

School Dismissal Monitoring System (SDMS)

Request for Revision

OMB Control Number 0920-0849

Supporting Statement B

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B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

Although no statistical methodology is used for the investigations, we will use this section of the submission to describe how the data are collected.

For the purposes of collecting school dismissal information, a common reporting form (Attachment 4) has been created that requires only the name and zip code of the school or school district, the date they first dismiss students, the projected date they plan to re-open, and reasons for the dismissal. Optional information includes the person's name, their title; the name of their organization/agency; a phone number; and email address. This optional information is not kept as part of the data set, but only used for data verification procedures.

SDMS will handle direct reports from schools and school districts in two ways. States with a school dismissal monitoring system already in place will provide a list of dismissed schools to CDC daily. CDC will provide one-on-one technical assistance to any state considering such a system and will jointly determine with the state the best approach for sharing data. If a state does not have a sustainable school dismissal monitoring system, then schools, school districts, and local health agencies are encouraged to use SDMS to report dismissals to CDC and state agencies.

SDMS reporting form requires only the name and zip code of the school or school district, the date they first dismiss students, the projected date they plan to re-open and, as

indicated above, the reason the school or school district was closed. Schools, school districts, and local public health agencies may complete this form via the Web, email, or fax. All Web and email submissions will be sent simultaneously to CDC and a designated state agency. All faxed submissions to CDC will be emailed as a PDF file to a designated state agency. For all submitted reports of a school dismissal, CDC will use publicly available information from the National Center for Education Statistics to determine the number of students and teachers impacted.

1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

This data collection is intended to capture all dismissals that occur in schools, and school districts in the United States. Because SDMS is a national surveillance system based on passive case finding, no sampling is employed.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

Information is collected by SDMS using a standard data collection form (Attachment 4) that requires name and zip code of the school or school district, the date they first dismiss students, the projected date they plan to re-open, and reasons for dismissal. Optional information includes the name of the respondent, their title, the name of their organization/agency name, a phone number, and email address. This optional information is not kept as part of the data set, but only used for data verification procedures. SDMS will handle direct reports from schools and school districts in two ways. States with a school dismissal monitoring system already in place will provide a list of dismissed schools to CDC daily. CDC will provide one-on-one technical assistance to any state considering such a system and will jointly determine with the state the best approach for sharing data. If a state does not have a sustainable school dismissal

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3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal with No Response

SDMS utilizes online searches for news articles and broadcasts reporting school dismissals, as well as state and local health and education agency websites listing school dismissals. During the 2009 H1N1 influenza response, some reports also were obtained from the American Association of School Administrators (AASA). At CDC's request AASA posted a form on their web site on May 1, 2009 for schools and school districts to report school dismissals to AASA. These reports were then forwarded to CDC. The Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (OSDFS) at ED and other national health and education organizations also posted a link on their web sites for schools and school districts to report school dismissals. An attempt was made to verify every dismissal by reviewing health and education agency websites to look for official announcements,

“dear parent” letters, or other information verifying the decision to dismiss students or by contacting the local health or education agency directly if the online approach did not yield sufficient information.

Each state was asked to appoint a single school dismissal monitoring contact in either the health or education agency even if that state also had its own school dismissal monitoring system already in place. In the 2009 H1N1 influenza pandemic response, 18 states appointed a contact from the state education agency and the remaining 33 states (including the District of Columbia) appointed a contact from the state health agency. In addition, the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) provided a school dismissal monitoring contact. While duties varied from state to state, the school dismissal monitoring contacts were responsible for administering state-based systems where they existed; encouraging schools, districts, and local health agencies to report school dismissals; receiving direct reports of school dismissals from schools, school districts, and local health agencies in their state; helping to verify reports of school dismissals; distributing school dismissal reports to others in their agency and other agencies; and serving as the first point of contact for CDC for any school dismissal monitoring issue in their state. The school dismissal monitoring contacts proved to be a critical component of SDMS. Many interacted daily with CDC and contributed significantly to timely and accurate reporting of school dismissal data.

4. Tests of Procedures or Methods to be Undertaken

CDC constructed a master Excel database (using the daily spreadsheets) of all school dismissals that were detected during the fall of 2009. Analyses of the lag between the first day of each dismissal event and the day each event was first included in an

SDMS report indicated that 67.1% of all dismissal events were reported on the day they first occurred, and 81.9% were reported on the day they occurred or only one day later. In many instances, the dismissal events reported one day later were reported to the SDMS on the day they occurred, but after the cutoff time (1:00 PM) for the daily report. The median number of days it took to report all school dismissal events was 0 days, the mean was 2.4 days, and the range was 0 to 62 days. This process will be repeated for all future activations of SDMS.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects and Individuals Collecting and/or Analyzing Data

No individuals were consulted on statistical aspects or data collection and analysis, because this ICR does not employ statistical methods.