# 2023 Dashboard Technical Guide: CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM INDICATOR

A Kindergarten through Grade Eight Indicator



Prepared by the California Department of Education

Available on the CDE

[California School Dashboard and System of Support](https://www.cde.ca.gov/dashboard) Web Page

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### About Mini-Guide, Resources, and Contacts

#### About this “Mini-Guide”

The California School Dashboard (Dashboard) Technical Guide provides technical information on California’s accountability system, specifically the state and local indicators reported on the Dashboard. The guide is divided into multiple sections, or mini-guides, to allow viewers to download only the topics of interest. The focus of this mini-guide is on the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. However, to ensure that you do not **miss important information and business rules** pertaining to the entire Dashboard, we encourage you to review as many of these mini-guides as possible:

* Access the full guide through the California Department of Education (CDE)[2023 Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page.

#### Resources

* The [Chronic Absenteeism Rate Indicator](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardchronic.asp) web page offers all resources related to this state indicator.
* The [Dashboard Communications Toolkit](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardtoolkit.asp) was developed to support local educational agencies (LEAs), parents and communities bring the 2023 Dashboard closer to home.
* The [Dashboard Resources](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardresources.asp) web page contains general and technical information, tools for educators, translations, and downloadable data files.

#### Contacts

Questions about:

* State Indicators (Academic, College/Career, Chronic Absenteeism, English Learner Progress, Graduation Rate, and Suspension Rate), contact the Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division by email at [Dashboard@cde.ca.gov](mailto:Dashboard@cde.ca.gov).
* Local indicators, logging onto the Dashboard, submitting local indicators into the Dashboard, and the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), contact the Local Agency Support Systems Office (LASSO) by email at [LCFF@cde.ca.gov.](mailto:lcff@cde.ca.gov)
* California’s System of Support (Differentiated Assistance and Comprehensive School Support), contact the System of Support Office (SSO) by email at [CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov](mailto:CASystemofSupport@cde.ca.gov).
* California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS), contact the CALPADS Office at [calpads@cde.ca.gov](mailto:calpads@cde.ca.gov).

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### 2023 Dashboard

#### A Return to Colors

The 2023 Dashboard reflects a full return of California’s accountability system with the reporting of Status (current year data), Change (the difference from prior year data), and Performance Levels (or colors) for most state indicators. With this return, for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator, the Dashboard will display performance by using the color gauges illustrated in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Five Performance Levels (or Colors) Represented by Gauges** (Refer to [Appendix A](#AppendixA) for the descriptive text.)



### Introduction

#### What is this Indicator?

The Chronic Absenteeism Indicator is one of several state indicators that the CDE reports on the [Dashboard](http://www.caschooldashboard.org/). It represents the percentage of **kindergarten through grade eight** students who were absent for 10 percent or more of the instructional days they were expected to attend.

**What is an “absence”?** There are a multitude of reasons that a student may not be able to attend school. LEAs submit a variety of absence data into the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and from this data collection, for purposes of calculating this indicator for the Dashboard, only the following are counted as absences:

* Excused Absence (In-Person)
* Unexcused Absence (In-Person)
* Out-of-School Suspension, and
* Non-ADA-Generating Independent Study

#### Reverse Goal

The goal of this indicator is reversed compared to most of the other state indicators. The desired outcome is to achieve a low chronic absenteeism rate and a decrease in the chronic absenteeism rate from the prior year.

#### Who is Held Accountable for this Indicator?

All LEAs, schools, and student groups with **30 or more students who were enrolled** in ***kindergarten through grade eight* (K–8)** **for at least 31 instructional days** are held accountable for this indicator. “Accountable” means that the data are used to determine LEAs and school eligible for support (i.e., Differentiated Assistance at the LEA level and Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI)/Additional Targeted Support and Improvement (ATSI) at the school level).

Note that students in transitional kindergarten are included in the enrollment counts for the chronic absenteeism rate.

##### When there are Fewer than 30 Students

While the Dashboard does report data (i.e., Status and Change) for **11 to 29 students**, it is not used to determine eligibility for Differentiated Assistance and CSI/ATSI and is reported for informational purposes only. Because these data are published for informational purposes, Performance Levels (or colors) are not displayed on the Dashboard.

When there are **less than 11 students,** no data (i.e., Status, Change, and Performance Levels) are displayed on the Dashboard to protect students’ privacy. Therefore LEAs, schools, and student groups with less than 11 students are not held accountable and are not eligible for Differentiated Assistance and CSI/ATSI.

More information on when LEAs and schools are held accountable are available in the *California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard*, *Local Educational Agency Eligibility: Differentiated Assistance*, and *Every Student Succeeds Act School Support* mini-guides on the CDE [Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page.

#### A K–8 Indicator

Per approval of the state’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) State Plan by the U.S. Department of Education, California’s accountability system is contingent on maintaining a balance between academic and non-academic indicators. Given that attendance already factors heavily into the Graduation Rate and College/Career Indicators (i.e., students may not perform as well on these indicators if they are chronically absent), the State Board of Education (SBE) excluded high schools from receiving a Chronic Absenteeism Indicator on the Dashboard. Therefore, the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator serves as the “Other Academic Indicator” for schools serving students in grades K–8 in California's ESSA State Plan.

Note though that chronic absenteeism and absenteeism by reason data for all grade levels, including high schools, are reported on the CDE [DataQuest](https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/) web page.

#### What is the Data Source?

The attendance data used for this indicator stems from data LEAs and schools submit in the Student Absence Summary (STAS) file in CALPADS. The base of students that determines the denominator of the chronic absenteeism rate are those who are cumulatively enrolled at the school or LEA. This enrollment data is taken from the CALPADS Student Enrollment (SENR) file.

All files used for the chronic absenteeism indicator are part of the CALPADS End-of-Year (EOY) 3 data collection. The CDE extracts these certified data from CALPADS after the close of the EOY certification deadline to calculate this indicator.

#### Differences between DataQuest and Dashboard

Chronic absenteeism rate data are reported both on the Dashboard and on DataQuest. Because different business rules are applied during the calculation process, differing rates may be reported. This section explains these differences.

##### Different Grade Spans Reported

While the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator for the Dashboard is an indicator for schools serving grades K–8, the chronic absenteeism rates are reported in DataQuest for all grade spans (i.e., kindergarten through grade twelve [K–12]). Note that DataQuest has filters for grade levels that can be used to filter the reports to grades K–8 only.

##### Inclusion of Students Who Attend Nonpublic, Nonsectarian Schools (NPS)

Another difference between DataQuest and the Dashboard is the inclusion of students who attend an NPS. In DataQuest, these students are included. For the Dashboard, students with disabilities (SWDs) at an NPS who have a District of Special Education Accountability (DSEA) are included in the LEA’s Dashboard. Otherwise, they are excluded.

##### Inclusion of Charter Schools

In DataQuest, charter schools are included in their authorizer’s report, although they can be filtered out. In contrast, charter schools are treated as LEAs under the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and are therefore not included in their authorizer’s report for the Dashboard.

##### District of Residence (or District of Special Education Accountability [DSEA])

For the Dashboard, the data outcomes for SWDs are “sent back” to their district of residence. Therefore, the district where the student geographically resides is held accountable for their absences. If the student is chronically absent at the LEA that is serving the student, then that student will be included in the district of residence’s Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. DataQuest, on the other hand, does not apply this rule. Rather, these students are reported at the District of Attendance.

##### CALPADS Race/Ethnicity Field

If the race/ethnicity is blank in a student’s CALPADS record, that student is included in the “Two or More Races” student group on the Dashboard and in the “Not Reported” demographic group for DataQuest reports. These students are included once in the “ALL” student group as well for both the Dashboard and DataQuest.

### Chronic Absenteeism Rate Rules

#### What’s New Since the 2022 Dashboard?

##### Return of Change and Performance Levels (or Colors)

The 2023 Dashboard includes a return to the calculation and reporting of Change (the difference from prior year data) and Performance Levels (colors) for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. Therefore, performance will be determined using the five-by-five colored tables. For more information on how performance colors are determined, please view the *California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard* mini-guide posted on the CDE [2023 Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page.

##### Application of Three-by-Five- Colored Tables for Fewer than 150 Students

In 2023, the Dashboard will restart the application of a separate methodology for LEAs, schools, and student groups that have fewer than 150 students as small counts have more Red (or Blue) Performance Levels compared to LEAs and schools with large student populations. This separate methodology—known as the “Three-by-Five”—removes both the “Increased Significantly” and “Declined Significantly” **Change levels** thereby limiting the large swings in the **Change data** that can be triggered by just a few students.

For the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator, the Three-by-Five is automatically applied when there are fewer than 150 students (in the current year) in the denominator who meet the chronic absenteeism eligibility enrollment requirements at the LEA, school, and student group levels.

#### Which Students Are Included in the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator?

The chronic absenteeism rate calculated for LEAs, schools, and student groups reflects the percentage of students who are absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days in which the student was expected to attend. This means that the first step is to determine which students meet the chronically absent threshold and should be included in the numerator of the rate.

##### Step A: Calculate Each Student’s Absence Rate

Use the following formula on the next page to determine each student’s absence rate for the most current year data (i.e., 2022–23):

**Student Absence Rate Formula**

Out-of-School Suspension Days + Days Absent Excused (In-Person) + Days Absent Unexcused (In-Person) + Non-ADA-Generating Independent Study Days

**divided by**

Expected Attendance Days

The following details each of the fields in the above formula:

###### DENOMINATOR

Expected Attendance Days

For a student to be included in an LEA or school’s chronic absenteeism rate, the student must be enrolled for at least 31 instructional days that they are expected to attend during the academic year (July 1 to June 30). The “Expected Attendance Days” are the total number of days a student was scheduled to attend and can be determined by taking the sum of the following fields in the CALPADS STAS file. (Note that the field numbers and definitions bulleted below can also be found in the CALPADS File Specifications on the [CALPADS System Documentation](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sp/cl/systemdocs.asp) web page:

* *Days Attended In-Person*: Total number of days the student attended the school in-person. A day attended is defined as any day a student attended for all or part of a school day. (Field # 13.16)
* *Days Absent Out of School Suspension*: Total number of days the student was absent from the regular classroom for the entire school day due to an out-of-school suspension pursuant to California *Education Code (EC)* Section 48911. This does not apply to students while they are in an independent study program. (Note that ‘Days Absent Out-of-School Suspension’ is only reported for students attending traditional in-person instruction.) (Field # 13.17)
* *Days in Attendance In-School Suspension*: Total number of days the student was in attendance but absent from the regular classroom for the entire school day due to either an in-school suspension pursuant to *EC* Section 48911.1, or a teacher suspension from a classroom pursuant to *EC* Section 48910(c) or a combination of both. (Note that ‘Days Attended In-School Suspension’ is only reported for students attending traditional in-person instruction.) (Field # 13.18)
* *Days Absent In-Person Excused Non-Suspension*: Total number of days the student was absent for in-person instruction for the entire school day with a valid excuse, per *EC* Section 48260(c). (Note that this does not include an absence due to an out-of-school or in-school suspension. In addition, ‘Days Absent Excused Non-Suspension’ is only reported for students attending traditional in-person instruction.) (Field # 13.19)
* *Days Absent In-Person Unexcused Non-Suspension*: Total number of days the student was absent from in-person instruction for the entire school day without a valid excuse. (Note that this does not include students who are absent due to an out-of-school suspension or who attended in-school suspension. Furthermore, the ‘Days Absent Unexcused Non-Suspension’ is only reported for students attending traditional in-person instruction.) (Field # 13.20)
* *Non-ADA Generating Independent Study Days*: Total number of days the student did not satisfy statutory and regulatory requirements necessary to generate a day attendance for either traditional (*EC* Section 51747.5) or course-based (*EC* Section 51749.5) independent study. (Field # 13.21)
  + This field used to be named ‘Incomplete Independent Study’ in prior years but was renamed to ‘Non-ADA Generating Independent Study Days.’
* *ADA-Generating Independent Study Days*: Total number of days the student *satisfied* statutory and regulatory requirements necessary to generate a day of attendance for either traditional (*EC* Section 51747.5) or course-based (*EC* Section 51749.5) independent study. (Field #13.22)

The student must also:

* Have a grade between K–8.
  + Students in transitional kindergarten are included in the chronic absenteeism rate.
* Have a CALPADS primary (status code 10) or short-term (status code 30) enrollment record within the academic year. Students enrolled under other enrollment types (e.g., secondary enrollments) are not included.

For students who are in a ***Home/Hospital***, LEAs are advised by CALPADS to report attendance summary data for the days a student was not enrolled in home/hospital. They are also advised to exempt students who are on a majority of home/hospital instruction (i.e., a record has to be submitted in CALPADS specifically exempting these students).

* **Example:** If a student was:
* Enrolled at a school for 3 months
* In a home/hospital for 3 months
* Returned to school for the remainder of the school year

The student’s denominator includes only the days enrolled at the school (i.e., does not include the days in home/hospital).

###### NUMERATOR

The numerator is determined by taking the sum of the following four fields from the CALPADS STAS file for each student in the denominator:

* Out of School Suspension Days (Field #3.17),
* Days Absent In-Person Excused (Field #13.19),
* Days Absent In-Person Unexcused (Non-Suspension) (Field #13.20), AND
* Non-ADA Generating Independent Study Days (Field #3.21)

**After calculating the rate** using the Student Absence Rate Formula at the beginning of Step A, a student with an absence rate of 9.999 percent is not considered to have an absence rate of 10 percent or more and would be excluded from the numerator. Therefore, only students who have a calculated absence rate of 10 percent or more are considered chronically absent and are included in the numerator of the chronic absenteeism rate for LEAs, schools, and student groups.

##### Step B: Calculate Status

Once each student’s absence rate is calculated, the next step is to take all the students who had a chronic absence rate of 10 percent or more and calculate the chronic absenteeism rate for LEAs, schools, and student groups. The following identifies the formula to use, which also is the formula to calculate Status for the 2023 Dashboard.

**Calculation Formula for Status**

Total Number of Unduplicated Count of Students Who Were Absent 10 Percent or More of Instructional Days (in which the student was expected to attend) During the 2022–23 Academic Year

**divided by**

Total Number of Cumulatively Enrolled Students Who Meet Specific

“Eligible Enrolled” Requirements

Note that in calculating the rate, the same weight is assigned to all students.

* Example: 20 of 2,000 students at Nebula Middle School were absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days in which the student was expected to attend. The chronic absenteeism rate for the school is 1 percent:

20 ***divided by*** 2,000 = 1 percent

The following details the information in the above formula:

###### NUMERATOR: Chronically Absent Students

Only students who are absent 10 percent or more of the instructional days they were expected to attend are included in the numerator of the chronic absenteeism rate at the LEA, school, and student group levels. Therefore, this would be the total number of students who had an absence of 10 percent or more determined under “Step A: Calculate Each Student’s Absence Rate.”

###### DENOMINATOR: Eligible Enrolled

The denominator is based on all students who are cumulatively enrolled at the school or LEA. The cumulative enrollment information is taken from the CALPADS Student Enrollment (SENR) file. Cumulative enrollment reflects the total number of students who were enrolled for at least one day at any time during the school year. For example:

* A student who enrolls in a school on March 7 and transfers out on March 10 would be counted in the school’s cumulative enrollment.

To be ***included*** in the denominator, students must be enrolled for at least 31 instructional days that they are expected to attend during the academic year (July 1 to June 30). In addition, students must also have a CALPADS primary (status code 10) or short-term (status code 30) enrollment record.

The following students are ***excluded***from the denominator:

* Enrolled less than 31 instructional days,
* Flagged as exempt in the CALPADS STAS file:
  + Received instruction through a home or hospital instructional setting, or
  + Attended community college full-time.
* Enrolled in a Non-Public School (NPS) if they *do not* have a DSEA. SWDs who *do* have a DSEA are “sent back” to their DSEA. Otherwise, SWDs who do not have a DSEA are excluded.

LEA-Level Denominator

The following identifies rules used to determine the denominator at the LEA-level.

***Enrolled in Multiple Schools in the Same LEA***

If a student is enrolled in **multiple schools within a LEA** during the academic year, the student is counted once in the denominator of the chronic absenteeism rate at each school, and only once in the LEA’s denominator as long as the student meets the eligible enrolled criteria identified above.

***District of Residence Rule (District of Special Education Accountability)***

Students with disabilities (SWDs) often receive services outside of the district where the student geographically resides if the district – also known as the *district of special education accountability (DSEA)* – is unable to provide the full range of special education services that the student requires. In these instances, the DSEA will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with another LEA or county office of education so that appropriate services can be provided to these students.

To ensure that the DSEA (which receives federal funding—under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act—for their SWDs) is held accountable for the outcomes of their students, beginning with the 2022 Dashboard, all SWD results are “sent back” to the DSEA and included in the DSEA’s Dashboard. This means that the DSEA is held accountable for all the data generated by the student (e.g., assessment results, suspensions, absences, graduation, course completion, and so on).

Therefore, at the **LEA-level** **only,** SWDs are included in the denominator if they have a **DSEA** in the CALPADS SPED file (field #14.16) and if they meet the eligible enrolled criteria. (They are also included in the numerator only if their absence rate meets the 10 percent or more absenteeism threshold.)

* *Example:* Jade Unified sent Walid, a grade four student, to Amber Unified to ensure that he received appropriate Special Education services. During the academic year, Walid was enrolled at Amber Unified during August 25 to May 20 and had a primary enrollment record. At Amber Unified, Walid had a total of five days of excused absences. Because the DSEA field in CALPADS (SPED file; field #14.16) identified Jade Unified as the DSEA for Walid, all the absence data that occurred at Amber Unified is “sent back” to Jade Unified. Because Walid was enrolled for at least 31 instructional days while at Amber Unified, he will be included in the denominator of Jade Unified’s chronic absenteeism rate. However, he will not be included in the numerator because he was not absent 10 percent or more of the instructional days he was expected to attend.

LEAs can confirm which of their SWDs’ data are: (1) sent to other entities and (2) attributed to their LEA by another entity by requesting an extract that identifies which students are being sent or attributed based on the District-County Code in the DSEA field. This extract can be downloaded directly from CALPADS and is accessible by CALPADS LEA Administrators.

For complete steps on how to request and download the DSEA extract, please refer to the [CALPADS User Manual District of Special Education Accountability (DSEA) Extract](https://documentation.calpads.org/Extracts/DSEAExtract/#district-of-special-education-accountability-dsea-extract) web page. You can also review information on the DSEA in the [*Connecting CALPADS to the Dashboard Handbook*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardresources.asp#handbookcalpads). Note that the CALPADS extract is data taken from the Operational Data Store (ODS), which reflects the most updated data submitted by LEAs. Because the DSEA data used for the Dashboard is extracted at the close of EOY, it is a snapshot (“point in time”) data and may not match the CALPADS extract that may include any updates made to this data by the LEA after the close of EOY.

Further information about the District of Residence rule is available in the: (1) Introductory mini-guide, *California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard*, which is available on the CDE [2023 Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page and (2) the CDE [*District of Residence Rule for Students with Disabilities*](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/documents/districtresidencerule.pdf) flyer.

##### Step C: Calculate Change

Once the Status for each LEA, schools, and student group is calculated, Change can be calculated. The following is the calculation formula for Change:

**Calculation Formula for Change**

2023 Status (2022–23 chronic absenteeism rate)

**minus**

2022 Status (2021–22 chronic absenteeism rate)

#### Status and Change Cut Scores, Five-by-Five Colored Table, and Three-by-Five Colored Table

To access the Status cut scores, Change cut scores, and five-by-five colored tables that are used for all Dashboard state indicators, refer to the CDE [2023 Five-by-Five Colored Tables](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/fivebyfivecolortables23.asp) web page.

To access the three-by-five colored table information for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator, refer to the section titled “Application of Three-by-Five Colored Tables for Fewer than 150 Students” in this mini-guide as well as the Introductory mini-guide *California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard*, which is available on the CDE [2023 Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page.

#### Automatic Assignment of an Orange Performance Level

In 2023, the Dashboard will return to the rules of automatically assigning an Orange Performance Level to LEAs and schools for this indicator if they:

* ***Submitted incorrect data*** for the current year
* ***Submitted attendance data but did not certify*** for the current or prior year
* ***Did not submit Student Absence Summary (STAS) data***. Cumulative enrollment will be used to provide student group denominators for all student groups in place of attendance data.
* ***Submitted STAS data that is misaligned*** with their cumulative enrollment data submission
* *Had more* ***full-days*** *of* ***out-of-school suspensions*** *than the* ***number of days*** *reported as* ***absences.*** Recall that out-of-school suspensions are counted as absences. LEAs and schools meet this criterion if (for the current Dashboard cycle) the CALPADS student absence summary file reflected:
  + Full day out-of-school suspensions but there were zero absences reported.

Note that if the LEA or school’s own chronic absenteeism data places them at the Red performance color, then the LEA or school will continue to receive a Red Performance Level and is not assigned an Orange.

The downloadable data files identify which LEAs or schools were automatically assigned an Orange performance color. These data files can be accessed on the CDE [Dashboard Resources](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardresources.asp) web page - see Data Files tab. The “certifyflag” and/or “DataErrorFlag” fields identify which LEAs and schools received an automatic Orange.

#### School Dashboard Additional Reports

Designed for educators, the [School Dashboard Additional Reports](https://www6.cde.ca.gov/californiamodel/) offer information and data beyond what are reported on the Dashboard, including summarized views across all state indicators. One report specific to the Chronic Absenteeism Rate Indicator is the:

* **Five-by-Five Placement Report:** This report helps LEAs and schools quickly identify which performance color they received on the state indicator, including the performance color received for all of their student groups.

#### Student Groups

To access student group definitions and the data used to determine the student groups for this indicator, please view the mini-guide titled *California’s Accountability System and the Dashboard* which is posted on the CDE [2023 Dashboard Technical Guide](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dashboardguide23.asp) web page.

### School and LEA Examples

#### Example 1: Aquamarine Academy (A school serving grades kindergarten through grade eight)

Step 1: Calculate the Absence Rate for Each Student to Determine the Numerator of the School’s Absenteeism Rate

Using the formula identified within “Step A: Calculate Each Student’s Absence Rate,” calculate the absence rate for each student. For example:

* Athena, a grade four student, was expected to be enrolled to attend 180 instructional days during the 2022–23 school year and therefore, this is the denominator of her absence rate. By the end of the school year, she had:
  + 19 days of excused absences
  + 5 days of unexcused absences

Using the above information, her absence rate is:

19 (excused absences) + 5 (unexcused absences) *divided by* 180 =

0.1333 or 13.3 percent

Because Athena’s absence rate is 10 percent or more, and she had more than 31 instructional days enrolled to attend, she is included in both the numerator and denominator of the school’s chronic absenteeism rate.

* After calculating each student’s absence rate, it was revealed that 125 students at the school had an absence rate of 10 percent or more. Therefore, the numerator of the school’s rate is:

**125** students who met the 10 percent or more chronic absenteeism threshold.

Step 2: Determine the Denominator of the School’s Absenteeism Rate

During the 2022–23 school year, 750 students were enrolled at the school. Of these 750 students:

* 10 were enrolled for less than 31 instructional days.
* 740 were enrolled for at least 31 instructional days. Of these 740 students:
  + 5 had a secondary enrollment record
  + 5 had a short-term enrollment record
  + 730 had a primary enrollment record. Of these 730 students, 15 students transferred in and out of the school. For example:
* Marcie was enrolled at:
  + *School 1* for 20 days and then transferred out
  + *Returned to School 1* for another 50 days and then transferred out

To determine the denominator of the chronic absenteeism rate:

* First, review the number of days that the students were enrolled to attend. Because students must be enrolled for at least 31 instructional days, the 10 students who were enrolled for less than 31 instructional days are excluded from the denominator.
* Second, the rate only includes students with primary and short-term enrollments. Therefore, the five students with a secondary enrollment record are excluded from the denominator.
* Third, although 15 out of the 730 students (like Marcie) with primary enrollments transferred in and out of the same school, they are included *only once* in the denominator as long as their total enrollment count within the school is at least 31 instructional days. Therefore, the denominator of the rate is:

5 (students with short-term enrollments) + 730 (students with primary enrollments) = **735**

Step 3: Determine the Chronic Absenteeism Rate or Status

The LEA’s calculated 2022–23 suspension rate or Status is:

* *Numerator*: 125 (Step 1)
* *Denominator:* 735 (Step 2)

125 ***divided by*** 735 = 0.1700 or **17.0%.**

Step 4: Determine Change

Change is the difference between the current year chronic absenteeism rate and the prior year chronic absenteeism rate.

Because the school’s prior year (2021–22) chronic absenteeism rate was 0.0624 or **6.2%**, the Change is:

0.1700 *minus* 0.0624 = 0.1076 or **10.8%**.

Step 5: Determine the Performance Level (Color)

The school’s Performance Level (or color) for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator is based on a combination of its Status (17.0%) and Change (10.8%) data. **This means that the chronic absenteeism rate increased in 2023, with more students missing 10 percent or more of instructional days.** Based on the school’s Status and Change results, the school’s Performance Level is Red. The five-by-five colored table below illustrates how the Performance Level was derived.

**Note:**"Percentage Point Change" or **p.pts**is referenced throughout the Change columns in the table below to signify that Change reflects the numerical difference between two percentages.

**Five-by-Five Colored Table Results for Example 1 (Aquamarine Academy)**

| Performance Level | Increased Significantly  from Prior Year (by 3.1 p.ptsor more) | Increased  from Prior Year (by 0.5 p.pts to 3.0 p.pts) | Maintained  from Prior Year (declined or increased by 0.4 p.pts) | Declined  from Prior Year (by 0.5 p.pts to 2.9 p.pts) | Declined Significantly  from Prior Year (by 3.0 p.pts or more) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very Low  2.5% or less in Current Year | Yellow | Green | Blue | Blue | Blue |
| Low 2.6% to 5.0% in Current Year | Orange | Yellow | Green | Green | Blue |
| Medium  5.1% to 10.0% in Current Year | Orange | Orange | Yellow | Green | Green |
| High  10.1% to 20.0% in Current Year | Red | Orange | Orange | Yellow | Yellow |
| Very High 20.1% or greater in Current Year | Red | Red | Red | Orange | Yellow |

#### Example 2: Diamond Unified (An LEA serving grades kindergarten through grade twelve)

Step 1: Calculate the Absence Rate for Each Student and Determine the Numerator of the LEA’s Absenteeism Rate

Using the formula identified within “Step A: Calculate Each Student’s Absence Rate,” calculate the absence rate for each student **in kindergarten through grade eight only.** For example:

* Hugo, a grade seven student, was expected to be enrolled for 131 instructional days during the 2022–23 school year and therefore, this will be used as the denominator of his absence rate. By the end of the school year, he had:
  + 21 days of excused absences
  + 7 days of unexcused absences

Using the above information, his absence rate is:

21 (excused absences) + 7 (unexcused absences) *divided by* 131 =

0.21374 or 21.374 percent

Because Hugo’s absence rate is 10 percent or more, and he had more than 31 instructional days enrolled to attend, he is included in both the numerator and denominator of the LEA’s chronic absenteeism rate.

* After calculating each student’s absence rate, it was revealed that 4,900 students at the LEA had an absence rate of 10 percent or more. Therefore, the numerator of the school’s rate is:

**4,900** students who met the 10 percent or more chronic absenteeism threshold.

Step 2: Determine the Denominator of the LEA’s Absenteeism Rate

During the 2022–23 school year, 65,000 students were enrolled at the LEA. Of these 65,000 students:

* 2,000 were enrolled for less than 31 instructional days.
* 63,000 were enrolled for at least 31 instructional days. Of these 63,000 students:
  + 50 had a secondary enrollment record
  + 50 had a short-term enrollment record
  + 62,900 had a primary enrollment record. Of these 62,900 students, 5,000 transferred in and out of the schools within the district. For example:
* Brianwas enrolled at:
  + *School 1* for 10 days and then transferred out
  + *School 2* for 51 days and then transferred out
  + *School 3* for 57 days and then exited the school

To determine the denominator of the chronic absenteeism rate:

* First, review the number of days that the students were enrolled to attend. Because students must be enrolled for at least 31 instructional days, the 2,000 students who were enrolled for less than 31 instructional days are excluded from the denominator.
* Second, the rate only includes students with primary and short-term enrollments. Therefore, the 50 students with a secondary enrollment record are excluded from the denominator.
* Third, although 5,000 out of the 62,900 students with primary enrollments transferred in and out of the schools within the same district (like Brian), they are included *only once* in the district’s denominator if their total enrollment count within the district (across all schools) is at least 31 instructional days. Therefore, the denominator of the rate is:

50 (students with short-term enrollments) + 62,900 (students with primary enrollments) = **62,950**

Step 3: Check for District of Special Education Accountability

Because the District of Residence (or DSEA) rule is applied *only at the LEA-level*, it is critical to check if any SWDs are being “sent back” and attributed to Diamond Unified. After accessing the DSEA information submitted by LEAs to CALPADS at the time of the EOY certification deadline, there were 150 SWDs who were enrolled at Blue Topaz County Office of Education (COE) to receive their appropriate special education services. These students will be “sent back” to Diamond Unified as the DSEA. These students’ absence and enrollment data at Blue Topaz COE will be used to determine if they should be included in Diamond Unified’s chronic absenteeism rate. For example:

* Gianna was a grade six student with a primary enrollment record who was enrolled for 160 instructional days at Blue Topaz COE. She had five days of unexcused absences, one full day of suspension, and three days of excused absences. Her absence rate was:

5 (unexcused absences) + 1 (suspension) + 3 (excused absences) *divided by* 160 =

0.056 or 5.6 percent

Because Gianna’s absence rate at Blue Topaz COE is 5.6 percent and does not meet the 10 percent or more chronic absenteeism threshold, she is not included in the numerator of Diamond Unified’s chronic absenteeism rate. However, because she had more than 31 instructional days enrolled to attend, she is included in the district’s denominator. (Note that Gianna is not included in Blue Topaz COE’s chronic absenteeism rate.)

After reviewing all 150 SWDs who were being sent back to Diamond Unified:

* 120 had more than 31 instructional days. Therefore, all 120 students will be added to the denominator calculated within Step 2.
  + Of the above 120 students:
* 100 had an absence rate of 10 percent or more. Therefore, these 100 students will be added to the numerator calculated within Step 1.

Step 4: Calculate Status

The LEA’s calculated 2022–23 suspension rate or Status is:

* *Numerator*: 4,900 (Step 1) + 100 (Step 3 DSEA) = 5,000
* *Denominator:* 62,950 (Step 2) + 120 (Step 3 DSEA) = 63,070

5,000 ***divided by***63,070 = 0.0792 or **7.9%.**

Step 5: Calculate Change

Change is the difference between the current year chronic absenteeism rate and the prior year chronic absenteeism rate.

Because the school’s prior year (2021–22) chronic absenteeism rate was 0.0854 or **8.5%**, the Change is:

0.0792 *minus* 0.0854 = -0.0062 or **-0.6%**.

Step 6: Determine the Performance Level (Color)

The LEA’s Performance Level (color) for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator will be based on a combination of its Status (7.9%) and Change (-0.6%) data. **This means that the chronic absenteeism rate decreased in 2023, with fewer students missing 10 percent or more of instructional days.** Based on the LEA’s Status and Change results, the LEA’s Performance Level is Green. The five-by-five colored table below illustrates how the Performance Level was derived.

**Five-by-Five Colored Table Results for Example 2 (Diamond Unified)**

| Performance Level | Increased Significantly  from Prior Year (by 3.1 p.ptsor more) | Increased  from Prior Year (by 0.5 p.pts to 3.0 p.pts) | Maintained  from Prior Year (declined or increased by 0.4 p.pts) | Declined  from Prior Year (by 0.5 p.pts to 2.9 p.pts) | Declined Significantly  from Prior Year (by 3.0 p.pts or more) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Very Low  2.5% or less in Current Year | Yellow | Green | Blue | Blue | Blue |
| Low 2.6% to 5.0% in Current Year | Orange | Yellow | Green | Green | Blue |
| Medium  5.1% to 10.0% in Current Year | Orange | Orange | Yellow | Green | Green |
| High  10.1% to 20.0% in Current Year | Red | Orange | Orange | Yellow | Yellow |
| Very High 20.1% or greater in Current Year | Red | Red | Red | Orange | Yellow |

### Frequently Asked Questions

This section covers the most commonly asked questions about this indicator by LEAs. For a more comprehensive list of questions and answers, please refer to the CDE [Chronic Absenteeism Indicator FAQs](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dbchronicfaq.asp) web page.

1. **The Dashboard is not showing chronic absenteeism data for all of my high schools. Is this an error?**

No. Keep in mind that the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator is a K–8 indicator. Data are reported on the Dashboard for elementary and middle grades only. However, chronic absenteeism data for all grades (K–12) are available on [DataQuest](https://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/).

1. **Are transitional kindergarten (TK) students included in the chronic absenteeism rate?**

Yes. Transitional kindergarten students are included in the enrollment counts for the chronic absenteeism rate.

1. **I heard that students with ‘in-school’ suspensions are counted as absent in the chronic absenteeism rate. Is this true?**

No. In-school suspensions are not counted as an absence. Only the following are counted as an absence and included in the numerator of the chronic absenteeism rate:

* Excused Absence (In-Person)
* Unexcused Absence (In-Person)
* Out-of-School Suspension, and
* Non-ADA-Generating Independent Study

1. **Are students in independent study included in the calculations for chronic absenteeism?**

Yes. As long as the student meets the eligible enrollment rule (enrolled for at least 31 instructional days), the student is included in the denominator of the chronic absenteeism calculation. Any independent study student who has an absence rate of 10 percent or more **(including non-ADA generating independent study days**) are considered chronically absent and **are also** included in the numerator.

1. **The student population (enrollment) numbers on my district’s Dashboard reflects 1,000 students. But the denominator for my district’s Chronic Absenteeism Rate Indicator displays 1,300 students. The denominator is a much higher count for the chronic absenteeism rate. Is this an error?**

No. The student population data on the Dashboard (which includes enrollment) reflects the count of students on Fall Census Day. However, the denominator for the chronic absenteeism rate reflects the count of students who were enrolled for at least 31 days at any time during the school year. This enrollment data is taken from the CALPADS Student Enrollment (SENR) file.

1. **Does it make a difference whether my LEA has an hourly or daily attendance in calculating the chronic absenteeism rate?**

No. The Chronic Absenteeism Indicator is calculated by using the count of expected instructional days and the count of days not attended. LEAs choose to report either daily or hourly attendance when they submit their attendance data.

1. **If a student attends Saturday school, and the district recoups ADA for their Saturday school attendance, does this attendance also get “added” back to the student’s attendance record as a day attended?**

No, Saturday School attendance is explicitly not counted as attendance in California’s legal definition of a chronic absentee: A "chronic absentee" has been defined in California *Education Code* Section 60901(c)(1) as "a pupil who is absent on 10 percent or more of the school days in the school year when the total number of days a pupil is absent is divided by the total number of days the pupil is enrolled and school was actually taught in the regular day schools of the district, exclusive of Saturdays and Sundays."

1. [**My school was closed because of heavy snowfall (or other natural disaster). Will all my students be counted as absent for the purposes of the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator because of this?**](https://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/ac/cm/dbchronicfaq.asp#my-school-was-closed-because-of-heavy-snowfall-or-other-natural-disaster-will-all-my-students-be-counted-as-absent-for-the-purposes-of-the-chronic-absenteeism-indicator-because-of-this)

No. The Chronic Absenteeism Indicator uses “Expected Attendance Days” for its denominator. Expected Attendance Days are the total number of days a student was scheduled to attend. The days the school is closed are not included in the Expected Attendance Days calculation.

### Local Data Sources

Another critical resource for LEAs is their own local data as it reflects an up-to-date picture of current students. Here are a few local sources that can be considered for use:

* Quarterly attendance reports by grade level (high school, middle school, elementary school) and student group
* Suspension data by month including school distribution

### Next Steps for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator

Actions Taken at September 2023 State Board of Education Meeting

At the September 2023 SBE meeting, the SBE members requested that the CDE explore a long-term option of exploring the granularity of data collected on the reasons a student is absent. The CDE will present the progress of this long-term work with the SBE when there is information to share. LEAs can follow along on these updates by accessing the SBE meeting agendas on the [SBE Current and Past Agendas](https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/index.asp) web page.

Transitional Kindergarten

Beginning in the 2023−24 school year, Transitional Kindergarten (TK) is being collected as a unique grade from kindergarten in CALPADS. The CDE will be reviewing how this may impact future rules on the continued inclusion of TK students within the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator and will receive a decision by the SBE at a future meeting.

### Appendix A: Descriptive Text for Image in Guide

This section contains the descriptive text to the images presented throughout this guide to ensure accessibility to individuals with disabilities as required by Section 508 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

**[Figure 1](#Figure1): Five Performance Levels (or Colors) Represented by Gauges**

The 2023 Dashboard returns with the use of five-segmented gauges with an arrow that points to one of the following performance colors: red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. Out of the five gauges identified in this figure, starting from the right, the first gauge points to blue (with the word Blue underneath); the second gauge points to green (with the word Green underneath); the third gauge points to yellow (with the word Yellow underneath); the fourth gauge points to orange (with the word Orange underneath); and the fifth gauge points to red (with the word Red underneath). Under these five gauges are the words Lowest Performance to the left and Highest Performance to the right with a double-ended arrow between these words.