

## Policy Review: School Exclusion Policy for Nonvaccinated Students

# Introduction

- One of the roles of government is to protect the populace by enacting policies for the greater good
  - Mandatory vaccinations for school entry are one of those policies
- 1800's Smallpox
  - 400,000 were dying annually in Europe
    - 30% mortality rate
  - Edward Jenner's vaccine
  - Mandatory vaccination
    - Victim of its own success
    - Fear of vaccine safety
  - Rise of Anti Vaccination Leagues

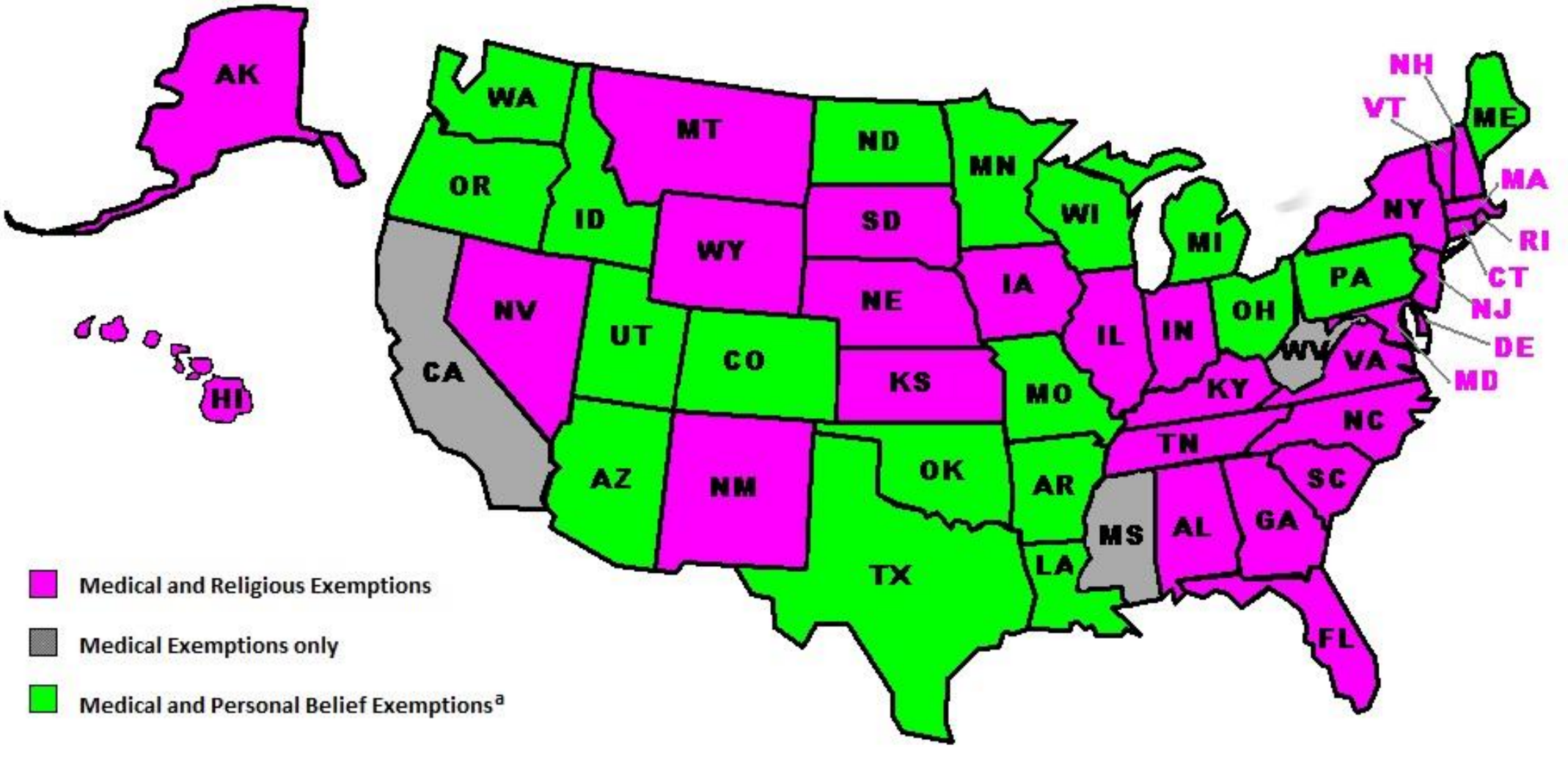
# US Legislation

- *Jacobson v the State of Massachusetts* 1905
  - **Case:** Mandatory vaccination violates civil liberties
  - **Ruling:** The state has the right to impose mandatory vaccination if it is for the benefit of the community





# Exemptions



# Kansas Statute



- Kansas state law requires students enrolled in school to be immunized with vaccines designated by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE)
  - Allows for exemptions on medical or religious grounds (K.S.A. 72-5209 *et seq.*).
- Local school boards and governing authorities of nonpublic schools are authorized to exclude students who have not been vaccinated according to the requirements (K.S.A. 72-5211a).
  - Each district/governing body has the ability to create their own policies regarding exclusion at the individual level
  - As a result these policies vary greatly from district to district

- In July 2016, the Immunize Kansas Coalition (IKC) – a group of Kansas providers, health department officials, researchers and educators working together to improve vaccine rates and protect Kansans against vaccine-preventable diseases – distributed a model school immunization exclusion policy to all school nurses in Kansas.
  - Written school policy
  - Exclusion date 6 weeks after enrollment date



**IMMUNIZE  
KANSAS  
COALITION**



- Kansas State University
  - BS Anthropology and Archaeology
  - MS Public Health (Spring 2018)
- Field Experience
  - Kansas Health Institute
  - Charlie Hunt

Jeni McDonald

# Methods



# Methods

- Literature review to understand policies of Kansas and surrounding states
- Qualtrics Survey emailed to Health Coordinator for each district
- Primary sources were KDHE Kindergarten Immunization Survey and School Nurse Survey
  - Total of 8 questions
- Results are reported by population density groups: Frontier, Rural, Dense Rural, Semi Urban and Urban
- Results are also reported by KDHE district regions: Northwest, Southwest, North Central, South Central, Northeast and Southeast

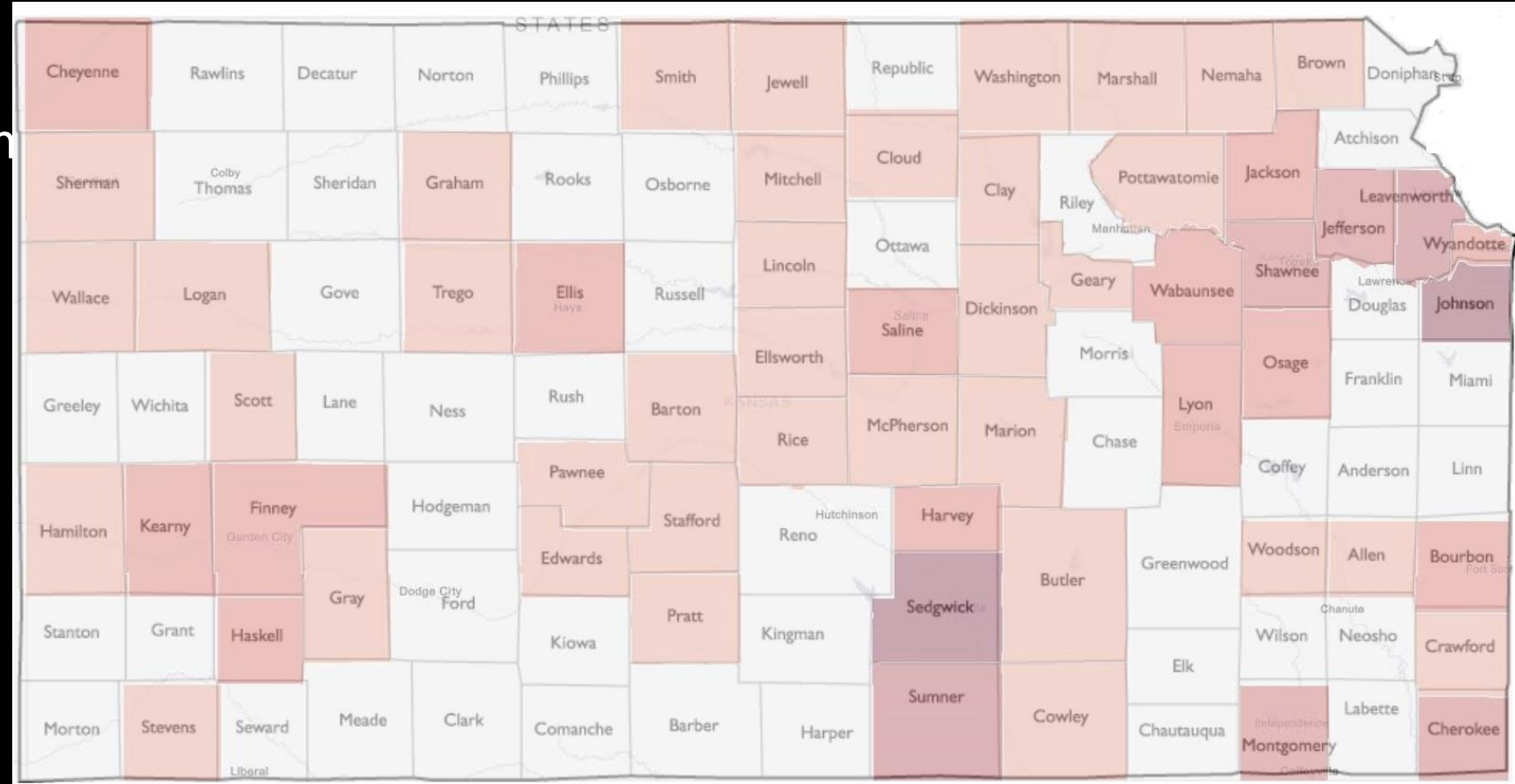
# School Nurse Survey- Background

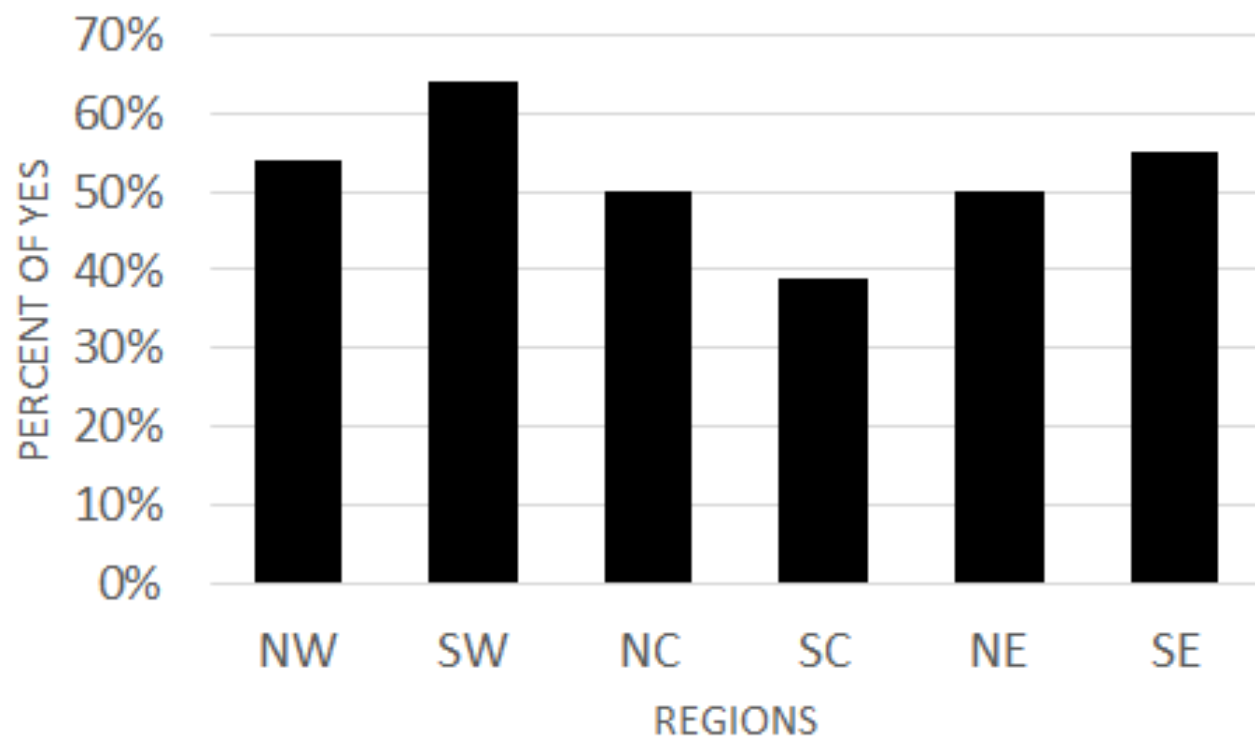
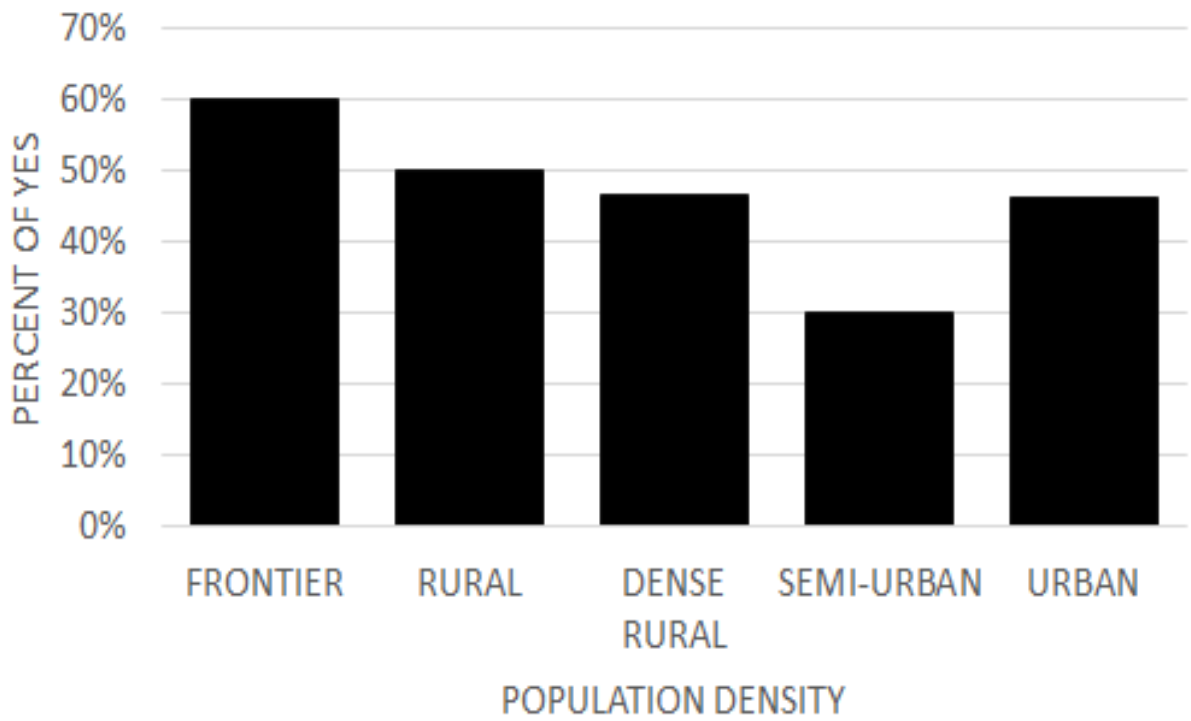
- Annually, KDHE sends out a school nurse survey
  - There had been a lapse in this being sent for 2 years
  - Survey of public schools and accredited private schools in the state
    - To study the school nurse workforce
    - Management of students with chronic diseases
    - Health screenings data
    - Immunization policies
      - Added to this section were questions about:
        - IKC's model policy
        - Grace periods
        - Exclusion policies



# Results

- 25% of Districts responded in full to the Survey by March 30th
- 30% Public Schools 11% Private
- Due to low return rate from Private schools further data will be reported by District Regions or Population Density





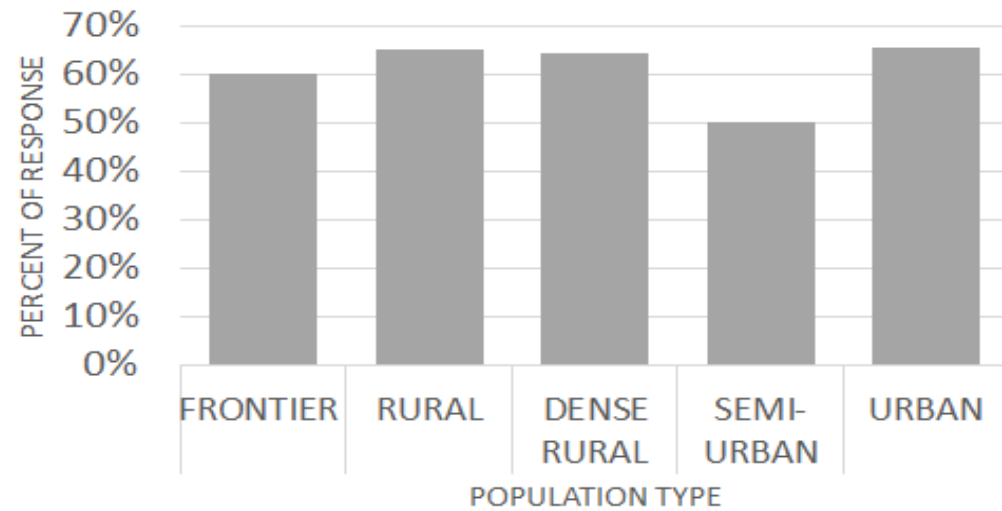
- 49% YES
- 51% NO
- (n=99)

Do you recall seeing the IKC Policy sent out July of 2016?



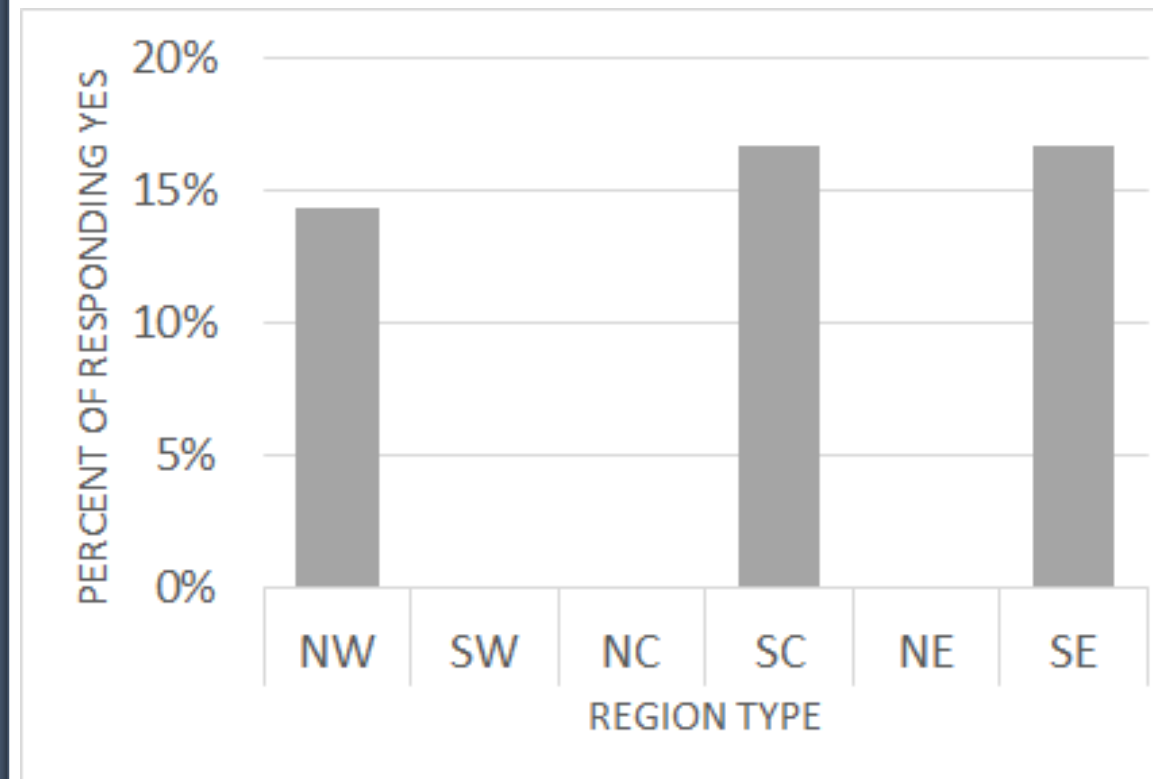
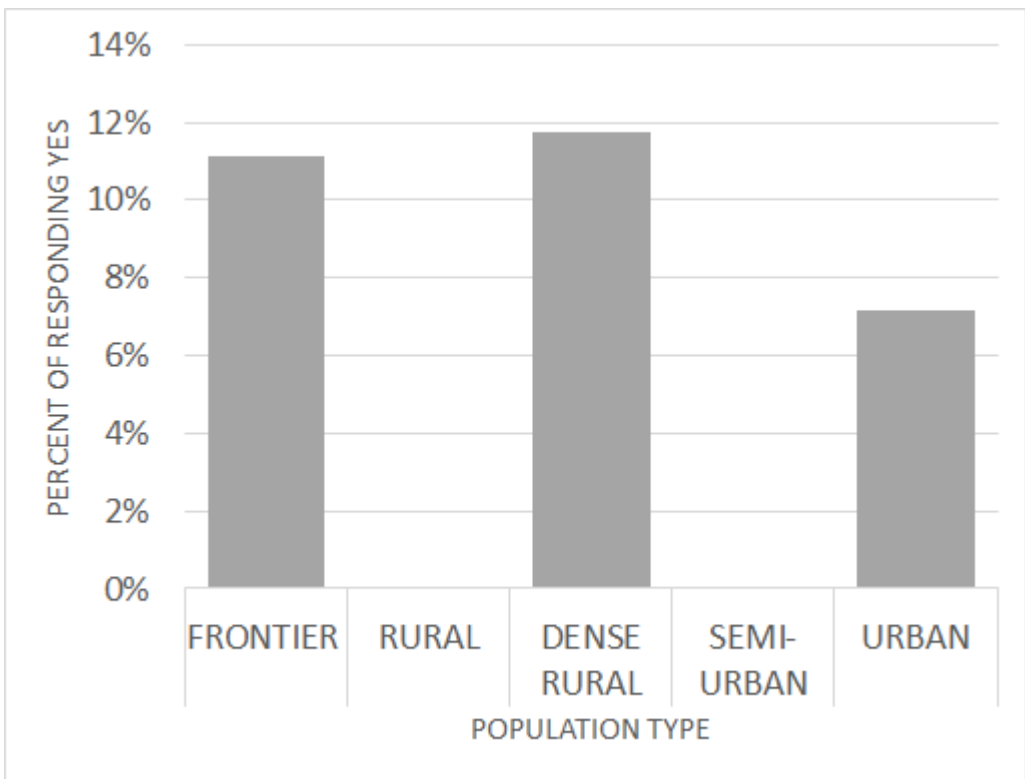
# Does your district have a written immunization exclusion policy?

63% YES 23% NO 14% UNSURE (n=99)



When was your district's  
immunization exclusion policy  
adopted? (n=33)

- Prior to 1989: 13% (4)
- 1990 – 1999: 10% (3)
- 2000-2009: 20% (6)
- 2010-2014: 20% (6)
- 2015 or later: 37% (11)



Did your district either adopt or revise its immunization exclusion policy in response to receiving the IKC Model Policy?

7% (4) YES

59% (34) NO  
(n=58)

34.5% (20) UNSURE

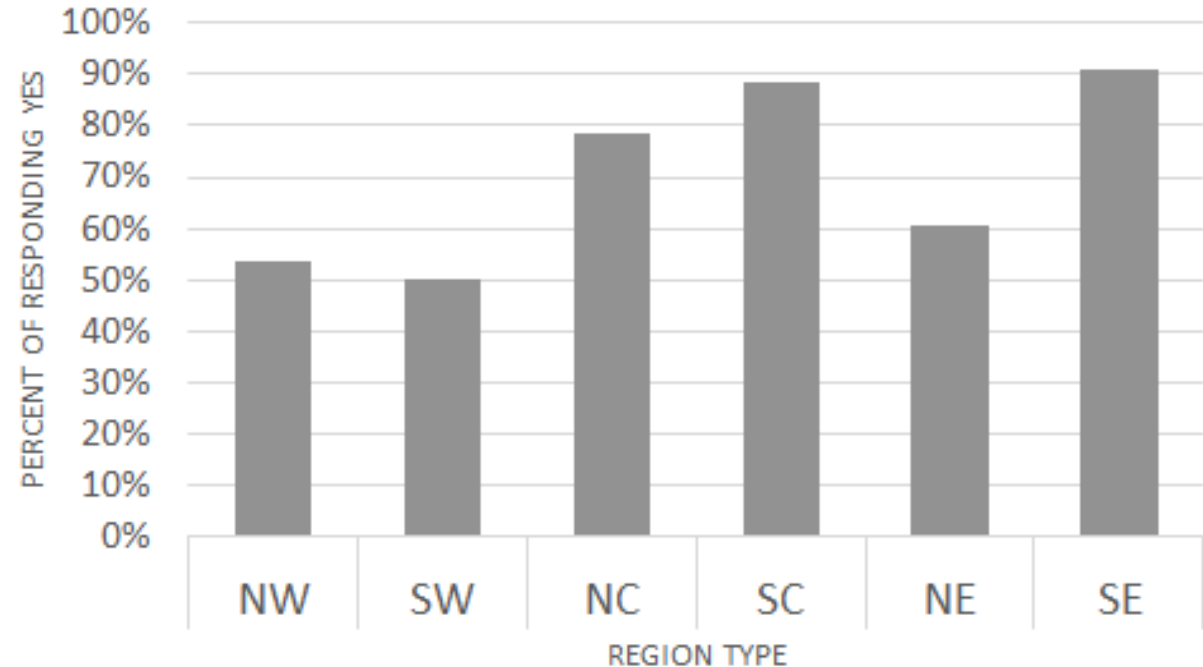
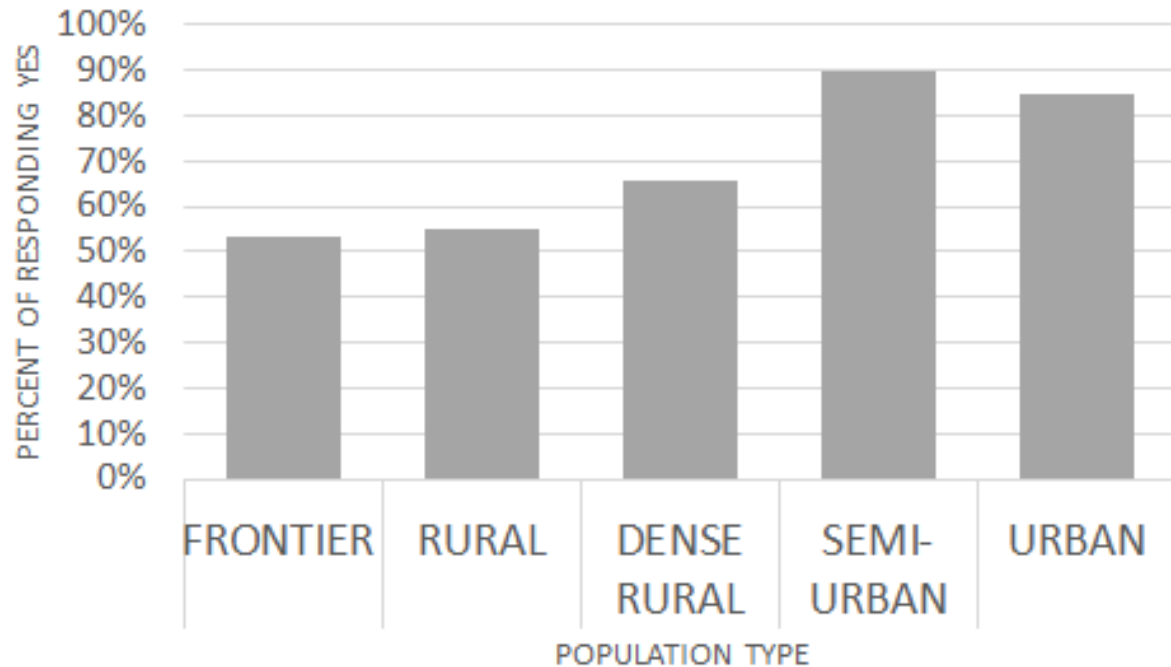
# With or without a grace period, does your district exclude students who have not received the required immunizations and who do not have a medical or religious exemption?

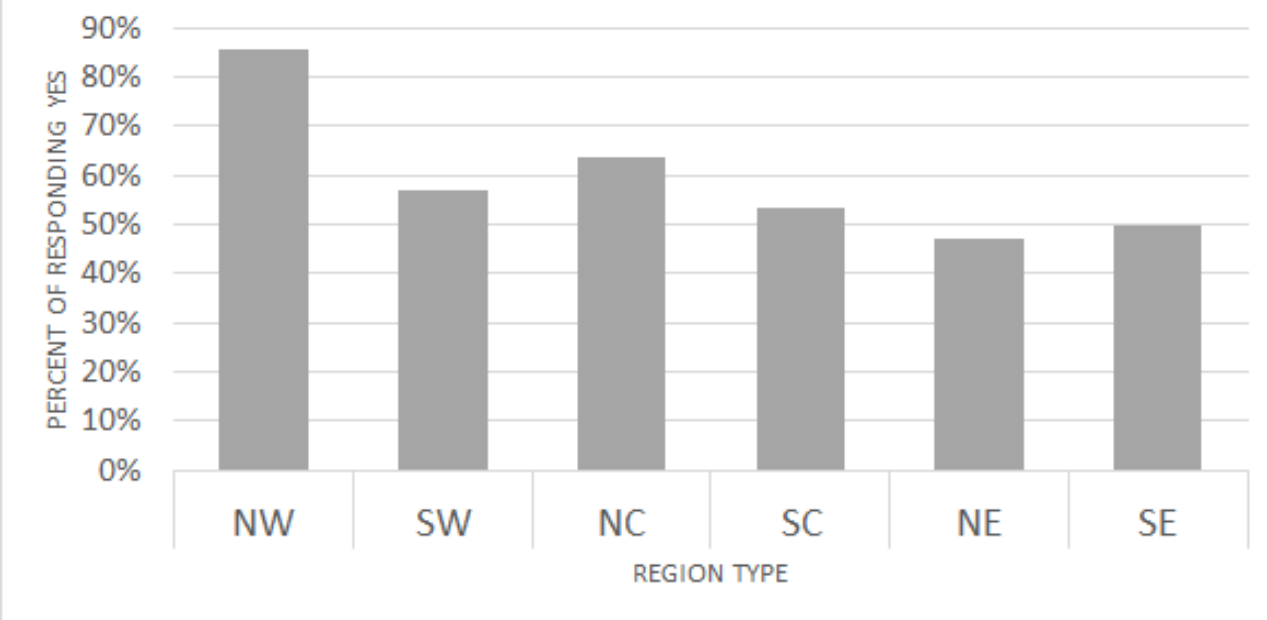
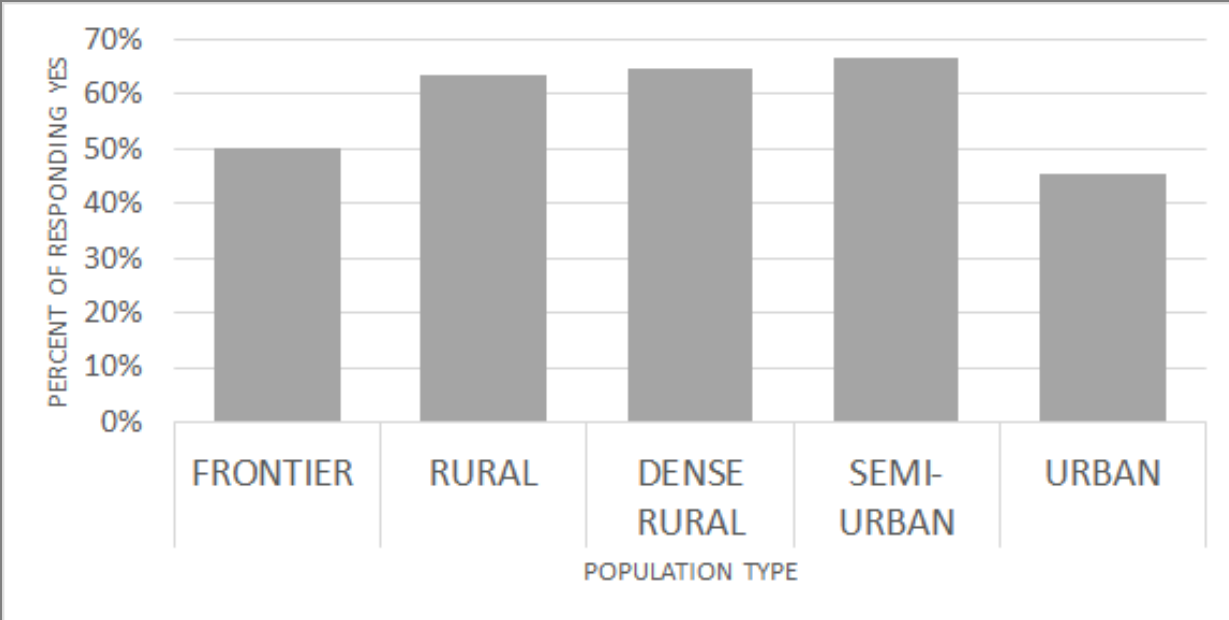
69% (67) YES

27% (26) NO

4%(4) UNSURE

(n=97)

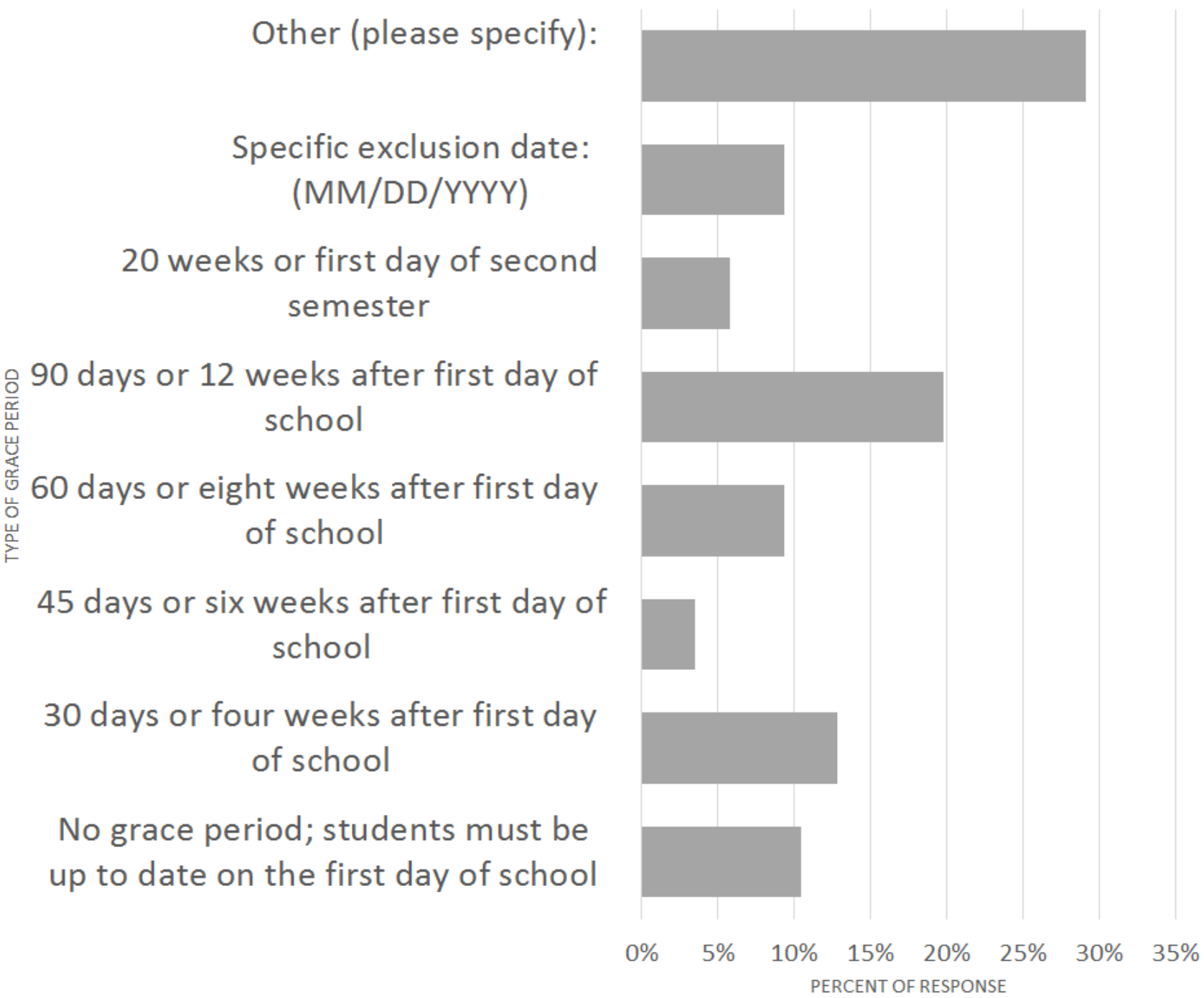




Outside of a grace period, does your district allow for exceptions to excluding students, either informally (e.g., case by case basis) or by policy (e.g., parents or guardians sign a statement that they understand the risks, etc.)?

57% (38) YES      34% (23) NO      9% (6) UNSURE      (n=67)





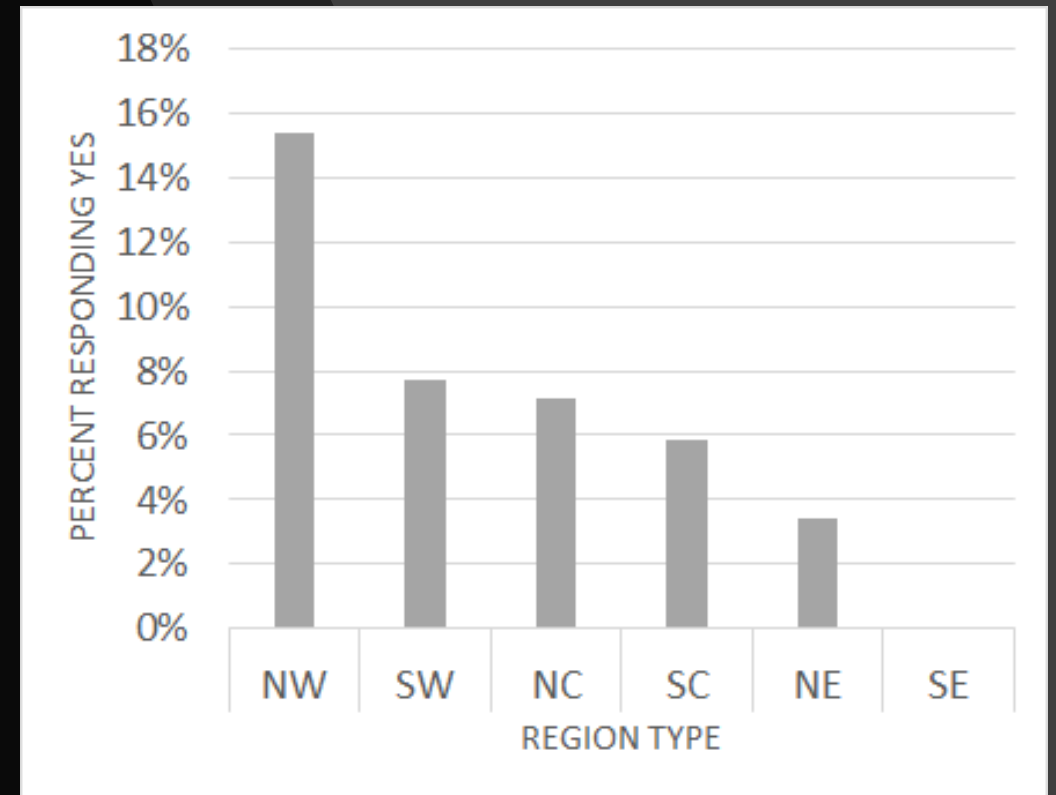
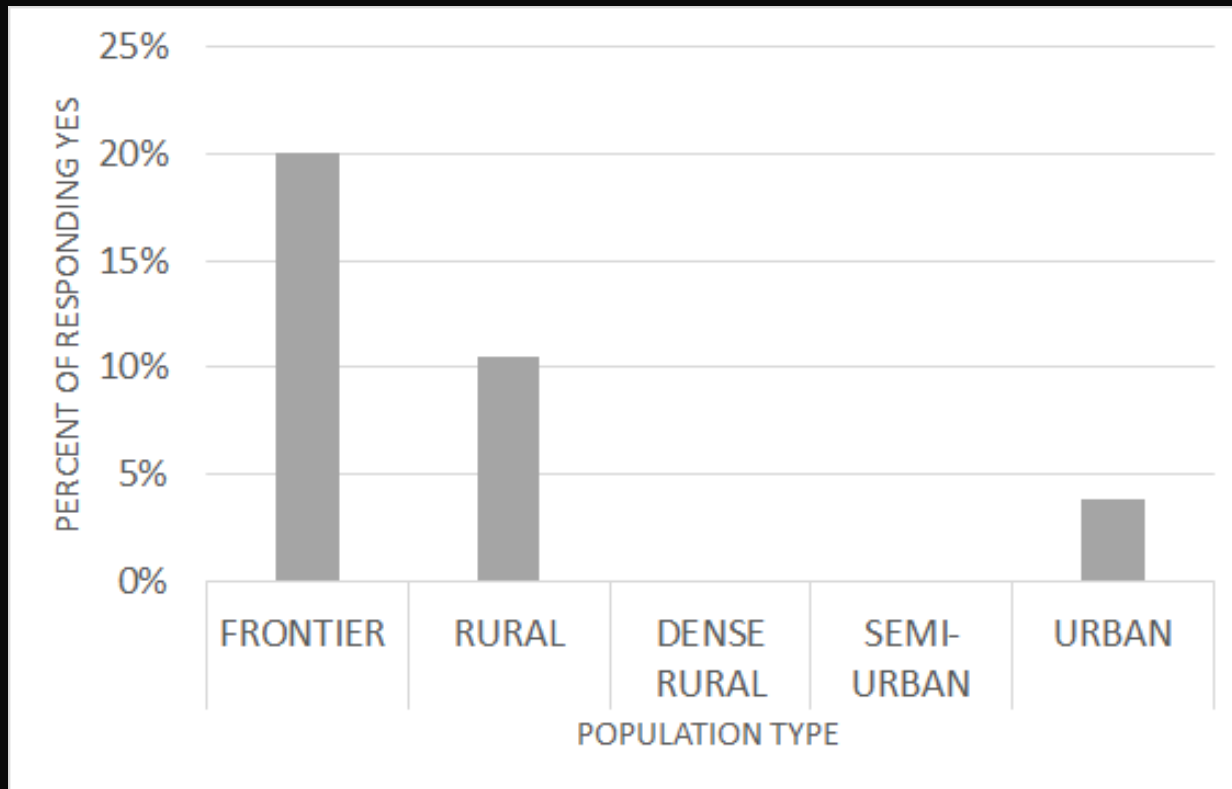
According to either your district's written policy or informal practice, how long is the grace period for students to begin receiving required immunizations before they are excluded? (n=86)

## Respondents replying 'other' to grace period (n=25)

- 48% (12) indicated that they do not exclude, so there was no need for an exclusion policy,
  - 59% (7) send reminders to parents to get children up to date on immunizations,
  - 8.% (1) indicated they were all up to date,
  - 8.% (1) did not exclude because it was more important to have students in school.
  - 25% (3) indicated they only excluded if there is a disease outbreak and they student is not immunized.
- 36% (9) indicated that they exclude during the month of October.
- 8% (2) determine their exclusion date by when the principal, or school nurse decide of the individual school.
- 4% (1) indicated the students must be up to date by the end of the first semester.
- 4% (1) indicated they had 7 days from enrollment.

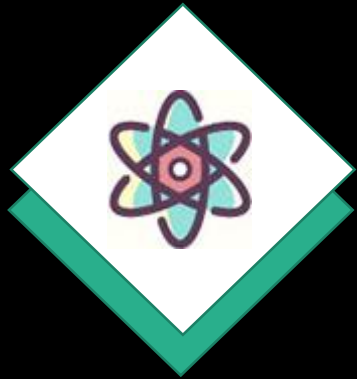
# Does your district intend to modify its immunization exclusion policy in the next 12 months?

6% (6) YES    49.5% (48) NO    44% (43) UNSURE    (n=97)



# Why change the district policy?

(n=6)



33% (2) responded they were changing the policy as the current policy was not being followed.



17% (1) wanted to change the policy to allow students to stay in school when doctor's appointments exceeded the exclusion date.



17% (1) will change the policy to follow recommendations.



17% (1) will change the policy to put a specific date in it.



17% (1) are changing the policy by putting one in place.

# Discussion



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- Exclusion policies support school districts in the event of a vaccine preventable outbreak by providing a consistent message.
- Grace periods within the first 6 weeks of school are good incentives to ensure immunization or documentation
- 43% of policies haven't changed since 2000
  - There is no major indicator there is a plan to change these policies
- 39% of grace periods are after 60 days
- Frontier and Rural counties indicate they are less likely to exclude than Semi-Urban or Urban counties
- 57% indicate they allow exceptions to exclusion on case by case basis
  - Decreasing consistency

Questions?  
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