

California Department of Education

Executive Office

SBE-003 (REV. 11/2017)

itb-amard-nov23item01

# California State Board of Education November 2023 Item #06

## Subject

Update on the 2022–23 Chronic Absenteeism and Absenteeism by Reason DataQuest Report Release

## Type of Action

Information

## Summary of the Issue(s)

This item provides an overview of the 2022–23 Chronic Absenteeism and Absenteeism by Reason report release on DataQuest. The reports can be access through the Absenteeism Data webpage at <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/ad/crabtop.asp>. On October 18, 2023, the California Department of Education (CDE) and California State Board of Education (SBE) released these reports in conjunction with the student test results for California’s assessments. By releasing these reports together, educators and the public were provided with a more complete picture of the progress of student groups, schools, and districts. The CDE will present a short overview of the Chronic Absenteeism and Absenteeism by Reason reports from DataQuest and, for informational purposes, walk-through the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator five-by-five color grid to demonstrate how improvement is valued in the state’s accountability system.

The CDE is continuing to process data and develop critical resources to support the release of the California School Dashboard (Dashboard), which is scheduled for December 15, 2023. The Dashboard uses multiple measures of student success for school and district accountability and, accordingly, cannot be released until all measures are completed to make eligibility determinations for Differentiated Assistance.

### Chronic Absenteeism Data Webinar

On October 18, 2023, the CDE and Attendance Works hosted a webinar titled “Counting Every Day: Making the Most of California’s Absenteeism Data”. Over 300 individuals participated in the webinar where they learned about how educators, community partners and policy makers can access CDE reports to answer key questions and drive efforts to re-engage students in learning. Additionally, the webinar spotlighted the Monterey County Office of Education, who shared their progress and work within the system of support to improve attendance through a community of practice jointly sponsored by the California Collaborative on Education Excellence (CCEE).

### Recommendation

No specific action is recommended at this time.

## Brief History of Key Issues

California’s accountability system was developed to align with the priorities of the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and to meet the requirements under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Chronic absenteeism is a metric identified as part of LCFF Priority 5 (Pupil Engagement). The ESSA requires states to collect data to identify students who are chronically absent and report chronic absenteeism rates for schools in the ESSA State Report Card (Section 1111[h][1][C][viii]).

Under California’s ESSA State Plan, chronic absenteeism serves as an additional academic indicator for kindergarten through grade eight (K–8). As adopted by the SBE, this indicator is limited to grades K–8 and is not applied to grades nine through twelve. There are currently two indicators (graduation rate and college/career) that capture the impact of chronic absenteeism at the high school level. Note: the CDE provides Chronic Absenteeism Rate reports for all grade levels on the state’s data reporting web site, DataQuest.

Chronic absenteeism data is collected through the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) and is used to calculate this indicator. This data was collected for the first time at the end of the 2016–17 school year. In December 2017, this data was released publicly on both the Dashboard and through a direct link to DataQuest. In November 2018, the SBE adopted the cut scores and performance levels currently used for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator.

Following a two-year pause in producing accountability metrics on the Dashboard in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the CDE requested guidance from the SBE at their March 2022 meeting on whether there was interest in adjusting the cut scores in preparation for a Status only Dashboard (i.e., Very High, High, Medium, Low, and Very Low). Prior to the SBE meeting, the technical and policy workgroups had recommended that the SBE should not adjust the cut scores and that lowering standards may not provide an accurate picture of what is occurring at schools. The SBE ultimately did not approve adjusting cut scores for any state indicators for the 2022 Dashboard. With the pre-pandemic cut scores in place, 617 local educational agencies (LEAs) were determined to be eligible for differentiated assistance and over 7,000 schools were eligible for assistance under the ESSA requirements based on the 2022 Dashboard results.

Accordingly, during the March 2023 SBE meeting, SBE members discussed the high rates of absenteeism (an increase from a statewide average of 14.3 percent in 2020–21 to 30 percent in 2021–22) and its’ subsequent impact in assistance eligibility under state and federal accountability requirements. At that time, the SBE did not take action to direct the CDE to explore this indicator further. However, during general public comment at the May 2023 SBE meeting, members of the public suggested that LEAs and schools may no longer view the Dashboard as a system that reports relevant data due to the lack of differentiation in the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator which led to a high number of eligibility determinations. In response, the SBE directed the CDE to bring this item back for discussion and to reopen the 2023 accountability workplan.

At the July 2023 SBE meeting, the 2023 workplan was re-opened to discuss options for modifying the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. Currently, the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator is defined as the percentage of students who were absent for 10 percent or more of the instructional days they were expected to attend for any reason. The SBE directed the CDE to explore the disaggregation of reasons for student absences collected by CALPADS over the long term and, in the short term, to place a link on the Dashboard to the DataQuest Absenteeism by Reason report.

At the September 2023 SBE meeting, the SBE approved adding an informational link to the DataQuest Absenteeism by Reason report on the Dashboard.

## Summary of Previous State Board of Education Discussion and Action

### Chronic Absenteeism Indicator

In November 2014, the SBE adopted the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) template, which included the formula for calculating the Chronic Absenteeism rate. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr14/documents/nov14item14.doc>)

In May 2016, the SBE adopted Chronic Absenteeism as a state indicator. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr16/documents/may16item02revised.doc>)

At the September 2017 SBE meeting, the CDE provided an update on the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator and the collection of chronic absenteeism data. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/sep17item02.doc>)

At the November 2017 SBE meeting, the CDE provided extensive background on the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator and requested that the SBE: (1) include information in the Fall 2017 Dashboard to redirect users to the Chronic Absenteeism reports on DataQuest; (2) direct CDE staff to develop a recommendation for the March 2018 SBE meeting on proposed Status cut scores that will subsequently be used to update the Fall 2017 Dashboard Chronic Absenteeism Indicator; and (3) direct CDE staff to develop a recommendation for the September or November 2018 SBE meeting on proposed Change cut scores. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr17/documents/nov17item03.doc>)

In March 2018, the SBE was provided an update on proposed changes to the Dashboard for the 2018 Dashboard release, including an update on the development of the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr18/documents/mar18item01.docx>)

In August 2018, the SBE received an Information Memorandum on the proposed methodology for calculating the chronic absenteeism rate. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/pn/im/documents/memo-pptb-amard-aug18item02.docx>)

In September 2018, the SBE approved the methodology for calculating the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr18/documents/sep18item01.docx>)

In November 2018, the SBE approved Status and Change cut scores for the Chronic Indicator. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr18/documents/nov18item04.docx>)

In July 2023, the SBE reopened the 2023 workplan to add Chronic Absenteeism to this year’s work and discuss short- and long-term options for modifications to the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator. (<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr23/documents/jul23item02.docx>)

In September 2023, the SBE approved for the 2023 Dashboard a link to additional data, the Absenteeism by Reason reports on DataQuest, to provide additional context for the Chronic Absenteeism Indicator.

(<https://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr23/documents/sep23item08.docx>)

## Fiscal Analysis (as appropriate)

California’s total kindergarten through grade twelve funding within the 2023–24 California Budget Act is $127.8 billion from the following sources:

* State: $80.0 billion (62.6 percent)
* Federal: $8.4 billion (6.6 percent)
* Local: $38.0 billion (29.7 percent)
* Lottery $1.4 (1.1 percent)

The Every Student Succeeds Act funds are also typically a portion of the total federal funding amount.

## Attachment(s)

None