

# Addressing Chronic Absence in San Francisco:

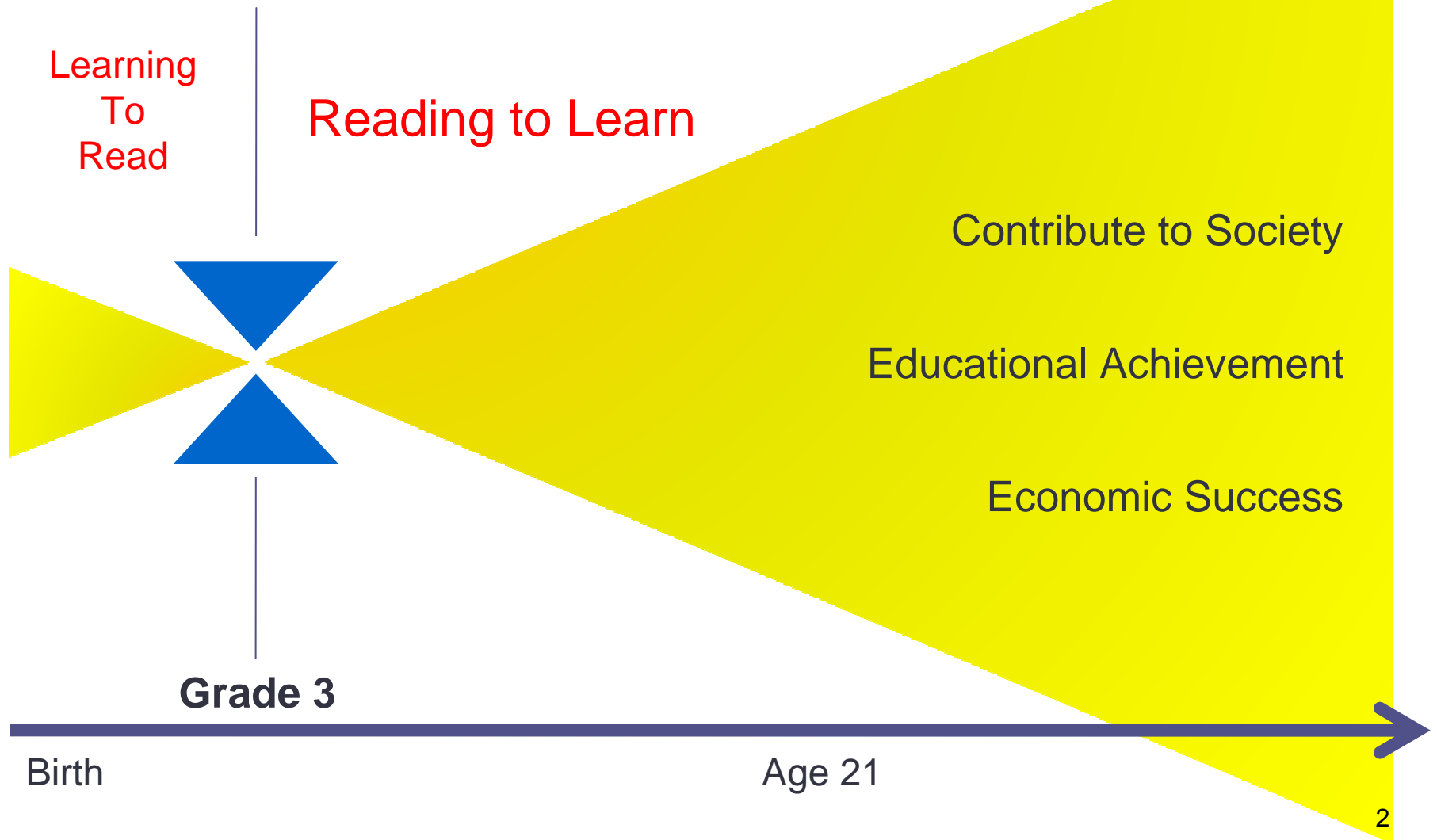
## An Untapped Opportunity for Taking A Two Generational Approach to Moving Families out of Poverty

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# Grade Level Reading Proficiency: *Pivot Point* for Student and Adult Success





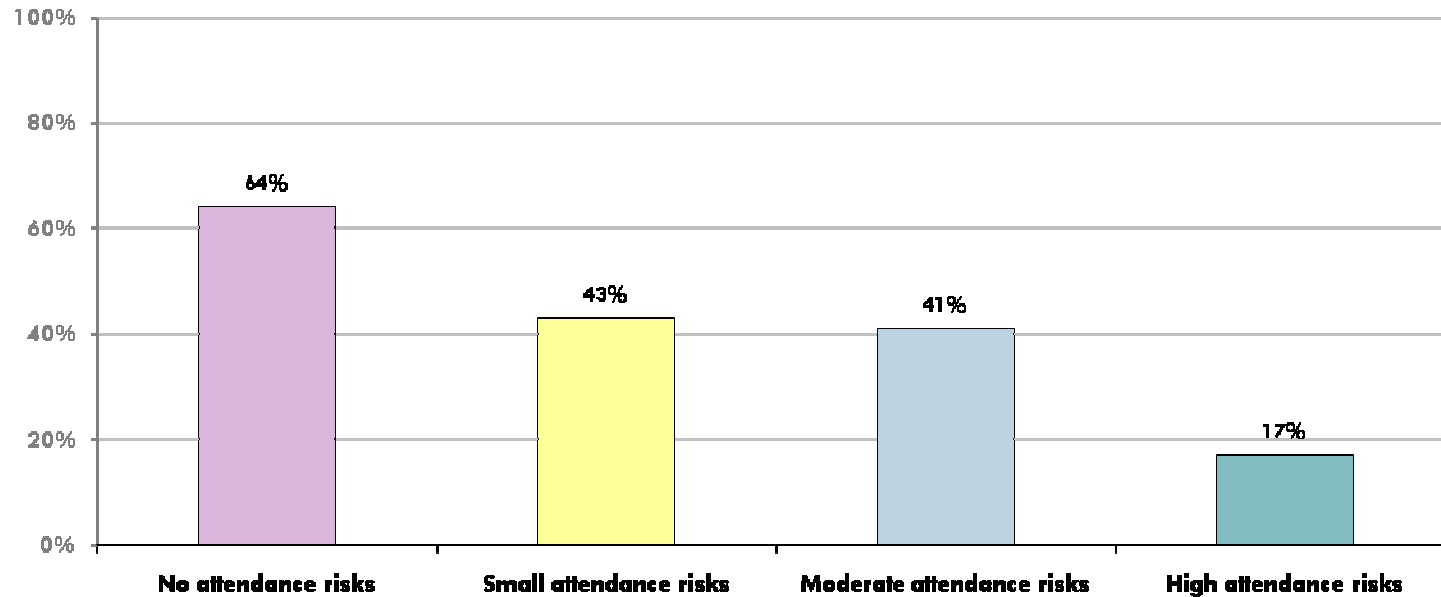
## **Reducing Chronic Early Absence Is Key to Increasing 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Literacy Especially for Poor Children**

- Nationwide, 1 out of 10 children in K is chronically absent (missing  $\geq 10\%$  of school). Rate is higher in some localities. (Chang & Romero, 2008)
- Poor children are 4 X more likely to be chronically absent in K than their highest income peers. (Romero & Lee 2007)
- The negative impact of school absences on literacy learning is 75% larger for a low SES vs. average SES child. (Ready 2010)



## Students Chronically Absent in Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Much Less Likely to Read Proficiently in 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

**Percent Students Scoring Proficient or Advanced on 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA Based on Attendance in Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Attendance**



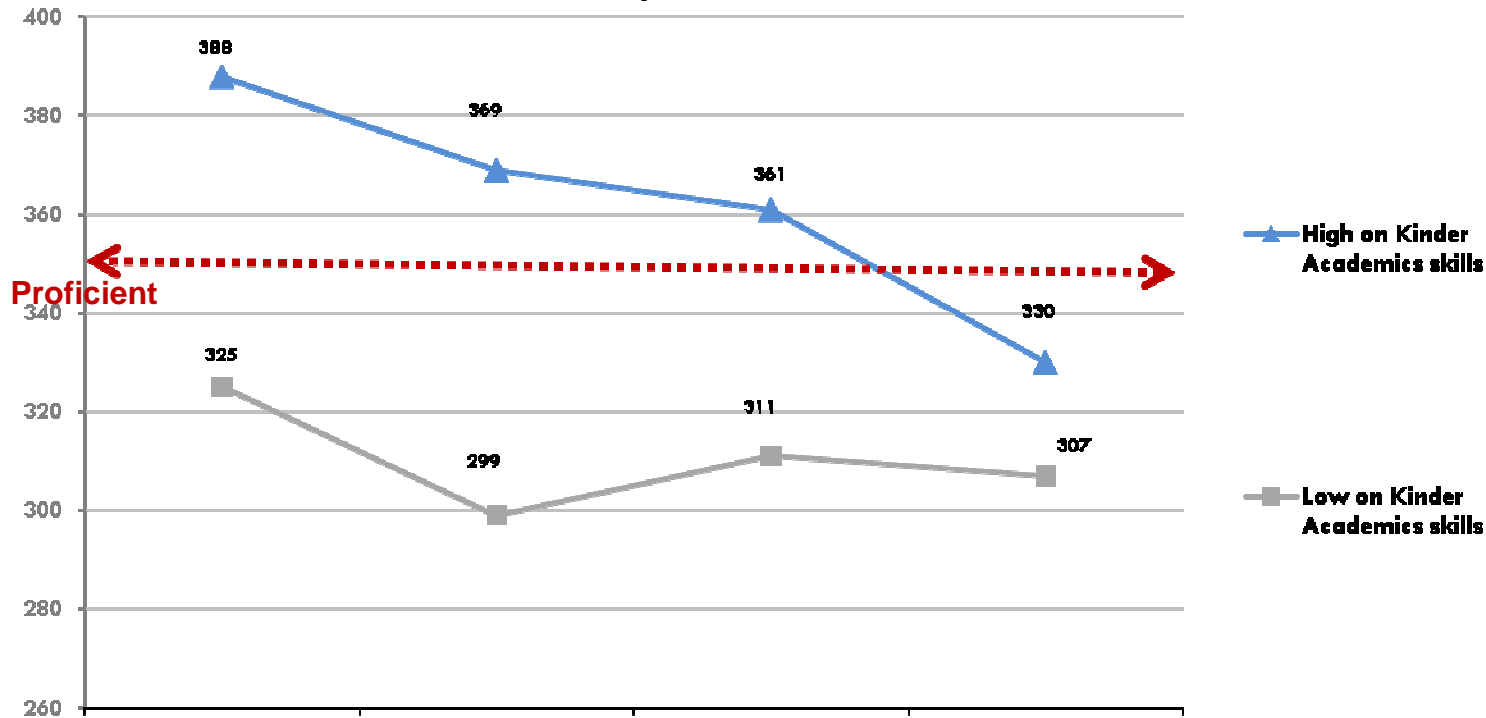
<b>No risk</b>	<b>Missed less than 5% of school in K &amp; 1<sup>st</sup> t</b>
<b>Small risk</b>	<b>Missed 5-9% of days in both K &amp; 1<sup>st</sup></b>
<b>Moderate risk</b>	<b>5-9% of days absent in 1 year &amp; 10 % in 1 year</b>
<b>High risk</b>	<b>Missed 10% or more in K &amp; 1<sup>st</sup></b>

*Source: Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works (April 2011)*



# School Readiness & Early Attendance Are Both Critical to Early School Success

3<sup>rd</sup> Grade ELA Test Scores By Attendance and School Readiness Level



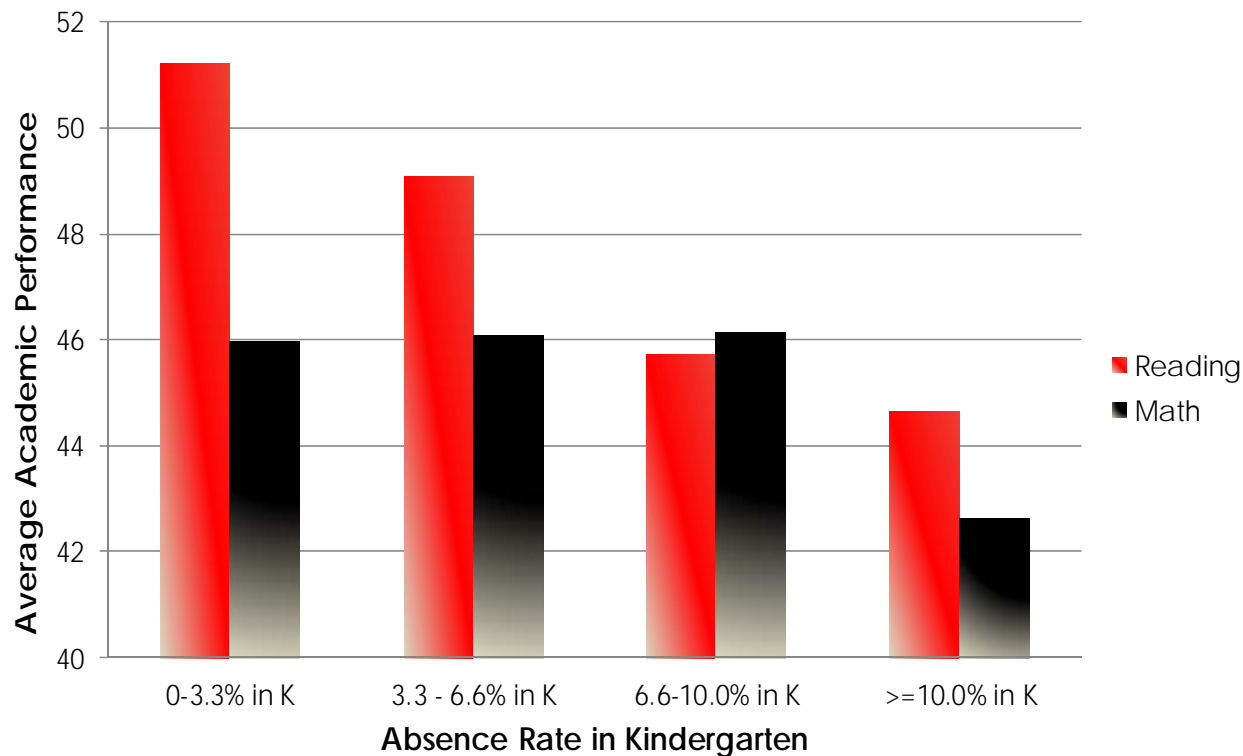
No attendance risk	Small attendance risk	Moderate attendance risk	High attendance risk
No risk	Missed less than 5% of school days (chronically absent)		
Small risk	Missed 5-9% of days in both K & 1 <sup>st</sup>		
Moderate risk	5-9% of days absent in 1 year & 10% in 1 year		
High risk	Missed 10% or more in K & 1 <sup>st</sup>		

Source: Applied Survey Research & Attendance Works (April 2011)



# The Long-term impact of Chronic Kindergarten Absence Is Most Troubling for Poor Children

5<sup>th</sup> Grade Math and Reading Performance By K Attendance

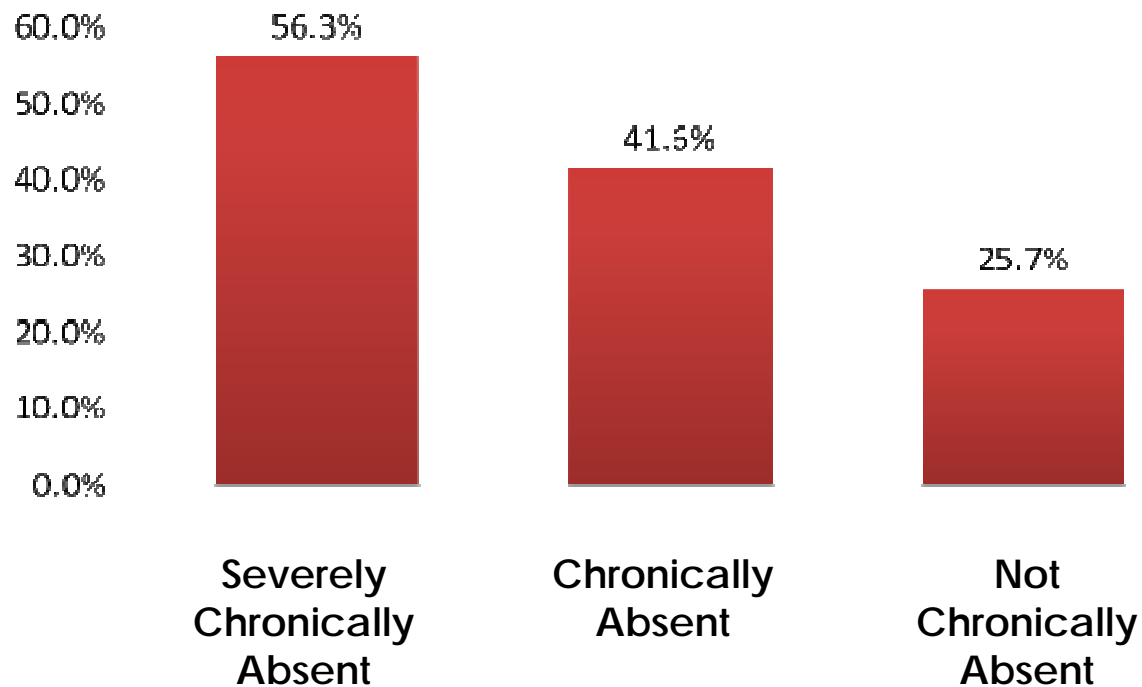


Source: ECLS-K data analyzed by National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP)  
Note: Average academic performance reflects results of direct cognitive assessments conducted for ECLS-K.

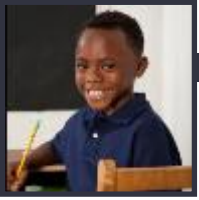


# Chronically Absent 6th Graders Have Lower Graduation Rates

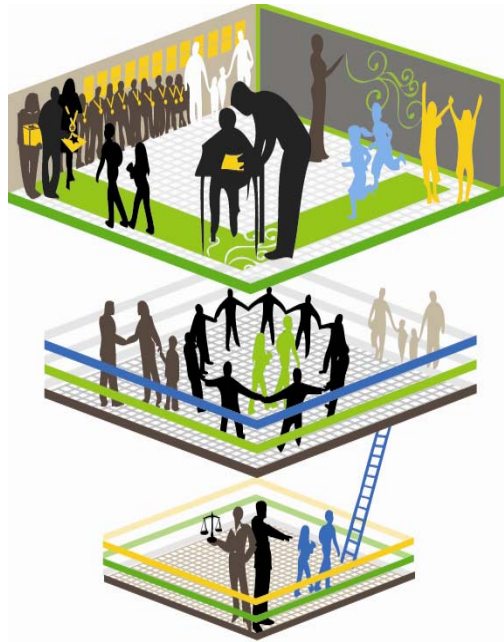
Dropout Rates by Sixth Grade Attendance  
(Baltimore City Public Schools, 1990-2000 Sixth Grade Cohort)



Source: Baltimore Education Research Consortium SY 2009-2010



# What Reduces Chronic Absence? A Comprehensive Approach



## Universal Attendance Supports

- ❑ Safe and supportive school environment
- ❑ Inviting and engaging classroom environment
- ❑ Intentional family involvement and participation
- ❑ On-going attention to attendance data
- ❑ Rapid parent contact for unexplained absences
- ❑ Recognition for good and improved attendance
- ❑ Collaboration with family support, afterschool programs and early childhood programs to build a culture of attendance & reach out to families.
- ❑ Increased access to school based health supports
- ❑ A school plan and budget that reflects high attendance priorities

## Individual Assessments and Intervention

- ❑ Refer chronically absent/ truant students for intervention including *SART & SARB*
- ❑ Identify and remove barriers
- ❑ Provide on-going support

## Recovery Strategies

- ❑ Interagency Staffing
- ❑ Case management and wrap-around services
- ❑ Referral as last resort for court -based intervention

Baltimore Student Attendance Work  
Group adapted from Scott Perry,  
Attendance Audit, Oregon



## Making Change Starts with Data

- ❑ Chronic absence data (as well as other attendance measures) should be examined by classroom, grade, school, neighborhood or sub-population.
- ❑ If chronic absence is unusually high for a particular group of students, explore what might be common issues (unreliable transportation, community violence, asthma and other chronic diseases, poor access to health care, unnecessary suspension for non-violent offenses, lack of engaging curriculum, child care or afterschool programming, foreclosures, etc.)
- ❑ If chronic absence is unusually low for a high risk population, find out what they are doing that works.



## What Do We Know About San Francisco?

### *Findings from Spring 2010 analysis*

- Approximately 9% of elementary students are chronically absent
- Levels ranged from affecting less than half a percent to nearly 40% of students in a single elementary school.
- While chronic absence was generally higher among schools in the Bayview and Mission, elementary schools with high levels could be found in other neighborhoods as well.



## Potential Implications for SFFSN Members

- Promote on-going analysis and release of chronic absence data
- Partner with schools to meet the needs of chronically absent students and their families
- Support increased professional development to help members understand chronic absence and its implications.
- Consider using chronic absence data to identify school and neighborhoods in need of additional supports