

Chronic Absenteeism

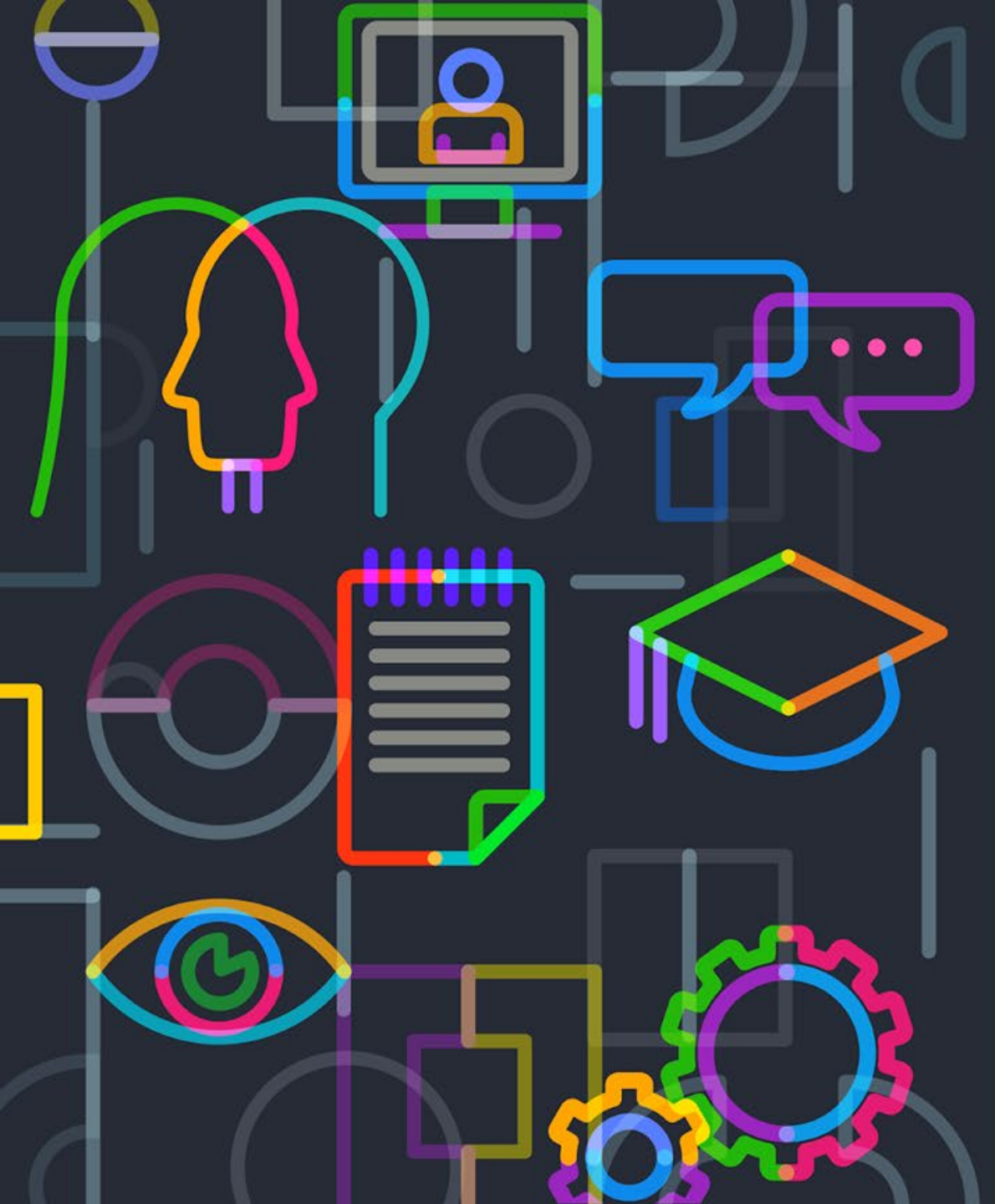
Lane Carr

February 20, 2020

Objectives

- Provide clarity around chronic absenteeism definition
- Illuminate the scope of chronic absenteeism in Nebraska
- Discuss why chronic absence has been a focus for the Nebraska Department of Education



**Mission:**

To lead and support the preparation of all Nebraskans for learning, earning, and living.

Goal:

Ensure all Nebraskans, regardless of background or circumstances, have equitable access to opportunities for success.

Goal:

Increase the number of Nebraskans who are ready for success in postsecondary education, career, and civic life.

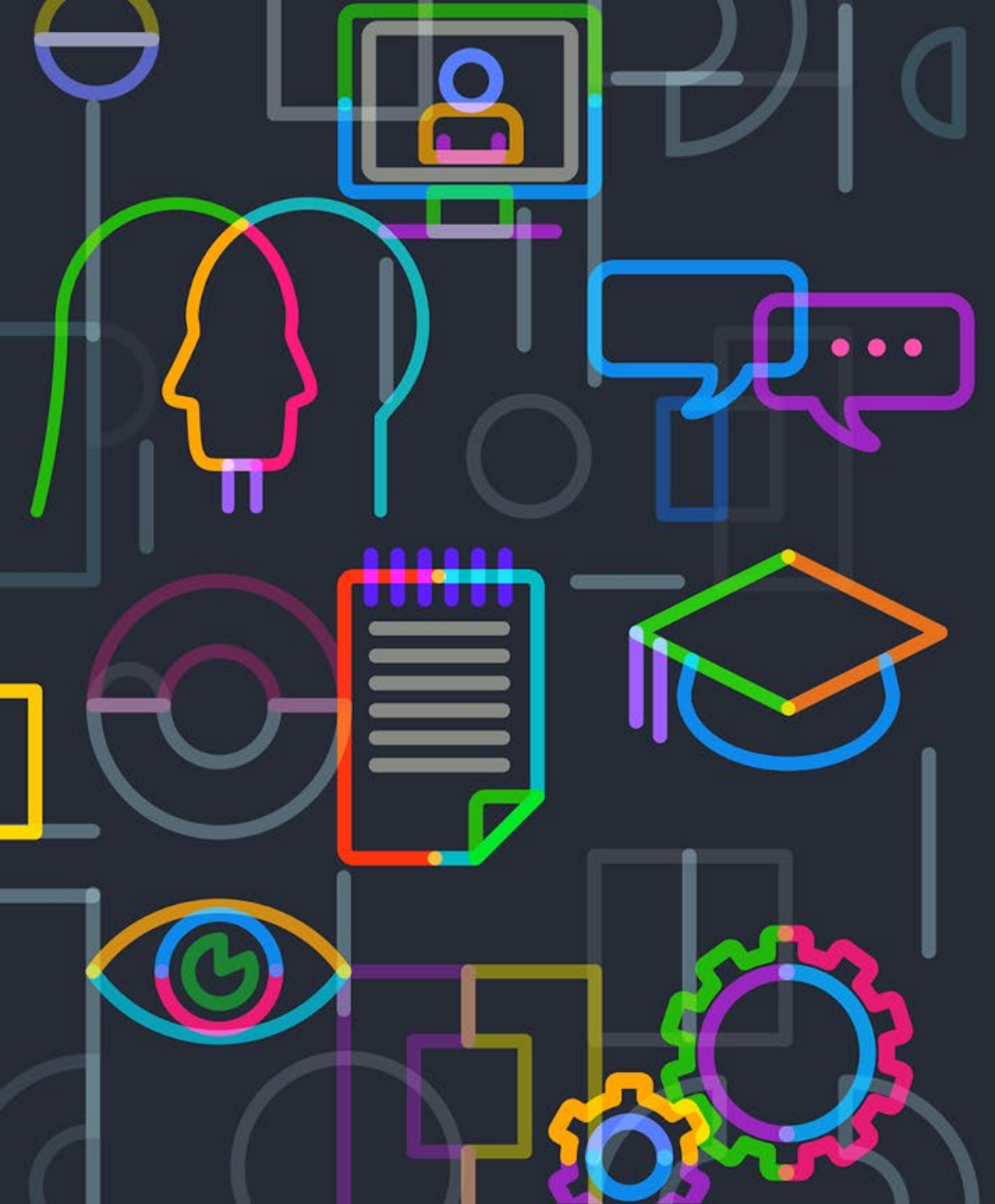
Goal:

Ensure the education system, including the Nebraska Department of Education, are taking charge of their roles and responsibilities to provide leadership and enhance school support systems in the state.

Educational Equity

Educational equity means all students have meaningful access to the educational resources they need at the right moment, at the right level, and with the right intensity to not only reach high expectations for learning, but also to discover and explore their passions and make meaningful connections within the context of their postsecondary interests, careers, and civic lives.





Defining Chronic Absence

What is Chronic Absenteeism?

- A student is chronically absent when they miss 10% of their time in membership
- Counts all absences - excused, unexcused, suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Fundamentally different from truancy



Examples



Blake is enrolled in his school 50 days, and misses 5.

He is **chronically absent**.



Mona misses 18 days out of her district's 175 day school year.

She is **chronically absent**.



Cora misses 3 days of her 130 enrolled days.

She is **NOT chronically absent**.

Truancy Vs. Chronic Absence

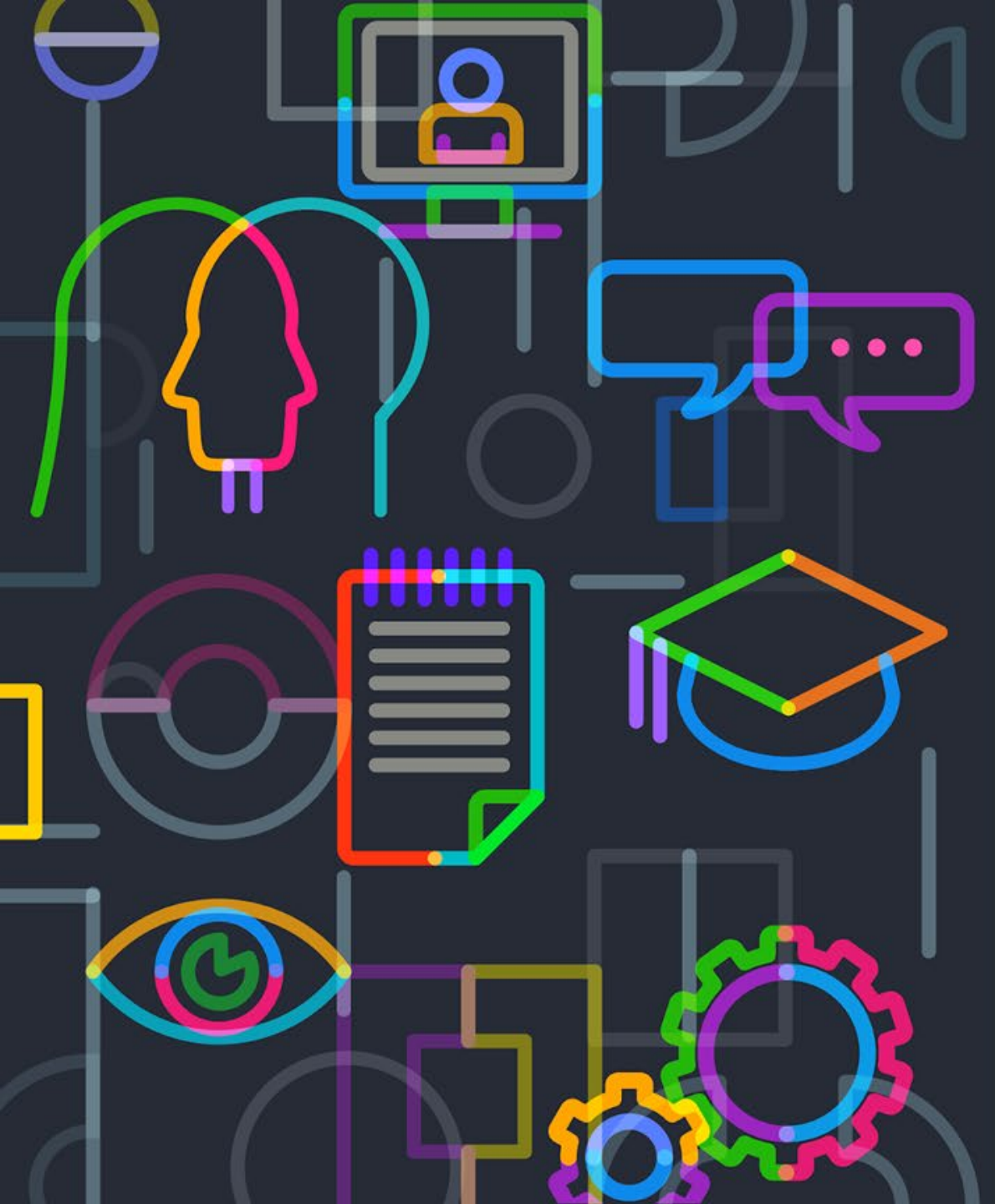
TRUANCY

- Counts only unexcused absences
- Emphasizes compliance with school rules
- Relies on legal & administrative solutions

Vs.

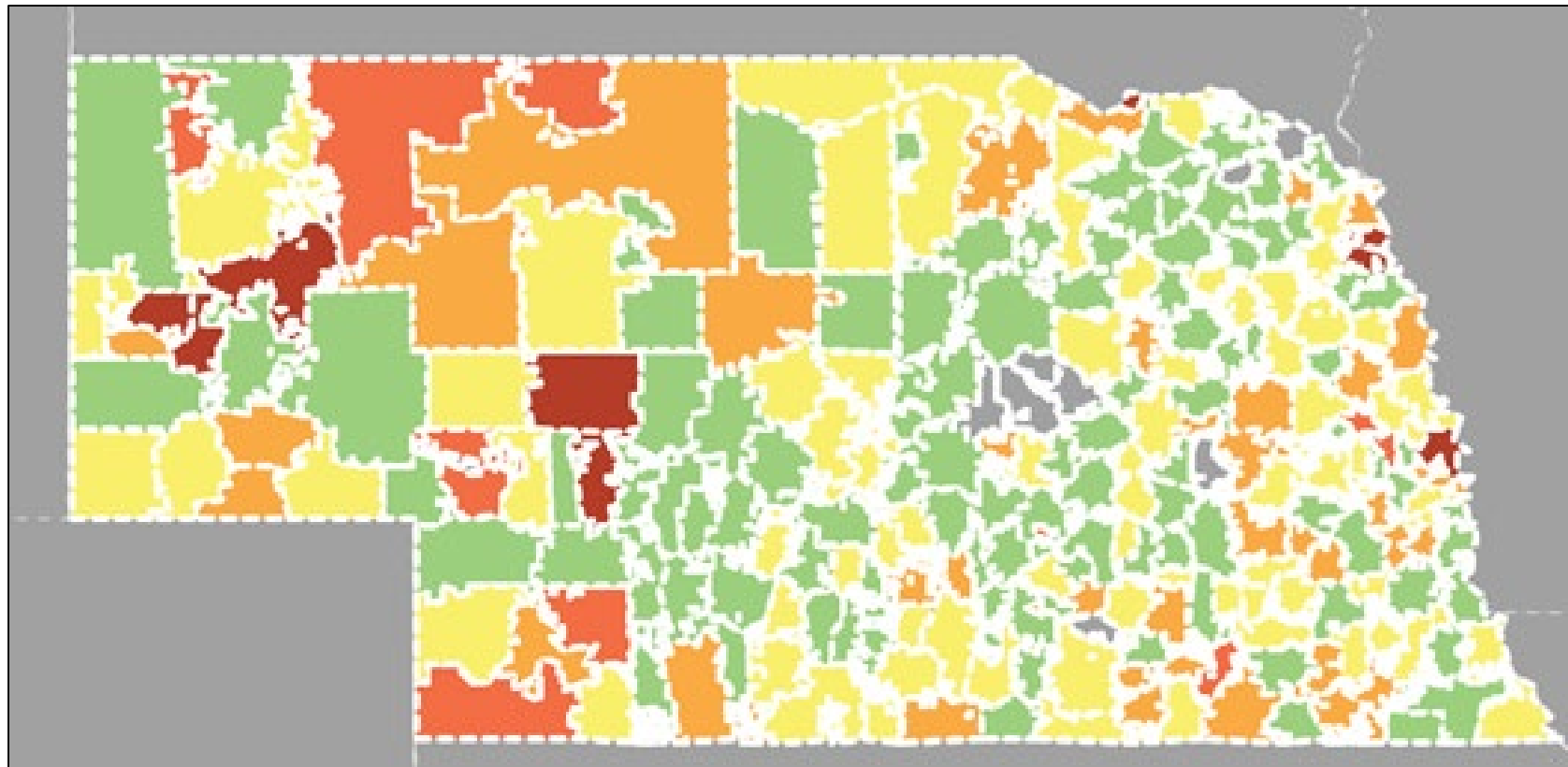
CHRONIC ABSENCE

- Counts all absences: excused, unexcused & suspensions
- Emphasizes academic impact of missed days
- Uses community-based, positive strategies

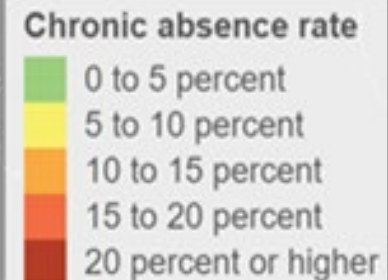


Chronic Absence in Nebraska

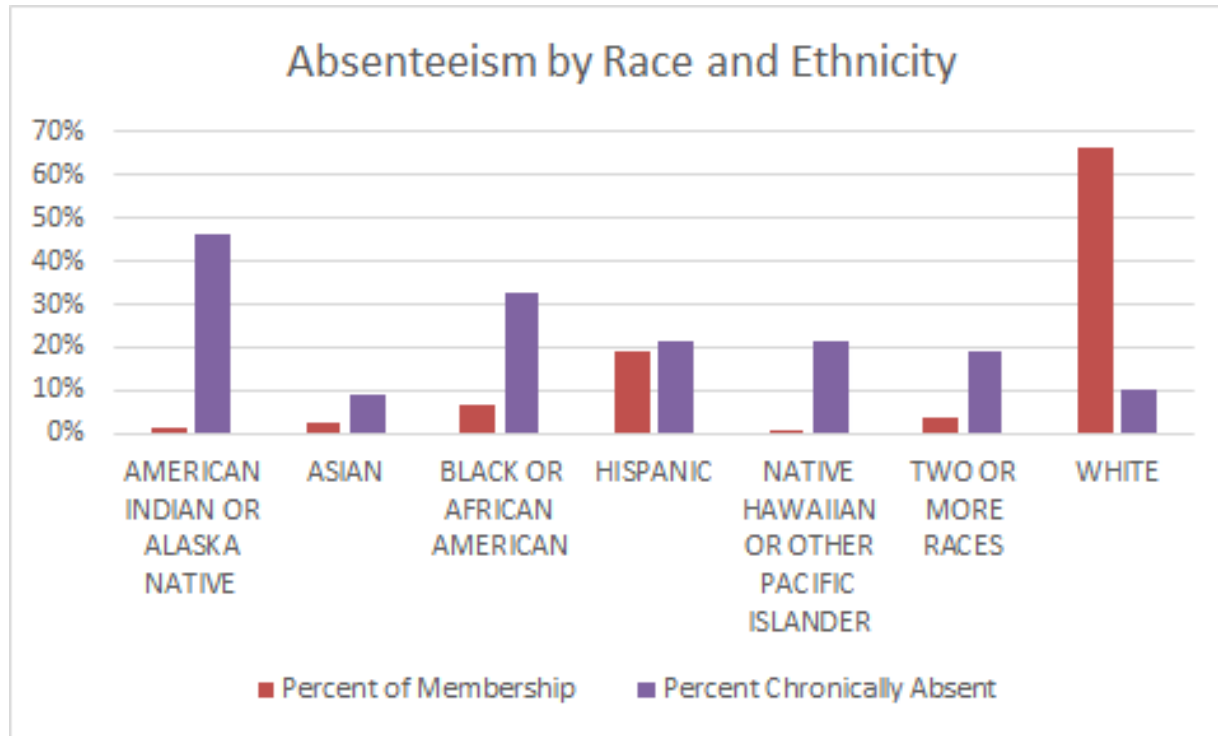
What is the extent of the problem in Nebraska?



In the 2018-19 school year, **45,000 students or 14%**, were chronically absent.

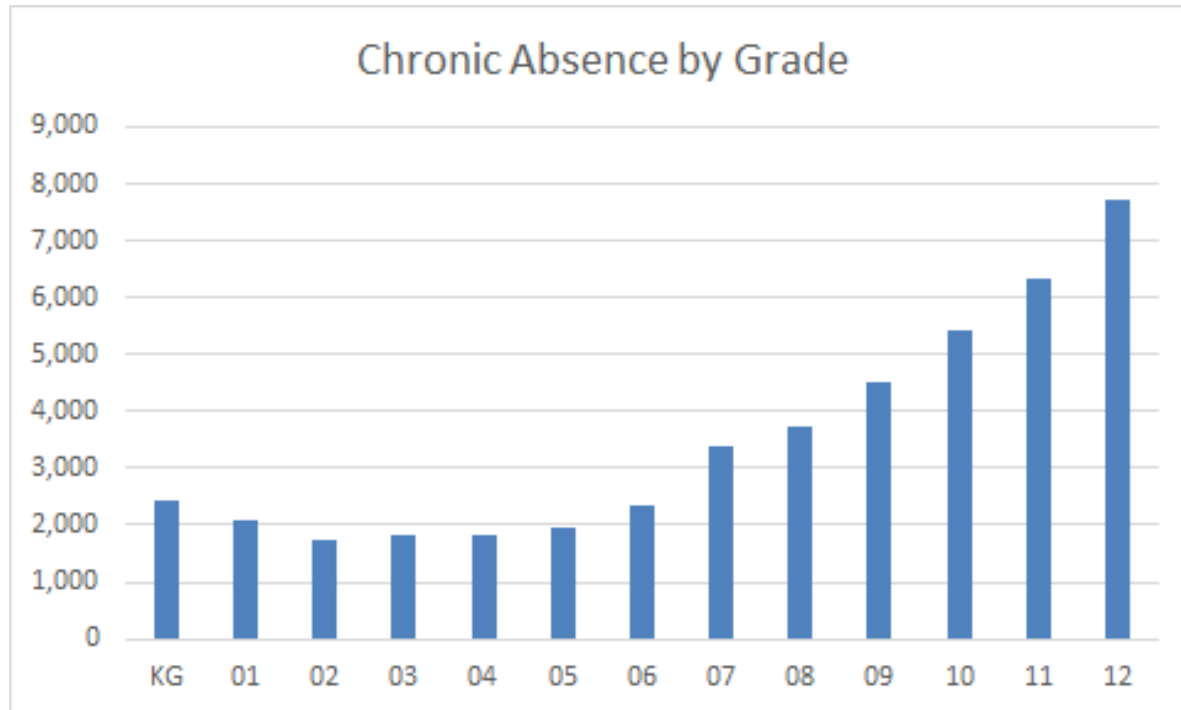


Chronic Absence in Nebraska

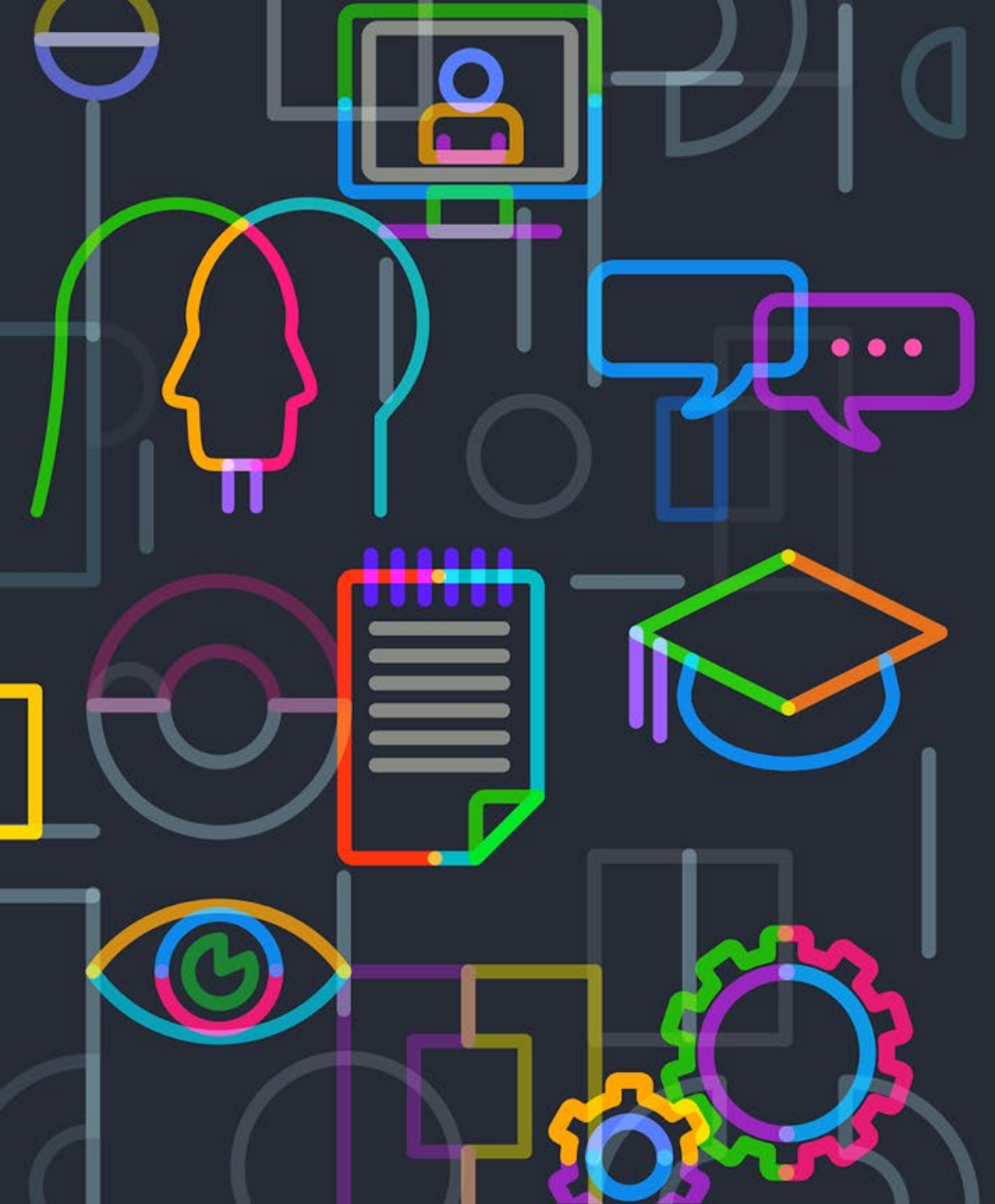


*In Nebraska, like much of the rest of the country, **students with disabilities, students of color, and students from low socio-economic backgrounds** are disproportionately chronically absent.*

Chronic Absence in Nebraska



*In Nebraska, like much of the rest of the country, **students in the earliest grades**, and especially those in **later grades**, are more chronically absent.*



How the NDE has Prioritized Chronic Absenteeism

Why do we even need an accountability system?

- State and federal mandates
- Set standards for all schools
- Ensure responsible use of taxpayer investment & focus funds for improvement
- Expose and close achievement gaps among student groups
- Create a framework for school improvement



How Chronic Absence Affects Classification and Designation

Classification - Rating schools

Designation - Supporting schools

- Priority Schools
- Comprehensive Support & Improvement (CSI)
- Targeted Support & Improvement (TSI)

Excellent

Great

Good

Needs
Improvement

Why Chronic Absence was included in AQuESTT

- Measure of educational equity
- May serve as a “canary in a coal mine”
- Correlated to worsened academic performance AND lifetime outcomes
- ESSA required a “5th Indicator” of school quality and student success
- Districts have been reporting chronic absence for at least 5 years



Resources

NEBRASKA EVERY DAY COUNTS!



Each year in Nebraska, almost 36,000 students are chronically absent.

This absenteeism disproportionately affects students of color, students with disabilities, English learners, and economically disadvantaged students. There are many steps educators can take to address chronic absence within their schools.

How does Nebraska define chronic absenteeism?

A student is chronically absent when they miss 10% of their time in membership.

Examples:

- 1) Blake is enrolled in his school for 50 days, and misses 5. He is chronically absent.
- 2) Mona misses 18 days of school out of her district's 175. She is chronically absent.
- 3) Cora misses 3 days of her 130 enrolled days. She is not chronically absent.

How is chronic absence different from truancy?

Truancy	Chronic Absence
• Counts only unexcused absences • Emphasizes compliance with school rules • Relies on legal and administrative solutions	• Counts all absences: excused, unexcused, and suspensions • Emphasizes academic impact of missed days • Uses community-based, positive strategies

What resources are available to help me accurately record and report students who are chronically absent?

We know each student situation is unique. The NDE provides guidance around this topic. Search the NDE website at education.ne.gov for:

- Rule 2: Uniform System of Accounting
- ADVISER: Who Reports What
- ADVISER: Data Elements

When in doubt, contact the Nebraska Department of Education Help Desk for guidance. They can be reached at ADVISERHelp@Nebraskacloud.org or 888.285.0556.



NEBRASKA EVERY DAY COUNTS!



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Why absenteeism matters:

- Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2 to 4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent.
- Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or are held back.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school year, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student's academic performance. That's just two days a month and that's known as chronic absence.
- Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are four times more likely to be chronically absent than others, often for reasons beyond their control, such as unstable housing, unreliable transportation, and a lack of access to healthcare.
- When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.
- Attendance improves when schools engage students and parents in positive ways and when schools provide mentors for chronically absent students.



NEBRASKA EVERY DAY COUNTS!



INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

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Factors that Contribute to Chronic Absence

