



Chronic Absenteeism

IL Technical Advisory Committee Meeting

December 12, 2019

Background

- Due to ESSA many states are now reporting chronic absenteeism (CA) data on an annual basis
 - 36 states, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico are using CA as one SQSS indicator
- 2015-2016 Civil Rights Data Collection
 - Helps define who is chronically absent and how it compares across communities and states.
 - Used to create a Chronic Absenteeism interactive “data story”
<https://www2.ed.gov/datastory/chronicabsenteeism.html>

National Trends – From USED

- In 2015-2016 over 16% of student population was chronically absent.
- Disparities exist for key demographic characteristics
 - Highest rates for American Indian (26%), Pacific Islanders (23%), Black (20%) and Hispanic (17%)
 - Rates were equal for male and female students
 - Rates were slightly lower for English Learners (14%) compared to Non-English Learners (16%)
 - Rates were higher for Students with Disabilities (23%) compared to Students without Disabilities (15%)
- Rates are highest in high school (21%) both overall and for all student groups

Potential Reasons for Chronic Absenteeism

- Poverty
- Health challenges
- Limited transportation
- Community Violence
- Difficult Family Circumstances
- Bad Weather
- Politics

Using Chronic Absenteeism Data Effectively

- Define the metric as a percentage of a school year that students miss
- Consider excused and unexcused absences
- Establish an appropriate goal for schools
- Create inclusive, fair models that discourage gaming the system (e.g., spot-checks, audits)
 - Establish policies for partial days
- Provide increased access to chronic absenteeism data
 - To teachers to use as an early warning system
 - To state and local agencies providing support

Taken from: https://www.future-ed.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/REPORT_Chronic_Absenteeism_final_v5.pdf

Current IL Statute Related to Chronic Absenteeism

- Defined in Statute: 105 ILCS 5/26-18
- "Chronic absence" means absences that total 10% or more of school days of the most recent academic school year, including absences with and without valid cause, (as defined in Section 26-2a of this Code), and out-of-school suspensions for an enrolled student.
- Excludes students who are medically homebound or hospitalized, but no other exceptions

Calculation of Chronic Absentee Indicator by IL

CA Rate = Students Chronically Absent ÷ Total Students

Students that Are Chronically Absent

- a) .Exclude enrollments less than 10 school days. Exclude days hospitalized or medically homebound.
- b) The length of enrollment for chronic absenteeism is calculated by counting the number of days present + days absent – unexcused + days absent – excused.
- c) If the sum of absences divided by the length of enrollment is greater than or equal to 0.10 then the student is considered chronically absent.
- d) For students with multiple enrollments at the same home school, attendance is the sum of all days for the schools.

Total Number of Students: Number of students with enrollments greater than or equal to 10 school days in the relevant student group.

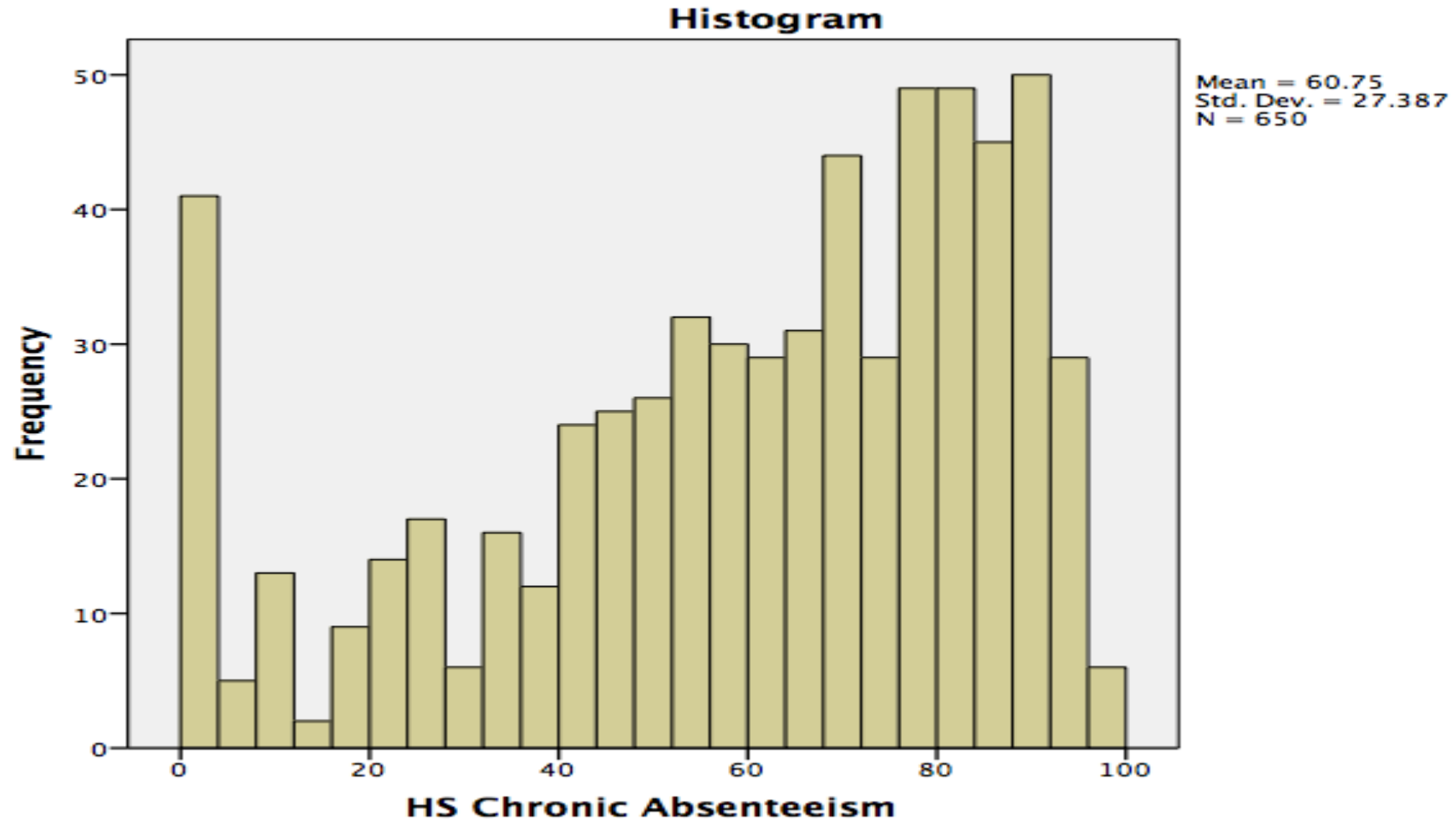
CA Indicator Score: [(Chronic Absenteeism Rate* -2) + 100]

- Inverted indicator (lower values are better)
- Ceiling of 0%, floor of 50%

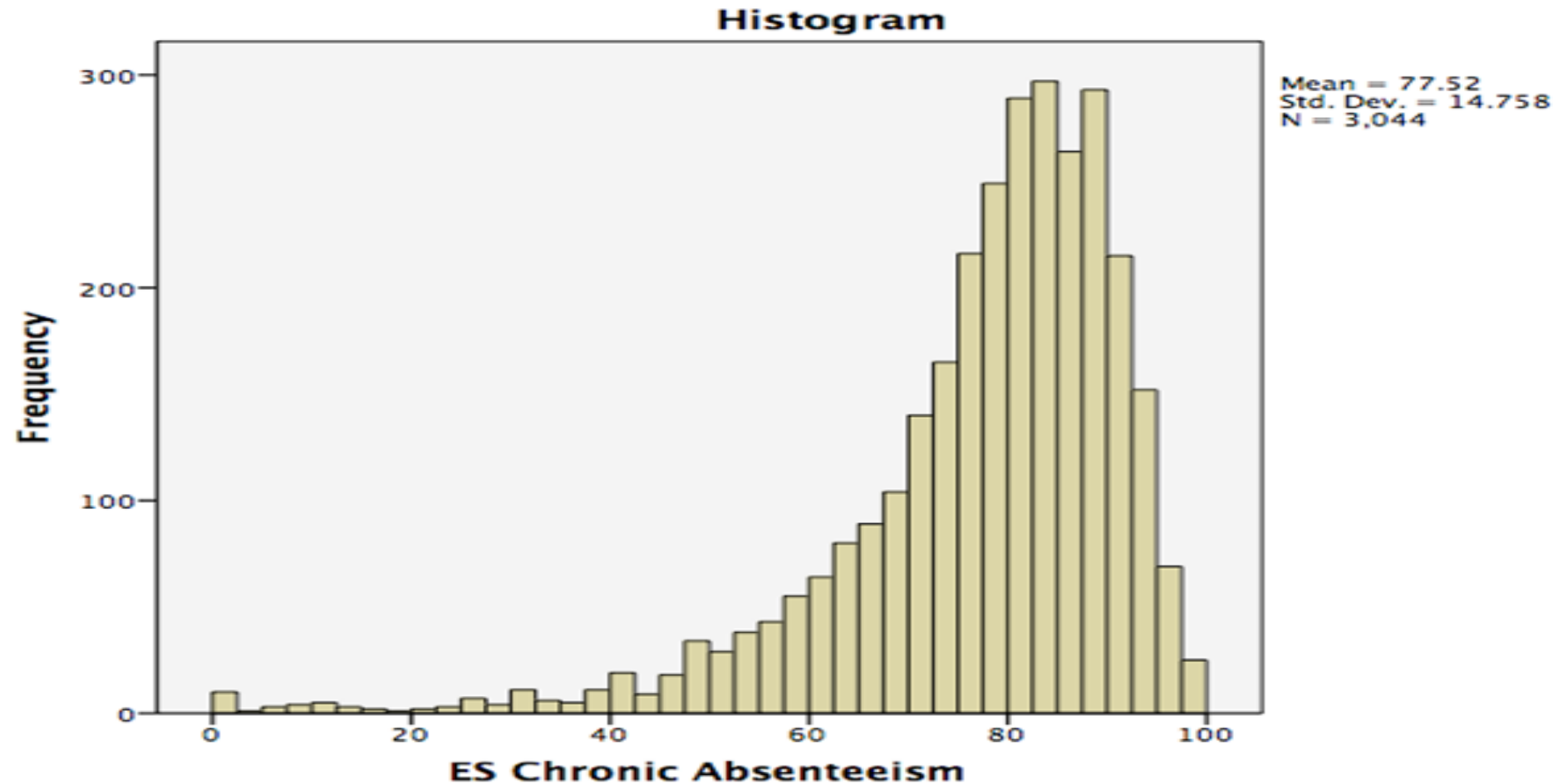
Research-Based Options for Impacting Rates of Chronic Absenteeism

- Correcting parent's beliefs about how many total absences their students have accumulated
 - https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Todd-Rogers-Avi-F.-influential_third_parties.pdf
- Focus on keeping students in school in the 9th grade
 - <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Preventable-Failure-CCSR-April-2014.pdf>

2019 Chronic Absenteeism Indicator: High School Performance Distribution



2019 Chronic Absenteeism Indicator: Elementary School Performance Distribution



Factors that Reduce Chronic Absenteeism

- Family and Community Involvement Activities
 - Reward students for improved attendance
 - Communication with parents about gains and declines in overall attendance
 - Establish a contact at the school for parents to work with and discuss attendance issues
 - Schools that offered workshops for parents and offered after school programs

From: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Preventable-Failure-CCSR-April-2014.pdf>

New York City Mayor's Interagency Task Force on Chronic Absenteeism (2010-2013)

- Citywide effort and data sharing agreement
- Use of data to measure, monitor and act
- Success mentors (3 types)**
- Principal Leadership meetings
- Link schools to community resources
- Promote awareness about CA
- Notice absence and recognize success
- Accountability to Sustain efforts

Taken from: <https://www.attendanceworks.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/NYC-Chronic-Absenteeism-Impact-Report-Nov-2013-1.pdf>

Additional Resources

- Every Student, Every Day: A Community Toolkit to Address and Eliminate Chronic Absenteeism (October 2015)
 - <https://www2.ed.gov/about/inits/ed/chronicabsenteeism/toolkit.pdf>

Questions for the TAC

1. Do you have any questions or concerns about the current procedures used to calculate the CA indicator?
2. What role should IL play in supporting districts and schools decrease rates of chronic absenteeism?
 - Share important resources and research
 - Provide strategies and/or data to help districts identify and diagnose potential CA issues
3. What strategies are being implemented or considered by other states and districts?