Chronic Absence in Oregon

Attendance Works
The Children's Institute
The Chalkboard Project
ECONorthwest

Chronic Absence:
Missing 10% or more of enrolled school days

1. Oregon has a chronic absence problem

   Almost a quarter of Oregon K-12 students are chronically absent

2. Early chronic absence has consequences later

   Early absenteeism is associated with continued attendance problems and lower achievement

3. There is hope if we look to successful schools

   Some schools are beating the odds and keeping chronic absence low

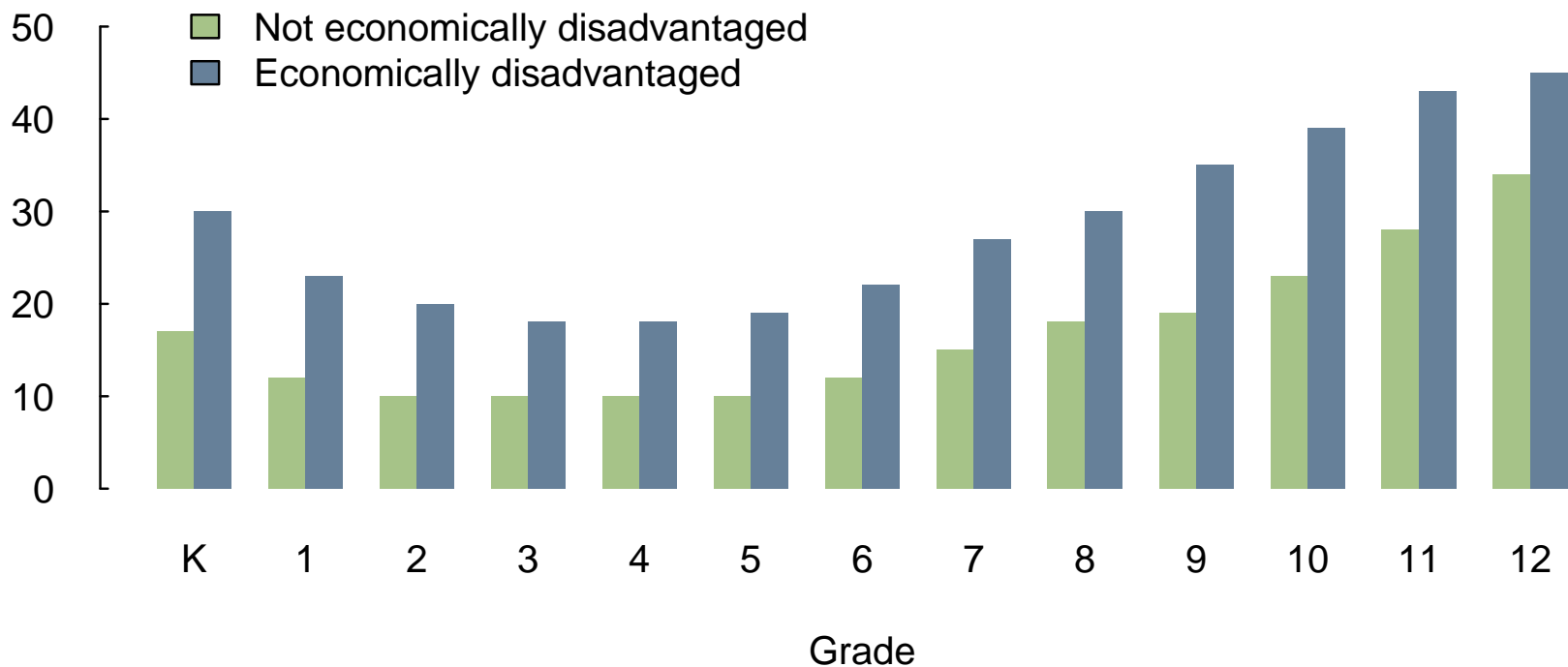# 23% of K-12 students in Oregon were chronically absent in 2009-10
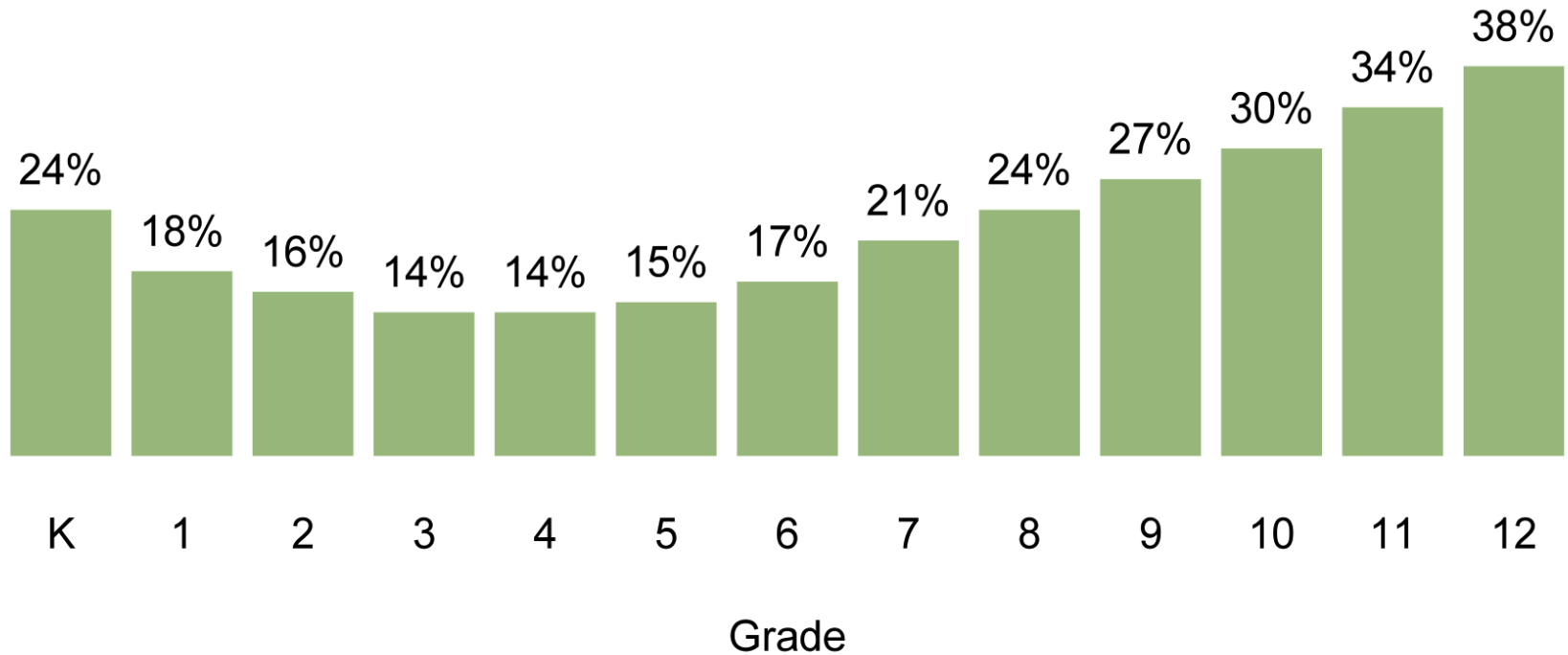
Percentage of Oregon students who are chronically absent, by grade
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Most subgroups had rates close to the overall average; groups with the highest rates were economically disadvantaged students (28%) and special education students (29%)
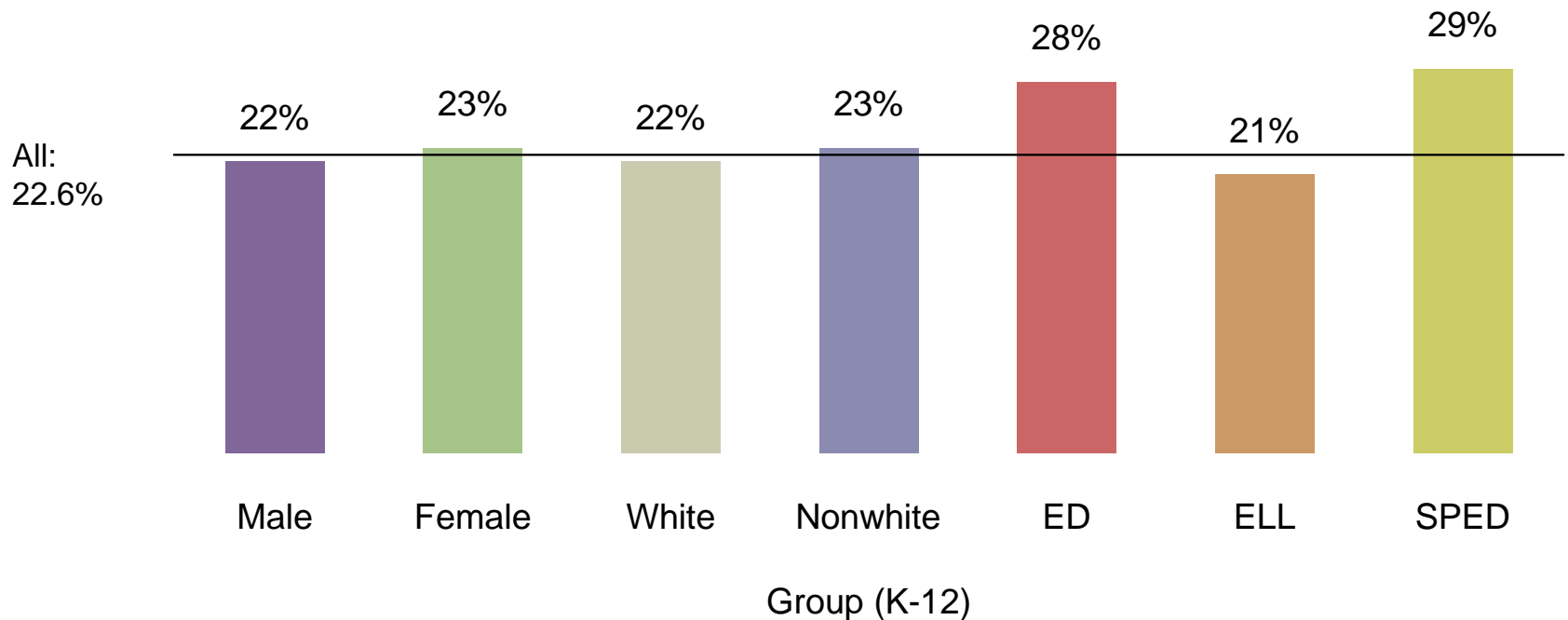
Percentage of Oregon students who are chronically absent, by subgroup
ED = economically disadvantaged; ELL = English language learner; SPED = special education.
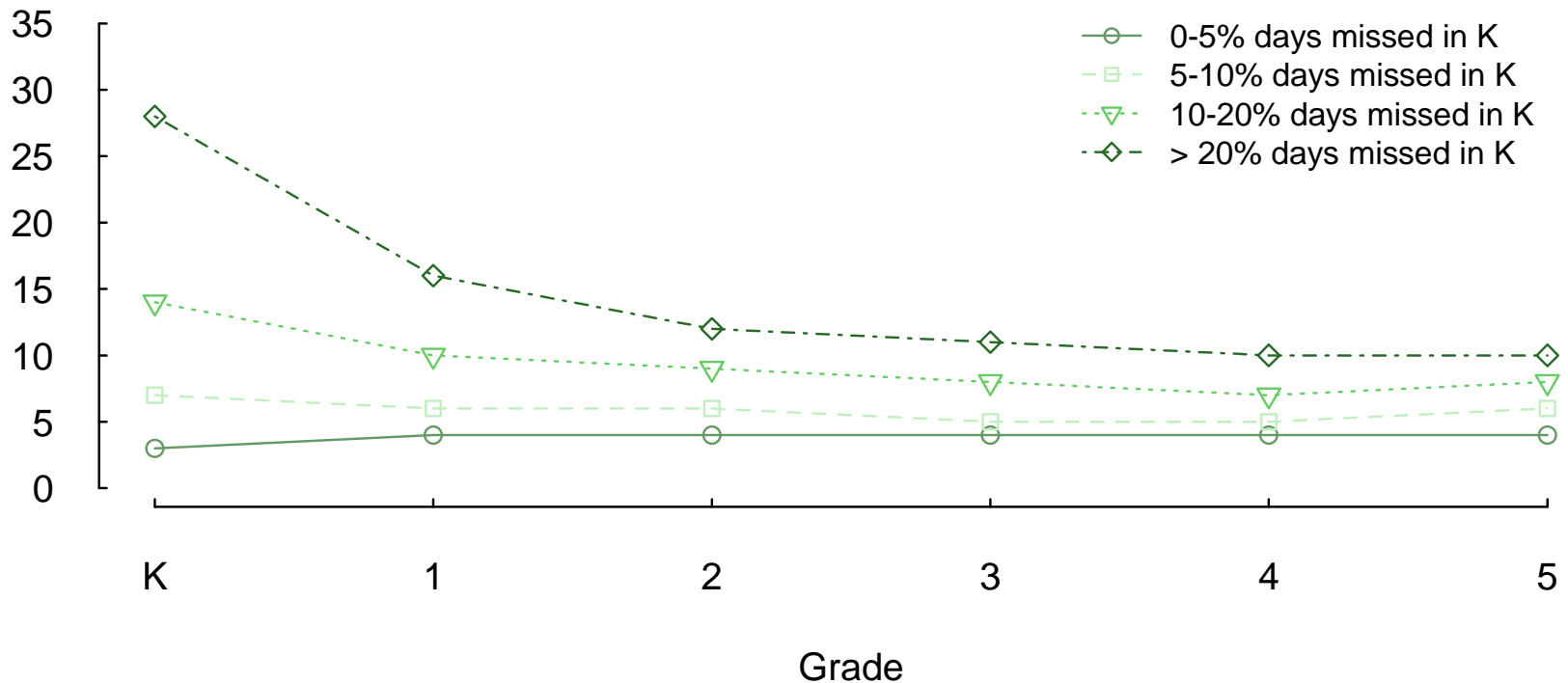Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Economically disadvantaged students were consistently more likely to be chronically absent; by high school, two out of five were chronically absent

Percentage of Oregon students who are chronically absent, by grade and economic disadvantage
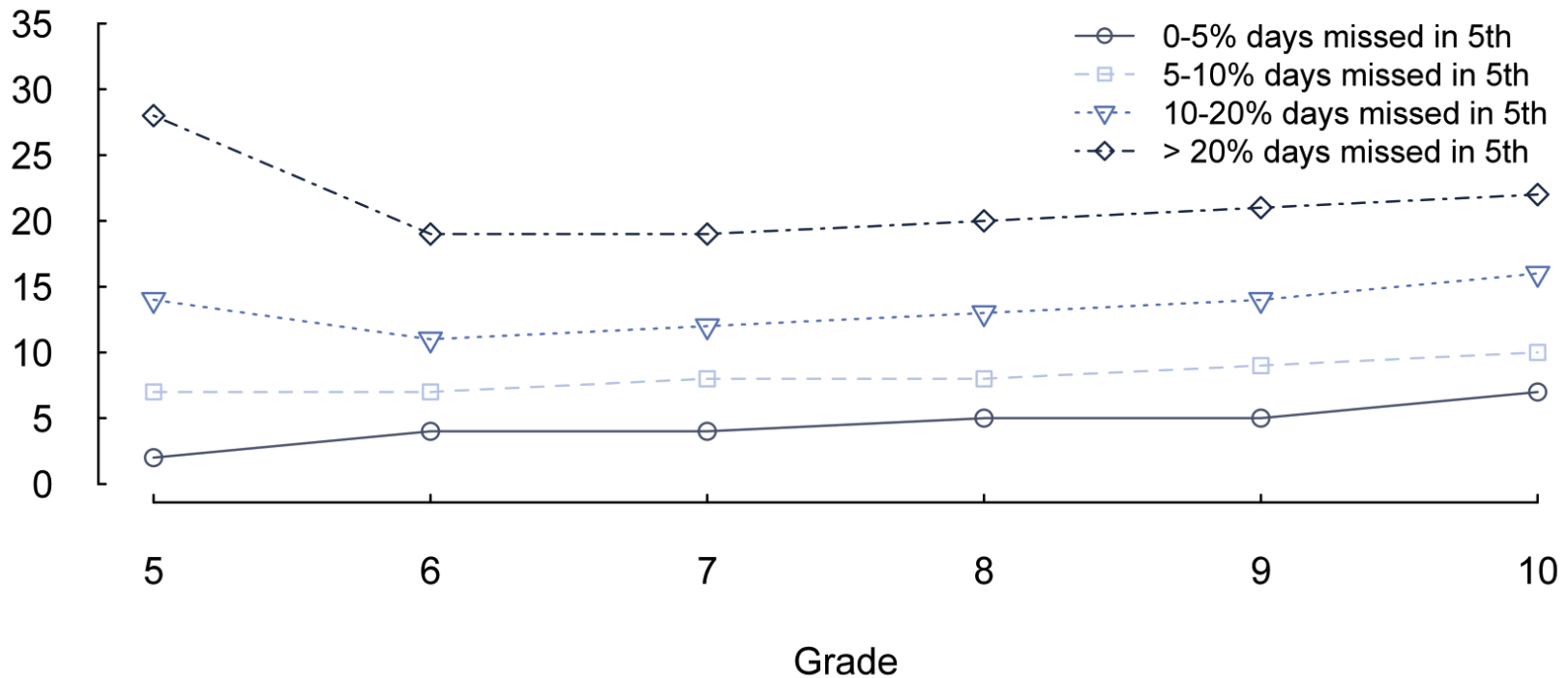Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Kindergarten absence rate is a good indicator of attendance through the 5th grade

Legend:
- 0-5% days missed in K
- 5-10% days missed in K
- 10-20% days missed in K
- > 20% days missed in K

X-axis: Grade (K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)
Y-axis: 0 to 35

Average absence rate for a cohort of Oregon students moving from K-5,
by absence rate in kindergarten
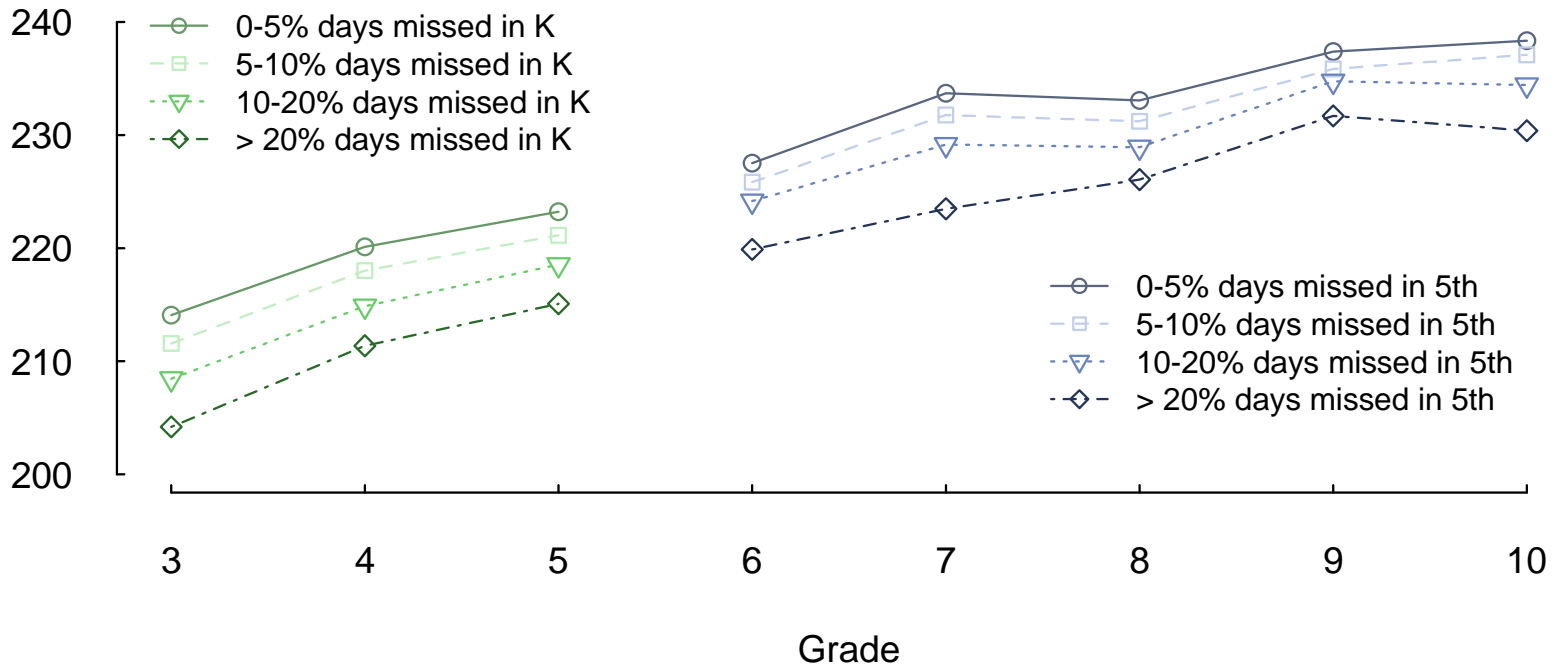Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Similarly, 5th grade absence rate is a good indicator of attendance through the 10th grade

Average absence rate for a cohort of Oregon students moving from grades 5-10, by absence rate in 5th grade
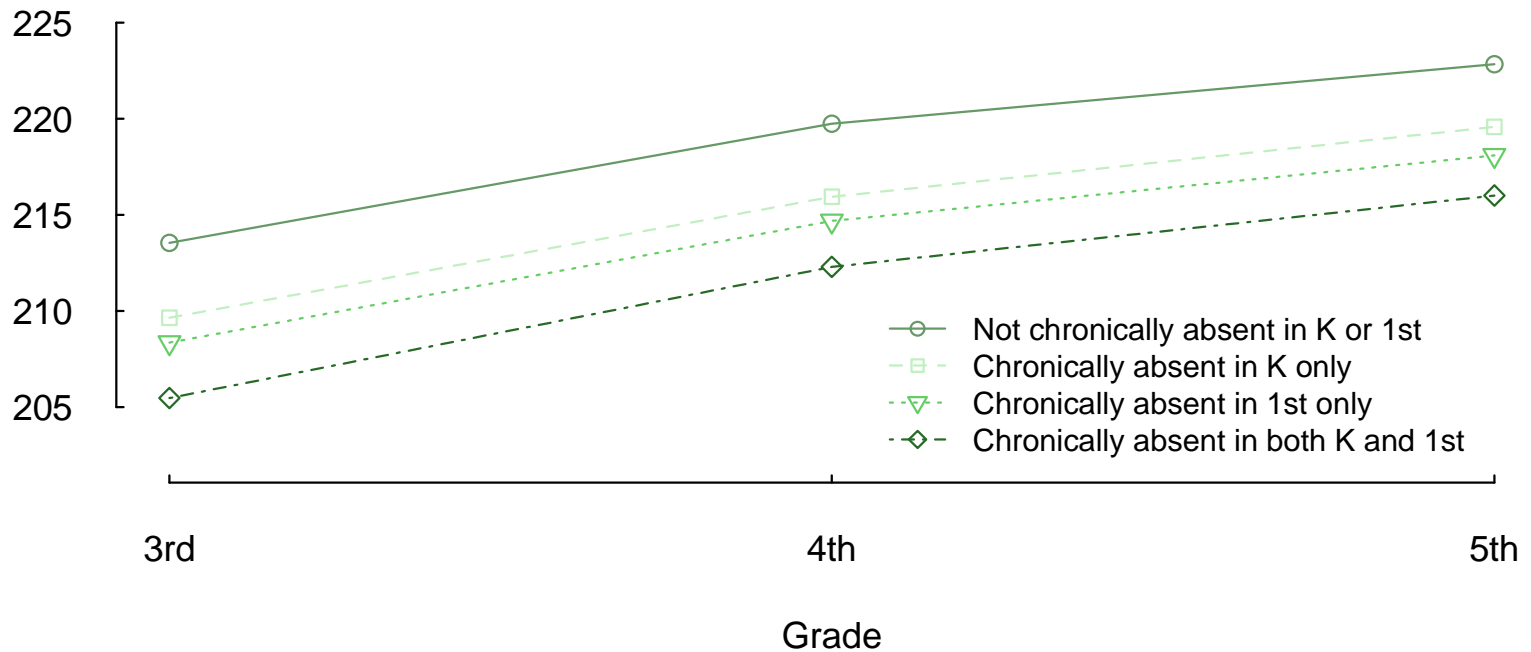Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

There is a clear and consistent relationship between early attendance and later achievement

Average reading RIT scores for two cohorts of Oregon students, by absence rates in kindergarten and 5th grade
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Chronic absence in one early grade is associated with lower test scores throughout elementary school; chronic absence in both grades corresponds to the lowest scores

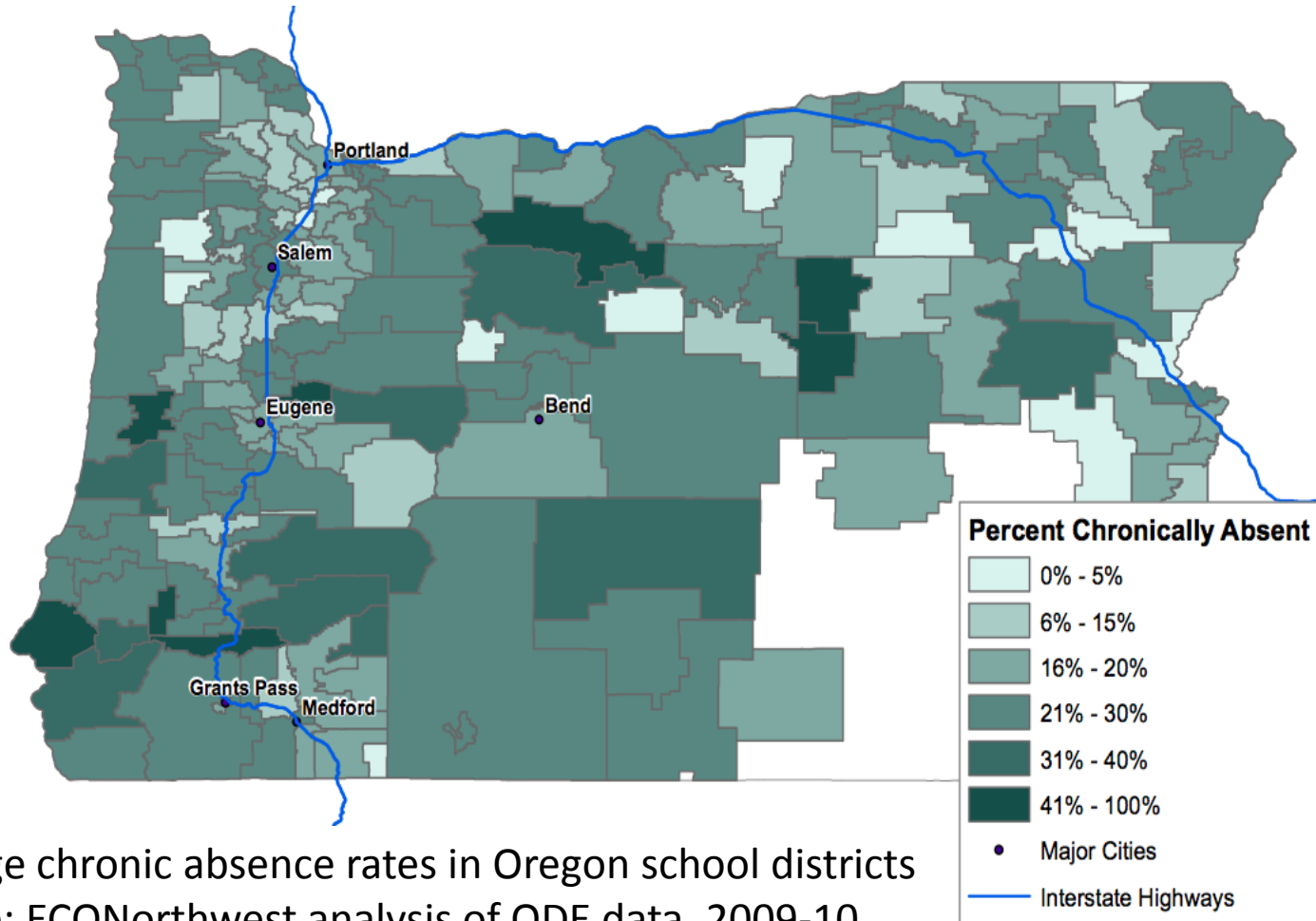Average reading RIT scores for a cohort of Oregon students moving from grades 3-5, by absenteeism in the early grades
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

In the early grades, there is high chronic absenteeism in many parts of the state, but rates seem especially high in rural areas

K-2nd

Average chronic absence rates in Oregon school districts
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

In high school, high chronic absenteeism is even more common in many parts of the state, but rates remain especially high in rural areas

9-12th

Percent Chronically Absent

- 0% - 5%
- 6% - 15%
- 16% - 20%
- 21% - 30%
- 31% - 40%
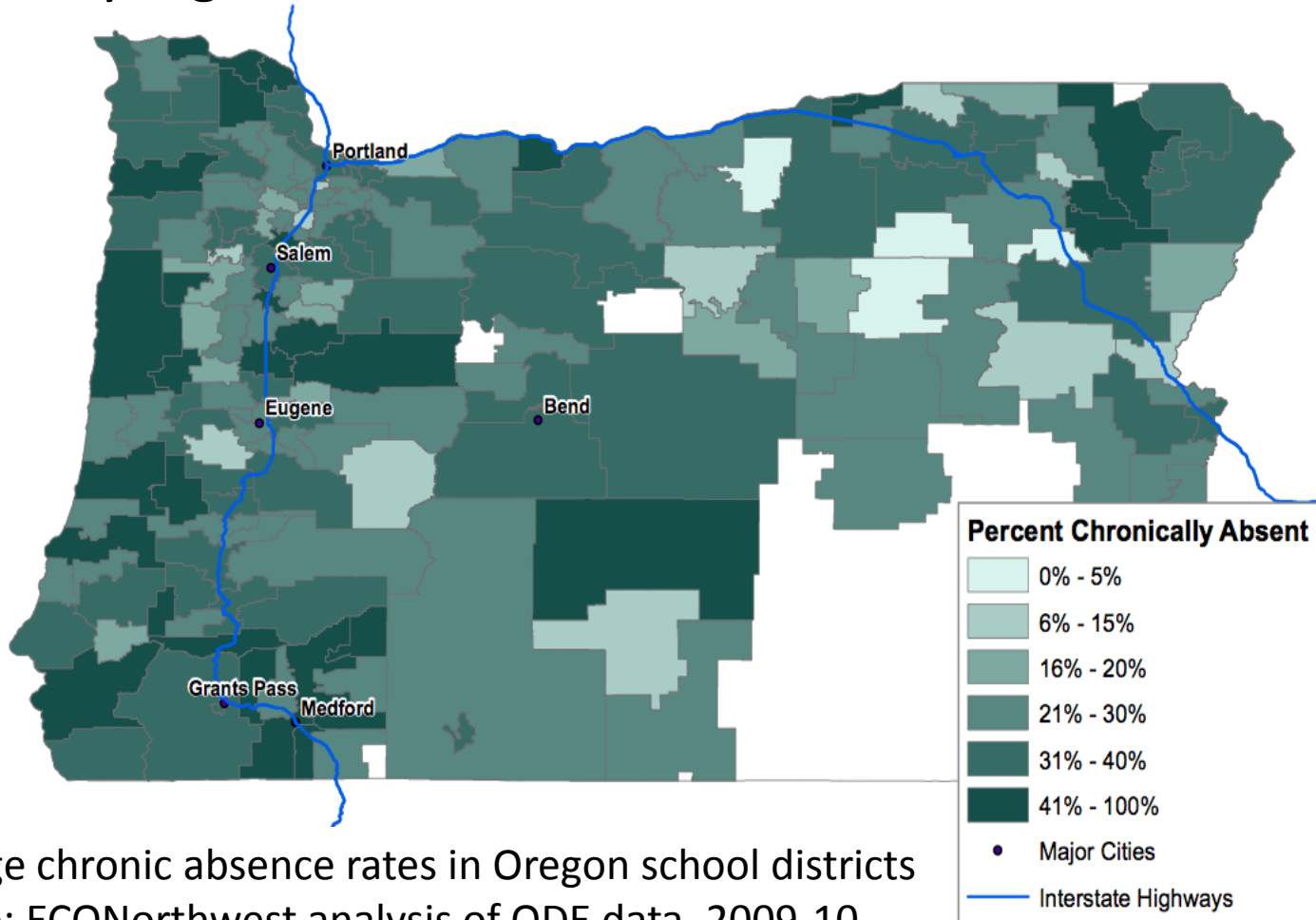- 41% - 100%
- • Major Cities
- — Interstate Highways

Average chronic absence rates in Oregon school districts
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Schools with the highest chronic absence have disproportionately large numbers of vulnerable students

Characteristics	10% of Schools with Best Attendance	10% of Schools with Worst Attendance	State Average
% ED	27%	74%	54%
% ELL	9%	27%	18%
% SPED	10%	15%	13%
% Non-White	21%	27%	22%
% Chronically Absent	5%	36%	19%

Characteristics of schools with the least and most K-2 chronic absence
ED = economically disadvantaged; ELL = English language learner; SPED = special education.
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Statistical controls for student demographics can help identify schools that are "beating the odds"

- Schools with disadvantaged student populations tend to have more chronic absence than do other schools
- Investigating schools with rates that differ significantly from prediction might provide insight into best practices for improving attendance
- Below, we present case studies and summary results from a preliminary statistical model of chronic absence at the school level

Demographics do not equal destiny

Characteristics	School #1	School #2	School #3	School #4
Region Type	Rural	Town	City	City
K-2 Enrollment	218	75	215	312
% ED	72%	100%	82%	89%
% ELL	5%	16%	64%	70%
% SPED	17%	5%	12%	9%
% Non-White	36%	33%	83%	83%
Chronic Absence				
Predicted Rate	24%	28%	22%	22%
Actual Rate	1%	7%	6%	38%
Difference	-23%	-21%	-16%	15%

Three over-performing schools and one under-performing school
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.

Schools that deviate negatively from their predicted chronic absence rates are "beating the odds"

Characteristics	10% of Schools with Best Model Performance	10% of Schools with Worst Model Performance	All Schools
% ED	67%	48%	54%
% ELL	16%	10%	18%
% SPED	14%	14%	13%
% Non-White	34%	27%	22%
Chronic Absence			
Average Predicted Rate	22%	18%	19%
Average Actual Rate	8%	35%	19%
Average Difference	-14%	17%	0%

Predicted vs. actual chronic absence for the highest-performing and lowest-performing Schools
Source: ECONorthwest analysis of ODE data, 2009-10.