

Chronic Absenteeism

Module 1

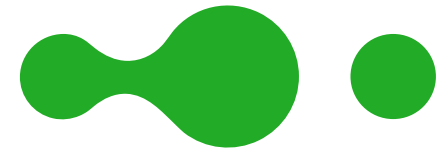


What is
chronic absenteeism?



Module 1a

Objectives



Participants will be able to:

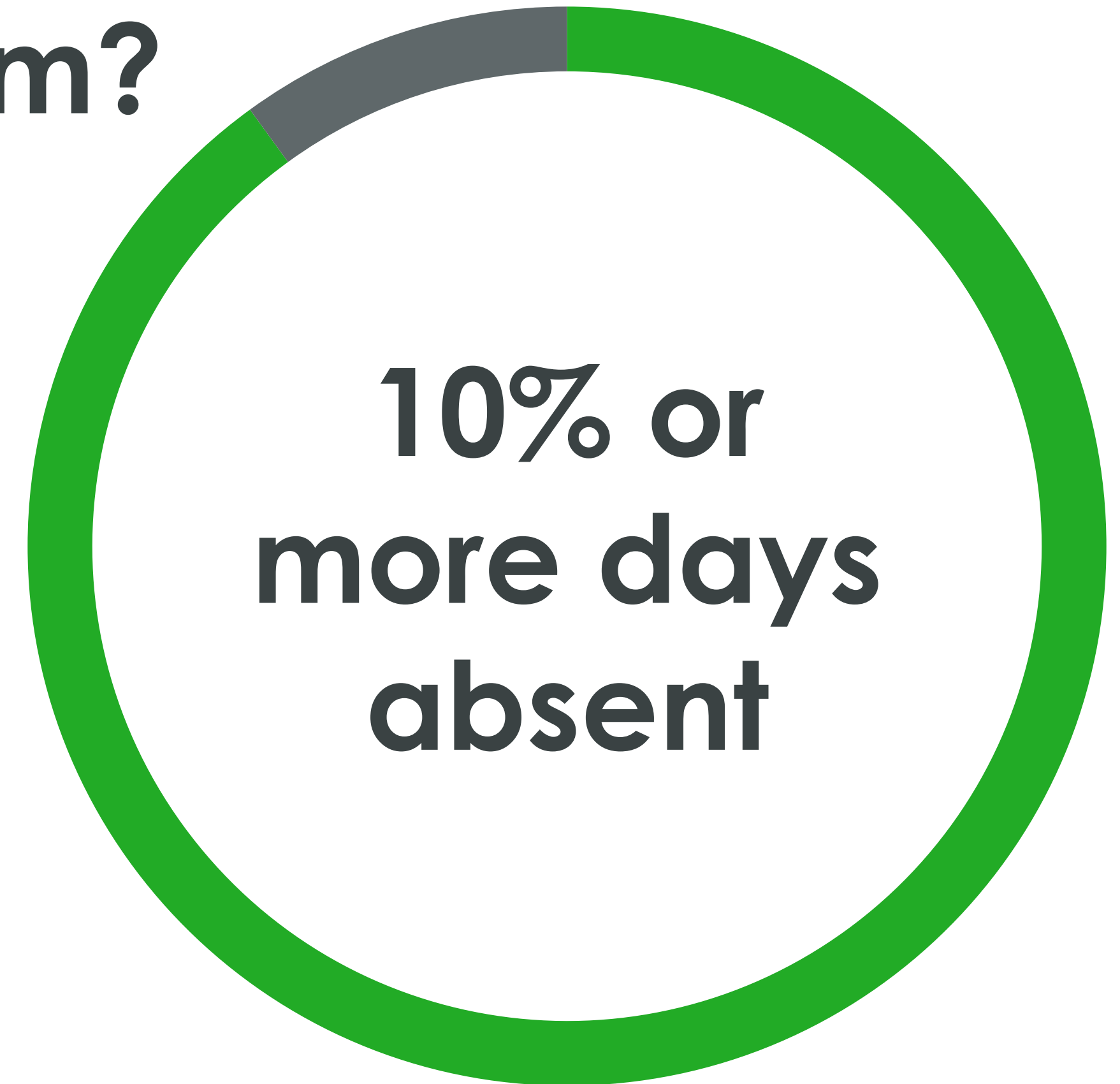
- Define chronic absenteeism and truancy.
- Understand the importance of a citywide approach.
focused on chronic absenteeism.
- Understand attendance trends in D.C.
- Understand the impact of attendance on D.C. students.



What is chronic absenteeism?

Chronic absenteeism is defined in D.C. Code § 38–201 (1)(A) as missing 10 percent or more of the school year.

Most schools have 180 days in their school year. Chronically absent students are those students who miss 18+ days per year (or two days each month) for any reason.



What is truancy?

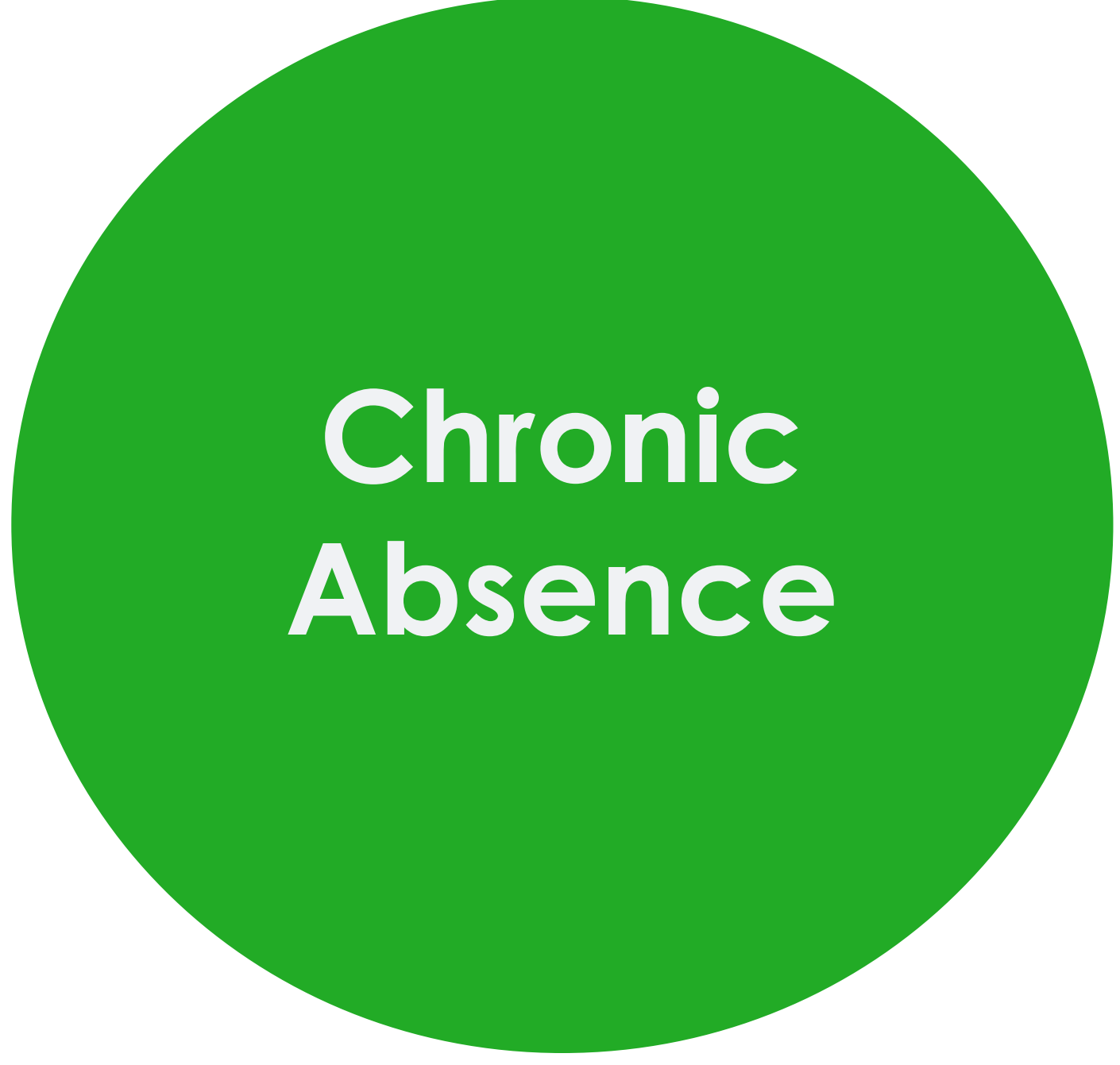
Truancy is defined in D.C. Code § 38–201 (B) as accruing ten or more unexcused absences at any point in the school year.





Truancy

Vs.



Chronic Absence

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal and administrative solutions

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused, and suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based, positive strategies

Why the shift away from truancy?

Focuses only on unexcused absences

Focusing only on unexcused absences does not capture the whole story of a student's time in/out of school and the academic impact.

Emphasizes compliance with rules

Emphasizing compliance with school rules externally motivates families to abide by rules rather than internally motivating good attendance as connected with learning.

Relies on legal solutions

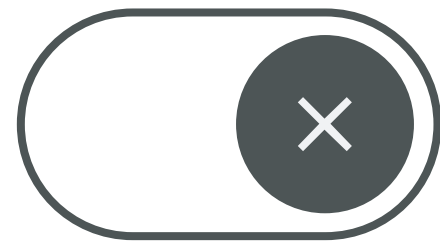
Relying solely on legal (and often punitive) solutions to motivate improved school attendance can have the adverse effect of alienating families and students, further disconnecting them from schools.

Why focus on chronic absenteeism?



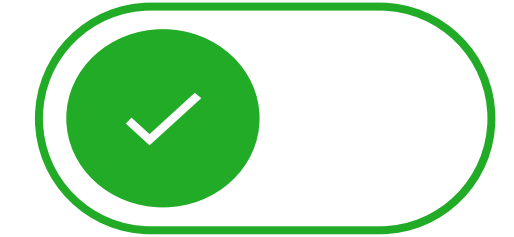
Every absence matters

whether it is excused or unexcused.



Missing just two days a month

puts students at risk of academic failure



Absenteeism

is an issue to be solved in collaboration,
not just truancy to be punished.

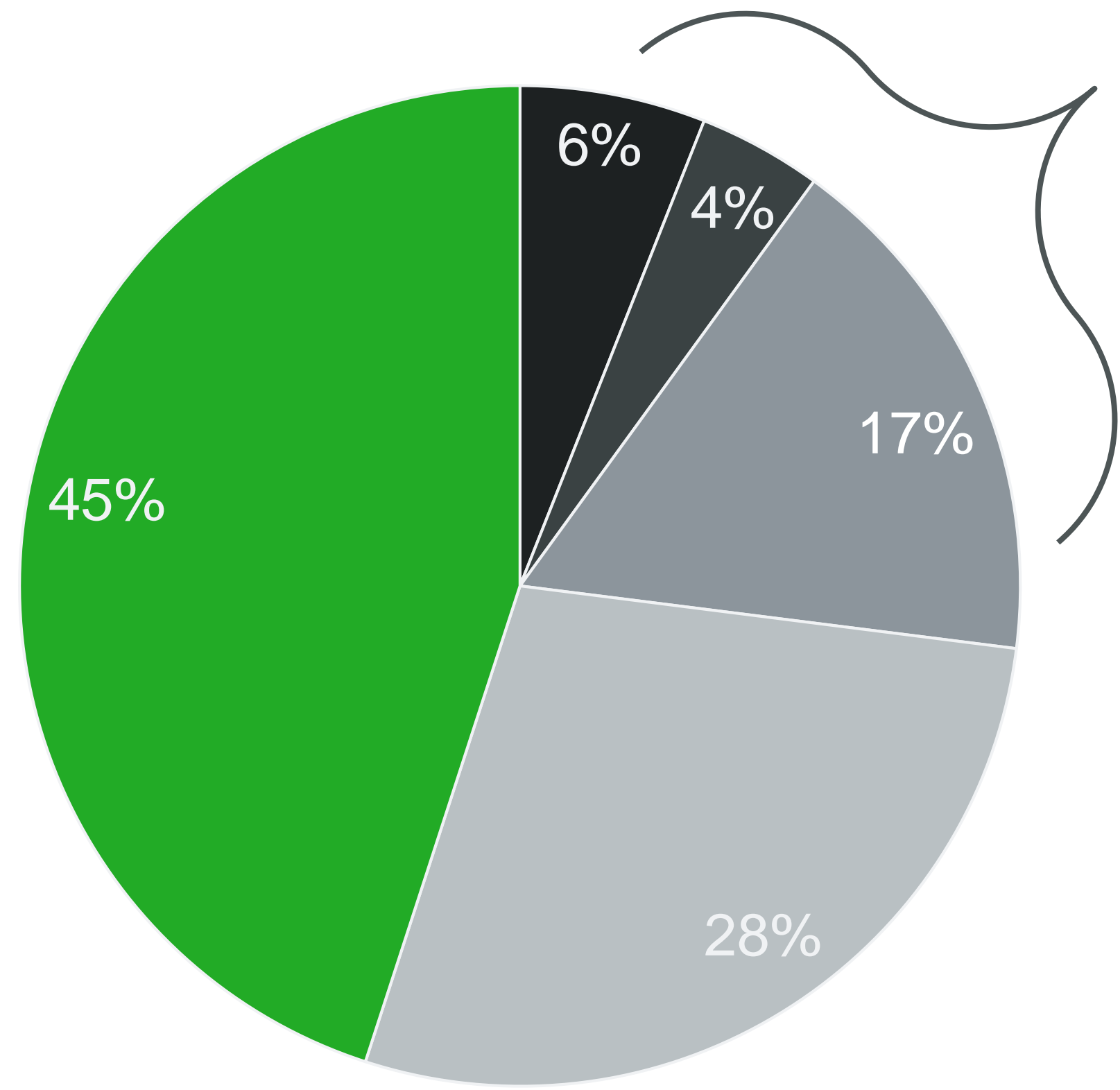
Critical learning [×]
happens every day
and...

Every Day Counts!

Chronic absenteeism in D.C.

More than 25% of students in D.C. are chronically absent

- Profound Chronic Absence (missed 30%+)
- Severe Chronic Absence (missed 20% - 29.99%)
- Moderate Chronic Absence (missed 10% - 19.99%)
- At-Risk Attendance (missed 5% - 9.99%)
- Satisfactory Attendance (missed <5%)





K/1st

Elementary school

Children that are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the end of third grade.



6th

Middle school

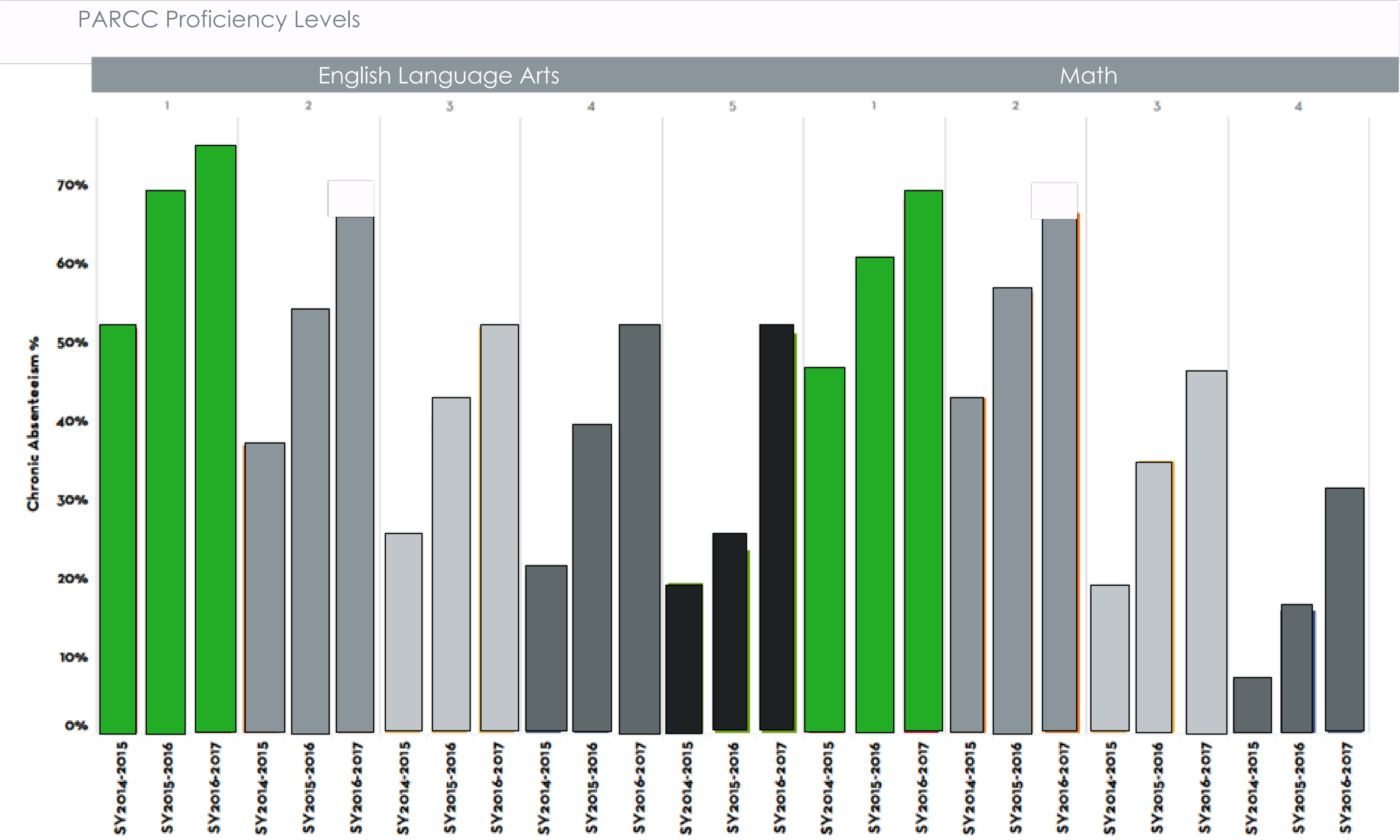
By sixth grade, chronic absence is a warning sign for students at risk of dropping out of school.



9th

High school

By ninth grade, good attendance can predict graduation rates even better than eighth grade test scores.

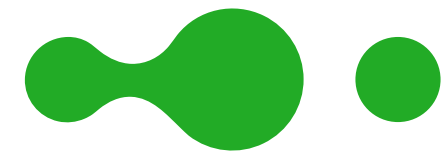


The impact of chronic absenteeism on student achievement

Chronically absent students tend to score at levels 1 and 2 as compared to their less-chronically-absent peers in English language arts and math.

Chart follows students who took the PARC exam in SY2014-2015 and tracks rates of absenteeism by PARC score for the following two years.

Think, pair, share



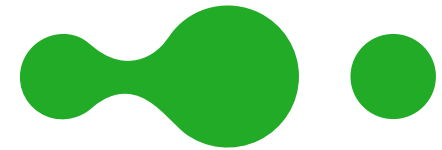
1. How does chronic absenteeism intersect with or impact your work with the D.C. community?
2. What do you think are some of the barriers preventing students from attending school?



Who are our chronically
absent students?

Module 1b

Objectives



Participants will:

- Explore students at greatest risk of chronic absenteeism
- Identify common barriers to school attendance in D.C.



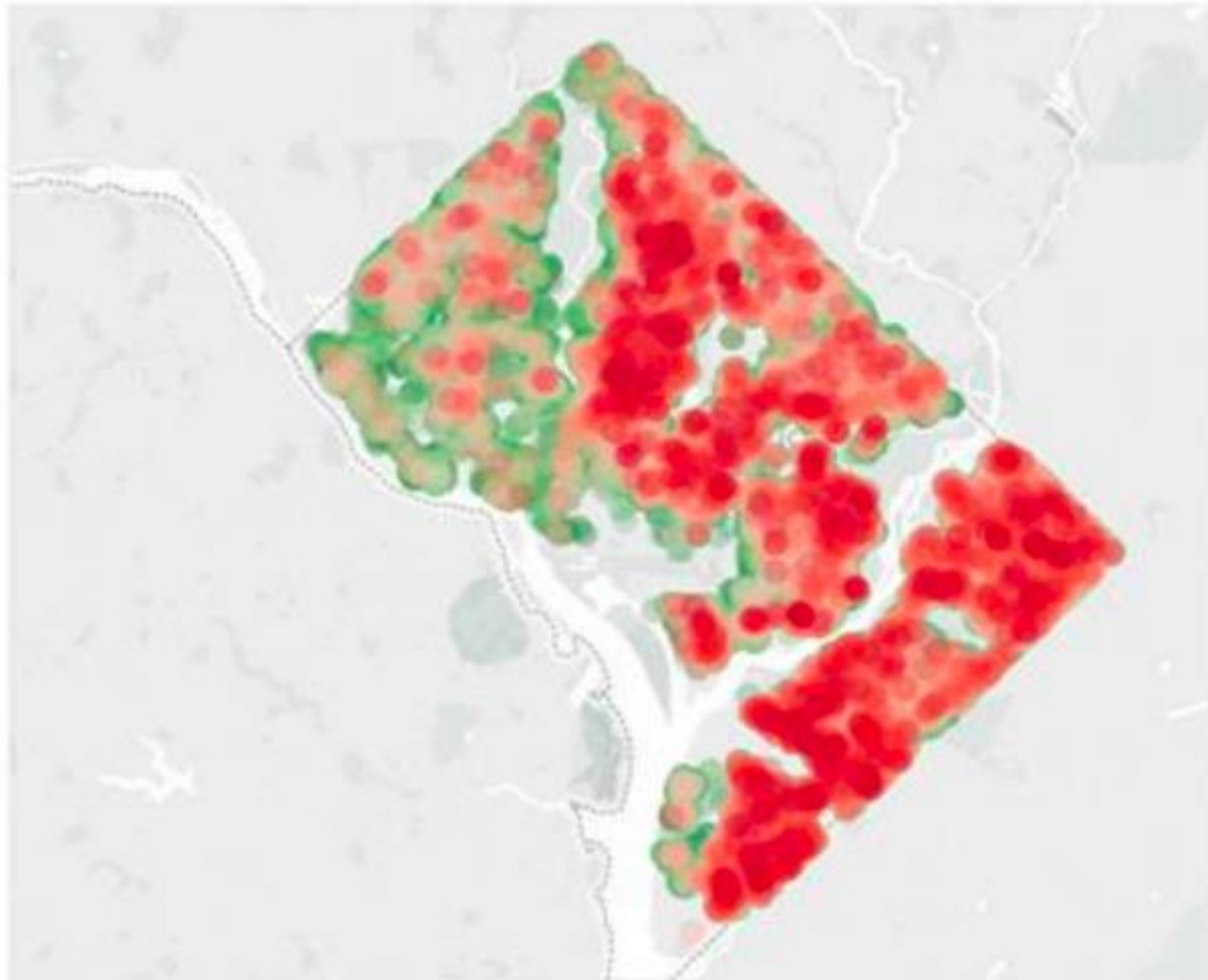
Chronic absenteeism demographics

- Experiencing homelessness
- Being overage for a grade
- Receiving the highest levels of special education services
- Receiving TANF or SNAP benefits
- Enrolling in more than one school within a school year

**Top 5
risk factors for
chronic
absenteeism**

Chronic Absenteeism Rate

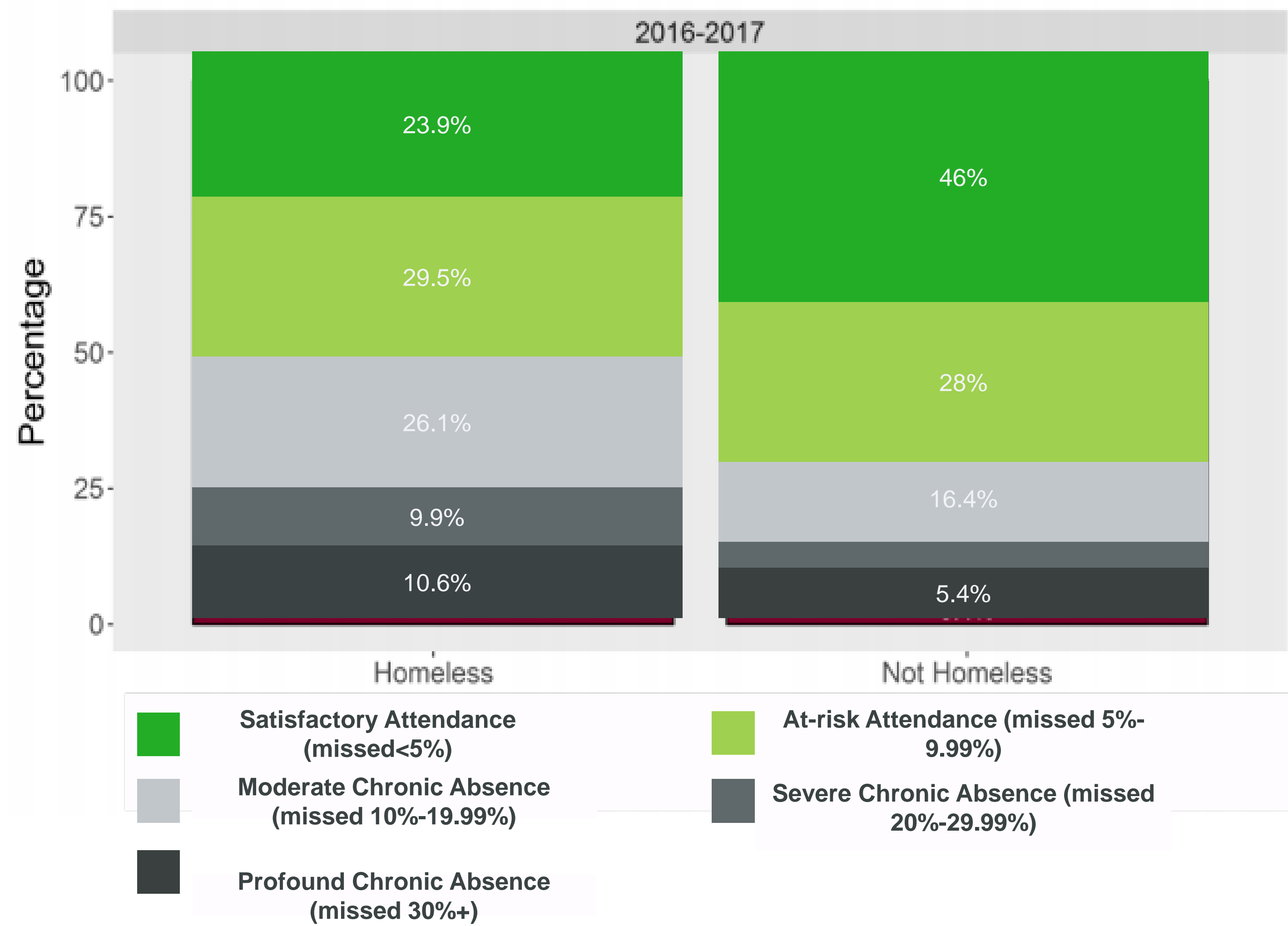
100.0% 0.0%



Chronic absenteeism by ward

- To the left is a map of where students live, color-coded by residents' absenteeism levels.
- Darker shades of red indicate more severe chronic absence.
- The highest levels of chronic absence were observed in Wards 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8.
- Wards 7 and 8 had both the greatest number of students who are chronically absent and students with the greatest severity in chronic absence levels.

Chronic absenteeism risk tiers, by homeless status



Absenteeism among youth experiencing homelessness

Homeless youth are particularly at risk for chronic absenteeism, largely due to:

- Distance from school
- Access to transportation
- Frequent school enrollment changes

Nearly half of homeless youth struggle with chronic absenteeism.

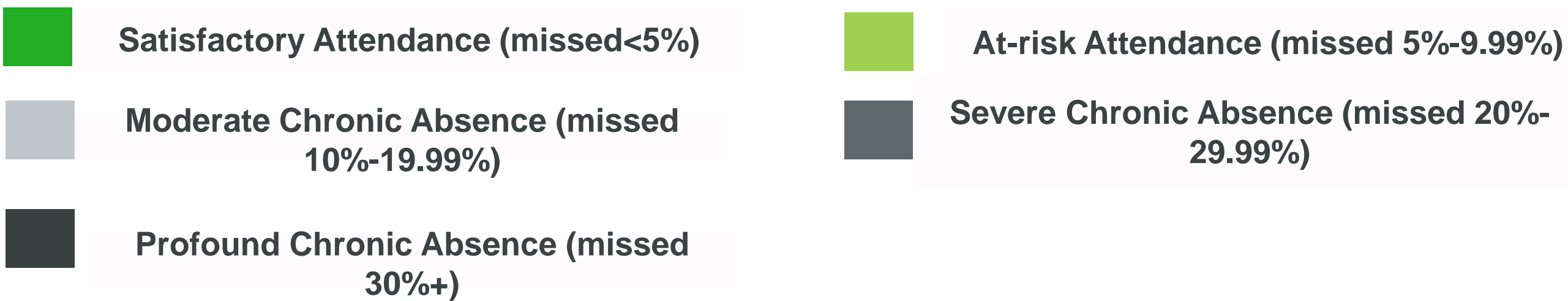
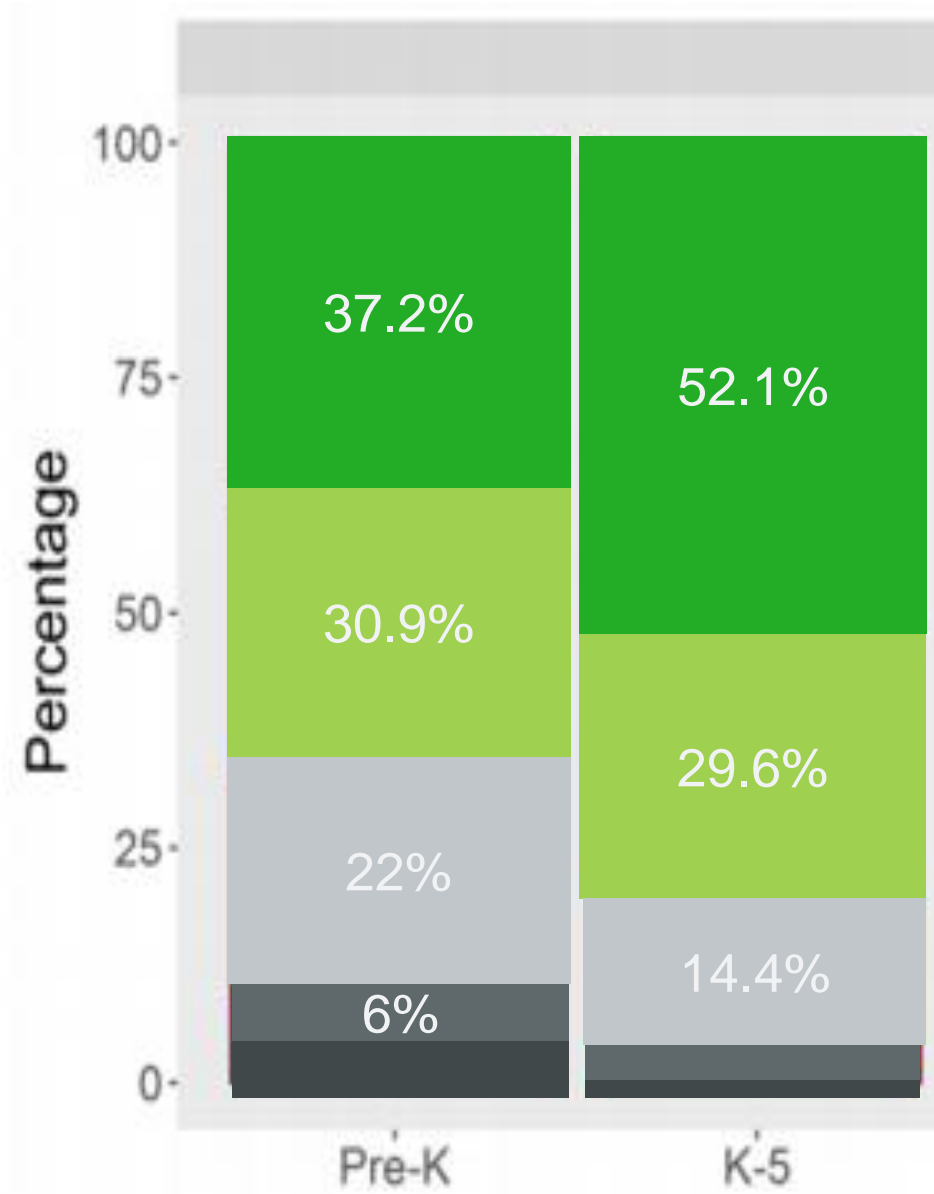
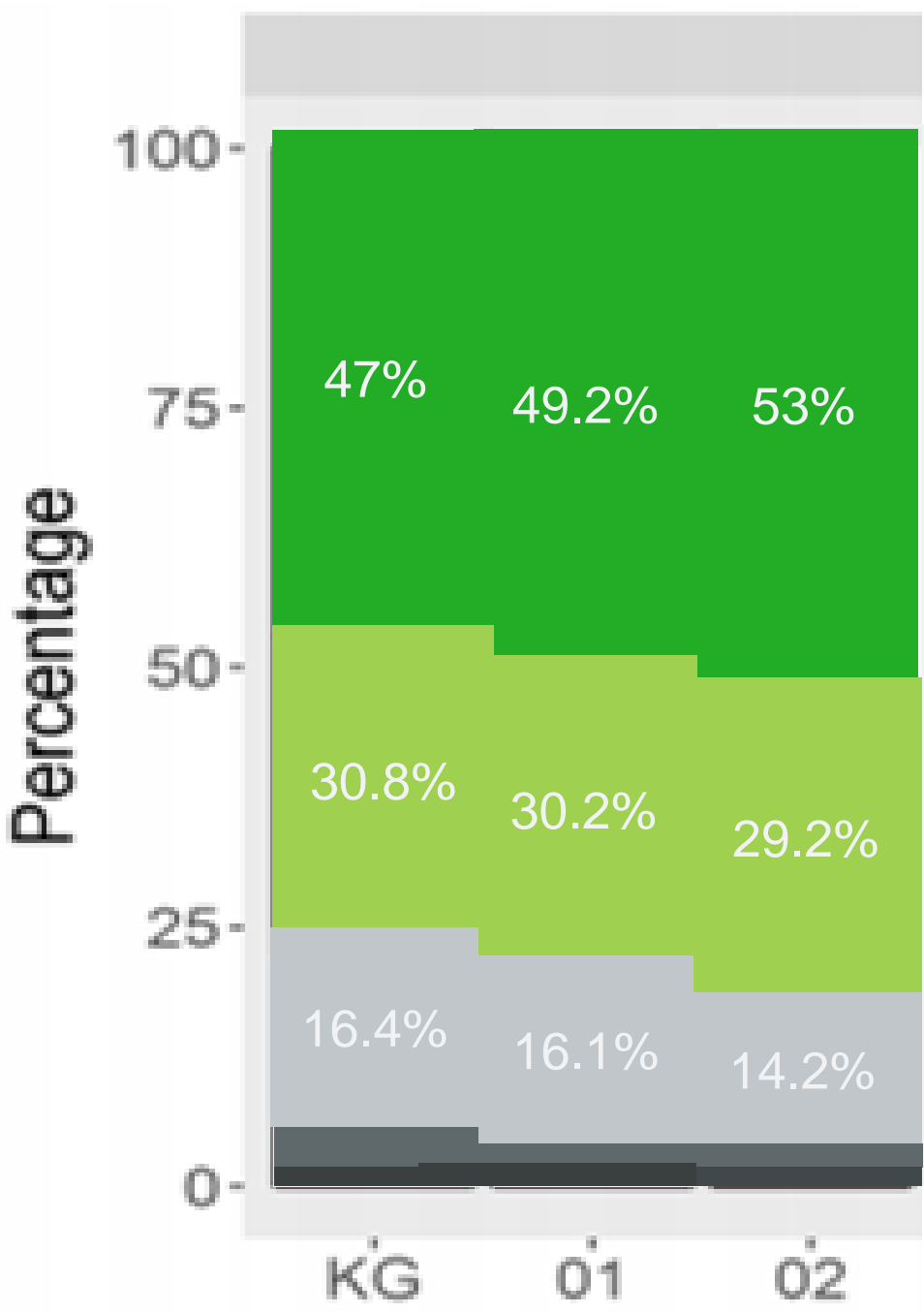
**Find specific resources to support homeless youth in Module 3

Early childhood: Pre-K and Kindergarten

A significant number of Pre-K and Kindergarten youth are at risk of chronic absenteeism.

Education in the early grades is fundamental to the building blocks of literacy and mathematical reasoning.

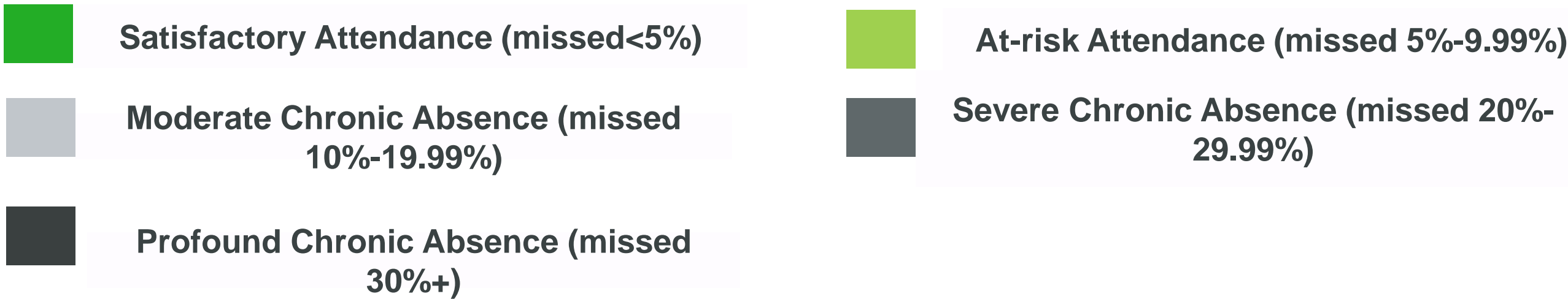
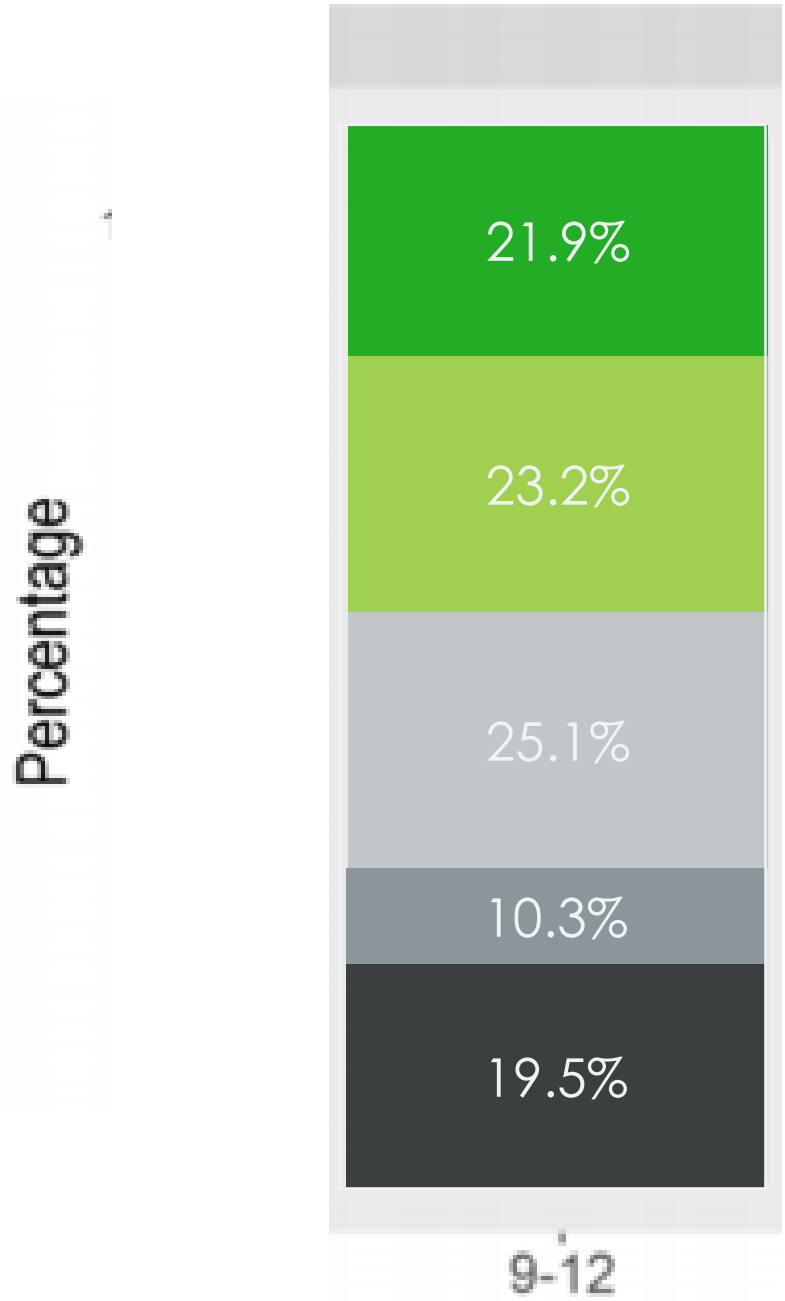
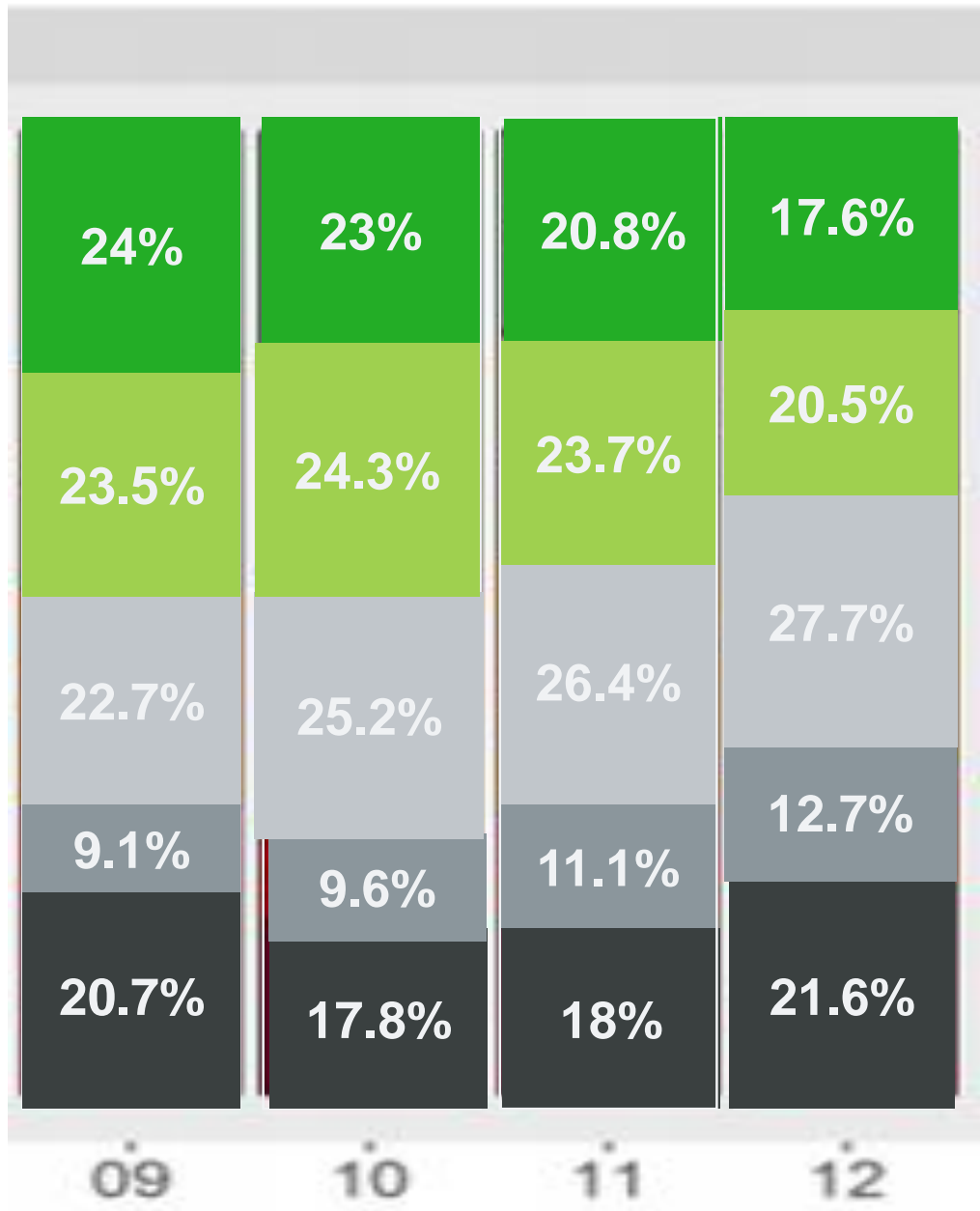
When students miss school, they miss lessons on phonemic awareness, phonics, decoding, encoding, and number sense that are difficult to catch up in later grades



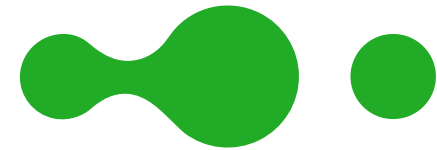
High school youth

In D.C., approximately half of students in grades 9–12 were chronically absent.

Additionally, 74.9% of non-graduates demonstrated severe, profound, or extreme absenteeism as compared with 35.4% of graduates (EDC Taskforce, 2018).



Spotlight: All hands on deck on chronic absenteeism



Hear from Mila Yochum, Executive Director of the D.C. Office of Out of School Time, on how partners can play a role in addressing chronic absenteeism.

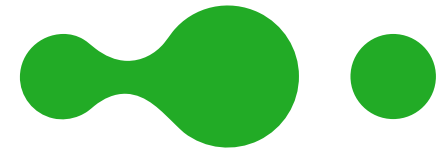


National barriers to school attendance

Myths	Barriers	Disengagement	Aversion	Transportation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Excused absences aren't a problem.• Missing just two days/month won't have an impact.• Attendance in younger grades doesn't matter.• Lack of clarity on 'typical' attendance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of access to health/dental care.• Chronic illness.• Trauma.• No safe passage.• Unemployment or mental health issues at home.• Family member's chronic illness or caretaking.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of engaging, relevant instruction.• Lack of meaningful relationships with adults in school.• Poor school climate.• Neighborhood affect of consistent chronic absenteeism.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child struggling academically or socially.• Bullying.• Ineffective school discipline.• Undiagnosed disability.• Parent/guardian's negative school experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sibling drop-off.• Buses/metro take too long/unreliable.• Parents/guardians don't have money to accompany kids on transit.



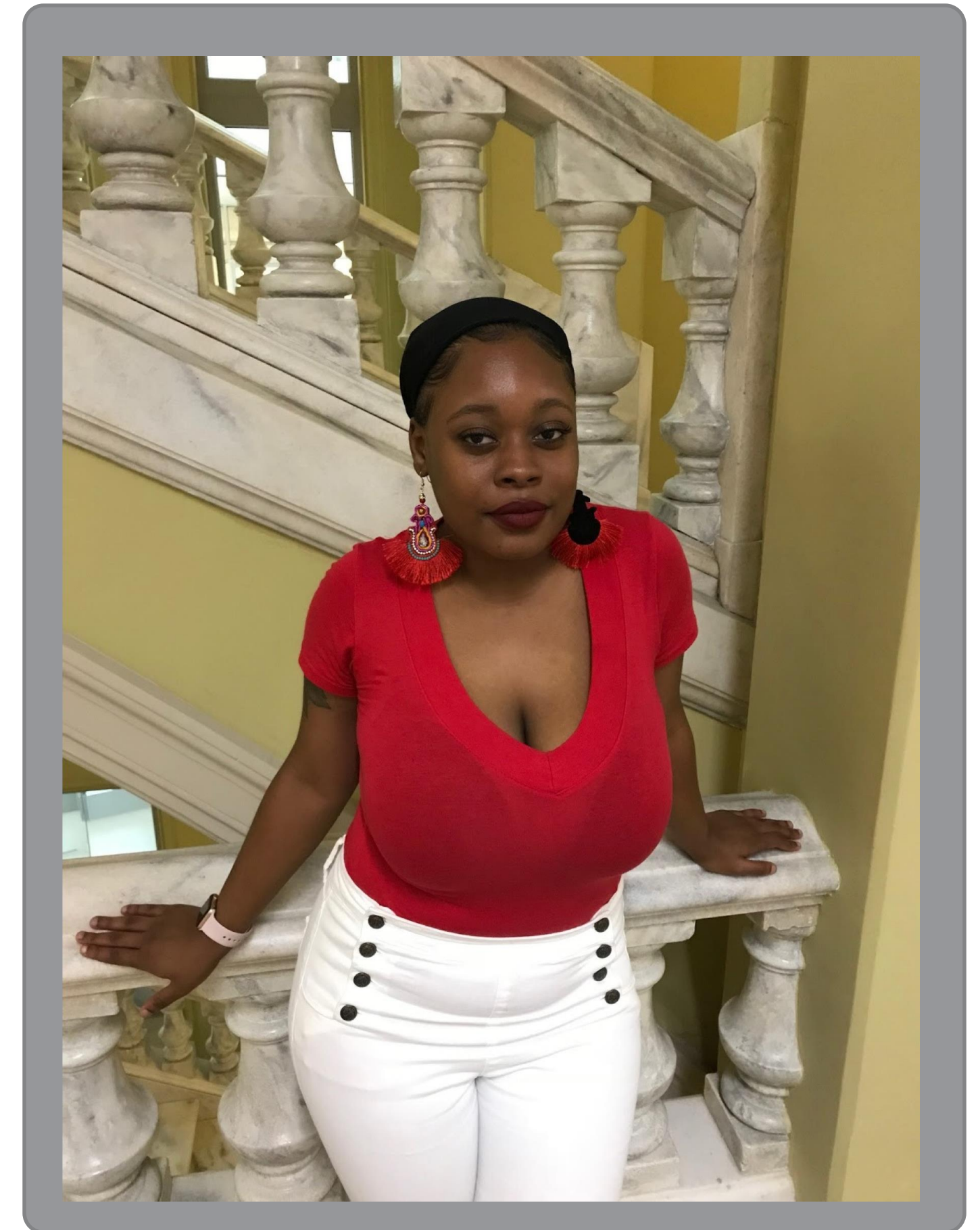
Spotlight: Barriers to student attendance



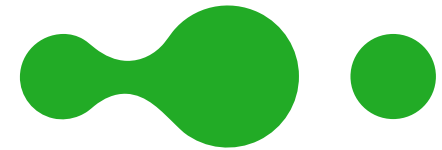
Pamela Harrington

Student, Eastern High School

Student Representative, Every Day Counts! Task Force



Spotlight: Barriers to student attendance



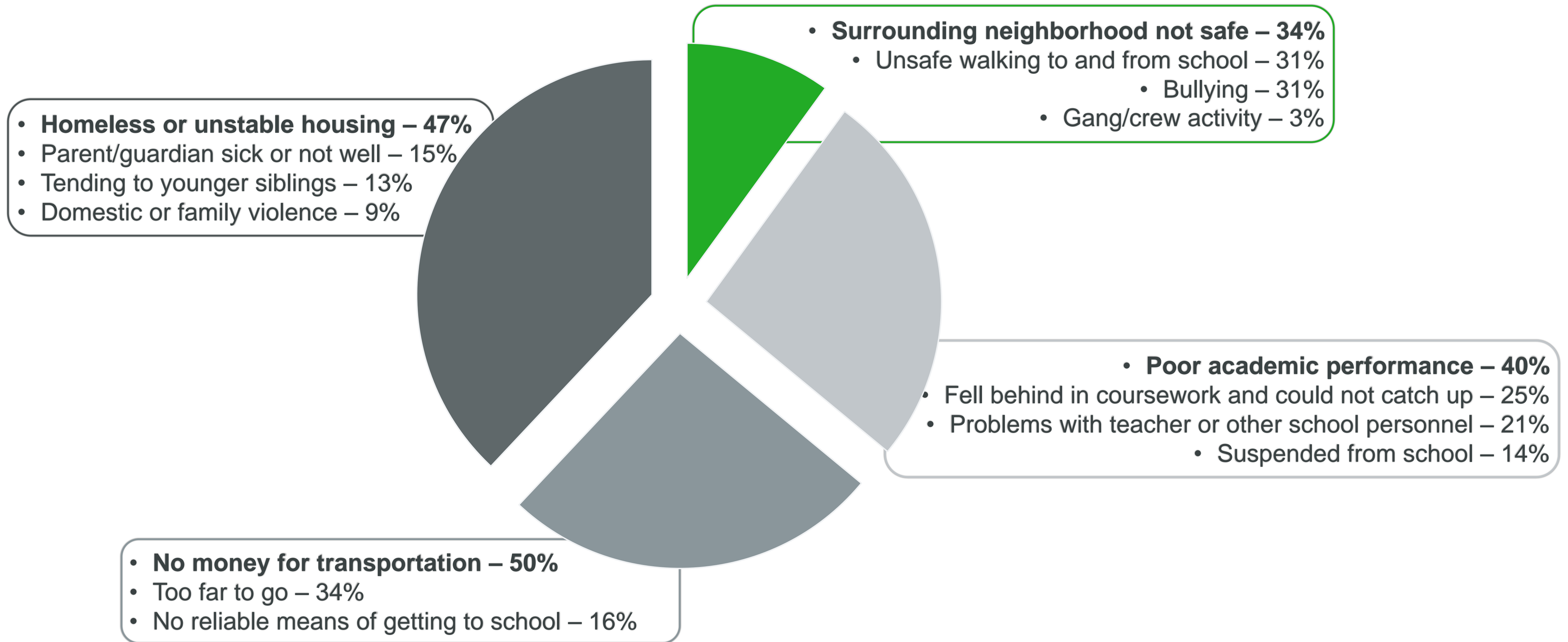
Maisha Riddlesprigger

Principal, Ketcham Elementary School



Barriers to school attendance in D.C.

Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants (OVSJG) Data 2017-18



Now what?: Let's make every day count in D.C.

These data sets can feel daunting, but there are a number of evidence-based strategies and resources we can all use to respond to and support students in improving attendance.

- In Module 2, you'll learn more about D.C.'s policies and procedures for tracking and responding to chronic absence and truancy.
- In Modules 3 and 4, you'll learn more about some of the specific strategies, tools, and resources to reduce absenteeism, including a focus on engaging families.



Works cited

- District of Columbia Attendance Report SY 2016-17.” *District of Columbia Attendance Report SY 2016-17*, 30 Nov. 2017, attendance.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/attendance/publication/attachments/SY16-17AttendanceReport.FINAL_.pdf.
- “Every Day Counts! Taskforce Meeting.” *Every Day Counts! Taskforce Meeting*, 18 Jan. 2018, attendance.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/attendance/publication/attachments/EveryDayCounts_TaskforceMtg_011818_Final.pdf.
- “State of Attendance 2015-16 School Year.” *State of Attendance 2015-16 School Year*, 2016, attendance.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/attendance/publication/attachments/OSSE-State-of-Attendance-15-16-Report.pdf.
- “Student Attendance and Support, Office of the Chief Operating Officer” *District of Columbia Public Schools*, <https://dcps.dc.gov/attendance>.
- “What's the Difference Between Chronic Absence and Truancy?” *Attendance Works*, 23 Jan. 2018, www.attendanceworks.org/whats-the-difference-between-chronic-absence-and-truancy/.
- “Code of the District of Columbia” *Council of the District of Columbia*. <https://code.dccouncil.us/dc/council/code/>.

**This online
resource was
developed by
Kininvolved**



www.kininvolved.com

Follow the latest on attendance in D.C.!



#EveryDayCounts | attendance.dc.gov

