**IARSS 2023-2024 teacher shortage survey results talking points**

Our latest statewide survey of Illinois schools shows our long-running teacher shortages remain persistent:

* 91 percent of districts report problems with teacher shortages
* 73 percent of districts report less than 50 percent of teacher applicants have proper credentials for the position they are seeking
* 52 percent of districts report employee burnout for working conditions is a major or significant factor for teacher shortages

The picture varies widely by region. In some Illinois counties, 80 percent or more of schools report their shortages are not serious. But in others – often rural, downstate counties but also in some cities – all schools say they are struggling to find teaching talent.

Shortages again are reported as most significant in specialty areas, often where students need the most help: special education, career and technical education, school psychologists and speech-language pathologists, social workers, nurses.

What is driving the shortage?

* Teachers are getting better pay at a neighboring school, or by leaving the profession
* Teachers are feeling the heavy burdens of burnout from challenging working conditions and increased responsibilities
* School district size, location and competition from neighboring schools are also driving factors

There are some encouraging signs of progress:

* More retired teachers and substitutes are working in the classroom for longer, helping schools fill needed gaps
* Shortage severity has been steady for several years in most categories, which is notable since we have been adding many more teaching positions since the pandemic to meet school and student needs
* Additional state funding through the Evidence-Based Funding Formula has helped schools pay higher wages and fill more positions
* Schools report placing more student teachers, supporting paraprofessionals to become teachers, and increasing pay and benefits are all helping ease the shortage burden

What needs to happen next? IARSS proposes short-term and long-term solutions:

* Continue increasing funding for schools
* Release more data to help drive policy decisions about shortage remedies and help school hiring managers find the right candidates for their districts
* Invest in school and teacher leadership
* Offer mentoring, administrative support and financial incentives to draw candidates for acute shortage needs