



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

Substitute Teacher Demand and Supply

June 4, 2019

What drives the demand for substitute teachers?

- **Teacher absences create the demand for substitute teachers.**
- **In addition to creating a potentially unfillable demand for substitute teachers, research consistently shows that teacher absences have a statistically significant impact on student achievement.**
- **National research also shows that schools serving higher proportions of students of color and/or students in poverty are more likely to have higher rates of teacher absenteeism.**
- **Therefore, high levels of teacher absences can interfere with our goal of closing achievement gaps and ensuring that all students are prepared for college, career, and citizenship.**

What drives the demand for substitute teachers?

- It is important for LEAs to determine the root cause of high rates of teacher absenteeism and to develop strategies to address those inequities.
 - High rates of teacher absence can be attributed to a variety of root causes.
- In June of 2015, the Board of Regents authorized the Department to begin collecting data from school districts and BOCES on teacher attendance in order to explore the New York State landscape.
- When we look at the two most recently completed school years (2016-17 and 2017-18), we see a significant variation across districts and regions of the State in the number of absences, reasons for absences, and levels of chronic absenteeism among teachers (defined as absences of 18 or more days in one school year).

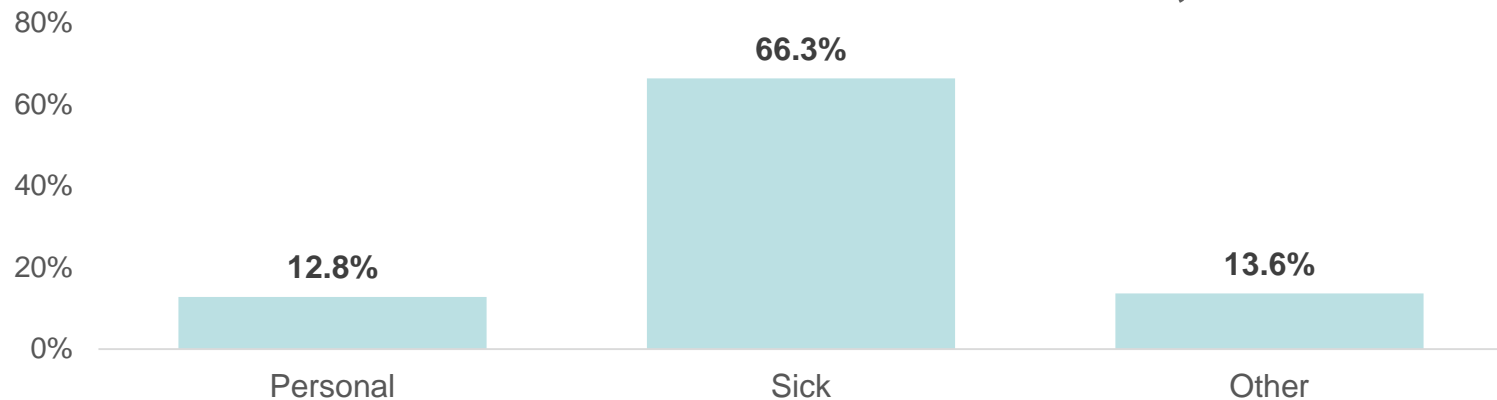
What drives the demand for substitute teachers?

- For purposes of this data collection, the Department has adopted the definition set by the U.S. Office of Civil Rights:

“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 other off-campus activities with students.**”

What do these data show?

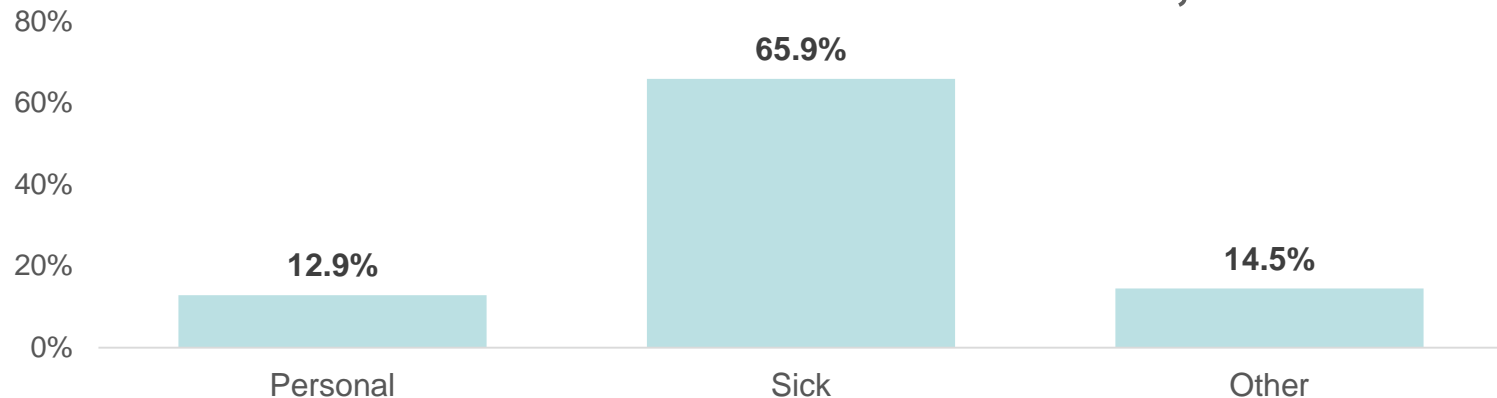
- For the 2016-17 school year, teachers were absent 1,969,239 days.
 - The mean number of days absent for an individual teacher was 9.7.
 - The average number of teacher absences in an LEA ranges from a low of 2.4 to a high of 25.4.
 - The percentage of teachers chronically absent in an LEA ranges from a low of 0.0% to a high of 45.5%.
 - On average, teachers who were chronically absent missed 37.1 days.
- When we examine the reasons for absences, we see:



*Remaining absences are attributed to maternity/paternity leave, bereavement leave, or jury duty.

What do these data show?

- For the 2017-18 school year, teachers were absent 2,107,532 days.
 - The mean number of days absent for an individual teacher was 9.9.
 - The average number of teacher absences in an LEA ranges from a low of 1.7 to a high of 28.2.
 - Similarly, the percentage of teachers chronically absent in an LEA ranges from a low of 0.0% to a high of 80.9%.
 - On average, teachers who were chronically absent missed 35.9 days.
- When we examine the reasons for absences, we see:



*Remaining absences are attributed to maternity/paternity leave, bereavement leave, or jury duty.



BOCES can help provide data for the demand (Fill Rates) for substitute teachers

- In order to determine whether the need for substitute teachers is able to be met across the State, the District Superintendents of the BOCES conducted a 4 week study at the beginning of this year (January 2, 2019 – February 4, 2019) to assess the number of absences in their regions, the number of substitutes requested, and the number of requests that were able to be filled.
- These data show that fill rates vary significantly across the State, from a low of 59% in Westchester to a high of 94% in Saint Lawrence-Lewis.
 - The average fill rate was 83%.
- Additional analysis is needed to determine whether there is any correlation between teacher absences in a BOCES region and the supply of substitute teachers.

BOCES are working with Districts to improve the supply and quality of substitutes

- **Monroe 2 BOCES has a well-established program that allows its component districts to utilize substitute teachers who are enrolled in teacher preparation programs in their regions.**
- **Programs like this both improve the quality of the substitute teachers available to school districts and create a potentially new supply of available substitute teachers.**
- **Other BOCES have started to implement or are in the process of developing similar programs:**
 - **Broome-Delaware Tioga BOCES**
 - **Erie 2 BOCES**
 - **Nassau BOCES**
 - **Orange-Ulster BOCES**
 - **Putnam-Northern Westchester BOCES**
 - **St. Lawrence-Lewis BOCES**
 - **Eastern Suffolk BOCES**
 - **Western Suffolk BOCES**
 - **Westchester BOCES**