Date: August 9, 2023
To: Directors and Chiefs, Principals, and Family Resource Coordinator
From: Sean Martin
Subject: 2023 CALPADS Review: Chronic Absenteeism

Introduction

This memorandum is a concise summary of chronic absenteeism rates (CAR) as certified in the California Longitudinal Pupil Achievement Data System (CALPADS) for the 2022-23 school year. CALPADS is the official reporting platform of the California Department of Education (CDE), and it is from this platform that information is sent to the annual California School Dashboard (Dashboard). The Dashboard calculates performance results for a set of key indicators that are reported to the public and to charter authorizers. It also provides a path to a "fast track" (High Level) charter renewal process if certain conditions are met. The CDE website explains:

> Pursuant to California Education Code (EC) Section 47607(c), as an additional criterion for determining whether to grant a charter renewal, the chartering authority shall consider a charter school's placement under the performance categories, which is based on the charter school's performance under the California School Dashboard (Dashboard).
>
> Under this new criterion, a charter school is placed into one of the three performance level categories:
>
> > High: A charter school with Blue and Green across all Dashboard indicators demonstrating a strong performance and closing the achievement gap for historically disadvantaged subgroups has a presumptive renewal.
> >
> > A charter school in this category is eligible for a five-, six-, or seven-year renewal term.
> >
> > Middle: A charter school that meets neither the High nor Low performance levels is automatically placed in the Middle performance category.
> >
> > A charter school in this category may be renewed for a five-year term.
> >
> > Low: A charter school with Red and Orange across all Dashboard indicators has a presumptive non-renewal. It is presumed that a charter school in the Low performance category will not be renewed unless there is compelling evidence that the charter school is taking meaningful steps to address the underlying cause or causes of low performance.

A charter school in this category may be renewed for a two-year term if it meets the conditions under EC Section 47607.2(a)(4).

Chronic Absenteeism and CALPADS
A student is considered chronically absent when the student is absent for more than 10% of instructional days for which the student has been enrolled during the current school year. This designation applies to students in kindergarten through Grade 8. It does not apply to students in transitional kindergarten.

All Navigator schools submit end-of-year data to CALPADS for final certification. As a result, data reports extracted from CALPADS are comprehensive, accurate, and official. CALPADS reports provide opportunities for school leaders and the Academic Success Committee to review, celebrate, and reflect upon annual school performance and the effectiveness of continuous improvement strategies. Chronic absenteeism is an essential topic to explore, as it is one of five performance indicators included in the Dashboard (in addition to suspension rate, English learner progress, English Language Arts, and mathematics).

A unique strength of CALPADS chronic absenteeism reporting is that it employs the exact formula utilized by the Dashboard to determine performance. This formula differs somewhat from the formula utilized by DataQuest (another major reporting platform managed by the CDE).

Summary of Results
Per CALPADS 2023, the annual chronic absenteeism rate and status level for each school in the Navigator family is listed in Table 1. Additionally, sample indicator colors are provided (based on the 2022 Dashboard). The number of chronically absent students is listed in parentheses. Please note that the 2022 Dashboard was a special, abbreviated edition (it did not incorporate growth into its calculations) due to multiple impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Table 1. 2023 Chronic Absenteeism Rates (Ranked)

Hayward Collegiate (HCC)	Hollister Prep School (HPS)	Gilroy Prep School (GPS)	Watsonville Prep School (WPS)
9.9% Medium Yellow (15)	21.0% Very High Red (115)	23.5% Very High Red (130)	24.3% Very High Red (102)

Compared to 2022, Watsonville Prep School achieved the highest reduction in chronic absenteeism rates in 2023. Growth rates are featured in Table 2.

Table 2. 2023 Chronic Absenteeism Rate Growth (Ranked)

	WPS	HCC	GPS	HPS
2023	24.3%	9.9%	23.5%	21.0%
2022	30.6%	5.7%	19.2%	14.4%
Growth	-6.3%	+4.2%	+4.3%	+6.6%

When disaggregated by grade level, chronic absenteeism rates show variation on a broader scale. A summary of highest and lowest chronic absenteeism rates and associated grade levels is provided in Table 3.

Table 3. 2023 High and Low Grade Level Chronic Absenteeism Rates

	GPS	HCC	HPS	WPS
High (Grade)	30.2% (Grade 1)	25.0% (KN)	34.5% (Grade 8)	37.3% (KN)
Low (Grade)	16.4% (Grade 6)	0.0% (Grade 2)	13.1% (Grade 2)	15.6% (Grade 4)

Student Groups
Patterns and trends relating to chronic absenteeism rates among members of student groups may require filtering at the school level to reveal pronounced differences (if any). Chronic absenteeism rates at the organizational level for members of student groups are documented below.

Table 4. Chronic Absenteeism Rates for Key Student Groups at Navigator Schools

	1. Eng Lang Prof		2. Gender		3. Hispanic/Latino		4. Socioeconomic Dis	
Group	EL	EO	Female	Male	HL	Not HL	SED	Not SED
CAR	21.9%	23.5%	21.9%	21.4%	23.6%	13.7%	24.9%	16.7%
Difference	1.6%		.5%		9.9%		8.2%	

Student groups with chronic absenteeism rates exceeding rates of non-group members by 10% or more are listed in Table 5. This information is disaggregated by school and applies to groups of 10 students or more. The number of chronically absent students is listed in parentheses.

Table 5. Chronic Absenteeism Rate Variations for Student Groups (>=10%) by School

	1. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged		2. Hispanic/Latino	
School	GPS		GPS	
Group	SED	Not SED	HL	Not HL
CAR	30.2% (85)	16.5% (45)	28.7% (102)	14.1% (28)
Difference	13.7%		14.6%	

The chronic absenteeism rate for English learners at each Navigator school is listed in Table 6. The number of chronically absent students is listed in parentheses.

Table 6. 2023 English Learner Chronic Absenteeism Rates (Ranked)

HCC	HPS	WPS	GPS
11.8% (6)	15.8% (27)	23.6% (61)	29.3% (44)

The reduction of chronic absenteeism rates will contribute to the success of future charter renewals for Navigator Schools. Red and orange indicator colors assigned during the two-year period immediately prior to the renewal application process will disqualify Navigator Schools from the High Level performance category and its many advantages (including the possibility of 6- and 7-year charters). The official Dashboard colors for 2023 will be released in late fall when the CDE updates Dashboards for all schools. Additional research and analysis may reveal correlations between chronic absenteeism and academic achievement at Navigator Schools. With this in mind, chronic absenteeism indicator colors may impact academic performance indicator colors (in English Language Arts, mathematics, and English learner progress).