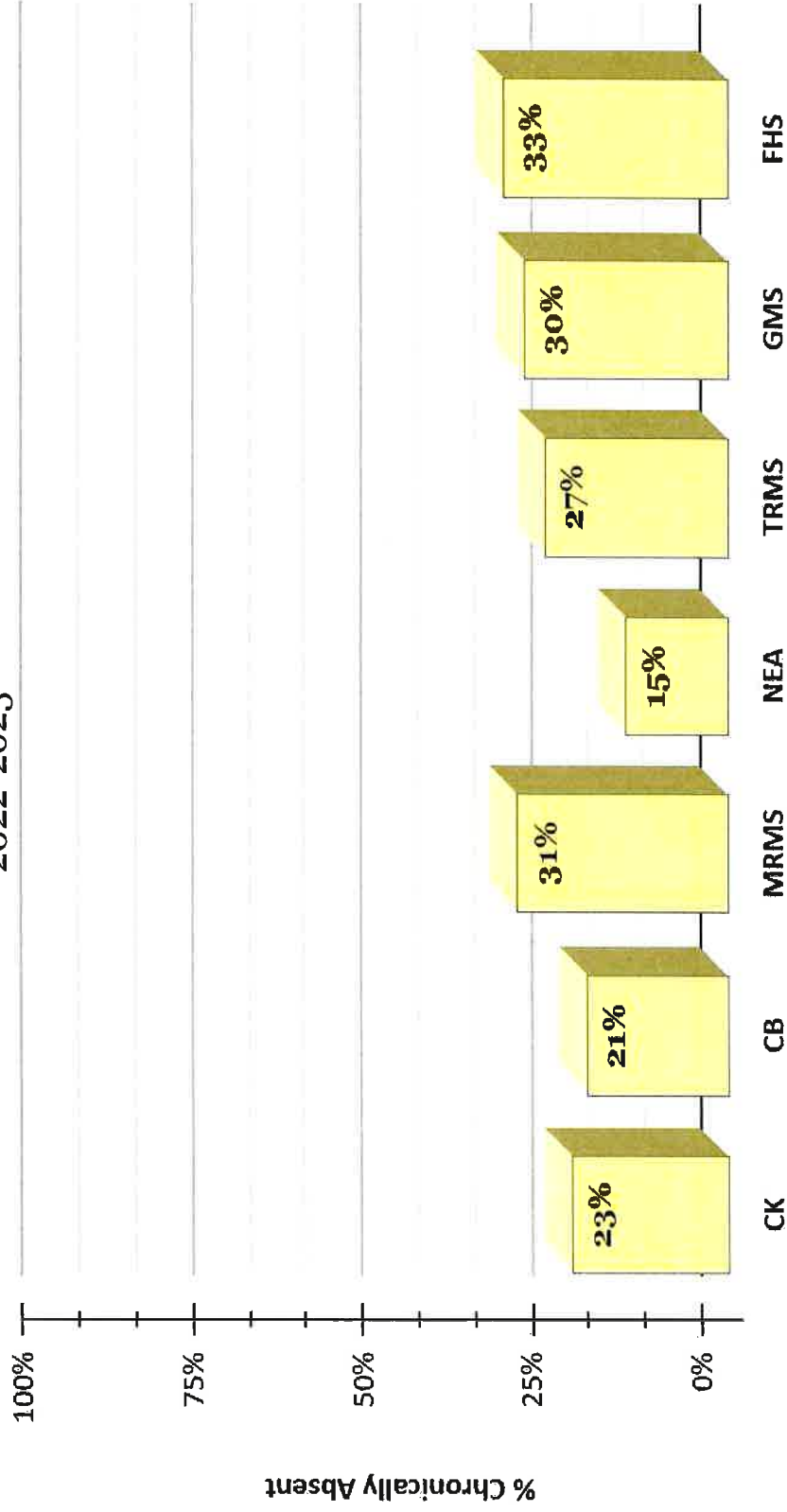
District-Wide Attendance

2022-2023



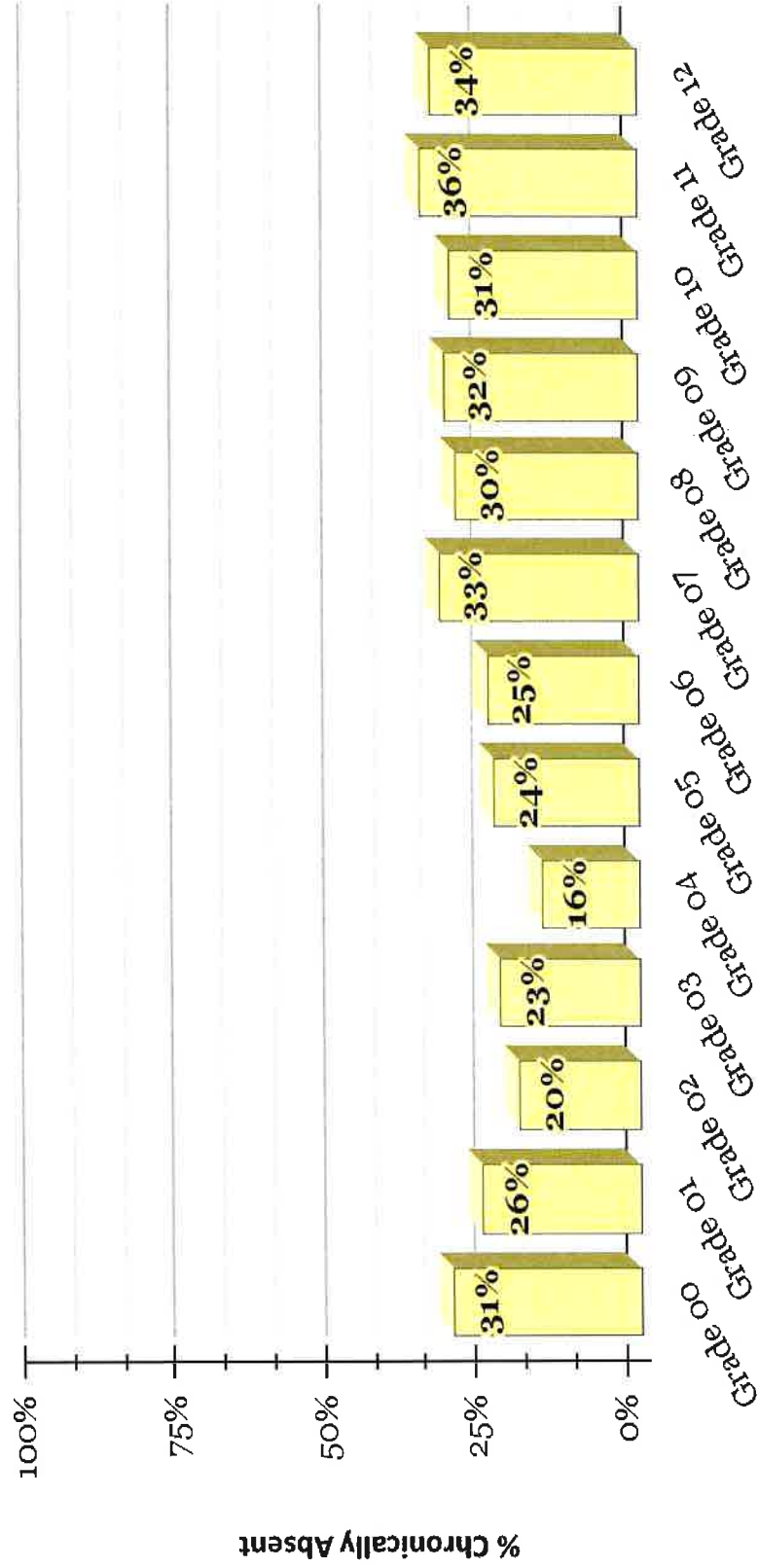
Chronic Absenteeism by School

2022-2023



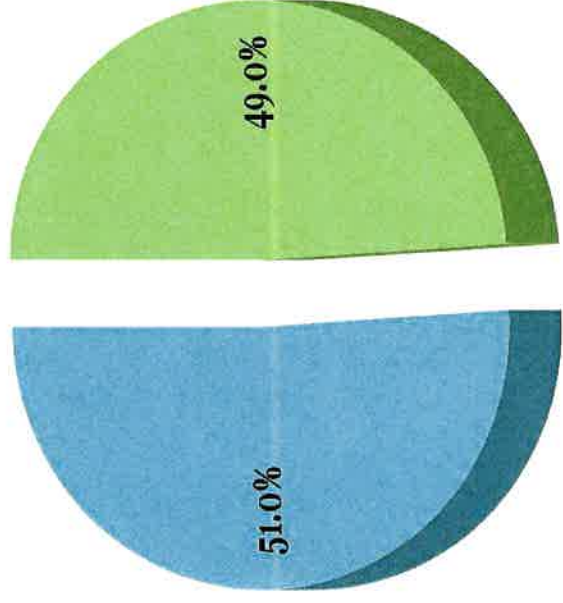
Chronic Absenteeism by Grade Level

2022-2023



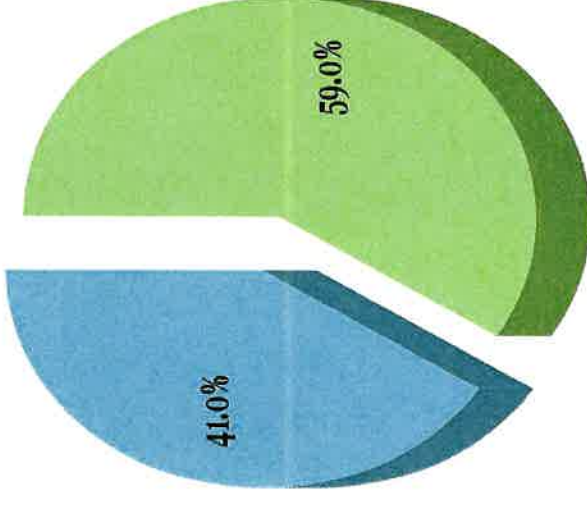
District Breakdown for Free and Reduced Lunch

- Students w/ Free or Reduced Lunch
- Students w/o Free or Reduced Lunch



Chronic Absenteeism by Free and Reduced Lunch

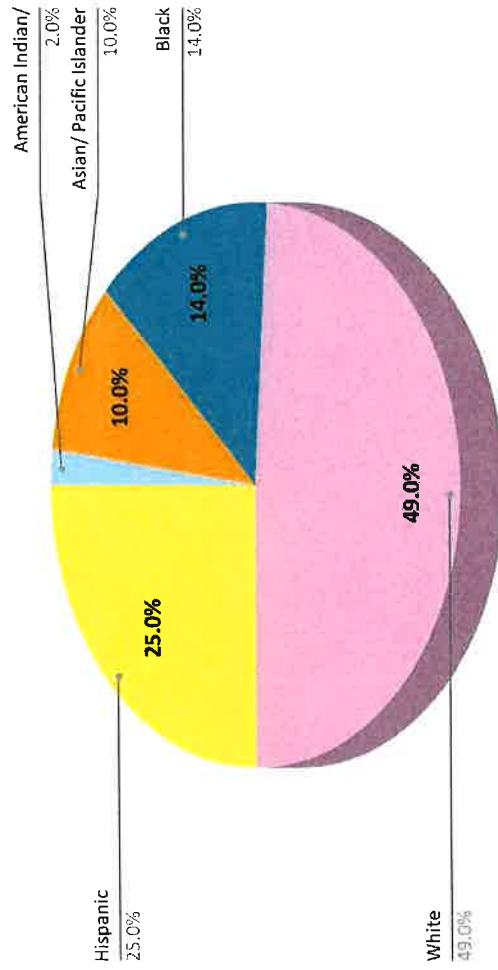
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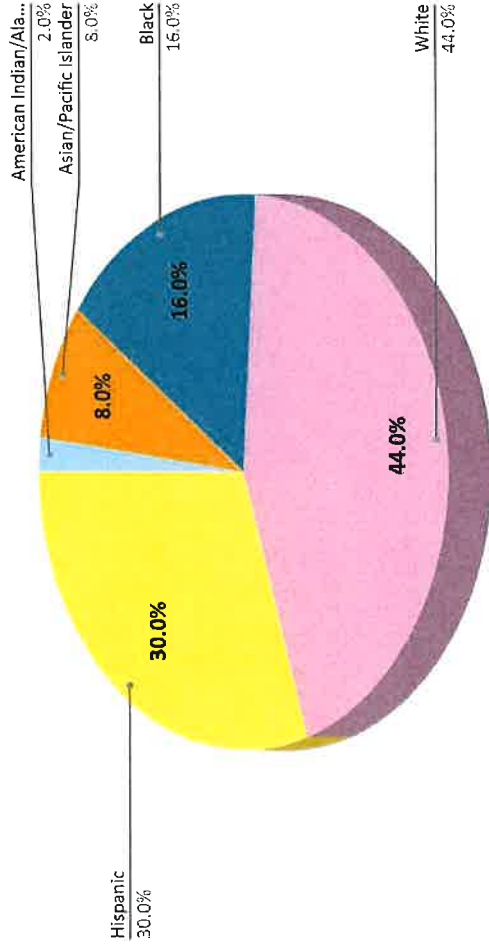
2022-2023

2022-2023

District Breakdown by Ethnicity



Chronic Absenteeism by Ethnicity



Considerations Connecticut Policy & Military Families

Senate Bill No. 217

Public Act No. 14-198

AN ACT CONCERNING EXCUSED ABSENCES FROM SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN OF SERVICE MEMBERS.

"A child, age five to eighteen, inclusive, who is enrolled in a public or private school and whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the armed forces, as defined in section 27-103, and has been called to duty for, is on leave from or has immediately returned from deployment to a combat zone or combat support posting, shall be granted ten days of excused absences in any school year and, at the discretion of the local or regional board of education, additional excused absences to visit such child's parent or legal guardian with respect to such leave or deployment of the parent or legal guardian."

Improving Attendance: One Step at a Time

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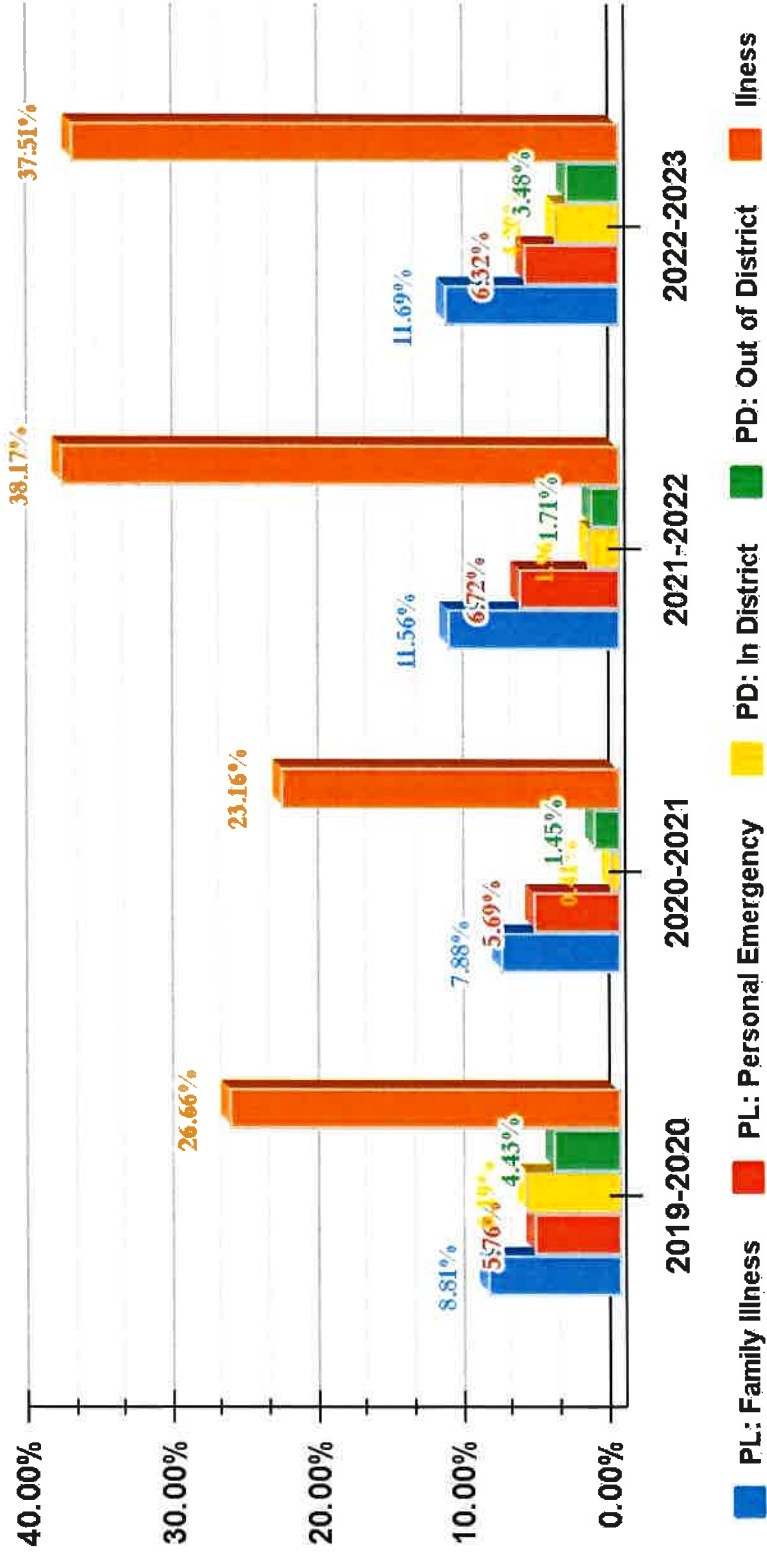
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Calibrating attendance reporting across the district

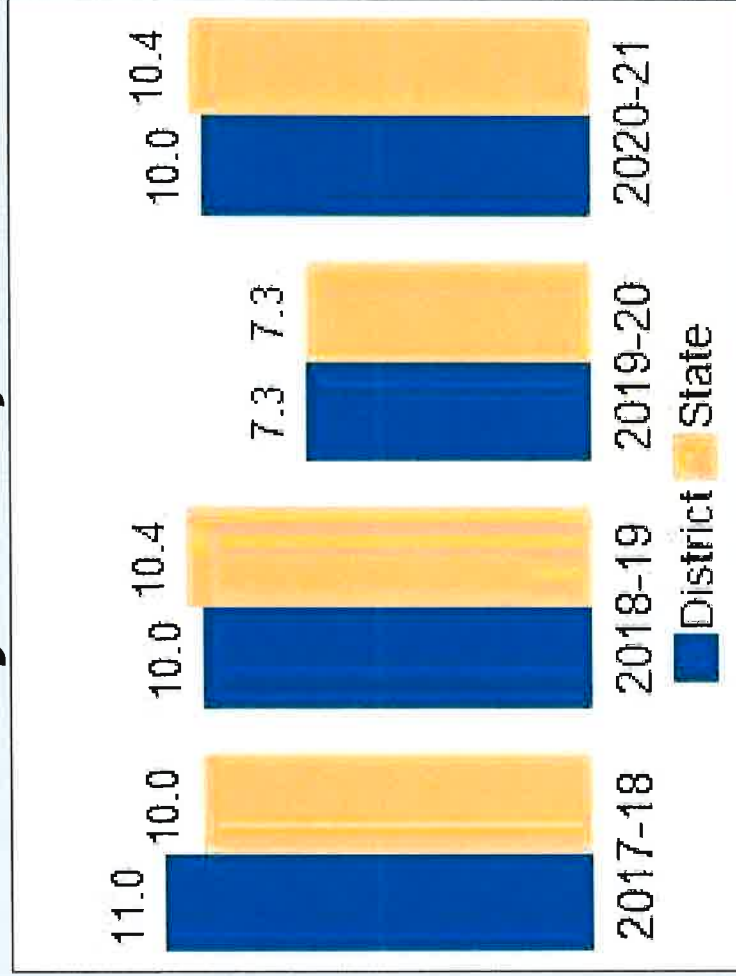
STAFF ATTENDANCE

Breakdown of Total Absences

Historical Comparison



Classroom Teacher Attendance (Average FTE Days Absent)



Lingering Impact from COVID

- * (22-23) First full year back to school where staff and students are mainly unmasked
- * Immunity is low due to several years of masking among the "tridemic"
- * Continuing to see COVID related illness

Monitor and Support

- * Regular monitoring of attendance across staff and students.
- * Identifying barriers and discussing available supports needed
- * Provide social and emotional supports for staff and students alike (resources, referrals, wellness activities)

Moving Forward

- * Bolster preventative measures
 - Attendance certificates
 - Incentives
 - Family Engagement Campaigns
 - Supports for students with military roots

- * Increase community engagement