Annual Truancy Report

August 26, 2019

Dear District of Columbia Residents,

In compliance with Section 38-203(i) of the District of Columbia Code, DC Public Schools (DCPS) is pleased to report a summary of the District's truancy data for School Year 2018-2019 to the Mayor and the Office of State the Superintendent of Education.

DCPS believes that attendance is a first step towards accelerating student achievement and every student should experience a safe and welcoming school environment. Further, it is our job, as a District, to support students on their paths to graduation and prepare them for success in life.

DCPS remains committed to our attendance strategy and our efforts to ensure daily student attendance. We believe that by prioritizing data systems and actionable data, engaging authentically with our stakeholders, and developing strong city partnerships, we will continue to effectively address barriers to attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism.

With increased investment from stakeholders, our work has shown progress in our schools.
- We have increased our focus on accurate daily attendance entry, which has risen to 98 percent.
- We have also maintained an 89 percent rate of in-seat attendance.
- We saw large increases in our referral rates to Student Support Teams and Child and Family Services agency.

DCPS also recognizes that we must continue to address barriers to attendance. We know that we can best serve our students when we work in partnership with families, communities. We are eager to work with stakeholders to ensure that every student feels welcome and is encouraged to attend school each and every day.

Sincerely,

Lewis D. Ferebee, Ed. D.
Chancellor
DC Public Schools

Introduction

In compliance with Section 38-203(i) of the District of Columbia Code, DC Public Schools (DCPS) is pleased to report a summary of the District's truancy data for School Year 2018-2019 to the Mayor and the Office of State the Superintendent of Education (OSSE). As required, the report reflects:

- The number of minors, with unexcused absences, categorized by grade, or equivalent grouping for ungraded schools for:
  - 1-5 days
  - 6-10 days
  - 11-20 days
  - 21 or more days
- A discussion of the efforts of the school-based student support teams to reduce unexcused absences that includes:
  - The number of students referred to a school-based student support team;
  - The number of students who met with a school-based student support team;
  - A summary of the action plans and strategies implemented by the school-based student support team to eliminate or ameliorate unexcused absences;
  - A summary of the services utilized by students to reduce unexcused absences; and
  - A summary of the common barriers to implementing the recommendations of the school-based student support team.
- The number of minors, categorized by grade, or equivalent grouping for ungraded schools, that the school reported to the Child and Family Services Agency pursuant to DC Code § 4-1321.02(a-1).
- The number of minors categorized by grade, or equivalent grouping for ungraded schools, referred for truancy to the Court Social Services Division of the Family Court of the Superior Court of the District of Columbia; and
- The policy on absences used, including defined categories of valid excuses.

HIGHLIGHTS

DCPS remains committed to our attendance strategy and our efforts to ensure daily student attendance. DCPS believes that by prioritizing **data systems and actionable data**, **engaging authentically with our stakeholders**, and **developing strong city partnerships,** we will effectively address barriers to attendance and reduce chronic absenteeism. We know that each of our students brings with them a unique set of talents, experiences, and interests, and it is our job to support students on their paths to graduation and prepare them for success in life. DCPS sought to accomplish its attendance goals through the following efforts:

- **Focusing on research-based interventions:** DCPS partnered with Harvard University's Proving Ground Organization to pilot new evidence-based Initiatives.
- **Implementing the DCPS Continuous Improvement Framework:** DCPS launched a continuous improvement framework anchored in the consistent review of data with schools and a focus on data quality and which included instituting a data locking system**.** Through the Framework,

DCPS looked at compliance, but also aimed to improve quality. For example, attendance specialists reviewed data to improve the quality of our Student Support Team process and to enhance family engagement. This system was implemented to improve adherence to DCMR regulations and DCPS policy guidelines and ensured the integrity of attendance data, attendance record. Data was locked after each month and changes to attendance records after the deadline required a data submission of a modification request and approval by principals and the DCPS Attendance team. This change improved data quality and reporting and aligned with our strategic initiative of ensuring excellent schools. However, we believe that this improved process effected our truancy numbers. We also initiated a process for a bi-monthly review of attendance data between the attendance team and instructional superintendents. These meetings will work to identify practice challenges on a regular basis, through our continuous improvement framework.

- **Further automating our attendance communications:** DCPS sends absence notifications to families each day via U.S. mail and by email via Blackboard. In alignment with current regulation and policy, these notifications are sent at 3, 5, 7, 10, and 15 cumulative unexcused days and at 20 consecutive unexcused days. Because regulation requires both course and daily absence notification at the secondary level, and DCPS had received feedback that these numerous communications were confusing and frustrating to families, beginning May 1, 2019, letters were merged into a new consolidated attendance notification called the DCPS Universal Attendance Letters to increase efficiency and improve fidelity.
- **Focusing on 100% attendance entry:** Ensuring that attendance-taking policies are clear and back-end systems support an accurate attendance record every period, every day remained a priority for DCPS. The attendance team provided targeted training and technical assistance aimed at clarifying and communicating our attendance entry expectations and daily monitoring of schools to ensure all schools entered attendance each day.
- **Improving notifications to families:** DCPS prioritized communications with families when students missed class. Examples of this work include consolidating the language in absence letters as noted above to reduce confusion, revising the language in communications to emphasize the academic impact of chronic absence and mailing them daily, sending attendance letters via email to families for whom we have email addresses to reduce administrative burden and the chance for human error, sending differentiated alerts based on data, such as making robocalls on a more frequent basis (period-by-period for secondary schools with significant attendance concerns), and upgrading parent alert and portal messaging systems so schools can better keep families up to date on student absences.
- **Developing and implementing robust school-based supports:** Providing differentiated, research-based on the ground supports for schools in implementing our attendance protocol and helping Student Support Teams (SST) meet regularly to highlight and respond to student needs.

DISCUSSION OF DATA

SY18-19 student attendance and compliance rates are noted below:

- DCPS is pleased to note that there were In-Seat Attendance (ISA) increases in PK4 and grades 2, 4 and 8, and a reduction in chronic absenteeism of 10 percent or more in three (3) schools and a reduction of 5-9 percent[1] in nine (9) schools.
- DCPS also experienced improved compliance with attendance referrals, ending the year with SST referral rate of 79%, which is an increase of 8 percentage points over SY17-18; and a Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) referral rate of 89% over last year's rate of 81%.
- Five (5) DCPS schools experienced substantial reductions in truancy: Brookland MS (26.6 percentage points), Burrville ES (17.2 percentage points) Wheatley EC, (16.7 percentage points) Moten ES (14 percentage points), Burroughs ES (10.3 percentage points), and Phelps HS (9.1 percentage points).
- DCPS' In-Seat Attendance (ISA) rate essentially remained steady: Our SY18-19 was 88.8%, which is an 0.1% decrease in ISA from last year's 88.9% ISA rate.
- DCPS' reported truancy rate increased for SY18-19, ending the year at 31.2%, which is a 2.5 percentage point increase from SY17-18 (28.7%).

Discussion of the Data

DCPS is pleased to note that daily student attendance reporting has continued to remain steady, with a high rate of reporting across all schools (97.6% in SY17-18 to 97.9% in SY18-19).

While DCPS remains dissatisfied with this year's rates of truancy, it is important to note that this data may reflect the fact that SY18-19 was the first year in which several policy and procedural changes were made to ensure better data quality and accuracy, as well as regulatory compliance. These include the following:

- Implementation of a data locking procedure requiring schools to request approval for attendance data entries beyond monthly locking periods;
- Improved compliance with the requirement to accept and process excuse documentation only if it is received within 5 days of the student's return to school, and only excuse notes with legally approved listed reason(s); and
- A change in DCPS policy that requires further documentation beyond communication from the parent for the absence to be excused, when a student is absent for five (5) or more cumulative days per term.

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[1] Moten, Stuart Hobson, and Sousa experienced reductions in chronic absenteeism of 10% or more, and Nalle ES, Wheatley EC, Payne ES, Luke C. Moore, Houston ES, Noyes, Burroughs ES, Hendley ES, and Boone ES experienced reductions in chronic absenteeism of between 5-9%.

Unexcused Absences for Minors

A breakdown of the incidents of truancy, as required by D.C. Official Code §38-203(i)(A), is included in Table 1 below. This data represents compulsory school-aged students (ages 5 through 17) enrolled in SY18-19). [2] The table below includes the number and percentages of students at each grade who had 1-5 unexcused absences, 6-10 unexcused absences, 11-20 unexcused absences, and 21 or more unexcused absences.

Table 1: Unexcused Absences Counting Toward Truancy by Grade

Grade	Truancy Age Students	# 1-5 Absences	% 1-5 Absences	# 6-10 Absences	% 6-10 Absences	# 11-20 Absences	% 11-20 Absences	# 21+ Absences	% 21+ Absences
K	4,559	2,153	47%	820	18%	566	12%	291	6%
1	4,615	2,245	49%	853	18%	517	11%	277	6%
2	4,335	2,194	51%	733	17%	462	11%	218	5%
3	4,276	2,092	49%	842	20%	441	10%	232	5%
4	4,153	2,105	51%	768	18%	420	10%	186	4%
5	3,841	1,919	50%	758	20%	415	11%	171	4%
6	3,034	1,285	42%	552	18%	457	15%	343	11%
7	2,673	1,098	41%	484	18%	397	15%	373	14%
8	2,676	1,142	43%	503	19%	425	16%	379	14%
9	3,311	698	21%	476	14%	579	17%	1396	42%
10	2,792	554	20%	429	15%	479	17%	1223	44%
11	2,466	499	20%	383	16%	487	20%	1020	41%
12	2,098	543	26%	349	17%	454	22%	605	29%
CE	175	43	25%	43	25%	31	18%	46	26%
Total[3]	**45,036**	**18,585**	**41%**	**7,999**	**18%**	**6,134**	**14%**	**6,765**	**15%**

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[2] Chart includes the number of students who were eligible for chronic truancy in school year 2018-2019 – or those who had at least 10 days where they were registered and of compulsory age. Evening students and students who are not compulsory-aged are not included. These absences include full day and 80/20 absences (students who were absent because they did not attend 80% of their scheduled periods). These data are further disaggregated in Appendix A of this report.
[3] Total: Certain grade categories are excluded from the table but included in the total due to the need to exclude aggregate data with group sizes less than 10 and the limitations to protect confidentiality.

Student Support Teams

Attendance Student Support Teams (SSTs) are school-based, problem-solving teams that provide teachers, students and families with supports for students who present attendance concerns. Attendance SST members—including attendance staff, administrators, school counselors, social workers, school nurses and other relevant school level support staff, in addition to families, and sometimes students—use a collaborative process to: (1) assess student needs and set positive goals; (2) identify barriers to attendance; (3) recommend strategies that students, families, and school staff can implement to improve attendance; and (4) develop and monitor attendance support plans.

In SY18-19, 13,064[4] students accrued 5 or more unexcused absences within a term resulting in attendance SST referrals. As noted above, DCPS held SST meetings for 10,321 of these students (79%). In SY17-18, 21,793[5] students accrued 5 or more unexcused absences over the course of the school year resulting in attendance SST referrals. DCPS held SST meetings for 15,368 of these students (71%).

DCPS attendance SSTs implemented a variety of strategies to eliminate or reduce the number of unexcused absences – including making calls and issuing attendance letters to families, conducting parent conferences and home visits, developing attendance contracts with students and parents, providing school-based counseling, making referrals to community agencies and partners, providing attendance incentives and rewards programs, and making external referrals to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) and Court. The services provided to students to help reduce unexcused absences included the provision of clothing, transportation assistance, parenting classes, uniforms, child-care assistance, vision care, and referrals to school-based clinical staff, Department of Behavioral Health social workers and counselors, as well as other community-based organizations. Additionally, DCPS has increased its communication to all stakeholders regarding the importance of students attending school on time every day.

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[4] SST referral numbers include students who reached 5 unexcused absences in one term, inclusive of 80/20 absences. Please note that this number differs from the numbers in the Table 1 because the reporting requirements are distinct in code. This number also reflect the number of students who reached 5 unexcused absences within a term rather than school year, as per the code. DCPS previously conducted SSTs for students who reached 5 unexcused absences over the course of a school year. DCPS made this change to align with code. Prior this this SY, DCPS conducted more SSTs than were required.
[5] SST referral numbers include students who reached 5 unexcused absences over the course of a school year, inclusive of 80/20 absences.

Referrals to Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA)

As noted above, in SY18-19, 3,458 of the 3,876 eligible students[6] (89%) were referred to CFSA for educational neglect. In SY17-18, 2,260 eligible students (81%) of the 2,780 eligible students[7] were referred to CFSA for educational neglect. The increased referral rates over the last few years represents DCPS' steady improvement in compliance. To further encourage improved compliance, DCPS expanded training for school staff and increased its emphasis on this requirement. DCPS also instituted weekly monitoring and support from the DCPS Central Office attendance team and Continuous Improvement Framework. DCPS continues to work towards 100% compliance in this area. Additionally, it should be noted that based on a change in the law which became effective for SY16-17, only students with 10 full day absences are required to be referred to CFSA.[8]

The table below illustrates the distribution of referrals to CFSA across grade levels. The largest number of referrals were for Kindergarten and first grade students. Kindergarten marks the first full year of compulsory school attendance. DCPS recognizes that some families struggle with daycare options and understanding the legal shift for compulsory attendance requirements. DCPS recognizes that early intervention and instilling good habits of regular school attendance in early grades is critical to preventing truancy and for SY19-20 has put in place some additional strategies to address this ongoing concern. Accordingly, DCPS continues to refine and increase its communication to parents and families about the importance of good attendance habits and the development of crucial skills for students in the early grades, coupled with providing education as to the disadvantages and academic challenges created by chronic absenteeism.

Figure 1: 2018- 2019 School Year CFSA Referrals by Grade[9]

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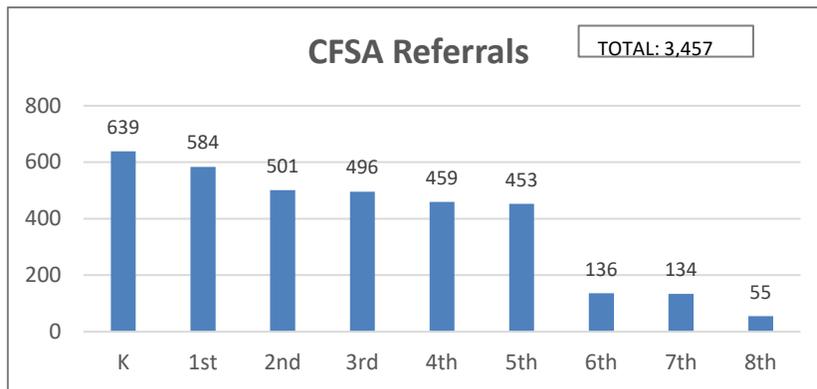
[6] These CFSA numbers are reflective of any student throughout the course of the year (inclusive of students who are no longer enrolled in DCPS) who met criteria for requiring a CFSA referral, and subsequently received one. An additional 446 discretional CFSA referral were made for students who did not meet the attendance criteria. 9th graders received fewer than 10 CFSA referrals and are therefore excluded from Figure 1.

[7] These CFSA numbers are reflective of any student throughout the course of the year (inclusive of students who are no longer enrolled in DCPS) who met criteria for requiring a CFSA referral, and subsequently received one. An additional 676 discretional CFSA referral were made for students who did not meet the attendance criteria.

[8] D.C. Official Code §38-208 (c) (1)(A) was amended by the D.C. Law 21-140, School Attendance Clarification Amendment Act of 2016.

[9] Because of privacy concerns, total excludes groups less than 10.

Referrals to the Judicial System

In SY18-19, DCPS referred 530 of the 1,603 eligible students[10] (33%) to the judicial system (including DC Superior Court Social Services only). In SY17-18, DCPS referred 797 of 2,318 eligible students[11] (34%) to the judicial system (including DC Superior Court Social Services and the Office of the Attorney General (OAG).

Additionally, schools continue to work to provide the extensive proof required that each of the attendance protocol steps were completed before a court referral could be made (for example, with copies of 3, 5, 7, and 15-day letters mailed to a family; CFSA referrals; attendance records; special education or Section 504 records; evidence of intervention services and copies of referral to outside resources; as well as SST plans and social history narrative).

The table below illustrates the distribution of referrals to court for SY18-19. The largest number of referrals was made to address absences at the ninth and tenth grade levels.

Figure 2: Court Referrals by Grade[12]

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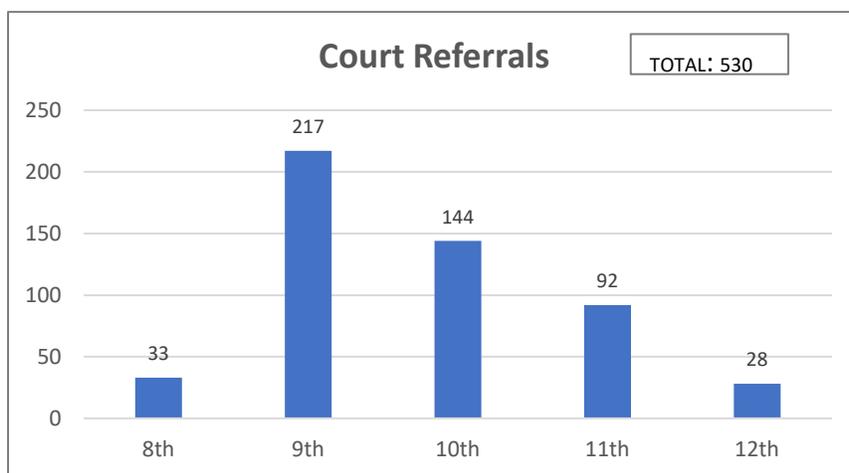
[10] For SY 18-19, this report this number includes students between the ages 14-17 who accumulated 15 or more unexcused full-day absences only. This change was made to align to Code which does not mandate referrals for students under the age of 14.

[11] For SY17-18, the attendance report included students between the ages 5-17 who accumulated 15 or more unexcused absences inclusive of full day unexcused absences.

[12] Certificate students, sixth grade students, and seventh grade students received fewer than 10 court referrals and are therefore excluded from this chart. Students ages 14-18 were referred to court.

Valid Reasons for Absence

Lawful reasons for absence are defined in DCPS' Attendance and Truancy Policy and follow DCMR Title 5-B, Chapter 21. The following absences are excused:

- Illness of the student (a doctor's note is required for a student absent five or more days in a term)[13];
- Illness of a child for parenting students (a doctor's note is required for a student absent five or more days in a term);
- Medical or dental appointments for the student;
- Death in the student's immediate family;
- Exclusion by direction of the authorities of the District of Columbia, due to quarantine, contagious disease, infection, infestation, or other condition requiring separation from other students for medical or health reasons;
- Necessity for a student to attend a judicial proceeding, or court-ordered activity, as a party to the action or under subpoena;
- Observance of a religious holiday;
- Absences to allow students to visit their parent who is in the military, immediately before, during, or after deployment;
- College visits for students in 9th- 12th grades (up to three cumulative days);
- School visits for students in K through 8th grades (one day);
- Absences of expectant or parenting students for a time- period specified by their doctor and any accommodations mandated by law;
- Take Our Daughters & Sons to Work Day;
- Religious event or celebration outside of a religious holiday (up to five cumulative days); and,
- An emergency or other circumstance approved by DCPS.

The following absences may also be excused without written documentation from the parent, as verified by the school:

- Lawful out of school suspension or exclusion by school authorities;
- Temporary closing of facilities or suspension of classes due to severe weather, official activities, holidays, malfunctioning equipment, unsafe or unsanitary conditions, or other condition(s) or emergency requiring a school closing or suspension of classes;
- Failure of the District of Columbia to provide transportation in cases where the District of Columbia has a legal responsibility for the transportation of the student; and
- An emergency or other circumstance approved by DCPS.

If a student is absent for a total of up to four (4) cumulative days in each grading period, a parent's written excuse is sufficient for explaining the absence.

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[13] If a student is absent for five (5) or more cumulative days per term, further documentation is required beyond communication by the parent for the absence to be excused. Written explanation of the student's absence must be submitted by a doctor or staff of a relevant agency, on official doctor's office/agency letterhead and signed by a relevant official.

Strategies for Improvement

Strategies for Improvement in SY18-19

In SY18-19, DCPS worked diligently to improve data integrity, messaging, and systems to better position schools to combat chronic absenteeism. DCPS also implemented a series of research-based initiatives to provide differentiated supports to schools and students. Highlights are summarized below.

As presented during the Attendance Works professional development session held in SY17-18 and referenced in last year's annual report, DCPS school leaders developed a multi-tiered system to reduce chronic absenteeism in their schools, with special emphasis on Tier 1 universal strategies, which are utilized to support consistent daily attendance for all students. Tier 2 interventions are designed to provide targeted support for students who need more support to avoid chronic absenteeism, and Tier 3 offers intensive support for students facing the greatest obstacles to consistent attendance.

DCPS ensured that schools incorporated attendance strategies as part of their Comprehensive School Plan. The Comprehensive School Plan establishes annual improvement goals for each school. Progress toward reaching these goals was closely reviewed by District leadership. Each school completed a self-assessment on attendance practices, to strengthen them and design student supports that are aligned to needs. Instructional superintendents and the Attendance team monitored these plans. As noted earlier in the report, DCPS also implemented the Continuous Improvement Framework this year, to ensure that attendance data was reviewed, and challenges addressed proactively.

Additionally, DCPS worked with Harvard University's Proving Ground to roll out its first pilot attendance intervention. The pilot consisted of sending individualized letters to a subset of students and families who have a history of absences. The letters included individualized attendance data, addressed learning lost and emphasized the importance of reducing all absences (excused and unexcused). During the pilot, letters were sent to a select number of students and families so DCPS could evaluate the intervention's effectiveness.

DCPS' pilot showed that personalized letters are an effective way to reduce absences. Letters comparing individual students' attendance to the average rates at their school reduced absences by 2.7 percentage points, overall. We estimate that if DCPS scaled letters up to all students, attendance could increase by over 17,000 instructional days. To continue to test this intervention, DCPS sent a second round of letters to families in March to determine if emails to families were as effective as letters sent via U.S. mail. Preliminary results show that U.S. mail outperformed email by a small amount (just under 1% reduction in absences). DCPS plans to scale up this initiative for SY19-20.

Throughout SY18-19, DCPS continued to provide training and support for schools implementing attendance intervention strategies. Targeted support included creating incentives for students, conducting specific outreach to students and families, and connecting families with our community and agency partners for additional support. In addition to focusing on ISA, schools received data on chronic

absenteeism in their buildings. Schools provided additional support to families that not only have unexcused absences, but excused absences whereby the students missed 10 percent or more of the school year. Schools received weekly updates identifying chronically absent students. The following is a list of strategies schools used to improve in-seat attendance:

- Schools created relationship-based, goal-setting attendance programs targeting students who had been chronically absent in the prior school year. These programs were implemented at the beginning of the year, and involved weekly check-ins centering around positive attendance reinforcement and problem-solving.
- Professional development opportunities included small-group discussions and sharing of best practices, in addition to sharing District-level policy and program guidance and updates.
- Ongoing focus on improving school climate and reducing suspensions.
- Weekly and/or monthly classroom or grade-level attendance competitions/incentives.
- Student incentives and giveaways for improved and/or perfect attendance.
- Enhanced communication including text messages, emails and letters with updated language were provided to families stressing the importance of school attendance.
- Attendance specialists continued to focus their supports on schools with intensive attendance concerns. This included school visits to check for tier 1 attendance best practices and rigorous analysis of ISA data and attendance practices within our schools experiencing chronic absenteeism. After completion of these reviews, DCPS' Central Office attendance team provided recommendations and support to improve attendance team structures, created an attendance plan, and provided professional development on best practices for supporting students. DCPS began the school year with a set of identified schools and the was adjusted mid-year based on a data review performed by the Attendance Team and vetted with Instructional Superintendents. The following schools received this intensive support:
  - *Elementary Schools:* Moten ES, Malcolm X ES, Excel ES, Patterson ES, Browne Leckie ES, Stanton ES, King ES, Thomas ES, C.W. Harris ES, Ketcham ES, Hendley ES, Burrville ES, Aiton ES and Langley ES
  - *Education Campuses:* Wheatley EC and Brown EC
  - *Middle Schools:* Brookland MS, Johnson MS, Kelly Miller MS, Kramer MS, McKinley MS, River Terrace Elliot-Hine MS, and Sousa MS
  - *High Schools:* Anacostia HS, Ballou HS, Ballou STAY, Eastern HS, H.D. Woodson HS, Luke C. Moore, Washington Metropolitan, Roosevelt HS, Roosevelt Stay, Coolidge HS, Dunbar HS, Cardozo HS, and Phelps ACE HS

DCPS worked to ensure the participation of all staff in our District-wide attendance improvement efforts, including our pathway coordinators, early childhood educators, 9th grade academy staff, deans of student behavior, special education coordinators, cafeteria workers, and others school-based staff. We emphasized that establishing strong, supportive, and welcoming relationships is a critical component of reducing chronic absenteeism.

In preparation for SY18-19, DCPS proactively engaged with students in critical transition grades (8th to 9th grade and PreK to Kindergarten) before the end of the summer, to get students and families excited for school. This engagement received favorable feedback from students, school leaders and

community members. As such, principals were encouraged to continue this work (connecting with incoming students to get them excited for school, implement welcoming robo-calls to each student reminding them of schools' start dates and encouraging solid attendance behaviors, and inviting students to summer school sponsored events).

Last summer, DCPS also targeted 5 elementary programs to provide a "Kindergarten Readiness" orientation for families transitioning from Pre-K. Families received student attendance data and research-based information about the impact of attendance on student achievement. Schools found this beneficial and have been encouraged to continue this practice.

Strategies for Improvement in SY19-20

While DCPS has seen some positive trends continue related to data entry, SST intervention planning, and partner referrals, truancy rates remain stubbornly high and ISA rates need to accelerate. Based on these facts, DCPS will be working this year to refine its intervention and support strategies while maintaining a focus on data accuracy and validity. DCPS maintains its mission and vision for attendance: that **every student** is welcomed and encouraged to attend school by **every adult**, **every day**. We will achieve success through executing the following key work streams well:

DCPS continues to focus on systems integrity and actionable data priorities. While DCPS recognizes that SY18-19 data continues to reflect an increase in the truancy rate, attendance entry has greatly improved over the last three years, moving from 94.2%, in SY16-17, to 97.8%, in SY18-19. Additionally, DCPS instituted a data locking procedure, critical professional development for staff around internal controls and strict adherence to DCPS' updated policy and procedure.

 As such, DCPS believes that the rate for the past two years likely reflects a more accurate account of attendance truancy data. Accurate record keeping is essential to ensure that challenges can be accurately identified, and students can receive the needed interventions. DCPS will continue to work towards 100% attendance entry and accurate record keeping. Our efforts to improve data integrity have resulted in a better understanding of excused and unexcused absences, an increased focus on attendance entry, and timely student or family notifications.

DCPS is using data to support a strategic focus on chronic absenteeism and universal, Tier 1 support, as prevention and early intervention while students are still engaged will have the greatest impact on student success. For SY19-20, DCPS will continue to require schools to consider and develop attendance strategies as part of their Comprehensive School Plan based on their 18-19 attendance data.

Last, based on feedback from many users of the Aspen student information system, DCPS was able to identify attendance data entry challenges from the user perspective. As a result of this process, DCPS is instituting two key upgrades planned for SY19-20. The first is the creation of a data dashboard that will ease the distribution of critical attendance data to school and central office staff. The second is an Aspen system upgrade that is slated to increase security, improve communications, and enhance usability.

In SY19-20, DCPS will continue to leverage its partnership with Harvard University's Proving Ground. Specifically, DCPS is planning to take this past year's family communication effort to scale and piloting a postcard project at the kindergarten level.

In the kindergarten level pilot, which has been proven to be effective in other jurisdictions, participating schools will mail postcards home weekly to any kindergarten students who were absent. Our Attendance Team identified that a reason kindergarteners were missing school was because some parents may not be aware of the content that is taught at the kindergarten level. Postcards address this by providing a way for teachers to quickly and easily let parents/guardians know just what their

child missed with each absence and why it matters. Schools will be provided the postcards, and school staff will write student-specific information –the date of the absence(s), the number of absences to date, and the lessons missed. In order to test this effectiveness of this effort, the project will be conducted in randomly selected schools and classrooms. The decision to move forward with this initiative is based on the successful testing of very similar work in other school districts.

Also, DCPS learned that personalized letters comparing individual student attendance to average attendance rates, when implemented to full scale, could reduce overall absenteeism by 2.7%. Due to the cost of scaling this project, DCPS is currently testing whether these letters are effective if sent via email. We anticipate having the results of the project impact analysis by mid-August. If the email delivery mode proves to be just as effective as U.S. mail, then DCPS will send email letters on a 6-8-week cycle to all families whose students have absenteeism concerns.

Throughout upcoming school year DCPS, with the support of the Proving Ground team, will be also working to design and soft pilot a mentorship program: Attendance Champions, an individualized intervention initiative to address chronic absenteeism within DCPS. This year will be used to thoughtfully develop, incorporate the learning of other school districts, and test this initiative on a very small scale, with the intent of a wider implementation for SY20-21. Principals and staff at Anacostia HS, Ballou HS, Brookland MS, Cardozo EC, and Hardy MS have volunteered to be a part of this new work.

DCPS is also excited to announce that in SY19-20, instructional superintendents will lead a robust team of cluster-based school supports that will include members of the attendance team. In this key leadership role, superintendents will be empowered to guide and direct supports to schools in ways that meaningfully address concerns and amplify strengths, and central office supports will be closer to schools and thus better able to coordinate supports as a coherent system of service delivery. DCPS anticipates that this new model will accelerate change and result in improved student outcomes, particularly for students furthest from opportunity.

 On August 20-21, joint professional development sessions will be provided to social workers, psychologists, section 504 team members, attendance POCs and Student Support Services to help coordinate work between these teams.

DCPS continues to provide comprehensive ongoing training regarding its attendance policy, to ensure compliance with code and regulation while also adding key best practices to support student success. This summer, policy professional development opportunities have been provided to all staff.

DCPS believes that a citywide approach is needed to ensure school attendance. DCPS is working to expand its use of community volunteers, non-profits and business leaders to support segments of its attendance efforts. Meetings between Central Office attendance staff and external partners (Show Up-Stand Out, Roving Leaders, Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Behavioral Health, Community in Schools, City Year, and Flamboyan) have taken place, with the goal of ensuring better coordination of partnership work. During SY19-20, there will be a push to evaluate outcomes for students referred to outside partners to determine the effectiveness of the efforts and make needed program modifications. In this vein, DCPS is partnering with the Lab @ DC to use scientific insights and methods to test and improve policies and provide timely, relevant, and high-quality analysis of aspects of DCPS's attendance work.

DCPS continues to coordinate with the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME) to create a more robust district-wide attendance messaging campaign to engage youth and convey the message that "every day counts." DCPS will be working to ensure these activities are appropriately matched and tailored to meet the needs of individual schools.

DCPS and DME are partnering to implement safe passage programs, transportation for homeless youth, and family engagement. The DME is seeking to build or scale evidence-based interventions in public schools through five areas of work in School Year 2019-20:

- Through a partnership with Kinvolved, providing two DCPS high schools and one DCPS 6-12 education campus with high absenteeism with new family engagement strategies to support attendance.
- Supporting the continuation and expansion of schools sending evidence-based "energy letters" that help students and families understand their attendance relative to their peers and to their own attendance goals based on the partnership with Proving Ground.
- DME will pilot a tech solution ("Carpool to School") to support schools in creating safe passage pools – including by car, walking, public transit or bike in several DCPS schools with a focus on schools in safe passage priority areas.
- DME will work with partners to establish "safe spots" – businesses, libraries, recs and other sites – where students can go if they feel unsafe on their way home. The DME is working with DCPS and other partners in the business community, law enforcement, the chief student advocate, and schools to begin establishing safe routes in Ward 8 and in interested communities.
- DME will pilot a tech solution to support students' concerns regarding safe passage. The solution will support sending emergency alerts, sharing their walking or riding route/status with others, and reporting issues to other users and to law enforcement.

DCPS, in partnership with Communities in Schools of the Nation's Capital (CIS), has launched the DCPS Connected Schools Initiative. This initiative is a bold new effort led by DCPS to formally establish and embed a replicable and scalable DCPS Full-Service Community School Model in ten (10) DCPS schools (Anacostia HS, Ballou HS, Cardozo HS, Eliot Hine MS, Hart MS, Kelly Miller MS, Kramer MS, Sousa MS, Langley ES and Moten ES). DCPS Connected Schools prioritize the "whole child, whole school, whole community" approach to leading schools. The process is a philosophy and school-wide strategy for how a school community works together to accelerate student success. It involves successfully integrating

academics with student services, healing centered practices and family engagement. The attendance team is working closely to shape how attendance will be managed within these schools.

DCPS has entered into a partnership with the Child and Family Services (CFSA) that will start in September 2019. CFSA and DCPS will implement a pilot program to target two Ward 8 elementary schools, Excel Academy and Moten Elementary school. These schools were selected because there is a high rate of chronic absenteeism and high rates of educational neglect referrals to CFSA. For this partnership, CFSA created a web-based referral portal, specifically for the prevention framework. School reporters will be required to complete the referral in its entirety, once a student has seven (7) unexcused absences. If a family requires support through the prevention track, CFSA will complete triage and teaming within (5) days, to include the school, the Show Up Stand Out program (if applicable) and other community-based providers to ensure the family is supported in addressing concerns to reduce absenteeism. DCPS will monitor these referrals to determine effectiveness and impact.

DCPS is committed to engaging and informing our schools, students, and parents about the importance of regular attendance and the important role each of us plays. DCPS believes that heightened work around chronic absenteeism, consultation and partnerships with national leaders in attendance intervention, implementation of research-based interventions and supports such as school climate work, trauma informed practices, restorative justice, and continued strengthening of foundational policies and procedures will result in increased attendance and accelerated student learning in SY19-20.

Appendix A: Disaggregated Data

Note, school-level data has been included in this appendix. School by grade level is suppressed due to small sample sizes that risk exposure of student information and based on the requirements of Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Figure 1: Unexcused Absences Counting Toward Truancy – By School

School Name	Truancy Age Students	# 1-5 Absences	# 6-10 Absences	# 11-20 Absences	# 21+ Absences
Aiton ES	190	58	61	45	21
Amidon-Bowen ES	279	132	87	38	10
Anacostia HS	345	20	29	68	221
Ballou HS	682	26	40	94	518
Ballou STAY	167	n<10	n<10	10	147
Bancroft ES	479	268	52	10	n<10
Barnard ES	532	333	49	18	11
Beers ES	422	233	95	32	n<10
Benjamin Banneker HS	482	294	72	22	n<10
Brent ES	369	229	29	n<10	n<10
Brightwood EC	720	399	150	62	27
Brookland MS	311	175	59	30	16
Browne EC	343	131	98	60	30
Bruce-Monroe ES @ Park View	380	230	38	17	n<10
Bunker Hill ES	191	101	40	19	n<10
Burroughs ES	209	87	68	24	15
Burrville ES	217	79	81	35	15
C.W. Harris ES	206	76	58	44	17
Cap Hill Montessori @ Logan	259	147	47	24	12
Cardozo EC	717	95	95	153	364
CHOICE Academy @ Washington Met	n<10	n<10	n<10	n<10	n<10
Cleveland ES	241	123	48	30	n<10
Columbia Heights EC (CHEC)	1304	418	257	281	245
Coolidge HS	330	61	47	63	143
Deal MS	1547	1026	132	46	22
Dorothy I. Height ES	342	183	72	35	n<10
Drew ES	220	95	59	38	20
Dunbar HS	718	27	43	135	508

School Name	Truancy Age Students	# 1-5 Absences	# 6-10 Absences	# 11-20 Absences	# 21+ Absences
Eastern HS	776	59	86	170	458
Eaton ES	456	260	23	n<10	n<10
Eliot-Hine MS	265	72	48	67	69
Ellington School of the Arts	567	112	142	147	159
Excel Academy	406	88	114	115	80
Garfield ES	274	112	99	22	25
Garrison ES	217	113	32	18	n<10
H.D. Cooke ES	330	162	67	53	17
Hardy MS	476	301	42	10	n<10
Hart MS	421	169	137	72	31
Hearst ES	303	172	24	n<10	n<10
Hendley ES	365	84	121	104	48
Houston ES	226	100	57	38	18
Hyde-Addison ES	318	167	38	n<10	n<10
J.O. Wilson ES	399	146	108	83	25
Janney ES	687	427	24	n<10	n<10
Jefferson MS Academy	363	112	88	84	62
Johnson, John Hayden MS	321	37	72	121	89
Kelly Miller MS	557	89	118	175	171
Ketcham ES	256	57	67	69	44
Key ES	364	203	24	n<10	n<10
Kimball ES	316	185	88	20	n<10
King, M.L. ES	270	53	57	86	70
Kramer MS	254	17	31	58	146
Lafayette ES	803	438	11	n<10	n<10
Langdon ES	340	158	91	48	14
Langley ES	232	78	71	48	23
LaSalle-Backus EC	386	183	84	48	24
Lawrence E. Boone ES	345	137	94	69	24
Leckie EC	465	176	127	114	34
Ludlow-Taylor ES	335	222	32	n<10	n<10
Luke Moore Alternative HS	165	n<10	n<10	13	130
MacFarland MS	387	176	71	57	22
Malcolm X ES @ Green	212	81	39	50	39
Mann ES	374	235	17	n<10	n<10
Marie Reed ES	358	196	58	24	n<10

School Name	Truancy Age Students	# 1-5 Absences	# 6-10 Absences	# 11-20 Absences	# 21+ Absences
Maury ES	339	196	21	12	n<10
McKinley MS	259	n<10	38	93	118
McKinley Technology HS	631	125	206	220	67
Miner ES	284	126	64	48	25
Moten ES	322	84	80	94	51
Murch ES	579	348	38	n<10	n<10
Nalle ES	313	184	55	30	11
Noyes ES	222	132	38	11	n<10
Oyster-Adams Bilingual	686	422	76	n<10	n<10
Patterson ES	353	89	113	76	70
Payne ES	268	109	60	45	38
Peabody ES (Capitol Hill Clus)	88	60	n<10	n<10	n<10
Phelps ACE HS	264	43	63	79	75
Plummer ES	293	92	102	59	27
Powell ES	469	294	41	17	n<10
Randle Highlands ES	272	178	58	n<10	n<10
Raymond EC	505	285	134	36	17
River Terrace	72	24	13	12	17
Ron Brown High School	275	23	44	71	134
Roosevelt High School	697	67	82	138	400
Roosevelt STAY @ MacFarland	189	10	15	11	145
Ross ES	166	94	12	n<10	n<10
Savoy ES	242	38	67	100	35
School Without Walls HS	590	396	34	n<10	0
School-Within-School @ Goding	237	145	21	n<10	n<10
Seaton ES	309	168	70	31	n<10
Shepherd ES	324	200	27	12	n<10
Simon ES	233	69	69	65	25
Smothers ES	205	68	68	37	23
Sousa MS	262	61	76	81	40

School Name	Truancy Age Students	# 1-5 Absences	# 6-10 Absences	# 11-20 Absences	# 21+ Absences
Stanton ES	424	131	112	97	67
Stoddert ES	466	288	44	n<10	n<10
Stuart-Hobson MS	461	251	102	38	11
SWW @ Francis Stevens	414	235	65	18	n<10
Takoma EC	471	300	46	31	12
Thomas ES	321	76	92	85	57
Thomson ES	263	163	26	n<10	n<10
Truesdell EC	559	270	131	70	26
Tubman ES	526	264	108	60	22
Turner ES	440	72	100	153	108
Tyler ES	403	244	85	11	n<10
Van Ness ES	208	125	31	22	n<10
Walker-Jones EC	379	130	93	91	50
Washington Metropolitan HS	150	n<10	n<10	n<10	130
Watkins ES (Capitol Hill Clus)	456	332	57	n<10	n<10
West EC	291	127	74	28	17
Wheatley EC	288	99	93	53	33
Whittier EC	341	156	91	61	18
Wilson HS	1803	694	466	333	266
Woodson, H.D. HS	514	27	49	107	327
Youth Services Center	118	28	15	n<10	n<10
Total	45035[14]	18585	7999	6134	6765

Figure 2: SST Compliance - By School

School Name	SST Required	SST Complete	SST Compliance
Aiton ES	61	52	85%
Amidon-Bowen ES	59	58	98%
Anacostia HS	302	221	73%
Ballou HS	639	431	67%
Ballou STAY	169	112	66%
Bancroft ES	37	29	78%

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[14] Because of privacy concerns, total excludes groups less than 10.

School Name	SST Required	SST Complete	SST Compliance
Barnard ES	40	38	95%
Beers ES	37	36	97%
Benjamin Banneker HS	32	22	69%
Boone ES	88	81	92%
Brent ES	19	19	100%
Brightwood EC	97	95	98%
Brookland MS	42	38	90%
Browne EC	76	72	95%
Bruce-Monroe ES @ Park View	26	24	92%
Bunker Hill ES	37	31	84%
Burroughs ES	42	39	93%
Burrville ES	62	61	98%
C.W. Harris ES	55	53	96%
Capitol Hill Montessori School @ Logan	44	43	98%
Cardozo EC	515	342	66%
Cleveland ES	32	30	94%
Columbia Heights EC (CHEC)	528	407	77%
Coolidge HS	230	211	92%
Deal MS	76	70	92%
Dorothy I. Height ES	34	33	97%
Drew ES	58	50	86%
Duke Ellington School of the Arts	302	140	46%
Dunbar HS	650	174	27%
Eastern HS	626	343	55%
Eaton ES	n<10	n<10	n<10
Eliot-Hine MS	147	129	88%
Excel Academy	186	172	92%
Garfield ES	61	60	98%
Garrison ES	29	25	86%
H.D. Cooke ES	56	55	98%
Hardy MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Hart MS	121	111	92%
Hearst ES	14	13	93%
Hendley ES	152	134	88%
Houston ES	54	49	91%
Hyde-Addison ES	15	14	93%
J.O. Wilson ES	97	84	87%
Janney ES	14	14	100%
Jefferson Middle School Academy	120	102	85%
Johnson John Hayden MS	175	162	93%
Kelly Miller MS	338	295	87%
Ketcham ES	105	75	71%
Key ES	18	17	94%
Kimball ES	42	38	90%

School Name	SST Required	SST Complete	SST Compliance
King M.L. ES	139	131	94%
Kramer MS	206	175	85%
Lafayette ES	n<10	n<10	n<10
Langdon ES	58	55	95%
Langley ES	81	76	94%
LaSalle-Backus EC	73	71	97%
Leckie EC	147	131	89%
Ludlow-Taylor ES	22	22	100%
Luke C. Moore HS	148	104	70%
MacFarland MS	91	45	49%
Malcolm X ES @ Green	82	80	98%
Mann ES	n<10	n<10	n<10
Marie Reed ES	39	34	87%
Maury ES	14	13	93%
McKinley MS	197	188	95%
McKinley Technology HS	219	191	87%
Miner ES	66	64	97%
Moten ES	135	132	98%
Murch ES	30	29	97%
Nalle ES	36	36	100%
Noyes ES	23	22	96%
Oyster-Adams Bilingual School	51	44	86%
Patterson ES	158	149	94%
Payne ES	82	80	98%
Peabody ES (Capitol Hill Cluster)	n<10	n<10	n<10
Phelps ACE HS	137	117	85%
Plummer ES	89	76	85%
Powell ES	29	28	97%
Randle Highlands ES	13	12	92%
Raymond EC	62	60	97%
River Terrace EC	27	27	100%
Ron Brown College Preparatory High School	205	114	56%
Roosevelt HS	541	385	71%
Roosevelt STAY	170	162	95%
Ross ES	n<10	n<10	n<10
Savoy ES	116	106	91%
School Without Walls @ Francis-Stevens	44	43	98%
School Without Walls HS	n<10	n<10	n<10
School-Within-School @ Goding	14	12	86%
Seaton ES	35	32	91%
Shepherd ES	17	14	82%
Simon ES	74	71	96%
Smothers ES	63	58	92%
Sousa MS	127	124	98%

School Name	SST Required	SST Complete	SST Compliance
Stanton ES	163	160	98%
Stoddert ES	21	20	95%
Stuart-Hobson MS (Capitol Hill Cluster)	46	46	100%
Takoma EC	44	42	95%
Thomas ES	104	104	100%
Thomson ES	14	12	86%
Truesdell EC	104	99	95%
Tubman ES	96	89	93%
Turner ES	200	179	90%
Tyler ES	16	14	88%
Van Ness ES	23	22	96%
Walker-Jones EC	126	121	96%
Washington Metropolitan HS	148	140	95%
Watkins ES (Capitol Hill Cluster)	21	20	95%
West EC	59	52	88%
Wheatley EC	88	81	92%
Whittier EC	70	66	94%
Woodrow Wilson HS	596	492	83%
Woodson H.D. HS	433	307	71%
Youth Services Center	25	0	0%

Figure 3: CFSA Compliance - By School

School Name	CFSA Required	CFSA Referred	CFSA Compliance Rate
Aiton ES	52	46	89%
Amidon-Bowen ES	41	40	98%
Bancroft ES	14	8	57%
Barnard ES	25	23	92%
Beers ES	26	26	100%
Boone ES	86	83	97%
Brent ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Brightwood EC	54	54	100%
Brookland MS	25	21	84%
Browne EC	36	35	97%
Bruce-Monroe ES @ Park View	19	17	90%
Bunker Hill ES	24	21	88%
Burroughs ES	28	27	96%
Burrville ES	53	50	94%
C.W. Harris ES	46	41	89%
Capitol Hill Montessori School @ Logan	n<10	n<10	75%
Cardozo EC	36	28	78%
Cleveland ES	32	29	91%

School Name	CFSA Required	CFSA Referred	CFSA Compliance Rate
Deal MS	n<10	n<10	89%
Dorothy I. Height ES	32	32	100%
Drew ES	47	25	53%
Eliot-Hine MS	20	18	90%
Excel Academy	131	128	98%
Garfield ES	36	35	97%
Garrison ES	18	17	94%
H.D. Cooke ES	55	53	96%
Hart MS	13	12	92%
Hearst ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Hendley ES	123	105	85%
Houston ES	51	45	88%
Hyde-Addison ES	n<10	n<10	100%
J.O. Wilson ES	91	54	59%
Janney ES	n<10	n<10	40%
Jefferson Middle School Academy	18	17	94%
Johnson John Hayden MS	53	51	96%
Kelly Miller MS	24	19	79%
Ketcham ES	103	34	33%
Key ES	n<10	n<10	50%
Kimball ES	29	6	21%
King M.L. ES	136	132	97%
Kramer MS	50	48	96%
Langdon ES	52	49	94%
Langley ES	60	58	97%
LaSalle-Backus EC	45	43	96%
Leckie EC	98	85	87%
Ludlow-Taylor ES	16	16	100%
MacFarland MS	10	10	100%
Malcolm X ES @ Green	78	77	99%
Mann ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Marie Reed ES	30	23	77%
Maury ES	12	8	67%
McKinley MS	42	26	62%
Miner ES	58	56	97%
Moten ES	127	120	95%
Murch ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Nalle ES	31	31	100%
Noyes ES	14	14	100%
Oyster-Adams Bilingual School	n<10	n<10	0%
Patterson ES	117	104	89%
Payne ES	76	74	97%
Peabody ES (Capitol Hill Cluster)	n<10	n<10	100%
Plummer ES	62	43	69%
Powell ES	21	21	100%
Randle Highlands ES	n<10	n<10	100%

School Name	CFSA Required	CFSA Referred	CFSA Compliance Rate
Raymond EC	32	31	97%
River Terrace EC	10	10	100%
Ron Brown College Preparatory High School	n<10	n<10	0%
Savoy ES	116	111	96%
School Without Walls @ Francis-Stevens	18	16	89%
Seaton ES	30	30	100%
Shepherd ES	14	10	71%
Simon ES	80	74	93%
Smothers ES	49	48	98%
Sousa MS	26	20	77%
Stanton ES	153	147	96%
Stoddert ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Stuart-Hobson MS (Capitol Hill Cluster)	n<10	n<10	100%
Takoma EC	21	19	91%
Thomas ES	81	78	96%
Thomson ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Truesdell EC	55	48	87%
Tubman ES	83	80	96%
Turner ES	186	183	98%
Tyler ES	n<10	n<10	100%
Van Ness ES	22	21	96%
Walker-Jones EC	105	103	98%
Washington Metropolitan HS	n<10	n<10	0%
Watkins ES (Capitol Hill Cluster)	n<10	n<10	71%
West EC	21	19	91%
Wheatley EC	60	53	88%
Whittier EC	43	42	98%
Woodrow Wilson HS	n<10	n<10	100%

Figure 4: Court Compliance - By School

School Name	Court Referrals Required	Court Referrals Completed	Court Referral Compliance Rate
Anacostia HS	60	8	13%
Ballou HS	167	78	47%
Ballou STAY	119	7	6%
Benjamin Banneker HS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Brightwood EC	n<10	n<10	n<10
Brookland MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Browne EC	n<10	n<10	n<10
Cardozo EC	156	26	17%

School Name	Court Referrals Required	Court Referrals Completed	Court Referral Compliance Rate
Columbia Heights EC (CHEC)	n<10	n<10	n<10
Coolidge HS	11	3	27%
Duke Ellington School of the Arts	26	0	0%
Dunbar HS	172	1	1%
Eastern HS	171	92	54%
Eliot-Hine MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Jefferson Middle School Academy	n<10	n<10	n<10
Johnson John Hayden MS	12	10	83%
Kelly Miller MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Kramer MS	20	6	30%
LaSalle-Backus EC	n<10	n<10	n<10
Luke C. Moore HS	72	51	71%
MacFarland MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
McKinley MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
McKinley Technology HS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Phelps ACE HS	33	28	85%
River Terrace EC	n<10	n<10	n<10
Ron Brown College Preparatory High School	35	7	20%
Roosevelt HS	162	98	61%
Roosevelt STAY	116	57	49%
School Without Walls @ Francis-Stevens	n<10	n<10	n<10
Sousa MS	n<10	n<10	n<10
Washington Metropolitan HS	100	14	14%
Whittier EC	n<10	n<10	n<10
Woodrow Wilson HS	47	16	34%
Woodson H.D. HS	71	3	4%