

Alexandria City Public Schools

Academic Year 2020-21

Chronic Absenteeism Data

This report summarizes chronic absenteeism data collected for the academic year 2020-21. With school buildings closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, instruction was virtual for all students during the entire first and second quarters. A hybrid model was introduced during Q3, allowing some students to attend school in-person two days per week. Virtual instruction was delivered with both synchronous days (i.e., when a group of students are engaging in learning at the same time) and asynchronous days (i.e., days when students learn the same material at different times and locations).

Methodology

The current report details the percentage of students who were chronically absent at the end of AY 2020-21. The primary focus is on the overall cumulative chronic absenteeism rate for the academic year compared with rates for AY 2018-19. AY 2018-19 was used as the most recent year for comparison due to the pandemic's disruption of instruction during the 2019-20 academic year. For chronic absenteeism calculations, absences were counted regardless of whether they were excused or unexcused. Students chronically absent, 10% or more days of the academic year, were only identified if they had been enrolled in ACPS for 20 or more days.

Results Summary

The overall percentage of students chronically absent at the end of academic year 2020-21 was 16%. The rate for the individual quarters varied ranging from 16% to 19%. The rate of students chronically absent in 2021 (16%) was more than double the rate of chronically absent students in 2019 (7%). The high rate of chronic absenteeism was primarily driven by low attendance on asynchronous days, which are days where students did not attend live, virtual or in-person classes. The percentage of students chronically absent this year dropped to 8% when only counting synchronous days, comparable to the 2018-19 EOY rate (7%).

Middle school students had lower rates of chronic absenteeism (11%) than elementary school (18%) and high school students (16%). Rates of chronic absenteeism in 2020-21 were at least twice as high as rates in 2018-19 across all grade bands.

The return to hybrid instruction had no apparent relationship with rates of chronic absenteeism. Students returning for hybrid in Q3 did not have markedly different rates of chronic absenteeism before returning for hybrid than they did after returning for hybrid. The same is true for students returning for hybrid in Q4. Students who remained virtual had lower rates of chronic absenteeism throughout the year than students who returned for hybrid.

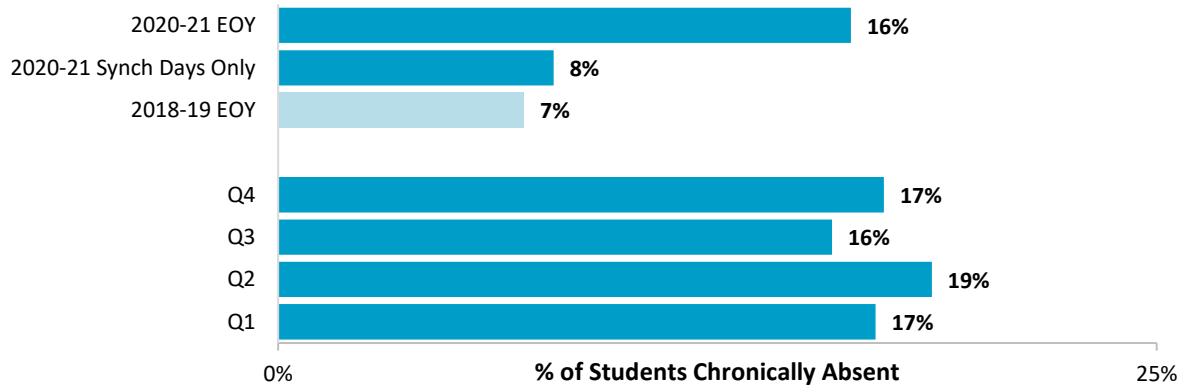
Black and Hispanic students were chronically absent at disproportionately higher rates than white students. Hispanic students continue to have the highest chronic absenteeism rate overall (24%), more than double the rate for Hispanic students in 2018-19 (10%). The chronic absenteeism rate for Black students was 17%, compared with 8% in 2018-19. White students' chronic absenteeism rate was unchanged at 5% in both 2018-19 and 2020-21. These data point to a disproportionate impact of virtual instruction on Black and Hispanic students as compared with white students. Similarly, English learners, students with disabilities, and students who are disadvantaged all have higher rates of chronic absenteeism compared with the division overall.

Overall Chronic Absenteeism Rates

Overall Findings

The overall percentage of students chronically absent at the end of academic year 2020-21 was 16%. The rate for the individual quarters varied ranging from 16% to 19%. The rate of students chronically absent in 2021 (16%) was more than double the rate of chronically absent students in 2019 (7%). The high rate of chronic absenteeism was primarily driven by low attendance on asynchronous days, which are days where students did not attend live, virtual or in-person classes. The percentage of students chronically absent this year dropped to 8% when only counting synchronous days, comparable to the 2018-19 EOY rate (7%).

Figure 1.
Alexandria City Public Schools
Academic Year 2020-21 EOY and Quarterly Chronic Absenteeism Rates

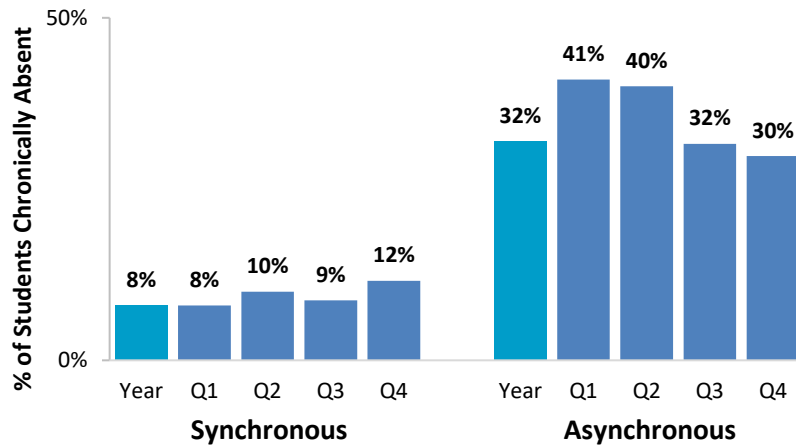


Note: 2018-19 EOY is used as the most recent year for comparison because 2019-20 attendance was disrupted when the pandemic-related school closure began in March 2020.

Synchronous vs. Asynchronous Days

As shown in Figure 2 on the next page, chronic absenteeism on synchronous days was far lower (8%) than asynchronous days (32%). Chronic absenteeism on synchronous days started at 8% in Q1 and increased to 12% in Q4. Conversely, chronic absenteeism on asynchronous days started at 41% in Q1 and declined to 30% in Q4.

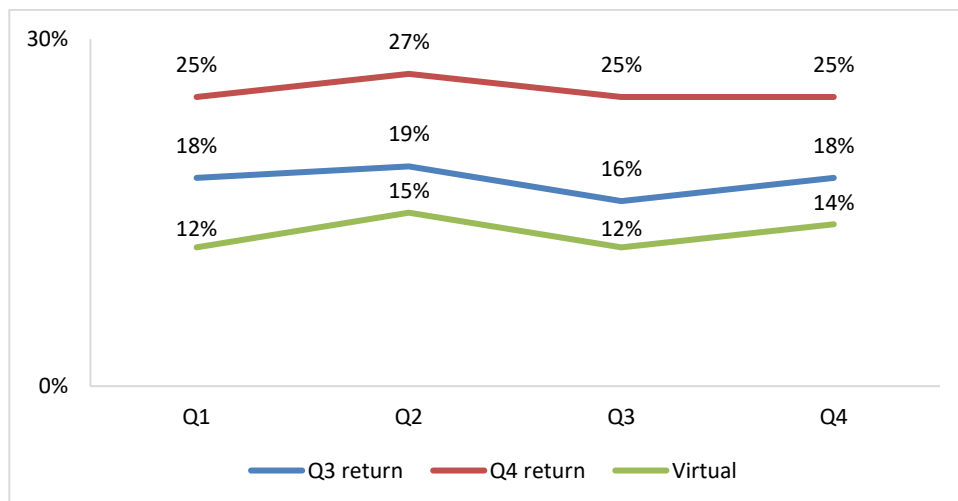
Figure 2.
Alexandria City Public Schools
Academic Year 2020-21 Chronic Absenteeism Rates
Synchronous vs. Asynchronous Instruction Days



Chronic Absenteeism During Hybrid Instruction

Some students returned for hybrid instruction in Q3 and Q4, while others remained virtual throughout the academic year. Hybrid return dates were staggered beginning in March 2021 and additional students returned weekly throughout the remainder of the academic year. Chronic absenteeism rates were compared between students who had a Q3 return for hybrid, Q4 return for hybrid, or no return for hybrid (remained virtual). Throughout the year, virtual students had the lowest rates of chronic absenteeism. Students who returned for hybrid in Q3 and Q4 had higher rates of chronic absenteeism throughout the year. That is, students who returned in Q4 had markedly higher rates of chronic absenteeism throughout the year, not just during the Q4 quarter of their return for hybrid instruction.

Figure 3.
Alexandria City Public Schools
Academic Year 2020-21 Quarterly Chronic Absenteeism Rates
Q3 and Q4 Hybrid Return and Virtual



Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Grade Band and School

Overall Findings

Middle school students had lower rates of chronic absenteeism (11%) than elementary school (18%) and high school students (16%). Rates of chronic absenteeism in 2020-21 were at least twice as high as rates in 2018-19 across all grade bands.

Figure 4.
Alexandria City Public Schools
EOY Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Grade Band for 2018-19 and 2020-21

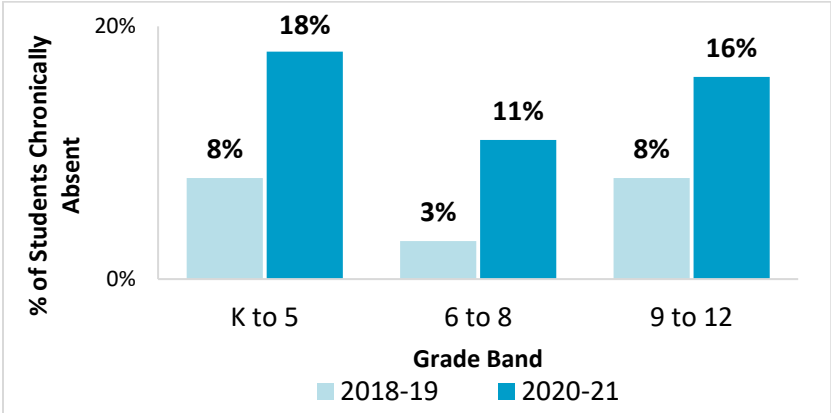
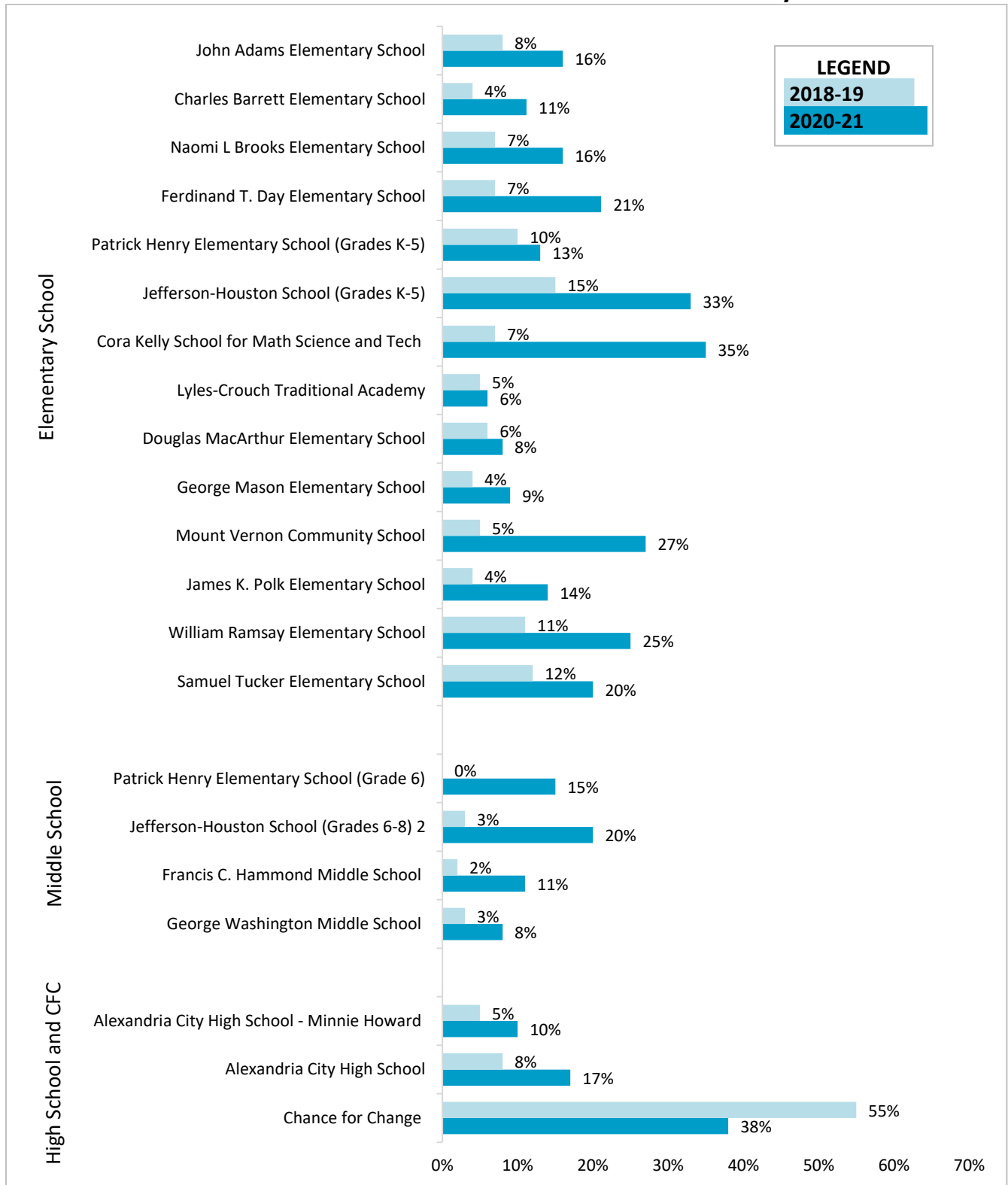


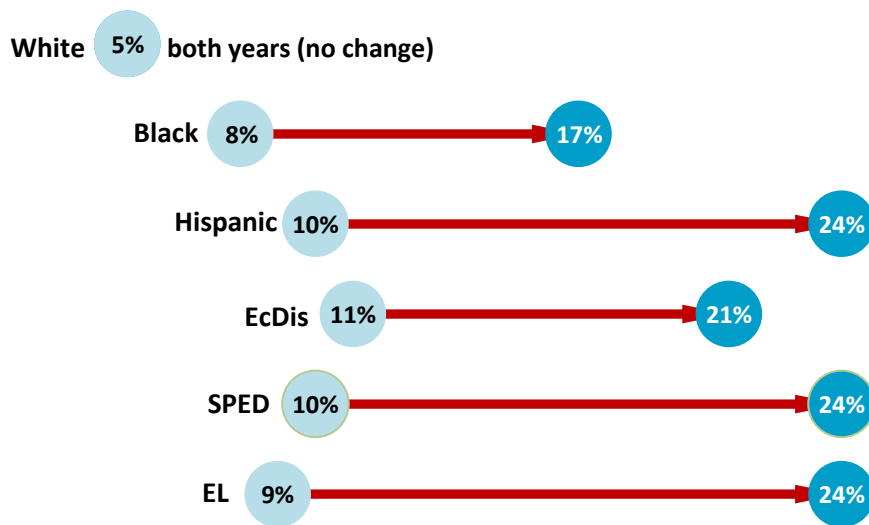
Figure 5.
Alexandria City Public Schools
EOY 2018-19 and 2020-21 Chronic Absenteeism Rates by School



Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Population of Interest

Rates of chronic absenteeism nearly doubled or more for all subgroups from 2019 to 2021, except White which showed no change. Black and Hispanic students were chronically absent at disproportionately higher rates than white students. Hispanic students continue to have the highest chronic absenteeism rate overall (24%), more than double the rate for Hispanic students in 2018-19 (10%). The chronic absenteeism rate for Black students was 17%, compared with 8% in 2018-19. White students' chronic absenteeism rate was unchanged at 5% in 2018-19 and 2020-21. These data point to a disproportionate impact of virtual instruction on Black and Hispanic students as compared with white students. Similarly, English learners, students with disabilities, and students who are disadvantaged all have higher rates of chronic absenteeism compared with

Figure 6.
Alexandria City Public Schools
EOY 2018-19 and 2020-21 Chronic Absenteeism Rates by Population of Interest



% of Students Chronically Absent

Note: 2019 baseline subgroup data as reported by the Virginia Department of Education School Quality Profiles.
<https://schoolquality.virginia.gov/divisions/alexandria-city-public-schools>

Chronic Absenteeism Tables

TABLE 1
Alexandria City Public Schools
Summary of Chronically Absent Students by Grade Level for AY 2018-19 & 2020-21

Grade Level	Chronically Absent					
	# of students as of	Total # of Students enrolled ≥ 20 days	% of students	# of students as of	Total # of Students enrolled ≥ 20 days	% of students
	EOY 18-19	EOY 18-19	EOY 18-19	EOY 20-21	EOY 20-21	EOY 20-21
KG	186	1518	12%	267	1247	21%
1	120	1415	8%	247	1344	18%
2	91	1382	7%	217	1338	16%
3	87	1339	6%	203	1233	16%
4	80	1255	6%	175	1244	14%
5	59	1241	5%	268	1202	22%
Grade Level K-5	623	8150	8%	1377	7608	18%
6	25	1203	2%	112	1113	10%
7	26	1095	2%	139	1113	12%
8	38	986	4%	106	1149	9%
Grade Level 6-8	89	3284	3%	357	3375	11%
9	87	1191	7%	151	1143	13%
10	81	972	8%	170	1122	15%
11	75	836	9%	153	886	17%
12	64	842	8%	174	961	18%
Grade Level 9-12	307	3841	8%	648	4112	16%
Division Total¹	1019	15275	7%	2382	15095	16%

¹As an external comparison, the end-of-year state average for chronic absenteeism in SY 2020-21 was 11.1% (Virginia State Quality Profile), end-of-year state average for chronic absenteeism in SY 18-19 was 10.8%.

TABLE 2
Alexandria City Public Schools
Summary of Chronically Absent Students by School for AY 2018-19 & 2020-21

School	<u>Chronically Absent</u>					
	# of students as of	Total # of Students enrolled ≥ 20 days	% of students	# of students as of	Total # of Students enrolled ≥ 20 days	% of students
	EOY 18-19	EOY 18-19	EOY 18-19	EOY 20-21	EOY 20-21	EOY 20-21
John Adams Elementary School	57	722	8%	107	670	16%
Charles Barrett Elementary School	21	508	4%	54	472	11%
Naomi L. Brooks Elementary School	26	374	7%	55	345	16%
Ferdinand T. Day Elementary School	29	407	7%	122	573	21%
Patrick Henry Elementary School (Grades K-5)	72	694	10%	92	682	13%
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades K-5) 2	58	376	15%	132	401	33%
Cora Kelly School for Math Science and Tech	26	367	7%	103	294	35%
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy	24	465	5%	26	421	6%
Douglas MacArthur Elementary School	43	677	6%	44	551	8%
George Mason Elementary School	20	474	4%	34	364	9%
Mount Vernon Community School	47	887	5%	224	832	27%
James K. Polk Elementary School	32	747	4%	99	704	14%
William Ramsay Elementary School	76	664	11%	141	566	25%
Samuel Tucker Elementary School	92	788	12%	144	733	20%
Elementary School Total	623	8150	8%	1377	7608	18%
Francis C. Hammond Middle School	0	95	0%	32	209	15%
George Washington Middle School	6	204	3%	41	203	20%
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades 6-8)	32	1475	2%	163	1424	11%
Patrick Henry School (Grade 6-8) ¹	44	1501	3%	121	1537	8%
Middle School Total	82	3275	3%	357	3373	11%
Alexandria City High School – Minnie Howard	40	835	5%	96	956	10%
Alexandria City High School	253	2977	8%	543	3134	17%
High School Total	293	3812	8%	639	4090	16%
Chance for Change	21	38	55%	9	24	38%
Other Total	21	38	55%	9	24	38%
Division Total	1019	15275	7%	2382	15095	16%

¹2020-21 is the first year in which Patrick Henry School included 8th graders.