SchoolStatus

2024-25

Attendance Trends Report

Lessons on Attendance from 1.3M Students

Chronic student absenteeism remains one of the most persistent challenges facing America's schools. Defined as missing 10% or more of the school year, chronic absenteeism is strongly linked to lower academic achievement, higher dropout rates, and diminished long-term economic outcomes for students and communities alike.

Current national data paints a concerning picture. A June 2025 report from the American Enterprise Institute found that chronic absenteeism affected 23.5% of students nationwide in the 2023-24 school year, still 57% higher than pre-pandemic levels. Progress has slowed significantly, with rates declining just 1.9 percentage points from 2022-23 to 2023-24 compared to 3 points the previous year. While comprehensive national chronic absenteeism data for 2024-25 is not yet available, the National Center for Education Statistics reports that average daily attendance in February 2025 was 92% for public schools, suggesting continued challenges with student attendance nationwide.

According to AEI, nearly 95% of U.S. students now attend districts with chronic absenteeism rates higher than their pre-pandemic levels. However, national averages mask important variation in outcomes. Some districts are achieving breakthrough results through systematic intervention approaches, demonstrating that recovery is possible when schools adopt data-informed strategies. Experts are calling for proactive, meaningful family engagement to get students back in the classroom.

State	2022-23	2023-24	% Change 22-23 to 23-24
Alabama	17.9%	14.8%	−17.3%
Alaska	45.0%	43.4%	−3.6%
Arizona	28.1%	24.4%	−13.2
Arkansas	22.0%	27.0%	+22.7%
California	24.9%	20.4%	−18.1%
Colorado	31.1%	27.7%	−10.9%
Connecticut	20.0%	17.1%	−14.5%
Delaware	20.6%	19.2%	−6.8%
District of Columbia	43.1%	39.2%	−9.0%
Florida	30.9%	31.2%	+1.0%
Georgia	22.6%	21.3%	−5.8%
Hawaii	27.0%	25.0%	−7.4%
Idaho	17.1%	15.0%	−12.3%
Illinois	28.3%	26.3%	−7.1%
Indiana	19.2%	17.8%	−7.3%
Iowa	22.6%	21.6%	−4.4%
Kansas	21.8%	19.8%	−9.2%
Kentucky	28.8%	28.0%	−2.8%

State	2022-23	2023-24	% Change 22-23 to 23-24
Louisiana	21.9%	24.6%	+12.3%
Maine	27.3%	Not reported	N/A
Maryland	29.8%	27.0%	−9.4%
Massachusetts	22.2%	19.7%	−11.3%
Michigan	30.8%	29.5%	−4.2%
Minnesota	25.5%	Not reported	N/A
Mississippi	23.9%	24.4%	+2.1%
Missouri	23.4%	21.8%	−6.8%
Montana	Not reported	Not reported	N/A
Nebraska	22.4%	22.1%	−1.3%
Nevada	34.9%	25.9%	−25.8%
New Hampshire	Not reported	Not reported	N/A
New Jersey	16.6%	Not reported	N/A
New Mexico	39.2%	29.8%	−23.0%
New York	29.1%	Not reported	N/A
North Carolina	26.7%	25.0%	−6.4%
North Dakota	20.0%	20.0%	0.0%
Oklahoma	20.0%	19.0%	−5.0%

State	2022-23	2023-24	% Change 22-23 to 23-24
Oklahoma	20.0%	19.0%	−5.0%
Oregon	38.1%	34.3%	−10.0%
Pennsylvania	22.0%	Not reported	N/A
Rhode Island	28.9%	24.7%	−14.5%
South Carolina	22.5%	22.0%	−2.2%
South Dakota	21.0%	21.0%	0.0%
Tennessee	20.2%	18.9%	−6.4%
Texas	20.3%	Not reported	N/A
Utah	25.2%	23.8%	−5.6%
Vermont	Not reported	Not reported	N/A
Virginia	19.3%	16.1%	−16.6%
Washington	30.0%	27.3%	−9.0%
West Virginia	27.6%	23.5%	−14.9%
Wisconsin	19.5%	Not reported	N/A
Wyoming	Not reported	Not reported	N/A
National	25%	23.5%	−6%
Attend Districts	25.8%	21.9%	−15.1%

About This Report

This report examines intervention effectiveness using attendance data from 1.3 million students across 172 districts in ten states during the 2024-25 school year. As national chronic absenteeism data for 2024-25 is not yet available, we compare proprietary data from the 2024-25 school year to the most recent national data from 2023-24 and current federal attendance indicators. The analysis focuses on districts that implemented systematic attendance intervention approaches to understand what strategies drive measurable improvement when national progress has stagnated.

The report covers four key areas:

- **Grade-level** effectiveness of attendance interventions
- **Family communication** response patterns across demographic groups
- **Predictable attendance trajectories** throughout K-12 education
- **Overall impact** of systematic intervention approaches

Methodology

This analysis uses period attendance tracking rather than traditional full-day absence calculations, providing more granular insight into student attendance patterns. While national data typically counts only full-day absences, SchoolStatus tracks partial-day absences by period or class. For example, if a student misses four of six classes in one day and two of six classes another day, this equals one full day of absence in our calculations. Many state reporting systems would not count either day as an absence.

This more detailed tracking method may result in higher reported absence numbers compared to state data, but it provides a clearer picture of actual student attendance and engagement, allowing for earlier identification of attendance concerns before they develop into chronic patterns.

This report distinguishes between percentage point changes (absolute difference) and percentage changes (relative difference). For example, a drop from 22% to 20% represents a 2 percentage point decrease or a 9% relative improvement.

All districts in this analysis were SchoolStatus Attend partners in both 2023-24 and 2024-25, ensuring consistent intervention approaches and data collection methods across multiple contexts.
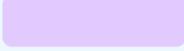
Key Findings Overview

The data reveal four critical insights about attendance intervention effectiveness:

1. **Elementary strategies** deliver dramatically higher returns than secondary efforts

2. **Family communication** works across all demographic groups but with important variation

3. **Attendance** follows a predictable three-phase pattern that allows for proactive intervention

4. **Systematic approaches** drive measurable improvement that outpaces national trends

Our analysis examines how systematic attendance interventions perform across different grade levels, demographic groups, and district contexts, providing insights for districts seeking to improve their attendance outcomes.

Student Ethnicity   Total Students: 1,29,5776

- Hispanic/Latino: 56.4% (730,403)
- White: 19.3% (249,709)
- Black: 8.7% (113,244)
- Asian: 8.5% (109,881)
- Two or More Eth: 4% (51,626)
- Filipino: 1.4% (18,149)
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander: 0.4% (5,804)
- Declined: 0.4% (5,341)
- Undefined: 0.2% (2,589)
- Not Provided: 0.1% (1,430)
- No Info: 0.1% (1,375)

TOTAL
1.3M
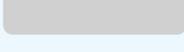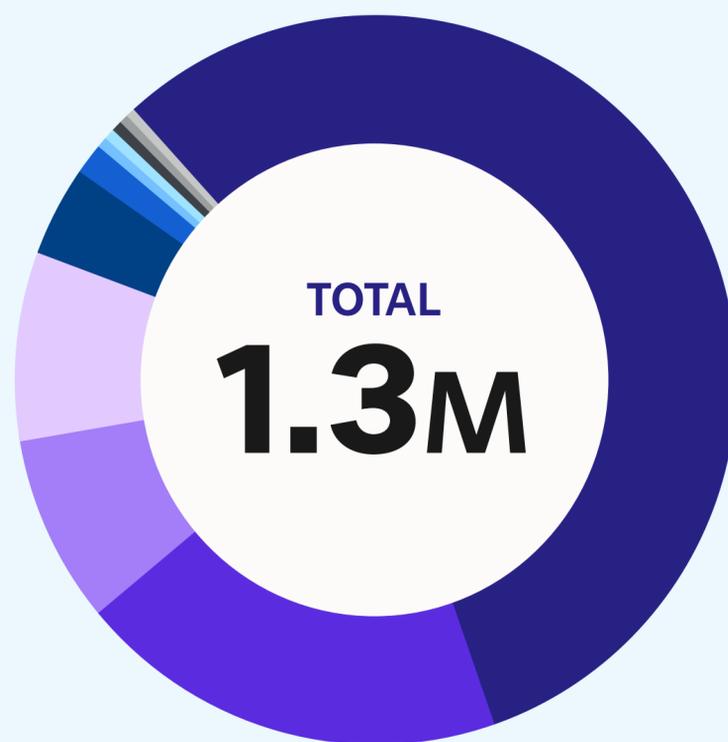
Percentages based on 2024-25 academic year

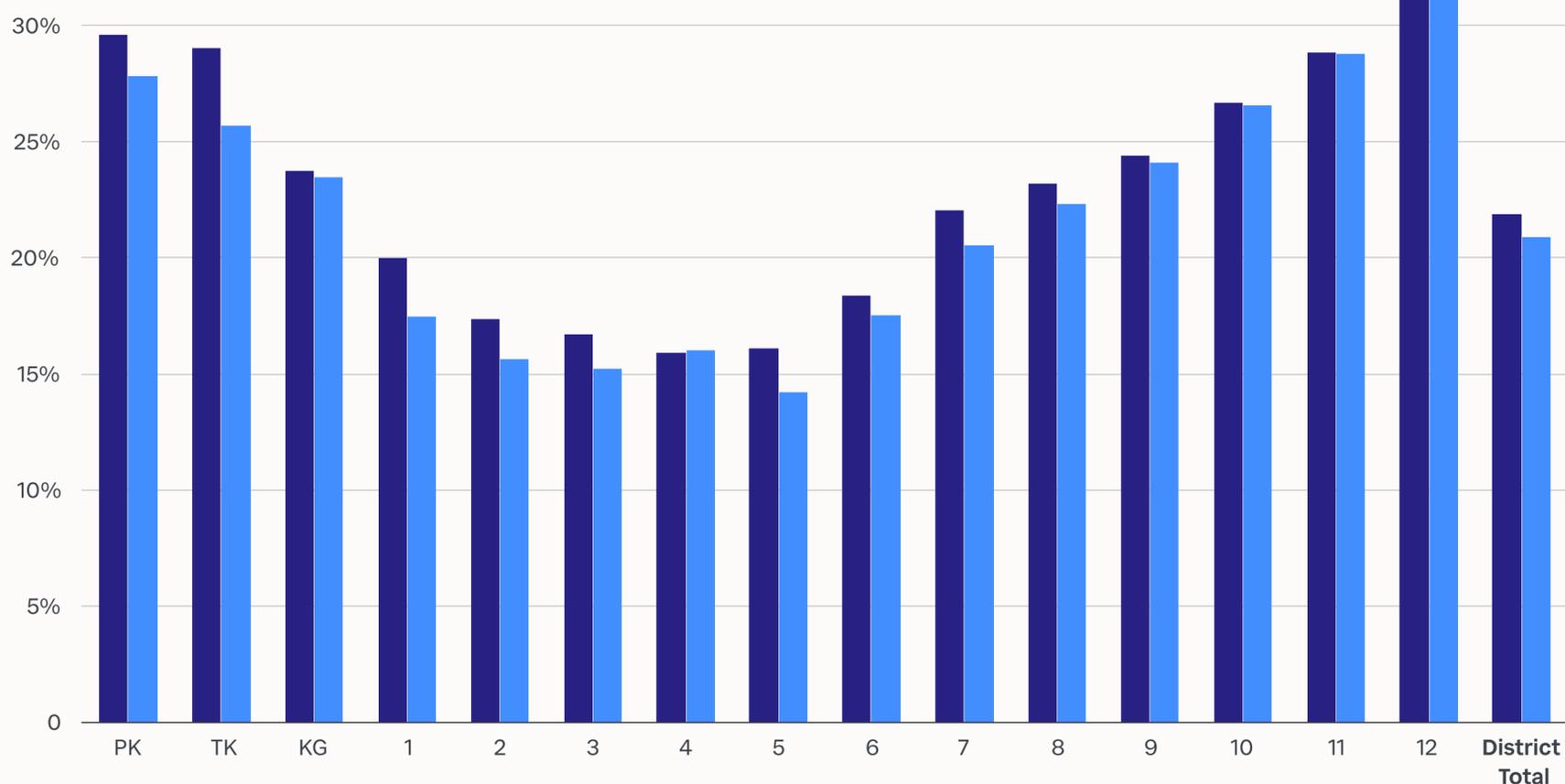# Finding 1: Elementary Interventions Show Dramatic Advantage

The data reveals a striking pattern: elementary interventions deliver substantially higher returns than secondary efforts, creating a clear roadmap for districts seeking maximum impact from their attendance initiatives.

Change in Chronic Rates from 2023-24 to 2024-25

- **1st grade:** -12.6% decrease in chronic absenteeism (from 20.03% to 17.50%)
- **5th grade:** -11.8% decrease in chronic absenteeism (from 16.12% to 14.22%)
- **8th grade:** -3.9% decrease in chronic absenteeism (from 23.21% to 22.31%)
- **12th grade:** +0.8% increase in chronic absenteeism (from 31.89% to 32.13%)

Chronic Absenteeism by Grade

Academic Years: **2023-24** **2024-25**

Elementary interventions show dramatically higher improvement rates, with first-graders improving by 12.6%. However, high school seniors saw chronic absenteeism increase by .8%, despite intervention efforts.

This substantial difference reveals both an opportunity and a challenge. While elementary interventions build a strong foundation, the real test lies in maintaining those gains through the vulnerable middle school years.

This differential effectiveness extends beyond individual classrooms to district-wide resource allocation decisions. Districts investing heavily in elementary attendance interventions see measurable returns that compound over time. Implementing strategies to sustain engagement through the critical middle school transition is key.

The practical implications are significant. In a typical elementary classroom of 25 students, reducing chronic absenteeism from 20% to 17.5% means helping approximately 1 student avoid chronic absence status. While this may seem modest at the classroom level, across an elementary school of 500 students, this represents 12-13 fewer chronically absent students. At a district level, this can quickly increase to hundreds of students.

THE TAKEAWAY:

Elementary intervention produces the strongest results and establishes the attendance patterns and family partnerships that districts need for long-term success. The key is sustaining that engagement through secondary years because the trust and habits developed early provide the foundation for navigating attendance challenges as students mature.

Districts see the best outcomes when they view elementary intervention as relationship-building that supports the entire K-12 experience, with continued engagement maximizing their initial investment.

Finding 2: Family Communication Shows Consistent Response Patterns

Family engagement proves to be a powerful attendance intervention tool, with systematic outreach generating measurable improvements across all demographic groups. When districts implement consistent communication strategies that identify at-risk students early and reach out to families proactively, nearly half of all families respond by improving their child's attendance patterns after one intervention.

SaveRate by Ethnicity

Academic Years: ■ **2023-24** ■ **2024-25**
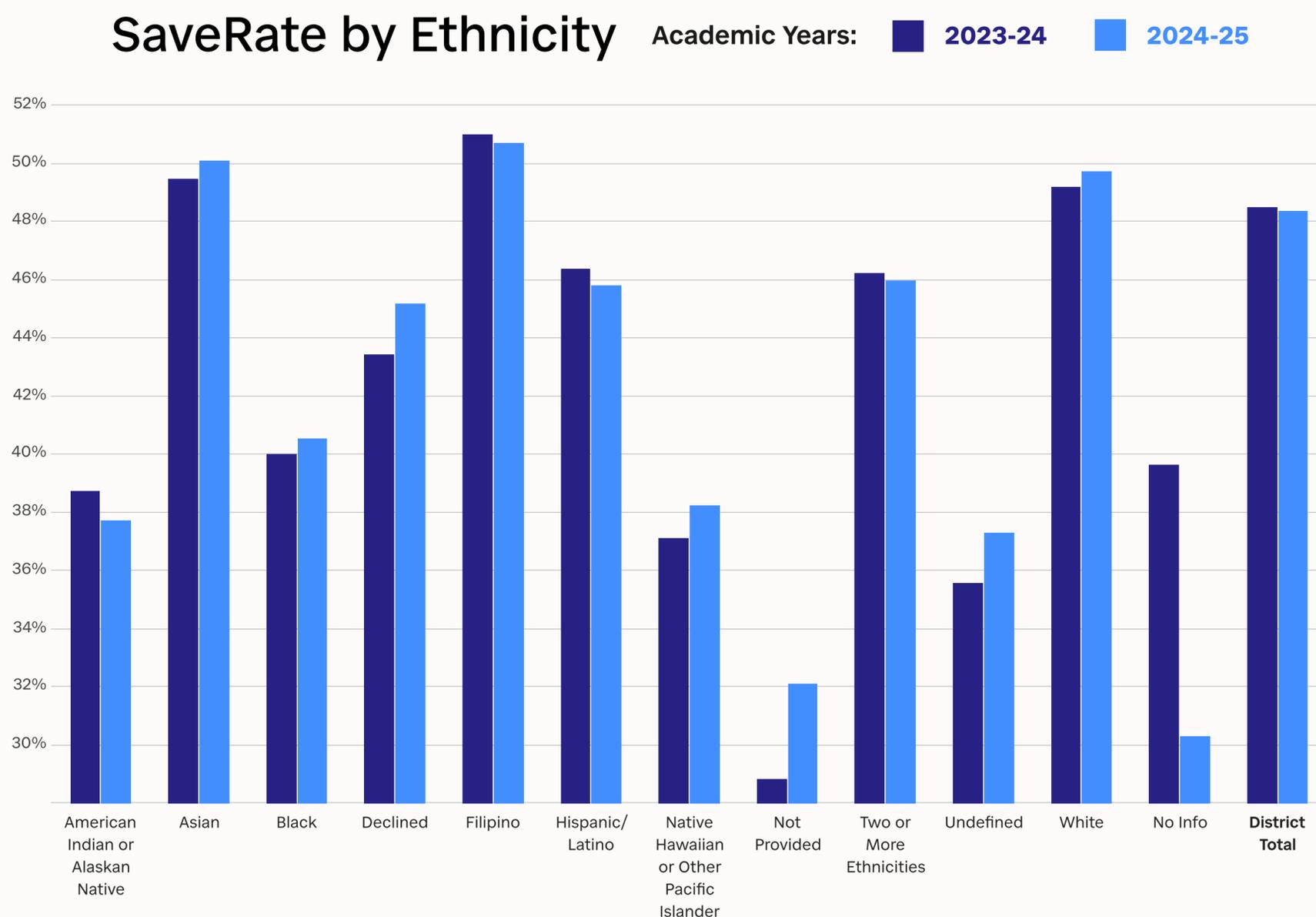
What the Data Shows:

- **Asian families:** 50.1% positive response after one letter
- **White families:** 49.7% positive response after one letter
- **Hispanic/Latino families:** 45.8% positive response after one letter
- **Black families:** 40.5% positive response after one letter
- **American Indian families:** 37.7% positive response after one letter

Overall 48.4% of chronically absent students return to school after one intervention, representing a substantial return on investment for districts. However, the variation across different populations reveals important opportunities for improvement. The 12-percentage-point gap between the highest and lowest response rates suggests that districts using more targeted, culturally responsive approaches could potentially reach thousands of additional families who are currently falling through the cracks.

The scale of impact is significant. Among Hispanic/Latino families alone, more than 334,000 students improved their attendance after one contact from the school. This demonstrates both the effectiveness of systematic outreach and the potential for even greater gains when communication strategies are refined to resonate more effectively with different communities.

These patterns point to family communication as both a proven intervention and an area ripe for innovation. Districts already see strong results from consistent outreach, but those willing to develop population-specific approaches may unlock even higher levels of family engagement and student attendance improvement.

THE TAKEAWAY:

Family communication is effective. Nearly 1 in 2 families improve attendance after just one intervention. But the variation in response rates across different populations suggests that culturally responsive communication approaches could significantly increase effectiveness.

Districts that tailor their messaging and outreach methods to different communities may be able to close the 12% gap by engaging more families.

Finding 3: Attendance Follows a Three-Phase Pattern

Student attendance follows a predictable trajectory that offers districts clear opportunities for strategic intervention. Rather than viewing attendance challenges as random occurrences, this three-phase pattern allows administrators to anticipate when students are most at risk and deploy resources proactively.

Early Elementary Challenges (Pre-K to Kindergarten)

- **Pre-K:** 27.85% chronic absenteeism (more than 1 in 4 students)
- **Kindergarten:** 23.50% chronic absenteeism (about 1 in 4 students)

The youngest students face the highest attendance barriers in the elementary years as families navigate new routines, transportation logistics, and separation anxiety. This phase represents the critical period for establishing school attendance as a family priority and building the foundation for future success.

Elementary Stabilization (1st to 5th Grade)

- **1st grade:** 17.50% chronic absenteeism (roughly 1 in 6 students)
- **3rd grade:** 15.24% chronic absenteeism (roughly 1 in 7 students)
- **5th grade:** 14.22% chronic absenteeism (*optimal point*, 1 in 7 students)

During the elementary phase, families develop consistent routines and students adapt to school expectations. Attendance improves and chronic absenteeism decreases steadily throughout elementary school.

Fifth grade emerges as the attendance sweet spot, representing the culmination of successful elementary intervention efforts and stable family engagement patterns.
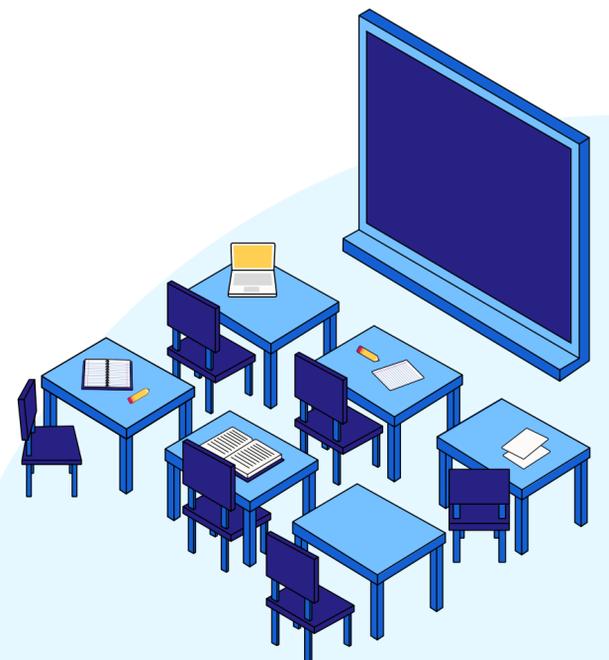
Average Attendance by Grade

Academic Years: ■ **2023-24** ■ **2024-25**
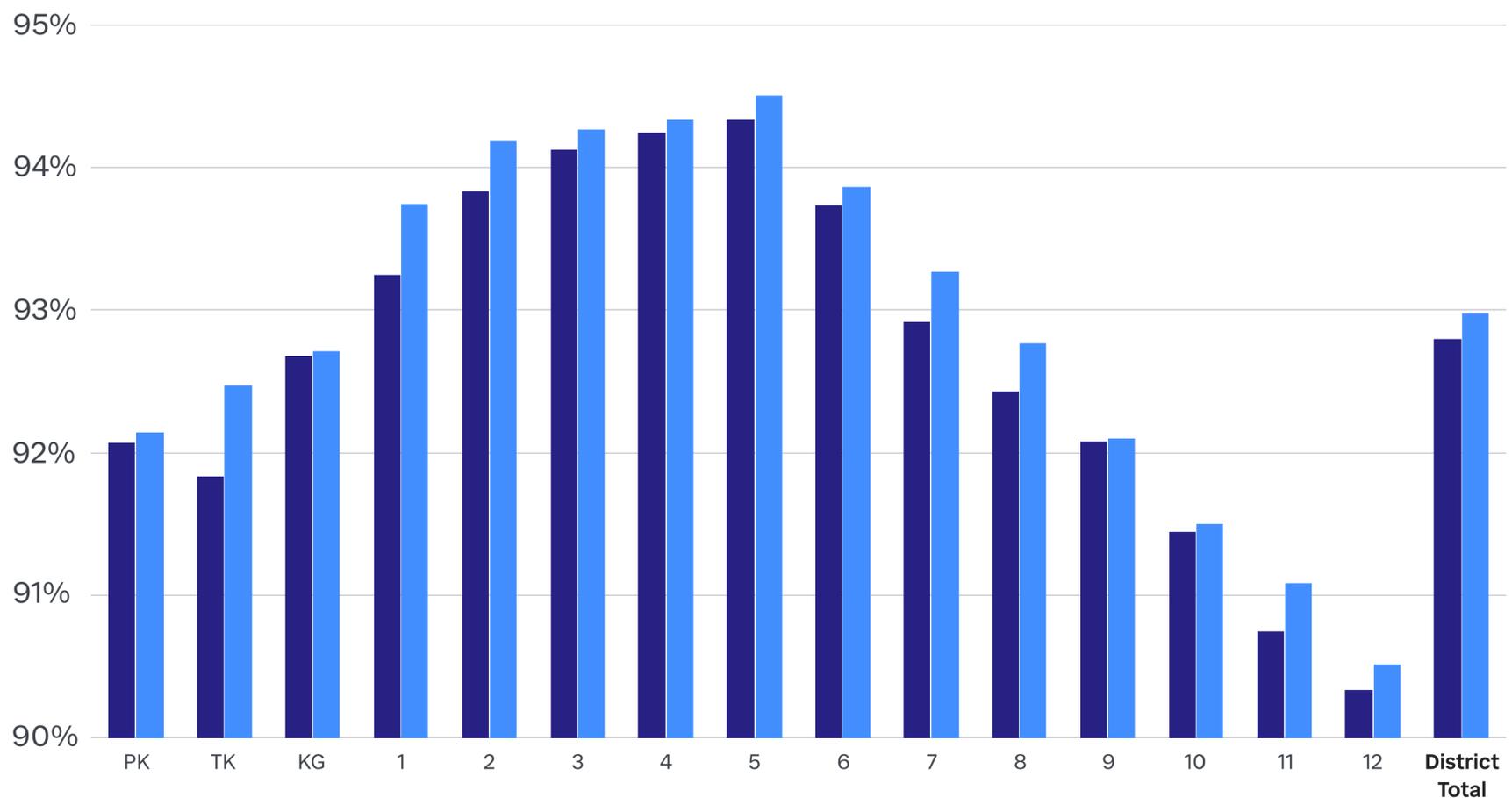
Middle School Turning Point (6th to 12th Grade)

- **6th grade:** 17.54% chronic absenteeism (more than 1 in 6 students)
- **8th grade:** 22.31% chronic absenteeism (more than 1 in 5 students)
- **10th grade:** 26.60% chronic absenteeism (more than 1 in 4 students)
- **12th grade:** 32.13% chronic absenteeism (nearly 1 in 3 seniors)

The transition to middle school marks the beginning of a steady decrease in attendance that continues through graduation. Students face new academic pressures, social dynamics, family and work responsibilities, and increased independence, which can disrupt previously stable attendance habits.

Understanding this progression should dictate how districts approach attendance intervention. The pattern reveals a troubling reality: the elementary-to-middle school transition triggers a steep and relentless decline in attendance that accelerates through graduation. This trajectory represents an attendance crisis in slow motion. Chronic rates more than double from 5th to 12th grade, meaning districts are systematically losing students in increasingly larger numbers each year.

THE TAKEAWAY:

The escalating trajectory from middle school onward should serve as an urgent wake-up call for secondary schools. Districts are hemorrhaging students starting in 6th grade, with the problem compounding annually until nearly 1 in 3 seniors are chronically absent. This pattern demands that middle and high schools intensify rather than reduce family engagement efforts. While students gain independence, the steep climb in chronic absenteeism suggests that loosening family communication and support systems may accelerate attendance deterioration.

Districts must recognize that 6th grade represents a critical turning point: what happens in that transition year can determine whether students follow a trajectory toward graduation or chronic disengagement.

Finding 4: Systematic Approaches Drive Measurable Improvement

While the nation struggles with stagnant attendance recovery, districts implementing systematic, data-driven intervention strategies are achieving dramatically better results. These districts reduced their chronic absenteeism rates from 21.90% in 2023-24 to 20.92% in 2024-25, moving approximately fifteen thousand students out of chronic absence status.

This improvement stands in stark contrast to national trends. The most recent national data shows chronic absenteeism at 23.5% for 2023-24 (down 1.9 percentage points from the prior year), and current indicators suggest ongoing challenges. The National Center for Education Statistics reports average daily attendance of just 92% in February 2025, indicating that approximately 8% of students are absent on any given day. SchoolStatus districts not only outperformed the national average by 1.6 percentage points in 2023-24 (21.9% vs 23.5%), but continued improving into 2024-25 while early indicators suggest national rates remain elevated.

This improvement occurred across multiple contexts:
- Urban and rural districts
- High-poverty and affluent communities
- Broad demographic compositions
- Districts ranging from under 2,000 to over 20K students

The consistency of improvement across such varied contexts demonstrates that systematic intervention approaches work regardless of local circumstances.

Individual district outcomes varied significantly, with some achieving improvements of 34% while a few saw increases in chronic rates. However, the overall positive trajectory across such a wide-ranging group of districts provides compelling evidence that data-driven strategies can accelerate attendance recovery at a time when national rates are slowing.

THE TAKEAWAY:

Systematic intervention produces measurable attendance improvement that outpaces national recovery efforts.

Districts that use data-driven, proactive strategies are leading the way toward attendance recovery. While individual results vary based on local factors, the overall improvement from 21.9% to 20.92% demonstrates that data-driven approaches consistently move the needle on chronic absenteeism and getting thousands of students back to class.

Chronic Absenteeism by State

Academic Years: **2023-24** **2024-25**
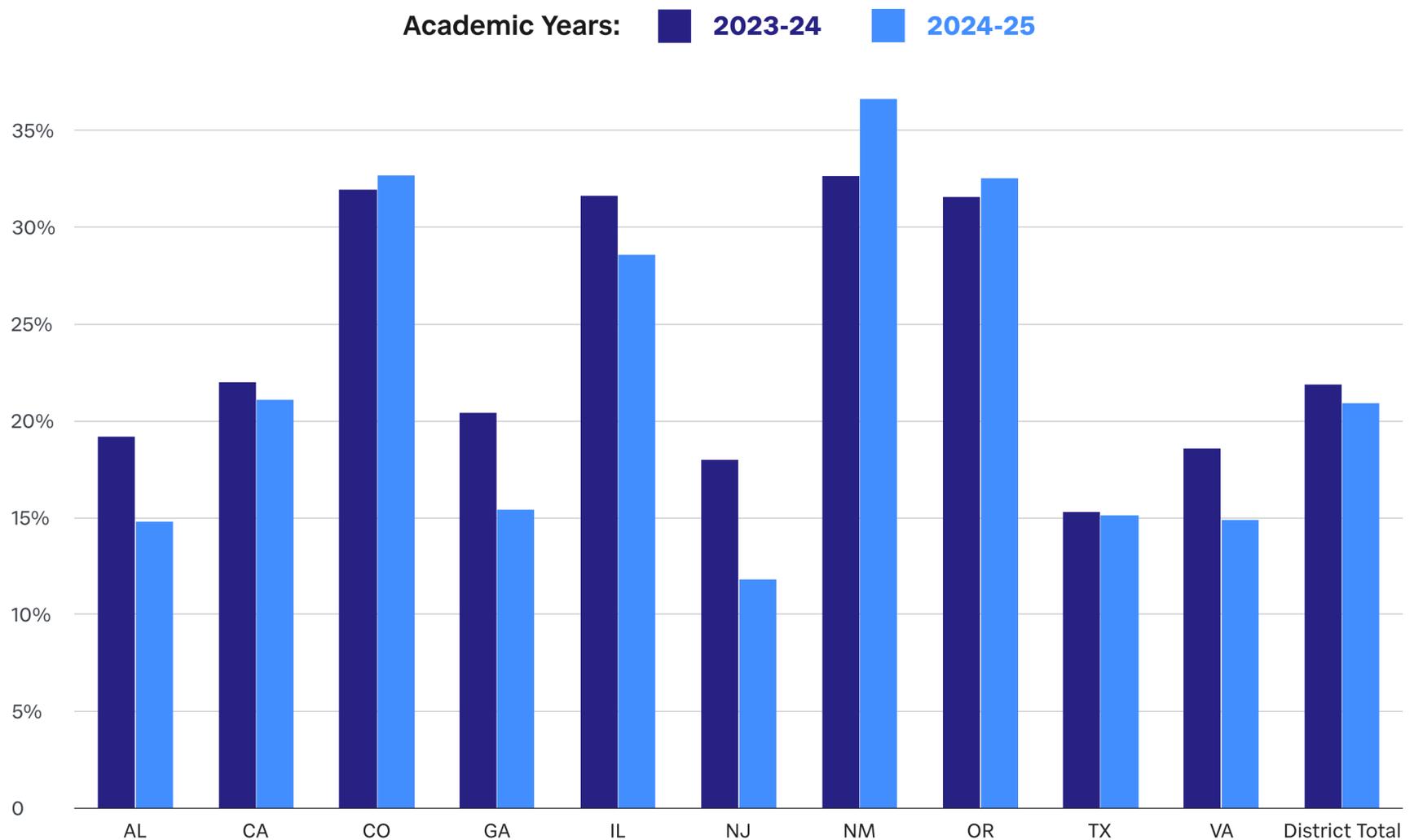
Key Observations

The data tell a clear story: systematic attendance intervention works, but timing and approach matter significantly. While chronic absenteeism continues to challenge schools nationwide, districts using data-driven strategies are achieving measurable progress that outpaces national recovery efforts.

The findings point to several key principles for effective attendance intervention. **Elementary years** offer the greatest return on investment, with first-graders showing 9 times greater improvement than high school seniors. **Family communication** proves effective across all demographic groups, though culturally responsive approaches could unlock even greater potential. Most critically, the predictable **three-phase attendance patterns** demands that districts maintain intensive family engagement throughout secondary years rather than reducing support when students need it most.

These insights offer hope for districts struggling with persistent attendance challenges. The continued improvement achieved by districts in this analysis—from 21.9% in 2023-24 to 20.9% in 2024-25—demonstrates that recovery is possible when systematic approaches replace ad-hoc efforts. While national chronic absenteeism stood at 23.5% in 2023-24 (the most recent data available) with current attendance challenges persisting into 2024-25, these districts are leading the way toward healthier attendance patterns and stronger student outcomes.

About SchoolStatus

SchoolStatus is a K-12 EdTech company that equips educators with the student insights they need to improve attendance and outcomes. Partnering with thousands of districts across the U.S., we serve over 22 million students with proven results in attendance improvement, family engagement, and educator support. By combining attendance, engagement, and academic information, SchoolStatus provides a complete view of every student. This clarity enables faster action, stronger family engagement, and more students in the classroom.
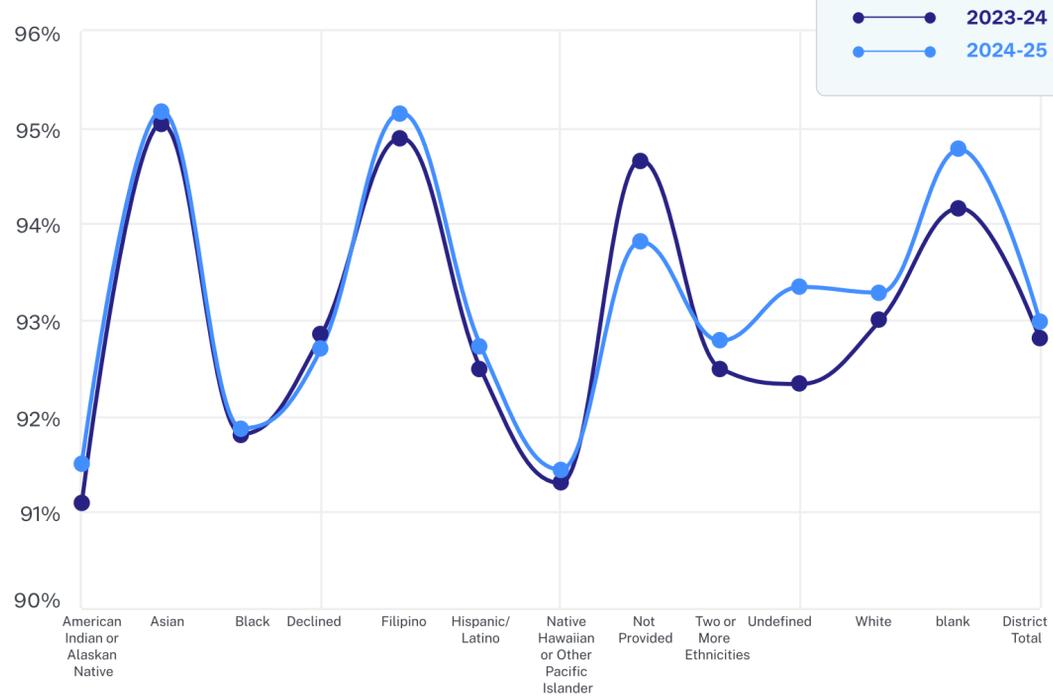
Ready to see successful attendance intervention in action? Book a meeting to learn how SchoolStatus can help you achieve the kind of results highlighted in this analysis.
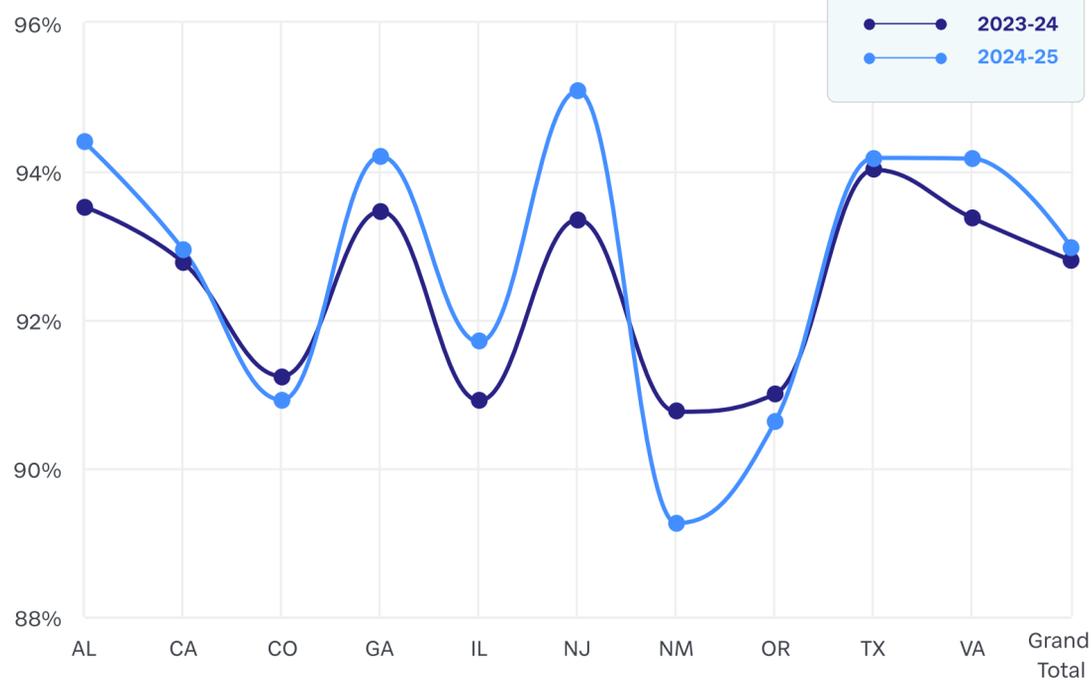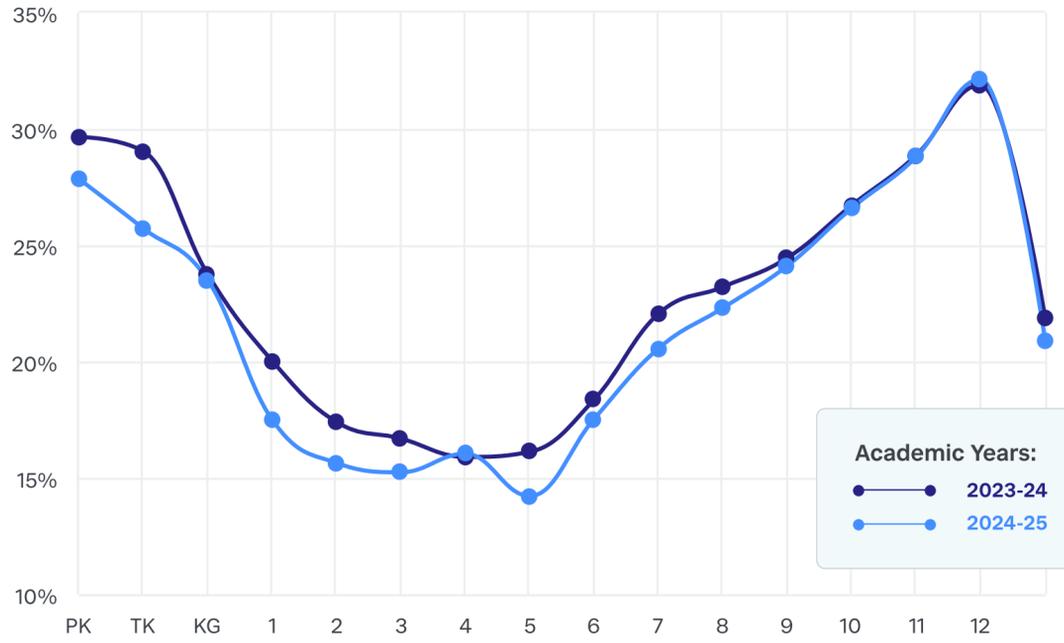
Average Attendance by Grade

Academic Years:
- 2023-24
- 2024-25
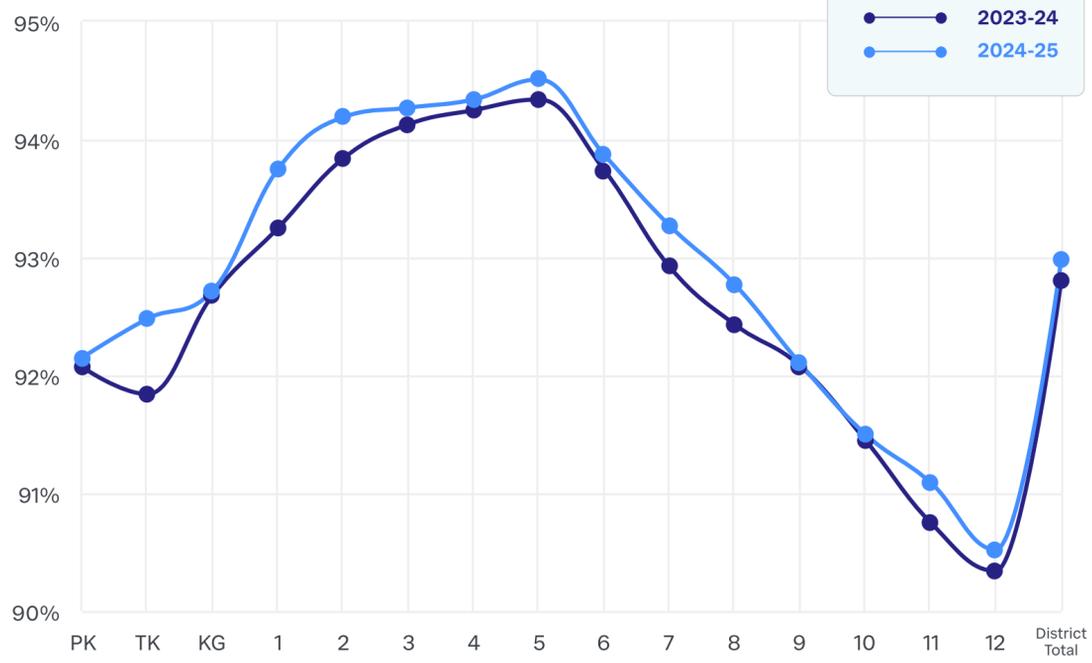
Average Attendance by Ethnicity

Academic Years:
- 2023-24
- 2024-25

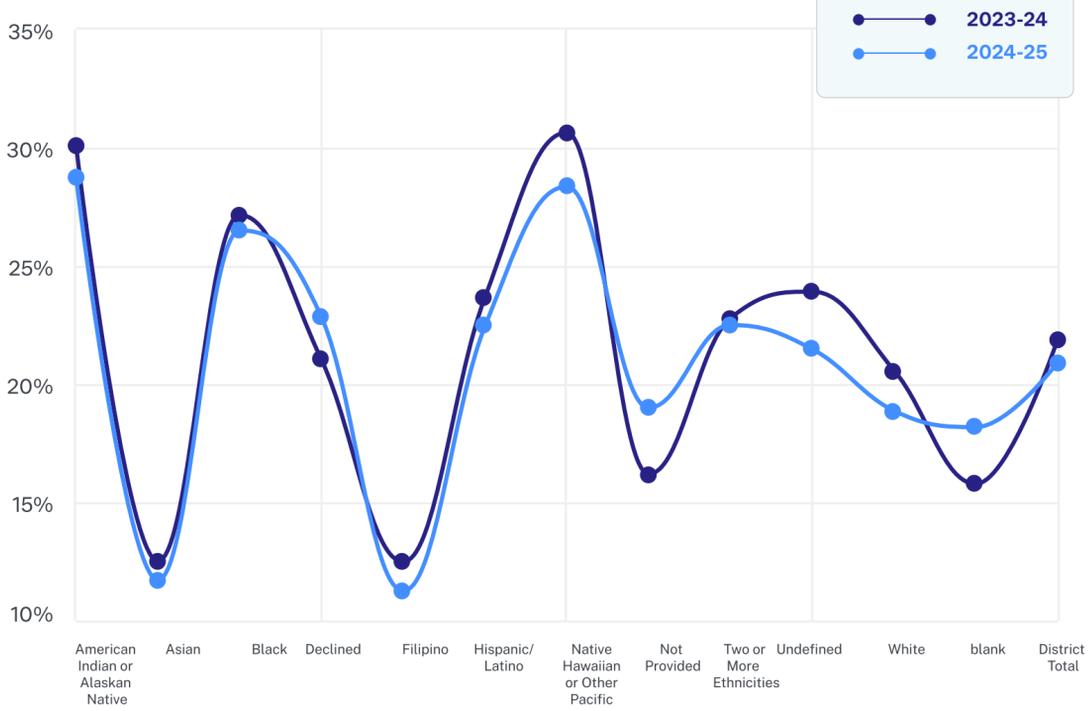## Average Attendance by State
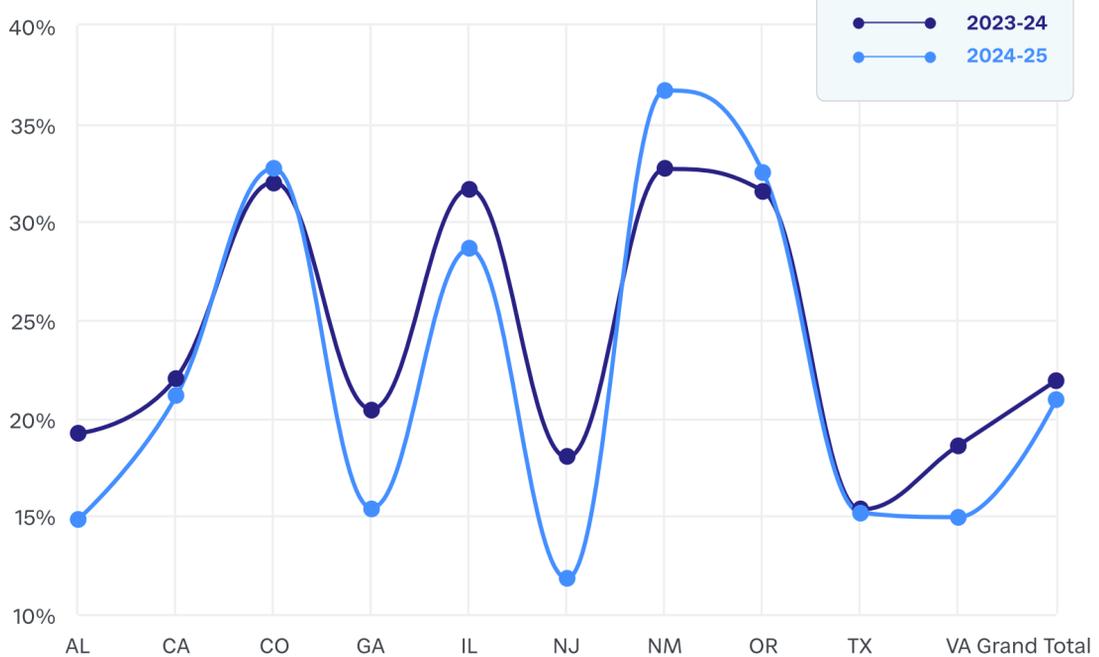
Academic Years:
- 2023-24
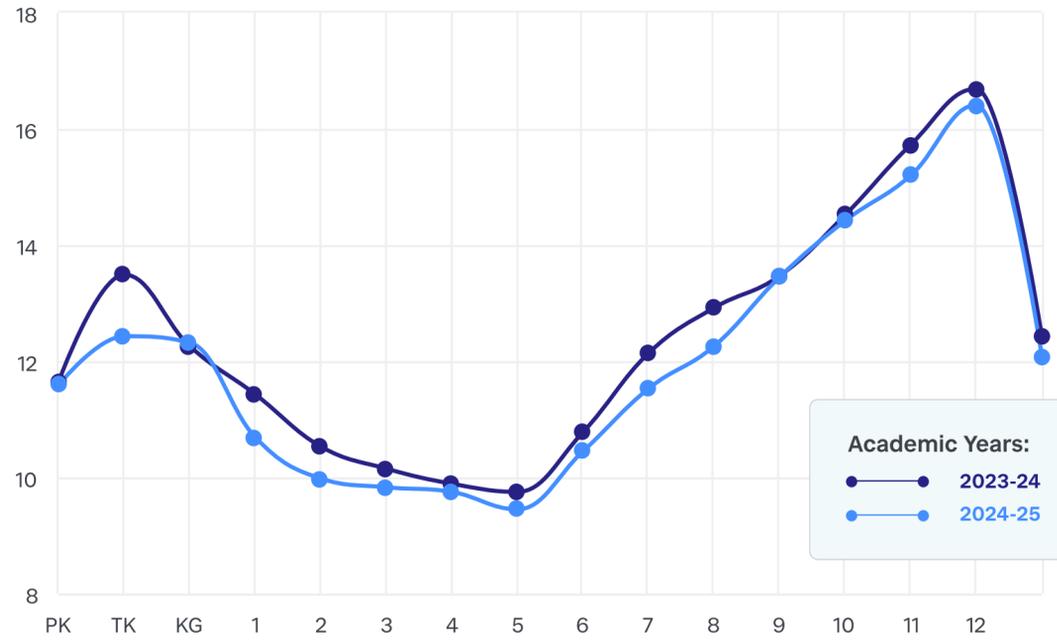- 2024-25

Chronic Absenteeism by Grade
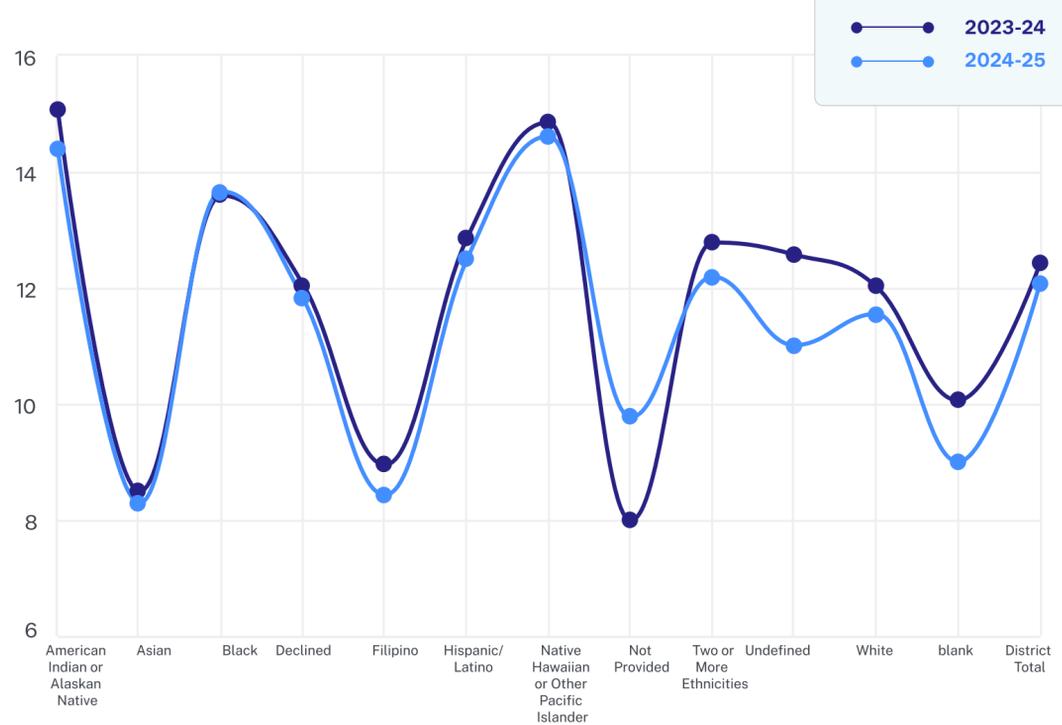

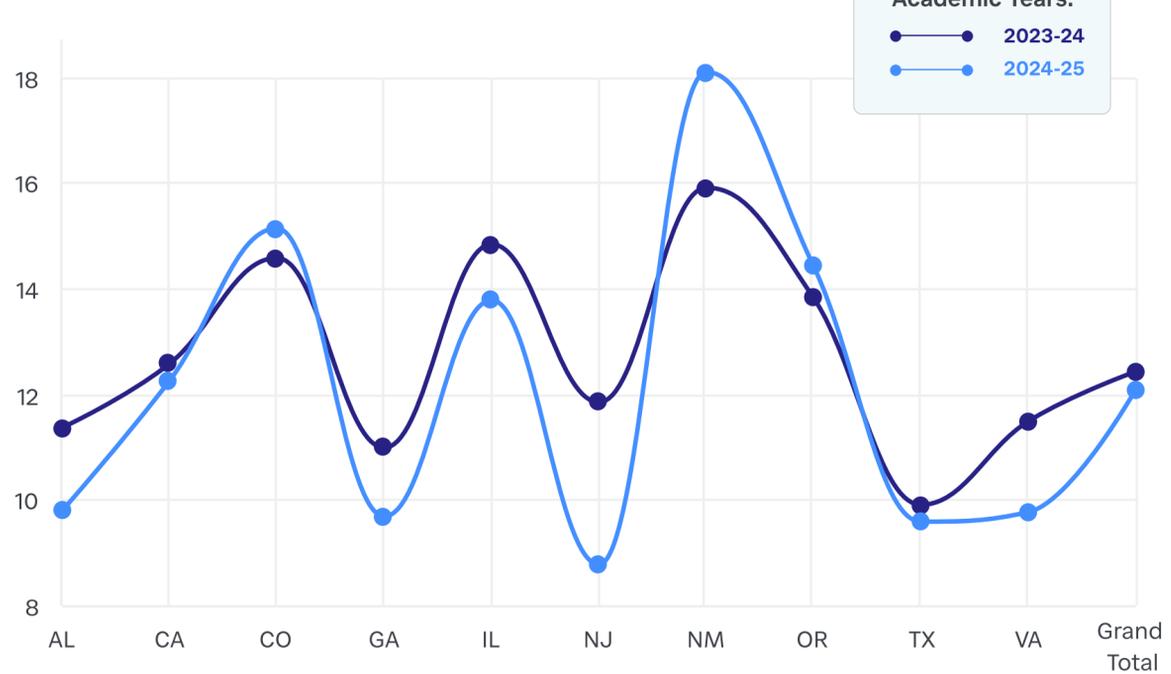## Chronic Absenteeism by Ethnicity

Chronic Absenteeism by State

Number of Absences Per Student **Grade**

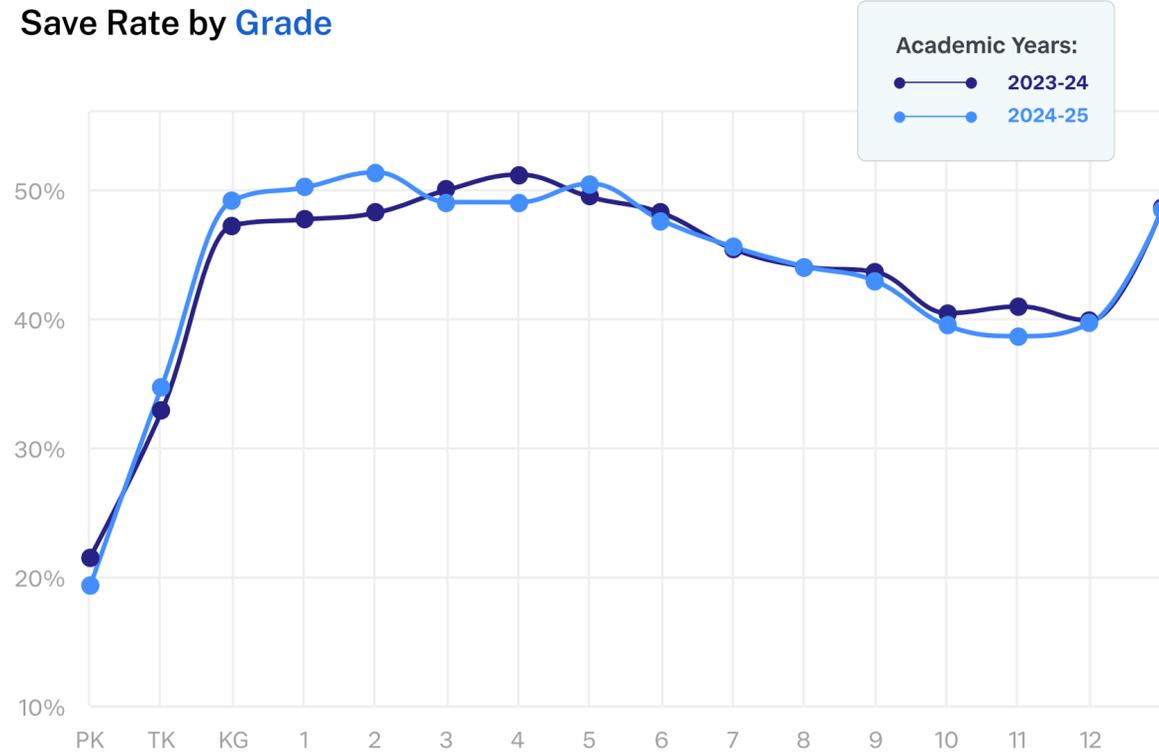## Number of Absences Per Student by **Ethnicity**
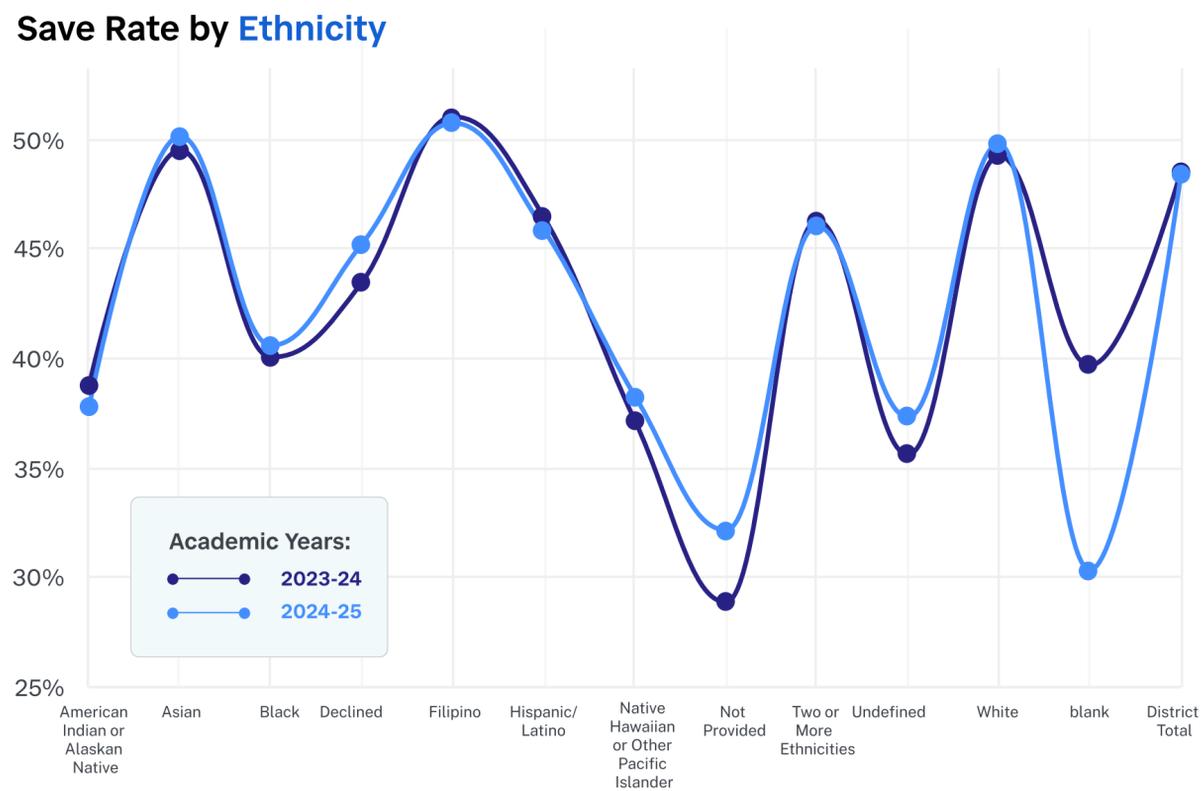

Number of Absences Per Student by **State**

Save Rate by Grade

Save Rate by Ethnicity

Save Rate by State