

Chronic Absenteeism: A major barrier to learning

Bergen County, New Jersey



Statewide, more than 125,000 NJ students are chronically absent each year. Regular attendance is essential to school success. Chronic absence—missing excessive amounts of school for any reason—can cause students to fall behind academically.

Students who are chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade are less likely to read proficiently by the time they finish third grade.

Children with certain risk factors—including poverty, homelessness and chronic illness—are both more likely to be chronically absent and especially hard hit because they often lack the resources to make up for the lost opportunities to learn in the classroom. An important step in reducing chronic absence is to build awareness and help understand what it is, how it affects students and identify ways to ensure children attend school. The chart below shows school districts with a chronic absenteeism rate of 10 percent or higher in Bergen County during the 2013-2014 school year.



School Districts with 10 Percent or More of their Students Chronically Absent (2013-14)

School District	Percent of K-3rd Graders Chronically Absent	Percent of 11th & 12th Graders Chronically Absent	Percent of Total K-12 Students Chronically Absent	Total # of K-12 Students Chronically Absent
Alpine Boro	14	n/a	11	18
Carlstadt Boro	9	n/a	10	58
Carlstadt-East Rutherford	n/a	17	14	67
Elmwood Park	9	25	12	309
Englewood City	12	22	15	416
Fairview Boro	15	n/a	12	139
Hackensack City	8	15	10	548
Lodi Borough	8	20	11	346
Moonachie Boro	10	n/a	11	27
Palisades Park	3	57	15	242
Ridgefield Boro	9	26	14	248
Saddle Brook Township	8	13	10	168
Teaneck Township	9	19	10	386
TOTAL: 13 DISTRICTS				2,972

Note: N/A means that the school district does not serve children in those grades.

Source: New Jersey Department of Education