

# JOINT HEARING

## ASSEMBLY BUDGET SUBCOMMITTEE NO. 2 ON EDUCATION FINANCE AND ASSEMBLY EDUCATION COMMITTEE MCCARTY, O'DONNELL, Chairs

10 a.m. — State Capitol, Room 4202

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*The public may attend this hearing in person or participate by phone. Any member of the public attending this hearing will need to wear a mask at all times while in the building location. This hearing can be viewed via live stream on the Assembly's website at <https://assembly.ca.gov/todayevents>.*

*We encourage the public to provide written testimony before the hearing. Please send your written testimony to: [BudgetSub2@asm.ca.gov](mailto:BudgetSub2@asm.ca.gov). Please note that any written testimony submitted to the committee is considered public comment and may be read into the record or reprinted.*

*A moderated telephone line will be available to assist with public participation. The public may provide comment by calling the following toll-free number: **877-692-8957 / Access Code: 131 54 202***

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## OVERSIGHT HEARING

### PANDEMIC RESPONSE OVERSIGHT: LEARNING RECOVERY, CHRONIC ABSENTEEISM, AND ENROLLMENT LOSS

- I. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond
- II. Pandemic Whiplash: Learning Recovery & Student Engagement  
Edgar Cabral, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Hedy Chang, Attendance Works  
Matt Navo, California Collaborative for Education Excellence  
Kyla Johnson-Trimnell, Oakland Unified School District
- III. California's Student Enrollment Cliff  
Edgar Cabral, Legislative Analyst's Office  
Mike Fine, *Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team*  
Mandy Corbin, Sonoma County Office of Education  
Lamont Jackson, San Diego Unified School District
- IV. Dr. Linda Darling Hammond, State Board of Education

## **Pandemic Response and Oversight in Public Education: Declining Enrollment, Attendance, and Learning Recovery**

### **Agenda**

For the first time in a generation, California's public education system is not experiencing a funding crisis. Instead, on the heels of a global pandemic that led California's public schools to physically close for a significant portion of the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years, schools across the state appear to have a student engagement crisis. The wellbeing of our students is at risk.

Although schools are now open for in person instruction, student enrollment and attendance has sharply declined statewide. The purpose of this hearing is to review the data and implications of the continuing student engagement crises. Hearing testimony will examine the investments to date supporting student learning recovery and school climate transformation. The implications of continuing student enrollment and attendance cliffs will have multi-year, if not permanent impacts on education systems, finance, student performance, and child wellbeing. The Assembly's priority will be supporting student recovery from this pandemic while stabilizing school systems.

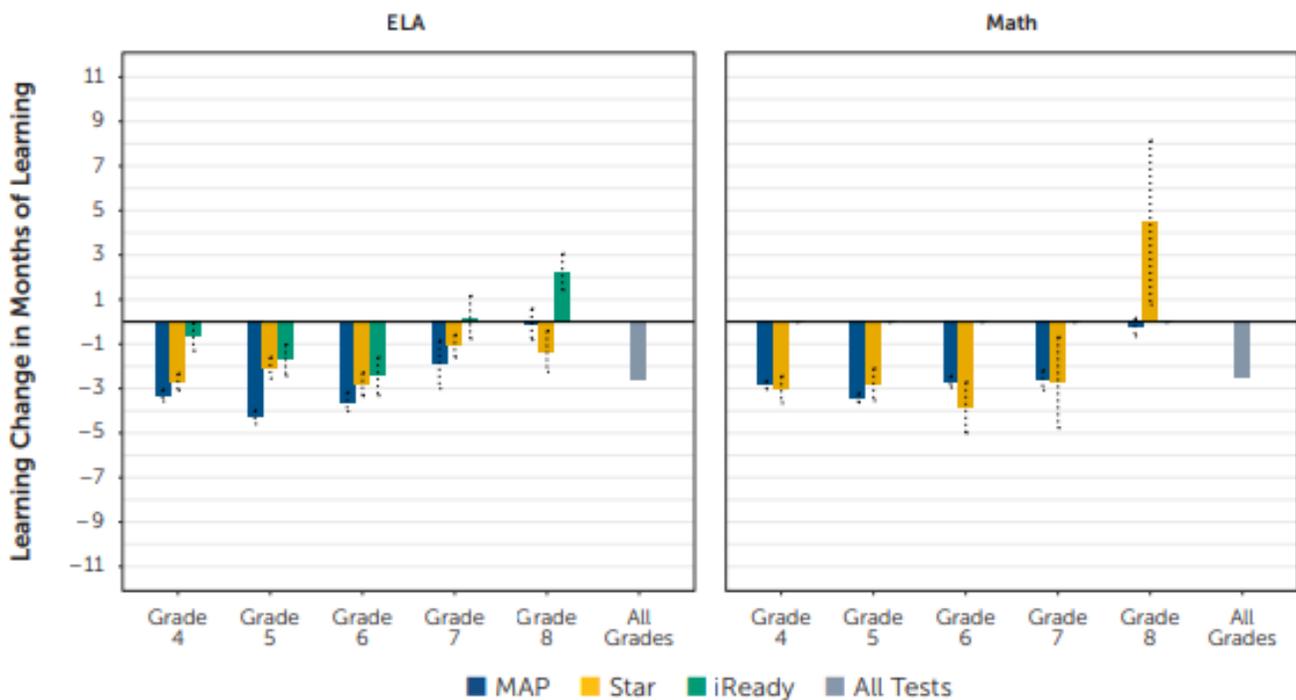
The pandemic has challenged and strained California schools: school leaders needed to balance public health, learning, and the need of families. School nutrition programs and subsidized child care became cornerstone responses during the crisis. Local school board meetings became flashpoints of debate on public health. Exhausted educators retired in droves. But most of all, our students are showing the impact of months of lost or insufficient instructional time, stress and trauma from the pandemic and social isolation, and the disorienting response of educators, many who are themselves traumatized. Without intervention, we risk thousands young Californians facing diminished opportunities, outcomes, and incomes throughout their entire lifetimes.

Meanwhile, the intent of Proposition 98 appears to finally be manifesting. The LAO forecasts continued historic growth in state education funding, which begins with California's average per-student funding baseline at over \$21,000 per student in the 2021-22 Budget Act. The top issue that the 2022-23 Budget Act must address during this period of revenue growth is how to support student engagement and wellbeing, with a laser focus on the growing achievement and outcomes gap.

**Pandemic Response to Learning Loss & Student Mental Health**

**Student Learning Loss.** According to prior testimony before this subcommittee and then updated by a Summer 2021 publication<sup>1</sup>, Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) has documented that California’s students experienced dramatic learning loss or “lag<sup>2</sup>” during the pandemic closure and distance learning months: their results show that by the time students completed winter assessments in the 2020–21 school year, they had experienced a learning lag of approximately 2.6 months in English language arts (ELA) and 2.5 months in math. This is the overall picture of student performance across the state during Distance Learning:

**Figure 2. Overall Learning Change**



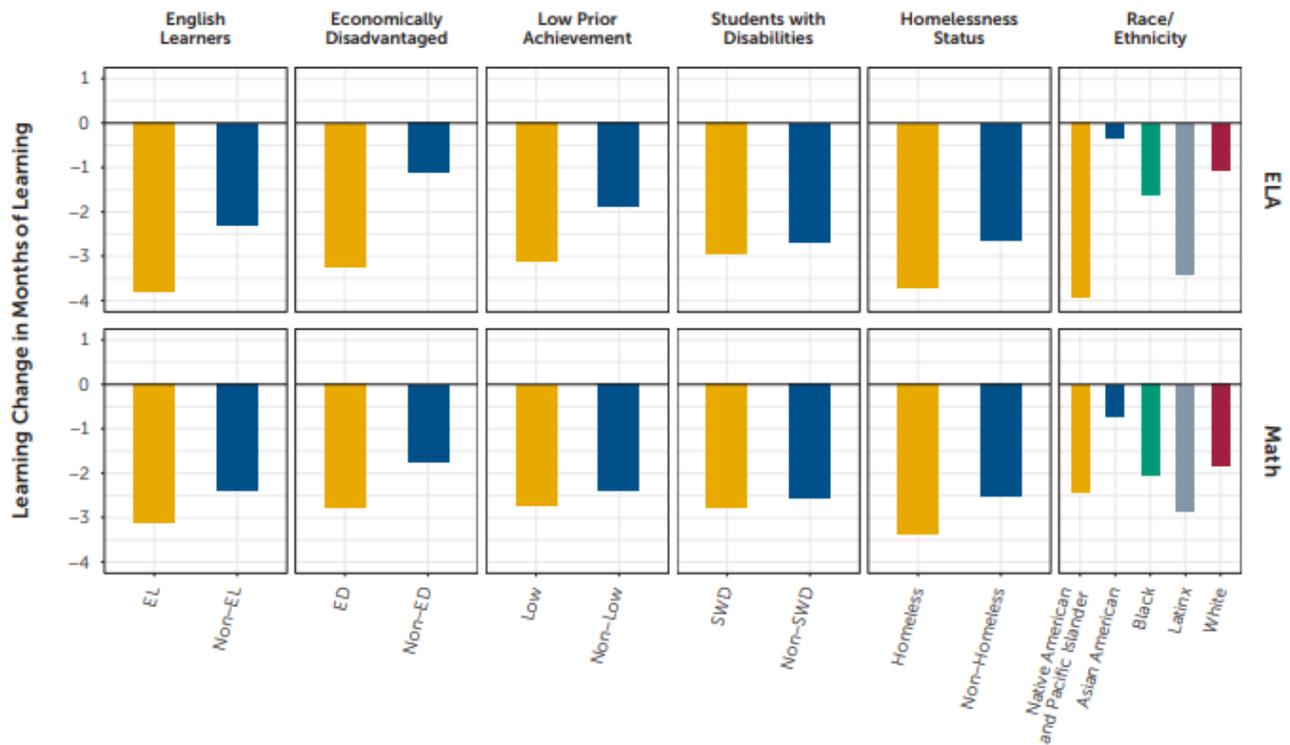
Source: PACE

This learning lag may contribute to a dramatic widening in our state’s achievement gap: PACE further found that students who were economically disadvantaged, English learners, and Latinx experienced far greater learning lag than students who were not in these groups. The figure below depicts PACE’s fall-to-winter 2020-21 for various student groups, as compared to their non-group peers:

<sup>1</sup> Pier, L., Christian, M., Tymeson, H., & Meyer, R. H. (2021, June). *COVID-19 impacts on student learning: Evidence from interim assessments in California* [Report]. Policy Analysis for California Education. <https://edpolicyinca.org/publications/covid-19-impacts-student-learning>

<sup>2</sup> PACE “opted to use the term *learning lag* rather than *learning loss* in order to underscore that a lag in learning can occur relative to expected progress, even as students continue to learn and gain new knowledge and skills, and also that learning that has been delayed during the pandemic can be recouped through deliberate intervention.”

**Figure 4.** Average Learning Lag (in Months of Learning) Across Grades and Assessments by Subgroup



Source: PACE

In May 2021, the PACE and USC Rossier School of Education annual poll<sup>3</sup> of California voters provided a snapshot of voters’ priorities on public education issues, post-school closures, and an additional snapshot of pandemic-related inequities:

- 53% of parents reported that their children’s educational experience was worse than before the pandemic, but 33% of parents said that their children’s educational experience was better than before.
- Regarding the ramifications of the pandemic on students, the following were the areas of greatest concern for California voters: (a) students falling behind academically; (b) the impact on students with special needs, such as those with disabilities and those learning English; and (c) the impact on students’ emotional and mental health. Among parents, the impact on students’ emotional and mental health ranked highest.
- California voters gave the highest marks to California schools and teachers since this annual poll was first administered in 2012. 62% said they would encourage a young person to become a teacher.

<sup>3</sup> Hough, H., Marsh, J., Myung, J., Plank, D., & Polikoff, M. (2021, July.) *Californians and K–12 education amid COVID-19 recovery: Views from the 2021 PACE/USC Rossier Poll* [Report]. Policy Analysis for California Education. <https://www.edpolicyinca.org/publications/pace-and-usc-rossier-polls-2021>

- Among a variety of policies and practices for addressing student needs during the pandemic the following were the five approaches with the highest levels of support: (a) offering summer school; (b) providing intensive tutoring to students who have fallen behind; (c) providing afterschool activities; (d) expanding access to sports, physical education, and outdoor education; and (e) hiring support staff in schools (e.g., counselors, social workers).

**Mental Health on Campus.** Learning loss or lag is quantifiable with local assessment data, but the pandemic's impact on student emotional and mental health is also widely reported despite not being measured consistently across the state. This hearing will ask local leaders to share results from their school climate and student mental health assessments, and describe how this information is impacting decision-making at the local level.

According to a Harris Poll<sup>4</sup>, funded by the National 4-H Council and conducted during the 2020 school closures:

- 81% of teens say mental health is a significant issue for young people in the U.S.
- 55% of teens say they have experienced anxiety, 45% excessive stress, and 43% depression
- 71% of those surveyed say school work makes them feel anxious or depressed
- 65% of those surveyed say uncertainty about the future makes them feel anxious or depressed
- Teens today report spending 75% of their waking hours (approx. 9 hours each day) on screens during COVID-19
- 46% of teens reported social media as their most common outlet for learning about coping mechanisms for mental health and 43% follow or support someone on social media who openly talks about their mental health issues
- 79% of teens surveyed wish there was an inclusive environment or safe space for people in school to talk about mental health. 70% wish their school taught them more about mental health and coping mechanisms

According to a 2021 American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry journal article,<sup>5</sup> children and adolescents are probably more likely to experience high rates of depression and anxiety during and after COVID-19 isolation ends. These mental health impacts may increase as enforced isolation continues intermittently, and mental health interventions may be required for up to nine years.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://theharrispoll.com/the-state-of-teen-mental-health-during-covid-19-in-america-a-4%E2%80%91and-harris-poll-youth-mental-health-survey/>

<sup>5</sup> Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry. "Rapid Systematic Review: The Impact of Social Isolation and Loneliness on the Mental Health of Children and Adolescents in the Context of COVID-19." Maria Elizabeth Loades, DClInPsy, et al.

Adults on school campuses are also reporting record stressors, while school leaders are reporting great difficulty in hiring. According to RAND<sup>6</sup>: “Stress was the most common reason teachers cited for leaving the profession before and during the pandemic. In fact, teachers cited stress nearly twice as often as insufficient pay as a reason for quitting. COVID-19 appears to have exacerbated teachers' stress. Almost half of all public-school teachers who left the profession early and voluntarily since March 2020 listed COVID-19 as the main reason for their departure.”

Despite billions in one-time and on-going funding dedicated to human resources and pandemic response in the 2021-22 Budget Act, school leaders report great difficulty in hiring, and meeting public health demands on campus.

### **Federal Relief & 2021-22 Budget Act Support for Pandemic Response**

**Education Funding.** The 2021-22 Budget Act reflected historic levels of growth to the Proposition 98 guarantee for school funding. The final per-student funding average, from all funding sources added up to over \$21,000 per student, and the guarantee grew by over \$20 billion from the 2019-20 Budget Act.

State and federal early action allocated over \$22 billion in one-time pandemic response funds to local schools, including support for public health and learning recovery efforts:

### **Budget Also Includes \$22.3 Billion One-Time Federal Relief Funding**

(In Millions)		
Program	Description	Amount
<b>Grants to schools<sup>a</sup></b>	Provides \$19.6 billion directly to schools for broad array of activities, including those related to COVID-19. Also includes \$302 million to support students with disabilities and \$99 million for homeless students.	\$20,002
<b>Instruction and expanded learning grants</b>	Covers a portion of costs associated with In-Person Instruction and Expanded Learning Opportunities Grants, adopted in Chapter 10 of 2021 (AB 86, Committee on Budget).	2,015
<b>Expanded learning</b>	Provides temporary rate and slot increases for the After School Education and Safety Program and 21st Century Community Learning Centers.	301
<b>State operations</b>	Funds California Department of Education to allocate and monitor federal COVID-19 relief funding.	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$22,334</b>

<sup>a</sup> Includes funding provided directly to public K-12 schools from CRRSAA and ARPA. Excludes federal funds from the CARES Act, which were allocated in the 2020-21 budget.  
 Note: Reflects federal funding included in the 2021-22 budget package and mid-year appropriations made during 2020-21.  
 COVID-19 = coronavirus disease 2019; CRRSAA = Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act; ARPA = American Rescue Plan Act; and CARES = Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security.

Source: LAO

<sup>6</sup> Diliberti, Melissa Kay, Heather L. Schwartz, and David Grant, Stress Topped the Reasons Why Public School Teachers Quit, Even Before COVID-19. Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2021. [https://www.rand.org/pubs/research\\_reports/RRA1121-2.html](https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1121-2.html).

Many of the new investments in the 2021-22 Budget Act were intended to support pandemic response, including \$1.7 billion for afterschool and summer programs in the 2021-22 school year, \$3 billion for Community Schools over a seven-year period, and \$550 million in Special Education learning recovery supports.

### Budget Includes \$30.5 Billion in New K-12 Proposition 98 Spending

(In Millions)	
<b>Ongoing</b>	
Local Control Funding Formula	\$4,367
Expanded Learning Opportunities Program	1,753 <sup>a</sup>
Special education	397
Other	1,048
Subtotal	(\$7,565)
<b>One Time</b>	
Deferral paydowns	\$11,042
COVID-19-related actions	5,258
Community schools	3,002
Education workforce	2,567
Curriculum and instruction	120
Other	950
Subtotal	(\$22,939)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$30,504</b>

<sup>a</sup> Of the total, \$753 million is one-time 2020-21 Proposition 98 funding.  
 COVID-19 = coronavirus disease 2019.

Source: LAO

**Student Mental Health Funding.** As was covered in a prior Assembly Education Committee joint information hearing<sup>7</sup>, the 2021-22 Budget package contained enormous investments, multi-year, in student mental health infrastructure:

- The package enacted a Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative Act (CYBHI Act) which requires private health plans and insurers, Medi-Cal Managed Care (MCMC) health plans, and county behavioral health delivery systems to provide coverage for school-based mental health and substance abuse disorder (SUD) services, irrespective of the network status of the health care provider, and additional requirements to increase school site reimbursements, including over \$1.2 billion allocated for these purposes.
- The Budget Act appropriated \$429 million in one-time funds to permit the DHCS, or its contracted vendor, to award competitive grants to entities it deems qualified for the following purposes: (a) To build partnerships, capacity, and infrastructure supporting ongoing school-linked behavioral health services for children and youth 25 years of age and younger; (b) To expand access to licensed medical and

<sup>7</sup> California Assembly Education Joint Information Hearing 10/27/2021

behavioral health professionals, counselors, peer support specialists, community health workers, and behavioral health coaches serving children and youth; (c) To build a statewide, community-based organization provider network for behavioral health prevention and treatment services for children and youth, including those attending institutions of higher education; and, (d) To enhance coordination and partnerships with respect to behavioral health prevention and treatment services for children and youth via appropriate data sharing systems.

- The Budget Act appropriated \$250 million in one-time funds to the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission to provide additional Mental Health Student Services Act grants to support partnerships between county mental health and LEAs.
- The Budget also authorized the Department of Health Care Information and Access (previously the Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development), as a component of the Children and Youth Behavioral Health Initiative, to award competitive grants to entities and individuals it deems qualified to expand the supply of behavioral health counselors, coaches, peer supports, and other allied health care providers serving children and youth, including those at schoolsites.

Finally, the Budget package made significant changes to School-Based Services in the Education Budget Trailer Bill, AB 130 (Committee on Budget):

- Requires the California Department of Education (CDE), no later than January 1, 2022, to establish an Office of School-Based Health Programs (Office) for the purpose of assisting LEAs regarding the current health-related programs under the purview of the CDE, including collaborating with the DHCS and other departments and offices involved in the provision of school-based health services, and assisting LEAs with information on, and participation in, the specified school-based health programs, including School-Based Medi-Cal Administrative Activities (SMAA), LEA Billing Option Program (BOP), and Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment (EPSDT).
- Requires the CDE, by January 1, 2022, to appoint a state school nurse consultant to be housed within the Office, with responsibilities as specified.
- Establishes the School Health Demonstration Project in the Office as a pilot project to expand comprehensive health and mental health services to public school pupils by providing LEAs with intensive assistance and support to build the capacity for long-term sustainability by leveraging multiple revenue sources, with the purpose being to provide training and technical assistance on the requirements for health care provider participation in the Medi-Cal program to enable LEAs to participate in, contract with, and conduct billing and claiming in the Medi-Cal program through all of the following: (a) The LEA BOP; (b) SMAA; (c) Contracting or entering into a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with MCMC plans as a participating MCMC

plan contracting provider; (d) Contracting with or entering into a MOU with county MHPs for specialty mental health services (SMHS), such as through EPSDT, and contracting with community-based providers to deliver health and mental health services to pupils in school through contracts with MCMC plans or county MHPs.

- Requires the State Superintendent of Public Instruction (SSPI), on or before June 30, 2022, in consultation with the executive director of the State Board of Education (state board) and the DHCS, to select up to three organizations to serve as technical assistance teams for purposes of the pilot project. Requires, on or before September 1, 2022, the CDE, in consultation with the DHCS, to select up to 25 LEAs to serve as pilot participants for a period of two years. The Budget Act appropriated \$5 million in onetime funds for this purpose.
- Requires the CDE to establish a process to select, with approval from the executive director of the state board, a LEA to provide guidance around Medi-Cal billing and increase LEAs' capacity to successfully submit claims through the LEA BOP. The Budget Act appropriated \$250,000 in on-going funds for this purpose.

**Ongoing new resources.** The LAO's Fiscal Outlook published earlier this month projects ongoing growth in the Proposition 98 guarantee of \$11.6 billion annually, and a one-time surplus of over \$10 billion in education resources, all in consideration for the 2022-23 Budget Act. The LAO estimates what approximately \$9.5 billion of these ongoing funds will be available for new or increased education priorities.

## **Enrollment & Finance**

**Average Daily Attendance.** California funds schools on a simple metric of "average daily attendance", based on three census dates each school year.

LEAs track the average daily attendance (ADA) of their students, which is an average of the daily attendance of the total enrolled student population in that LEA. If a district's school year is 180 days, and an average of 1,000 students out of 1,100 enrolled students attend each day, the LEA's ADA is 1,000. School districts and charter schools report their ADA for the first time (known as "P-1") beginning in October to cover attendance data from the beginning of the school year through December. The CDE certifies this data in February each year. The second census (known as "P-2") runs from the beginning of the school year through April 15 and is certified annually in June. The third census (known as "Annual") covers the entire school year and is certified in February of the following school year.

The CDE uses attendance data to allocate state funding for various programs, including the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF) and state special education categorical program. For most programs, the state finalizes funding based on the P-2 attendance data. For a few programs—generally those operated by county offices of education—the

state waits to finalize funding until it receives Annual data. The role of the P-1 report is to provide an interim estimate of attendance until better data become available.

**Proposition 98 Funding Guarantee.** The state also uses attendance data in the calculation of the Proposition 98 minimum guarantee. In most years since the passage of Prop 98, the minimum guarantee equals the amount of state and local funding schools received the previous year, adjusted for changes in statewide ADA and growth in state revenue (Test 3) or the state economy (Test 2). In Test 3 years, changes in ADA also affect the size of the supplemental appropriation the state is required to make to ensure school funding grows in tandem with the rest of the budget.

However, in recent years and in projections for near-term budgets, Test 1 was operative. Under Test 1, attendance does not affect school funding.

### **Declining Enrollment**

Prior to the pandemic, declining birth rates and migratory patterns across the state were leading to declining enrollment over a multi-year period in most school districts. A pre-pandemic February 2020 PPIC report, “Declining Enrollment in California Schools: Fiscal Challenges and Opportunities in the Coming Decade” found that most school district-level declines in student enrollment are large and long lasting. The typical multi-year decline persists over a decade or more and is greater than 20%. Enrollment does not generally rebound, so most districts must adjust to lower enrollment levels. Further, school district downsizing in response to enrollment declines does not necessarily lead to budget savings. District revenues often decrease each year as enrollment declines, but it is difficult to shed costs at the same rate. Some costs are fixed and districts lose economies of scale in some services (e.g., capital, maintenance, debt service) and staffing (e.g., administrative positions).

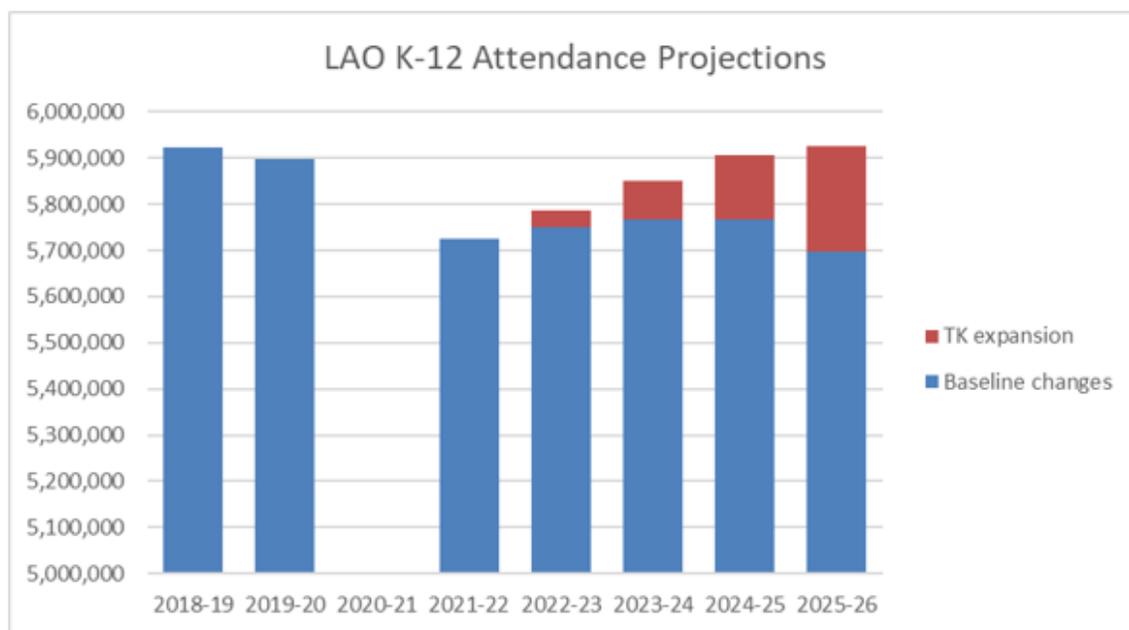
While enrollment and attendance reporting will not conclude until Spring 2022 for the state’s fall semester, at the hearing the CDE will present a snapshot of data reported in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS). to date, and the Fiscal Crisis & Management Assistance Team (FCMAT) will share survey data. This data appears to show an unanticipated drop in enrollment in the 2020-21 school year statewide, and a continued drop in enrollment and ADA in 2021-22, statewide.

The California Department of Finance (DOF) is projecting an 11.4% decline in statewide enrollment by 2031, a loss of 703,000 students from pre-pandemic 2019-20, as a result of declining birth, migration, and pandemic-related withdrawals from the public education system.

***TK-12 Attendance Projected to Drop in 2021-22, Rise Over the Following Four Years.*** According to the recent LAO Fiscal Forecast, there is a continuing decline in enrollment and attendance, beyond pre-pandemic projections. However, the decline in enrollment may be temporary due to recent Budget actions. For 2021-22, the LAO outlook assumes ADA will be down about 170,000 students (3 %) relative to the pre-pandemic level of 5,897,000. Over the following four years, the outlook accounts for three trends

affecting attendance. First, the LAO expects an additional reduction of about 170,000 students by 2025-26 due to declines in the school age population. This drop primarily reflects declining births in California—a trend that began more than a decade ago and has continued through the pandemic.

Unlike DOF, the LAO assumes districts' attendance eventually recovers by the equivalent of about 140,000 students relative to the drop in 2021-22. The LAO will cover reasons for this assumption in the hearing, including but not limited to state investments in student re-engagement over a multi-year period, and the high number of students not enrolled in the early grades, including Transitional Kindergarten (TK) and kindergarten. Significantly, the LAO also expects the expansion of TK to add nearly 230,000 students by full implementation in 2025-26. Accounting for all these estimates and assumptions, statewide attendance would be approximately 5,925,000 students in 2025-26—slightly above the pre-pandemic level.



Source: LAO

### **Chronic Absenteeism**

According to Attendance Works<sup>8</sup>, “chronic absence” — missing 10 percent or more of school days due to absence for any reason—excused, unexcused absences and suspensions, can translate into some of the most concerning student outcomes: students having difficulty learning to read by the third-grade, achieving in middle school, and graduating from high school.

Students living in poverty, from communities of color, and those identified with disabilities are disproportionately absent and facing the most consequences.

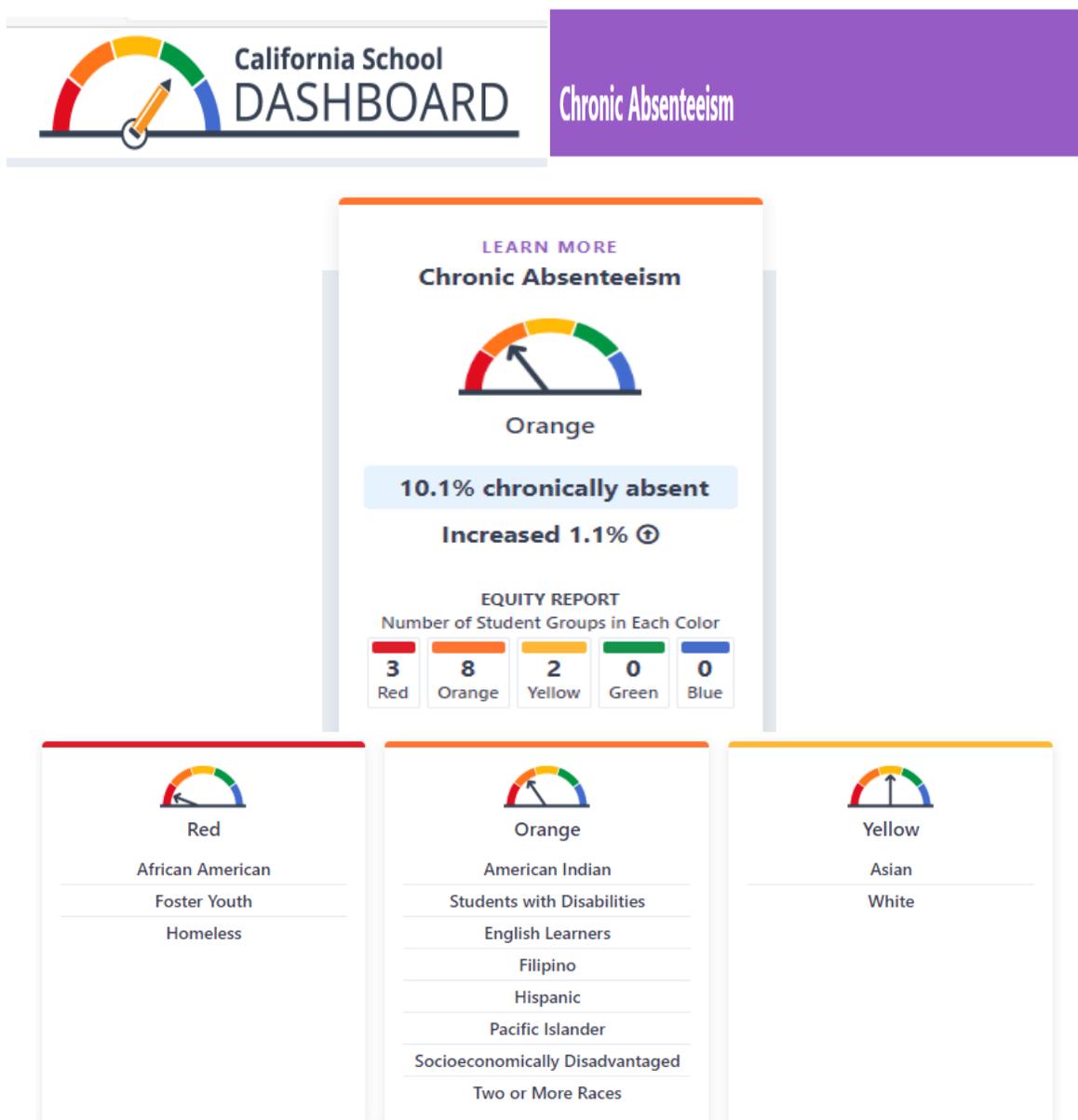
<sup>8</sup> Attendance Works: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/chronic-absence/the-problem/>

The dramatic impact of chronic absence on student outcomes is the reason the State added this measure to the California School Dashboard (Dashboard), our state’s multi-dimensional measure of school performance.

Reasons for chronic absenteeism can be personal and systemic, ranging from truancy, health, bullying, family needs, and barriers like transportation and community safety. The impact of absenteeism is on the individual student, but also their entire class.

According to AttendanceWorks’ research, “chronic absence goes unnoticed because schools are counting how many students show up every day rather than examining how many and which students miss so much school that they are falling behind.”

Prior to the pandemic, chronic absenteeism presented on the state School Dashboard as a critical challenge, with the entire state ranked as “orange,” and three entire student groups statewide at “red” or the lowest performing standard:



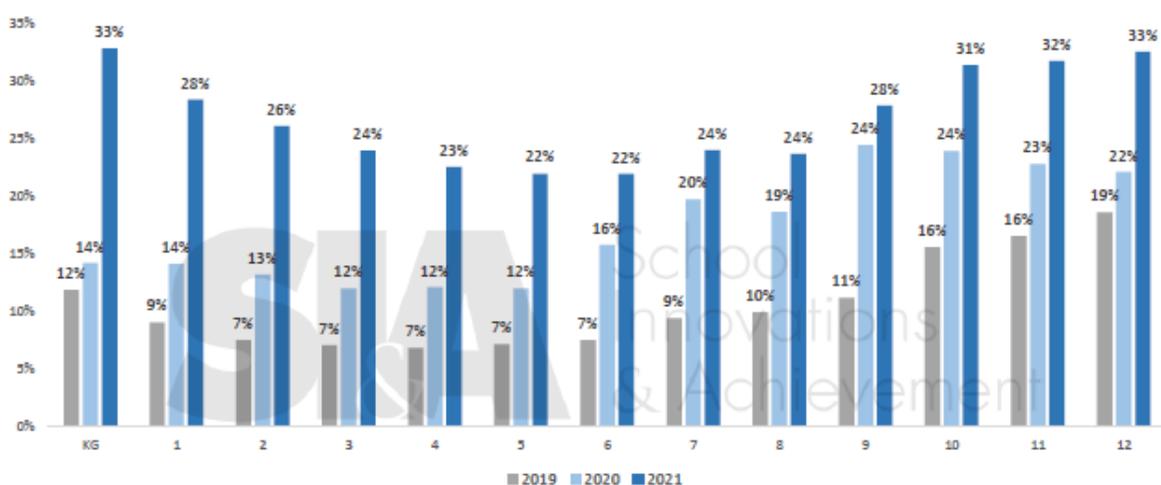
Source: California Department of Education

The CDE defines the state’s chronic absentee measure: “The School Dashboard contains reports that display the performance of LEAs, schools, and student groups on a set of state and local measures to assist in identifying strengths, challenges, and areas in need of improvement. Students are considered chronically absent if they are absent at least 10 percent of the instructional days that they were enrolled to attend in a school. A distinguishing feature of this measure is that the goal is reversed. For most of the other measures, the desired outcome is a high number or percent in the current year and an increase from the prior year. For this measure, however, the desired outcome is a low chronic absenteeism rate, which means a low percent in the current year and a decline from the prior year rate.”

For many individual LEAs, the chronic absence measures, pre-pandemic, were far steeper, with over 1,300 California schools experiencing “extreme chronic absence” of 30% or more of their students, and over 4,200 schools between 10% and 29.9% chronic absence rates.

**Pandemic Impacts to Attendance.** While the state did not collect attendance in the 2020-21 school year, and preliminary 2021-22 data is not yet available statewide, individual LEAs are reporting alarming spikes in increased chronic absenteeism, both during Distance Learning last year, and now:

## Chronic Rate Comparison By Grade



Source: School Innovations & Achievement

According to a survey by the California Collaborative for Education Excellence (CCEE), 90% of LEAs are experiencing declines in attendance. Attendance Works, CCEE, and local education leaders will present their preliminary data on attendance drops, and chronic absenteeism patterns at this point in the Fall, post-reopening our public schools.

## **Staff Comments**

Where are our children? How do we get them back to school? Are we ready to support each student's recovery?

The data on enrollment and attendance trends across California are only a snapshot at this time, as the State does not regularly monitor and collect this information for more than an annual examination. In a data-free environment, the State is hampered in contemplating data-driven, near-term solutions to support school leaders in this latest phase of the pandemic crisis.

Emerging recommendations from school leaders vary across fiscal and student engagement strategies including:

- Explore all options to increase human capacity, on campus, in near-term, including but not limited to leveraging retirees.
- Create immediate state and local infrastructure for restorative practices.
- Expedite implementation of Budget Act investments and infrastructure for student engagement.
- Dedicate on-going new funds to student engagement and campus climate programs, like Community Schools and Expanded Learning, to promote sustainable planning and hiring.
- Support LEAs in leveraging local data for student re-engagement and individualized recovery.
- Adjust the LCFF to address learning acceleration, re-engagement, and achievement gap goals.
- Adjust multi-year LCFF/ADA projections for funding, to soften ADA change impacts.
- Address multi-year cost growth pressures in LCFF to stabilize LEA budgeting.
- Adjust Independent Study program standards to support more robust and stable online options during future surges and quarantines.
- Stabilize LEA quarantine procedures to minimize absences or need for Independent Study.
- Create more flexibility in measurement of Independent Study work's time-value.

Regardless of the near-term package of state and regional supports necessary to support student re-engagement and recovery from the academic and social emotional impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the state must also explore how to ensure enrollment rebounds due to Universal Transitional Kindergarten do not mask student withdrawal patterns at the local and state level. Data trends, by grade and student group will require multi-year analyses for state and school-based decision making.

**Questions:**

- What does enrollment and ADA look like across CA compared to prior years and pre-pandemic projections? Are there particularly impacted grades?
- Will families return to public education? If so, how do we prepare?
- What do attendance patterns look like after the return to in-person instruction?
- How are LEAs disaggregating their attendance reporting data to track the underlying reasons for absences? How are they using this data?
- Does chronic absenteeism in 2021-22 have particularly impacted grades or student groups? How are they different/similar to pre-pandemic trends and reasons?
- How much of a contributing factor is student quarantines beyond public health requirements?
- What can/should/are we doing to get student back in public school classrooms?
- What do high-functioning schools do to address these core engagement issues?
- What does learning loss look like statewide, for both chronically absent and fully engaged students?
- How will learning loss and engagement gaps impact the achievement gap?
- How are LEAs measuring and addressing student and family trauma in re-engagement strategies?
- What recently appropriated student mental health supports are active in local communities?
- What are the ADA drop implications short-term financially for the state, for individual LEAs?
- What are the long-term implications for LEAs?
- What does that mean for our kids over a multi-year period and long-term?
- How can data systems better capture the reasons behind enrollment and absence for interventions?