



ILLINOIS EDUCATOR SHORTAGE SURVEY 2019



Version 2020.2

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Executive Summary

“No one wants to pay attention to this topic, but every teacher we had leave moved to Iowa solely because of Illinois requirement to teach until the age of 67.”

Superintendent in West Central Illinois

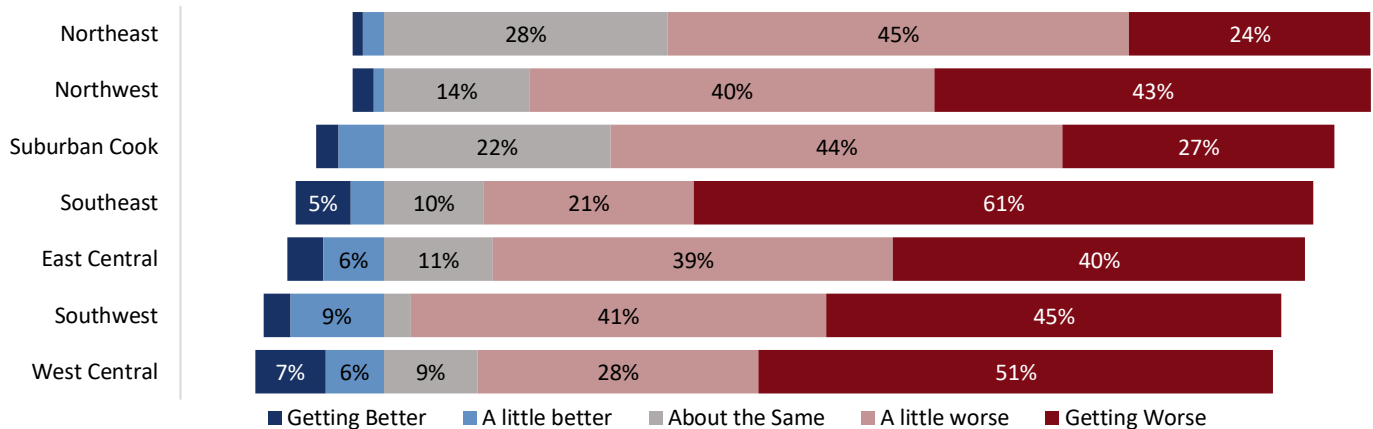
This survey by the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) provides longitudinal data that demonstrates educator shortages (teacher, substitutes and administrators) are continuing to increase in severity. Superintendents in 88% of the districts surveyed believed they have a problem with teacher shortages, which is up from 85% in 2018 and 78% in 2017. Substitute teacher shortages continue to be a major concern for superintendents; 94% of surveyed superintendents believed they have a problem. Among the 628 responding districts (73%), superintendents reported that 22% of open teacher positions (1,226) remained unfilled or filled with a less than qualified hire. This resulted in 256 classes that were cancelled and another 219 that were converted to online instruction.

Three key policy recommendations are presented. First, the IARSS should create regional pools of substitute teachers to address the severe substitute teacher shortage. Second, the IARSS, in conjunction with the Center for the Study of Education Policy, should perform a deeper dive on data collected by Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) to fully understand the root causes of the educator shortage issue. Third, ISBE should create educator hubs around the state that can partner districts, universities, and statewide and regional partners to target training of teachers and leaders in Grow Your Own strategies that can fulfill regional needs and will lead to sustainable recruitment and retention strategies. This is especially important in education deserts where the teacher shortage is most severe.

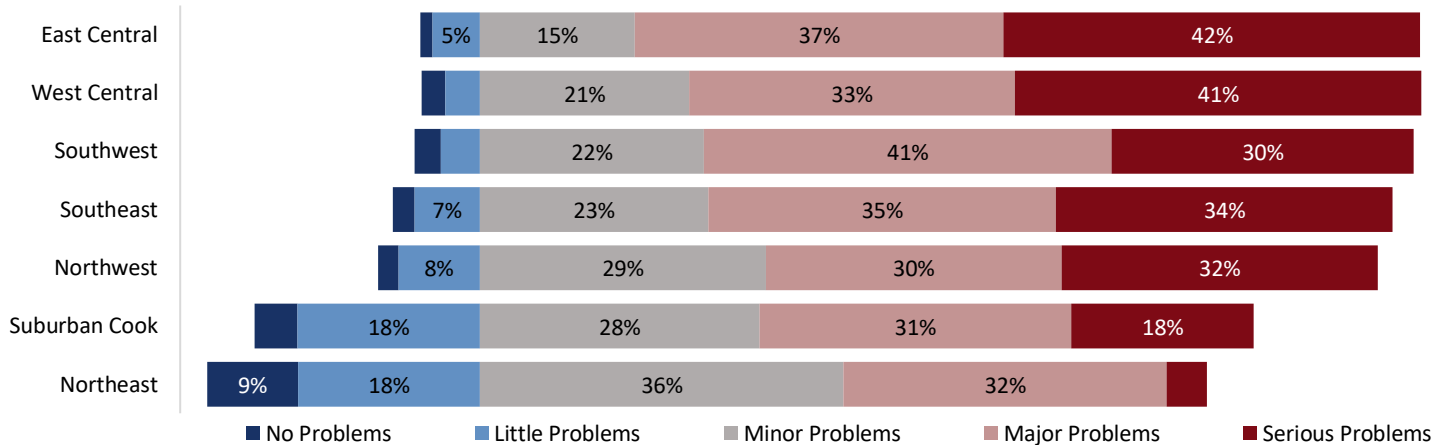
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



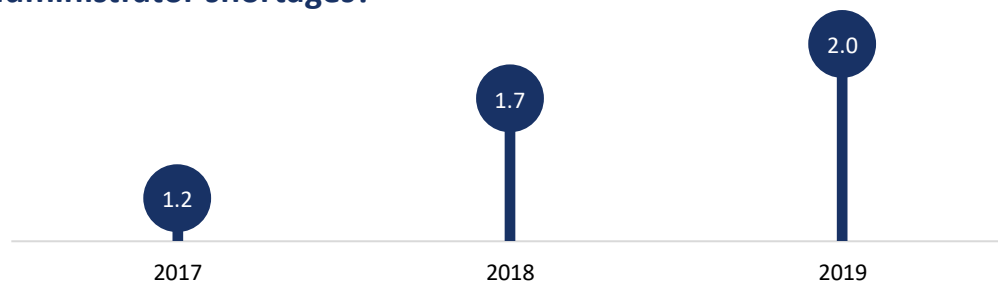
Is the educator shortage getting better, worse or staying the same?



How serious of a problem does your district have with shortages?



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

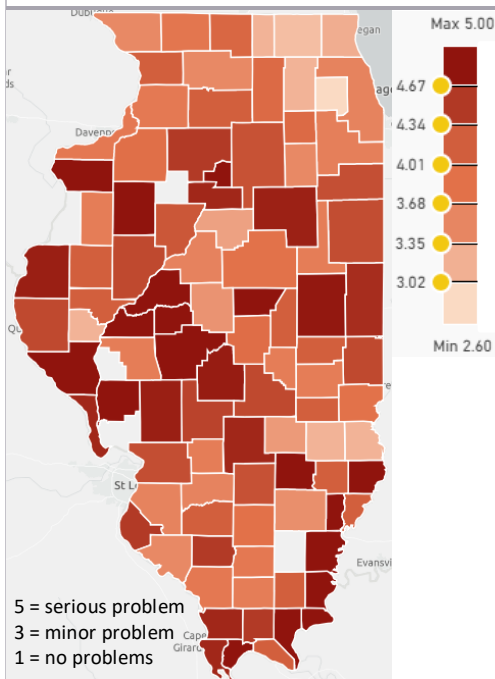


Note: 1 = No Problems; 3 = Minor Problem; 5 = Serious Problems

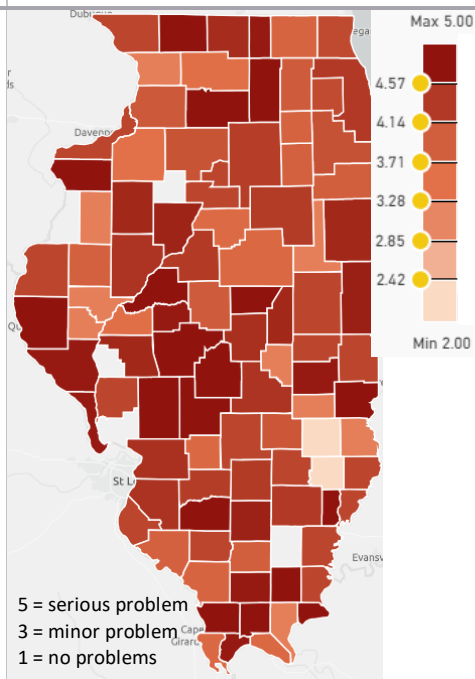
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



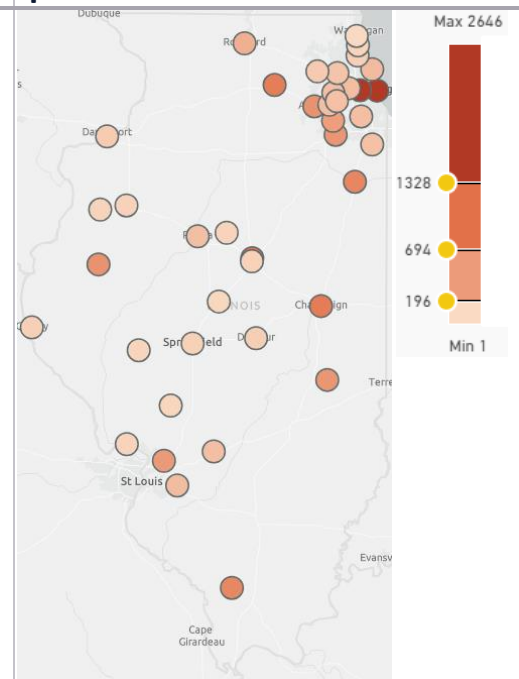
Teacher Shortage Intensity



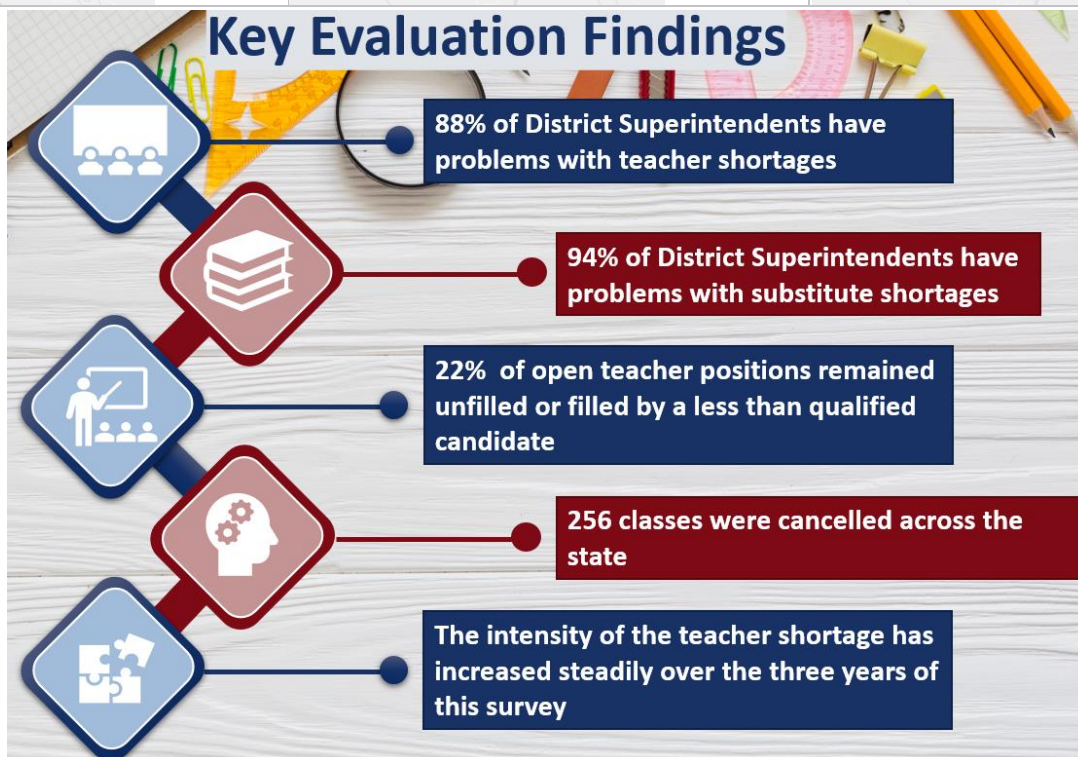
Substitute Shortage Intensity



Education Degrees Awarded per Institution¹



Key Evaluation Findings



¹ 2018 IPEDS data retrieved from the National Center for Educational Statistics



Policy Implications²

Since the inception of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of School's (IARSS) survey in 2015, the breadth and magnitude of the educator shortage has continued to grow despite significant efforts by the Illinois Legislature and related administrative state agencies. The results of IARSS's 2020 study affirm the increasing teacher, substitute teacher and paraprofessional shortages, but also an increasing shortage for principals and a looming shortage for superintendents. The shortage was noticed by the association nearly a decade ago as Illinois continued to ramp-up requirements and make significant changes with preparation programs. Even then we often commented that Illinois was becoming an export state of educators. The shortage happened over time and the solutions to the shortage will take time and require cohesive strategic collaboration among all stakeholders for the recruitment and retention of educators.

With limited financial resources and a myriad of ideas and opinions bouncing around the state we believe that it is imperative for Illinois to focus stakeholder efforts to collect additional data to determine the root causes of the shortage. We do not have solid data to know if Illinois' shortage is based on the tiered pension, salary inequities, mobility and proximity to other states with simpler licensure systems, increased demand on educators to address social, emotional and academic needs of students, school safety, or a national decline of respect for educators and law enforcement who have been social service targets. Does the pack mentality of social media and instant gratification play a role in our shortage? These questions and more may only be answered with further study that starts with the collection of data we simply have not collected in Illinois.

Illinois must maximize its resources. Schools have learned from implementing "research-based practices" nearly all initiatives will have a positive impact.

² Policy Implications were written by the IARSS Educator Shortage Committee

However, unless there are unlimited resources of time, people, and money we must determine the most impactful practices and be focused on only those efforts. It is simply a cost-benefit analysis based on what we know about the root causes of Illinois' educator shortage and what changes will make the most impact with the fiscal limitations of the state.

Teacher Shortage

No subject area is without a shortage. Although one may believe a few dozen or hundred teachers makes little difference or constitutes a shortage, the average educator serves over 130 pupils per day either uniquely or through instruction multiple subject areas. If there is not fully licensed and qualified educators, then those students are not being served. With special education teachers and support staff working with special needs we are now not meeting the needs of the child which is unethical and illegal by state and federal laws. To alleviate these issues, we have stretched educators to the maximum, increased class sizes, canceled classes, and utilized distance learning with local paraprofessional support.

There is no shortage of anecdotal evidence of why teachers leave the profession and/or leave Illinois to teach out of state. In September 19, 2019 as a supplement to the annual PDK Poll of the Public's Attitude Towards the Public Schools titled "Frustration in the Schools" we learned that over 50% of the teachers surveyed have seriously considered leaving the profession. The top three reasons that comprise 51% of the responses are (1) lack of respect and feeling valued, (2) stress, pressure, and burnout and (3) inadequate pay or benefits. Comments from superintendents from the IARSS survey support the outcome of this research when they inform us that they do not recommend their own children to enter the profession or at least not in Illinois. When Illinois has a strong history of generational educators and current educators do not support their families to enter the profession, we must heed the warning. While we may glean some generalizations from national surveys and what other states are doing to attract and retain educators, we must know exactly why we have these issues by collecting information from potential teacher candidates from post-secondary institutions, candidates who complete or leave the teacher

preparation program, those educated in Illinois that leave to teach in another state, existing Illinois educators that leave the profession, and Illinois educators who remain in Illinois but change school districts. With this information we may ascertain exactly why we have the shortage. In the meantime, there are several initiatives that exist:

- Alternative Programs for Licensure (desert areas needing cohorts)
- Southern Illinois University Carbondale Grow Your Own
 - Micro credentialing
- Induction and Mentoring & Job Embedded coaching and professional development (Not simply pairing up)
- Delays in issuance of a license
- Professional Development Alignment Aligned with Performance Evaluation process
- Mandate Trainings
- Recruitment strategies and incentives for secondary education
- Deeper Data Study and access to state data bases

Substitute Teacher & Paraprofessional Shortage

Illinois' education system is not an isolated social service immune to the issues of the state. Policies impacting businesses, families, and other agencies strongly influence our schools. The current substitute teacher shortage has the potential of growing exponentially as higher wages in the state will result in substitute pay being less competitive than entry level jobs. Schools are already employing full-time substitutes but still lack adequate coverage absences for illness, school improvement work, professional development, etc. Employment agencies for substitute teachers have gained more popularity but this service comes at a higher cost. The practices of these agencies may readily be accomplished by Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Services Centers through funded professional development of substitutes and induction and mentoring of substitutes.

Principal Shortage

In 2013, Illinois enhanced the principal preparation programs required for principal licensure. At that time over 4,000 educators were earning this administrative license annually. As with all education preparation programs the principal preparation programs have had a massive decline in enrollment. There still exists a large pool of licensed educators but we are not currently able to ascertain how many educators have a desire to be a school leader. We see a growing demand for and decline of applicants for these positions. Therefore, we believe support for continued collaboration with The Center for the Study of Education Policy (CSEP) at Illinois State University and IARSS will provide the data necessary to determine how limited the numbers are for administration and determine the additional professional learning supports needed to transition teachers from the classroom to leadership roles.

For both teachers and administrators, the ROEs and ISCs have legal access to all licensure and employment data through the Educator Licensure Information System housed with the Illinois State Board of Education. By providing those data compiled state-wide to IARSS and its members so that we may study more closely the variables of the shortage and to accurately predict by location educator demand for the next 5-10 years.

For decades there has been focus on “hard-to-staff” schools and efforts to address inequity among schools. The immediate assumption of “hard-to-staff schools” are those schools with poverty in metropolitan and urban areas. We now know that most schools in Illinois are hard to staff. Illinois must immediately make the commitment to develop and deliver a cohesive and system-wide plan with targeted resources to address our severe shortage. Illinois is far beyond the point of funding isolated pilot programs to determine what may help the shortage. Every effort must be purposeful and interconnected. This begins with system wide data collection and the mandatory collaboration among all stakeholders. The collection of Regional Superintendents of Schools and Directors of Intermediate Service Centers are uniquely positioned as ombudsmen of education serving all stakeholders from children, educators, administrators, community and regions. As a collective, the Illinois Association of Regional

Superintendents in collaboration with other stakeholder groups are capable of immediately facilitating and supporting efforts state-wide to efficiently and effectively resolve our educator shortage crisis.



2019 - 88% of Superintendents believe they have a problem with teacher shortages.

“One of the greatest causes to the teacher shortage has been the change in the retirement pensions. I have told my children who want to become educators either to not do it or to do it in another state.”

Overall Findings

Summary

Superintendents in 88% of the districts surveyed believed that they have a problem with teacher shortages, which is up from 85% in 2018 and 78% in 2017. When asked about teacher shortages for Academic Years 2020-2021 (AY2021) and 2021-2022 (AY2022), 89% believe that this will remain an issue. Further, 90% believed that they have received significantly fewer applicants than five years ago, which also is up from 79% in 2018 and 65% in 2017. Among the 73% of responding districts, 256 courses were cancelled and 219 were converted to online instruction due to shortages. The problems appear most pronounced for special education, physical education and mathematics teachers.

Substitute teacher shortages continue to be a concern for superintendents. About 94% of the districts surveyed indicated they have a problem with substitute teacher shortages, while only 6% indicated they have little to no problem with substitute shortages. About the same percentage of superintendents (84%) believed that the availability of substitute teachers is worse than in previous years, which is up from 63% in 2018 and 54% in 2017. Substitute teacher shortages are predicted to get worse with 92% believed the shortages will be a problem in AY2021 and AY2022.

Administrators reported the practice (32%) of pulling existing teachers from their class preparation time to cover for teacher absences as the most common solution to substitute teacher shortage. It was also common (19%) to redistribute students to other classrooms.

Few districts indicated either a minor or a serious problem with administrator shortages. About 67% of districts believed the administrator situation is either the same or better than it was five years ago. However, many superintendents predict administrator shortages will increase due to the implementation of Tier II pension requirements and increased demands on administrators.

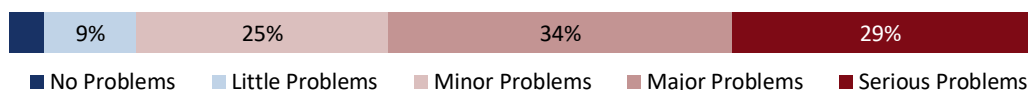
OVERALL FINDINGS



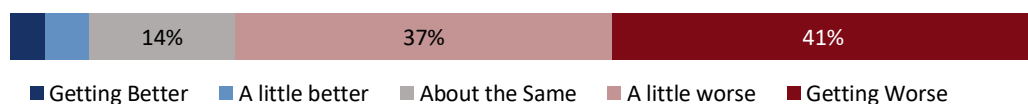
29% reported teacher shortages are a serious problem

Teacher Shortage Findings

1.1. How serious of a problem did your district have with teacher shortages?



1.2. Was the educator shortage getting better, worse, or staying the same?



256 classes were cancelled due to teacher shortages

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

Response	Percentage	N	Number Canceled
At least one	15%	90	256
None	85%	519	0

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

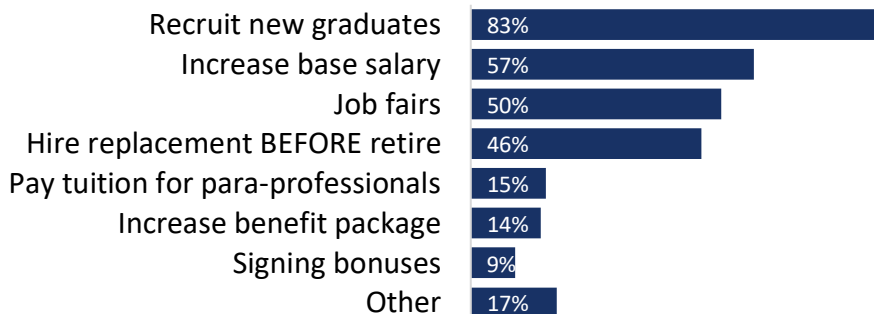
Response	Percentage	N	Number Converted
At least one	15%	89	219
None	85%	520	0

OVERALL FINDINGS



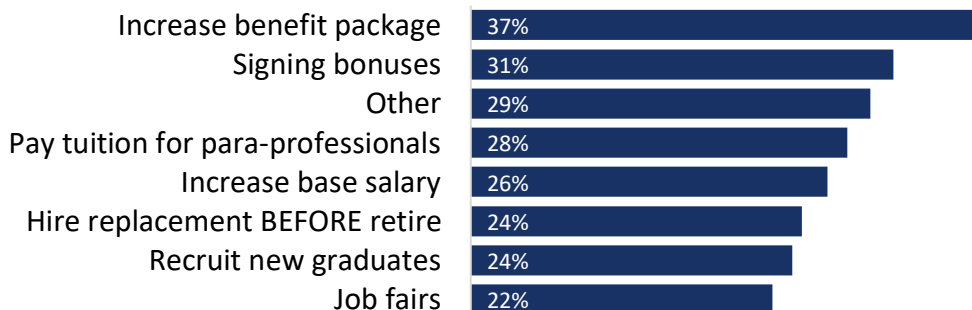
While 355 of 628 districts increased base salary to attract new teachers, those districts still reported 26% of their positions remained unfilled/unqualified.

1.5. Identify all the current strategies used by the district to attract certified teachers.

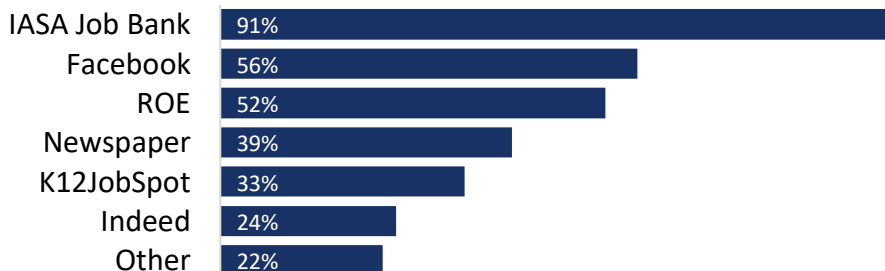


Superintendents that chose “Other” discussed various incentives (27%), additional recruitment strategies (60%), utilizing retirees/substitutes (8%), implementing specific recruitment program like Grow Your Own (6%).

1.5-1. Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by current recruitment strategies.



1.6. On which of the following sites did your district post available jobs?



Superintendents that chose “Other” discussed other education specific websites (55%), online staffing sites (21%), social media (21%) and local resources (4%).

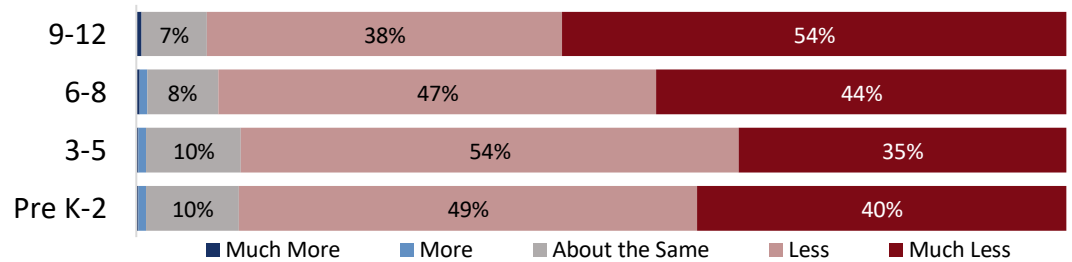
OVERALL FINDINGS



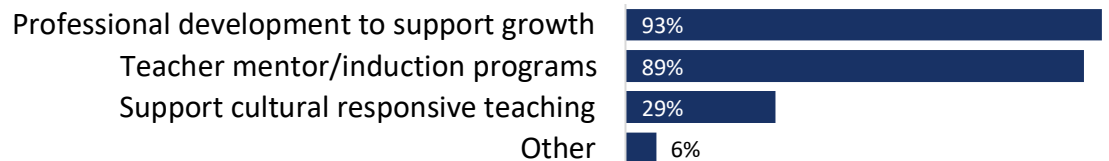
1.6-1. Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by job posting method.



1.7. Compared to previous years how many applicants did you receive in the following categories?

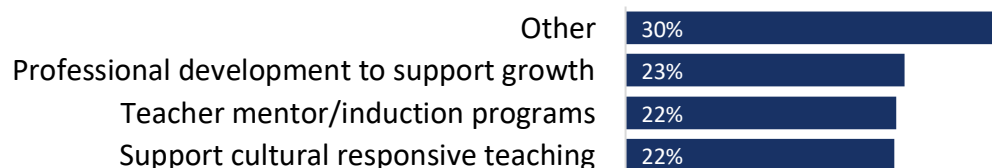


1.8. Which of the following programs did you have in your district to support new teachers?



Superintendents who chose “Other” responded with different incentives (22%), instructional coaches or mentors (41%), orientation programs (12%) and school climate or professional development (24%).

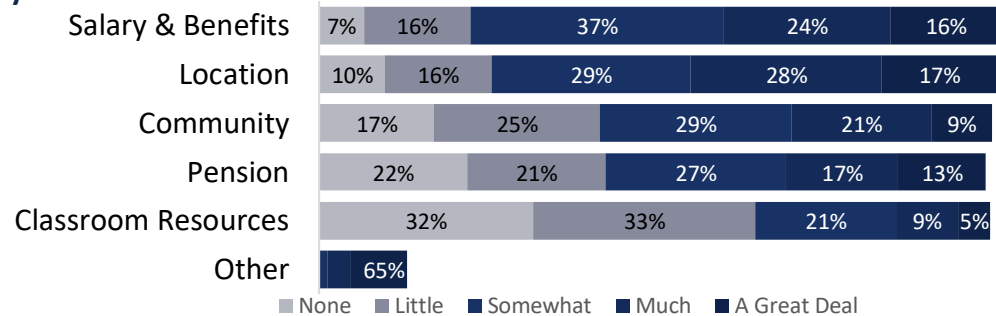
1.8-1 Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by teacher support programs.



OVERALL FINDINGS

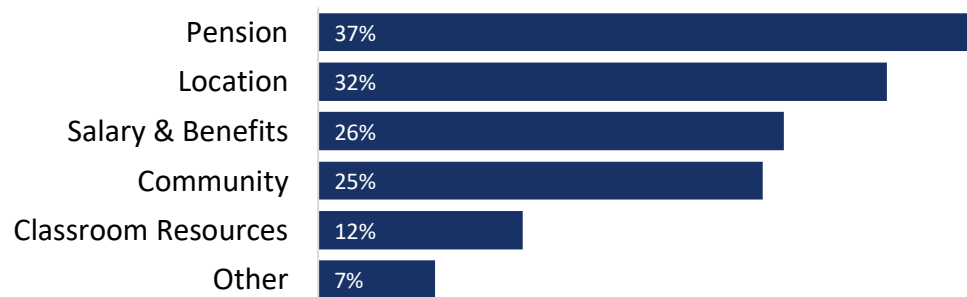


1.9. To what extent did the following impact your ability to recruit teachers in your district?

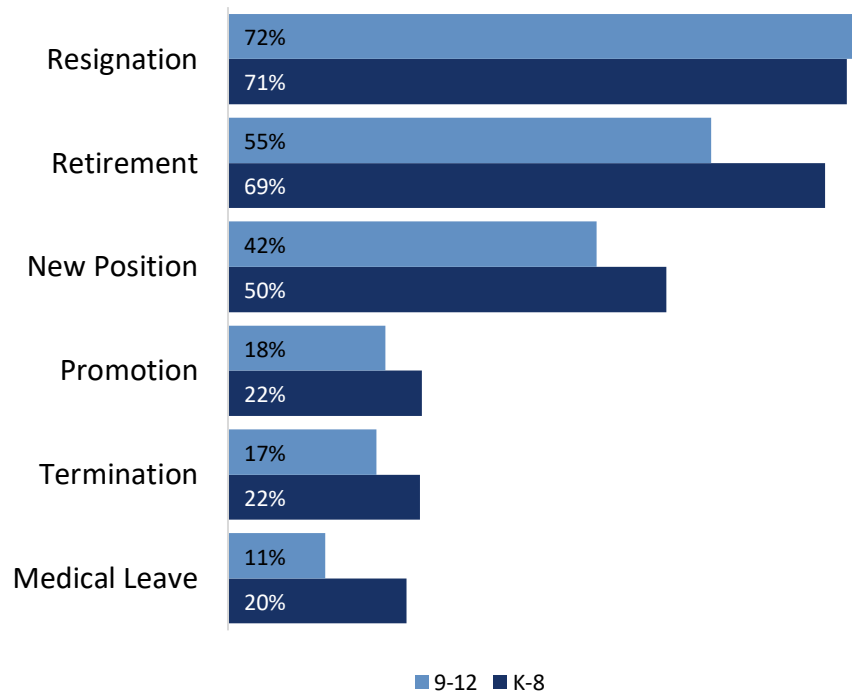


Superintendents that selected “Other” elaborated on various benefits and incentives such as insurance (20%), certification requirements (11%), demands on educators (17%), lack of candidates (24%), public perception (19%), location (7%) and school violence (2%).

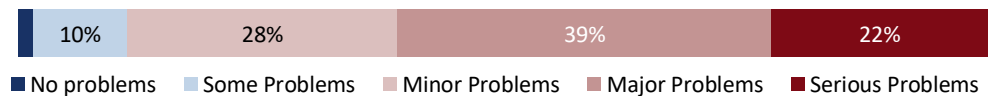
1.9-1. Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by factors affecting teacher recruitment.



1.10. What occurred to make the positions available in your district?



1.11. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning teacher shortages?

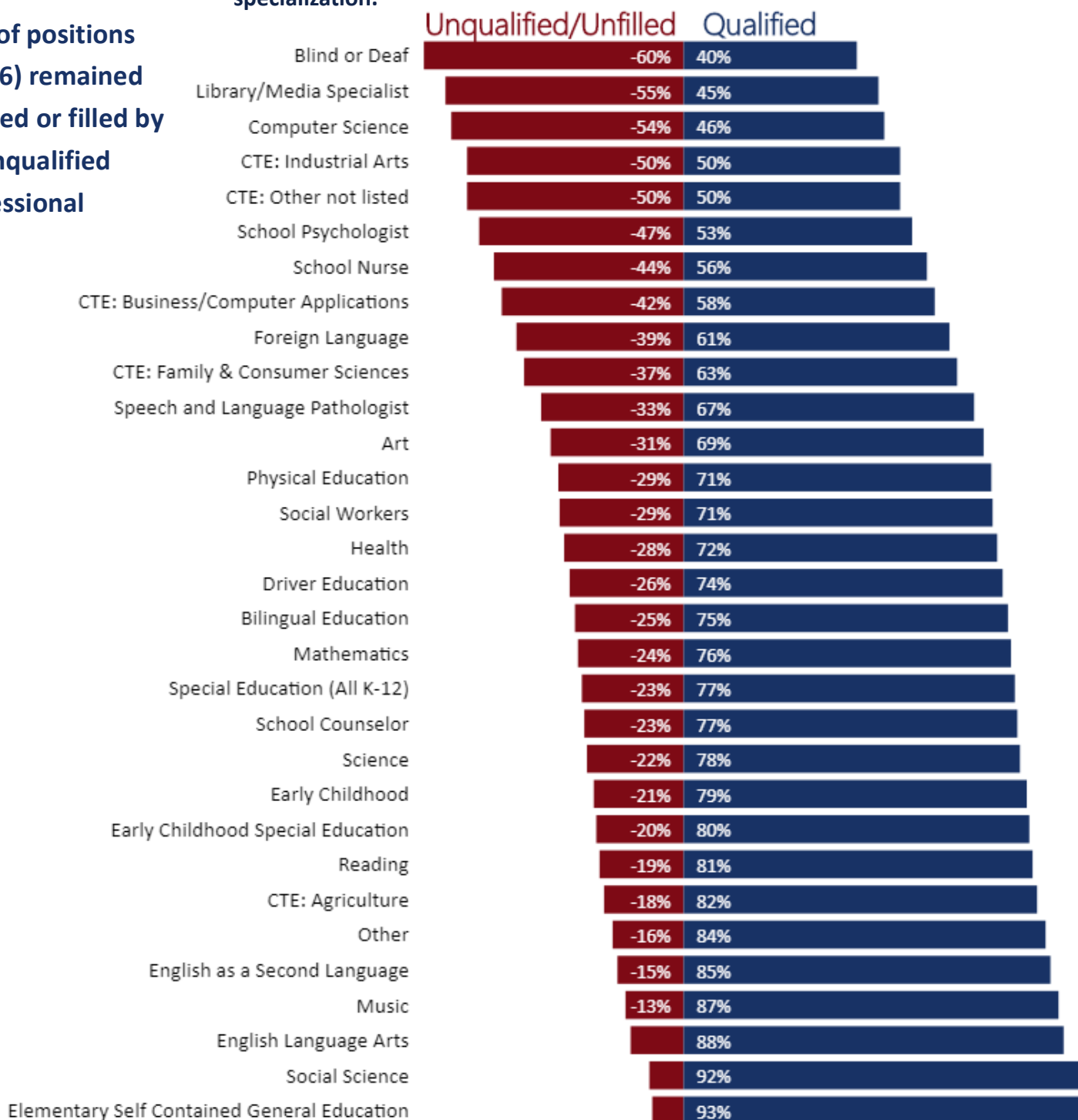


OVERALL FINDINGS



1.12a. Percent of open teacher positions that were filled with a qualified hire versus filled with less than qualified hire or unfilled broken down by teacher specialization.

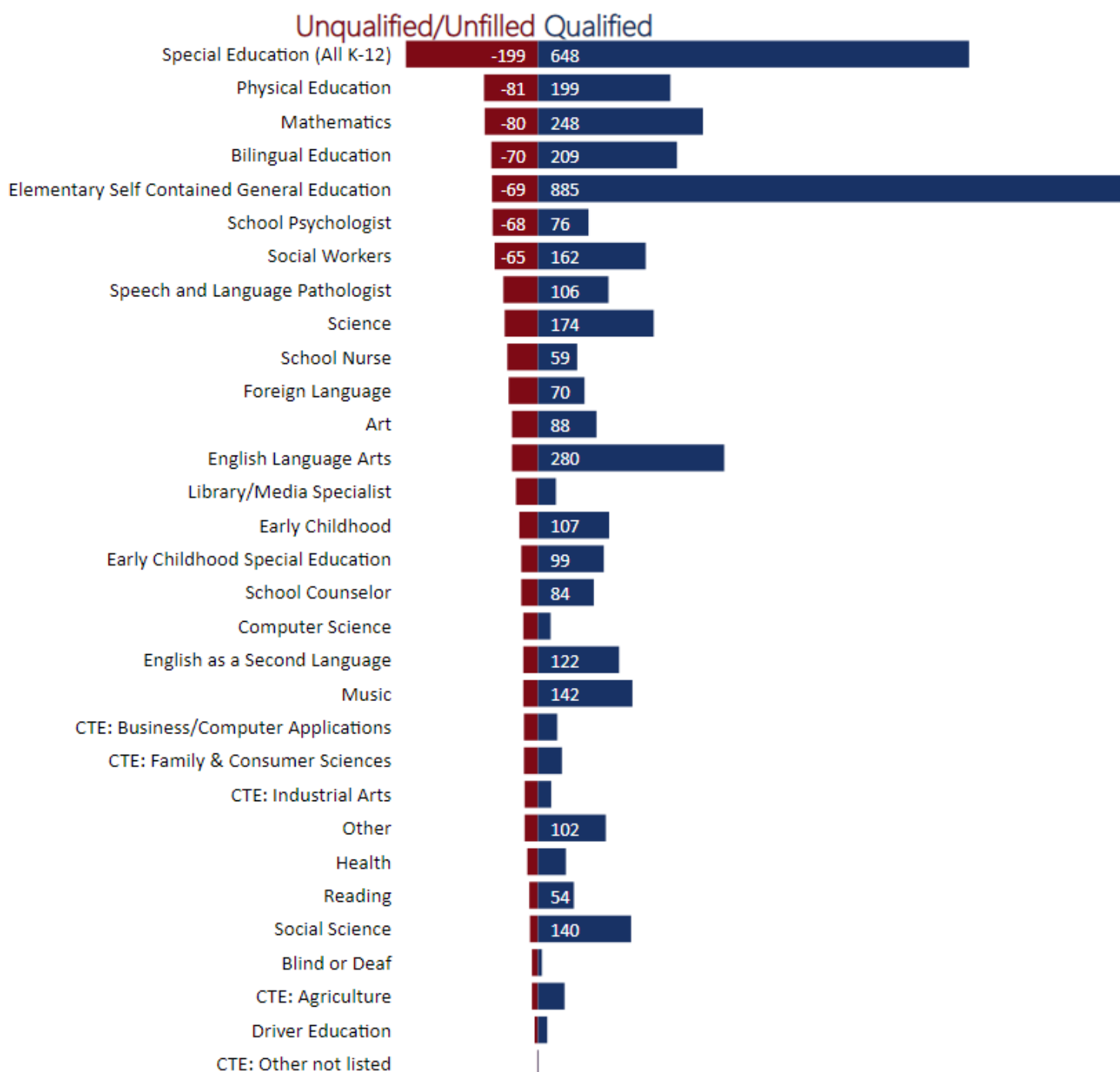
22% of positions (1,226) remained unfilled or filled by an unqualified professional



OVERALL FINDINGS



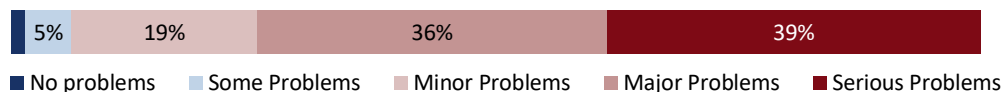
1.12b. Number of open teacher positions that were filled with a qualified hire versus filled with less than qualified hire or unfilled broken down by teacher specialization.



94% of districts believe they either have a minor to serious problem with substitute teacher shortages

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

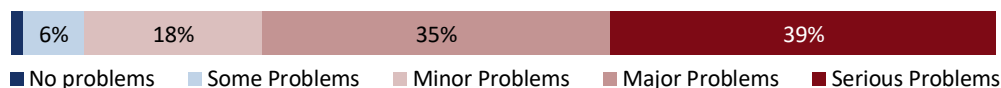
2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?



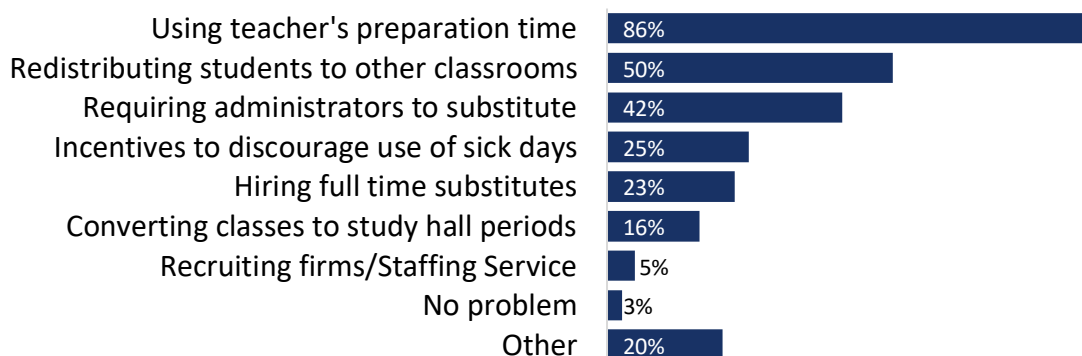
2.2. How did substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago?



2.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?



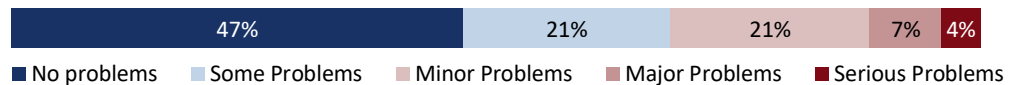
2.4. In which of the following ways did your district act in response to substitute teacher needs?



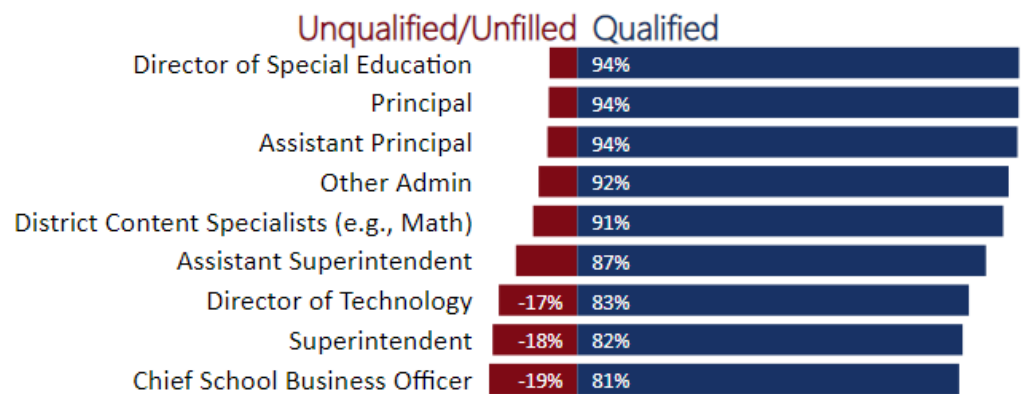
Superintendents who selected "Other" elaborated on reducing the need for substitutes (7%), providing incentives (57%), additional recruiting (15%) and utilizing other staff like paraprofessionals, administrators or counselors (22%).

Administrator Shortage Findings

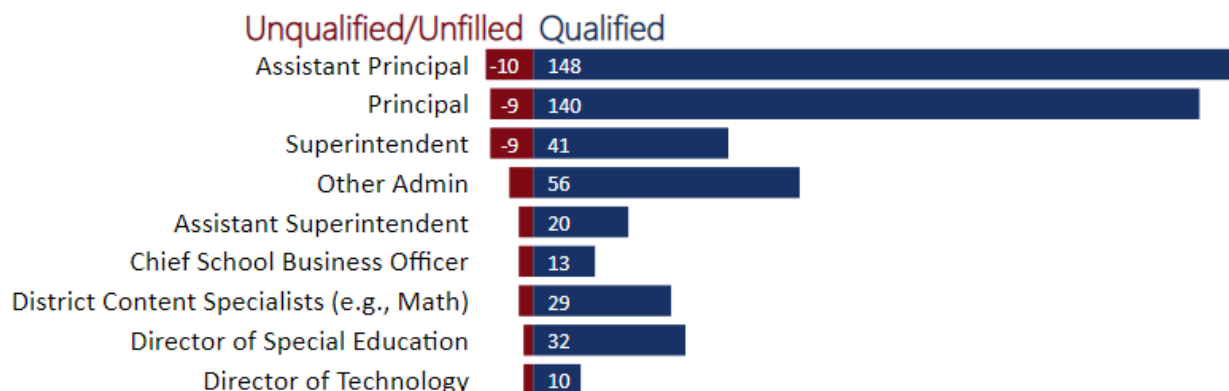
3.1. Which of the following best described your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?



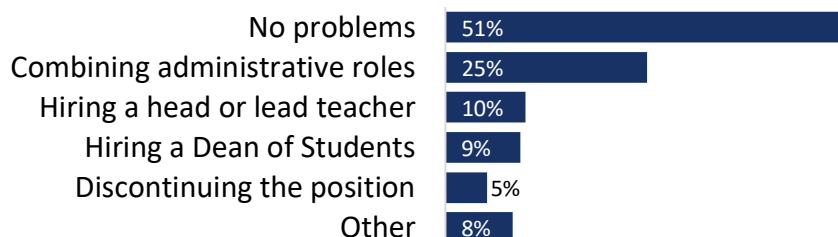
3.2a. Percent of open administrator positions that were filled with a qualified hire versus filled with less than qualified hire or unfilled broken down by administrator position.



3.2b. Number of open administrator positions that were filled with a qualified hire versus filled with less than qualified hire or unfilled broken down by administrator position.

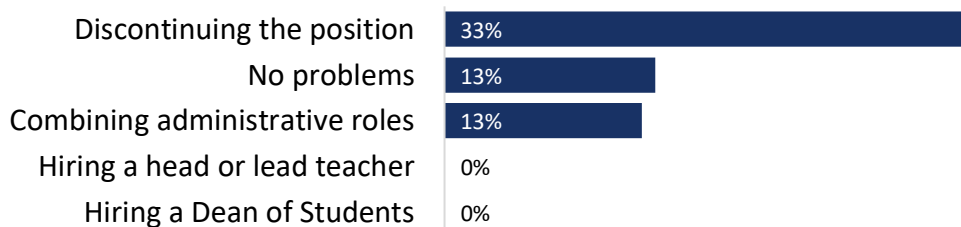


3.3. In which of the following ways did your district act in response to administrative needs?

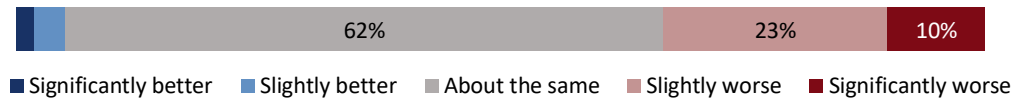


Superintendents that selected “Other” commented on promoting from within their district (43%), adjusting the position (25%), hiring interim (11%) and adding incentives (21%).

3.3-1. Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by response to administrator need.

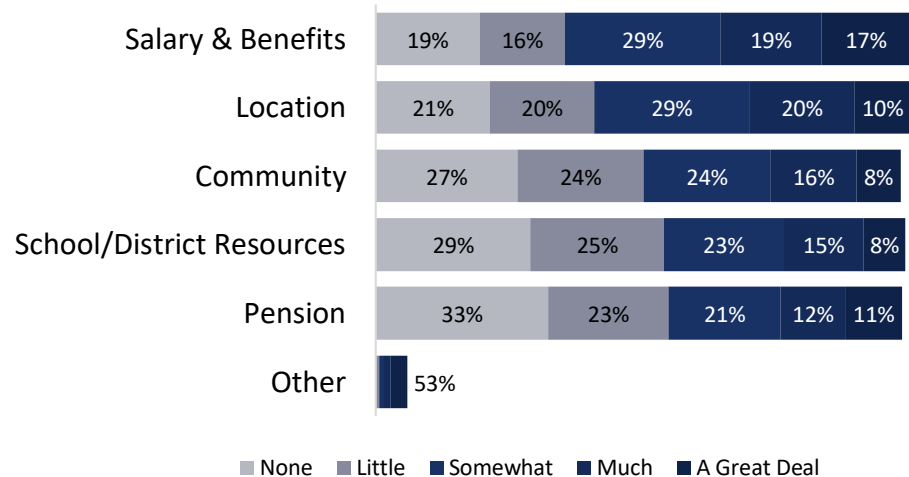


3.4. How did administrator availability compare to five years ago?



3.5 What occurred to make leadership positions available in your district?

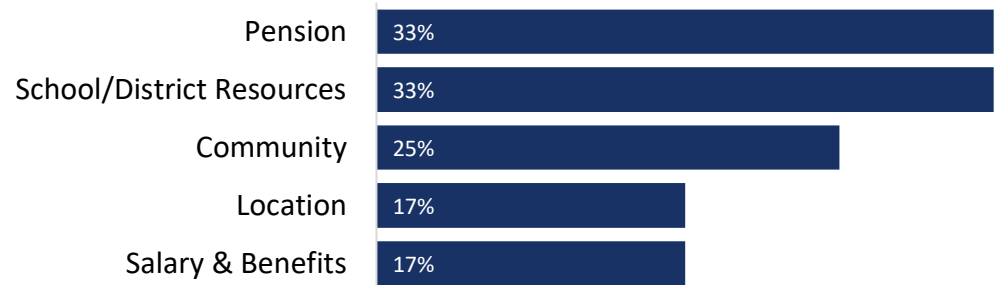
3.6 To what extent do the following impact your ability to retain



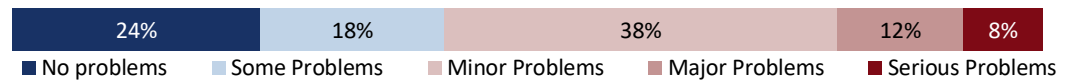
administrators?

Superintendents that chose “Other” discussed advancement opportunities (15%), school and community culture (36%) and the demands of the job (48%).

3.6-1. Percent of open positions that remained unfilled/unqualified broken down by factors that affect ability to retain administrators.



3.7 Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022 which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning administrative shortages?





Superintendent Comments

At the end of each of the three surveys sections (concerning teacher, substitute teacher, and administrator staffing) the superintendents were given the opportunity to comment. The following areas include themes identified from the 463 comments received.

Teacher Staffing Comments

Superintendents were asked to comment on recruiting and staffing teachers for the 2020 academic year. The open ended responses were analyzed for themes that concerned (1) shortage areas (e.g. nurses, Spanish teachers, etc.), (2) that they received fewer applicants who were less qualified, (3) concerns about salaries/benefits/pensions, and (4) reflections for state legislation and policies that has impacted the shortage. There also were several superintendents who presented their ideas and tested approaches to meet the teacher shortages. There is a section dedicated to each of these below.

(1) Shortage areas

Among the 237 open-ended responses, 32% (n = 76) specifically concerned those areas that were hard to fill. Consistent with the figure 1.12a on page 12, the respondents were concerned about filling positions in the following areas: Social Work, Special education, English as a second language, Bi-lingual, Math, Science and family and consumer sciences. There also was some reflection that these shortages have started to affect the administrative ranks. The following are some exemplar quotes from superintendents.

“The teacher shortage is a problem, which has also worked its way into administration and will continue to get worse.”

“Bilingual teachers are almost impossible to find & recruit. Bilingual specialists (SPED, Reading Specialists, social workers, school psychologist) are impossible to locate.” - Rural elementary superintendent in Northwest Illinois

“The two most challenging areas to fill are Emergent Bilingual and Special Education teaching positions. It's an area where the labor market is

broken and there isn't a sufficient supply of candidates available at any price." - Suburban unit superintendent in Northeast Illinois

"The pool is simply not big enough. This will no doubt have an effect on quality."

(2) Quality and number of teacher applications

More than one quarter (27%, n = 64) of the superintendent open ended responses concerned either a lack of quality of the candidates or the decrease in the number of applicants. Several also discussed how this has led to the unfortunate practice of "poaching" teachers from other local school districts or of their teachers being recruited to other school districts.

"We seem to be losing more teachers right before school starts to other districts. This is in direct conflict with school code." - Urban unit superintendent in Northwest Illinois

"When I started in the district in 2003, I had over 100 applicants for a position. The last four positions we had under 5 applicants." - Rural elementary superintendent in Northwest Illinois

"We poached a HS science teacher from another district. We hired a retired teacher for a special ed position because we had no applicants. We had one applicant for a 6th grade position." - Rural unit superintendent in West Central Illinois

"Teachers are in demand and that causes a lot of teacher movement to high paying districts."

(3) Concerns about salaries/benefits/pensions

Administrators wrote about competition for salaries, but mostly were concerned about the Tier II retirement pension system that is a disincentive for teachers to work in Illinois. There also were concerns that a district's geography; there are two alternate quotes identifying compensation challenges for rural and suburban districts.

"No one wants to pay attention to this topic, but every teacher we had leave moved to Iowa solely because of Illinois requirement to teach until the age of 67. Our top teacher salary is \$50,000. Can you imagine teaching for 45 years as a teacher and working for 50 grand? Our salary step stops at 25 (years), so they would work for another 20 years without much of a pay raise." – Rural unit superintendent in West Central Illinois

“(We are affected by) The competitive area surrounding us with better benefits and salary...also certifications in Bilingual/HS Elective Areas” - Suburban unit superintendent in Northwest Illinois

“We are in a fairly remote agricultural area in a small town. Other districts in our area offer fringe benefits, like insurance, that we don't offer.” – Rural unit superintendent in Southwest Illinois

“We are close to suburbs and cannot compete with salary & benefit packages.” - Rural elementary superintendent in Northwest Illinois

“Changes being made in Springfield, increasing the number of mandates on districts, continues to increase the stress levels of educators.”

(4) Reflections on state legislation and policy

Superintendents had concerns about legislation and policy and suggested additional changes that may alleviate the shortage. One idea concerning the Tier II requirement that teachers teach until age 67 before they can receive retirement benefits, one superintendent suggested that the age be lowered to 55 and that the retirement benefits payouts be decreased initially and on a scale until age 67. Another commented that changes in licensure for middle grades (grades 4 – 6) have impacted their flexibility in hiring.

“Please talk to legislators about making the retirement age 55 for teachers again. But for those teachers coming into the system starting out they will only receive a low % of overall pay. Now it is 75%. Make that %, 66-70 %” – Rural elementary superintendent in Southeast Illinois

“There are numerous factors impacting the teacher shortage in Illinois. In my opinion some of the key contributions to the lack of teacher candidates are: low starting salary for a 4 year degree, pension changes (67 years old for full pension), to many hoops to jump through in route to a teaching degree.” – Rural unit superintendent in Southeast Illinois

“We are looking at job fairs outside of the metro area, which we have not typically not in the past.”

(5) Ideas and approaches to meet the teacher shortages

The following are ideas shared about how to meet a teacher shortage.

“In one instance we did not receive an applicant for a special education teaching position. We recruited a candidate who applied for an elementary position, but was not hired. She was working as a parapro in a special education classroom. We are working with her to get her special education endorsement.” – Suburban elementary superintendent in West Central Illinois

“We are attending job fairs, raising salaries, and focusing on mentoring/coaching” – Suburban unit superintendent in West Central Illinois

“Money matters to a point. Young teachers are fewer and more targeted on professional community, perceived moral purpose/social justice perspectives, and would not function well without intense induction and mentoring program” – Urban elementary superintendent in Northeast Illinois

Substitute Teacher Staffing Comments

Overall there were 134 comments from superintendents about substitute teacher employment. About 25% commented with little more than that they have a problem with statements like, “There is a decrease in substitute candidates,” “It’s bad,” or “We are struggling to find substitutes.” Other key themes included (1) the increased costs associated with substitutes, (2) strategies that they have used, (3) suggested state legislation or policies, and (4) how the substitute shortage is directly affecting their teacher shortage.

(1) Increased costs

“We pay better than other districts but it's just hard to get people.”

Superintendents shared that even with increasing substitute teacher daily rates and other incentives, they still have issues with finding consistent substitute teachers. The following quotes are representative of comments made about substitute teacher costs.

"It is very hard to find subs in our area we provide them a free lunch as an incentive and increased pay from \$85 to \$95 this year." – Rural unit superintendent in West Central Illinois

"Districts are regularly upping their substitute teaching pay to attract substitutes. District competition and active recruitment of substitutes is the norm" – Suburban unit superintendent in East Central Illinois

"We raised the rate and provide on-boarding for new individuals in an attempt to train and keep substitutes." – Urban elementary superintendent in Suburban Cook Illinois

(2) Strategies

About 18% (n = 24) shared their strategies to attract and retain substitute teachers that included using recently retired teachers, hiring full time substitutes, and outsourcing substitute teacher staffing to a firm.

"(We) Offer an early retirement package to assume the teacher will return in a partial capacity to substitute."

"We pay 85 dollars a day for our substitute teachers. We are changing our pay this year to: 0-29 days = \$85 30-59 days = \$95 60 + = \$105. That will raise our sub pay and will roll over from year to year. We hope this works." – Urban unit superintendent in Northeast Illinois

"We have found that hiring full time substitute teachers to always be on call is a great option that is supported by both administration and certified staff." – Suburban high school superintendent in Northeast Illinois

(3) Effects from state legislation or policies

Superintendents wrote both in favor of recent changes and about complications caused by these changes.

"The process and expense people must go through to be subs inhibits many from even trying."

"Some surrounding states only require 60 hours of college in order to substitute teach. This should be expanded in Illinois even further then it currently is." – Suburban high school superintendent in East Central Illinois

“Some of our subs have become full-time certified teachers in our district.”

“With the requirements changing for obtaining a paraprofessional license, our district is hurting more now with the lack of substitute support staff.” – Suburban unit superintendent in East Central Illinois

(4) Substitute shortage relationship with teacher shortage

Many superintendents reflected that the substitute teacher shortages directly impact the teacher shortage. When districts successfully recruit substitutes to be full time teachers this affects the number of available substitutes. When a substitute teacher is not available, regular teachers are “asked” to cover classes during their planning periods. Further, the lack of substitutes limits teacher professional development, student assessments and the flexibility to conduct IEP meetings.

“Teachers are being denied their personal days, and are coming in sick because there are no substitutes. This only serves to add to the teacher shortage because teachers will leave if they can never take a day off.” – Suburban elementary superintendent in West Central Illinois

“We overwhelmingly rely on in-house faculty to sub during their planning periods.” – Suburban high school superintendent in Northeast Illinois

“We are canceling learning for teachers, assessment for students and have almost had to cancel some IEP meetings because we cannot get substitutes. This is awful!” – Urban elementary superintendent in Suburban Cook Illinois

Administrator Staffing Comments

The overwhelming majority of the 92 comments (43% or n = 40) indicated that they did not currently have a problem. Among the others, they shared that they had experienced (1) fewer quality candidates, (2) success with “grow your own initiatives”, and (3) frustrations with compensation.

“The depth of candidates has decreased over the years.”

(1) Fewer quality candidates

Superintendents shared that they have experienced fewer candidates and that many of the applicants are not prepared for the administrative positions. They also are concerned that current teachers are not electing to pursue additional education to become an administrator in the future.

“I hired a whole new team (2 principals, 1 asst principal) It was unnerving to see the number of applicants below 10 and the quality to be much less than previous years to a very attractive district, with 2 distinguished schools. The workload required with administrative positions has drastically increased in the 10 years that I have held an admin position.” – Suburban unit superintendent in East Central Illinois

“The pool of applicants available for administrators is extremely low. The quality of candidates in the pool is also very low.” – Suburban high school superintendent in Northeast Illinois

“There are fewer capable candidates than years past. I teach as an adjunct (at a local university) and have seen firsthand how few of current teachers are electing to obtain a masters in admin.” – Suburban elementary superintendent in Northwest Illinois

(2) “Grow your own initiatives”

“We are growing our own from within our district.”

One strategy identified by seven superintendents was to develop an internal “grow your own” program. One district created entry level administrative positions. Another superintendent reported that they found a quality pool of candidates when they promoted internally.

“We promoted internally and had a fairly quality pool of applicants, but it is down significantly from where it was a few years ago.” – Suburban elementary superintendent in Northwest Illinois

“Recently, we created a ‘grow you own’ administrative program creating 3 new entry level administrative positions which were all filled with teachers who had been working in the district.” – Urban elementary superintendent in Suburban Cook Illinois

“The jobs are getting more challenging with fewer and fewer benefits.”

(3) Compensation

Consistent with the other two survey areas, superintendents struggle to attract administrators due to fewer benefits. The Tier II retirement pension requirements appear to be affecting administrative recruitment. One superintendent forecast that these limitations will become more of an issue in the future.

“Pension reform efforts has negatively impacted recruitment and retention. We lost a young, gifted administrator who was classified at Tier 2. He took a management job at Ameren. He expressed he does not want to work until he is 67 in order to get his full retirement. I cannot say I blame him.” – Suburban unit superintendent in East Central Illinois

“The declining pension benefits that have not been offset by increasing salaries will impact all areas of certified staffing as Tier II teachers begin to matriculate into administrative roles. We have not seen this yet but will certainly be impacted by this issue.” – Urban elementary superintendent in Suburban Cook Illinois



Responding District Demographics

Among the 861 districts who received a survey, 628 responded for a 73% response rate. This was a significant increase in response rate from 2018 when 527 districts responded. This report only considers public school districts. There were additional responses from special education cooperative districts, vocational districts, or alternative school districts; these data will be considered in a different report.

Response rates were robust among the districts from the Northwest (81%), Central West (81%), and Southwest (92%) regions. High school districts had the lowest response rate with 54% responding.

Responding Districts by District Type

	District Type ³			Total
	Elementary	High School	Unit	Total
n	274	54	300	628
N	371	100	389	861
%	74%	54%	77%	73%

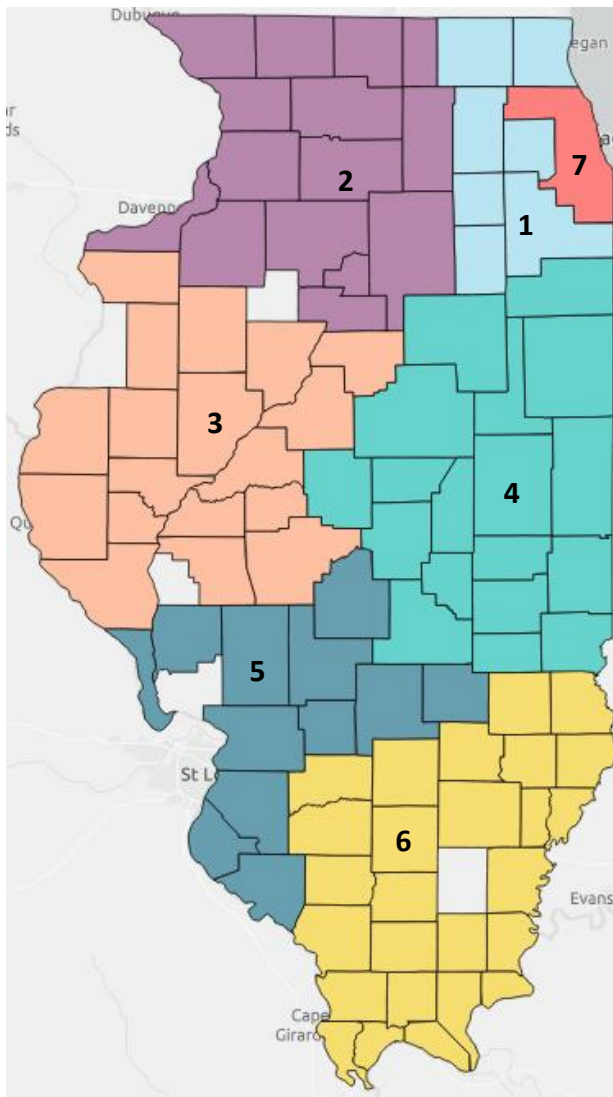
Note: The table includes the (n) - Number responding, the (N) - Total Number of districts, and the (%) - Percentage of districts responding.

³ 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



Responding Districts by Illinois Region



	Region							Total
	Suburban Cook* (7)	Northeast (1)	Northwest (2)	East Central (3)	West Central (4)	Southeast (5)	Southwest (6)	Total
n	93	99	97	84	87	93	76	628
N	150	163	121	112	108	123	83	861
%	62%	61%	81%	75%	81%	76%	92%	73%

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

*Chicago Public Schools are not included in this survey.



94% of Unit School districts reported receiving significantly fewer qualified teacher applicants in comparison to 5 years ago

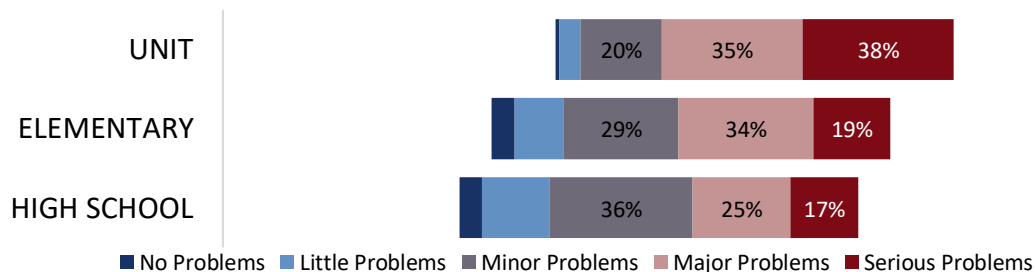
Differences by District Type

Summary

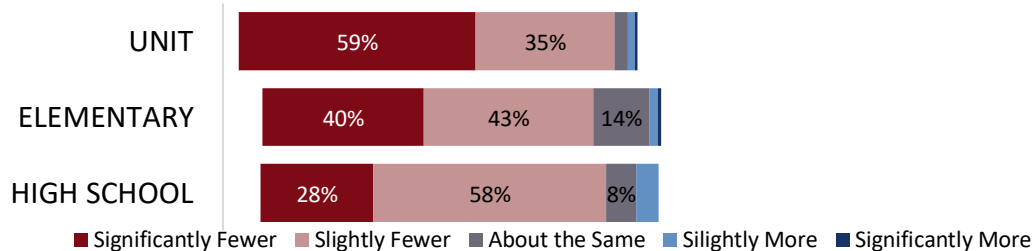
Educator shortages appeared to be about the same across the unit types. However, there is a slight trend that High School districts are faring slightly better than Unit and Elementary Districts. However, High School districts also make up the smallest subgroup (12%) and have the lowest response rate (54%).

Findings

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



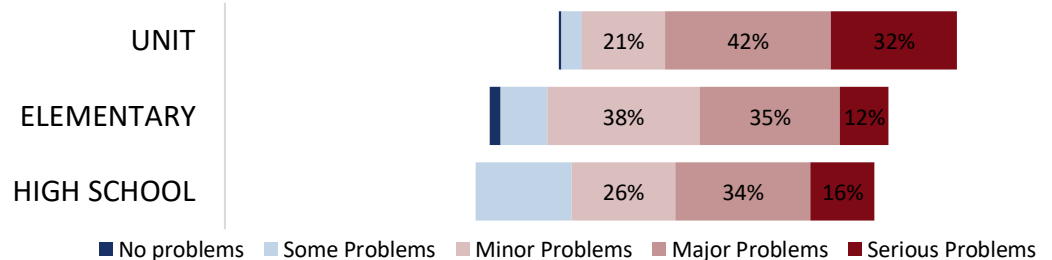
1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years?



DIFFERENCES BY DISTRICT TYPE



1.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning teacher shortages?



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

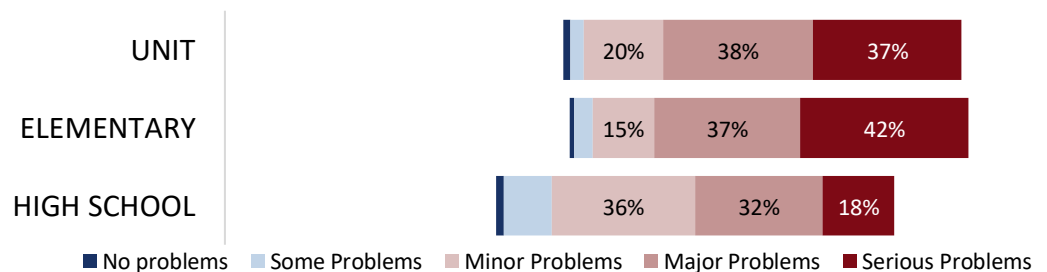
	Elementary	High	Unit
% Indicating Yes	6%	19%	22%
Number of Classes	30	26	206

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

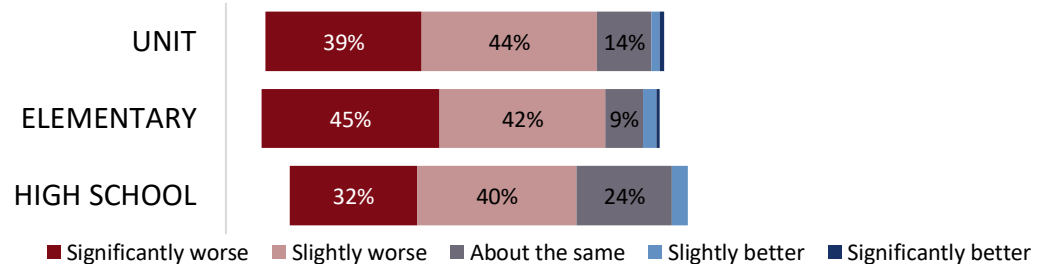
	Elementary	High	Unit
% Indicating Yes	3%	6%	26%
Number of Classes	15	3	202

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

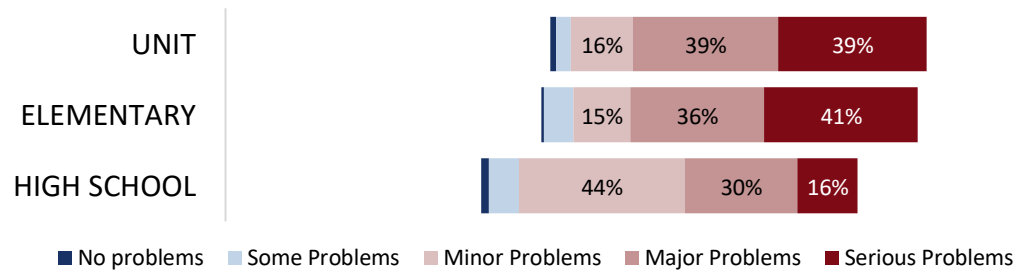
2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?



2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago?

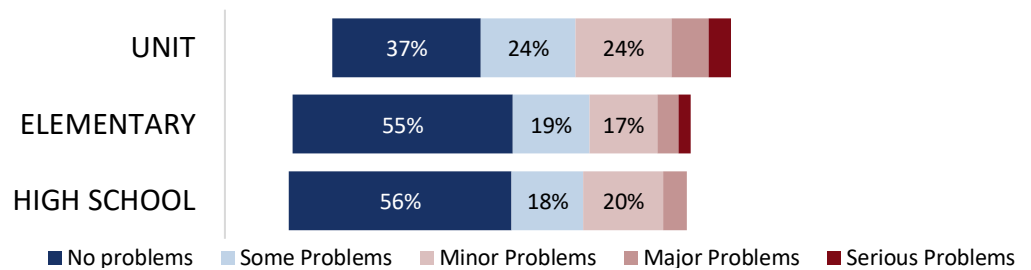


2.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?

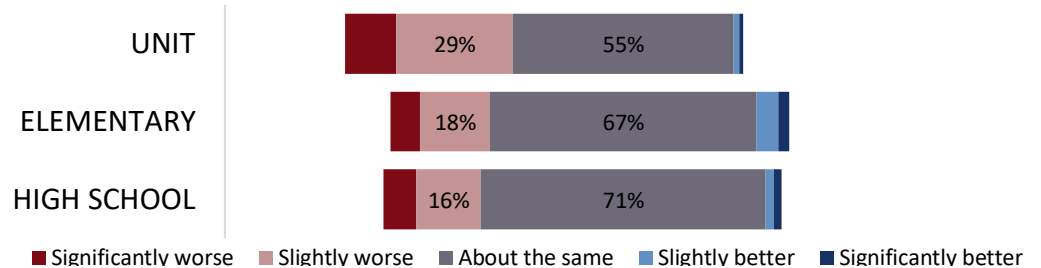


Administrator Shortage Findings

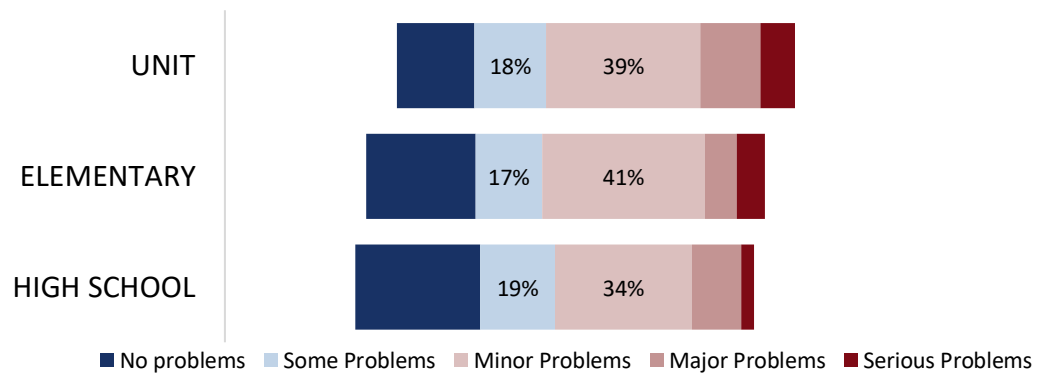
3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?



3.2. How does administrator availability compare to five years?



3.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning administrator shortages?





Differences by Illinois Region

Summary

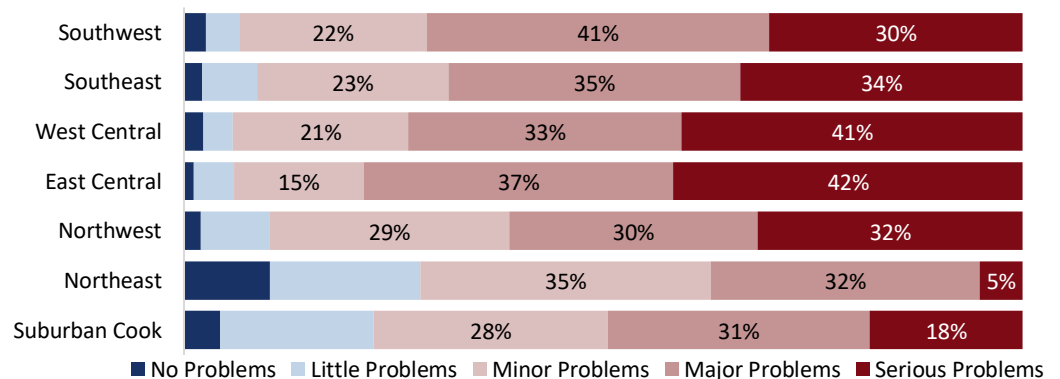
Most districts in all parts of the state currently reported they had a minor problem with teacher shortages. However, the districts in the Northwest, Central and Southern regions reported more serious problems with teacher shortages and qualified applicants. Districts in the Central regions particularly believed future shortages will be worse with 97% reporting that this will become a minor to serious issue for AY2021 and AY2022.

Substitute shortages are consistent across the state. The Northeast and Suburban Cook regions reported the same levels of problems with substitutes as the rest of the state.

The Central regions reported slightly higher problems with administrator shortages (41%) than the Southern and Northern Regions (24% to 33%). The Southern, Central and Northwest regions reported that administrator availability is worse compared to five years ago.

Findings

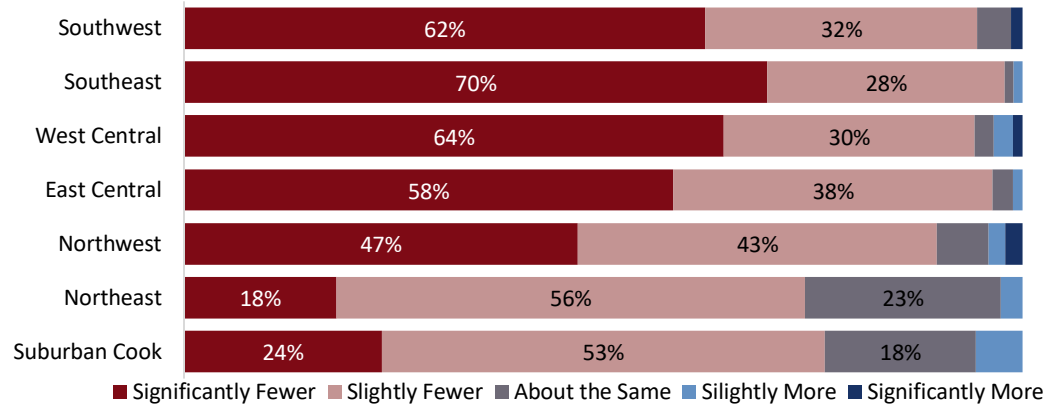
1.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning teacher shortages?



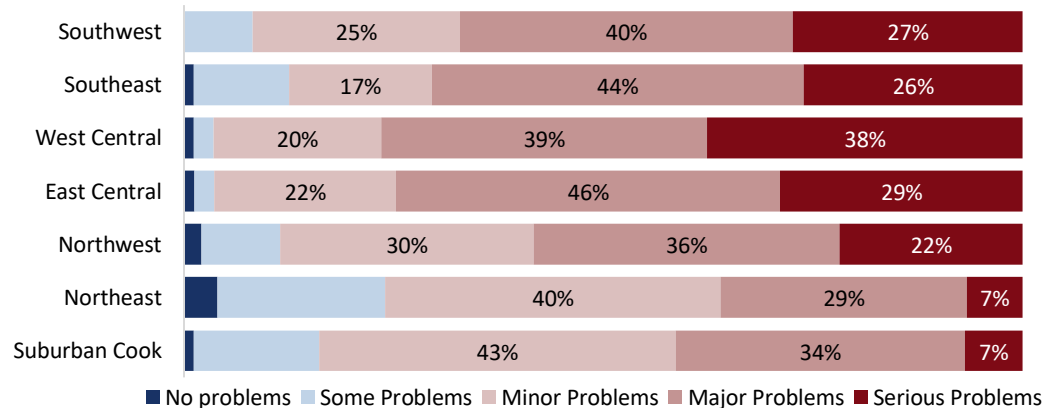
DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years?



1.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning teacher shortages?



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

	Suburban Cook	Northeast	Northwest	East Central	West Central	Southeast	Southwest
Yes	8%	8%	13%	23%	16%	13%	25%
Number of Classes	17	20	24	70	44	42	45

DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION

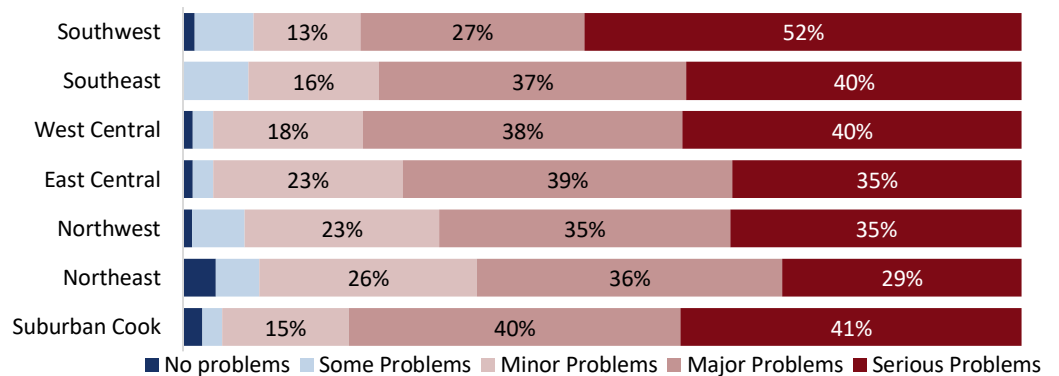


1.5. Have you had to convert classes to online instruction because you lacked a qualified teacher for the subject? If so, how many?

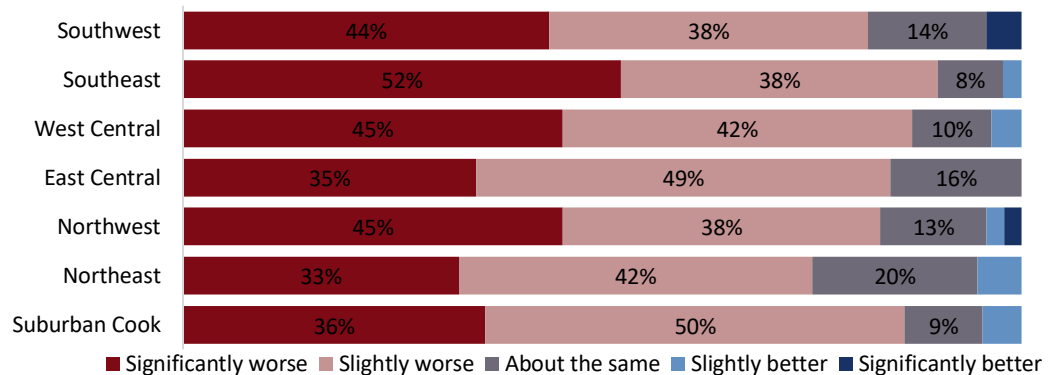
	Suburban Cook	Northeast	Northwest	East Central	West Central	Southeast	Southwest
Yes	5%	2%	10%	20%	24%	23%	18%
Number of Classes	7	2	19	51	53	58	30

Substitute Teacher Shortage Findings

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



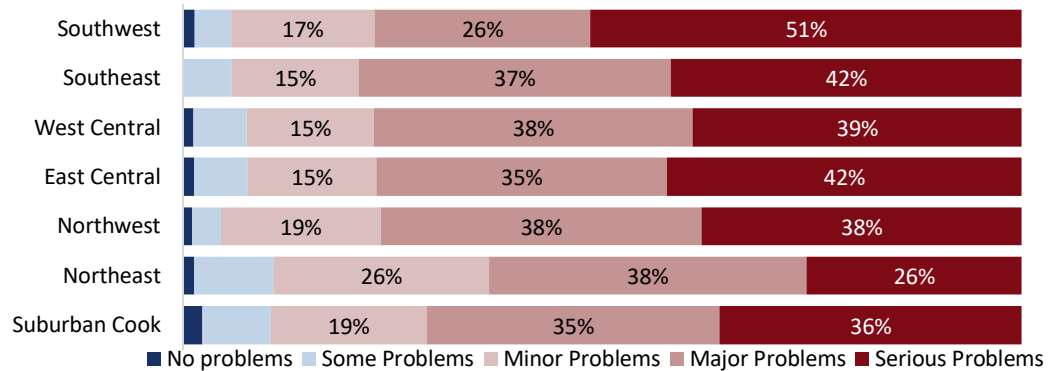
2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago?



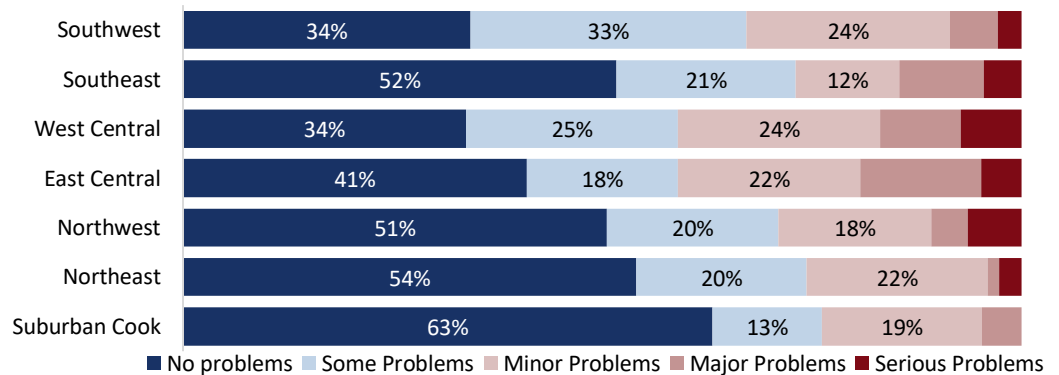
DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



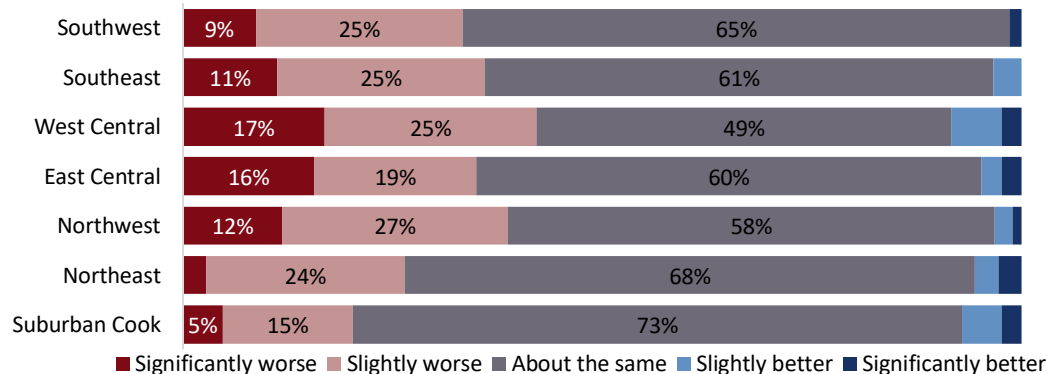
2.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?



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



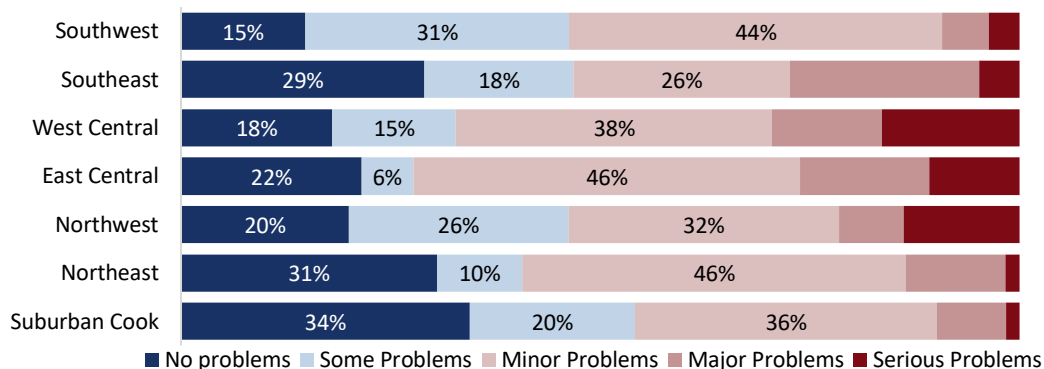
3.2. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago?



DIFFERENCES BY ILLINOIS REGION



3.3. Looking at Academic Years 2021 and 2022, which of the following best describes your district's future situation concerning administrator shortages?





Comparisons Among 2017, 2018 and 2019 Surveys

Summary

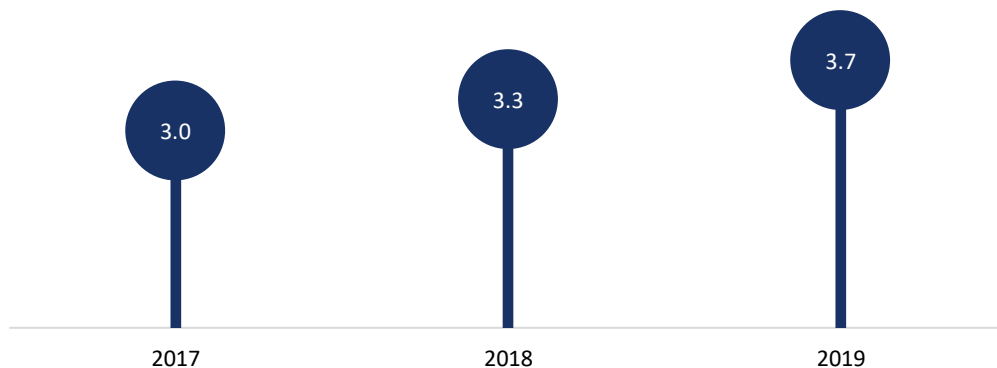
District Superintendents have reported the teacher shortage is more serious than in past years. In 2017, District Superintendents reported a minor problem (3.0 on 5.0 scale) and in 2019 they reported a major problem (3.7 on a 5.0 scale).

The 2019 results for classes cancelled, classes converted to online, and percent unfilled/unqualified are similar to the 2018 results. The substitute teacher shortage continued to be a major problem (4.0 on a 5.0 scale).

Unlike the previous years' comparison, the administrator shortage intensity is showing a small but steady increase. In 2017, district superintendents reported no problems with administrator shortages while this year they reported little problems (from 1.2 to 2.0 on a 5.0 scale).

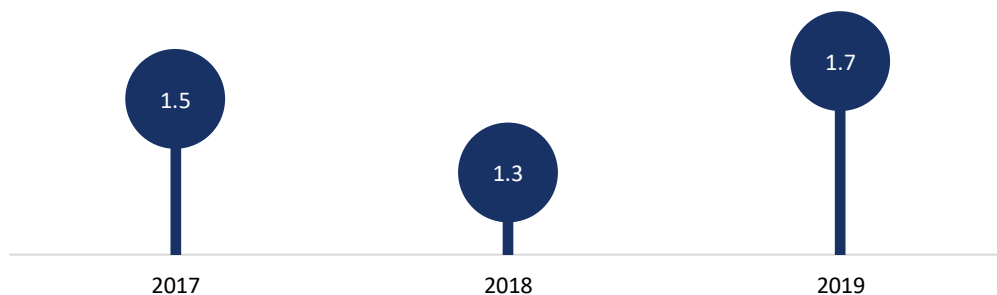
Findings

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



Note: 1 = No Problems; 3 = Minor Problem; 5 = Serious Problems

Figure 1.2. Overall, how many applicants were qualified for the open positions in your district in comparison to five years?



Note: 1 = Significantly Fewer; 3 = About the Same, 5 = Significantly More

COMPARISONS AMONG 2017, 2018 AND 2019 SURVEYS



Figure 1.3. Percent of districts that cancelled at least one class.

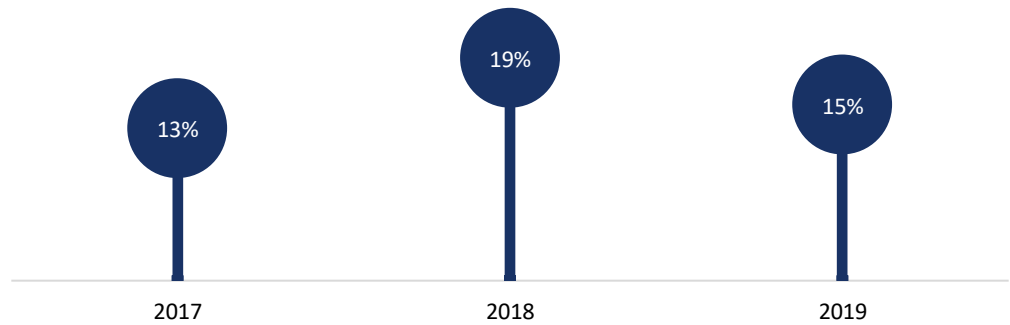


Figure 1.4. Percent of districts that converted at least one class to online.

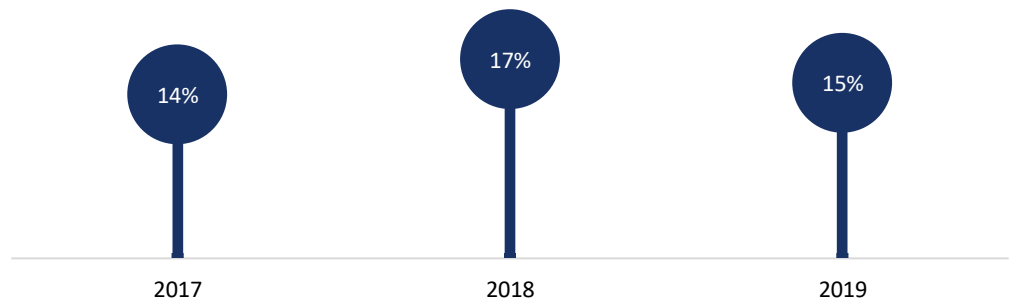
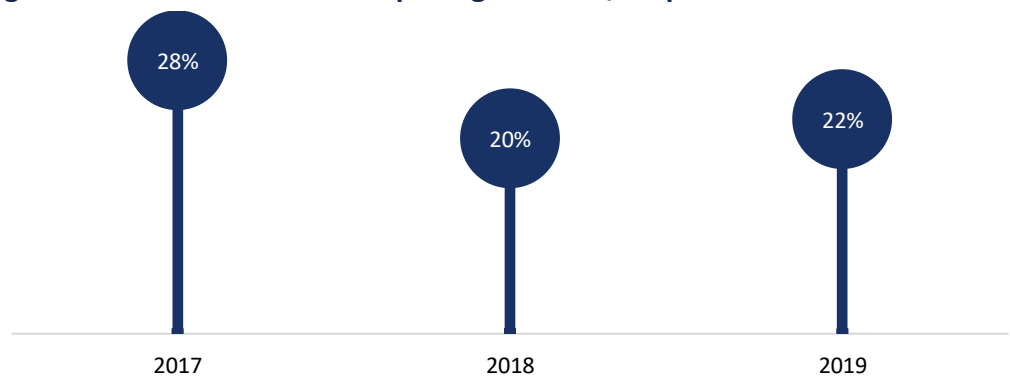


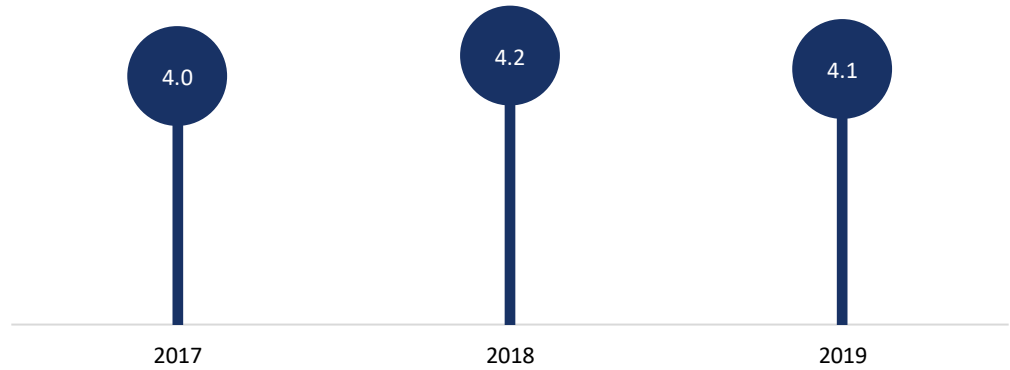
Figure 1.5. Percent of teacher openings unfilled/unqualified.



COMPARISONS AMONG 2017, 2018 AND 2019 SURVEYS

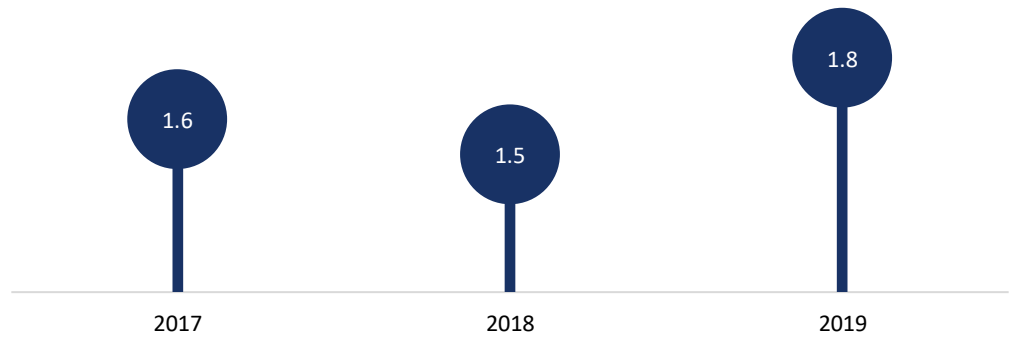


Figure 2.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning substitute teacher shortages?



Note: 1 = No Problems; 3 = Minor Problem; 5 = Serious Problems

Figure 2.2. How does substitute teacher availability compare to five years ago?

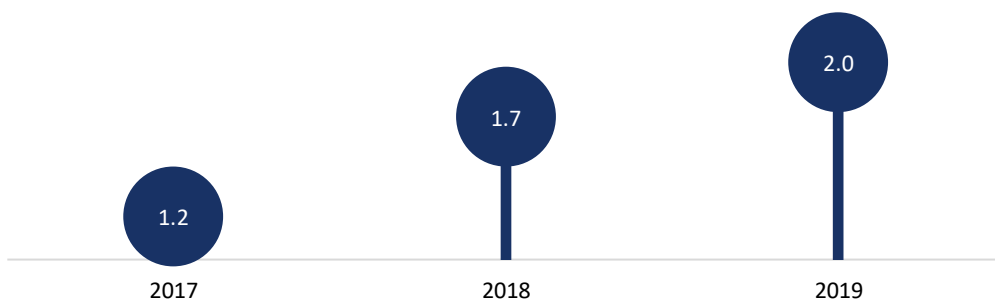


Note: 1 = Significantly Fewer; 3 = About the Same, 5 = Significantly More

COMPARISONS AMONG 2017, 2018 AND 2019 SURVEYS

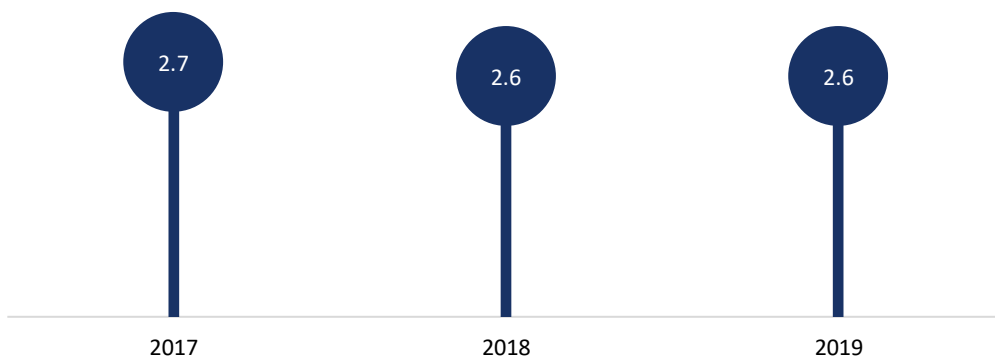


Figure 3.1. Which of the following best describes your district's current situation concerning administrator shortages?

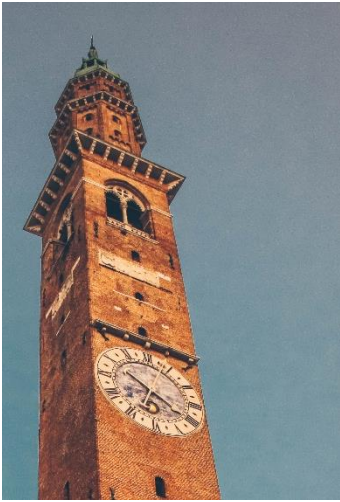


Note: 1 = No Problems; 3 = Minor Problem; 5 = Serious Problems

Figure 3.2. How does administrator availability compare to five years ago?



Note: 1 = Significantly Fewer; 3 = About the Same, 5 = Significantly More



Demographic Relationships

Summary

The heat maps in this section support previous findings that the teacher shortage intensity was particularly serious for districts in Central and Southern Illinois. The intensity of substitute shortages is more evenly distributed across the state than in past years.

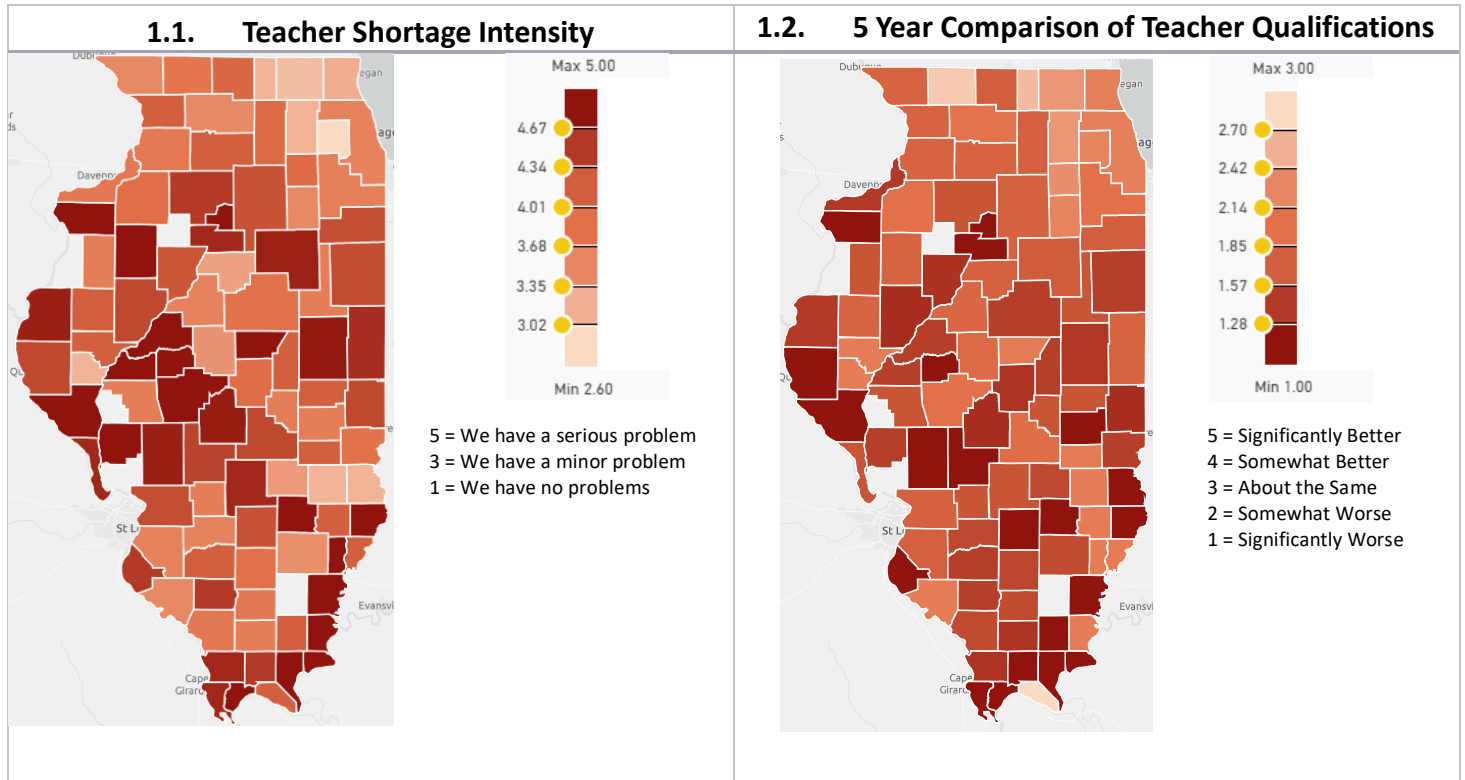
There are correlational relationships between the two teacher shortage variables and average teacher salary. This means that as salaries increase, teacher shortages become less of a concern for superintendents.

In areas of higher poverty, the teacher shortages are more severe. There are correlational relationships between teacher shortage intensity and percent teacher openings unfilled/unqualified with percent students who come from low income households.

There is a correlation relationship between percent of teacher openings unfilled/unqualified and teacher retention rate. This corroborates the results of the Educator Shortage Survey with the published 2019 Illinois School Report Card.

Infographic Heat Maps

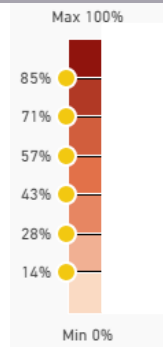
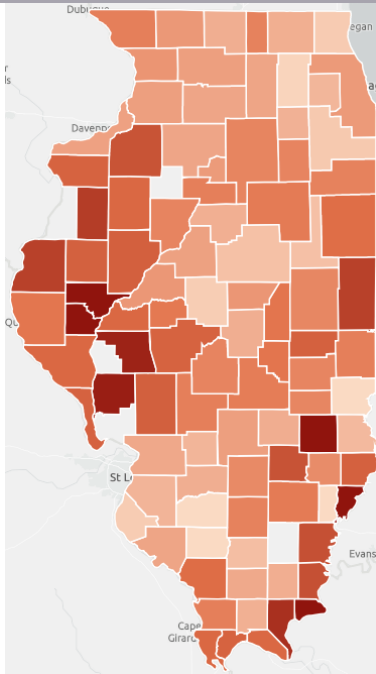
The following are visual descriptions of the key findings.



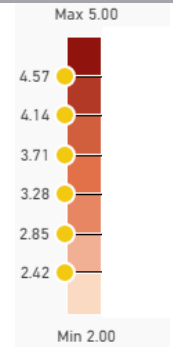
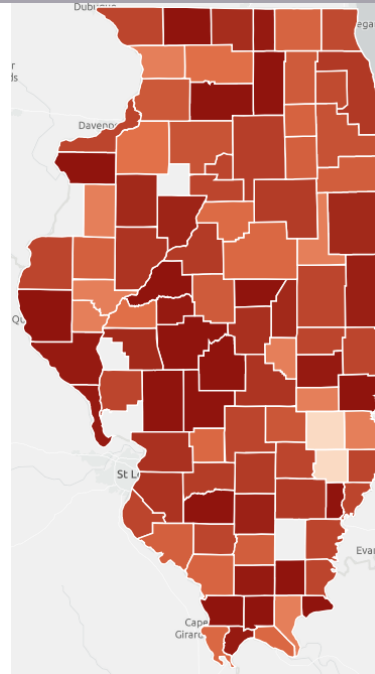
DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



1.3. Percent of Unfilled/Unqualified Positions

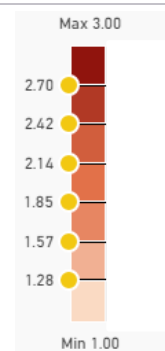
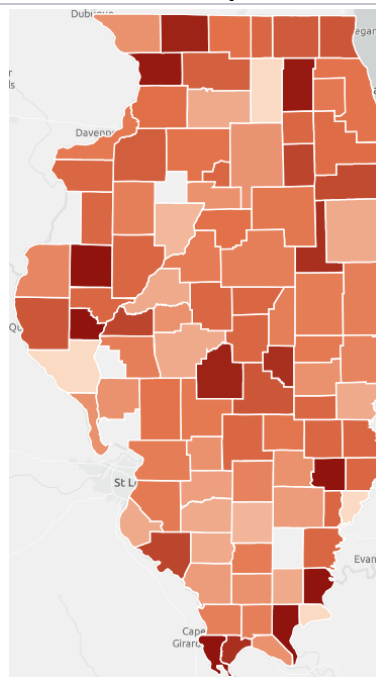


1.4. 2.1. Substitute Teacher Shortage Intensity



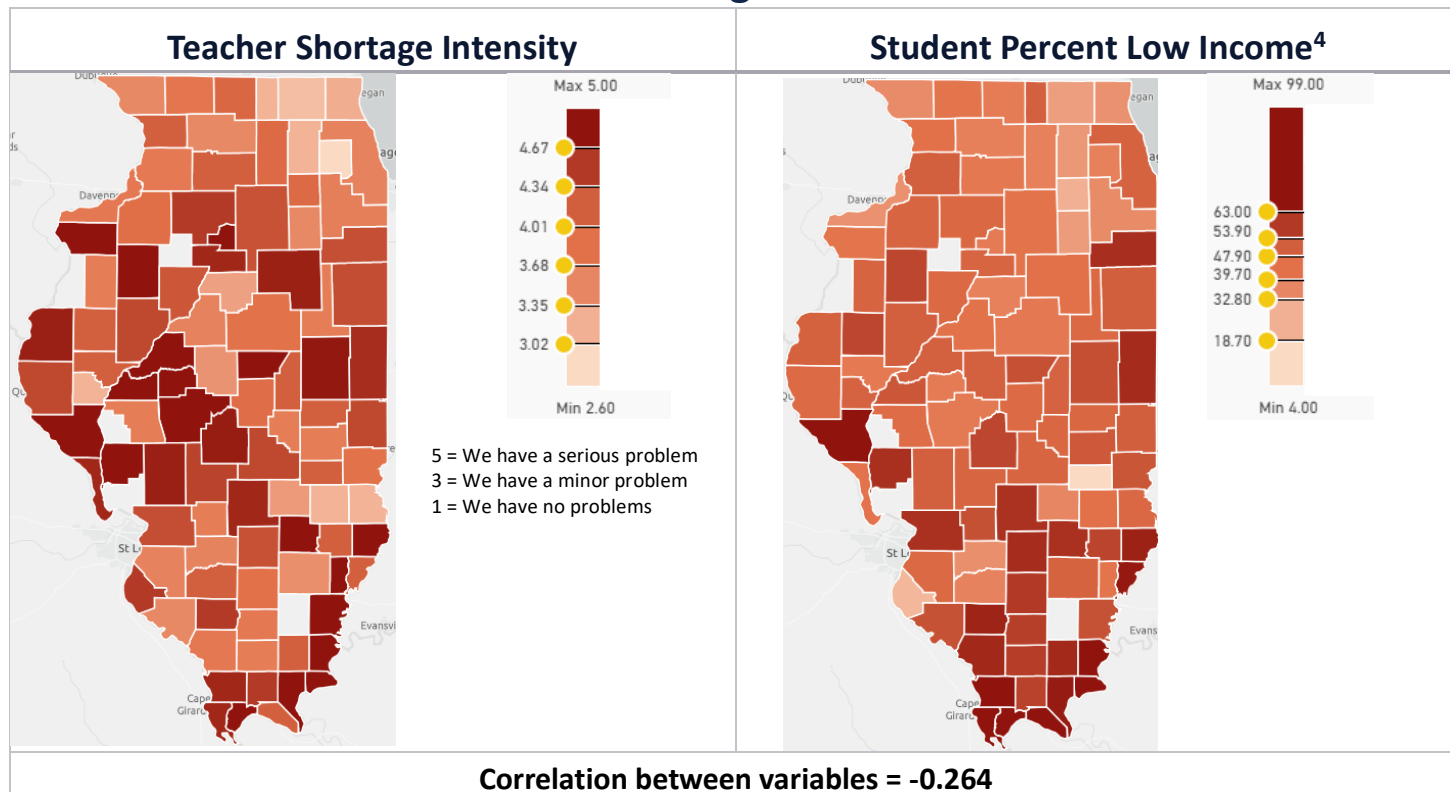
5 = We have a serious problem
3 = We have a minor problem
1 = We have no problems

2.2. Five Year Comparison of Substitute Teacher Availability



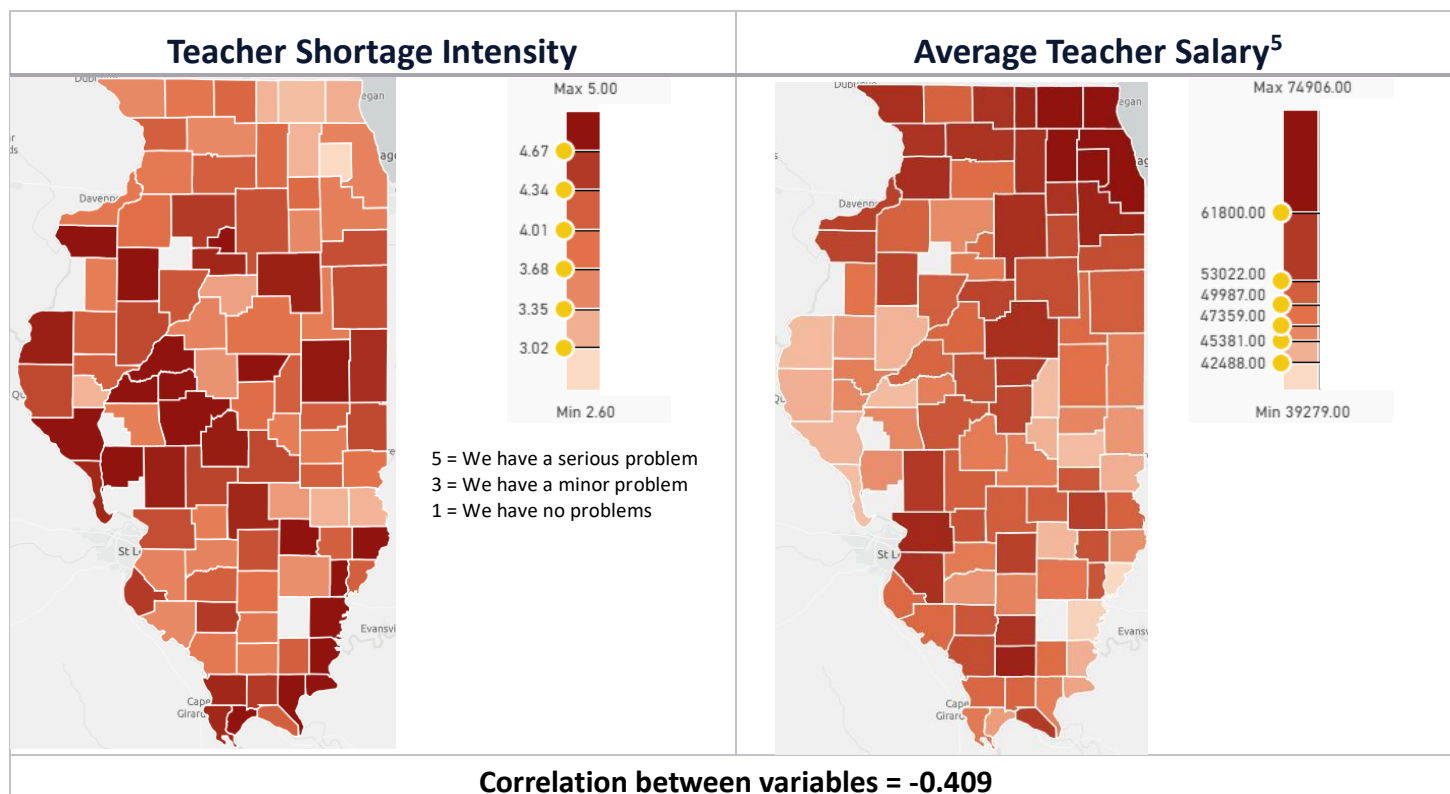
5 = Significantly Better
4 = Somewhat Better
3 = About the Same
2 = Somewhat Worse
1 = Significantly Worse

Correlated Findings



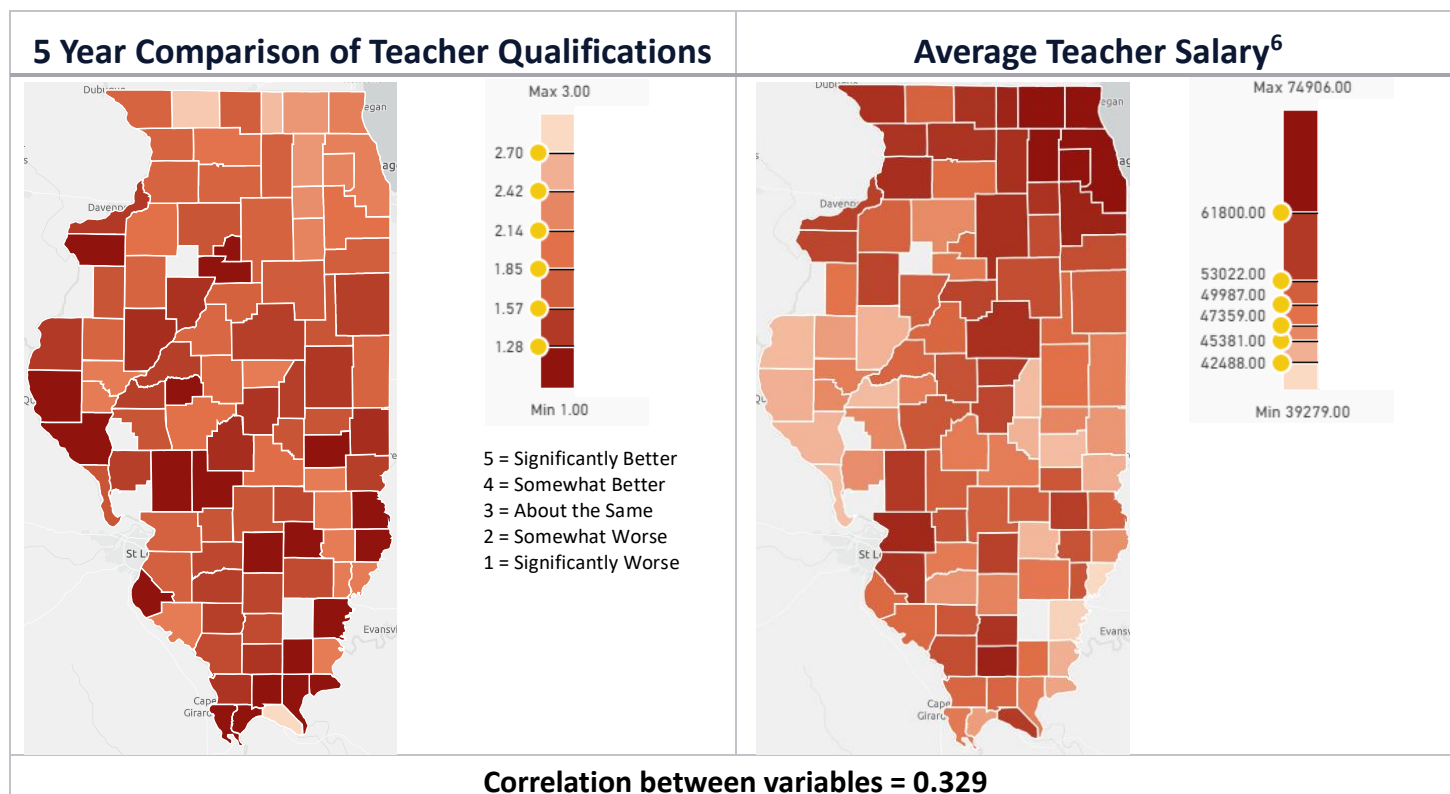
⁴ Data retrieved from the Illinois State Board of Education 2018-2019 Illinois Report Card.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



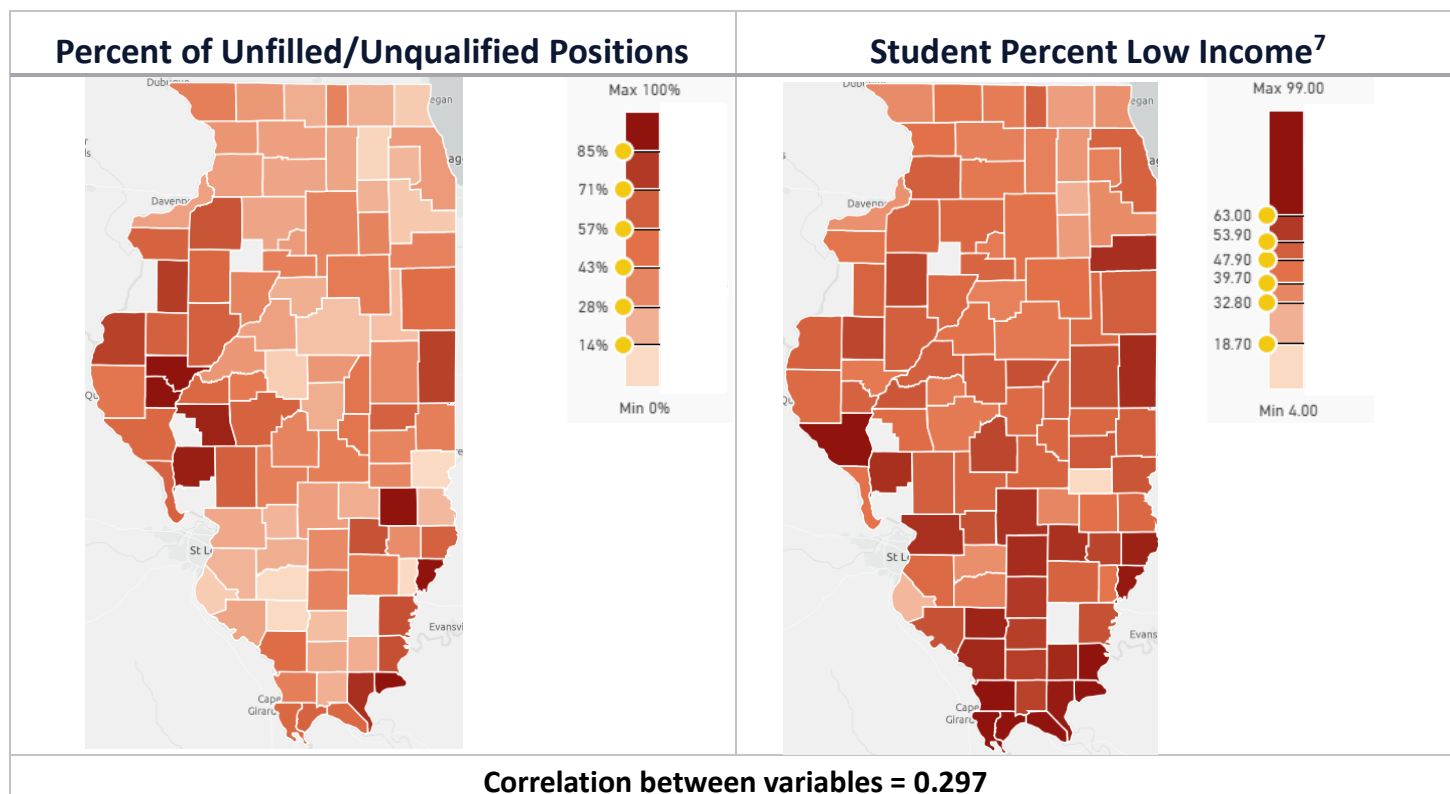
⁵ Data retrieved from the Illinois State Board of Education 2018-2019 Illinois Report Card.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



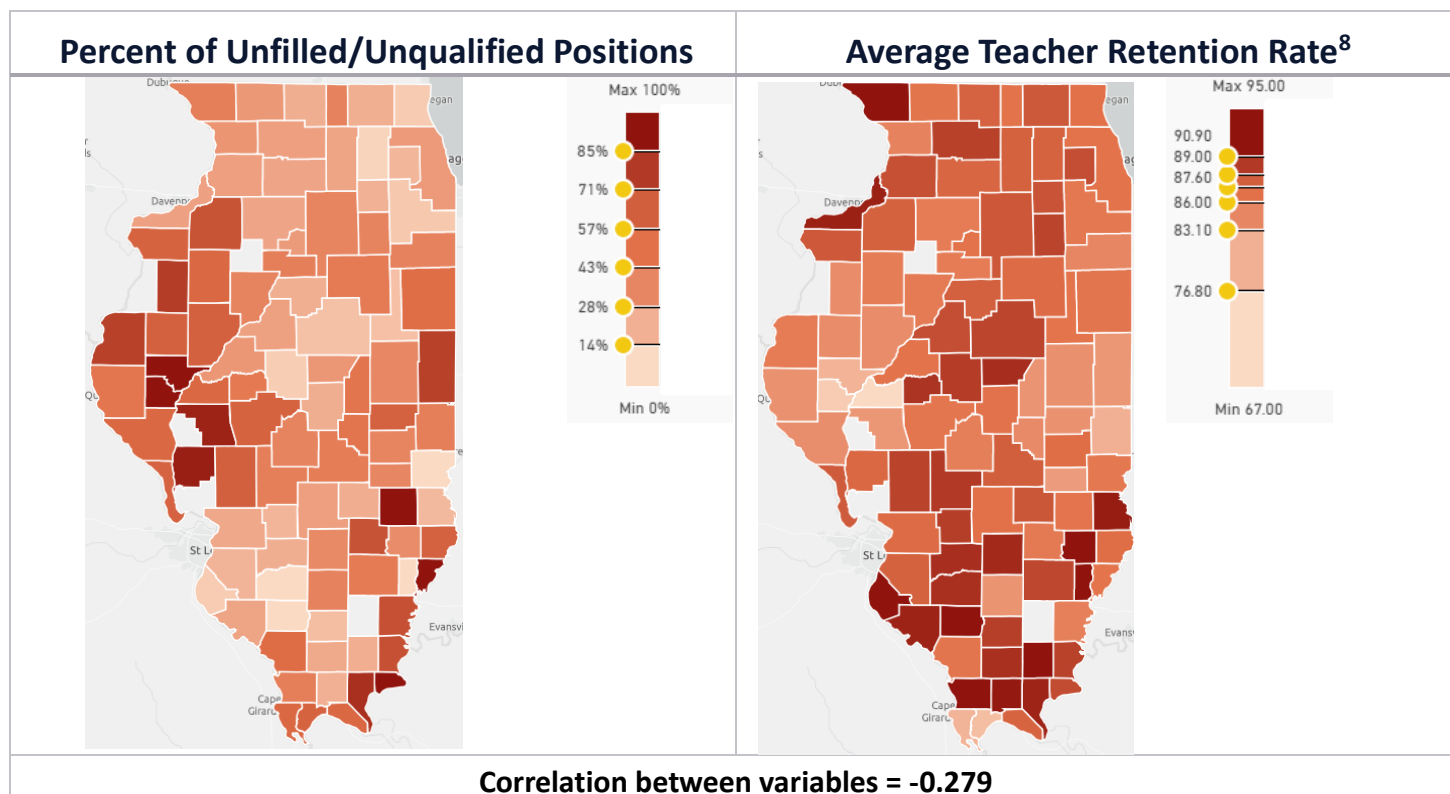
⁶ Data retrieved from the Illinois State Board of Education 2018-2019 Illinois Report Card.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



⁷ Data retrieved from the Illinois State Board of Education 2018-2019 Illinois Report Card.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



⁸ Data retrieved from the Illinois State Board of Education 2018-2019 Illinois Report Card.

DEMOGRAPHIC RELATIONSHIPS



Correlation Table

	Student Low Income Percent	Avg Class Size	Percent Teacher's with MS or higher	Teacher Retention Rate	Average Teacher Salary	Teacher Shortage Intensity	Teacher Qualification Severity	Teacher Unfilled	Substitute Shortage Intensity	Substitute Availability	Administrator Shortage Intensity
Avg Class Size	(0.049)	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Percent Teacher's with MS or higher	(0.281)	0.421	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Teacher Retention Rate	(0.346)	0.141	0.297	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Average Teacher Salary	(0.249)	0.422	0.785	0.296	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Teacher Shortage Intensity	0.264	(0.154)	(0.354)	(0.226)	(0.409)	x	x	x	x	x	x
Teacher Qualification Severity	(0.142)	0.098	0.296	0.073	0.329	(0.450)	x	x	x	x	x
Teacher Unfilled	0.297	0.124	(0.051)	(0.279)	(0.076)	0.292	(0.032)	x	x	x	x
Substitute Shortage Intensity	0.111	0.056	(0.052)	(0.079)	(0.078)	0.322	(0.234)	0.092	x	x	x
Substitute Availability	(0.015)	(0.070)	0.016	(0.025)	0.059	(0.205)	0.305	0.028	(0.462)	x	x
Administrator Shortage Intensity	0.007	(0.034)	(0.104)	(0.059)	(0.126)	0.311	(0.130)	0.134	0.130	(0.103)	x

Note: Highlighted statistics indicate likely areas for additional research among variables.



Survey Method and Analysis

Originally the Teacher Shortage Survey was developed by a committee from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) in 2017. The survey was updated with questions about future vacancies in 2018. The survey was further updated in 2019 with questions about how districts are responding to the educator shortage. The survey was administered by Goshen Education Consulting, a neutral third-party education consulting practice, between September 16 and October 8, 2019.

The survey was downloaded and analyzed for the purposes of identifying subgroup frequencies and descriptives. Further analysis concerned the use of existing data sources including data from the Census Bureau, the National Center for Educational Statistics and the 2018-2019 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.

An interactive Power BI Dashboard can be accessed online by contacting Dr. Kelton Davis at kdavis@roe45.net.

The survey instrument is available upon request. Please contact Dr. Matt Feldmann at 618-751-2807 or gosheneducation@gmail.com to request a copy of the instrument.



Related Efforts by Partners

Funded by a federal Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant, the Center for the Study of Education Policy (CSEP) at Illinois State University is working with the IARSS and ROE 45 to develop a system that helps support district strategies to address their educator shortage. To do this, ROE 45 and CSEP are partnering with ISBE and other ROEs to develop an on-line platform that:

- Provides a system to districts that provide them information on their workforce compared to the state, region, and similar districts.
- Captures data about district openings and shortage severity relative to other districts.
- Provides supportive data on the educator preparation pipeline.
- Supports improved educator pathways and capture data about teacher and leadership candidates.

For more information on this work, contact Erika Hunt at elhunt@ilstu.edu or Ben Boer at boerby@gmail.com

Over 43,000 Type 75 certificate holders were grandfathered when the old Type 75 administrative certificate was transitioned to the now Principal Endorsement. While this may sound like an abundance of leadership candidates, many teachers pursued the old Type 75 certificate for reasons other than to become a principal. To get an accurate estimate of the pool of leadership candidates, ROE 45 in partnership with Goshen Education is surveying all Type 75 holders in the state to get a real count of those interested in administrative positions by region. Such a count will provide districts with a realistic idea of what their potential leadership pool looks like as well as will provide the state regions to target principal training strategies with shortages of qualified applicants.

For more information on this survey, contact Matt Feldman at matt@gosheneducationconsulting.com