

# Chronic Absence Patterns Across California Schools

Some encouraging signs but it  
will take a long-term investment  
and experience to recover

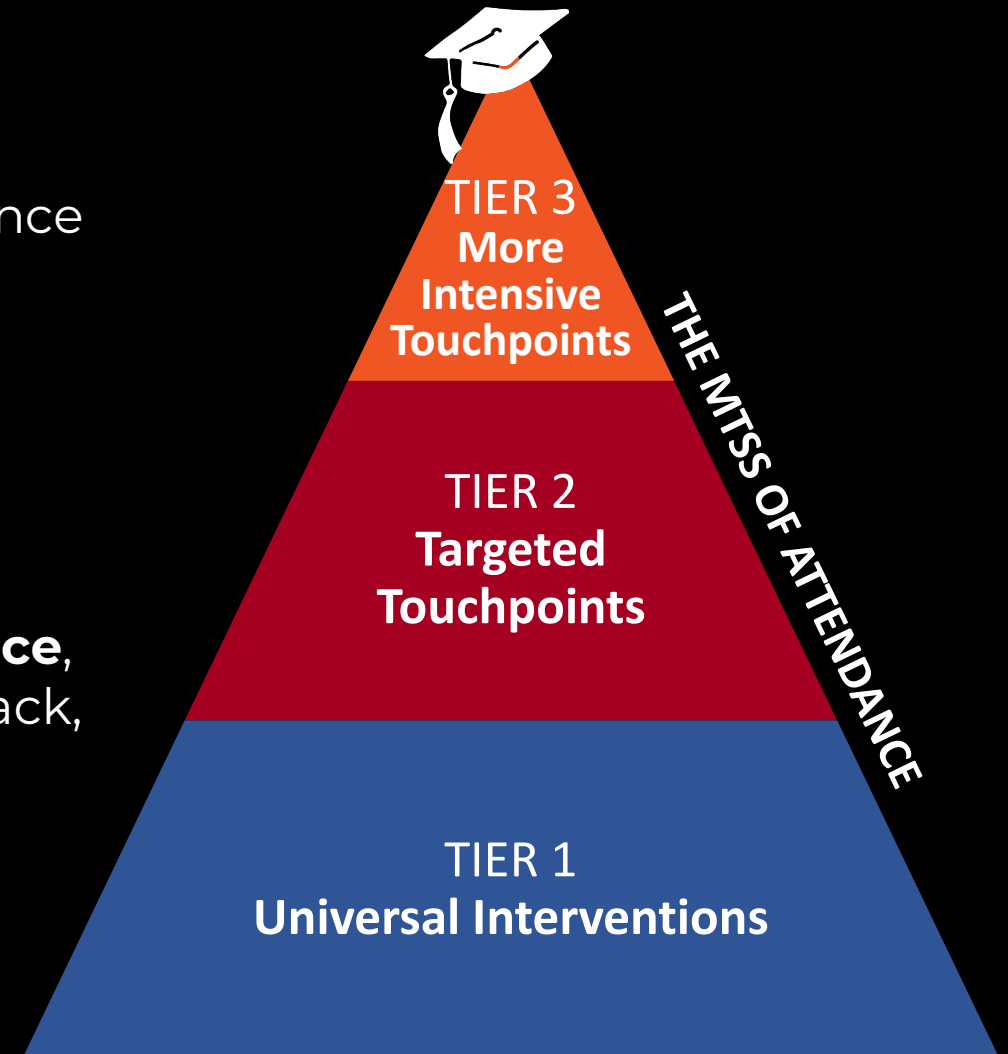
April 2023

# About SI&A

**School Innovations & Achievement** makers of The Achievement Initiative—the nation’s leading Attendance Management System (AMS).

**The Achievement Initiative** is a systems approach to improve learning time for ALL.

The Achievement Initiative with **Attention2Attendance**, is a data-driven Multi-Tiered System of Supports to track, manage and improve student attendance.



# Areas of Focus

## Pre-Pandemic

**Strong systems are required to eliminate bias and close equity gaps**

**Attendance is the #1 predictor for student success**

## Today

**Chronic absenteeism is at an all time high across the state and nation**

**Due to the volatility of the last two years, good habits have been forgotten**

**Focus on daily attendance is essential for recovering from the pandemic**

**Proactive communication is essential to reconnect with families and students**

# Preliminary Chronic Absence Analysis



Given that the California Department of Education (CDE) collects absenteeism information in arrears, the CDE would like to spot and address attendance patterns and trends as they are occurring.

In an effort to support public education, SI&A is the supplier of absenteeism reports to the California Department of Education.

# SI&A calculates chronic absenteeism differently than the California Dashboard

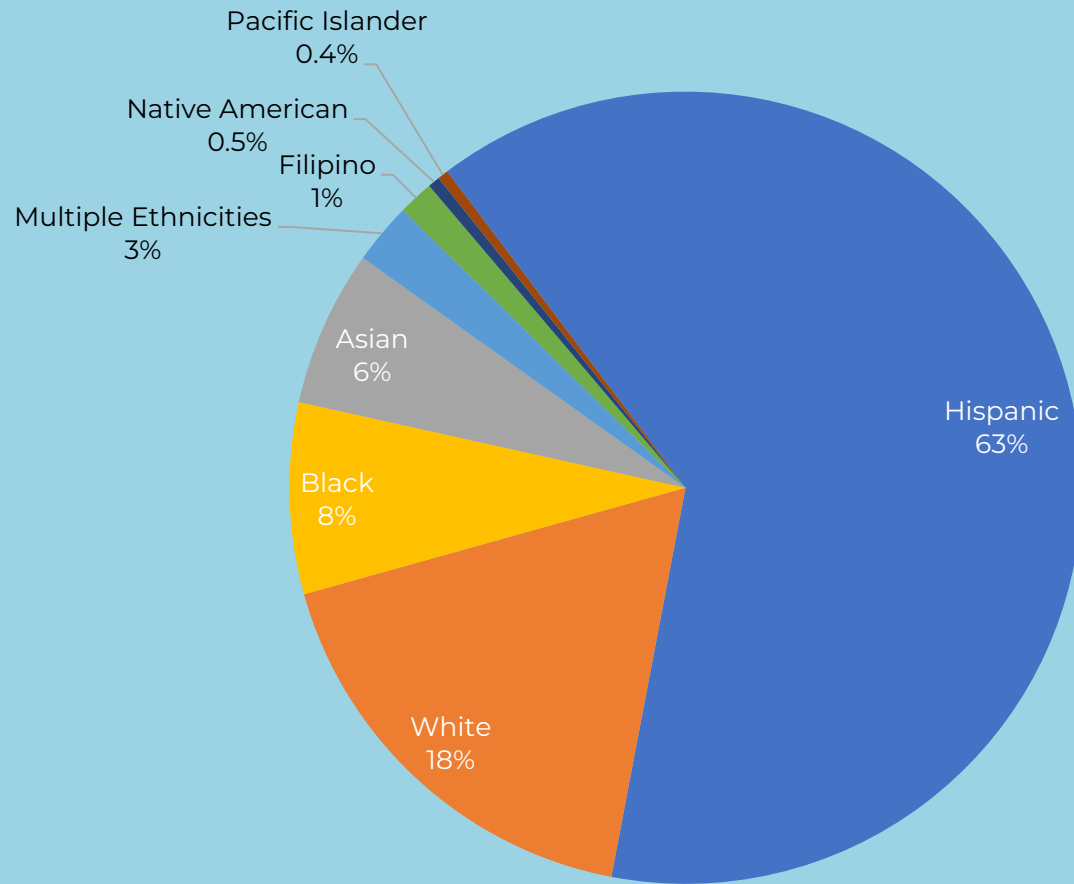
**Our program, The Achievement Initiative includes all students in all grades including PK/TK and high school grades 9-12**

**Our chronic absence rate includes all active students regardless of how many days enrolled**

**We calculate on a day equivalent basis, weighting partial days absences**

**Based on these differences, SI&A chronic rates include more students than the California Dashboard**

# Preliminary Chronic Absence Analysis

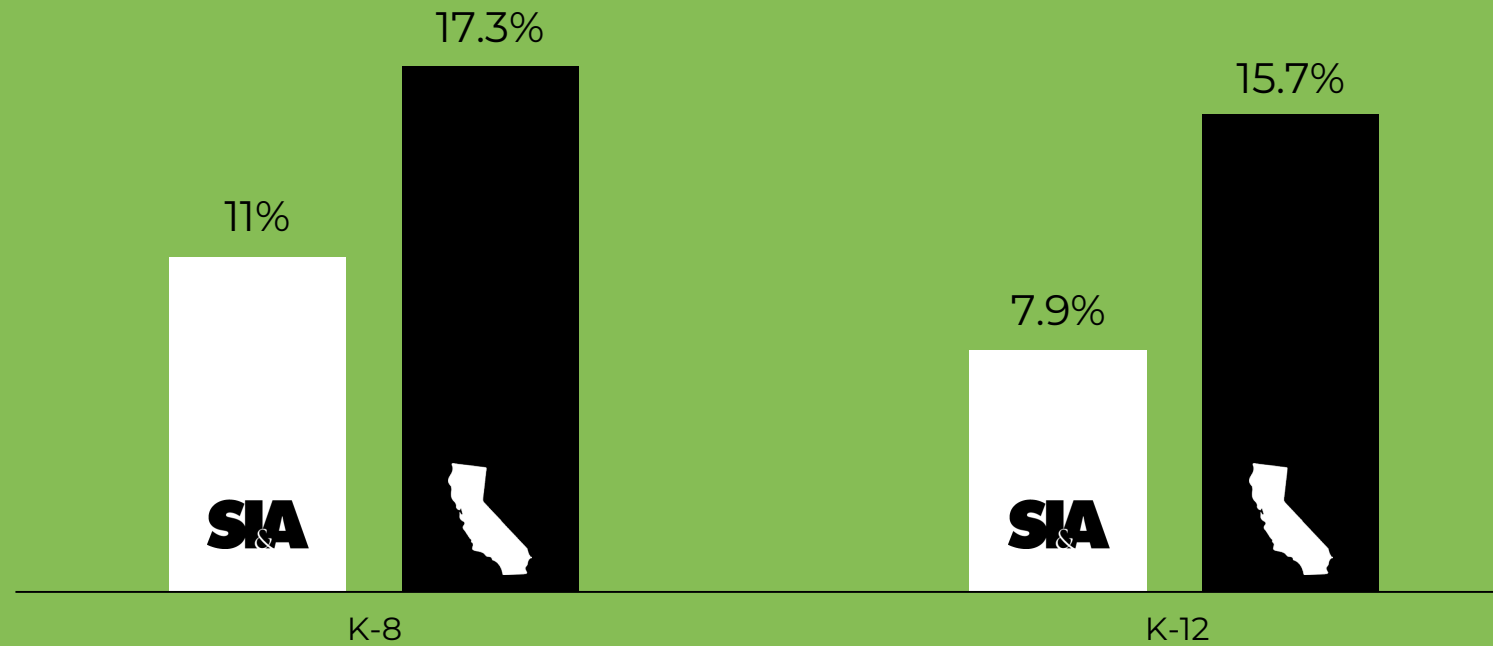


The pie chart displays the racial/ethnic composition of nearly 325,000 students in the 30 districts. This composition resembles the overall California state enrollment.

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Population
Hispanic	63%
White	18%
Black	8%
Asian	6%
Multiple Ethnicities	3%
Filipino	1%
Native American	0.5%
Pacific Islander	0.4%

# SI&A district partners outperform the statewide average in chronic absence rates of change

Chronic rate changes 2021 to 2022



# Long term impacts of missing school

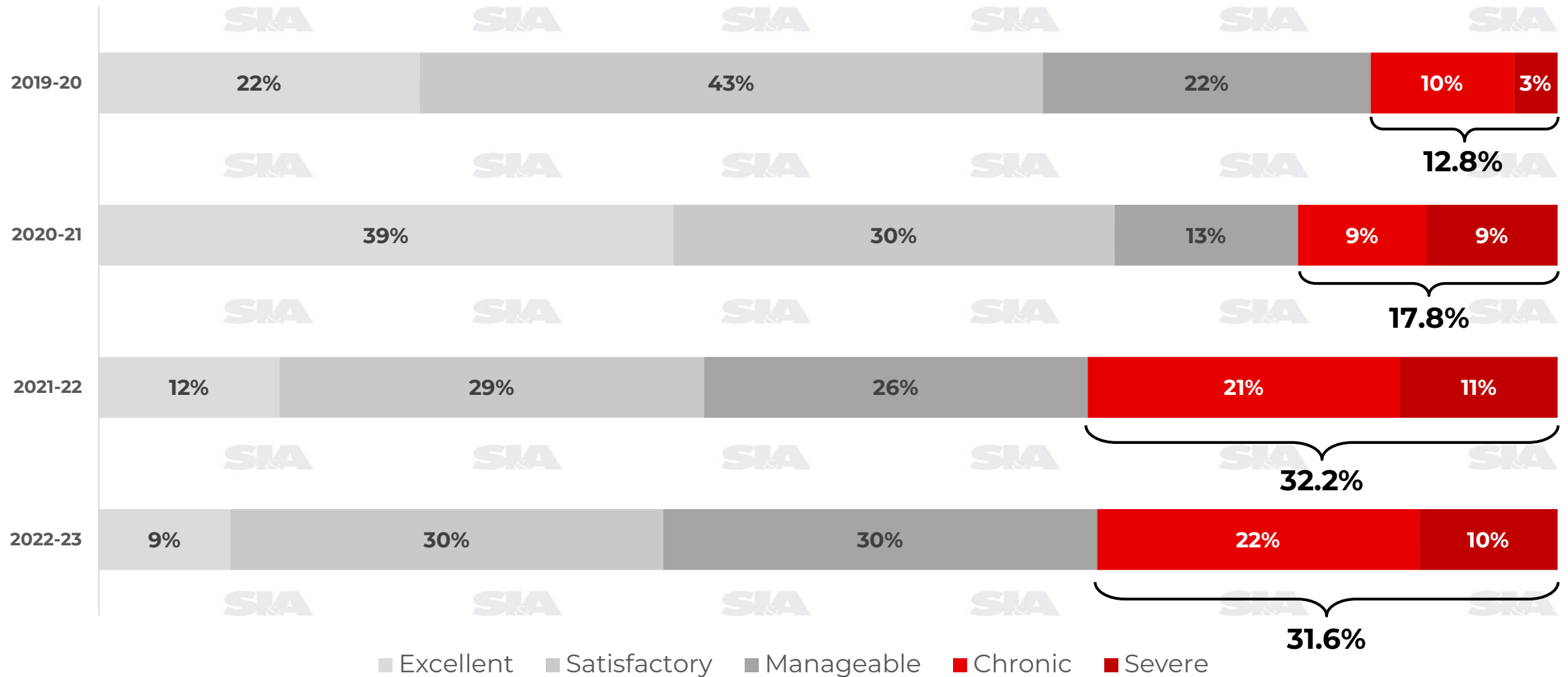
<b>1 day</b> per quarter =	<b>4 days</b> per year	Which is <b>1 week</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is <b>36% of 1 school year</b>
<b>1 day</b> per month =	<b>10 days</b> per year	Which is <b>2 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is <b>3/4 of 1 year</b>
<b>4 days</b> per quarter =	<b>16 days</b> per year	Which is <b>3 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is just over <b>1 year</b>
<b>1 day</b> per week =	<b>36 days</b> per year	Which is <b>7 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is just over <b>2 1/2 years</b>
<b>2 days</b> per week =	<b>72 days</b> per year	Which is <b>14 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is just over <b>5 years</b>

## Being on time also matters

<b>30 min.</b> per month =	<b>7.5 min.</b> per week	Which is <b>1 day</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is <b>13 days</b>
<b>10 min.</b> per day =	<b>50 min.</b> per week	Which is <b>1 week</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is <b>36% of 1 school year</b>
<b>20 min.</b> per day =	<b>100 min.</b> per week	Which is <b>2 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is <b>3/4 of 1 year</b>
<b>30 min.</b> per day =	<b>Half a day</b> per week	Which is <b>3 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is just over <b>1 year</b>
<b>1 hour</b> per day =	<b>1 day</b> per week	Which is <b>7 weeks</b> per year	In 13+ years of schooling is just over <b>2 1/2 years</b>



# Attendance summary year over year



# Chronic Absence Comparison by District Type

District Type	Mar 2021 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
				SIA Rate of Change	Estimated Non-SIA Rate of Change
ESD	16.7%	28.9%	29.9%	3.6%	25.4%
HSD	25.9%	41.3%	43.9%	6.4%	25.3%
USD	14.7%	29.8%	27.1%	-9.1%	17.0%

Still a long way to go but the majority of enrollment are in Unified School Districts so improvement in this group applies to more students.

Unified School Districts rate of change decreased by 9.1%.

# Chronic Absence Comparison by District Size

District Size	Mar 2021 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
				SI&A Rate of Change	Estimated Non-SIA Rate of Change
<3500	20.0%	26.6%	21.5%	-19.1%	10.2%
3500-5000	11.4%	27.1%	27.4%	1.0%	29.7%
5000-10000	14.0%	25.2%	26.2%	3.8%	34.7%
10000-20000	19.1%	33.9%	31.7%	-6.6%	16.4%
>20000	18.2%	35.6%	36.0%	1.1%	23.0%

Districts with enrollment less than 3500 and 10k-20k had some of the largest SI&A rates of increase in 2020. It makes sense then that they see some early wins in improvement.

For example, the growth rate for districts with less than 3500 enrollment had a huge jump- a 74.7% rate of increase in chronic absenteeism in the fall of 2020.

# Chronic Absence Comparison by Grade

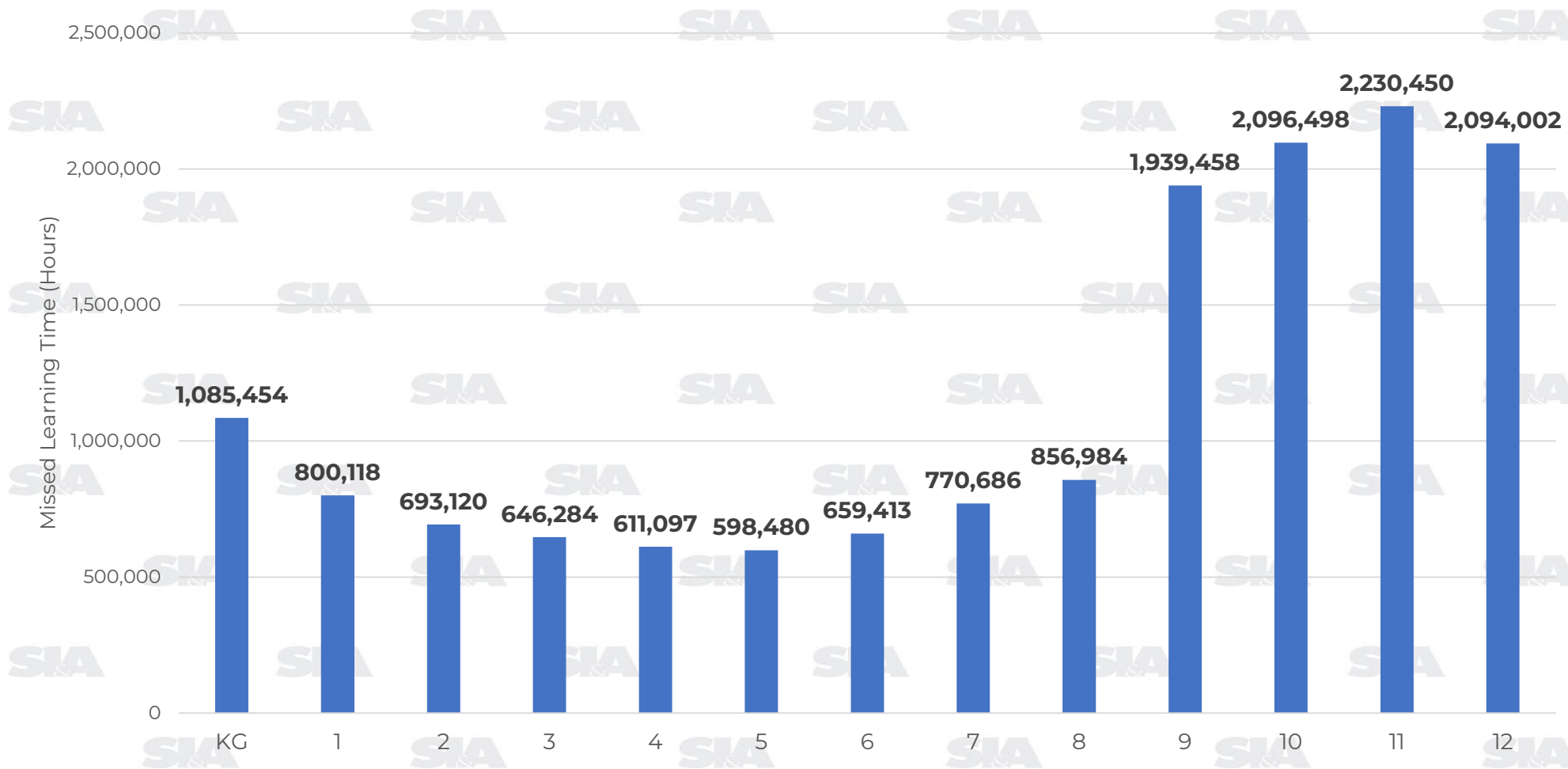
Grade	Mar 2021 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Absence Rate	Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
				SI&A Rate of Change	Estimated Non-SIA Rate of Change
<b>KG</b>	15.8%	37.3%	40.5%	8.4%	25.3%
<b>1</b>	14.6%	32.0%	30.5%	<b>-4.7%</b>	15.0%
<b>2</b>	13.2%	28.4%	26.6%	<b>-6.2%</b>	16.0%
<b>3</b>	11.9%	26.4%	24.3%	<b>-7.8%</b>	16.1%
<b>4</b>	12.4%	25.5%	23.0%	<b>-9.7%</b>	15.1%
<b>5</b>	12.3%	25.3%	21.8%	<b>-13.8%</b>	11.1%
<b>6</b>	15.6%	26.6%	23.1%	<b>-13.3%</b>	10.3%
<b>7</b>	18.5%	28.5%	26.9%	<b>-5.7%</b>	16.3%
<b>8</b>	17.6%	27.9%	28.5%	2.0%	24.6%
<b>9</b>	22.9%	34.1%	35.5%	3.9%	26.7%
<b>10</b>	22.9%	37.7%	37.2%	<b>-1.6%</b>	19.1%
<b>11</b>	22.2%	38.3%	38.7%	1.0%	21.4%
<b>12</b>	21.5%	40.5%	39.2%	<b>-3.4%</b>	15.8%

The largest rates of change in the first year of the pandemic were in the “transition years”; we see this group experiencing the largest decreases in rates of change.

Elevated absence rates in Kindergarten makes parent education on the importance of early learning critical.

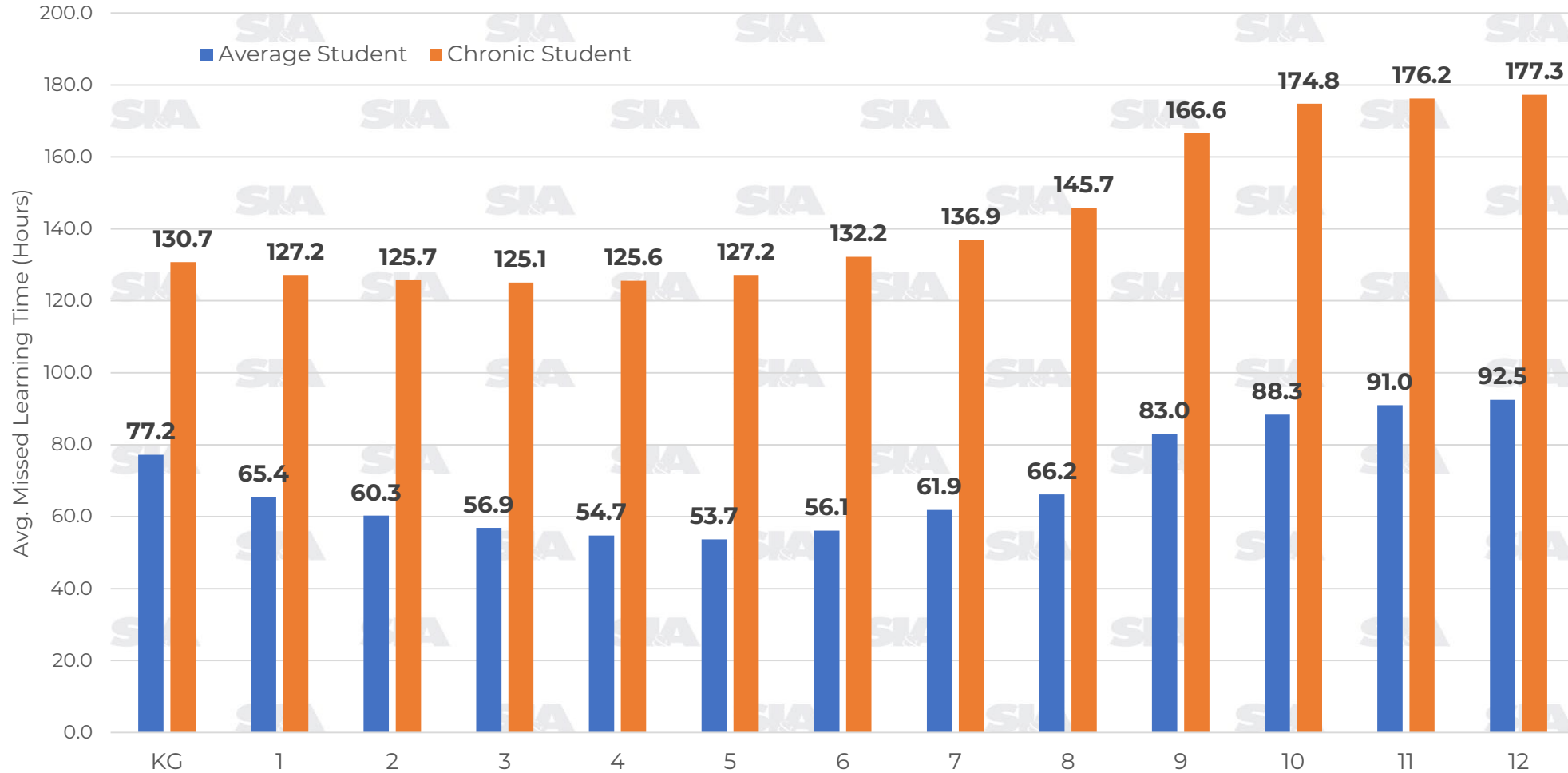
# Missed Learning Time by Grade as of March 2023

Total Missed Hours of Learning Time: **15,416,327 Hours**



Using 6hrs/day as a multiplier, we see that absences add up and the staggering amount of missed learning time by grade for students who are chronically absent.

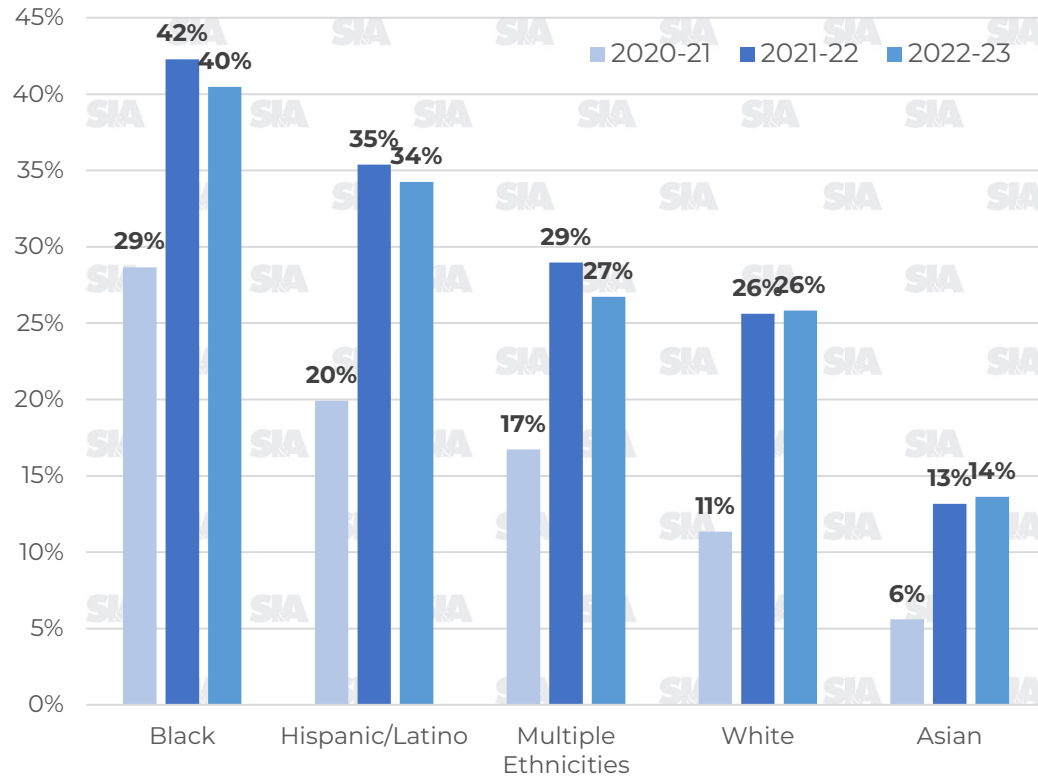
# Missed Learning Time by Grade as of March 2023



Chronically absent students accumulate double the missed learning time compared to their non-chronically absent peers

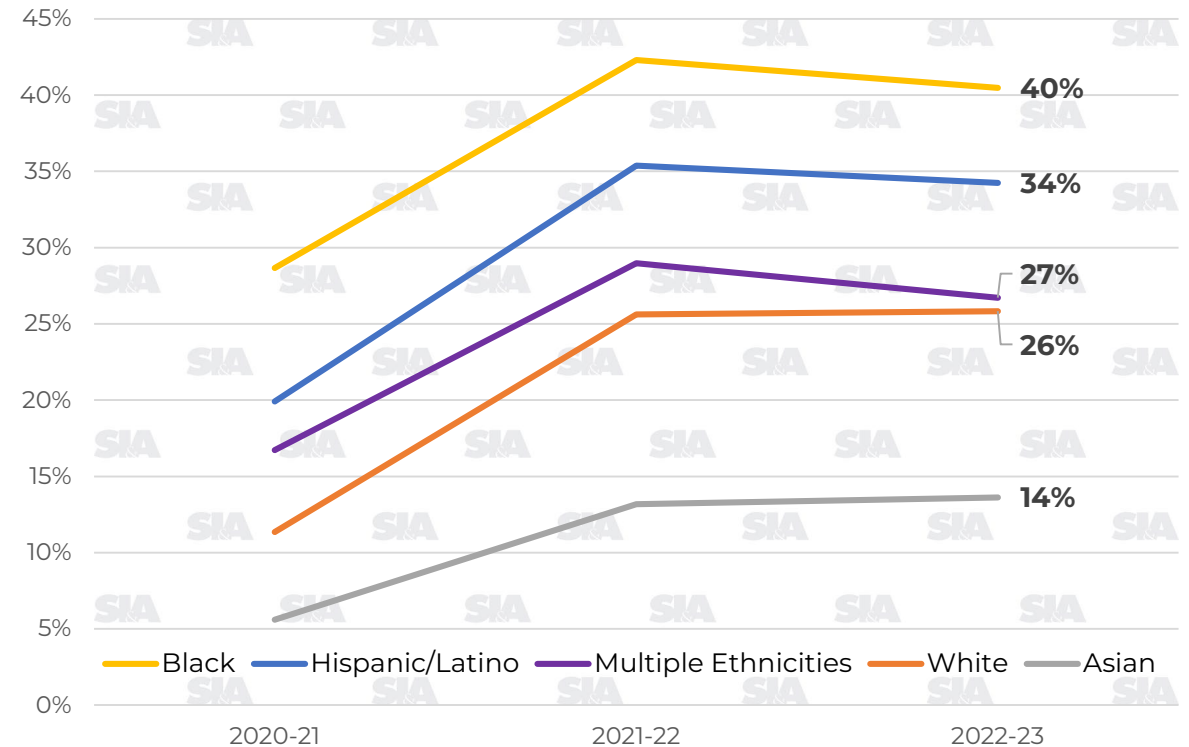
# Chronic Absences Highest for Black & Hispanic Students

Chronic Absence Rates by Top 5 Ethnicities by Year



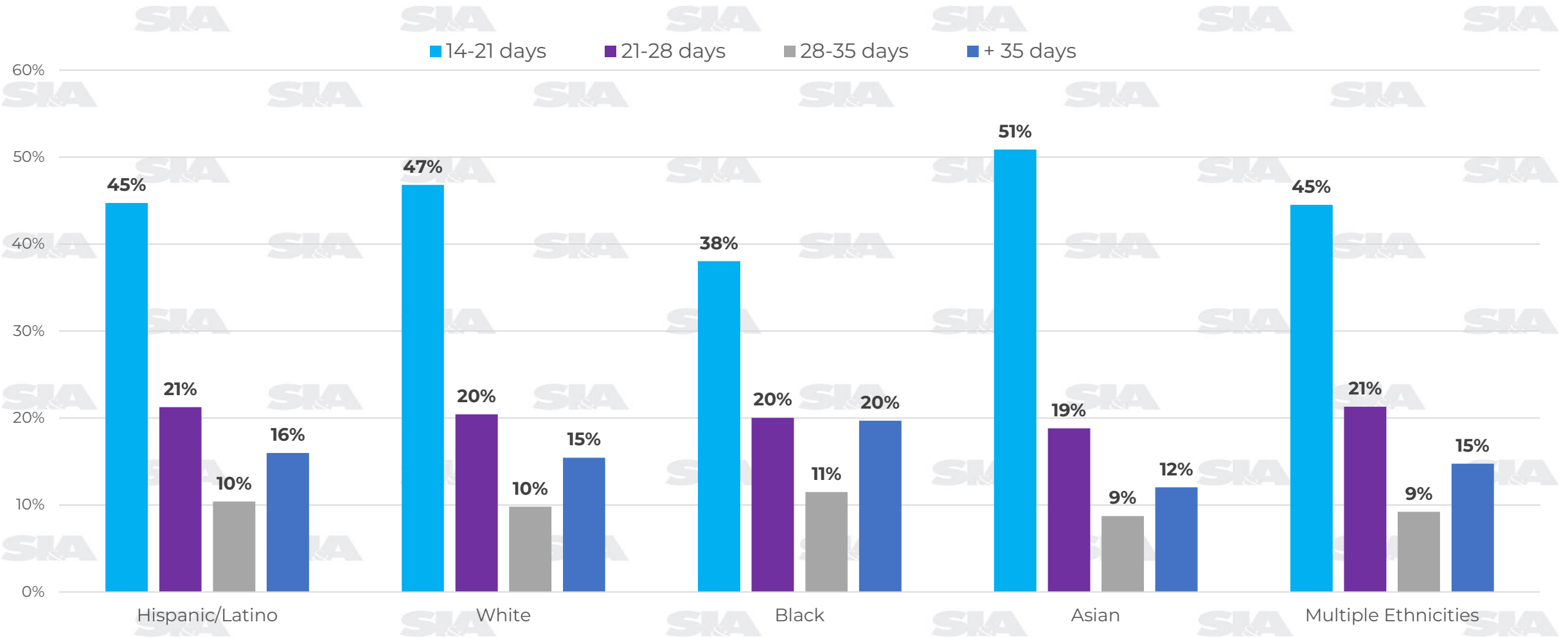
Showing the large differences one year to the next.

Relative Chronic Absence Rate Trends by Top 5 Ethnicities



Showing that although all ethnicity subgroups have an increase in chronic rate, they are still in the same relative position compared to each other.

# Days Missed for Chronically Absent Students by Ethnicity





# Chronic Absence Comparison by District Size

English Language Learners (ELL)				Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
Subgroups	Mar 2021 Chronic Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Rate	SI&A Rate of Change	Est. Non-SIA Rate of Change
ELL	21.7%	34.6%	33.6%	-1.0%	-3.0%
Non ELL	16.1%	32.3%	31.2%	-1.2%	-3.7%

Change in chronic rates for **ELL vs. non-ELL** Subgroups. Both subgroups saw similar decreases in chronic rates.

Free & Reduced Lunch				Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
Subgroups	Mar 2021 Chronic Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Rate	SI&A Rate of Change	Est. Non-SIA Rate of Change
Free & Reduced Lunch	22.7%	36.2%	37.5%	1.3%	3.6%
Paid Lunch	9.8%	31.3%	23.7%	<b>-7.6%</b>	-24.3%

Change in chronic rates for the **Free & Reduced vs. Paid Lunch** subgroups. The latter saw a decrease in chronic rates while F&R saw a slight increase.

Foster Youth				Mar 2022 vs. Mar 2023	
Subgroups	Mar 2021 Chronic Rate	Mar 2022 Chronic Rate	Mar 2023 Chronic Rate	SI&A Rate of Change	Est. Non-SIA Rate of Change
Foster Care	20.1%	39.8%	35.2%	-4.5%	-11.4%
Permanent Housing	12.7%	31.1%	26.8%	-4.3%	-13.9%

Change in chronic rates for the **Foster Care vs. Permanent Housing** subgroups. Each saw similar decreases in chronic rates.

# What Districts Need to Do for The 2023-2024 School Year

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- Message a strong start to being present
- Leadership messaging to all families at all levels
- Setting the expectation for the year ahead and what it means to be successful
- Leaning into September Attendance Month is a perfect Segway to focus on attendance
- Create a systemic communication plan that reinforces the importance of good attendance habits
- Schedule regular intervals to analyze the attendance data and make course corrections as necessary



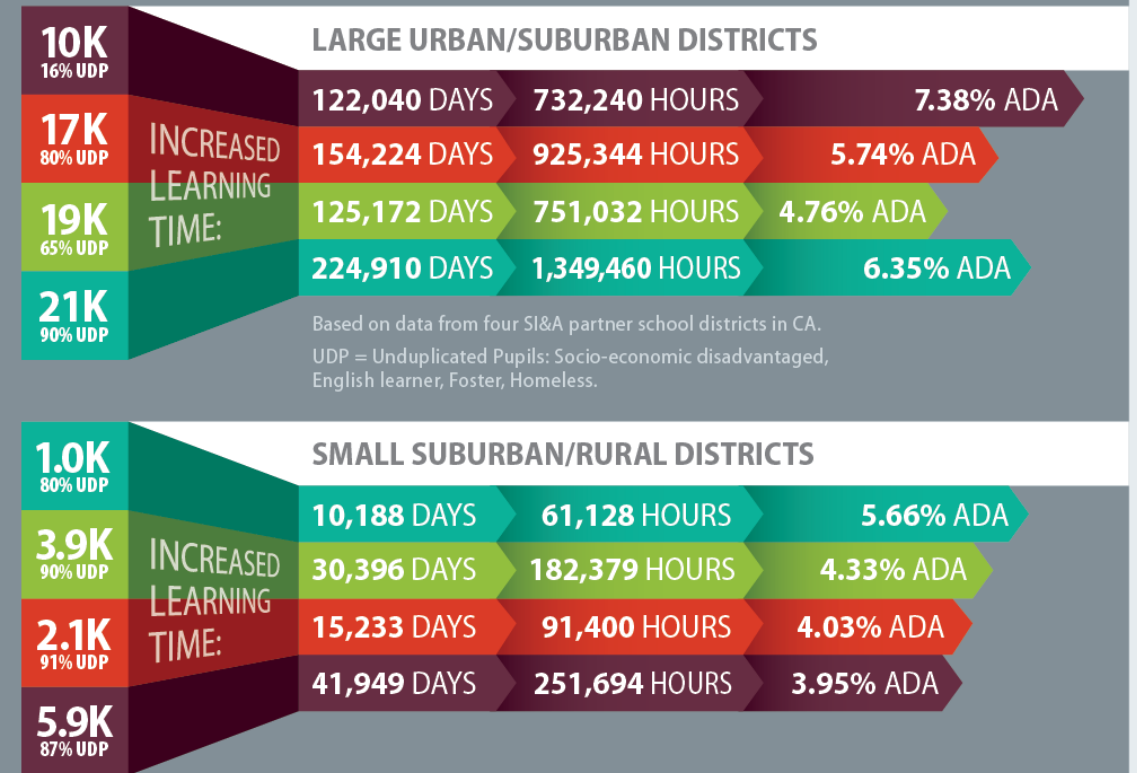
# Increased Communication Makes an Impact

The infographic on the right shows the results from new school district partners that implemented SI&A at the start of this school year, as well as existing SI&A partners who increased the number of school-to-home communication touchpoints using SI&A's attendance management system, The Achievement Initiative.

## NEW PARTNERS



New partners increased learning time **this school year!**



All socioeconomic type districts improvement by implementing **The Achievement Initiative.**

# Appendix

# Population Statistics

The dataset includes 30 districts in total

- 10 are Elementary School Districts
- 6 are High School Districts
- 14 are Unified School Districts

The dataset includes districts from the following 17 counties across California

- Contra Costa, Fresno, Humboldt, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Merced, Monterey, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Sutter, Tulare, Ventura

# Considerations

- The chronic rates included in this analysis are SI&A chronic rates (see slide 3 for clarification)
  - The data contains students in PK-12th grade
  - Only includes active student populations (current active students and students marked as active at the same time in the previous year)
- We are comparing point-in-time data
    - Data up through Mar. 2022 vs through Mar. 2023
    - Districts who start earlier may have less varied data (less likely for events to skew overall rate, since there are more instructional days that contribute to the chronic rate)
- The period to drop students from the district may not have passed. These students could be included in this dataset, possibly contributing to the increase in enrollment for various reporting groups and/or the increase in chronic rates.
  - Attendance taking practices were irregular during the first part of the 2020-21 fiscal year. The drastic change in policy and confusion around new attendance codes/and or how to code virtual attendance could contribute to the increase in chronic rates.

# SI&A Compared to California Dashboard Chronic Absenteeism Calculations\*

## Attention2Attendance

1. Includes all active students
2. Does not include suspensions
3. Includes all students regardless of how many days enrolled
4. SI&A calculates on a day equivalent basis
5. SI&A includes all students including PK/TK.
6. SI&A calculates every student enrolled in the district per the above mentioned

## California Department of Education

1. Includes all active and inactive students
2. Includes suspensions
3. Includes only students that have been enrolled more than 30 days
4. State rate calculates on all day absences only
5. State rate includes Transitional Kindergarten and up.
6. State is currently looking at TK-8, excluding high school