

Answer to Probability Problem involving teacher absences

For the month of January, the average number of absences, over the previous 9 years, is 3.222. Using Stat Trek's [Poisson calculator](#), we find the probability of observing six or more absences in January to be .11. This is high enough to conclude that six absences is not high enough to cause alarm.

On the other hand, an absentee rate of eight or higher, for the month of February, where the average rate over the previous nine years is 3.667, has Poisson probability of .03. This probability is a low enough to cause concern. The reasons for the higher than average absentee rate bears looking into.