

Chronic Absenteeism: A major barrier to learning

Sussex 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 Sussex County during the 2013-2014 school year.



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

School District	Percentage of K-3rd Graders Chronically Absent	Percentage of 11th and 12th Graders Chronically Absent	Percentage of Total K-12 Students Chronically Absent	Total # of K-12 Students Chronically Absent
Franklin Boro	12	n/a	12	52
Hamburg Boro	25	n/a	19	51
Newton Town	21	15	17	244
Sandyston-Walpack Township	8	n/a	13	19
Sussex County Vocational	n/a	31	19	151
Vernon Township	12	26	15	527
Wallkill Valley Regional	n/a	24	20	132
TOTAL: 7 DISTRICTS				1,176

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