

EVALUATION OF ABSENTEEISM REPORTING
IN NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOLS



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OBJECTIVES:

- Collect health related data from the schools
- Evaluate the potential of using school absenteeism rates for the early identification of illness outbreaks in the schools and communities
- Determine the problems with school reporting



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PHASES OF PROJECT

Literature Review and IRB Approval

- March 1, 2015 - March 20, 2015

Survey Building

- March 21, 2015 - March 27, 2015

School Recruitment

- March 21, 2015 - March 31, 2015

Data Collection

- April 1, 2015 - June 1, 2015

Data Analysis

- July 2, 2015 - July 8, 2015

Created Report

- July 30, 2015 - August 20, 2015

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During a typical influenza season, 40% to 50% of ALL reported influenza cases are in children between the ages of 6 and 19 (school-aged children) which often result in influenza outbreaks in North Dakota school systems and the movement of the virus into the community.



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RATIONALE FOR USING SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM DATA

To monitor the trend of absences from school which may provide early detection of outbreaks before they reach their peak level.

Outbreaks in the school system often precede larger community-based outbreaks.

The data is helpful in targeting control and/or prevention strategies.



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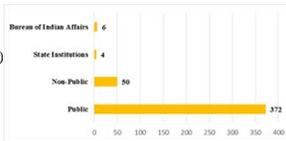
NORTH DAKOTA SCHOOLS

There are a total of 432 schools throughout the state consisting of:

- Public
- Non-public
- State institutions
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)

Schools ranged in size from 8 to 849 students

Average enrollment was 212 students




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ABOUT THE DATA

This report summarizes school absenteeism reporting data from:

- Public schools (61 out of 372)
- Non-public schools (9 out of 50)
- State institution (1 out of 4)
- Bureau of Indian Affairs (1 out of 6)

Caution in interpreting the data in this report.

- Data not received by June 1, 2015 were considered “missing” for the purposes of this report
- The absenteeism data in this report reflects overall student absenteeism (E.g., students missing school due to any type of illness, family vacation, inclement weather, sporting event, etc.)

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METHODS

A survey tool called **Qualtrics** was used to collect information

Report contains health related data and absenteeism data from participating schools from April 6, 2015 (MMWR week 14) through May 15, 2015 (MMWR week 19)

Information collected included:

- School information
- Name of person completing the survey
- Health related data
- Total number of students enrolled for the week
- Number of students absent for the week

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An email was sent out at the end of March, 2015 notifying the schools of the upcoming survey

The survey was sent out April 1, 2015 to gather health related data

- 72 schools responded

At the end of the survey, the schools were asked to participate in weekly absenteeism reporting from April 6, 2015 through May 15, 2015

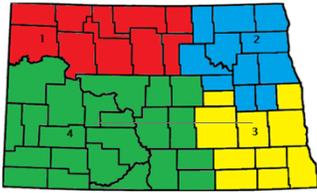
- 13 agreed to participate in the weekly absenteeism reporting
- All 13 were public schools



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REGIONAL INFLUENZA REPORTING

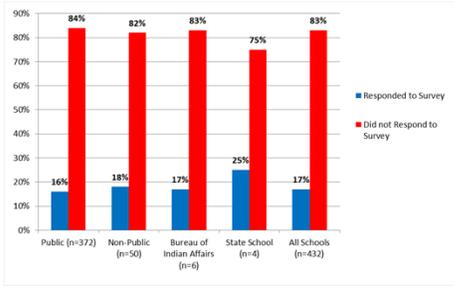


North Dakota is separated into four influenza regions based on critical access to hospitals and referral centers.

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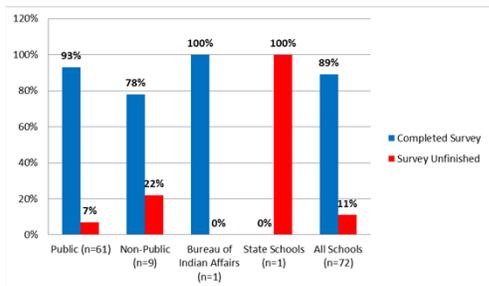
SURVEY RESPONSE RATE



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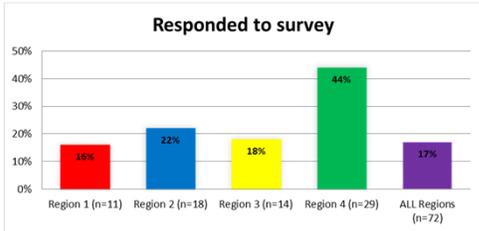
SURVEY COMPLETION STATUS



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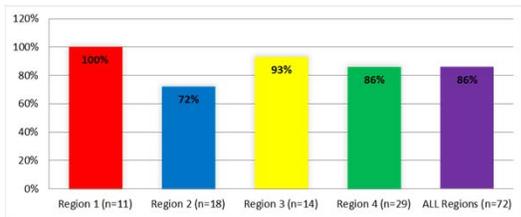
RESPONSES TO SURVEY BY REGION



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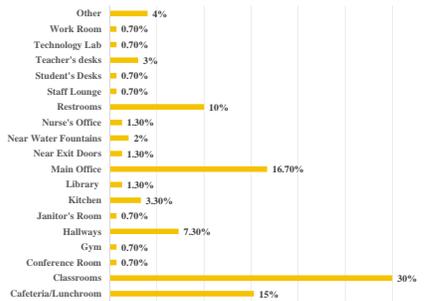
ALCOHOL-BASED HAND SANITIZERS AT SCHOOLS



14



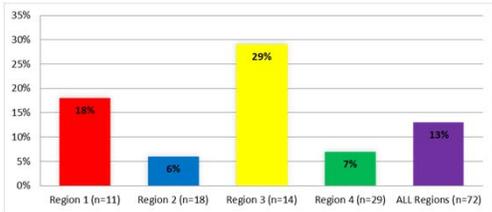
LOCATION OF ALCOHOL- BASED HAND SANITIZERS



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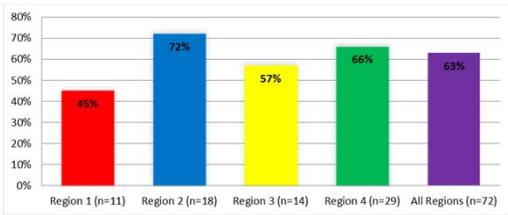
SCHOOL NURSE ON STAFF



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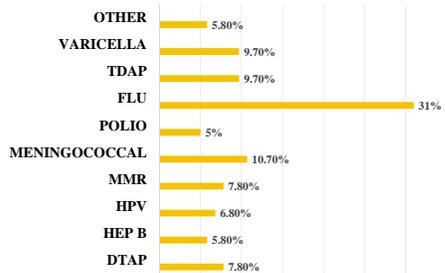
IMMUNIZATIONS OFFERED AT SCHOOLS



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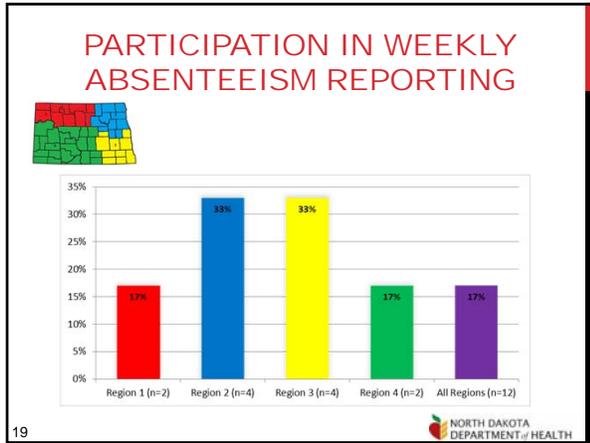


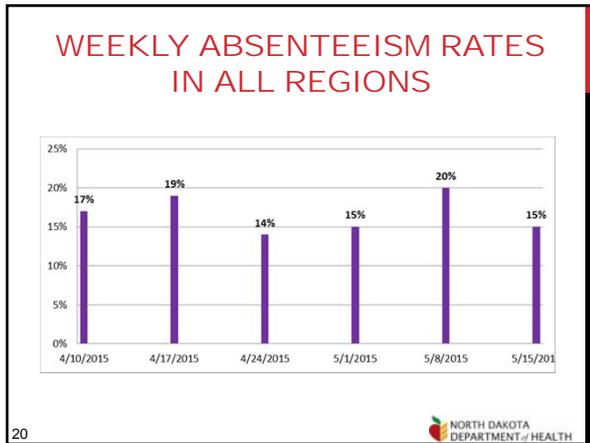
IMMUNIZATIONS OFFERED AT SCHOOLS

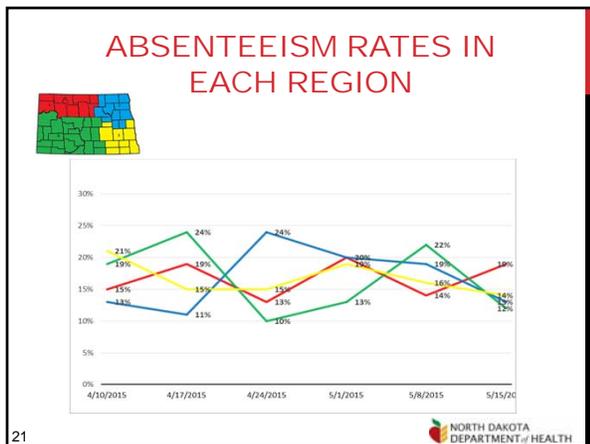


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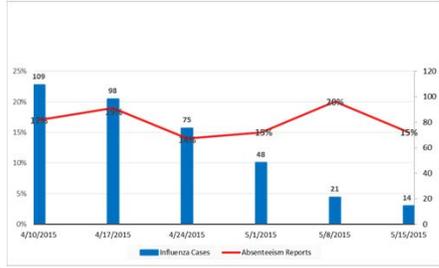








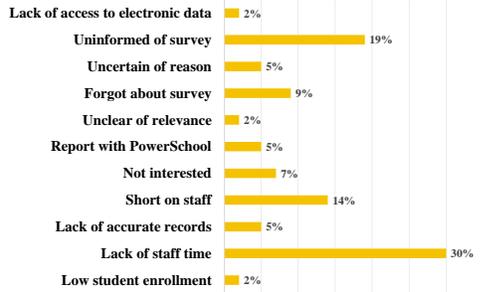
COMPARISON OF INFLUENZA CASES TO SCHOOL ABSENTEEISM REPORTS



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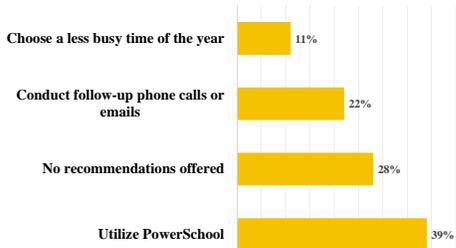
REASONS UNABLE TO PARTICIPATE



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RECOMMENDATIONS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION



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RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE SURVEY TOOL

100%

All of the survey responders stated that changes were not necessary since the survey tool was **easy** to use

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PROJECT CHALLENGES

- Getting schools across North Dakota to participate
- 432 schools were sent surveys inquiring about health related data, only 72 responded
 - Out of the 72 that responded to the survey, only 13 agreed to participate in weekly student absenteeism reporting

School absenteeism data included overall student absenteeism (E.g., students missing school due to any type of illness, family vacation, inclement weather, sporting event, etc.) and not limited to influenza cases

Integrating information from the weekly student absenteeism reporting to the existing Influenza Incidence Surveillance Project (IISP)

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RECOMMENDATIONS

The health department should look into accessing **PowerSchool**

- Public schools are required to report school absenteeism information to the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction through PowerSchool
- PowerSchool data has the potential to provide insight into trends of illness occurring among school-aged children who do not seek medical attention
- Offers Real-Time Monitoring of school absenteeism for syndromic surveillance



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Summary

School absenteeism data can be beneficial to the health department for the following reasons:

- Detects various disease outbreaks early
- Data is pre-existing
- Easily accessible
- Requires minimum time and resources



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special thanks to the **North Dakota Department of Health**
Division of Disease Control

- Dr. Tracy Miller
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North Dakota Schools

- Principals and attendance secretaries of participating schools

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Questions



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