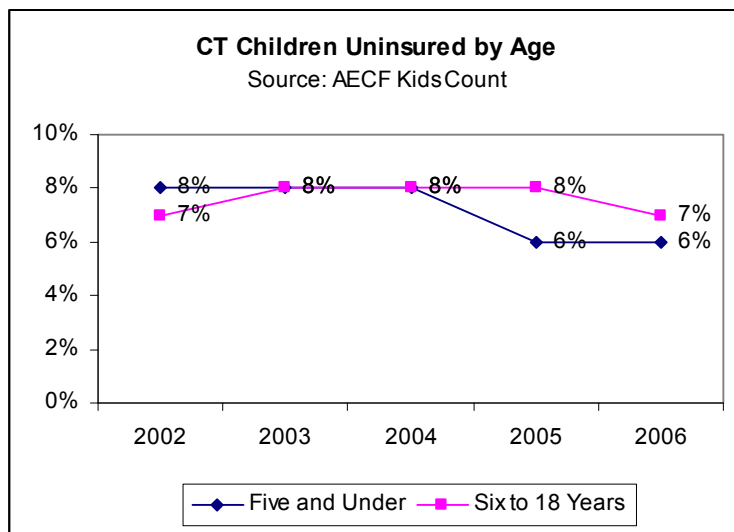


Population Report Card: Early Childhood Cabinet

Quality of Life Result #1: Ready by Five and Fine by Nine: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, contributing to a reduction over time in Connecticut's achievement gap at Grade 4.

Indicator 1: Children's Health Status



Story behind the baseline:

The health of young children demonstrably impacts their ability to learn effectively in school. In some cases, it even prevents them from coming to school. As one example, asthma represents a key challenge for some children, especially in the state's districts with high numbers of urban poor children.

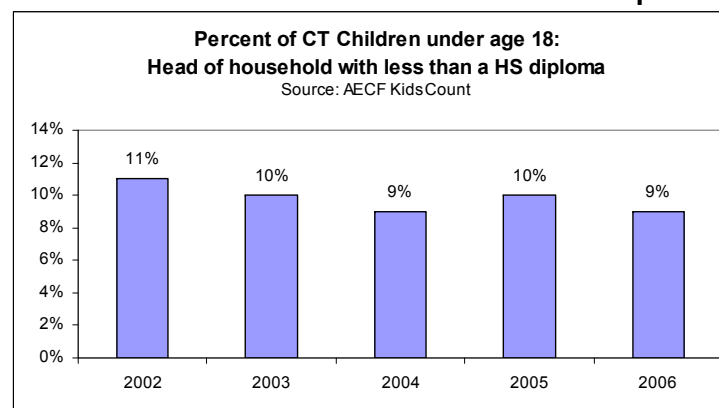
At the present time, the Cabinet does not have access to precise data on uninsured children in kindergarten through Grade 3. However, as shown above, it appears that about seven percent of the state's children ages 6 to 18 are uninsured. The estimate of the number of uninsured children in Connecticut is 60,000 youngsters under age 18 (AECF Kids Count Data 2008).

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

- Collaborate with state agencies, schools, child advocacy groups and other stakeholders to implement a Coordinated School Health approach, based on the *Guidelines for a Coordinated Approach to School Health*, to address the health and safety needs of children, which includes ensuring that all schools provide access to school and community-based health and mental health services and inform families about HUSKY.

- Explore implementation of comprehensive health care services within schools where children are at-risk that include school-based health and dental centers and adequate school and mental health providers.
- Within available resources, develop a system for collecting and reporting student health data at the local level. The system would be used by schools to track and address the health needs of children and would allow critical data to be reported at the state level.

Indicator 2: Maternal Education Less than a HS Diploma



Story behind the baseline:

The Cabinet's K-3 System Framework indicates that maternal education is one of the best predictors of a child's educational success. Children living with mothers who have less than a high school (HS) diploma have markedly lower school success. The percentage of all children with the head of household with less than a HS diploma declined from 11 percent in 2002 to nine percent in 2006. The number of children (under age 18) in these families has been estimated at 74,000 in Connecticut in 2006 (AECF Kids Count Data 2008).

Connecticut's adult education system enables adults, including mothers, to complete secondary school and attain a HS diploma. This system is mandated in State Statute to be provided through local and regional boards of education and is supported by the State Department of Education. Connecticut is one of few states that offer three pathways for adult learners to attain a HS diploma. The data demonstrate that, for a wide variety of reasons (e.g., program design,

Population Report Card: Early Childhood Cabinet

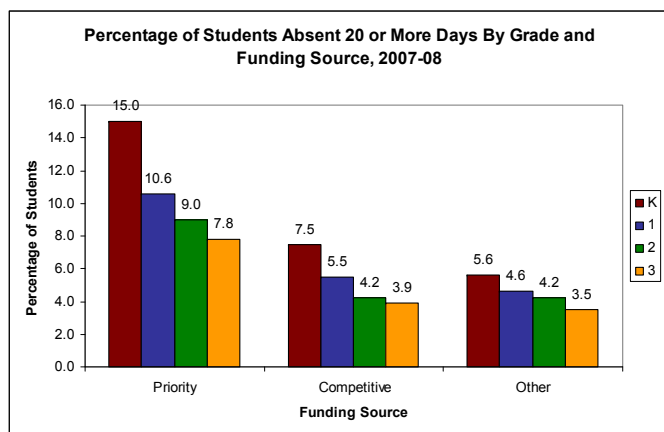
Quality of Life Result #1: Ready by Five and Fine by Nine: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, contributing to a reduction over time in Connecticut’s achievement gap at Grade 4.

persistence supports), learners in the Adult High School Credit Diploma Program and the National External Diploma Program reflect higher graduation and persistence rates than those in the GED preparation program.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

- Based on available resources, expand the Even Start Family Literacy Program, which has shown promising results in improving the educational outcomes for both children and parents. Reference the RBA Even Start Report Card.
- Implement actions delineated within the Adult Education RBA Report Card that will expand secondary school completion pathways and online learning opportunities in order to increase the HS diploma attainment rate of mothers who are enrolled in all secondary school completion programs.

Indicator 3: K-3 Attendance



Story behind the baseline:

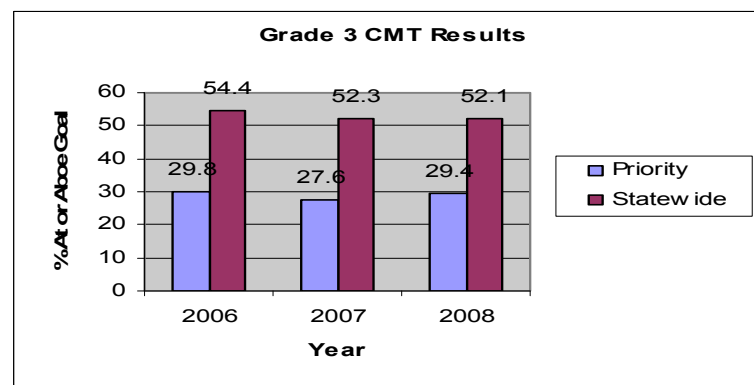
Children need to be in school to participate in and benefit from school instruction. The percentage of students absent 20 or more days is a good indicator of how much time is lost due to multiple absences. Starting with the 2008-09 school year, the State Department of Education implemented a standard definition of what it means to be “in attendance.” This new definition will enable the comparability of attendance data across districts. Note that the data presented in the chart are for 2007-08 and are not based on the standard definition.

The 2007-08 data show that there are considerable differences in the attendance rates among Priority School Districts (PSD), Competitive Grant Municipalities and the rest of the state. There are also substantial differences between grade levels. In the 2007-08 school year, 15 percent of kindergartners in PSD’s were absent 20 or more days, compared to 5.6 percent of kindergartners in Other Districts. PSD’s have the highest rate of absenteeism compared to other districts.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

- Re-evaluate attendance patterns across priority, competitive and other districts based on data that are collected using the new standard definition of attendance in order to assist districts in identifying:
 - the causes of chronic absenteeism; and
 - the strategies and practices that can be implemented to increase student attendance in kindergarten through Grade 3.

Indicator 4: Grade 3 CMT Results



Story behind the baseline:

The Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) Reading results were chosen as an indicator because national research has shown that strong reading performance at third grade is a good predictor of later school and life success. Students who are not reading well in the third grade are often on a pathway that includes later school failure, dropping out, teen pregnancy, welfare and prison involvement.

Population Report Card: Early Childhood Cabinet

Quality of Life Result #1: Ready by Five and Fine by Nine: All Connecticut children are healthy and ready for school success at age 5, contributing to a reduction over time in Connecticut's achievement gap at Grade 4.

Connecticut began Grade 3 CMT assessments in 2007. Statewide, the performance of Grade 3 students stayed consistent with 52 percent performing in the Goal range. Reading achievement by Priority School District Grade 3 students increased in 2008, but they remain out performed by their peers by almost 25 percent.

Proposed actions to turn the curve:

- Conduct site visits of all Priority School Districts as part of the State Department of Education's accountability plan.
- Implement a comprehensive reading test for new elementary school teachers as a condition of certification. The test will become a condition of certification in the summer of 2009.
- Include expectations and indicators of early literacy achievement in the district and school improvement plans.