



Destination 2025 Monthly: June 2019
Prepared by the Department of Research & Performance Management*

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Key Findings

- Over three years, both instructional school-based employees and administrative certified school based employees were present 95% of contracted days, missing an average of 9-10 days each year.
- From 2016-17 to 2018-19, the percentage of students affected by long-term subs decreased from 6.9% to 2.8%. The largest decrease was 3.5% at the high school level.
- In each year, fewer than 1% of students were assigned to teachers who taught outside their areas of certification.

Employee Absences

Data provided by the Department of Human Resources for fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019 were analyzed to determine the degree of absenteeism among those Shelby County Schools employees who had the most direct impact on student achievement. Teachers, school administrators, and central office administrators (classified by Human Resources as salaried administrative and instructional employees) comprised the employee sample population. Non-certificated support personnel classified by Human Resources as Clerical, Classroom Instructional Support, Food Service, Plant Maintenance, and Transportation were not included in this analysis. Attendance rates and reasons for absence were examined. Data were grouped according to both school-based and non-school-based administrative and instructional employees.

The overall three-year attendance rate for school-based employee groups was 95%, and this percentage was nearly the same for both school-based administrative (96%) and school-based instructional (95%) employees. The overall average attendance rate for non-school-based employees was 94%. The attendance rate for non-school-based administrative employees was 92%, and the attendance rate for non-school-based instructional employees was 95%. Three-year averages are presented below.

Three-year average attendance rates (FY 2017 – 2019)

Employee Type	Work Base	Avg. # Employees	Avg, Contract Days	Avg. Days Absent	Avg. Attendance Rate
All Groups	School Based	9,259	190	9	95%
	Non-School Based	1,605	211	14	94%
Administrative Certified	School Based	317	219	10	95%
	Non-School Based	191	229	18	92%
Administrative Non-Certificated	School Based	15	197	9	96%
	Non-School Based	118	243	19	92%
Instruction	School Based	4,865	194	10	95%
	Non-School Based	293	210	11	95%

*This brief contains teacher attendance/certification data provided by the Department of Human Resources.



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When examining attendance rates over time for both school-based and non-school-based employees, attendance has remained relatively flat since FY2015 and has generally ranged from 93% to 96%.

Employee Attendance Rates Over Time

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Non-School Based	93.2%	95.3%	95.7%	93.8%	92.8%
School Based	95.5%	95.0%	95.0%	95.6%	94.5%

The most frequent reasons for absence for all groups in 2019 were illness (66%), Board-approved absences (11%), and vacation (9%). The graph below shows the comparison of school-based to non-school-based employees. Sick days were the most frequent reason for absences for both school-based employees (70%) and non-school based employees (43%). Note that medical leave of absence was not presented as a separate reason for absence in Human Resources data. Sick days may reflect some employees on medical leave.

Days Absent by Reason

		2017	2018	2019
School Based	SICK	67.28%	72.12%	69.60%
	Vacation	3.37%	3.28%	3.57%
	Board Approved	12.50%	9.52%	10.69%
	Personal	7.10%	6.84%	6.65%
	Professional Day	7.32%	5.88%	7.10%
	Unpaid Absence	0.92%	0.69%	0.50%
	Jury Duty	0.72%	0.55%	0.52%
	On-Job Injury	0.62%	0.82%	1.12%
	Military	0.14%	0.23%	0.24%
	Religious Holiday	0.04%	0.05%	0.02%
	Legislative Leave	0.00%	0.02%	0.01%
	Non-School Based	SICK	42.85%	45.61%
Vacation		42.15%	41.81%	41.56%
Board Approved		7.72%	6.70%	9.72%
Personal		2.91%	2.43%	2.41%
Professional Day		2.73%	1.60%	2.26%
Unpaid Absence		0.64%	0.66%	0.25%
Jury Duty		0.26%	0.48%	0.25%
On-Job Injury		0.69%	0.55%	0.31%
Military		0.05%	0.01%	0.05%
Legislative Leave			0.14%	0.01%

The most frequent reasons for absence for teachers in 2019 were illness (66%), Board-approved absences (12%), and personal days (8%).

Days Absent by Reason

		2017	2018	2019
Teacher	SICK	65.14%	68.32%	66.07%
	BOARD APPROVED	12.31%	10.13%	11.78%
	PERSONAL	8.02%	8.37%	8.42%
	Professional Day	6.38%	5.44%	7.09%
	SAL ADJ - UNPAID ABS	4.23%	4.57%	3.69%
	UNPAID ABSENCE	1.52%	1.03%	0.73%
	ON-JOB INJURY	0.88%	0.83%	1.04%
	VACATION	0.66%	0.59%	0.45%
	JURY DUTY	0.63%	0.46%	0.52%
	MILITARY	0.20%	0.21%	0.19%
	Religious Holiday	0.04%	0.03%	0.02%
	LEGISLATIVE LEAVE	0.00%	0.02%	0.01%

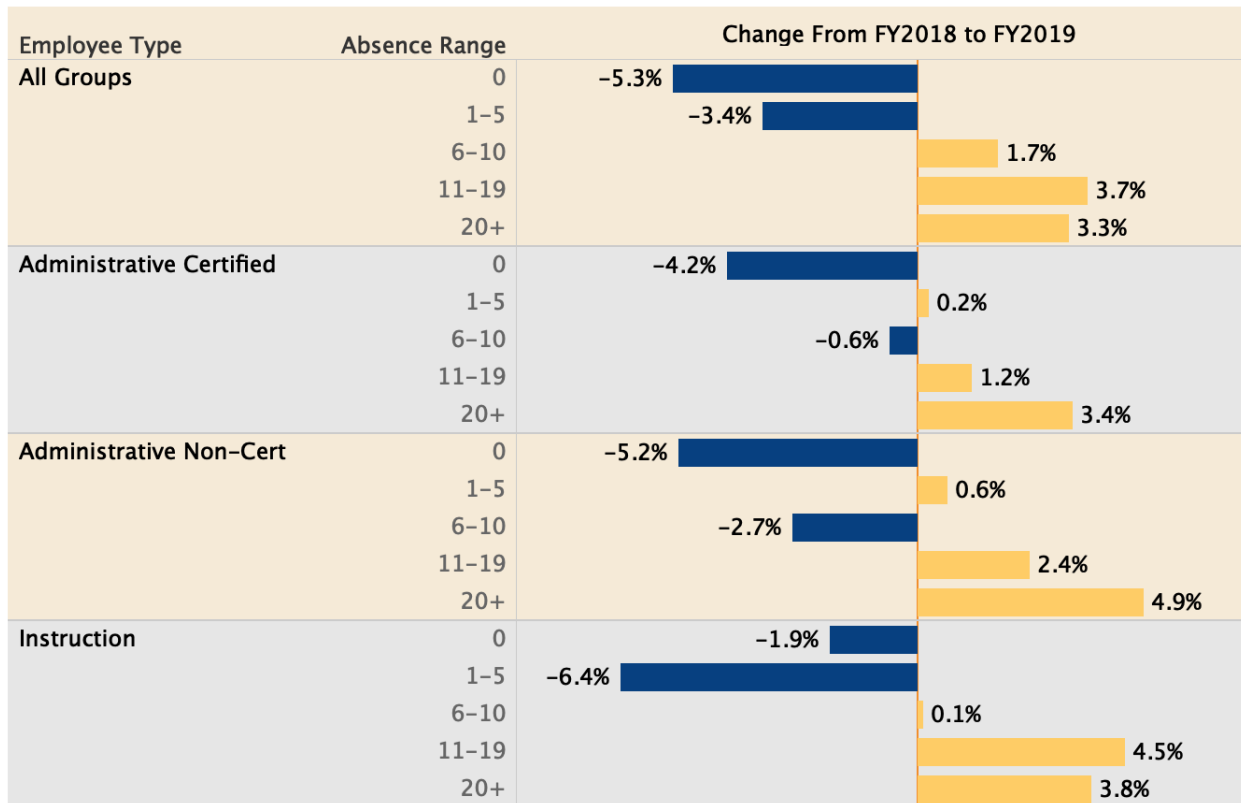


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In 2019, the percentage of employees who missed more than 10 days increased for each group, and 33% percent of all employees missed an average of more than 10 days across all absence types.

Comparison by employee type revealed that 78% of Administrative Non-Certificated employees, 55% of Administrative Certified employees, and 40% of Instructional employees were absent more than 10 days. This is an expected trend given that most school-based staff including teachers do not have vacation days while year-round full-time employees do earn vacation time and have additional contracted days that could contribute to a higher number of absences. Absences may reflect some employees on medical leave.



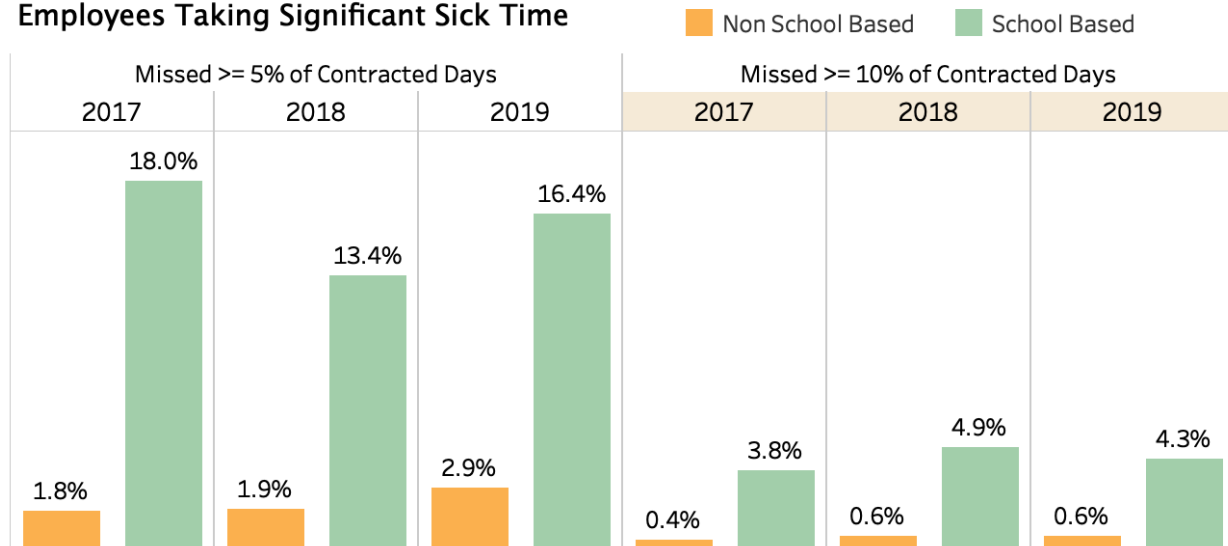
Given the varying number of contracted days and approved absence types for different employee groups, the chart that follows shows how many employees may be at risk for absenteeism based on the percentage of sick days taken during the year. A notable change in 2019 is a 3-point increase in the number of school-based employees who missed at least 5% of contracted days due to illness. However, the employees in this group should be considered at risk on an individual, case-by-case basis, as some may be on medical leave or have other extenuating circumstances that have contributed to their absences due to illness.



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Employees Taking Significant Sick Time



Long-term Substitutes

Long-term substitute positions for K-12 regular classroom teachers were included in this analysis. Charter schools were excluded because teacher staffing is not managed centrally for these schools. Specialist positions such as counselor, librarian, art, music, and PE were not included since they serve the whole school instead of a subset of students. On average, 2% of students each received 74 days of classroom instruction from long-term substitute teachers in 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Year	Long-term Substitutes	Avg. Instructional Days	Students Served	Avg. District Enrollment	Avg. % of District Enrollment
2016-17	91	77	3,069	93,004	3.3%
2017-18	65	67	1,348	95,755	1.4%
2018-19	60	78	1,209	92,182	1.3%

From 2016-17 to 2018-19, the percentage of students effected by long-term subs decreased from 6.9% to 2.8%. The largest decrease was 3.5% at the high school level.

Level	Year	Long-term Substitutes	Instructional Days	Students Served	Enrollment	% of Enrollment
Elementary	2016-17	72	5,496	1,633	49,770	3.3%
	2017-18	53	3,264	1,088	54,023	2.0%
	2018-19	49	3,715	999	47,737	2.1%
Middle	2016-17	6	482	387	17,599	2.2%
	2017-18	2	71	39	16,108	0.2%
	2018-19	3	258	57	16,777	0.3%
High	2016-17	13	996	1,049	25,635	4.1%
	2017-18	9	941	196	25,624	0.8%
	2018-19	8	712	153	27,668	0.6%



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Teachers on Waiver

In 2019, less than one percent of K-12 students were assigned to teachers who taught outside their areas of certification, meaning they received waivers. Charter schools were excluded because teacher staffing is not managed centrally for these schools. Instances of teachers who taught outside their areas of certification were most frequent in the elementary schools.

Elementary	2016-17	2	44	49,770	0.1%
	2017-18	4	77	54,023	0.1%
	2018-19	9	147	47,737	0.3%
Middle	2016-17	3	74	17,599	0.4%
	2017-18	1	8	16,108	0.0%
	2018-19	3	62	16,777	0.4%
High	2016-17	4	131	25,635	0.5%
	2017-18	1	35	25,624	0.1%
	2018-19	4	92	27,668	0.3%
		Teachers On Waivers	Students Served	Enrollment	% of Enrollment