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## IARSS SURVEY: ILLINOIS SUFFERS FROM SUBSTITUTE TEACHER SHORTAGES

**SPRINGFIELD** -- Illinois schools see thousands of teacher absences each week and cannot find enough substitutes to cover more than 3,000 of those absences, a new survey has found.

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS), representing the leaders of Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers in every Illinois county, conducted the survey of school districts around Illinois this fall to determine the extent of the state's substitute teacher shortage.

The survey of nearly 400 districts found:

- Schools have to cover more than **16,500 absences** each week
- Schools cannot find substitutes to cover more than **3,000 absences each week**, or about **18 percent** of total absences (**600 classrooms** per day)
- Total absences are more common in schools in the Chicago suburbs. Substitute teacher shortages are more of an issue outside Chicagoland, led by southern and western Illinois.

The survey is a followup to a Fall 2015 review of teacher shortages by IARSS that found schools around Illinois are struggling to employ qualified teachers in a number of key subject areas. The Legislature did approve legislation, which the governor signed earlier this month, that reduces the fees for substitute teaching licenses.

IARSS President Jeff Vose, Regional Superintendent for Sangamon and Menard counties, said both surveys show the sobering reality facing Illinois schools.

"When teachers miss class time, schools need an assurance that qualified, prepared substitutes can step in and guide students' learning. Yet what we found here is schools often are scrambling to move personnel around or change plans to fill the gaps when those substitutes cannot be found," Vose said.

"Now that we know this is a significant problem in our schools, we need to work to make it easier for qualified people to become substitute teachers, especially in shortage areas downstate, and we need to work comprehensively to draw more young people into the demanding yet rewarding profession of teaching and mentoring our next generation."

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## IARSS SUBSTITUTE TEACHER SHORTAGE SURVEY RESULTS

Question 1:

In a given week, how many absences (average) are there for licensed teaching positions?

### Area 1

- 101 districts reporting
- 8,900 absences per week

### Area 2

- 61 districts reporting
- 2,146 absences per week

### Area 3

- 83 districts reporting
- 2,114 absences per week

### Area 4

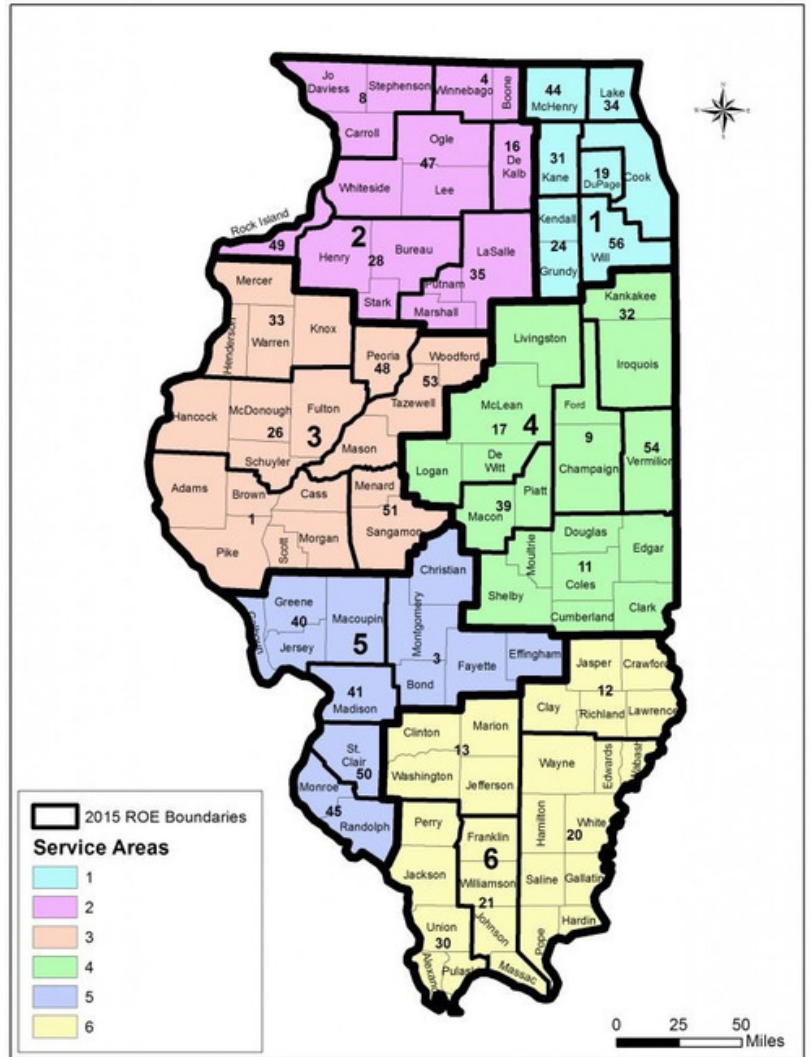
- 48 districts reporting
- 1,878 absences per week

### Area 5

- 35 districts reporting
- 607 absences per week

### Area 6

- 71 districts reporting
- 947 absences per week



### Statewide Totals

**399 districts reporting**  
**16,592 absences per week**



## IARSS SUBSTITUTE TEACHER SHORTAGE SURVEY RESULTS

### Question 2:

Of the teacher shortage numbers, how many substitutes are you unable to secure to cover those absences?

#### Area 1

- **1,443.54 absences per week**
- **16 percent per week**

#### Area 2

- **371.25 absences per week**
- **17 percent per week**

#### Area 3

- **477.50 absences per week**
- **23 percent per week**

#### Area 4

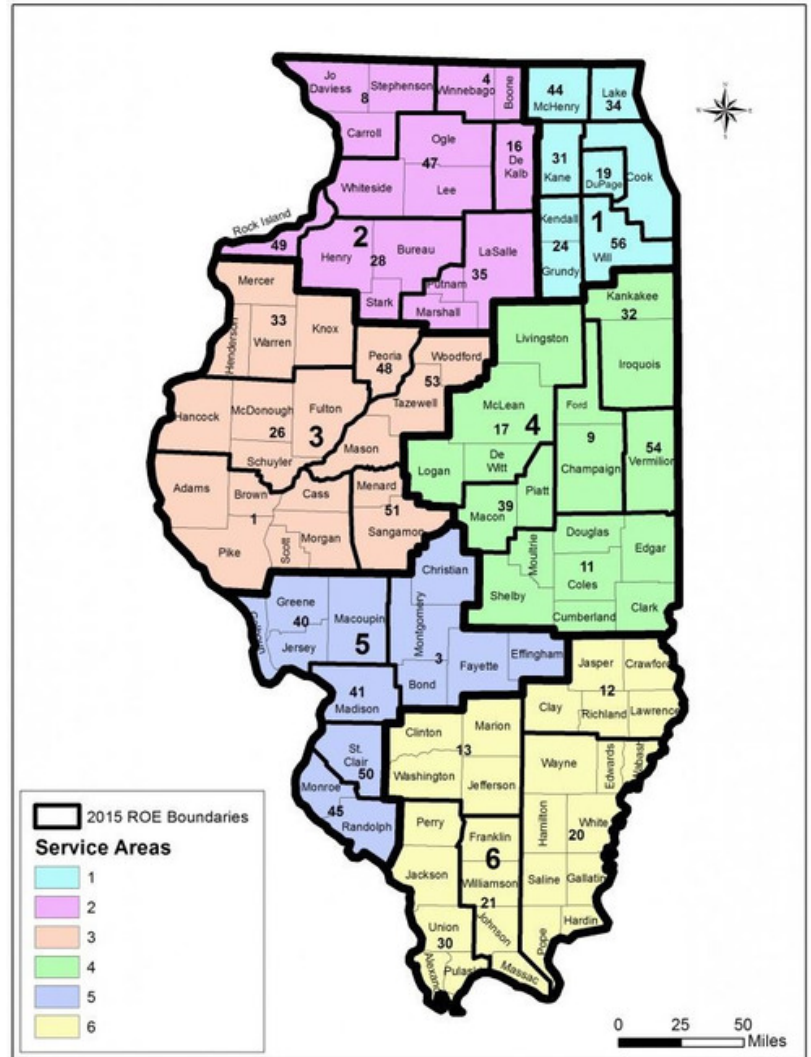
- **351.47 absences per week**
- **19 percent per week**

#### Area 5

- **114.25 absences per week**
- **19 percent per week**

#### Area 6

- **244.50 absences per week**
- **26 percent per week**



### Statewide Totals

**3,002.5 absences per week**  
**18 percent per week**  
**600 average classrooms per day**



## **IARSS SUBSTITUTE TEACHER SHORTAGE SURVEY RESULTS**

The survey revealed the substitute teacher shortage in Illinois varies widely across the state. Here are some comments from participating educators:

**"There is a great demand for substitutes. We are never able to fill our daily rates or even come close."**

**"We are constantly juggling and trying to secure substitute teachers."**

**"We have significantly increased our sub pay, but are struggling on an almost daily basis with unfilled positions that we cannot find a substitute for."**

**"We have staff that cannot go to professional development opportunities because subs cannot be found in some cases."**

**"There are no Spanish language teachers 6-12 to be had south of I-80."**

**"We pay about the same as all of the surrounding school districts for substitutes, but at times we have to call anywhere from 80-90 people to find one sub (and this could be weeks in advance)."**

**"We have issues due to the fact we are one mile from Iowa and one mile from Wisconsin. Teachers can drive to any state and get higher pay, more benefits and less state regulations to fulfill."**

**"The lack of available substitutes requires the shifting of employees consistently. This disruption causes a serious lack of consistency and disrupts core instruction. In my career, this is the most difficult period that I've had staffing substitutes. We need help with this issue."**