Dear Illinois education partner:

On behalf of the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS), representing the leaders of Regional Offices of Education and Intermediate Service Centers in every Illinois county, I am proud to present you with our annual 2023-2024 Illinois Educator Shortage Survey.

This report reflects months of hard work in collaboration with our expert partners at Goshen Education Consulting, and the seventh consecutive year of our study. We asked detailed questions about the depth and reach of Illinois’ ongoing teacher shortage in Fall 2023 and compiled the responses of more than 750 school districts statewide into this latest report.

The results show this problem weighs heavily on our school districts:

* More than 90 percent of schools say they have a serious or very serious teacher shortage problem
* 93 percent of schools say they struggle to fill substitute teacher openings
* 88 percent of school leaders report having fewer than five – and sometimes zero – applicants for open teaching positions
* Teacher shortages are seen as most severe in special education and career technical education
* School psychologists, speech-language pathologists, and nurses create the most prominent school support personnel shortages
* Teacher shortages are the most severe in city districts, in vocational centers, and in more rural parts of Illinois such as west-central, southwest and east-central Illinois
* 73 percent of school leaders say half or less of their teacher candidates have the proper credentials for the position they are seeking

But there also are encouraging signs. State law and regulation changes to help more retired teachers and substitutes to teach have helped ease shortages, and additional state funding is helping schools add more staff. The shortage severity varies by region, with 80 percent or more of schools in some Illinois counties not reporting serious shortages.

Please take time to review our latest study and reach out to us if you have any questions or would like to work with us on meaningful solutions. Our children, our families and our future generations need our help to ensure Illinois can provide high-quality education for many years to come.

Sincerely,

Gary Tipsord

Executive Director, Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools