



**TO:** Higher Education Committee  
P-12 Education Committee

**FROM:** John L. D'Agati

Charles A. Szuberla, Jr.

**SUBJECT:** Collection of Teacher-Level Attendance Data

**DATE:** June 8, 2015

**AUTHORIZATION(S):**

**SUMMARY**

**Issue for Discussion**

The Department will provide the Board with an overview of the current collection of teacher attendance data in New York State (NYS) and discuss its potential expansion, which will better assist Local Education Agencies (LEAs) in working toward providing equitable access to effective educators for all students and help to inform Department policy.

**Reason(s) for Consideration**

For information.

**Proposed Handling**

This item will come before a joint meeting of the Higher Education Committee and P-12 Education Committee for discussion at the June 2015 meeting.

**Background Information**

New York State (NYS) teacher attendance data has already been collected in a variety of ways for a number of years. NYS LEAs submit teacher attendance data as part of the biennial Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC) conducted through the United

States Department of Education (USED) Office for Civil Rights (OCR).<sup>1</sup> Teacher attendance data from the 2011-12 CRDC was used by USED in their state-level Educator Equity Profiles, which were published in December of 2014 (<http://1.usa.gov/1w9QtCL>). Since LEAs report this data directly to the OCR, the New York State Education Department (Department) does not have the ability to monitor the accuracy or completeness of this data. Additionally, the Department currently collects aggregate teacher attendance data from our lowest performing schools in compliance with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA). ARRA stipulates that in order to receive School Improvement Grants (SIG), State Education Agencies (SEAs) must submit teacher attendance data for schools receiving SIG funds.<sup>2</sup> Expanding such collection to require teacher attendance data from all LEAs, not just the lowest performing schools, would enable the Department to have a more complete and accurate data set, based on the most recently available data, to inform equity analyses and reporting. The proposed collection of this attendance data would begin in the 2015-16 school year, enabling districts to have one year to refine their systems to collect and report these data to the Department, with the goal of having a more accurate collection by the 2016-17 school year.

### ***Collection of Teacher Attendance Data***

#### History

Prior to 2009-10, LEAs were not explicitly required to report teacher attendance data at the state or federal levels. The OCR surveys school districts across the country, collecting data on key education and civil rights issues in public schools every two years, through the Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC), which began in 1968.<sup>3</sup> In 2009-10, “after conducting a comprehensive review of the past survey and considering comments from numerous stakeholders, the OCR added new data items to the 2009-10 CRDC;” one of these items was data regarding teacher absences.<sup>4</sup> For the purposes of this collection, LEAs submit the number of teachers with more than ten days absent based on the following definition of teacher absenteeism: “A teacher is absent if he or she is not in attendance on a day in the regular school year when the teacher would otherwise be expected to be teaching students in an assigned class. This includes both days taken for sick leave and days taken for personal leave. Personal leave includes voluntary absences for reasons other than sick leave. Teacher absenteeism does not include administratively approved leave for professional development, field trips, or

---

<sup>1</sup> Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Notes. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-data-notes.doc>

<sup>2</sup> School Improvement Grants; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA); Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended (ESEA); Final requirements for School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. (2010, October 25). Retrieved March 9, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2010-4/102810a.html>

<sup>3</sup> 2011-12 Civil Rights Data Collection Questions and Answers. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2015, from <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/downloads/FAQ.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Civil Rights Data Collection: Data Notes. (n.d.). Retrieved March 19, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-data-notes.doc>

other off-campus activities with students.”<sup>5</sup> The Department’s current definition of teacher attendance is consistent with that used in the OCR data collection.

To satisfy the federal reporting requirement for schools receiving SIG funds put forth in ARRA,<sup>6</sup> a building aggregate teacher attendance rate was collected by the Department’s School Turnaround Office from 2008-09 to 2012-13 from those schools receiving SIG funds using a document entitled the “Academic Performance Plan” (APP). To streamline this process and improve the accuracy of the teacher attendance data collection, beginning in 2013-14, and annually since, the Department has collected building aggregate teacher attendance rates from Focus and Priority schools using the Basic Educational Data System Public School Data (BEDS) Form. This aggregation includes both full-time and part-time teachers.

### Teacher Attendance and Equity

NYS prides itself on a long tradition and reputation of high-quality education and bold education reforms. Yet, like many other states across the country, NYS’ data reveals that there is much work to be done before all students are achieving at the levels necessary for them to succeed in college or careers, and have access to high quality learning opportunities provided by the most effective educators.

Teacher absenteeism can impact students both academically and emotionally. In one study, it was found that an absent full-time teacher is often replaced by a temporary substitute whose average daily productivity, or contribution to student learning, is significantly lower than the teacher s/he replaced.<sup>7</sup> Substitute teachers may not have the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the type of instruction aligned with school reform efforts.<sup>8</sup> In addition, frequent instruction delivered by substitute teachers can lead to low levels of student interest in learning.<sup>9</sup>

Research indicates that, compared to low-poverty communities, high poverty communities have higher rates of teacher absenteeism.<sup>10</sup> Substitute teacher quality may also vary significantly across schools in high- and low- poverty communities.<sup>11</sup> In

---

<sup>5</sup> Data Definitions. (n.d.). Retrieved March 5, 2015, from <http://ocrdata.ed.gov/DataDefinitions>

<sup>6</sup> School Improvement Grants; American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA); Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as Amended (ESEA); Final requirements for School Improvement Grants authorized under section 1003(g) of Title I of the ESEA. (2010, October 25). Retrieved March 9, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/legislation/FedRegister/finrule/2010-4/102810a.html>

<sup>7</sup> Herrmann, Mariesa, and Jonah Rockoff. "Worker Absence and Productivity: Evidence from Teaching." The National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 16524 (2010). [www.nber.org](http://www.nber.org). Retrieved November 2014, from <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16524>.

<sup>8</sup> Bruno, J. (2002). The Geographical Distribution of Teacher Absenteeism in Large Urban School District Settings: Implications for School Reform Efforts Aimed at Promoting Equity and Excellence in Education. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 10(32), 1-21. Retrieved March 9, 2015, from <http://epaa.asu.edu/ojs/article/viewFile/311/437>

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Rogers, John, and Mirra Nicole, "It's About Time: Learning Time and Educational Opportunity in California High Schools." UCLA Institute for Democracy, Education and Access. Retrieved November 2014, from <http://idea.gseis.ucla.edu/projects/its-about-time/Its%20About%20Time.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

one study, teachers in high-poverty schools were approximately 12 percentage points more likely to report that insufficiently qualified substitutes negatively impacted student learning.<sup>12</sup>

Recent national data, which includes data from NYS, demonstrates that teachers are absent from schools serving high proportions of black or Hispanic students (those where the proportion of black or Hispanic students is in 90th percentile) at a rate that is 3.5 and 3.2 percentage points higher respectively than schools with low proportions of black or Hispanic students (those where the proportion of black or Hispanic students is in 10th percentile).<sup>13</sup> Trends have been noted not only in relation to student population, but also when looking at teacher attendance in connection with school type. Nationally, teachers in traditional public schools miss more than ten days of school at a rate that is 15 percentage points higher than in charter schools.<sup>14</sup>

Evidence of the impact of teacher absenteeism on teaching and learning can also be found specifically in New York. According to the September 2014 Mayor's Management Report, 16.0% of New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE) teachers were absent for 11 or more days in 2013-14, which was an increase in chronically absent teachers from 11.8% in 2012-13.<sup>15</sup> A recent study of NYCDOE teachers by the National Bureau of Economic Research found that teacher absences have large negative impacts on student achievement.<sup>16</sup> The results of this study suggest that each teacher absence prior to the end-of-year math exam is associated with a 0.0012 standard deviation reduction in student scores on the math exam.<sup>17</sup> If a teacher were absent for the entire school year, the effect on student scores would be equivalent to replacing an average teacher with one in the tenth percentile of teacher productivity.<sup>18</sup>

USED's Educator Equity Profile for New York State reveals higher rates of teacher absenteeism, on average, in the State's highest poverty quartile schools than in those in the lowest quartiles of poverty.<sup>19</sup> Schools in the State's highest poverty quartile had, on average, 34% of teachers absent more than 10 days in 2011-12, as compared to 31% in the lowest poverty quartile.<sup>20</sup> Of the highest poverty quartile schools, those with the greatest percentages of teachers absent more than 10 days are found in the following LEAs: Hawthorne-Cedar Knolls UFSD (71%), Albany City SD (62%),

---

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Miller, R. (2012). Teacher Absence as a Leading Indicator of Student Achievement: New National Data Offer Opportunity to Examine Cost of Teacher Absence Relative to Learning Loss. Center for American Progress. Retrieved March, 22, 2015, from <https://www.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/TeacherAbsence-6.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Mayor's Management Report. (2014, September). Retrieved March 20, 2015, from [http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/downloads/pdf/mmr2014/2014\\_mmr.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/ops/downloads/pdf/mmr2014/2014_mmr.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> Herrmann, Mariesa, and Jonah Rockoff. "Worker Absence and Productivity: Evidence from Teaching." The National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper 16524 (2010). [www.nber.org](http://www.nber.org). Retrieved November 2014, from <http://www.nber.org/papers/w16524>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> "Educator Equity Profile: New York. (n.d.). Retrieved March 24, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/nyeep.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

Rochester City SD (54%), Poughkeepsie City SD (46%), and Schenectady CSD (44%).<sup>21</sup>

Teacher absences, instructional practice, and student learning are inextricably linked. Having equitable access to the most effective educators means having equitable access to teachers who are consistently present to guide instruction. Teacher absences have a significant impact on teaching and learning in classrooms. Educational productivity suffers when a regular teacher misses a single day of work. Therefore, an important means to increase student learning is to improve teacher attendance. It is important for LEAs to determine the root cause of high rates of educator absenteeism and to develop strategies to address those inequities. High rates of teacher absence can be attributed to a variety of root causes. The Department encourages LEAs to examine their local context to determine strategies that will address their unique needs.

The impact of educator attendance on teaching and learning has led USED to require aggregate building-level data collection and reporting for SIG grant requirements, as well as for the reporting of the OCR data used in USED's state-level Educator Equity Profiles, published in December 2014 (<http://1.usa.gov/1w9QtCL>). In order to ensure accurate collection and reporting of these data, the Department proposes to expand its current collection of attendance data beginning in the 2015-16 school year, which will enable districts to have one year to refine their systems to collect and report these data to the Department, with the goal of having a more accurate collection by the 2016-17 school year.

#### Limitations of the Current Data Sets

As previously stated, information on teacher absenteeism, stemming from the OCR data collection, can be found in USED's state-level Educator Equity Profiles, published in December 2014. It is important to note that the teacher attendance data used in the Educator Equity Profile are reported by LEAs directly to the OCR, a third party source, and therefore may be incomplete or inaccurate. In the "Data Notes and Methodology" section of a data snapshot on teacher equity published by the OCR, a cautionary note to users is included: "After reviewing the data, OCR is aware that inconsistencies may still remain in the data file. Users should be aware that outliers in the dataset may be a function of districts misreporting data."<sup>22</sup>

Without accurate and complete data, the Department is unable to determine the true extent of inequity in districts, and therefore, is limited in its capacity to address students' academic needs. For instance, in the 2011-12 OCR data collection, Buffalo City School District reported that 0% of their teachers were absent for more than ten days across the district. However, in a direct communication between Buffalo City School District and the Department, Buffalo acknowledged that more than 2,200 teachers were absent for more than ten days in 2011-12 demonstrating the limitations and inaccuracies of these data collected through OCR. Because the teacher attendance

---

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Issue Brief No. 4. (2014, March). Retrieved March 9, 2015, from <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-teacher-equity-snapshot.pdf>

data used in the Educator Equity Profile published by USED is submitted directly to the OCR, the Department has no ability to review or provide oversight of this collection process and thereby has limited recourse in remedying these types of data issues. This type of discrepancy in OCR reports also makes it difficult to ascertain the true rates of absenteeism in any identified district. Metrics such as teacher attendance are crucial to improving the state of equitable access and the process can be greatly improved upon by ensuring LEAs submit accurate and complete data sets to the Department, rather than to third parties.

The current required reporting of aggregate building-level teacher attendance data to the Department by Focus and Priority schools provides limited, but important information about teacher absenteeism in our state's lowest performing schools. In 2014-15, 26% of all schools included a building aggregate teacher attendance rate on their BEDS form. Expanding the data collection to include individual teacher attendance elements at the state-level for all LEAs will facilitate a more accurate and complete representation of the current attendance data. Furthermore, requiring the collection of this expanded set of attendance data for the 2015-16 school year is important as LEAs will need time to adjust and refine their systems to accurately collect and report to the Department. With stable and reliable data collected and analyzed by the Department, attendance patterns of educators can be analyzed and provide the Department, LEAs, and the public with more information as they develop comprehensive talent management systems designed to increase equitable access for all students.

### The Collection of Teacher Attendance Data in Other States

Based on a survey from the 2014 Data Quality Campaign<sup>23</sup> and other publicly available information as of March 2015 (see Appendix), sixteen states currently collect teacher attendance data: Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and West Virginia. Six states of these states report, or plan to report, such data through their normal reporting procedures, as part of accountability reporting, or as a metric included on the state report card:

- Connecticut reports the average number of days general education teachers are absent at the school and district level as part of their regular data reporting. ([http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct\\_report/StaffDTViewer.aspx](http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/StaffDTViewer.aspx); See Staff; General Education Teachers)
- Illinois will include the teacher attendance measure as part of its state report card in 2015, displaying the percentage of teachers with fewer than ten absences in a school year. (<http://illinoisreportcard.com/>; See Fast Facts About Illinois Schools, Teachers, Teacher Attendance)
- Louisiana includes average teachers' days absent by school and district as part of accountability reporting. (<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/minimum-foundation-program/2014-minimum-foundation-program-accountability-report.pdf>)

---

<sup>23</sup> Per data collected by the Data Quality Campaign (<http://dataqualitycampaign.org/>) in 2014, obtained by the Department March 5, 2015 from the Data Quality Campaign

- The Nevada State Board prepares an annual report of accountability for each LEA that includes the attendance of teachers who provide instruction. ([http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/AB/AB460\\_EN.pdf](http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/AB/AB460_EN.pdf); See page 385.3469 1)
- Ohio reports teacher attendance at the district and school-level as part of its report card. (<http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/EMIS/EMIS-Documentation>; See Current EMIS Manual, Teacher Data; Teacher Attendance)
- South Carolina reports both current and prior year teacher attendance, by district, and the attendance rate of similar districts as part of its report cards. (<https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/>; See Fact Files)

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Regents direct the Department to begin collecting data on teacher-level attendance data directly from all LEAs starting in the 2015-16 school year. This collection will enable the Department to provide oversight and technical assistance support to LEAs, ensuring the fidelity of the data and the accuracy of subsequent interpretations of it.

## Appendix

<i>State</i>	<i>Collect</i>	<i>Report</i>	<i>Notes and Sources</i>
<b>Arkansas</b>	X		Collects the total number of “days worked” for teachers at the individual level and the number of working days in the contract. ( <a href="https://adedata.arkansas.gov/sis/docs/sisman1516.pdf">https://adedata.arkansas.gov/sis/docs/sisman1516.pdf</a> )
<b>Connecticut</b>	X	X	Collects the total number of days absent for teachers and reports the average number of days general education teachers (classroom teachers) are absent at the school and district level as part of their regular data reporting. ( <a href="http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/StaffDTVviewer.aspx">http://sdeportal.ct.gov/Cedar/WEB/ct_report/StaffDTVviewer.aspx</a> ; See Staff; General Education Teachers)
<b>Florida</b>	X		Collects administrator and teacher absences and days present in the aggregate. Absence types include personal leave, sick leave, temporary duty elsewhere, other. ( <a href="http://fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates/2014-15-staff-info-system/">http://fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/database-manuals-updates/2014-15-staff-info-system/</a> ; See Days Absent and Days Present)
<b>Georgia</b>	X		Collects the total number of leave days for teachers at the individual level. Leave day types include sick leave, professional development, vacation, and other leave. ( <a href="http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/Data-Collections/Pages/FY2015-CPI-RESOURCES.aspx">http://www.gadoe.org/Technology-Services/Data-Collections/Pages/FY2015-CPI-RESOURCES.aspx</a> ; See File Layout and Edit Rules)
<b>Hawaii</b>	X		Collects the number of days absent for teachers at the individual level. Absence types include illness, family leave, personal leave, Department of Education or school sponsored activities, in-service training, and other.  The information was obtained directly from the Hawaii SEA on March 23, 2015.
<b>Idaho</b>	X		Collects individual teacher period attendance, teacher absences and reasons, which is uploaded each month as part of regular required data upload. ( <a href="http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/isee/requiredData.htm">http://www.sde.idaho.gov/site/isee/requiredData.htm</a> )
<b>Illinois</b>	X	X	The percentage of teachers with fewer than ten absences in a school year will be included on the state report card in 2015. ( <a href="http://illinoisreportcard.com">http://illinoisreportcard.com</a> ; See Fast Facts About Illinois Schools, Teachers, Teacher Attendance)
<b>Louisiana</b>	X	X	Collects the number of days absent for teachers, at the school and district level. These data are included in the state’s accountability reporting. ( <a href="http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/minimum-foundation-program/2014-minimum-foundation-program-accountability-report.pdf">http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/minimum-foundation-program/2014-minimum-foundation-program-accountability-report.pdf</a> )

<b>Massachusetts</b>	X		Collects the number of days a teacher has been present and the number of days a teacher was expected to be present in the district at the individual level. ( <a href="http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/epims/">http://www.doe.mass.edu/infoservices/data/epims/</a> ; See EPIMS Data Handbook)
<b>Mississippi</b>	X		Collects teacher attendance in each reporting period. (Per data collected by the Data Quality Campaign ( <a href="http://dataqualitycampaign.org/">http://dataqualitycampaign.org/</a> ) in 2014, obtained by the Department March 5, 2015 from the Data Quality Campaign)
<b>Nevada</b>	X	X	The State Board prepares an annual report of accountability for each LEA that includes the attendance of teachers who provide instruction. ( <a href="http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/AB/AB460_EN.pdf">http://www.leg.state.nv.us/Session/77th2013/Bills/AB/AB460_EN.pdf</a> ; See page 385.3469 1) Teacher average daily attendance is included as a filtering option on the State Report Card. ( <a href="http://www.nevadareportcard.com/di/">http://www.nevadareportcard.com/di/</a> ; See Personnel Information)
<b>New Mexico</b>	X		Collects the total number of days a teacher is absent at the individual level. Leave that is excluded from the attendance calculation includes leave under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), bereavement, jury duty, military leave, religious leave, professional development, and coaching. ( <a href="http://ped.state.nm.us/stars/">http://ped.state.nm.us/stars/</a> ; See STARS Manual for School Year 2014-2015, Volume 1: User Guide)
<b>North Carolina</b>	X		Collects teacher absence during the contract period with a corresponding reason. (Per data collected by the Data Quality Campaign ( <a href="http://dataqualitycampaign.org/">http://dataqualitycampaign.org/</a> ) in 2014, obtained by the Department March 5, 2015 from the Data Quality Campaign)
<b>Ohio</b>	X	X	Collects absence days, absence days due to long term illness, and attendance days. ( <a href="http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/EMIS/EMIS-Documentation">http://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Data/EMIS/EMIS-Documentation</a> ; See Current EMIS Manual, Teacher Data; Teacher Attendance) Reports teacher attendance at the district and school level as part of its report cards. ( <a href="http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Pages/Power-User-Reports.aspx">http://reportcard.education.ohio.gov/Pages/Power-User-Reports.aspx</a> ; See Begin, Teacher Data)
<b>South Carolina</b>	X	X	Reports current and prior year teacher attendance by district and the attendance rate of similar districts as part of its report cards. ( <a href="https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/">https://ed.sc.gov/data/report-cards/2014/</a> ; See Fact Files)
<b>West Virginia</b>	X		Collects time worked and time missed for teachers at the individual level from districts through a centralized data system. ( <a href="https://wveis.k12.wv.us/CIMS_Manuals/EMS501ug.pdf">https://wveis.k12.wv.us/CIMS_Manuals/EMS501ug.pdf</a> )