

## **End of Second Quarter Chronic Absenteeism & Suspension Results Brief**

Chronic absenteeism and out-of-school suspension are two indicators that link directly to an array of short- and long-term negative outcomes for students including decreased academic performance, decreased school engagement, and ultimately a decreased likelihood of earning a high school diploma. For these reasons, it is critical that these indicators be tracked in formative and summative manners to inform immediate division- and school-level actions when necessary.

This brief reviews chronic absentee and suspension data from the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year through the end of the second quarter on February 2, 2017. Samuel Tucker Elementary, which is on a modified school calendar, also had data pulled as of February 2, 2017 which fell 12 days after the end of their second quarter. The brief is broken into two discrete sections with narrative and accompanying tables specific to chronic absenteeism and suspension results. All 2016-2017 statistics came from data as entered within the division's student information system as of February 3, 2017.

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

Chronic absenteeism is defined as any student who has been absent, excused or unexcused, for greater than or equal to 10% of the total days that they have been enrolled during the current school year. For example, if a student has been absent from school for a total of 11 days and was enrolled in school for 93 total days, that student would be considered chronically absent ( $11/93 = 0.12 \rightarrow 0.12*100 = 12\%$ ). For the purpose of Alexandria City Public Schools' (ACPS) calculation methodology, only students enrolled in the division for 20 or more school days at the end of the second quarter were included in this analysis.

The distinction between chronic absenteeism and truancy is important to understand. Truancy only accounts for unexcused student absences and is employed with a benchmark pointed to total number of unexcused absences. Within the state of Virginia, truancy is defined as five or more unexcused absences per year. Chronic absenteeism is viewed as the more adapt measure at the formative tracking of aggregate attendance patterns during the course of a school year for several reasons. Chronic absenteeism acknowledges and measures the importance within research that states the negative impact on student outcomes that are associated with missing school regardless of the reason. Further, chronic absenteeism is a fluid measure over the course of the school year so should a student's attendance improve they would then have the possibility of not being identified as chronically absent.

### *Chronic Absenteeism End of Second Quarter Results*

The ACPS division average of chronically absent students at the end of the 2016-2017 second quarter was 11%. This aligns directly with both division results for the same time frame in the 2015-2016 school year as well as the statewide end-of-year 2015-2016 average reported by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Overall, consistent trends also emerged when comparing ACPS' current year results to last school year across elementary, middle, and high school grade level bands. Chronic absenteeism rates increased when moving from the elementary grade levels (7%), to middle school (9%) and finally high school (20%). An area of continued focus for the division are the consistently high rates of chronic absenteeism at grades 10-12,

which, while down slightly from last year, remained between 20% and 26% across individual grade levels (see Table 1). The trend of elevated rates of chronic absenteeism at higher grade levels is a national trend and area of critical focus both within ACPS and across the country.

Chronic absenteeism was also analyzed by school. At the elementary grade levels, while overall results were consistent with the most recent year, increases in chronic absenteeism rates of five percentage points were seen at Cora Kelly as well as Jefferson-Houston (grades K-5 ONLY). At the secondary level, all schools (Jefferson-Houston (grades 6-8 ONLY), Francis Hammond, George Washington, T.C. Williams - Minnie Howard Campus, and T.C. Williams) all showed decreases in chronic absenteeism ranging from one to five percentage points. When looking at school-level chronic absenteeism rates it should be taken into consideration that Jefferson-Houston has been, and continues to be, the location of a city-wide special education program that serves medically fragile students. The alternative setting, Chance for Change, has all current students identified as chronically absent largely due to out-of-school suspensions that took place during the course of this school year prior to their placement in the alternative setting (see Table 2).

Finally, results for chronic absenteeism were investigated by subgroup within education level. Consistent results emerged when comparing ACPS' current year results within subgroup to last year at the division level. With that said, the Students with Disabilities (SWD – 16%), Hispanic (15%), and English Language Learners (ELL – 13%) subgroups all continued to have rates of chronic absenteeism in the current year that exceeded the division average (11%). The aforementioned trend of increased rates of chronic absenteeism when looking across elementary, middle, and high school remained prevalent when data were disaggregated by subgroup. However, the large increases in chronic absenteeism rates within the Hispanic (+20 percentage points) and ELL (+18 percentage points) population when moving from middle to high school grade levels warrants particular attention (see Table 3).

In summary, chronic absenteeism rates remained largely stable compared to the previous year and equivalent to end-of-year state averages for the 2015-2016 school year. An area of continued focus for the division, and the nation, remains the persistent elevation of chronic absenteeism rates at the high school level. Within ACPS this focus further delineates to the Hispanic, ELL, and SWD populations at the high school level.

### **Out-of-School Suspension**

Out-of-school suspension is defined as any suspension incident for which students are not allowed on school grounds for one day or more. Both short-term (1-10 days) and long-term (> 10 days) out-of-school suspension incidents are included in this analysis. Results indicate out-of-school suspension incidents that occurred between the beginning of the school year and February 2, 2017 (end of the second quarter for traditional calendar schools).

#### *Out-of-School Suspension End of Second Quarter Results*

Overall, the number of out-of-school suspensions across the division showed a large decrease when compared to the two previous school years. The total number of out-of-school suspensions at the end of the second quarter in the current year was 260 compared to 473 and 397 seen at the end of the second quarters in 2015-2016 and 2014-2015 school years, respectively. When

looking across grade levels the largest decrease from the previous school year occurred at the high school level (-162) followed by the middle school level (-68). While decreases were seen at both T.C. Williams campuses, the largest decrease was at T.C. Williams – Main Campus with a decrease of 130 out-of-school suspension incidents compared to the 2015-2016 school year (see Table 4).

The number of out-of-school suspension incidents also declined across all subgroups that historically have been overrepresented in the suspension population when compared to their representation within the overall division population. Out-of-school suspension incidents for Black Males decreased from 218 to 100 from 2015-2016 to the current year. Similarly, the subgroups of SWD (-62), Black Females (-43), and Hispanic Males (-14) all decreased in the number of out-of-school suspension incidents when compared to the previous year. These decreases also led to a decrease in the overall representation of Black Males (-8 percentage points) and Black Females (-2 percentage points) within the overall suspension population in the current year. With that said, Black Males remain the largest represented subgroup within the suspension population accounting for 38% of all suspension incidents (see Table 5).

Overall, out-of-school suspension incidents showed large levels of decline when compared to previous years. These declines are most noted at the high school level and for the subgroup of Black Males across both middle and high school grade levels.

**TABLE 1**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**Summary of Chronically Absent Students by Grade Level SY 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

Grade Level	<u>Chronically Absent</u>			
	# of students as of Q2	Total # of Students enrolled > 20 days	% of students 2016-17 Q2	% of students 2015-16 Q2
KG	166	1437	12%	12%
1	139	1442	10%	7%
2	79	1334	6%	7%
3	78	1290	6%	5%
4	61	1319	5%	4%
5	68	1193	6%	6%
Grade Level K-5	591	8015	7%	7%
6	74	995	7%	8%
7	79	918	9%	13%
8	117	959	12%	13%
Grade Level 6-8	270	2872	9%	11%
9 <sup>2</sup>	149	1090	14%	12%
10	201	994	20%	23%
11	198	867	23%	25%
12	193	754	26%	28%
Grade Level 9-12	741	3705	20%	21%
Division Total <sup>3</sup>	1602	14592	11%	11%

<sup>1</sup> 2016-17 school year data is the first 93 days of school, with the exception of Tucker, which is reported for 104 days due to its modified calendar

<sup>2</sup> The ninth grade total includes students who attend either T.C. Williams campus.

<sup>3</sup> As an external comparison, the end-of-year state average for chronic absenteeism in SY 15-16 was 11%.

**TABLE 2**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**Summary of Chronically Absent Students by School SY 2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

School	Chronically Absent			
	# of students as of	Total # of Students enrolled > 20 days	% of students 2016-17	% of students 2015-16
	Q2		Q2	Q2
John Adams Elementary School	69	874	8%	9%
Charles Barrett Elementary School	33	470	7%	3%
Patrick Henry Elementary School	50	558	9%	7%
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades K-5) <sup>2</sup>	55	354	16%	11%
Cora Kelly School for Math Science and Tech	40	404	10%	5%
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy	20	433	5%	5%
Douglas MacArthur Elementary School	35	688	5%	6%
George Mason Elementary School	21	554	4%	3%
Matthew Maury Elementary School	26	413	6%	8%
Mount Vernon Community School	53	878	6%	7%
James K. Polk Elementary School	44	771	6%	6%
William Ramsay Elementary School	66	858	8%	8%
Samuel Tucker Elementary School	79	760	10%	9%
<b>Elementary School Total</b>	<b>591</b>	<b>8015</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades 6-8) <sup>2</sup>	20	146	14%	19%
Francis C. Hammond Middle School	135	1392	10%	11%
George Washington Middle School	114	1333	9%	11%
<b>Middle School Total</b>	<b>269</b>	<b>2871</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>11%</b>
T.C. Williams - Minnie Howard Campus	60	784	8%	9%
T.C. Williams High School	661	2901	23%	25%
<b>High School Total</b>	<b>721</b>	<b>3685</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>21%</b>
Chance for Change	21	21	100%	100%
<b>Other Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Division Total</b>	<b>1602</b>	<b>14592</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>11%</b>

<sup>1</sup>2016-17 school year data is the first 93 days of school, with the exception of Tucker, which is reported for 104 days due to its modified calendar.

<sup>2</sup>Jefferson Houston School contains a city-wide program for Students with Disabilities who are medically fragile.

**TABLE 3**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools Summary of Chronically Absent Students:**  
**Populations of Interest SY2016-17<sup>1</sup>**

School Level	Black		Hispanic		White		ELL <sup>2</sup>		Students with Disabilities		Total Chronically Absent											
	<u>2015-16</u>		<u>2016-17</u>		<u>2015-16</u>		<u>2016-17</u>		<u>2015-16</u>		<u>2016-17</u>											
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	n								
Elementary	2200	6%	2201	8%	2687	8%	2800	8%	2324	6%	2423	5%	2804	8%	2944	9%	717	10%	758	11%	534	591
Middle	884	12%	849	11%	996	13%	1041	10%	723	8%	749	8%	526	12%	595	10%	332	19%	341	16%	312	269
High	1129	18%	1132	14%	1347	30%	1524	30%	733	11%	764	10%	855	28%	953	28%	339	26%	338	26%	734	721
Other	10	100%	12	100%	9	100%	8	100%	--	--	--	--	7	100%	6	100%	3	100%	9	100%	20	21
Division	<b>4223</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>4194</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>5039</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>5373</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>3780</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>3936</b>	<b>7%</b>	<b>4192</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>4498</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>1391</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>1446</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>1600</b>	<b>1602</b>

<sup>1</sup>2016-17 school year data is the first 93 days of school, with the exception of Tucker, which is reported for 104 days due to its modified calendar.

<sup>2</sup>Students with an LEP proficiency level of 1-5, regardless of LEP status

**TABLE 4**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**Number of Suspensions by School**

School	Number of Suspensions		
	2014-15 <sup>1</sup>	2015-16 <sup>2</sup>	2016-17 <sup>3</sup>
John Adams Elementary School	15	15	10
Charles Barrett Elementary School	3	1	3
Patrick Henry Elementary School	7	0	1
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades K-5)	15	9	0
Cora Kelly School for Math Science and Tech	8	3	1
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy	0	1	0
Douglas MacArthur Elementary School	0	0	0
George Mason Elementary School	0	0	0
Matthew Maury Elementary School	5	2	7
Mount Vernon Community School	4	3	5
James K. Polk Elementary School	4	2	2
William Ramsay Elementary School	9	0	3
Samuel Tucker Elementary School	4	1	3
<b>Elementary School Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>35</b>
Jefferson-Houston School (Grades 6-8)	10	8	0
Francis C. Hammond Middle School	135	100	100
George Washington Middle School	67	128	68
<b>Middle School Total</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>168</b>
T.C. Williams - Minnie Howard Campus	0	44	12
T.C. Williams High School	97	156	26
<b>High School Total</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>38</b>
Chance for Change	14	0	19
Out of District	0	0	0
<b>Other Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Division Total<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>397</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>260</b>

<sup>1</sup> 2014-15 discipline data refers to data as of 28-Jan-15

<sup>2</sup> 2015-16 discipline data refers to data as of 08-Feb-16

<sup>3</sup> 2016-17 discipline data refers to data as of 02-Feb-17

<sup>4</sup> Suspensions reported include short-term and long-term suspensions per entered sanction codes "02" and "03". Forty-nine records had suspension days recorded but a respective sanction code was either blank, "1" (In School Suspension) or "99" (None), thus these records are not represented in the table.

**TABLE 5**  
**Alexandria City Public Schools**  
**SY2016-17<sup>1</sup> Percentage of Suspensions within Subgroup by Educational Level**

School Level	Black Females		Black Males		Hispanic Males		Students with Disabilities		Total Suspensions									
	<u>2015-16<sup>2</sup></u>		<u>2016-17</u>		<u>2015-16</u>		<u>2016-17</u>		<u>2015-16</u>	<u>2016-17</u>								
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	n								
Elementary	7	19%	1	3%	19	51%	17	49%	4	9%	8	23%	18	49%	7	20%	37	35
Middle	33	14%	29	17%	103	44%	59	35%	52	23%	43	26%	65	28%	54	32%	236	168
High	42	21%	6	16%	96	48%	14	37%	25	13%	10	26%	61	31%	16	42%	200	38
Other	--	--	3	16%	--	--	10	53%	--	--	6	32%	--	--	5	26%	--	19
Division <sup>3</sup>	<b>82</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>260</b>

<sup>1</sup> 2016-17 discipline data refers to data as of 02-Feb-17.

<sup>2</sup> 2015-16 discipline data refers to data as of 08-Feb-16

<sup>3</sup> Suspensions reported include short-term and long-term suspensions per entered sanction codes "02" and "03". Forty-nine records had suspension days recorded but a respective sanction code was either blank, "1" (In School Suspension) or "99" (None), thus these records are not represented in the table.