



ILLINOIS EDUCATOR SHORTAGE CRISIS: SURVEY CONDUCTED BY IARSS



Version 2017.1



GOSHEN EDUCATION
CONSULTING



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Executive Summary

“My concern is not only the low number of student teachers in local universities, but also the low number of available substitute teachers in our area.”

-Supt. from a rural unit district in Southern Illinois

The Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools’ (IARSS) educator shortage survey identified a widespread concern for both teacher shortages and substitute teacher shortages. Teacher shortage concerns were more prominent in the rural districts of central Illinois, but substitute teacher shortage concerns were most evident for Southern Illinois districts. When a substitute teacher was not available, 86% of districts reported pulling in another district teacher to teach the class, who would otherwise have had class preparation time.

Superintendents believed that bilingual teachers, Spanish teachers, special education teachers, nurses, and school psychologists were the most difficult positions to fill. When asked about the qualifications of the teachers who did apply 65% of the superintendents believe that they have received significantly fewer qualified teacher applicants than five years ago and 54% believe that availability of substitute teachers was “significantly worse” for the 2017-2018 school year than for previous years. One superintendent wrote, “The number of applicants is alarming and the quality of applicants is also a concern. Many have been able to meet State requirements but lack personality and classroom ‘presence’”.

The survey was administered between September 8 and October 12, 2017 and was completed by 61% of the 860 district superintendents in the state. It is notable that the response rate was above 73% in all the regions except for the Suburban Cook/Northeast region that had a 50% response rate.¹ The following figures summarize major findings.

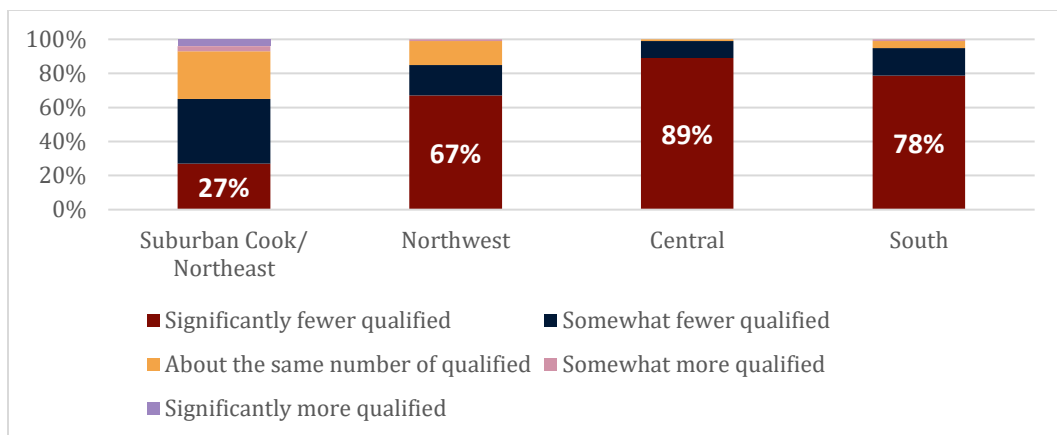
Policy implications may include addressing substitute teacher qualifications, requirements for preparation programs, licensure renewal processes, and interstate competition for qualified candidates.

¹ It should be noted that Chicago Public Schools were not included in the survey.

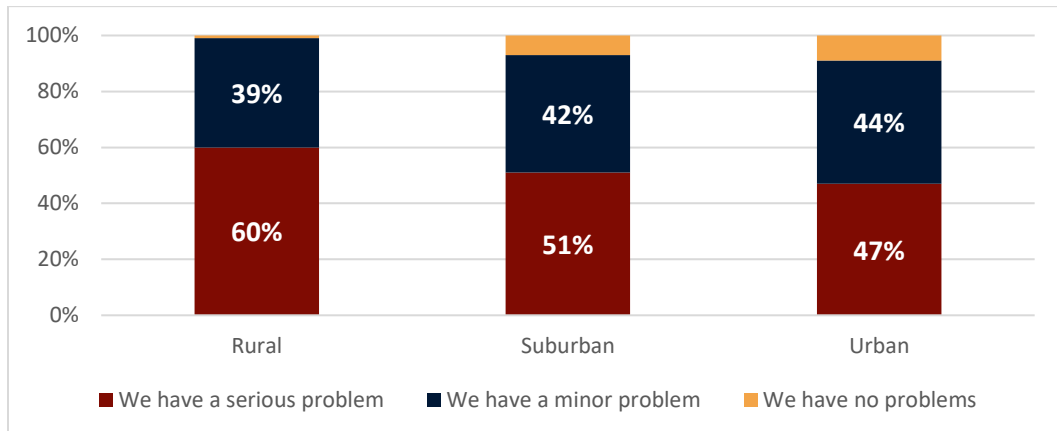
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



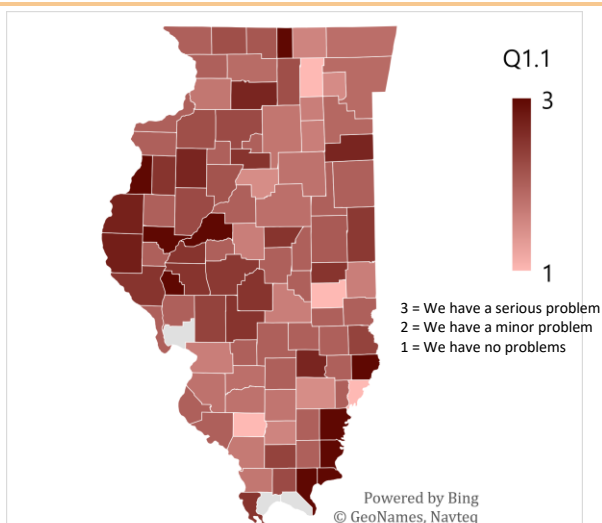
Teacher Candidate Qualifications Compared with 5 Years Ago by Region



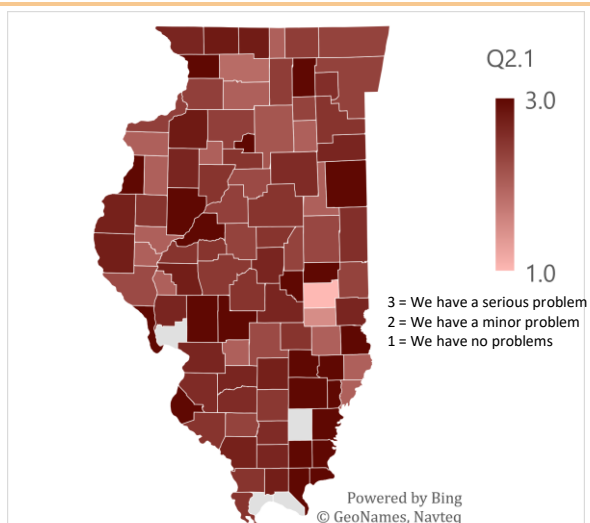
District Substitute Teacher Shortages by Rural/Urban Categories



Teacher Shortage Intensity by County



Substitute Teacher Shortage Intensity by County





Overall Findings

Summary

78% of the districts identified a serious or minor problem with teacher shortages.

Superintendents in 56% of the districts surveyed believed that they have a minor problem with teacher shortages. When combined with those who believed they have a serious problem, 78% of district superintendents believed they have some degree of a problem with teacher shortages. Further, 65% believe that they have received significantly fewer applicants than five years ago. The problems appear most pronounced for bilingual and foreign language teachers as well as recruitment of school psychologists.

Substitute teacher shortages are a particular concern for superintendents. Over half (53%) indicated that they have a “serious problem” with substitute teacher shortages, while only 5% indicated that they have “no problems” with substitute teacher shortages. Further, 54% believe that the availability of substitute teachers is “significantly worse” than in previous years. None of the districts reported that substitute teacher availability was “significantly better.”

Administrators reported a common practice of pulling existing teachers from their class preparation time to cover for teacher absences. About half of the districts also indicated that they have required administrators to teach or redistributed students to other classrooms when they lacked an available substitute teacher.

Few districts indicated either a minor or a serious problem with administrator shortages. About 70% of districts believe the administrator situation is either the same or better than it was five years ago.

OVERALL FINDINGS



“The following areas have a VERY weak pool: middle school math, middle school science, middle school ELA, special education, early childhood (both sp ed and general ed), ESL endorsed candidates, foreign language (Spanish), and social worker/psych”

-Supt. from Suburban Cook Elementary District

Teacher Shortage Findings

1.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?

Response	Percentage	N
We have a serious problem with teacher shortages.	22%	115
We have a minor problem with teacher shortages.	56%	294
We have no problems with teacher shortages.	23%	119
TOTAL	100%	528

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge.)

Response	Percentage	N
Significantly fewer applicants	65%	335
Somewhat fewer applicants	21%	108
About the same number of applicants	12%	61
Somewhat more qualified applicants	1%	6
Significantly more qualified applicants	1%	6
TOTAL	100%	516

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

OVERALL FINDINGS



1 in 5 (1,574) Teacher positions remained unfilled

1.3. Indicate the status of your teacher hires using the following categories.² (Table is sorted by the highest number of positions that remain unfilled.)

	Total Openings	Qualified Hires	Short Term Approvals	Short-Term Emergency Subs	Positions Remains Unfilled
Bilingual	376	213 (57%)	64	69	117
Special Education (K - 12)	824	682 (83%)	98	116	110
Foreign Language	335	201 (60%)	48	67	103
School Psychologists	260	160 (62%)	31	32	92
Speech & Language Pathologists	335	210 (63%)	25	40	82
School Nurses	206	98 (48%)	45	31	66
CTE: Business/ Computer Applications	200	94 (47%)	44	34	62
English as a Second Language	229	132 (58%)	39	45	57
Art	281	208 (74%)	45	61	57
Social Workers	295	253 (86%)	28	30	57
Mathematics	397	343 (86%)	53	55	55
Music	296	230 (78%)	36	38	53
English Language Arts	419	346 (83%)	36	42	53
Elementary Self-Contained Gen Ed	823	791 (96%)	34	43	51
CTE: Family & Consumer Sciences	187	95 (51%)	33	33	47
Science	359	331 (92%)	45	55	43
Other (includes Media Specialist and others)	135	79 (59%)	19	17	42
Physical Education	350	315 (90%)	38	48	42
Reading	156	88 (56%)	25	26	37
Health	143	62 (43%)	28	28	35
School Counselors	158	104 (66%)	19	19	34
Driver Education	123	49 (40%)	25	26	33
CTE: Agriculture	152	70 (46%)	31	30	33
CTE: Industrial Arts	145	62 (43%)	29	27	32
Computer Science	150	66 (44%)	33	24	32
Early Childhood Special Education	210	136 (65%)	28	24	32
Early Childhood	223	140 (63%)	31	31	32
Blind or Deaf	117	37 (32%)	21	22	31
CTE: Other not listed	109	34 (31%)	22	23	27
Social Science	227	213 (94%)	21	21	27
TOTAL	8220	5,842 (71%)	1,074	1,157	1,574

² Calculation for this table is further discussed in the Survey Method and Analysis Chapter

OVERALL FINDINGS



One in eight districts have cancelled a class or program due to shortages

1.3. Have you had to cancel classes or programs due to shortages of qualified applicants? If so, how many?

Response	Percent	n	Number Cancelled
No	87%	490	0
Yes	13%	74	161
Total	100%	564	161

1.4. Have you had to convert classes to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject? If so how many?

Response	Percent	n	Number Converted
No	86%	485	0
Yes	14%	79	209
Total	100%	564	209

More than half the districts have a “serious” problem with substitute teacher shortages.

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

Response	Percentage	n
We have a serious problem with substitute teacher shortages.	53%	281
We have a minor problem with substitute teacher shortages.	41%	218
We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.	5%	27
TOTAL	100%	526

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Percentage	n
Significantly worse	54%	282
Somewhat worse	34%	177
About the same	11%	55
Somewhat better	1%	6
Significantly better	0%	0
TOTAL	100%	520

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

2.3. In which of the following ways has your district acted in response to substitute teacher needs? (Please select all that apply.)

Response	Percentage	n
Hiring full time substitute teachers who are always on call	17%	86
Providing incentives to discourage the use of sick days	25%	127
Requiring administrators to teach in place of an absent teacher	46%	233
Using an existing teacher who would otherwise have class preparation time	86%	438
Redistributing students to other classrooms	48%	243
Converting classes to study hall periods	18%	93
We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.	4%	19
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES		1,239

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

Administrator Shortage Findings

3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?

Response	Percentage	n
We have a serious problem with administrator shortages.	2%	12
We have a minor problem with administrator shortages.	13%	66
We have no problems with administrator shortages.	85%	448
TOTAL	100%	526

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

3.2. Indicate the status of your administrative hires using the following categories.

	Total openings	Qualified professional hires	Less than qualified professional hires	Interim hire	Unfilled positions
Superintendent	148	92 (62%)	16	24	26
Assistant Superintendent	99	52 (53%)	13	13	23
Chief School Business Officer	102	63 (62%)	13	19	22
Director of Technology	99	44 (44%)	15	15	23
District Content Specialists (e.g., Math)	95	44 (46%)	12	12	21
Director of Special Education	105	58 (55%)	15	13	18
Principal	291	250 (86%)	18	16	27
Assistant Principal	253	215 (85%)	12	17	22
Other	89	62 (70%)	15	14	23
TOTAL	1,281	880 (69%)	129	143	205

3.3. In which of the following ways has your district acted in response to administrative needs? (Please select all that apply.)

Response	Percentage	n
Hiring a Dean of Students in place of a principal/assistant principal (who does not have proper qualifications to be a principal)	3%	14
Discontinuing a position	3%	13
Combining administrative roles	18%	76
Hiring a head or lead teacher to assume some administrative responsibilities	5%	23
We have no problems with administrator shortages	79%	340
TOTAL NUMBER OF RESPONSES		466

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.

3.4. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Percentage	n
Significantly worse	7%	34
Somewhat worse	19%	92
About the same	68%	331
Somewhat better	5%	23
Significantly better	1%	7
TOTAL	100%	487

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response.



Because 1 in 5 positions are not filled, policy solutions need to be created to encourage professionals to become or return to teaching or substitute teaching.

Tiered licensure for substitutes would increase the substitute pool.

Policy Implications³

Illinois' issue with educator shortages is not inconsistent with national shortages. This report gives insight into the severity of our issues, but we must be cautious considering causation versus correlation as there are multiple variables to consider when addressing remedies for the shortage. IARSS will continue to dive deeper into these data and other state-reported data to conduct multivariate analyses to better determine courses of action. As the U.S. Department of Education notes in an August 2016 report on teacher shortages, the problem has been exacerbated in the past decade, but has been increasing steadily since the 1990s. IARSS adamantly believes in the equitable education of all children in all classrooms and that we must have no positions unfilled and no classrooms without high quality instruction. We believe this survey must be continued annually and be further enhanced to inform policy and practice for Illinois to rise above the crisis.

All stakeholders and policymakers must share the same vision of developing, attracting and retaining the very best educators in the nation. Aligned with the vision, our policy implications address both short-term crisis solutions and long-term solutions.

Substitute Teacher Shortage

We recommend a tiered licensure for substitutes that distinguishes between supervisory and instructional services. The supervisory substitute would require an Associate's Degree and be utilized in classrooms where the instructional planning and decision making is not being completed by the substitute.

The current Emergency Substitute position is limited to 30 calendar days. These substitutes are in place when there is no teacher under contract for the position being filled. The largest influx of potential candidates during the school year is in

³ Policy Implications were written by the IARSS Educator Shortage Committee

Retired educators should be better utilized as substitute teachers.

December after mid-year candidates graduate. The emergency position should be extended to the remainder of a semester for both continuity for students and opportunities for employment.

Retired educators should be better utilized as substitute teachers. These educators are considered among the best candidates for substitute teaching. However, TRS limits the number of days/hours a retiree may work and remain an annuitant. Increasing the number of days/hours a retiree may work would significantly relieve pressure on schools.

With 40 of our counties bordering other states, we are in competition with those states for teacher candidates. Out-of-State candidates applying in Illinois need to be processed faster and more easily than in competing states. If ROEs/ISCs could return to processing licensure applications for substitutes and paraprofessionals in one day, this would allow ISBE personnel time to address other applicants and candidates.

Qualifications for Teaching

Decreasing the specialization requirements would broaden teachers' capacity to teach various subjects and/or grades. Increased specialization requirements of preparation programs has exacerbated the issues of teacher supply and teacher assignments in schools. This is particularly disconcerting with the separation of kindergarten from elementary education and early childhood special education.

School Service Personnel with IDFPR licensure should be able to serve in schools like nurses.

Several high-needs areas also may be addressed with reciprocity of licensure with the Illinois Department for Professional Regulations (IDFPR). School Service Personnel with IDFPR licensure should be able to serve in schools like Nurses. These IDFPR positions include Speech Language Pathologists, Psychologists, and Social Workers. At a minimum, allowing the employment of these professionals with graduate degrees in their fields to be employed while taking "education" classes would be beneficial. Additional high-needs areas include Foreign Language where competency testing and not content coursework for native-speaking teachers would increase the supply of qualified teachers.

Developing and Retaining Teachers

Expand programs for developing new teachers

Illinois needs to expand programs for developing new teachers beginning at the secondary level and Alternative Licensure to bring field professionals into the classroom. One significant barrier to increased participation in traditional programs may be the student teaching requirements. If the position of student teaching were compensated, Illinois could attract professionals who want a career change but cannot afford to “not work.” Additionally, the retention of these teachers through formal induction and mentoring has been significant for both the quality and quantity of individuals staying in the profession.

Streamline professional license renewal requirements to align with other Illinois professionals

Arguably, the profession of teaching is among other social service careers such as law enforcement that have had a noticeable shift with public opinion. The field seems to lack the prestige and honor it once had. Illinois policy should reflect the commitment, responsibility and professionalism of educators. One simple way of rebuilding the climate of trust and respect is to streamline professional license renewal requirements to align with other Illinois professionals. Illinois’ system of renewal is based on overly complicated requirements and bureaucratic processes that may be simplified and streamlined and increase accountability without compromising the integrity of adult learning professionals. Illinois must focus on professional development requirements and processes that improve teacher quality rather than licensure renewal compliance.

Reduce the barrier to reentry among teaching professionals whose licenses have lapsed

Illinois has a segment of professionals who could be brought back into the system but who have lapsed licenses for failure to renew registrations or submit professional development hours for renewal. Allowing individuals to reinstate under temporary conditions without financial penalty and to have extended time to complete renewal requirements would immediately bring back some retired educators and individuals who have left the profession temporarily.

The ROEs/ISCs are uniquely positioned to provide direct support for the Illinois State Board of Education and schools. The offices employ over 38 individuals that provide direct field support with licensure and have Licensure Officers with invaluable knowledge of both current and historical issues and solutions. As elected officials IARSS members are uniquely positioned to represent all stakeholders from children to educators and families and businesses.



61% or 528 school districts (out of 860) provided responses to the survey

Responding District Demographics

The survey was completed by 61% of the unit, elementary, or high school districts in the state (528 districts). The initial response yielded 654 raw responses. Eighty-two of these responses were duplicates or were from school districts that were not invited to respond.⁴ Another 44 responses were from districts that did not include enough identifier information or were not complete responses. It should be noted that the 2015 IARSS Educator Shortage survey had a comparable response rate of 63%.

The response rate was above 73% in all regions except for the Suburban Cook/Northeast region that had a 50% response rate.⁵ Unit school districts had the highest response rate with 69%. Rural districts had a notably high 78% response rate. The sample had a margin of error of +/- 3% and a confidence level of 99%.

Responding Districts by District Type

	District Type ⁶			Total
	Elementary	High School	Unit	
n	216	50	262	528
N	379	101	380	860
%	57%	50%	69%	61%

Note: The table includes the (n) - Number responding, the (N) - Total Number of districts, and the (%) - Percentage of districts responding.

District types were identified using the district Region/County/District/Type (RCDT) codes. The district types were generally defined as:

⁴ Special education school districts were not included within the initial request, but probably should be included. Fourteen special education districts responded at the urging of their Regional Superintendents. Since the survey administration was not consistent, these responses were removed from the dataset.

⁵ It should be noted that Chicago Public Schools (CPS) was not targeted for this survey given the size differences between CPS and other districts in the state. This omission had no appreciable effect on the lower response rate for the Suburban Cook/Northeast region.

⁶ District types were identified using the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data for Local Education Agencies Universe Survey Data, 2016-2017.

RESPONDING DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS



Elementary – A school district that served Kindergarten – 8th grades, though not all elementary districts serve all of these grades.

High School – Typically a district that served 9th – 12th grades. Some high school districts may include 7th or 8th grades, though this was uncommon.

Unit School District – Typically a district that served Kindergarten – 12th grades.

Responding Districts by Illinois Region



	Region				Total
	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern	
n	150	86	154	138	528
N	322	113	218	207	860
%	47%	76%	71%	67%	61%

Note: The table includes the (n) - Number responding, the (N) - Total Number of districts, and the (%) - Percentage of districts responding.



Responding Districts by Urban/Rural Classification

	District Type			Total
	Rural	Suburban	Urban	
n	219	169	140	528
N	299	272	289	860
%	73%	62%	48%	61%

Note: The table includes the (n) - Number responding, the (N) - Total Number of districts, and the (%) - Percentage of districts responding.

Urban/Suburban/Rural districts were identified using 2010 Census Data and the Census Percent Rural calculations for counties. An urban county was identified when it was 9% or less rural. A suburban county was 40% or less rural. A rural county was more than 40% rural. The percentages were identified by the researcher to create roughly equal comparison groups. The term “suburban” is not a Census technical term, but a grouping used to provide context between the rural and urban categories. For more information see the Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau⁷ description.

⁷ Michael Ratcliffe, Charlynn Burd, Kelly Holder, and Alison Fields, “Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau,” ACSGEO-1, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, DC, 2016.



Differences by Urban/Rural Classification

80% of the rural districts have received “significantly fewer qualified” teacher candidates than in previous years.

Summary

Rural and suburban districts have about the same difficulty with teacher shortages. Only 12% of urban districts indicated a “serious” problem with teacher shortages. Rural and suburban districts also strongly believe that they received “significantly fewer qualified” teacher candidates than five years ago.

Rural districts indicated the most problems with substitute teacher shortages. Sixty percent of rural districts have a serious problem with substitute teacher identification and 64% believe that substitute teacher availability is significantly worse than 5 years ago.

Administrator shortages were not a concern among the districts and there appears to be no real difference by rural/urban classification.

Findings

1.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
We have a serious problem with teacher shortages.	28%	21%	12%
We have a minor problem with teacher shortages.	53%	59%	57%
We have no problems with teacher shortages.	19%	20%	31%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.

DIFFERENCES BY URBAN/RURAL CLASSIFICATION



1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Significantly fewer qualified candidates	80%	75%	30%
Somewhat fewer qualified candidates	13%	17%	38%
About the same number of qualified candidates	6%	7%	27%
Somewhat more qualified candidates	1%	1%	2%
Significantly more qualified candidates	0%	1%	4%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.

1.3. Have you had to cancel classes or programs due to shortages of qualified applicants? If so, how many?

	Rural	Suburban	Urban
% Indicating Yes	14%	17%	8%
Number of Classes	78	61	22

1.4. Have you had to convert classes to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject? If so how many?

	Rural	Suburban	Urban
% Indicating Yes	22%	14%	1%
Number of Classes	152	56	1

DIFFERENCES BY URBAN/RURAL CLASSIFICATION



Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
We have a serious problem with substitute teacher shortages.	60%	51%	47%
We have a minor problem with substitute teacher shortages.	39%	42%	44%
We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.	1%	7%	9%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.

2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Significantly worse	64%	52%	42%
Somewhat worse	29%	39%	36%
About the same	7%	8%	19%
Somewhat better	0%	0%	4%
Significantly better	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.

DIFFERENCES BY URBAN/RURAL CLASSIFICATION



3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
We have a serious problem with administrator shortages.	2%	4%	0%
We have a minor problem with administrator shortages.	12%	15%	9%
We have no problems with administrator shortages.	85%	80%	91%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.

3.4. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Rural	Suburban	Urban
Significantly worse	8%	10%	3%
Somewhat worse	22%	19%	14%
About the same	67%	64%	73%
Somewhat better	3%	5%	7%
Significantly better	1%	1%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by rural/urban demographics.



75% of the Central Illinois districts had issues with staffing positions with qualified candidates

Differences by Illinois Region

Summary

There appears to be no real difference in teacher shortages by region outside of the Suburban Cook/Northeast region; about 75% - 88% of all districts outside of the Suburban Cook/Northeast region identified either a minor or serious problem with teacher shortages. It appears most pronounced in Central Illinois with 30% of districts identifying this as a “serious problem” and 89% indicating that they have received “significantly fewer candidates” than in previous years.

Substitute teacher shortages are notable in all the regions, but is particularly pronounced in the Southern region. Among the Southern districts, 68% believed that they have a “serious problem” with substitute teacher shortages and 74% believe the condition is “significantly worse” compared to previous years.

Consistent with the previous chapters, all district types do not believe that they have a problem with administrator shortages.

Findings

1.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?

	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
We have a serious problem with teacher shortages.	11%	23%	30%	23%
We have a minor problem with teacher shortages.	57%	57%	58%	51%
We have no problems with teacher shortages.	32%	20%	12%	25%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.

DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
Significantly fewer qualified candidates	27%	67%	89%	78%
Somewhat fewer qualified candidates	38%	18%	10%	16%
About the same number of qualified candidates	28%	14%	1%	4%
Somewhat more qualified candidates	3%	1%	0%	1%
Significantly more qualified candidates	4%	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.

1.3. Have you had to cancel classes or programs due to shortages of qualified applicants? If so, how many?

	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
% Indicating Yes	8%	16%	22%	8%
Number of Classes	23	31	80	27

1.4. Have you had to convert classes to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject? If so how many?

	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
% Indicating Yes	2%	19%	19%	19%
Number of Classes	8	52	86	63

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

Response	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
We have a serious problem with substitute teacher shortages.	45%	48%	52%	68%
We have a minor problem with substitute teacher shortages.	45%	47%	44%	31%
We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.	10%	5%	4%	1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.

DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
Significantly worse	41%	47%	54%	74%
Somewhat worse	39%	39%	37%	23%
About the same	17%	14%	9%	3%
Somewhat better	3%	0%	0%	1%
Significantly better	0%	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.

3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?

Response	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
We have a serious problem with administrator shortages.	1%	2%	4%	2%
We have a minor problem with administrator shortages.	11%	7%	18%	12%
We have no problems with administrator shortages.	88%	91%	79%	86%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.

DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



3.4. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Suburban Cook/ Northeast	Northwest	Central	Southern
Significantly worse	4%	7%	12%	4%
Somewhat worse	14%	17%	21%	24%
About the same	73%	68%	61%	70%
Somewhat better	8%	6%	4%	1%
Significantly better	2%	1%	1%	1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by Illinois region.



Differences by District Type

Summary

The respondents identified a particular issue for unit school districts. Among unit school districts, 31% have a serious problem with teacher shortages and another 59% indicate a minor problem. Eighty percent of unit districts believe that they received “significantly fewer qualified” teacher candidates. Unit districts represent the highest number and percentage of classes that have had to be converted to online instruction.

Substitute teacher shortages are most pronounced in elementary districts. Most high school districts (56%) identified their problems with substitute teachers as “minor.”

All the district types appear to agree that there are few problems with administrator shortages.

89% of the Unit districts believed that they received “significantly fewer qualified” teacher candidates than in previous years

Findings

1.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?

Response	Elementary	High School	Unit
We have a serious problem with teacher shortages.	15%	6%	31%
We have a minor problem with teacher shortages.	50%	66%	59%
We have no problems with teacher shortages.	36%	28%	11%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.

DIFFERENCES BY DISTRICT TYPE



1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Elementary	High School	Unit
Significantly fewer qualified candidates	50%	53%	80%
Somewhat fewer qualified candidates	27%	27%	15%
About the same number of qualified candidates	19%	18%	4%
Somewhat more qualified candidates	1%	2%	1%
Significantly more qualified candidates	3%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.

1.3. Have you had to cancel classes or programs due to shortages of qualified applicants? If so, how many?

	Elementary	High	Unit
% Indicating Yes	6%	12%	19%
Number of Classes	30	17	114

1.4. Have you had to convert classes to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject? If so how many?

	Elementary	High	Unit
% Indicating Yes	2%	4%	26%
Number of Classes	11	2	196

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

Response	Elementary	High	Unit
We have a serious problem with substitute teacher shortages.	52%	24%	60%
We have a minor problem with substitute teacher shortages.	43%	56%	38%
We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.	5%	20%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.

2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Elementary	High School	Unit
Significantly worse	53%	32%	60%
Somewhat worse	35%	40%	32%
About the same	10%	26%	8%
Somewhat better	2%	2%	0%
Significantly better	0%	0%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.

3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?

Response	Elementary	High School	Unit
We have a serious problem with administrator shortages.	1%	2%	3%
We have a minor problem with administrator shortages.	7%	8%	18%
We have no problems with administrator shortages.	92%	90%	79%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.

3.4. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge)?

Response	Elementary	High School	Unit
Significantly worse	5%	4%	9%
Somewhat worse	14%	15%	24%
About the same	73%	75%	62%
Somewhat better	5%	6%	4%
Significantly better	2%	0%	1%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

Note: Highlighted text indicate the most frequent response by district type.



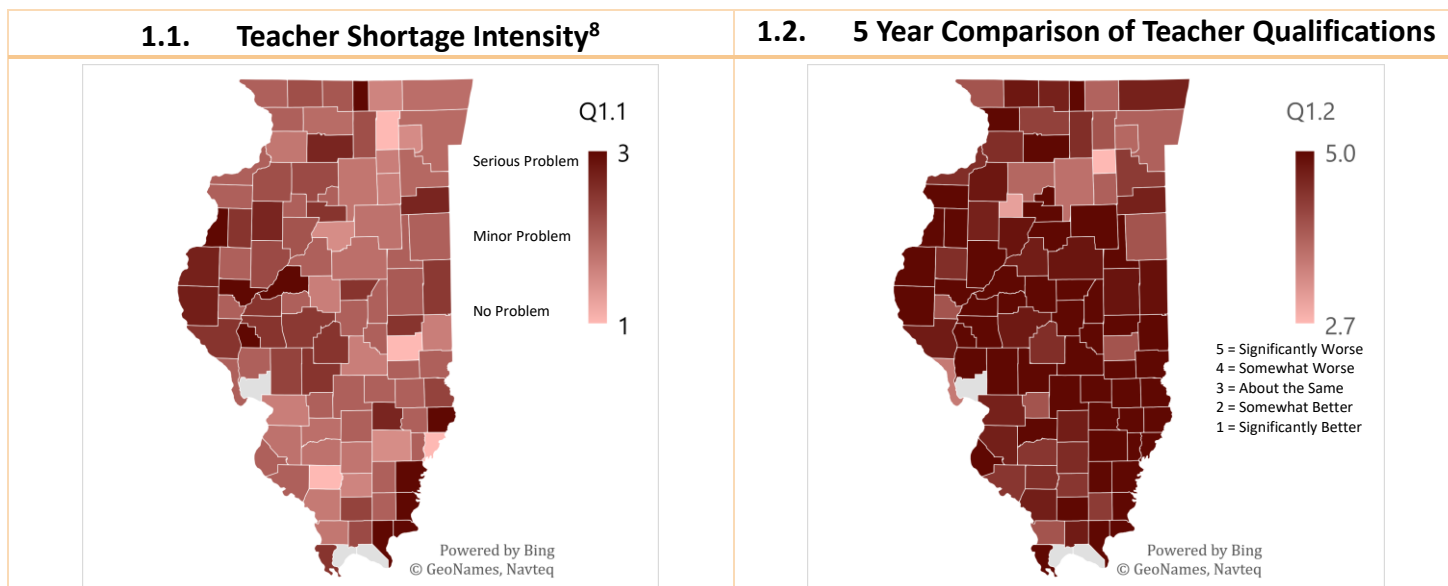
Demographic Relationships

Summary

Correlations suggest that teacher shortages are more pronounced in counties with lower teacher salaries, greater low-income students and smaller percentages of adults with college degrees. Several survey variables were compared with available demographic data by county and plotted on infographic heat maps. There are notable correlations among average teacher salary with teacher shortage intensity, adult college degree completion with perception of teacher qualifications, low income student percentage with the intensity of the teacher shortage, and adult college degree completion with average teacher salary.

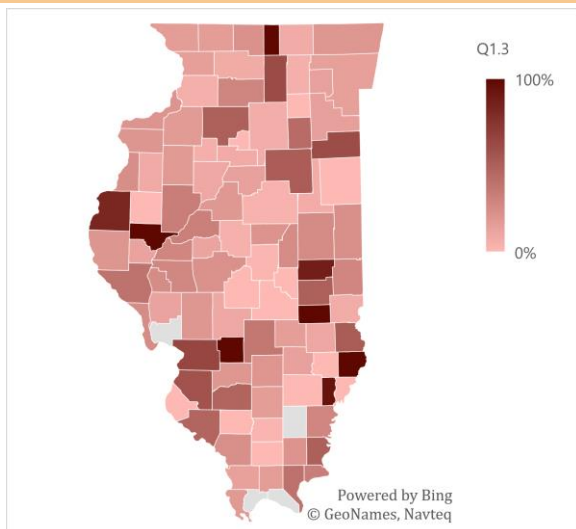
Infographic Heat Maps

The following are visual descriptions of the key findings.

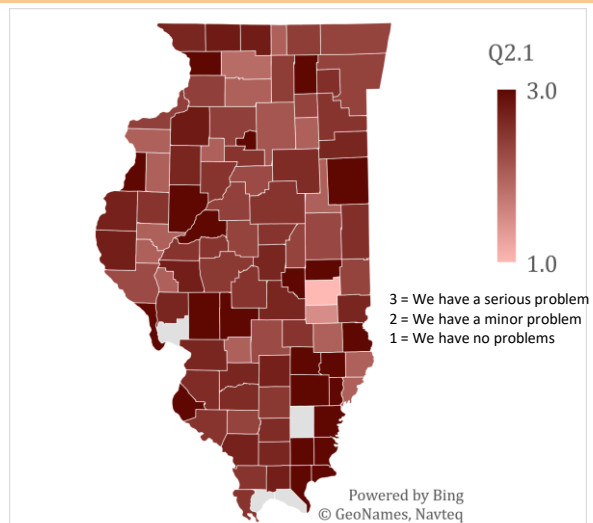


⁸ Note that responses to this scale were reversed for the purposes of visual demonstration.

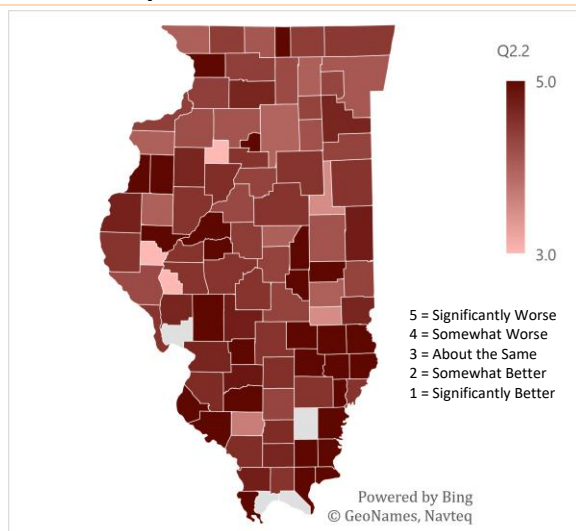
1.3. Percent of Unfilled Positions



2.1. Substitute Teacher Shortage Intensity



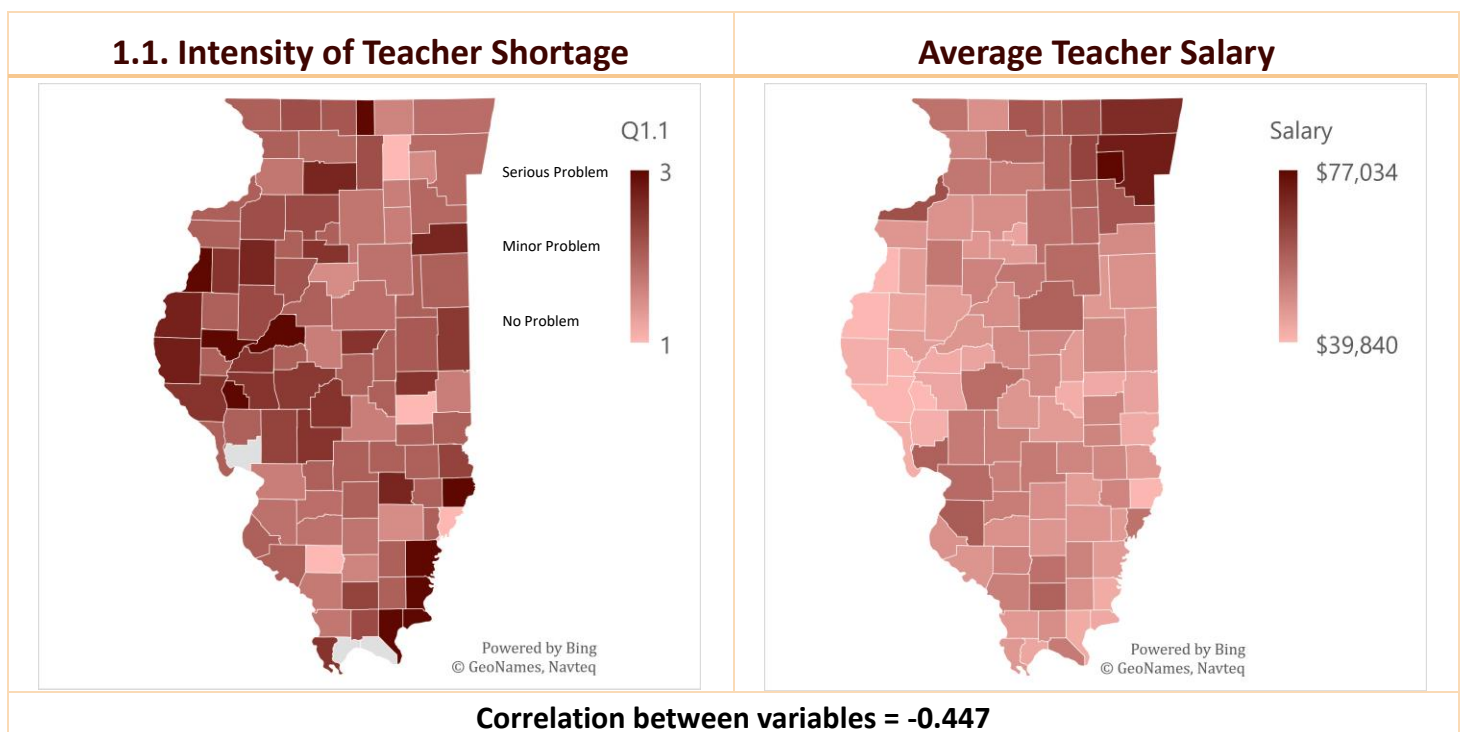
2.2. Five Year Comparison of Substitute Teacher Availability



Correlated Findings

The following infographic heat maps visually demonstrate average findings by county. The key variables are identified in comparison. The full correlation table is included at the end of this findings section.

There is a negative relationship between teacher shortage and average teacher salary. As salaries go down, teacher shortage becomes a more serious problem.

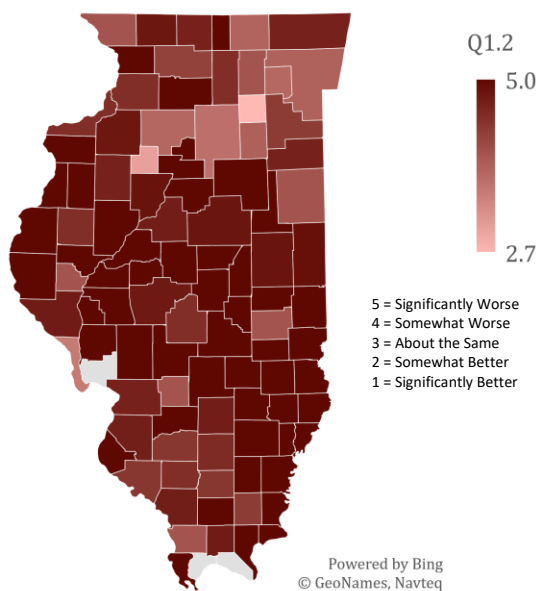


DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS

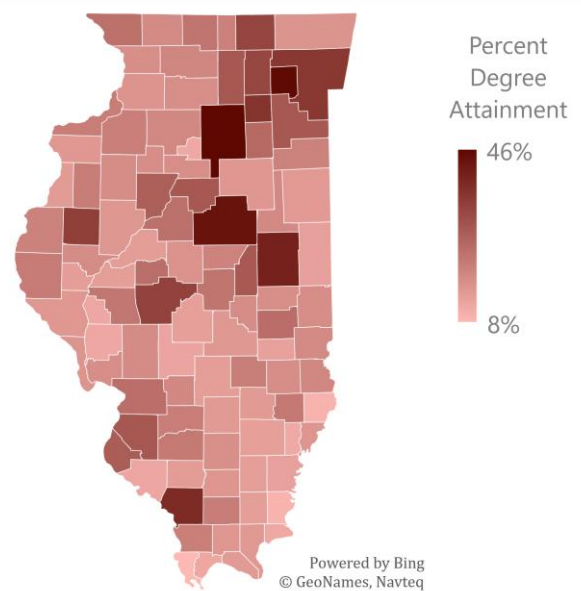


There is a negative relationship between teacher qualifications and adults who have completed a bachelor's degree or better. As degree completion goes down, perceptions of teacher qualifications compared with previous years becomes worse.

1.2. 5 Year Comparison of Teacher Qualifications



Adult College Degree Completion



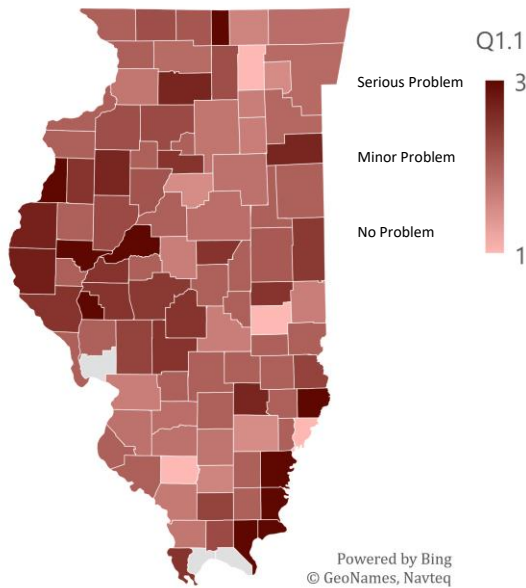
Correlation between variables = -0.393

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS

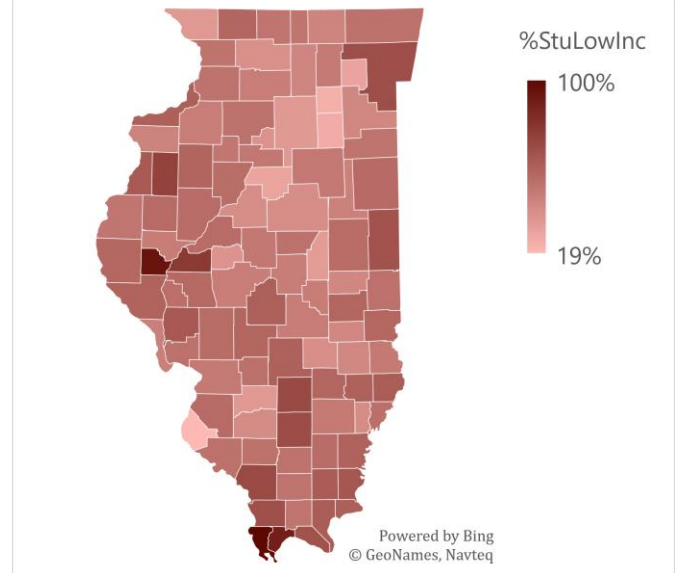


There is a positive relationship between the intensity of teacher shortages and the percent of low income students in the county. As low-income students increase the intensity of the teacher shortage increases.

1.1. Intensity of Teacher Shortage



Low Income Student Percentage

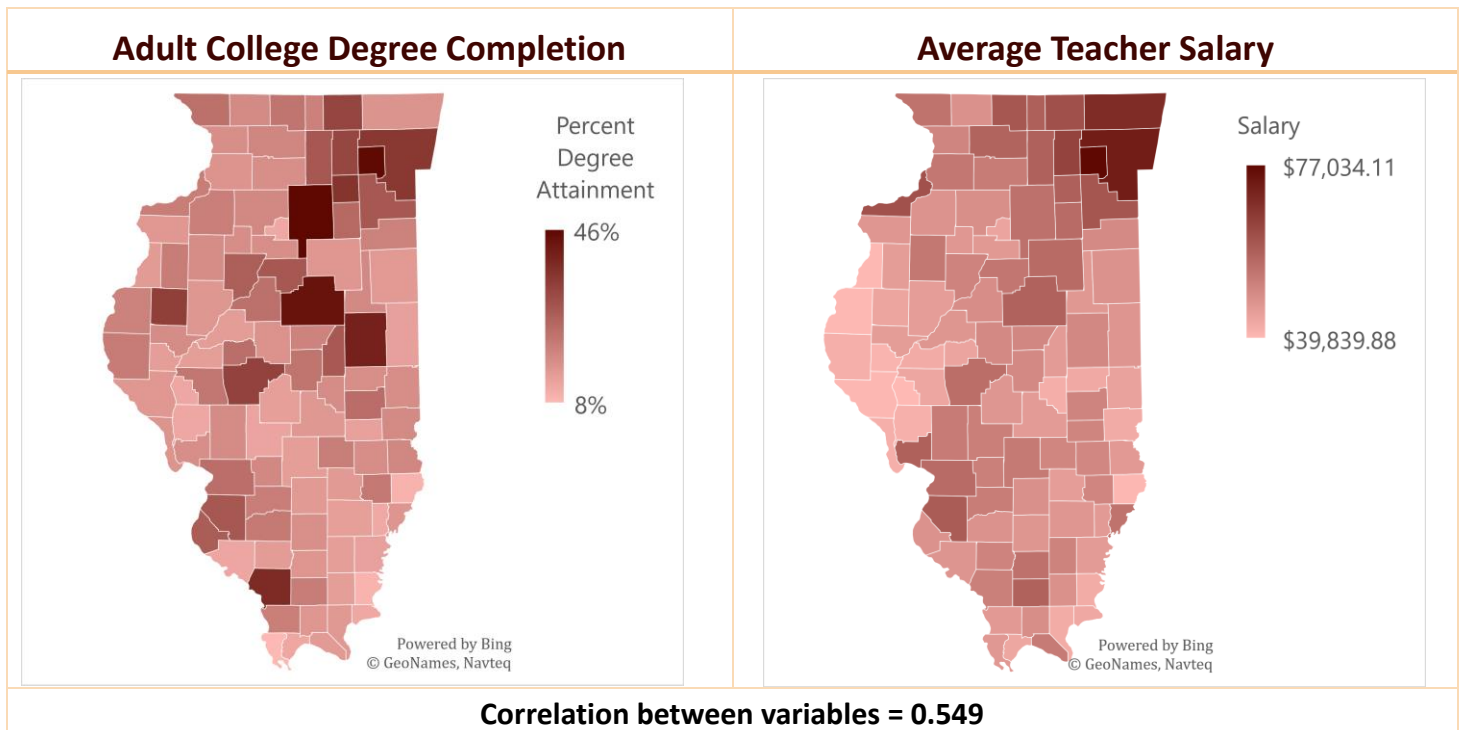


Correlation between variables = 0.290

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



While not the focus of this survey, it is notable to find a positive relationship between the two external variables, average teacher salary and adult college degree completion. As college degree completion increases, average teacher salary also increases.



DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



Correlation Table

	Average Teacher Salary	Adult College Degree Completion	Student Low Income Percent	1.1. Teacher Shortage Intensity	1.2. Qualified Teacher Applicants	1.4. Unfilled Positions	2.1. Substitute Shortage Intensity	2.2. Substitute Teacher Availability
Average Teacher Salary	1.000							
Adult College Degree Completion	0.549	1.000						
Student Low Income Percent	(0.294)	(0.414)	1.000					
1.1. Teacher Shortage Intensity	(0.447)	(0.361)	0.290	1.000				
1.2. Qualified Teacher Applicants	(0.377)	(0.393)	0.156	0.396	1.000			
1.4. Unfilled Positions	(0.116)	(0.191)	(0.003)	0.340	0.123	1.000		
2.1. Substitute Shortage Intensity	(0.165)	(0.132)	0.045	0.229	0.230	(0.200)	1.000	
2.2. Substitute Teacher Availability	(0.136)	(0.180)	0.005	0.308	0.409	0.177	0.478	1.000



Survey Method and Analysis

Survey method and analysis focused on descriptives and frequencies. Further multiple variate analysis is encouraged.

The Teacher Shortage Survey was developed by a committee from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS). The survey was administered by Goshen Education Consulting, a neutral third-party education consulting practice, between September 8 and October 12, 2017.

The survey was downloaded into MS Excel and analyzed primarily using pivot tables for the purposes of identifying sub-group frequencies and descriptives. Further analysis concerned the use of existing data sources including data from the Census Bureau and the 2016-2017 Illinois State Board of Education Illinois Report Card dataset for all Illinois districts. The report also identified several correlations among many of the key variables of interest. The survey analysis scope and timeline did not permit a further, deeper look at the relationships among these variables. A multiple variate analysis is recommended and would likely identify contributing factors to teacher and substitute teacher shortages.

Question 1.3 concerned teacher vacancies and is further discussed here due to apparent respondent confusion. Superintendents were asked to identify the number of total teacher position openings (in column 1) and the status of those openings at the beginning of the academic year (in columns 2-5). The status columns included qualified hires (column 2), short-term approvals (column 3), short-term emergency subs (column 4), and that the positions remained unfilled (column 5). Respondents were instructed to make sure the status columns 2-5 added up to the openings column 1. In practice, the status columns summed to more than the openings column. Through committee discussion it was decided that the categories were viewed as non-exclusive. For example, a superintendent may have had an opening for a Spanish teacher that was filled by a short-term emergency sub, but also believed that the position remained unfilled.

The survey instrument is included in the following Appendix.

APPENDIX: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

IARSS Educator Shortage Survey

Instructions and identification.

There are four sections to this survey. This section provides instructions and requests your district identification. The second section concerns teacher shortages, the third section concerns substitute teacher shortages, and the fourth section concerns district leader shortages.

This survey is confidential. Your identity (via your RCDTS code) will only be known to the survey professional, Goshen Education Consulting. Your identity will only be used for demographic reporting purposes and will not be reported in any way.

When completing this survey consider your hiring process in preparation for the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year.

- * 1. Please include your District RCD Code

- * 2. Please include the District ZIP code (or the ZIP code for the primary district building).

IARSS Educator Shortage Survey

SECTION 2: Questions about teacher applicants

The following questions ask about your ability to fill positions with "qualified" professionals. A qualified applicant is defined as an individual who was Illinois licensed or endorsed.

- * 3. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?

- ☐ We have a serious problem with teacher shortages.
- ☐ We have a minor problem with teacher shortages.
- ☐ We have no problems with teacher shortages.

4. The matrix asks you about openings in certain teacher and professional categories. You do not need to enter a zero for columns that are not applicable.

* In the first column you should list all openings, or available positions that needed to be filled.

* In the second column indicate how many of these vacancies were filled by qualified professionals (i.e., Illinois licensed or endorsed appropriate to the position)

* In the third column indicate how many were filled by short-term emergency substitutes.

* In the fourth column indicate how many were filled by unqualified individuals or those with a Request for Short Term Approval (Form 73-96).

* In the fifth column indicate how many positions remained unfilled.

###PLEASE MAKE SURE COLUMNS 2 - 5 ADD UP TO THE TOTAL IN COLUMN 1.###

	Column 1: Total openings	Column 2: Qualified hires	Column 3: Short- term emergency subs	Column 4: Unqualified and/or short term approval	Column 5: Position remains unfilled
Art	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bilingual	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Blind or Deaf	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Computer Science	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CTE: Business/ Computer Applications	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CTE: Agriculture	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CTE: Family & Consumer Sciences	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CTE: Industrial Arts	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
CTE: Other not listed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Driver Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Early Childhood	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Early Childhood Special Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
English as a Second Language	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
English Language Arts	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Foreign Language	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Health	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mathematics	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Music	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Physical Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Reading	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Column 1: Total openings	Column 2: Qualified hires	Column 3: Short- term emergency subs	Column 4: Unqualified and/or short term approval	Column 5: Position remains unfilled
School Counselors	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
School Nurses	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
School Psychologists	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Science	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Elementary Self Contained Gen Ed	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Social Science	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Social Workers	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Special Education (K - 12)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Speech & Language Pathologists	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Other (please specify)

5. How many classes or programs have you had to cancel due to shortages of qualified applicants?

6. How many classes have you had to convert to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject?

7. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge.)

- ☐ Significantly fewer qualified applicants
 ☐ Somewhat more qualified applicants
- ☐ Somewhat fewer qualified applicants
 ☐ Significantly more qualified applicants
- ☐ About the same number of qualified applicants

What comments do you have about the qualifications of your applicants?

8. Please share any comments you have regarding teacher recruitment, staffing, and employment for the 2017-2018 school year.

IARSS Educator Shortage Survey

SECTION 3: Questions about Substitute Teachers

* 9. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

- ☐ We have a serious problem with substitute teacher shortages.
- ☐ We have a minor problem with substitute teacher shortages.
- ☐ We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.

10. In which of the following ways has your district acted in response to substitute teacher needs? (Please select any that apply.)

- ☐ Hiring full time substitute teachers who are always on call
- ☐ Providing incentives to discourage the use of sick days
- ☐ Requiring administrators to teach in place of an absent teacher
- ☐ Using an existing teacher who would otherwise have class preparation time
- ☐ Redistributing students to other classrooms
- ☐ Converting classes to study hall periods
- ☐ We have no problems with substitute teacher shortages.
- ☐ Please list any additional ways not included above.

11. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Significantly worse | <input type="radio"/> Somewhat better |
| <input type="radio"/> Somewhat worse | <input type="radio"/> Significantly better |
| <input type="radio"/> About the same | |

What comments do you have about the qualifications of your applicants?

12. Please share any comments you have regarding substitute teacher employment this year.

IARSS Educator Shortage Survey

SECTION 4: Questions about district and building leaders

* 13. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrative shortages?

- ☐ We have a serious problem with administrator shortages.
- ☐ We have a minor problem with administrator shortages.
- ☐ We have no problems with administrator shortages.

14. The following matrix asks you about openings for district and building leaders. You do not need to enter a zero for columns that are not applicable.

* In the first column you should have all openings.

* In the second column indicate how many of these openings were filled by qualified professionals.

* In the third column indicate how many were filled by less than qualified professionals.

* In the fourth column indicate how many were filled by interim professionals (i.e., those who have previously retired or filled due to unexpected vacancy).

* In the fifth indicate how many positions remained unfilled.

###PLEASE MAKE SURE COLUMNS 2 - 5 ADD UP TO THE TOTAL IN COLUMN 1.###

	Column 1: Total openings	Column 2: Qualified professional hires	Column 3: Less than qualified professional hires	Column 4: Interim hire	Column 5: Unfilled positions
Superintendent	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Assistant Superintendent	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Chief School Business Officer	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Director of Technology	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
District Content Specialists (e.g., Math)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Director of Special Education	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Principal	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Assistant Principal	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Other (please specify)

15. In which of the following ways has your district acted in response support administrative shortages?
(Please select all that apply.)

- ☐ Hiring a Dean of Students in place of a principal/assistant principal (who does not have proper qualifications to be a principal)
- ☐ Discontinuing the position
- ☐ Combining administrative roles
- ☐ Hiring a head or lead teacher to assume some administrative responsibilities
- ☐ We have no problems with administrator shortages.
- ☐ Other. Please list any additional ways not included above.

16. How does administrator availability at your district compare to five years ago (or as recent to five years ago as you are able to judge.)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Significantly worse | <input type="radio"/> Somewhat better |
| <input type="radio"/> Somewhat worse | <input type="radio"/> Significantly better |
| <input type="radio"/> About the same | |

What comments do you have about the qualifications of your applicants?

17. Please share any comments you have regarding district leader employment this year.