The Rhode Island Student and Teacher Absenteeism Indicators

January 2019

Presentation Goals

By the end of this presentation you will be able to answer the following:

- What are student and teacher chronic absenteeism?

- How are the indicators calculated?

- How are they included in school accountability?

- How does RIDE ensure data quality?

- How is RIDE supporting schools and districts in reducing student and teacher chronic absenteeism?

How is student and teacher absenteeism included in accountability?

RIDE Rhode Island Department of Education

This is the accountability Star Chart. It's how we determine schools' star ratings.

Star Rating	Achievement – ELA and Math (Max. 8 Points)	Growth – ELA and Math (Max. 6 Points)	English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 Points)	Graduation Rate (Max. 5 Points)	Exceeds Expectations, Absenteeism, & Suspension (Max. 15 Points)	# of Low-Performing Subgroups
★★★★★	6-8 points (3-4 per subject)	4-6 points (2-3 per subject)	3-4 points	4-5 points	12-15 points**	None
★★★★	5-6 points (2-4 per subject)		2 points		10-11 points**	1 subgroup
★★★	7-11 total points*			3 points	7-9 points**	More than 1 subgroup
★★	5-6 total points*		1 point	2 points	5-6 points**	
★	2 points	2 points		1 point		

The five **School Quality and Student Success** indicators were developed to show that the strengths of a school go beyond test scores. They are grouped in one column. Their points are summed together.

Student and teacher absenteeism are combined with other indicators, through the **Star Chart** above to determine a school's star rating. We'll come back to this.

Why is student and teacher absenteeism included in the accountability system?

> The *Every Student Succeeds Act* requires one or more indicators of **School Quality or Student Success** (SQSS).

> Rhode Island chose a range of indicators to represent school culture:
>   - Exceeds Expectations in ELA
>   - Exceeds Expectations in Math
>   - Student Chronic Absenteeism
>   - Teacher Chronic Absenteeism
>   - Student Suspension

> **Student chronic absenteeism** is correlated with low academic achievement and is a powerful predictor of students who may eventually drop out of school.

> A few studies on **Teacher chronic absenteeism** show an impact on student learning.

How is the student absenteeism calculated?

RIDE has reported student absenteeism since 2011-12.

A chronically absent student is a student who missed **10% of school days or more**.

- That's 18 days for a continuously enrolled student.
- To calculate this, we confirm that the student was **enrolled for at least 90 days.** Students must be enrolled for 90 days to included in the metric.
- Next, take the total number of school days attended and divide it by the number of school days enrolled to get each student's attendance rate.
- If the attendance rate is 90% or less, the student is chronically absent.
- There is no difference between excused and unexcused absences in student absenteeism.

To get the percent of students who are chronically absent in a school, divide the **number of chronically absent students** by the **average number of students enrolled** over the full school year.

How is the student absenteeism indicator calculated?

After calculating the percent of students chronically absent, apply the indicator cut scores below to get the indicator points.

Elementary/Middle	High School	K-12 School	7-12 School	Student Absenteeism Points
< 5.0	< 10.0	< 6.6	< 8.3	3
>= 5.0 AND < 15.0	>= 10.0 AND < 20.0	>= 6.6 AND < 16.6	>= 8.3 AND < 18.3	2
>= 15.0	>= 20.0	>= 16.6	>= 18.3	1

There are different cuts for different grade spans because high school students are absent more frequently than elementary and middle school students. The K-12 and 7-12 cuts were set in between the Elementary/Middle and High cuts based on the statewide distribution of students enrolled in those grades.

For each respective school, their student absenteeism points are then combined with points from the other **School Quality and Student Success** indicators in one column on the Star Chart. The Star Chart uses all accountability indicators to determine a school's star rating.

Background on teacher absenteeism

➢ The United States Department of Education bi-annually releases the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC). The inaugural report indicated that Rhode Island had the highest rate of teacher absenteeism in the country with more than 1 in 2 teachers chronically absent.

➢ Within Rhode Island and nationally, there are concerns over the quality of data collection for the CRDC.

➢ In response to the 2013 results, RIDE formed a task force, involving district and union leaders, to develop commonly understood definitions for a teacher attendance data collection. The task force agreed on definitions for teacher absenteeism. This included a key distinction between planned and unplanned absences.

➢ Rhode Island is the **first state** to include teacher absenteeism as a part of it's accountability system.

Rhode Island has the 3rd highest rate of teacher absenteeism on the most recent CRDC report.

What data are collected?

➢ Each day, RIDE collects from districts:
- Whether each teacher is present or absent for a full or a half day
- Whether it is an present, absence or an administrative day which includes professional development
- Whether it is part of a pre-approved absence of greater than 5 days

How is the teacher absenteeism indicator calculated?

Now determine whether each teacher is chronically absent.

A chronically absent teacher is a teacher who missed **10% of school days or more**.

- In most schools, that's 18 days for a full-time full-year teacher.

For the numerator, count the number of days each teacher missed, using data submitted by the district.

The following types of absence are **not counted** toward teacher absenteeism:

- Professional development
- Pre-approved absences of more than 5 consecutive days (e.g. maternity leave)
- Absences on non-school days
- Half days

The denominator is the number of days the teacher was employed by the district multiplied by their FTE status.

How is the teacher absenteeism indicator calculated?

Here are some examples.

	Days Employed	FTE Status	Denominator	Absences (not including pre-approved > 5 days or professional dev.)	Att. Rate	Chronically Absent?
Teacher A	180	1.0	180	14	0.92	No
Teacher B	180	0.5	90	5	0.94	No
Teacher C	180	1.0	180	27	0.85	Yes
Teacher D	90	0.7	63	2	0.97	No
Teacher E	104	1.0	104	11	0.89	Yes

How is the teacher absenteeism indicator calculated?

Working fewer days means that it takes fewer days to be chronically absent. However, it also means that the teacher will have a smaller weight toward the school total.

	Days Employed	FTE Status	Denominator	Att. Rate	Chronically Absent?	Weight
Teacher A	180	1.0	180	0.92	No	1.0
Teacher B	180	0.5	90	0.94	No	0.5
Teacher C	180	1.0	180	0.85	Yes	1.0
Teacher D	90	0.7	63	0.97	No	0.35
Teacher E	104	1.0	104	0.89	Yes	0.58
					Weighted total:	3.43
					Weighted total CA teachers:	1.58
					% Chronically Absent (all students): 1.58/3.43	46%

Recall that teacher data will not be reported for schools with fewer than 10 teachers, and will not be part of accountability determinations for schools with fewer than 20 teachers. These are the same n-sizes that we use with students.

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Finally, apply the indicator cut scores to get the indicator points from the percent of teachers chronically absent.

% Chronically Absent	Teacher Absenteeism Points
< 5.0	3
>= 5.0 AND < 15.0	2
>= 15.0	1

The teacher absenteeism points are then combined with points from the other **School Quality and Student Success** indicators in one column on the Star Chart (shown on a later slide). The Star Chart uses all indicators to determine a school's star rating.

Let's review: How are student and teacher absenteeism the same or different?

Both indicators…

- Are based on missing 10% of days or more
- Are based on a percentage
- Don't differentiate between 'excused' and 'unexcused' absences
- Are applied to indicator cuts to get 1-3 final points

Student Absenteeism…	Teacher Absenteeism…
- Only includes students enrolled 90+ days - Counts all absences - Has different cuts for high school	- Is weighted based on length of employment and FTE status - Does not count long-term pre-approved absences - Has the same cuts for all grades

How are the absenteeism indicators used in accountability?

This is the accountability Star Chart. It's how we determine schools' star ratings.

Star Rating	Achievement – ELA and Math (Max. 8 Points)	Growth – ELA and Math (Max. 6 Points)	English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 Points)	Graduation Rate (Max. 5 Points)	Exceeds Expectations, Absenteeism, & Suspension (Max. 15 Points)	# of Low-Performing Subgroups
★★★★★	6-8 points (3-4 per subject)	4-6 points (2-3 per subject)	3-4 points	4-5 points	12-15 points**	None
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★	2 points	2 points		1 point		

The five **School Quality and Student Success** indicators are grouped in one column. Their points are summed together. If a school is missing 1-3 indicators, we use adjusted cuts for this column.

A school earns the highest star rating for which every applicable indicator is at that row or above.

Like the other indicator columns, performance on SQSS indicators can impact a school's star rating.

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How does RIDE ensure data quality?

➤ RIDE has collected **student attendance data** since 2008-09, and reported student chronic absenteeism data since 2011-12.
  - Districts can access daily reports on their data including a list of chronically absent students online.
  - Districts were required to validate and sign off on the 2017-18 collection in July.

➤ RIDE started collecting **educator attendance data** in 2016-17. 2017-18 is the first year in which all districts submit a full year of data.
  - Districts had access to an online report estimating which teachers would be chronically absent.
  - Superintendents were required to validate and sign off on the 2017-18 collection in July 2018.
  - During the validation window, RIDE reviewed data at the school level to ensure that districts had reported for the full year and were reporting the correct category of absences.
  - RIDE followed up with districts on any noticeable concerns and regularly reminded districts to check their data.

➤ After the 2018 school accountability release several districts have reached out to us to let us know they may have incorrectly categorized some of the data they submitted.

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What is RIDE doing to address student and teacher chronic absenteeism?

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➤ To address **student chronic absenteeism**, RIDE is supporting districts and schools to leverage <u>behavioral science</u>.

1. School Dashboard
- Easy to read display of school-level statistics
- Comparison to last year
- Charts absences over time

2. Nudges to Families
- Reminders that raise awareness
- Proven effective
- Targets parental misunderstanding of absences

3. State Leaderboard
- Introduces competition
- School comparison to state mean and top 10% of schools
- Sortable statewide list

The Nudge Tool

Rank	School Name	Grade Level
1	Achievement First Providence (28609)	E
2	AF Providence Mayoral Middle (28615)	M
3	Community School (08109)	E
4	East Greenwich High (09106)	H

The Attendance Leaderboard – Updated Daily

SurveyWorks- How much do you think missing at least 2 days a month impacts a student's chance of graduating high school?

➤ For **teacher absenteeism**, our first step is to support schools and districts in better understanding their data. This means calls, questions, and presentations for schools, districts, and community groups and learning about how and where we can add value.

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Questions?

Appendices

How to calculate the student subgroup percentages

ESSA requires that every indicator be reported by student subgroup in addition to the full school level.

To do this, we use the proportion of students in each subgroup each teacher teachers.

	Chronically Absent?	Weight	Students taught - All	FRL students taught	% FRL	FRL Weight
Teacher A	No	1.0	88	44	50%	0.5
Teacher B	No	0.5	120	30	25%	0.125
Teacher C	Yes	1.0	90	63	70%	0.7
Teacher D	No	0.35	50	5	10%	0.035
Teacher E	Yes	0.58	120	24	20%	0.116
					FRL weighted total:	1.476
					FRL weighted total CA teachers:	0.816
					% Chronically Absent (FRL): 1.58/3.43	55%

From earlier slide

In addition to teacher n-sizes, this is limited by student n-size in the school as well. Subgroups with less than 20 students are not used for accountability; subgroups with less than 10 students are not reported.

Star Chart Overview

Star Rating	Achievement – ELA and Math (Max. 8 Points)	Growth – ELA and Math (Max. 6 Points)	English Language Proficiency (Max. 4 Points)	Graduation Rate (Max. 5 Points)	Exceeds Expectations, Absenteeism, & Suspension (Max. 15 Points)	# of Low-Performing Subgroups
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Cut points are set based on a combination of norm and criterion factors.
Science Proficiency, Graduate Proficiency, and Diploma Plus will be added in future years.

How does the star chart work?

Pick the number of points your school earned in each column…

This is an elementary school.

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How does the star chart work?

… And your star rating is the lowest row where you circled something.

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