



Harris County  
**Public Health**  
Building a Healthy Community



# Tracking Flu in a Large Urban Area

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Harris County Public Health

9<sup>th</sup> Annual Influenza Surveillance Workshop

August 16, 2016



Chronic Disease



Food Safety



Emergency Preparedness



Environmental Health



Infectious Diseases



Injury



Social, Mental, and Emotional Wellbeing



# HCPH and Harris County

- HCPH serves as the county health department for unincorporated Harris County
- Over 700 public health professionals
- Third most populous county in the nation; estimated 4.34 million
  - Approximately 2.2 million in HCPH jurisdiction
- Covers over 1,778 square miles (approximately the size of Rhode Island)
- Geographically, politically, and demographically diverse





# Why School-Based Surveillance?

- Children play a key role in the spread of influenza
- Approximately 24% under 15 years, additional 7% 15-19 years
- Of 2.3 million residents, 540,000 are children enrolled in public school
- 86% (18/21) Independent School Districts (ISDs) are in the HCPH jurisdiction
- Strong, long-term relationship with school nurses
- Relationship was vital during flu portal implementation in 2009



# Harris County Public Health Flu Portal



- Web-based surveillance tool
  - First implemented in 2009
  - Secure, credentialed
- School nurses voluntarily report daily absenteeism data
  - Faculty, staff, students
  - School enrollment, total absenteeism/due to ILI, clinic visits/due to ILI
- Epidemiologists at HCPH analyze data and create weekly flu summary reports
  - Disseminated to school district health coordinators and made available to the public
- Annual analysis by students/interns



# Flu Portal

## Disease Control & Clinical Prevention Disease Control & Medical Epidemiology

Logoff |

### Share Your Health Data

Blog  
Flu Prevention Resources  
Flu Form  
Morbidity Form  
Hospital ILI Form  
Chickenpox Form  
Document Manager  
Reports  
Site Admin

### Action Items

Visible By  
Administrators Only

The HCPHES ILI Web Form is currently being upgraded; additional features are being added to make reporting and providing information to you easier.

### Helpful Resources

Healthy people,  
Healthy communities,  
a Healthy Harris County



These links provide resources that can help you in your work:

- [2010-2011 Influenza Season](#)
- [It's Up To You To Stop The Flu](#)
- [Harris County Public Health & Environmental Services homepage](#)
- [Provider Resources for Conversations with Parents](#)
- [CDC Homepage](#) and [CDC Flu Site](#)

### Flu Form

\*For District Use Only\*

School

[Select an answer]

ILI is defined as a student or faculty member with temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, cough and/or sore throat. Other symptoms include: malaise, muscle aches, runny nose, chills, and/or headache.

#### School Information

Reporting Date Enrollment

9/5/11

1000

Students Present

820

Please provide daily absenteeism totals and your perception of flu activity:

Students Absent

180

Students Absent with ILI

23

Seen by nurse

14

Seen with ILI by nurse

U

Did your school close?

No

Was ILI the reason?

No

# of students with ILI in your school is:

Not Changing

#### Additional Information

Total # of Faculty / Staff

90

Faculty absent

4

Faculty with ILI

U

Please share any other findings or comments you may have:

Submit form



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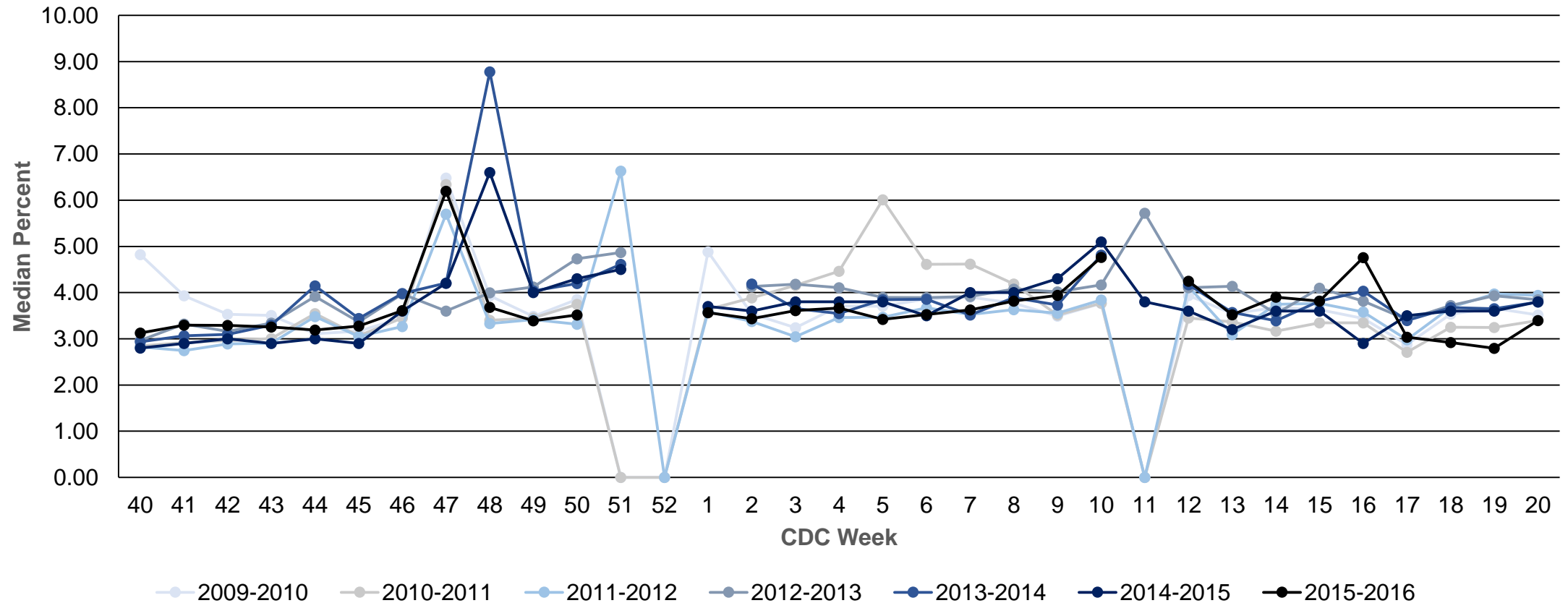


Injury



Social, Mental, and Emotional Wellbeing

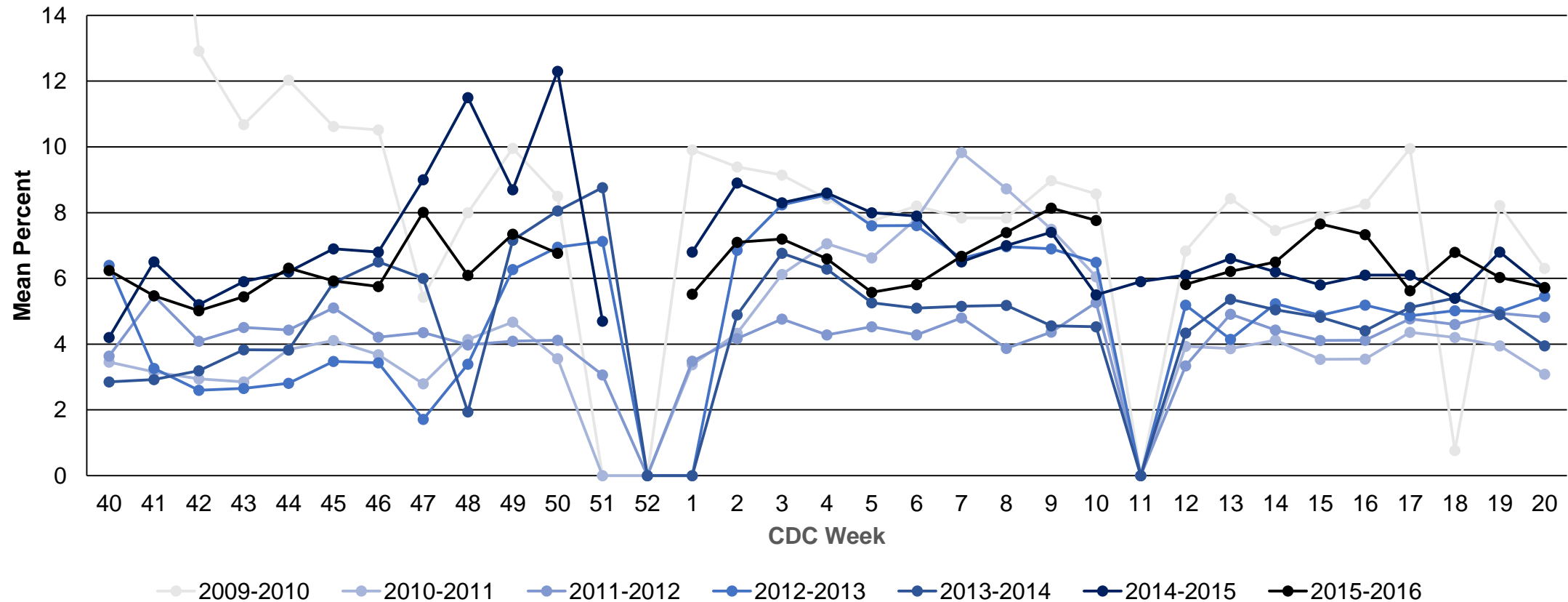
# Median Percent Absenteeism in Harris County Schools, 2009-2016



Harris County School-Based Influenza Surveillance Project, Summer 2016  
By: Natasha Wahab, MPH Candidate, The University Of Texas School of Public Health



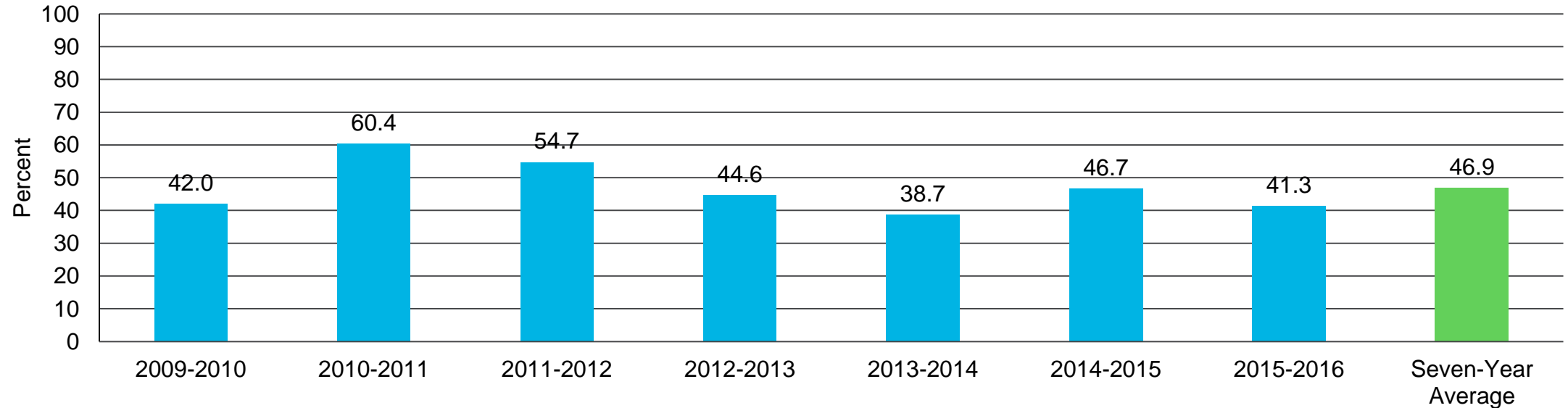
# Mean Percent Absenteeism Due to ILI in Harris County Schools, 2009-2016



**Note:** Graph excludes ILI-related peak in absenteeism during 2009-2010 CDC weeks 40-41.

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# Percentage of Harris County Schools Reporting, 2009-2016



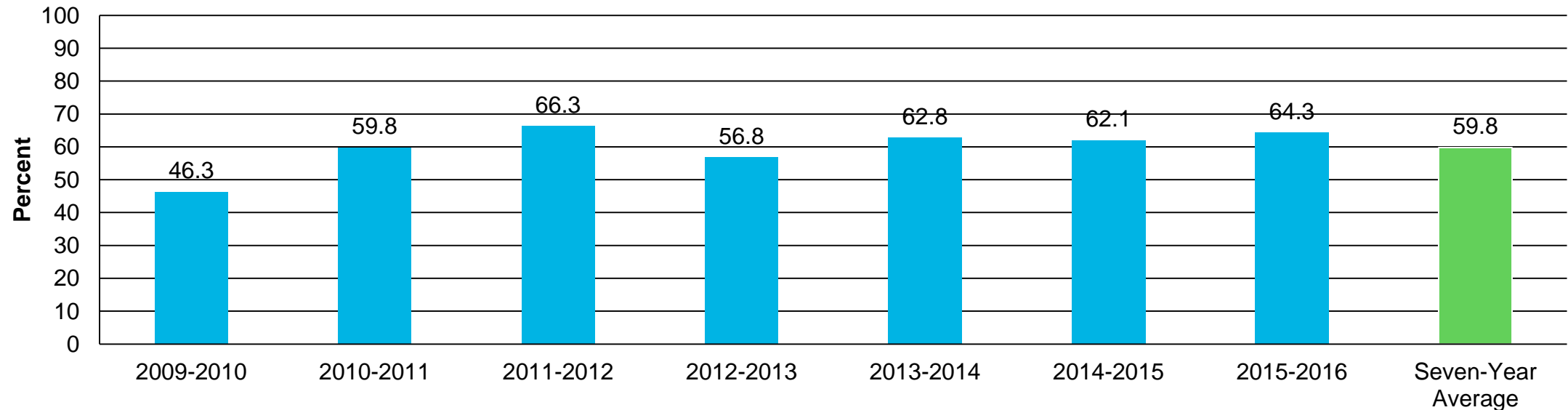
- 238/576 (41.3%) of schools reported data during the 2015-2016 season
- 10/18 (55.6%) independent school districts

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# Percentage of Harris County Schools Reporting Consistently, 2009-2016



- 153/238 (64.3%) of schools that reported data during the 2015-2016 season did so consistently
- 9/18 (50.0%) independent school districts

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# Harris County Public Health

## { Vision }

- Healthy People,
- Healthy Communities,
- A Healthy Harris County

## { Values }

- Excellence
- Compassion
- Flexibility
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Professionalism
- Equity

## { Mission }

- Promoting a Health and Safe Community
- Preventing Injury and Illness
- Protecting You

[www.hcphtx.org](http://www.hcphtx.org)

