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# Board Cover Memorandum

**To** Board of Education

**From** Kyla Johnson-Trammell, Superintendent  
Sondra Aguilera, Chief Academic Officer  
Misha Karigaca, Interim Director- Attendance, Discipline, Safety  
Matin Abdel-Qawi, High School Network Superintendent

**Meeting Date** Wednesday, September 8, 2021

**Subject** Academic Update on Chronic Absence and Re-Engaging High Schoolers

**Ask of the Board** This presentation is intended to get the board up to speed with the efforts taken by the Office of Community Schools and Student Services in collaboration with the High School Network focused on significantly reducing the number of scholars in the High School Network that are chronically absent.

**Background** During the 20-21 school year the High School Network witnessed an unprecedented rise in the number of scholars that are chronically absent. Chronic Absence is defined as “missing 10 percent or more of school over the course of the school year for any reason, including excused and unexcused absences.” During the 20-21 school year 21.1% or 2,129 scholars in the HSN were chronically absent versus 12.3% or 1,192 scholars during the 19-20 school year.

**Discussion** Chronic absences, that is scholars missing more than 18 days during a school year is one of the most important data points that can be used to gauge a scholar's likelihood of poor academic performance and being pushed out of our schools. We are sharing with you some of the efforts we are taking centrally to support sites, scholars, and their families with reengaging our scholars and getting them back in school. Some of the efforts we have or are in the process of implementing are an evaluation and teering of our school's Attendance Teams, establishing a High School Network COST with one of the goals being to reduce chronic absence. and developing a street team that will go door to door to engage our chronically absent scholars and their families.

**Fiscal Impact** When children are absent, schools get fewer resources from the state, resulting in less funding to pay for teachers and books. Chronic absence in kindergarten predicts chronic absence the following year, so even the attendance patterns of our youngest students affect funding down the road.

**Attachment(s)** • [Presentation](#)