

# Educator Shortage Report

**Academic Year**  
**2024-2025**

working conditions pathways  
student teachers substitutes  
leadership retirement

## NOW HIRING



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Suggested Citation:

Illinois State Board of Education, Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools, Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative, Goshen Consulting, & ROE LeadHUBS. (2025). *Educator Shortage Report: Academic Year 2024 - 2025*. <https://iarss.org/2024-2025-educator-shortage/>.

## Executive Summary

In Fall 2024, the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS) partnered to collect complementary statewide educator staffing data for the 2024-2025 school year (SY25). In tandem, ISBE administered the Unfilled Positions data collection, and IARSS conducted the Educator Shortage Survey. Response rates were 92% (1,029 of 1,120) for the Unfilled Positions data and 71% (790 of 1,120) for the Educator Shortage Survey. Here, we highlight key findings.

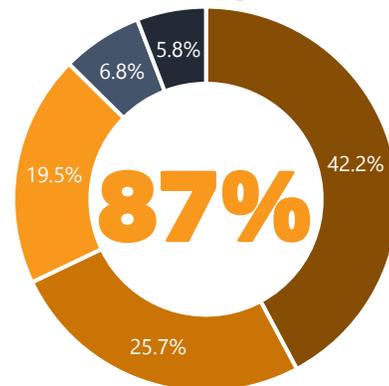
Results from the two statewide surveys show Illinois' educator shortage is easing. According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of filled educator positions, which consists of teaching, school support personnel, administrative, and paraprofessional positions, increased in SY24<sup>1</sup>, rising across all roles by 7,473 FTE. Additionally, total unfilled positions decreased across all four roles in SY25 by 643 FTE. Further, reductions in unfilled positions were seen in every position category except administrative.

Taking a closer look at the Unfilled Positions data, **3,864 teaching<sup>2</sup> positions were unfilled** for SY25 at a vacancy rate of 2.8%. An additional 996 school support personnel, 189 administrator, and 2,415 paraprofessional positions were also unfilled. Shortages, of any position across all four categories, occurred in 55% of education entities (615 of 1,120). In contrast, 37% of education entities<sup>3</sup> (414) reported no unfilled positions of any kind<sup>4</sup>.

Staffing data from the Educator Shortage Survey supports these findings, with a reported **6,117 teacher<sup>5</sup> positions remedied through alternative measures such as hiring substitutes, hiring retired educators, combining classes, and increasing class sizes, among other short-term solutions.**

**Figure 1: Leaders' Perceptions of Teacher<sup>5</sup> Shortages**

**87%** of education leaders indicated a **minor, serious** or **very serious** problem with teacher<sup>5</sup> shortages.



<sup>1</sup> In this report, Unfilled Positions data pertain to SY25, as the information was collected by ISBE in Fall 2024 for SY25. However, filled positions data pertain to SY24, as ISBE reports these numbers after a school year ends. Thus, filled positions data for SY25 are not yet available.

<sup>2</sup> For the Unfilled Positions Data, teaching position includes classroom teachers and special education teachers.

<sup>3</sup> Throughout the report, we use the term "education entities" to refer to the different types of entities included in these analyses. For the Educator Shortage Survey, these entities are composed of public districts, area career centers, and special education cooperatives (951 entities). For the Unfilled Positions data, the group of education entities broadens to also include regional offices of education, other state funded entities, miscellaneous payees, and non-public districts and schools (1,120 total entities).

<sup>4</sup> Note, 8% of entities (91) did not respond to the Unfilled Positions data collection.

<sup>5</sup> For the Educator Shortage Survey, "teacher" includes classroom teachers, special education teachers and school support personnel.

Turning from staffing numbers collected from both measures to consider leaders' perspectives, the Educator Shortage Survey found that 87% of respondents indicated a minor, serious, or very serious problem with teacher<sup>5</sup> shortages in SY25 (see Figure 1). Leaders also perceived substitute and paraprofessional shortages as being severe. When asked about filling open substitute positions, 91% of respondents indicated a minor, serious, or very serious problem; and when asked about filling open paraprofessional positions, 81% of leaders indicated a minor, serious, or very serious problem. Conversely, ratings of administrator shortages were much lower, with 33% of leaders indicating a minor, serious, or very serious problem.

The Educator Shortage Survey also assessed leaders' perceived causes for staffing challenges. The most frequent cause leaders mentioned was receiving **limited applicants** for their specific open positions (395 of 694), with reasons ranging from a general lack of applicants to issues related with certification. **Issues related to salary or benefits** were also frequently raised by leaders as a major cause of shortages (382 of 694).

*"We have very skilled paraprofessionals that could make the transition to a teaching position. ... If a paraprofessional has 5 years of successful experience... we can grant them a license to teach with evaluation stipulations for a 5-year period."*

*-- Superintendent in the West Central suburbs*

In addition, education leaders shared current strategies they have implemented to address shortages. **Improving recruitment** through "Grow Your Own" programs, connecting with colleges, hiring incentives, and hosting student teachers was frequently reported as a current strategy implemented by districts (442 of 688). **Providing incentives** such as adjusting pay scales, supporting continuing education, providing student loan forgiveness, and recognizing all years of experience was another popular strategy adopted by education leaders (402 of 688). And finally, the Educator Shortage Survey queried leaders about possible policy solutions that would support their hiring and retention efforts. **Support at the state or federal level** that would provide alternative certifications for educators as well as additional funding and improvements to the retirement system were reported as the most common desired solutions (375 of 634).

Importantly, findings indicate **that educator shortages are not distributed equally across the state**, as 37% of education entities reported no unfilled positions. And for the education entities grappling with unfilled educator positions, many leaders perceive these shortages to be severe. Leaders then must turn to alternative remedies such as increasing class sizes, combining classes, and hiring substitutes, which ultimately affect the quality of instruction and services that students receive. Thus, in this report, detailed findings from ISBE's and IARSS's datasets are analyzed together with the goal of offering stakeholders a robust resource that is both a snapshot of the current state of educator staffing in Illinois as well as a resource from which districts can continue to devise targeted, diverse strategies to address unfilled positions.

*"The shortage of qualified special education teachers is one of the most critical issues our district faces ... Without properly trained and licensed special education teachers, students may not receive the appropriate services, putting the district at risk of non-compliance."* -- Superintendent in Suburban Cook County

## Introduction

Educator shortages arise when districts are unable to find qualified educators with the appropriate certification to fill open positions (Sutcher et al., 2016). In Illinois, and across the country, these shortages are not distributed evenly (Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools et al., 2023; Illinois State Board of Education et al., 2024; Illinois State Board of Education, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2023). Educator shortages disproportionately impact rural and urban regions (Beilstein & Withee, 2022a; Bruno, 2022), under-resourced schools (Office of the Governor JB Pritzker, 2023), as well as specific content areas (Beilstein & Withee, 2022b and 2022c) and positions (Advance Illinois, 2023; Bates et al., 2024). Such disproportionate variation in educator shortages can result in inequitable student access to high-quality instruction and services. To illustrate, many districts that experience severe shortages over time also tend to serve higher percentages of English language learners, students from low-income families, and students with individualized education programs (Withee & Beilstein, 2023).

Historically, two annual statewide measures of educator shortages have been administered in the fall: (1) the Unfilled Positions (UFP) data collection from the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) and (2) the Educator Shortage Survey from the Illinois Association of Regional Superintendents of Schools (IARSS). Beginning in the 2023-2024 school year (SY24), ISBE and IARSS collaborated, in partnership with the Illinois Workforce and Education Research Collaborative (IWERC) at the University of Illinois and Goshen Consulting, to conduct and report on both measures in tandem. Findings from both measures for SY25 are presented concurrently in this report.

Taken together, results from both measures provide a comprehensive picture of the impact that educator shortages have on districts across the state, by providing an analysis of the magnitude and severity of staffing challenges as well as strategies to address root causes of the problem. Although these two measures are similar in scope, salient differences exist in the types of data each organization collects. These distinctions influence the conclusions drawn from the data and their implications for Illinois districts and schools. For example, the UFP collects administrative data from education entities to determine the number of vacant educator positions, or magnitude of educator shortages, throughout the state. The Educator Shortage Survey, on the other hand, asks education entity leaders to assess the severity of educator shortages in their jurisdictions and to consider causes of and solutions to the issue.

This report is organized around the roles of various educators: teachers (classroom teachers and special education teachers), school support personnel, administrators, paraprofessionals, and substitutes. Within each role, we report on unfilled positions, vacancy rates, alternative measures for filling open positions, shortage severity, quantity and quality of applicants, and demand, among other areas. The report also includes findings from leaders' assessments of licensure changes, causes of shortages, current and potential solutions to mitigate shortages, as well as Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER) funding.

## Teacher Shortages

### Filled Positions

According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of teaching positions filled for the 2023-2024 school year (SY24) was 136,092. This is an increase of 1,877 filled teaching positions from the previous school year, SY23.

### Unfilled Positions

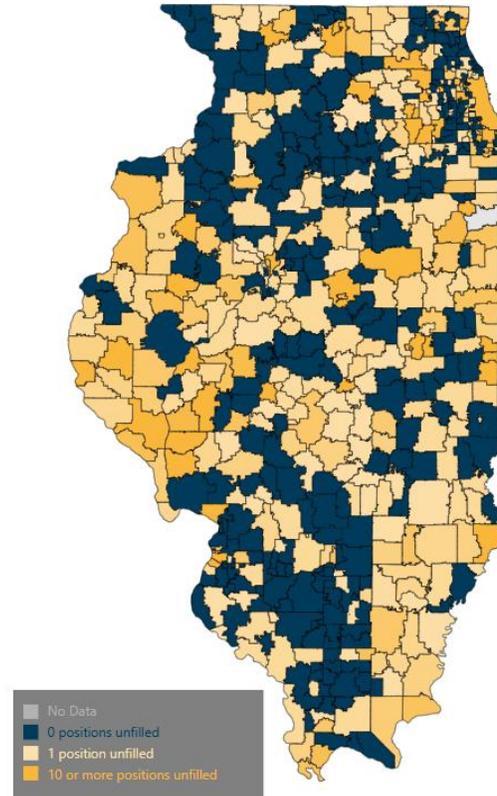
In total, 3,864 teaching positions remained unfilled for SY25 as of Oct 1, 2024, representing a decrease of 232 (or 5.6%) from SY24.

Unfilled teaching positions varied greatly by education entity. While 488 education entities, inclusive of all types of entities, reported zero unfilled teaching positions, 517 education entities reported at least one unfilled position of which 71 reported 10 or more unfilled positions. Figure 2 shows the distribution of unfilled positions by public school districts only, which is one type of education entity.

Across the state, 1,005 education entities had unfilled teaching positions, an overarching category with many subtypes, including teachers, special education teachers, bilingual education teachers, and more (see Figure 3). Among these subtypes, teachers comprised the most unfilled positions with a count of 1,970. Further, a subject-area breakdown<sup>6</sup> of unfilled teaching positions shows

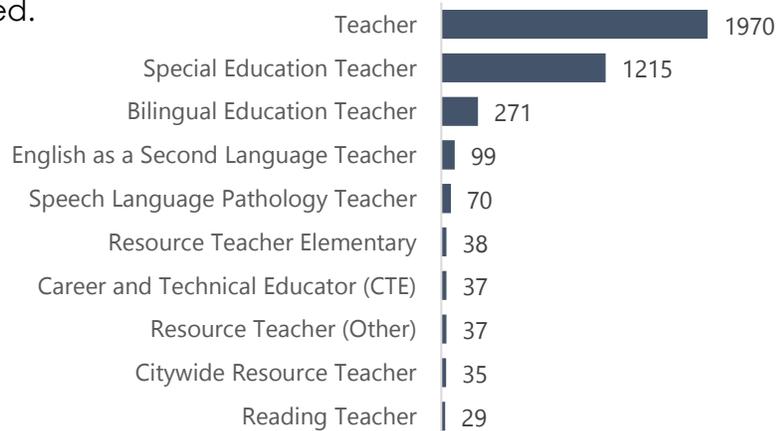
**Figure 2: Unfilled Teaching Positions by District**

Unfilled teaching positions varied from 0 to 10 or more.



**Figure 3: Top 10 Unfilled Teaching Positions**

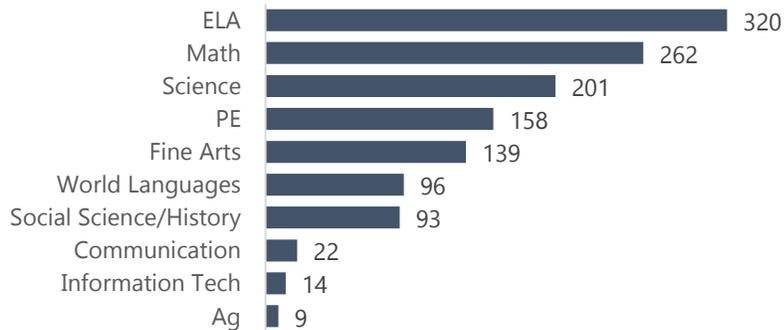
For the 2024 - 2025 school year, 1,970 teaching positions were unfilled.



<sup>6</sup> This breakdown was calculated by staff from IWERC and Goshen Consulting from the UFP data set. The publicly available data was filtered and then aggregated to develop these findings. See Table 2 in Appendix A for specific business rules. "Non-Subject Specific", "NULL," and "Miscellaneous" also accounted for significant numbers of unfilled positions but were not included in this comparison.

that English Language and Literature (ELA) comprised the most unfilled teaching positions with a count of 320 unfilled positions (see Figure 4).

Figure 4: Top 10 Unfilled Teaching Positions by Subject



### Vacancy Rate

While the total count of unfilled positions is a critical data point needed to understand educator shortages, vacancy rate is another important component. ISBE defines vacancy rate as the number of unfilled positions divided by the estimated total number of filled and unfilled positions (i.e., SY25 unfilled full-time equivalent, or FTE, positions divided by SY24 filled FTE plus SY25 unfilled FTE positions). For SY25, the overall teacher vacancy rate was 2.8% (3,864 unfilled FTE positions of 136,092 FTE positions), down from 3.0% in SY24.

Vacancy rates also varied greatly by education entity. There were 235 education entities with teaching vacancy rates above 5.0%. Figure 5 shows the distribution of vacancy rates by public school districts only. Appendix D contains detailed vacancy rates by EBF Tier, district percent low-income, district percent students of color, geographic area (locale), type of agency, and area of the state.

Figure 5: Teacher Vacancy Rates by District

Teacher vacancy rates varied from 0.0 to above 5.0%.

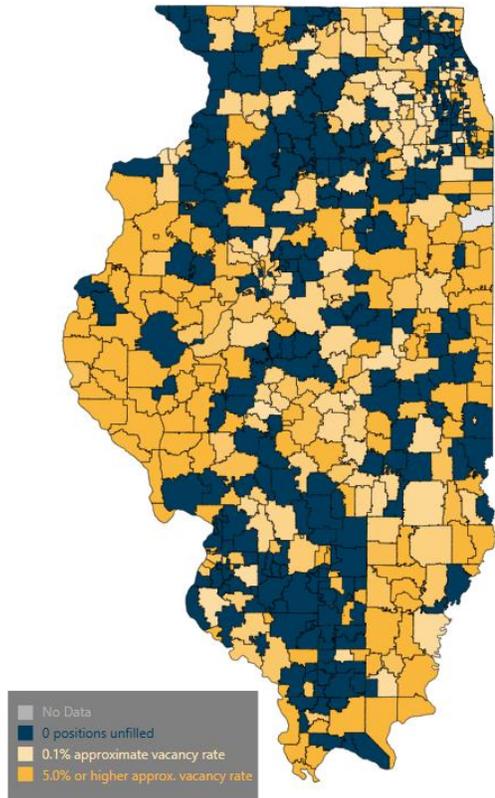
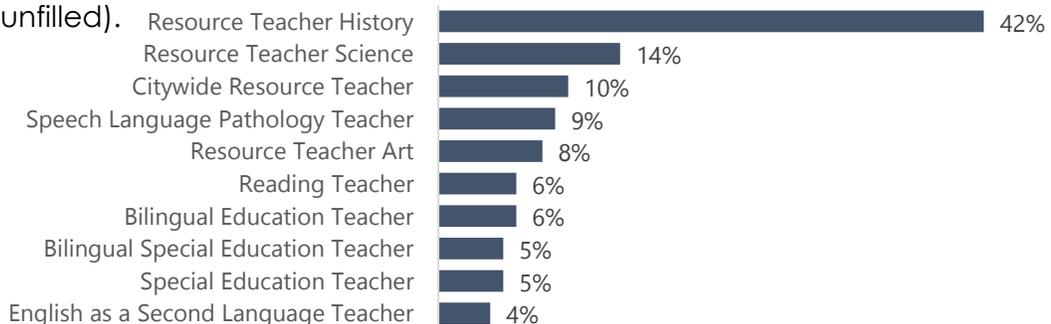


Figure 6 shows the top 10 vacancy rates by teaching position. Resource Teacher History had the highest vacancy rate at 42%. Vacancy rates by subject area are not currently available.

Figure 6: Top 10 Teacher Vacancy Rates

For the 2023 - 2024 school year, Resource Teacher History had a 42% vacancy rate (1.00 out of 1.36 FTE were unfilled).



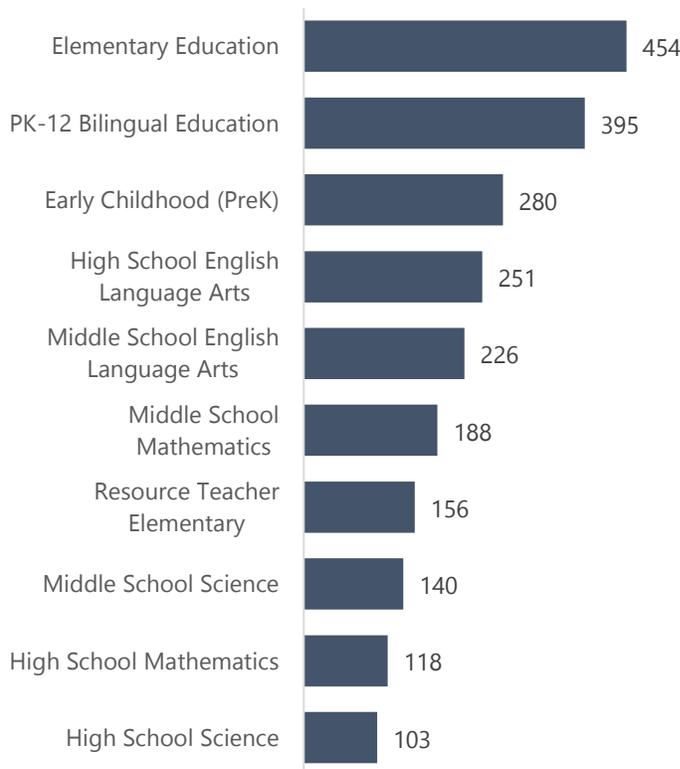
## Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

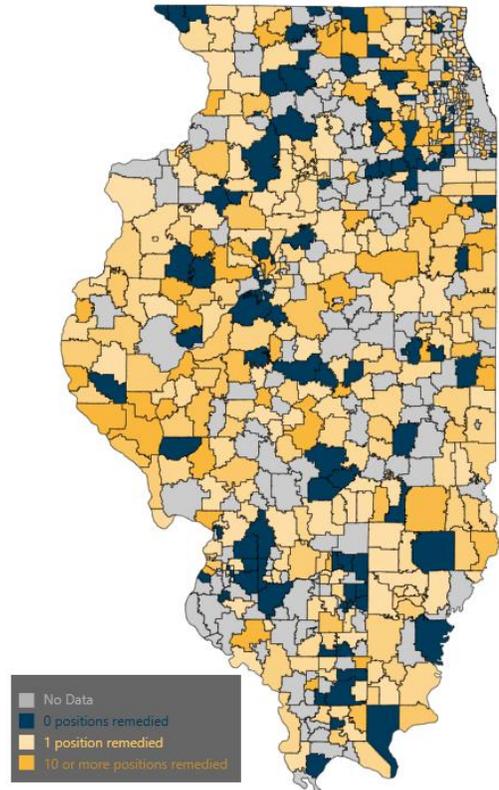
When faced with unfilled positions, education entity leaders often turn to alternative measures to provide needed services. For unfilled teaching positions, these measures include hiring a retired educator, hiring a substitute, modifying class offerings and/or teacher responsibilities, outsourcing the position to a third-party vendor, and utilizing a virtual learning platform. As of Oct 1, 2024, 439 education entity leaders reported 3,445 positions that were remedied using these alternative measures. Figure 7 shows the top 10 teaching positions that were filled by alternative measures: Elementary education was at the top with 454 positions (see Appendix C for the full list). Figure 8 shows the distribution of positions remedied by public school district.

**Figure 7: Teaching Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures**

454 elementary education teaching positions were remedied through alternative measures.



**Figure 8: Teaching Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures by District**

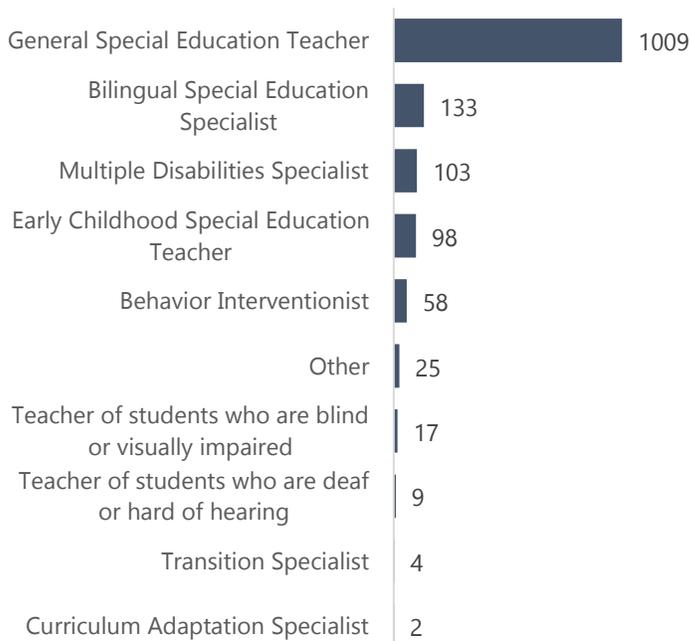


*SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS*

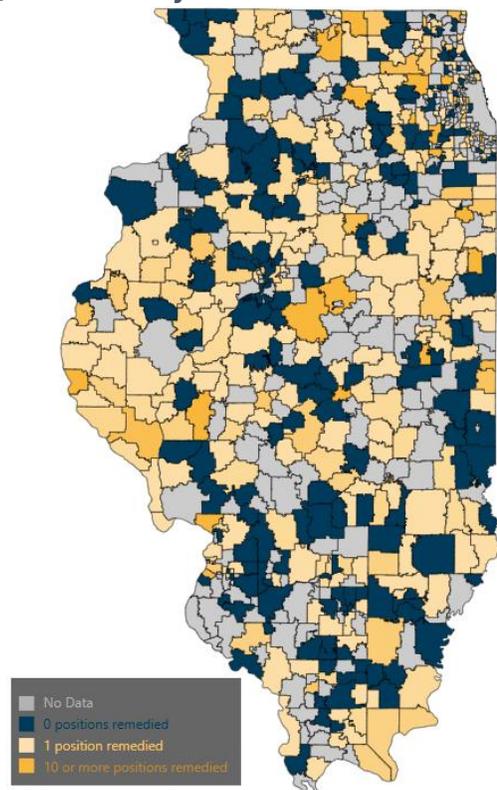
For unfilled special education teaching positions, alternative measures included connecting virtually with remote personnel, hiring a retired educator, modifying services offered and/or responsibilities, outsourcing the position to a third-party vendor, and utilizing a university student in a clinical setting. As of Oct 1, 2024, education entity leaders in 354 education entities<sup>7</sup> reported 1,458 positions that were filled using these alternative measures. Figure 9 shows the special education teaching positions that were filled by alternative measures: General Special Education Teachers were at the top with 1,009 positions remedied through alternative measures. Figure 10 shows the distribution of special education teaching positions remedied by public school districts.

**Figure 9: Special Educator Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures**

1,009 General Special Education teaching positions were remedied through alternative measures.



**Figure 10: Special Education Teaching Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures by District**



<sup>7</sup> Several leaders from education entities noted they work with a special education cooperative for the special education services and do not hire their own special education teachers.

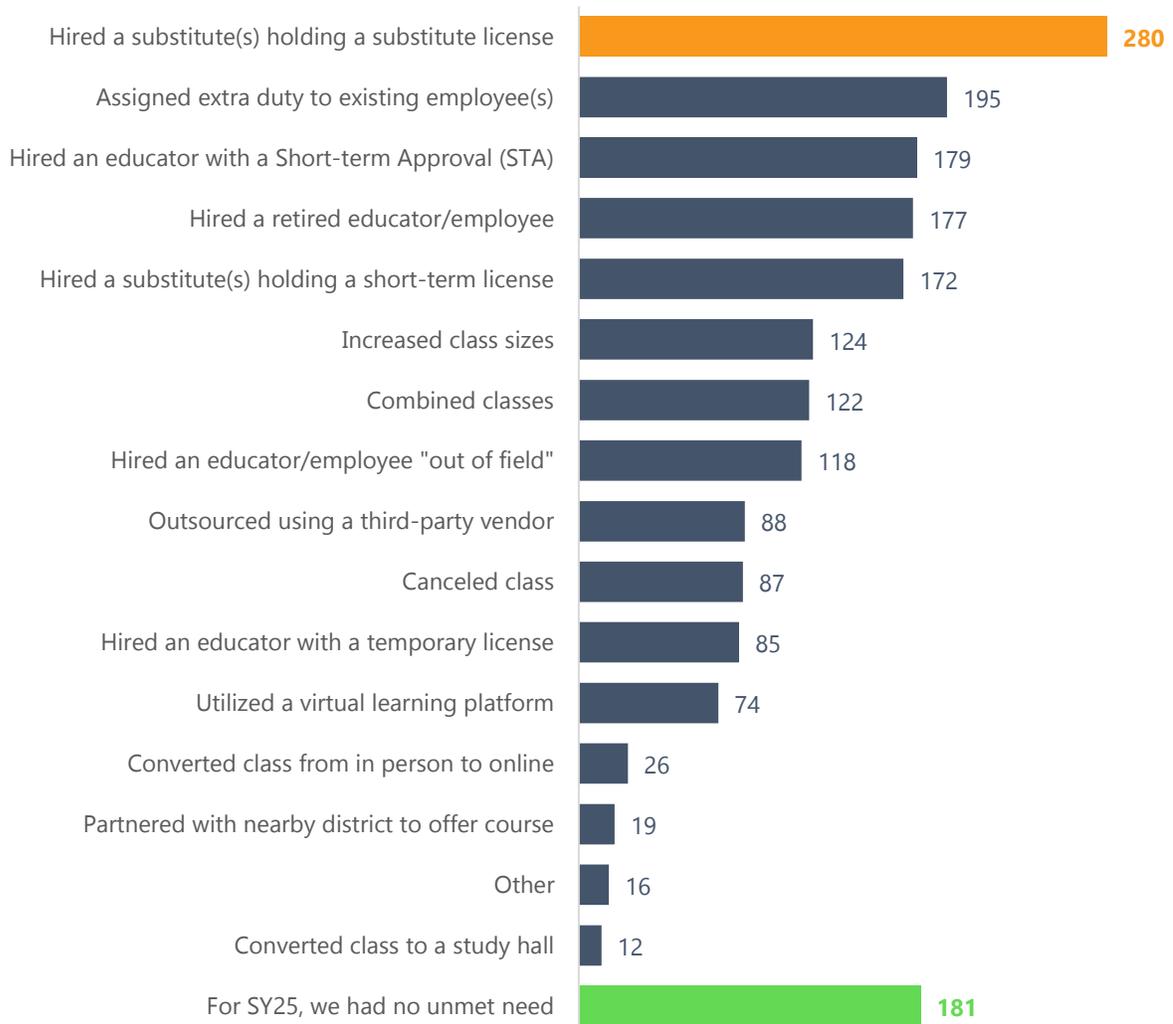
## Alternative Measures for Addressing Shortages

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Education entity leaders were asked to select all the remedies they utilized in accommodating an unfilled teacher position. Among the 703 leaders who responded, 181 (26%) indicated they had no unmet need for teachers for SY25 (see Figure 11). For those who had unmet teacher needs, 280 (40%) indicated they hired a substitute with a substitute license and 195 (28%) indicated they assigned extra duty to existing employees.

**Figure 11: Leaders Reported Hiring Substitutes as the Most Common Remedy for an Unfilled Teaching Position**

280 education leaders indicated they "hired a substitute" as a method to remediate an unfilled teaching position.

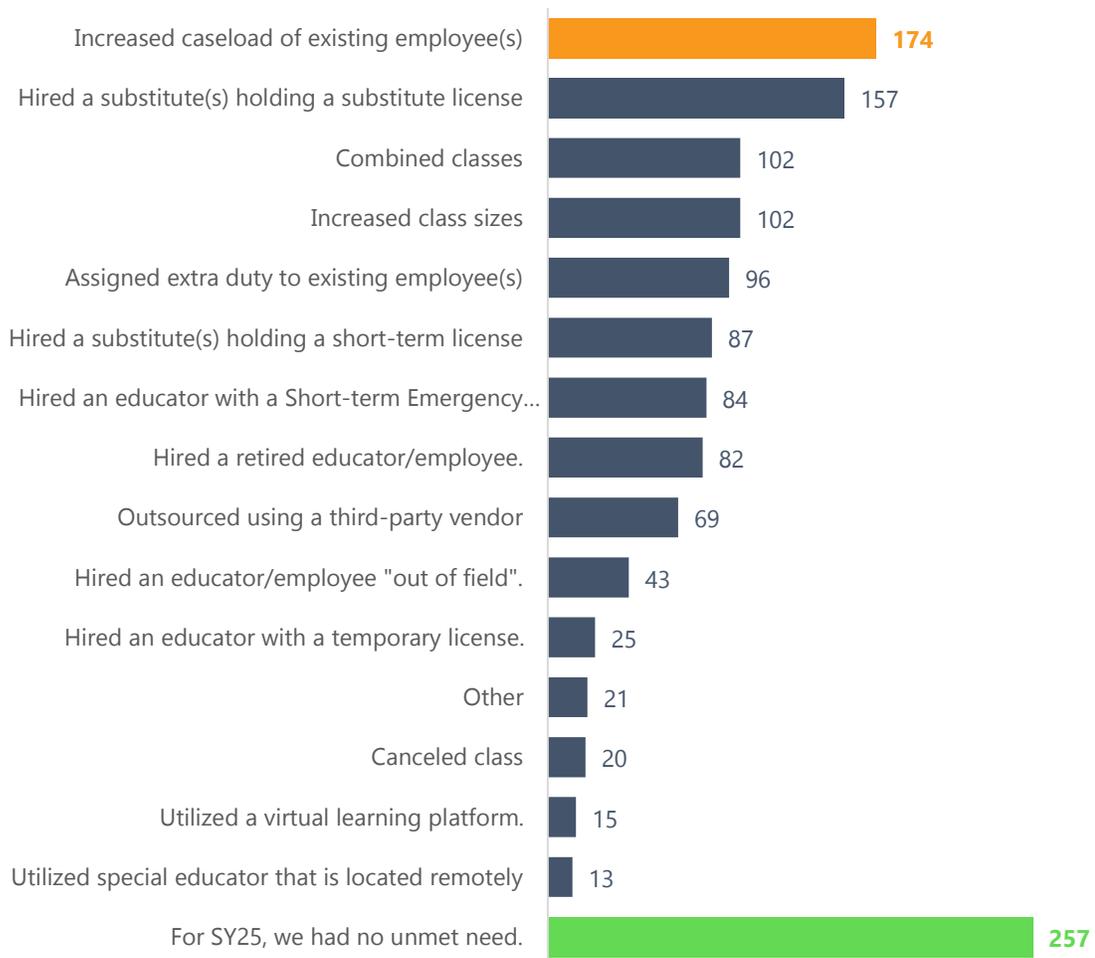


*SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS*

Education entity leaders were asked to select all the remedies they utilized in accommodating an unfilled special education teaching position. Among the 665 leaders who responded, 257 (39%) indicated they had no unmet need<sup>8</sup> for special education teachers for SY25 (see Figure 12). For those who had unmet special education teacher needs, 174 (26%) indicated they increased caseload of existing employees and 157 (24%) indicated they hired a substitute with a substitute license.

**Figure 12: Leaders Reported Hiring Substitutes as the Most Common Remedy for an Unfilled Special Education Teaching Position**

174 education leaders indicated they "increased caseload" as a method to remediate an unfilled special education teacher position.



<sup>8</sup> Several leaders from education entities noted they work with a special education cooperative for the special education services and do not hire their own special education teachers.

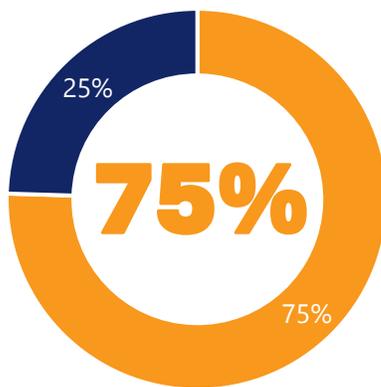
## Shortage Severity

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their teacher shortages. Across all categories of teaching positions, 75% of education entity leaders (524 of 699) indicated a minor to very serious problem with teacher shortages (see Figure 13).<sup>9</sup> Leaders' ratings of teacher shortage severity varied greatly by education entity.<sup>10</sup> Figure 14 shows the distribution of education entities that indicated a minor to very serious problem with teacher shortages.

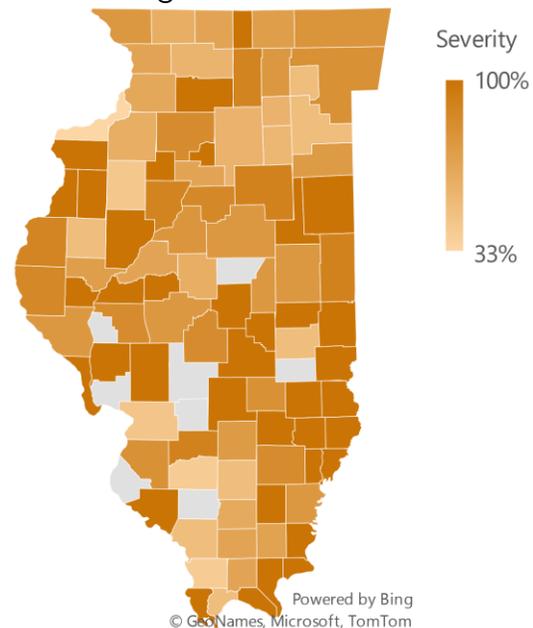
**Figure 13: Leaders' Perceptions of Teacher Shortages**

75% of education leaders indicated a **minor, serious** or **very serious** problem with teacher shortages.



**Figure 14: Leaders' Perceptions of Teacher Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 33% to 100%.



*“The top issue our district faces is the limited pool of qualified candidates, especially in high-need areas like special education, STEM, and especially at the High School level. Fewer students are entering the teaching profession, resulting in fewer applicants when we have open positions.”*

— Superintendent in rural, Southeast area

<sup>9</sup> Appendix G contains detailed data on Likert style items presented as donut charts in the main body of the report.

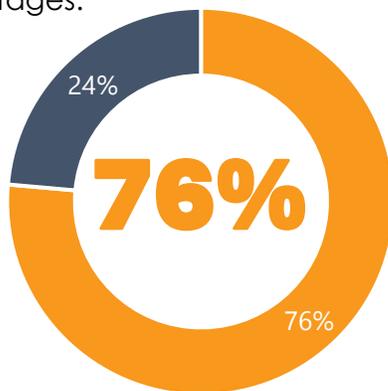
<sup>10</sup> Appendix E shows this broken out by area of the state, type of district, and district locale.

*SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS*

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their special education teacher shortages. Across all categories of special education teaching positions, 76% of education entity leaders (462 of 605) indicated a minor to very serious problem with special education teacher shortages (see Figure 15). The severity of special education teacher shortages varies greatly by education entity.<sup>11</sup> Figure 16 shows the percentage of education entities that indicated a minor to very serious problem with special education teacher shortages by county.

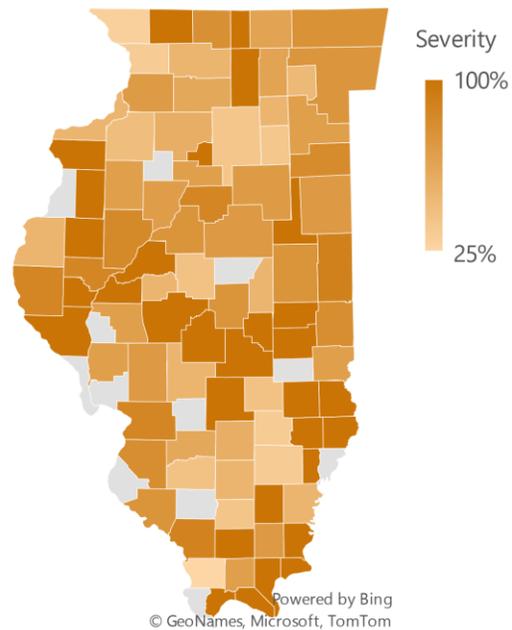
**Figure 15: Leaders' Perceptions of Special Education Teacher Shortages**

76% of education leaders indicated a **minor, serious** or **very serious** problem with special education teacher shortages.



**Figure 16: Leaders' Perceptions of Special Education Teacher Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 25% to 100%.



*“High quality applicants for hard to fill positions are almost nonexistent. We just simply do not have people applying for the jobs let alone be certified in those areas.”*

— Superintendent in rural, Southwest area

<sup>11</sup> Appendix E shows this broken out by area of the state, type of district, and district locale.

## Qualified Applicants

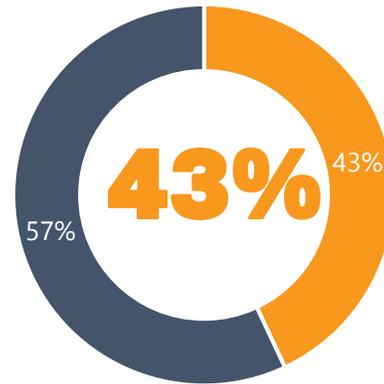
### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

Education entity leaders also rated the quality of applicants for open positions. Almost half, or 43% of education entity leaders (296 of 688 education entities) indicated that none or very few (0-25%) or some (26-50%) of applicants were qualified to be hired as a teacher who holds the proper credentials for the position (see Figure 17). Conversely, 57% of education entity leaders (392 of 688) indicated that most (51% - 74%) or nearly all or all (75-100%) applicants were qualified. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quality of candidates by district characteristics for classroom and special education teachers.

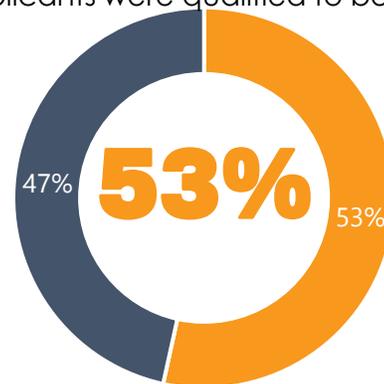
### SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

For applicants for all special education teaching positions, 53% of education entity leaders (303 of 570) indicated that none or very few (0-25%) or some (26-50%) of applicants were qualified to be hired as an employee who holds the proper credentials for the position (see Figure 18). Conversely, 47% of education entity leaders (267 of 570) indicated that most (51-74%) or nearly all or all (75-100%) were qualified.

**Figure 17: Leaders Reporting Less than 50% of Teacher Applicants Were Qualified**  
**43%** of education leaders indicated "None (0-25%)" or "Some (26-50%)" of teacher applicants were qualified to be hired.



**Figure 18: Leaders Reporting 50% of Special Education Teacher Applicants Were Qualified**  
**53%** of education leaders indicated "None (0-25%)" or "Some (26-50%)" of special education teacher applicants were qualified to be hired.



## Quantity of Applicants

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

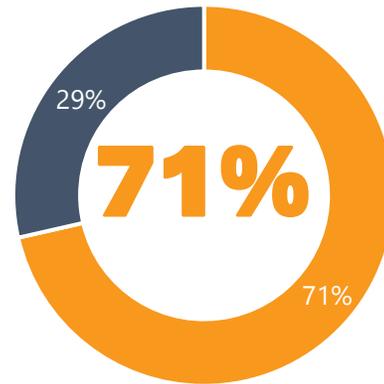
Education entity leaders were also asked about the quantity of applicants for open positions. For open teaching positions, 71% of education entity leaders (489 of 693) indicated they received none or very few (<5) applicants, on average, per open teaching position (see Figure 19). Conversely, 29% of education entity leaders (204 of 693) indicated they received some (6-10), sufficient (11 – 20), or more than sufficient (20+) applicants, on average, per open teacher position. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quantity of candidates by district characteristics for classroom and special education teachers.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

For open special education teaching positions, 85% of education entity leaders (483 of 571) indicated they received none or very few (<5) applicants, on average, per open position (see Figure 20). Conversely, 15% of education entity leaders (88 of 571) indicated they received some (6-10), sufficient (11-20), or more than sufficient (20+) applicants, on average, per open special education teacher position.

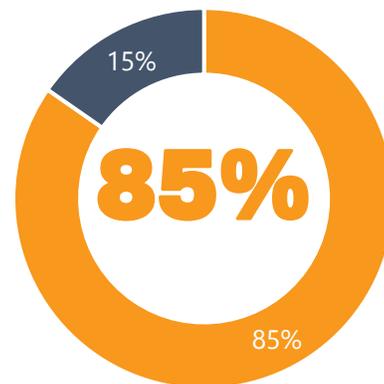
**Figure 19: Leaders Reporting Very Few Teacher Applicants**

71% of education leaders indicated "None" or "Very few (<5)" applicants per open teaching position.



**Figure 20: Leaders Reporting Very Few Special Education Teacher Applicants**

85% of education leaders indicated "None" or "Very few (<5)" applicants per open special education teacher position.



## Change in Need Compared to Last Year

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

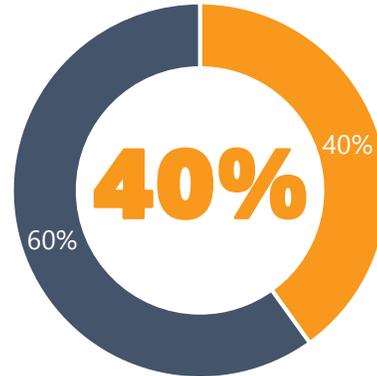
Education entity leaders also reported on how their needs for positions in SY25 changed compared to last year (SY24). For teaching positions, 40% of education entity leaders (281 of 698) indicated their need for teachers increased or increased substantially compared to last year (see Figure 21). Conversely, 60% of education entity leaders (417 of 698) indicated their need for teachers remained the same, decreased or decreased substantially compared to last year.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

For special education teaching positions, 52% of education entity leaders (336 of 641) indicated their need for special education teachers increased or increased substantially compared to last year (see Figure 22). Conversely, 48% of education entity leaders (305 of 641) indicated their need for special education teachers remained the same, decreased or decreased substantially compared to last year.

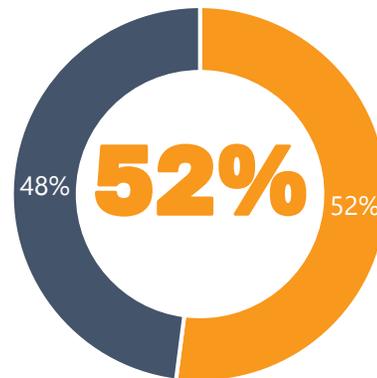
**Figure 21: Leaders Reporting Increased Need for Teachers**

40% of education leaders indicated their need for teachers increased compared to last year.



**Figure 22: Leaders Reporting Increased Need for Special Education Teachers**

52% of education leaders indicated their need for special education teachers increased compared to last year.



## Anticipated Need for Next Year

### CLASSROOM TEACHERS

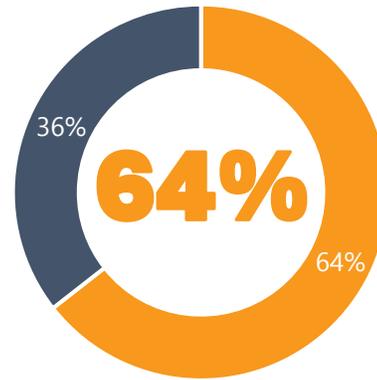
Education entity leaders also reported on how they anticipate their needs for positions will change for next year (SY26). For teaching positions, 64% of education entity leaders (455 of 711) indicated they anticipate their need for teachers will increase or increase substantially for next year (see Figure 23). Conversely, 36% of education entity leaders (256 of 711) indicated they anticipate their need for teachers will remain the same, decrease or decrease substantially for next year.

### SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

For special education teaching positions, 66% of education entity leaders (440 of 671) indicated they anticipate their need for special education teachers will increase or increase substantially for next year (see Figure 24). Conversely, 34% of education entity leaders (231 of 671) indicated they anticipate their need for special education teachers will remain the same, decrease or decrease substantially for next year.

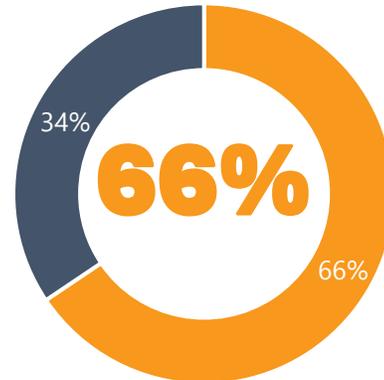
**Figure 23: Leaders Reporting Their Need for Teachers Will Increase**

64% of education leaders anticipate their need for teachers will increase for next year.



**Figure 24: Leaders Reporting Their Need for Special Education Teachers Will Increase**

66% of education leaders anticipate their need for special education teachers will increase for next year.



## School Support Personnel Shortages

### Filled Positions

According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of filled school support personnel positions for the SY24 was 20,184. This is an increase of 1,211 filled school support personnel positions from the previous year, SY23.

### Unfilled Positions

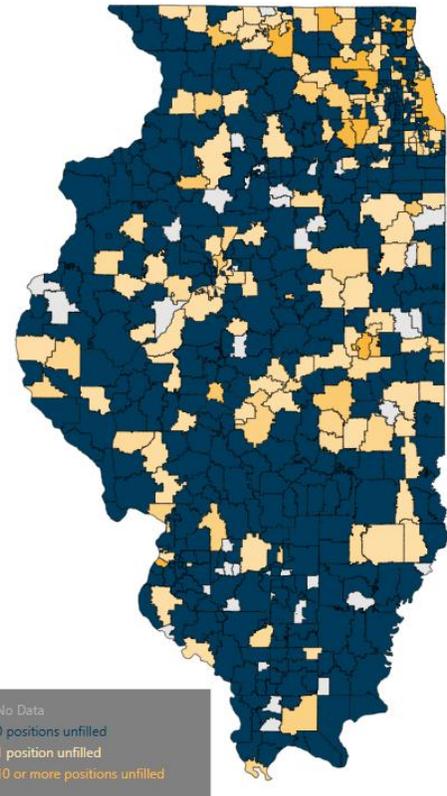
In total, 996 school support personnel positions remained unfilled for SY25 as of Oct 1, 2024, a decrease of 99 (or 9.0%) from SY24.

Unfilled school support personnel positions varied by education entity. While 614 education entities, inclusive of all types of entities, reported zero unfilled positions, 277 education entities reported at least one unfilled position of which 21 reported 10 or more unfilled positions. Figure 25 shows the distribution of unfilled positions by public school districts, which is one type of education entity.

Among the 854 education entities that reported unfilled positions for school support personnel, school social workers accounted for the majority of those positions. For SY25, 222 school social worker positions were reported unfilled (see Figure 26).

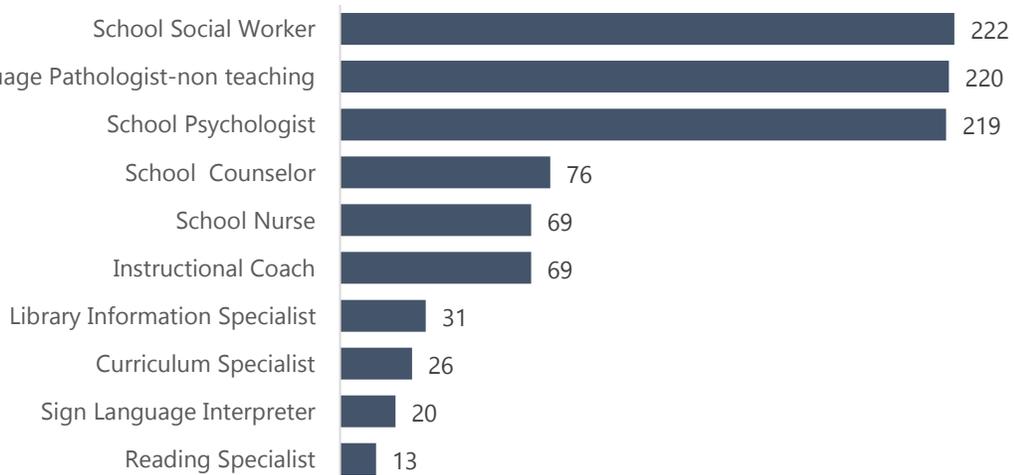
**Figure 25: Unfilled School Support Personnel Positions by District**

Unfilled school support personnel positions varied from 0 to 10 or more.



**Figure 26: Top 10 Unfilled School Support Personnel Positions**

For the 2024 - 2025 school year, 222 school social worker positions were unfilled.



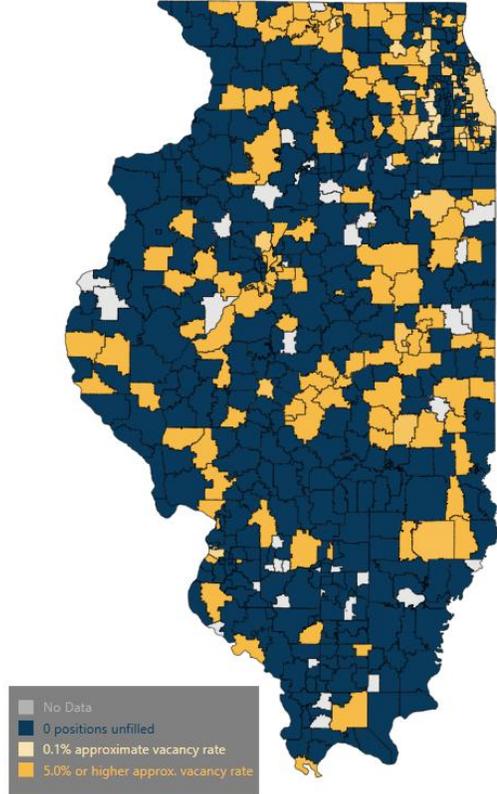
### Vacancy Rate

As seen with teachers, looking at the vacancy rate tells a different story for unfilled school support personnel. For SY25, the overall school support personnel vacancy rate was 4.7% (996 unfilled FTE positions of 20,185 FTE positions), down from 5.5% in SY24.

Vacancy rates also varied greatly by education entity. There were 215 education entities with school support personnel vacancy rates above 5.0%. Figure 27 shows the distribution of vacancy rates for public school districts only.

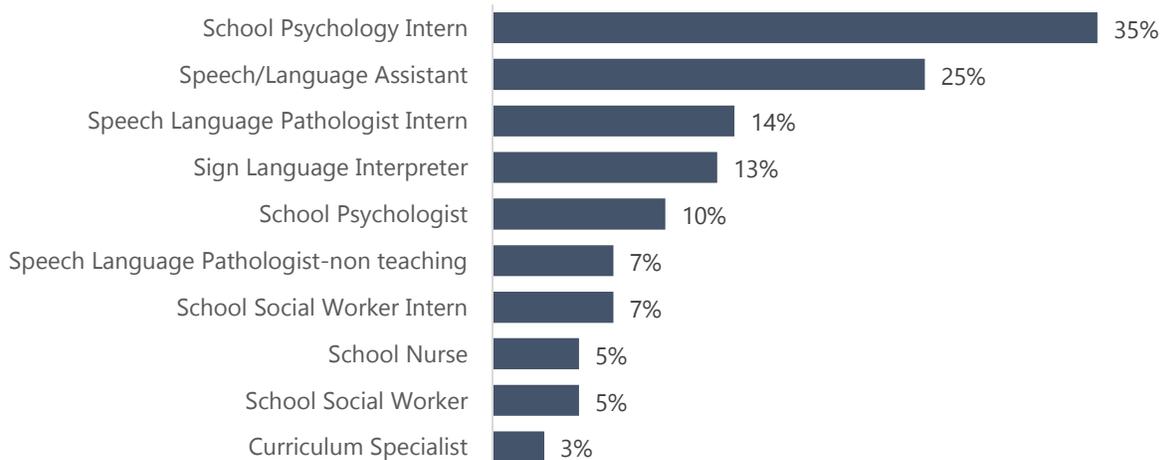
Figure 28 shows the top 10 vacancy rates by school support personnel position. School Psychology Intern had the highest vacancy rate at 35%. Appendix D contains detailed vacancy rates by EBF Tier, district percent low-income, district percent students of color, geographics area (locale), type of agency and area of the state.

**Figure 27: School Support Personnel Vacancy Rates by District**  
School support personnel vacancy rates varied from 0.0 to above 5.0%.



**Figure 28: Top 10 School Support Personnel Vacancy Rates**

For the 2024 - 2025 school year, School Psychology Intern had a 35% vacancy rate (10 out of 18.6 FTE were unfilled).

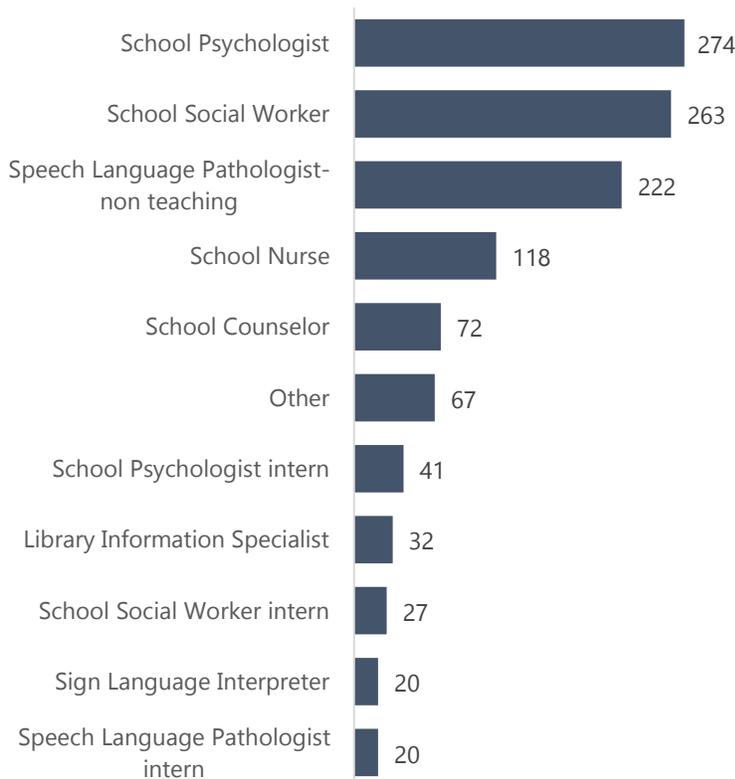


## Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures

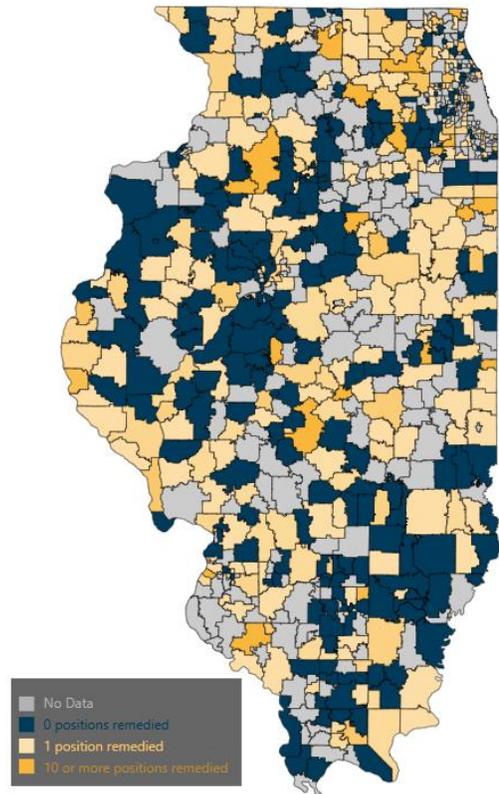
When faced with unfilled positions, education entity leaders will utilize alternative measures to provide services. For unfilled school support personnel positions, this includes connecting virtually with a remote provider, hiring a retired educator, modifying services offered and/or responsibilities, outsourcing the position to a third-party vendor and utilizing a university student doing a practicum. As of Oct 1, 2024, 346 education entity leaders reported 1,214 positions that were filled using these alternative measures. Figure 29 shows the school support personnel positions that were filled by alternative measures: School Psychologist was at the top with 274 positions remedied through alternative measures. Figure 30 shows the distribution of school support personnel positions remedied by public school district.

**Figure 29: School Support Personnel Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures**

274 School Psychologist positions were remedied through alternative measures.



**Figure 30: School Support Personnel Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures by District**

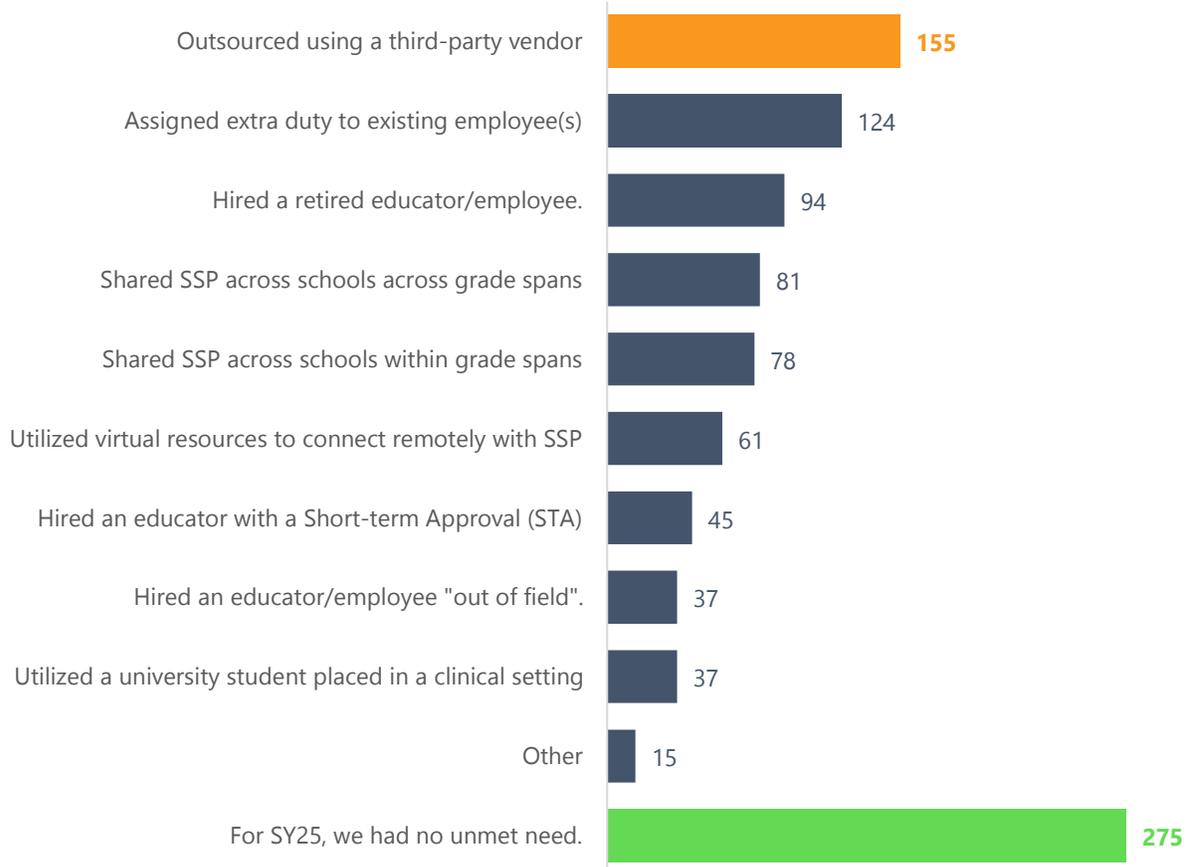


### Alternative Measures for Addressing Shortages

Education entity leaders were asked to select all the remedies they utilized in accommodating an unfilled school support personnel position. Among the 650 leaders who responded, 275 (42%) indicated they had no unmet need<sup>12</sup> for school support personnel for SY25 (see Figure 31). For those who had unmet school support personnel needs, 155 (24%) indicated they outsourced using a third-party vendor and 124 (19%) indicated they assigned extra duty to existing employees.

**Figure 31: Leaders Reported Outsourcing to 3rd Party as the Most Common Remedy for an Unfilled School Support Personnel Position**

155 education leaders indicated they "out-sourced using a third-party vendor" as a method to remediate an unfilled school support personnel position.



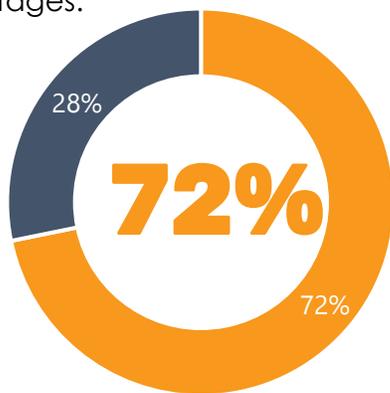
<sup>12</sup> It should be noted that some education entities do not employ full-time school support personnel. These education entity leaders noted their lack of need in their comments and were included in the 275 who had no unmet need.

### Shortage Severity

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their school support personnel shortages. Across all categories of positions, 72% of education entity leaders (416 of 577) indicated a minor to very serious problem with school support personnel shortages (see Figure 32). The severity of shortages varies greatly by district.<sup>13</sup> Figure 33 shows the percentage of education entities that indicated a minor to very serious problem with school support personnel by county.

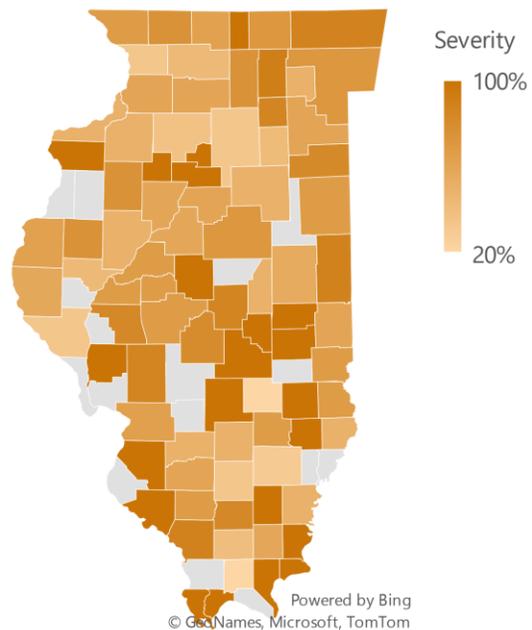
**Figure 32: Leaders' Perceptions of School Support Personnel Shortages**

72% of education leaders indicated a **minor, serious** or **very serious** problem with school support personnel shortages.



**Figure 33: Leaders' Perceptions of School Support Personnel Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 20% to 100%.



*“...School Social Workers programs to exist with only allowing 1 class on special education in schools. These people are graduating with no knowledge of how to write an IEP, how to document service in schools, how to conduct a full case study evaluation, or even how to write a goal. My cooperative spends more than \$50,000 a year just training OT, PT, and Social Work staff on how to work in schools.”*

-- Superintendent at a Special Education Coop in East Central Area

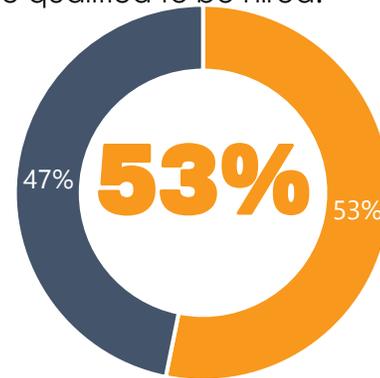
<sup>13</sup> Appendix E shows this broken out by area of the state, type of district, and district locale.

### Qualified Applicants

Education entity leaders rated the quality of applicants for open positions. For open school support personnel positions, 53% of education entity leaders (280 of 531) indicated that none or very few (0-25%) or some (26-50%) of applicants were qualified to be hired as an employee who holds the proper credentials for the position (see Figure 34). Conversely, 47% of education entity leaders (251 of 531) indicated that most (51-74%) or nearly all or all (75-100%) were qualified. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quality of candidates by district characteristics.

**Figure 34: Leaders Reporting 50% of School Support Personnel Applicants Were Qualified**

53% of education leaders indicated "None (0-25%)" or "Some (26-50%)" of school support personnel applicants were qualified to be hired.

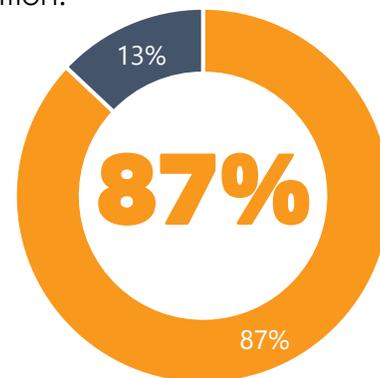


### Quantity of Applicants

Education entity leaders were also asked about the quantity of applicants for open positions. For open school support personnel positions, 87% of education entity leaders (454 of 523) indicated they received none or very few (<5) applicants, on average, per open school support personnel positions (see Figure 35). Conversely, 13% of education entity leaders (69 of 523) indicated they received some (6-10), sufficient (11-20), or more than sufficient (20+) applicants, on average, per open school support personnel position. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quantity of candidates by district characteristics.

**Figure 35: Leaders Reporting Very Few School Support Personnel Applicants**

87% of education leaders indicated "None" or "Very few (<5)" applicants per open school support personnel position.

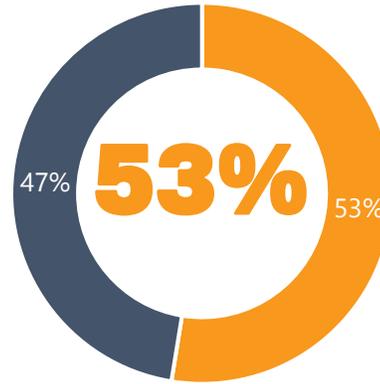


### Change in Need Compared to Last Year

Education entity leaders reported on how their needs for positions changed compared to last year (SY24). For school support personnel positions, 53% of education entity leaders (327 of 622) indicated their need for school support personnel increased or increased substantially compared to last year (see Figure 36). Conversely, 47% of education entity leaders (295 of 622) indicated their need for school support personnel remained the same, decreased or decreased substantially compared to last year.

**Figure 36: Leaders Reporting Increased Need for School Support Personnel**

53% of education leaders indicated their need for school support personnel increased compared to last year.

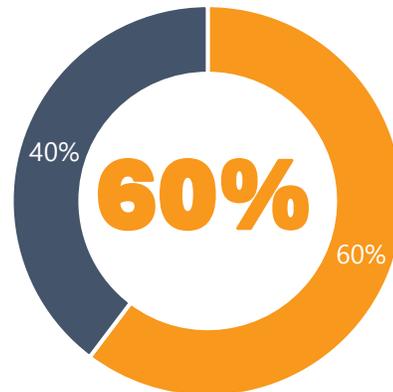


### Anticipated Need for Next Year

Education entity leaders reported on how they anticipate their needs for positions will change for next year (SY26). For school support personnel positions, 60% of education entity leaders (381 of 630) indicated they anticipate their need for school support personnel will increase or increase substantially for next year (see Figure 37). Conversely, 40% of education entity leaders (249 of 630) indicated they anticipate their need for school support personnel will remain the same, decrease or decrease substantially for next year.

**Figure 37: Leaders Reporting Their Need for School Support Personnel Will Increase**

60% of education leaders anticipate their need for school support personnel will increase for next year.



## Administrator Shortages

### Filled Positions

According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of filled administrative positions for the SY24 was 13,253. This is an increase of 347 filled administrative positions from the previous year, SY23.

### Unfilled Positions

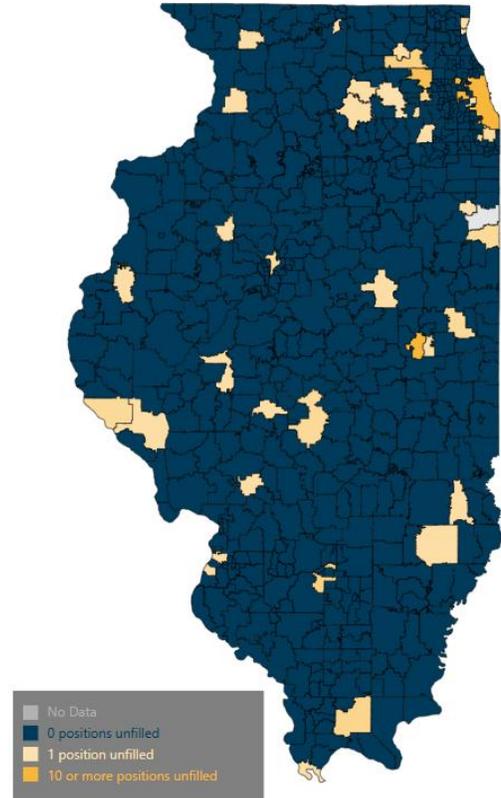
In total, 189 administrative positions remained unfilled for SY25 as of Oct 1, 2024, an increase of 27 (or 16.7%) from SY24.

Unfilled administrative positions varied slightly by education entity. While 932 education entities, inclusive of all types of entities, reported zero unfilled positions, 68 education entities reported at least one unfilled position of which 22 reported two or more unfilled positions. Figure 38 shows the distribution of unfilled positions by public school districts, which is one type of education entity.

Among the 947 education entities that reported unfilled administrative positions, assistant principal accounted for the majority of those positions. Figure 39 shows the top 10 unfilled administrative positions with 59 unfilled assistant principal positions.

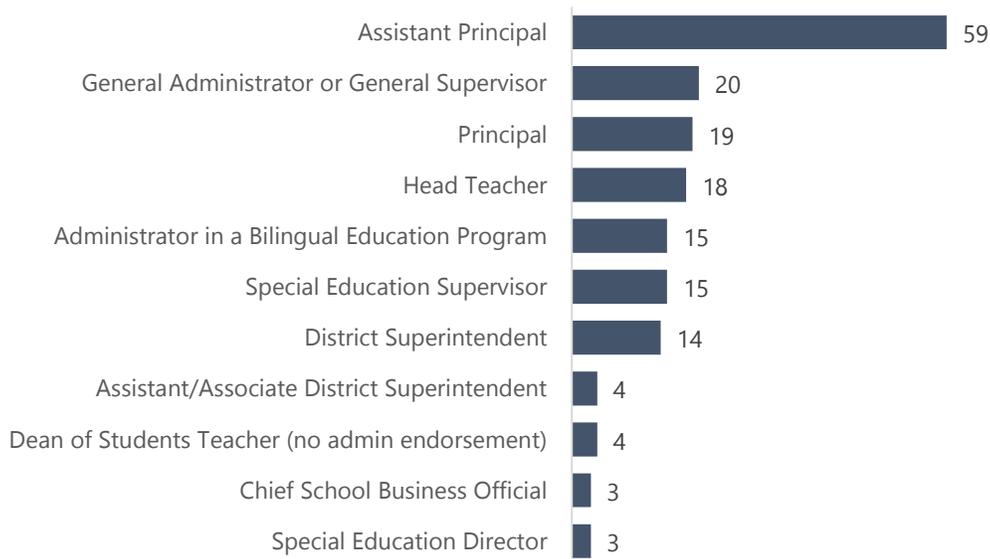
**Figure 38: Unfilled Administrator Positions by District**

Unfilled administrator positions varied from 0 to 10 or more.



**Figure 39: Top 10 Unfilled Administrator Positions**

For the 2024 - 2025 school year, 59 Assistant Principal positions were unfilled.



### Vacancy Rate

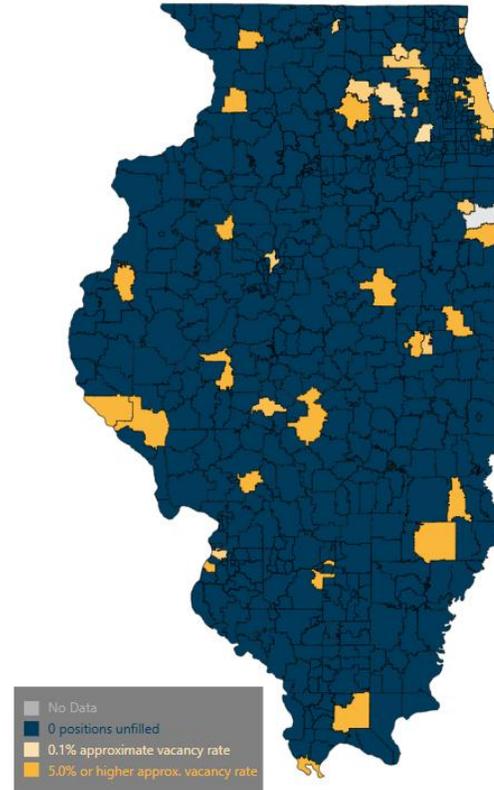
Alongside unfilled positions, vacancy rates are an important component in understanding educator shortages. For SY25, the overall administrative vacancy rate was 1.4% (189 unfilled positions of 13,253 FTE positions), up from 1.2% in SY24.

Vacancy rates also varied slightly by education entity. There were 44 education entities with administrative vacancy rates above 5.0%. Figure 40 shows the distribution of vacancy rates among public school districts only.

Figure 41 shows the top 10 vacancy rates by administrative position. Head Teacher had the highest vacancy rate at 24%. Appendix D contains detailed vacancy rates by EBF Tier, district percent low-income, district percent students of color, geographics area (locale), type of agency and area of the state.

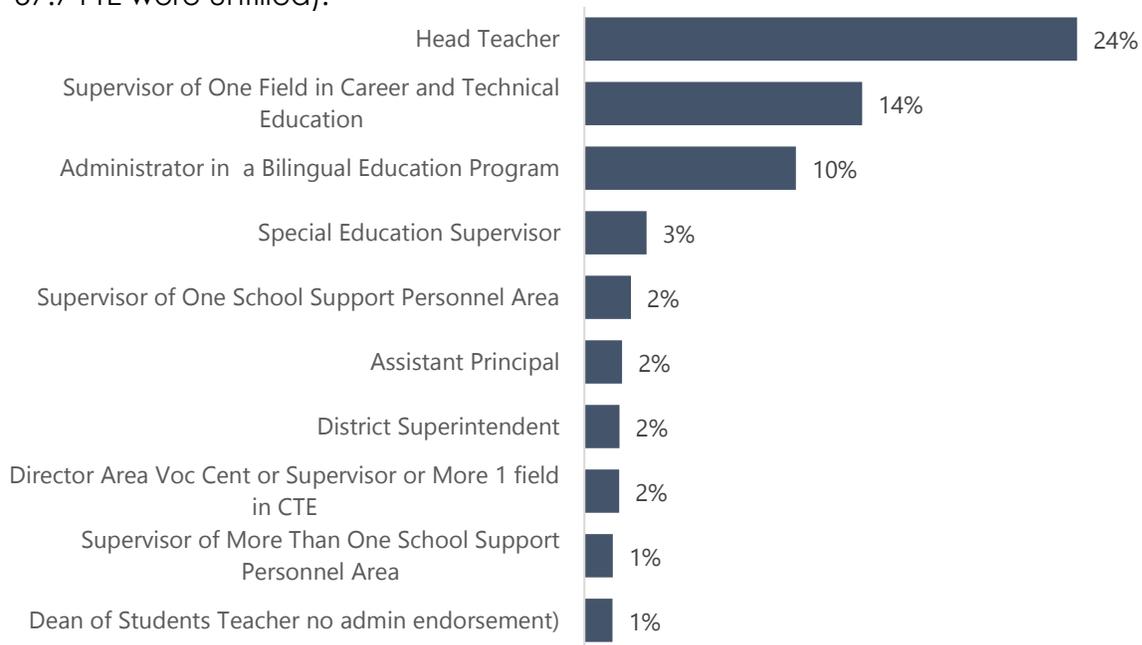
**Figure 40: Administrator Vacancy Rates by District**

Administrator vacancy rates varied from 0.0 to above 5.0%.



**Figure 41: Top 10 Administrator Vacancy Rates**

For the 2024 - 2025 school year, Head Teacher had a 24% vacancy rate (18.3 out of 57.7 FTE were unfilled).

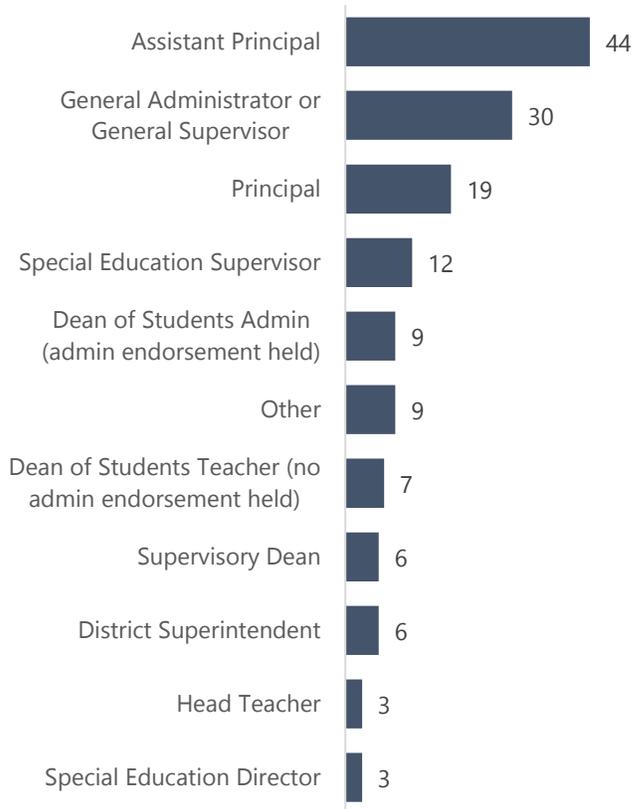


## Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures

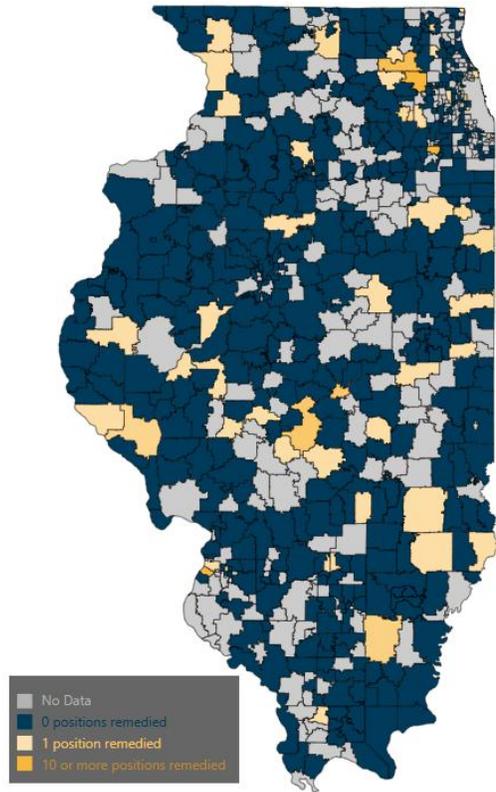
When faced with unfilled positions, education entity leaders will utilize alternative measures to provide services. For unfilled administrator positions, this includes distributing administrative duties, hiring new non-licensed administrative staff, hiring a retired educator, and hiring a teacher in the process of earning their administrative endorsement. As of Oct 1, 2024, 71 education entity leaders reported 157 positions that were filled using these alternative measures. Figure 42 shows the top 10 administrator positions that were filled by alternative measures with assistant principal at the top with 44 positions remedied by alternative measures. Figure 43 shows the distribution of administrator positions remedied by public school district.

**Figure 42: Administrator Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures**

44 Assistant Principal positions were remedied through alternative measures.



**Figure 43: Administrator Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures by District**

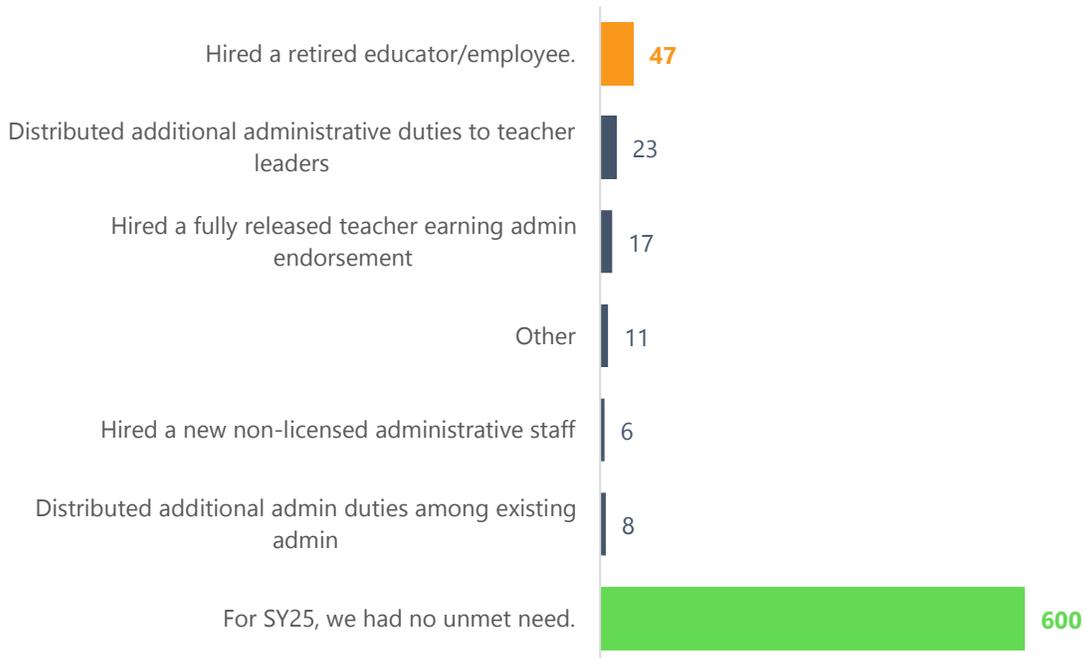


## Alternative Measures for Addressing Shortages

Education entity leaders were asked to select all the remedies they utilized in accommodating an unfilled administrator position. Among the 689 leaders who responded, 600 (87%) indicated they had no unmet need for administrators for SY25 (see Figure 44). For those who had unmet administrator needs, 47 (7%) indicated they hired a retired educator and 23 (3%) indicated they distributed additional administrative duties among teacher leaders.

**Figure 44: Leaders Reported Hiring Retired Educators as the Most Common Remedy for an Unfilled Administrator Position**

47 education leaders indicated they "hired a retired educator" as a method to remediate an unfilled administrator position.

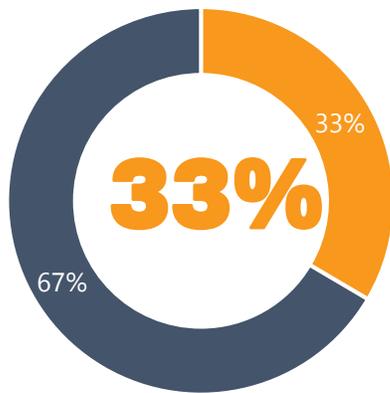


## Shortage Severity

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their administrator shortages. Across all categories of administrator positions, 33% of education entity leaders (151 of 451) indicated a minor to very serious problem with administrator shortages (see Figure 45). The severity of administrator shortages varies by district.<sup>14</sup> Figure 46 shows the percentage of education entities that indicated a minor to very serious problem with administrator shortages by county.

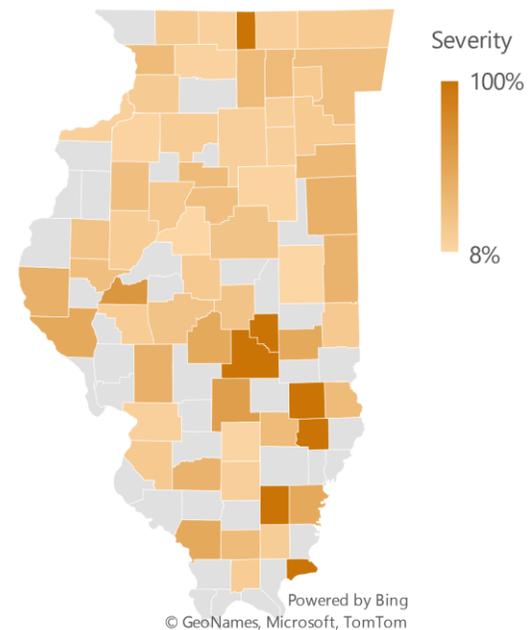
**Figure 45: Leaders' Perceptions of Administrator Shortages**

33% of education leaders indicated a minor, serious or very serious problem with administrator shortages.



**Figure 46: Leaders' Perceptions of Administrator Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 8% to 100%.



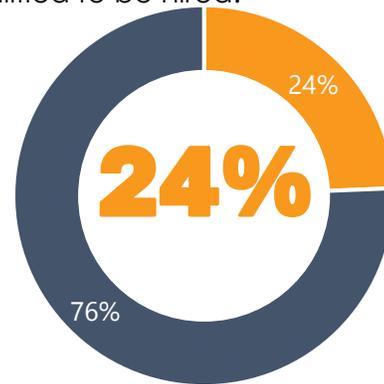
<sup>14</sup> Appendix E shows this broken out by area of the state, type of district, and district locale.

### Qualified Applicants

Education entity leaders rated the quality of applicants for open positions. For all administrator positions, 24% of education entity leaders (96 of 394) indicated that none or very few (0-25%) or some (26-50%) of applicants were qualified to be hired as an employee who holds the proper credentials for the position (see Figure 47). Conversely, 76% of education entity leaders (298 of 394) indicated that most (51-74%) or nearly all or all (75-100%) were qualified. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quality of candidates by district characteristics.

**Figure 47: Leaders Reporting Less than 50% of Administrator Applicants Were Qualified**

24% of education leaders indicated "None (0-25%)" or "Some (26-50%)" of administrator applicants were qualified to be hired.

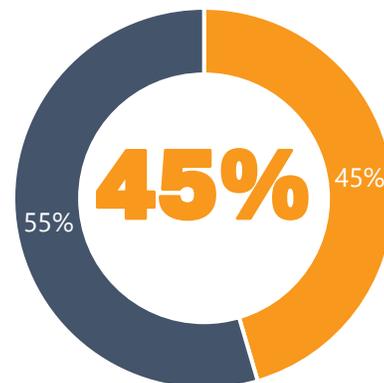


### Quantity of Applicants

Education entity leaders were also asked about the quantity of applicants for open positions. For open administrator positions, 45% of education entity leaders (180 of 396) indicated they received none or very few (<5) applicants, on average, per open administrator position (see Figure 48). Conversely, 55% of education entity leaders (216 of 396) indicated they received some (6-10), sufficient (11-20), or more than sufficient (20+) applicants, on average, per open administrator position. Appendix E shows the breakdown of leaders' perceptions on the quantity of candidates by district characteristics.

**Figure 48: Leaders Reporting Very Few Administrator Applicants**

45% of education leaders indicated "None" or "Very few (<5)" applicants per open administrator position.

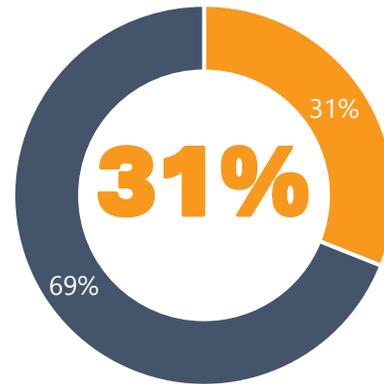


### Change in Need Compared to Last Year

Education entity leaders reported on how their needs for positions changed compared to last year (SY24). For administrator positions, 31% of education entity leaders (184 of 587) indicated their need for administrators increased or increased substantially compared to last year (see Figure 49). Conversely, 69% of education entity leaders (403 of 587) indicated their need for administrators remained the same, decreased or decreased substantially compared to last year.

**Figure 49: Leaders Reporting Increased Need for Administrators**

31% of education leaders indicated their need for administrators increased compared to last year.

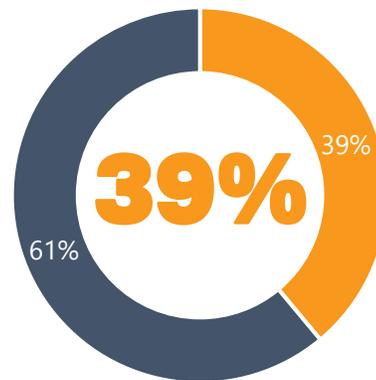


### Anticipated Need for Next Year

Education entity leaders reported on how they anticipate their needs for positions will change for next year (SY26). For administrator positions, 39% of education entity leaders (247 of 638) indicated they anticipate their need for administrators will increase or increase substantially for next year (see Figure 50). Conversely, 61% of education entity leaders (391 of 638) indicated they anticipate their need for teachers will remain the same, decrease or decrease substantially for next year.

**Figure 50: Leaders Reporting Their Need for Administrators Will Increase**

39% of education leaders anticipate their need for administrators will increase for next year.



## Paraprofessional Shortages

### Filled Positions

According to the Unfilled Positions data, the total number of filled paraprofessional positions for the SY24 was 39,710. This is an increase of 4,037 filled paraprofessional positions from the previous year, SY23.

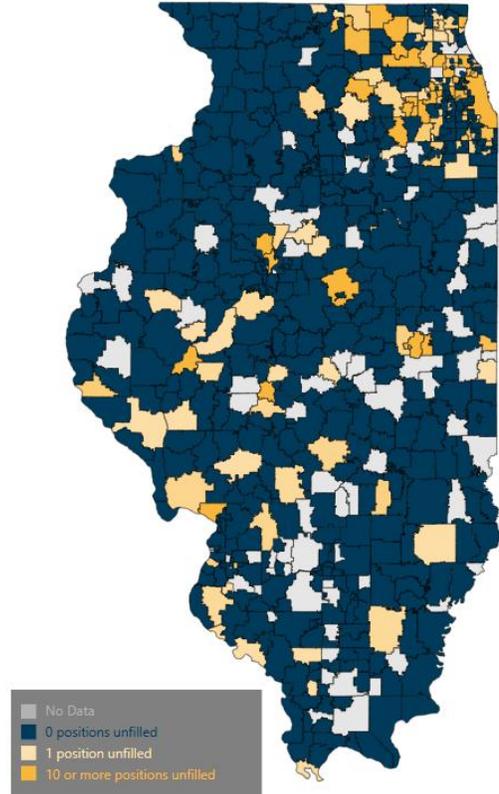
### Unfilled Positions

In total, 2,415 paraprofessional positions remained unfilled for SY25 as of Oct 1, 2024, a decrease of 339 (or 12.3%) from SY24.

Unfilled paraprofessional positions varied by education entity. While 622 education entities, inclusive of all types of entities, reported zero unfilled positions, 226 education entities reported at least 1 unfilled position with 51 education entities reporting 10 or more unfilled positions. Figure 51 shows the distribution of unfilled positions among public school districts, which is one type of education entity.

**Figure 51: Unfilled Paraprofessional Positions by District**

Unfilled paraprofessional positions varied from 0 to 10 or more.



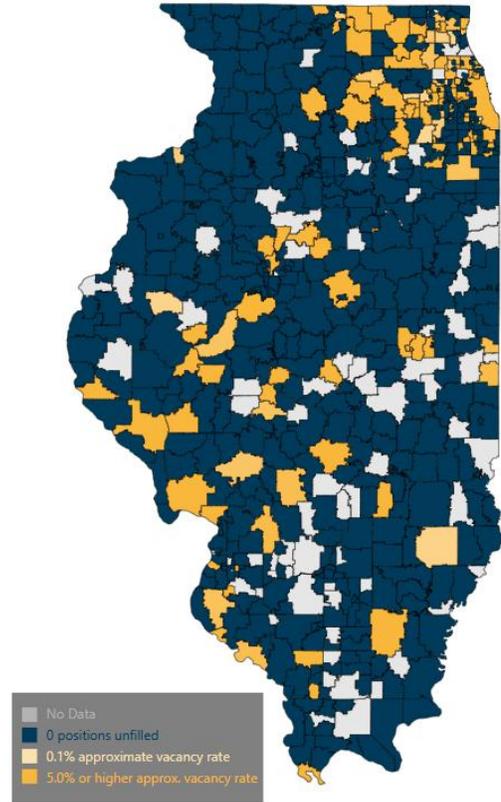
### Vacancy Rate

The vacancy rate for paraprofessionals is an additional indicator of the overall educator shortage. For SY25, the overall paraprofessional vacancy rate was 5.7% (2,415 unfilled positions of 39,710 FTE positions), down from 7.2% in SY24.

Vacancy rates also varied by education entity. There were 173 education entities with paraprofessional vacancy rates above 5.0%. Figure 52 shows the distribution of vacancy rates among public school districts only. Appendix D contains detailed vacancy rates by EBF Tier, district percent low-income, district percent students of color, geographic area (locale), type of agency and area of the state.

**Figure 52: Paraprofessional Vacancy Rates by District**

Paraprofessional vacancy rates varied from **0.0** to above **5.0%**.



*“(We) hosted sub for sub nights to bring individuals into the district and inform them of the requirements of being a substitute teacher, custodian, bus driver, cook, paraprofessional.”*

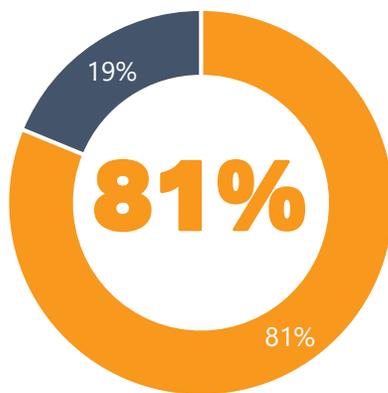
-- Superintendent in an East Central town

### Shortage Severity

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their paraprofessional shortages. For paraprofessionals, 81% of education entity leaders (549 of 675) indicated a minor to very serious problem with shortages (see Figure 53). The severity of paraprofessional shortages varies greatly by district. Figure 54 shows the percentage of education entities that indicated a minor to very serious problem with paraprofessional shortages by county.

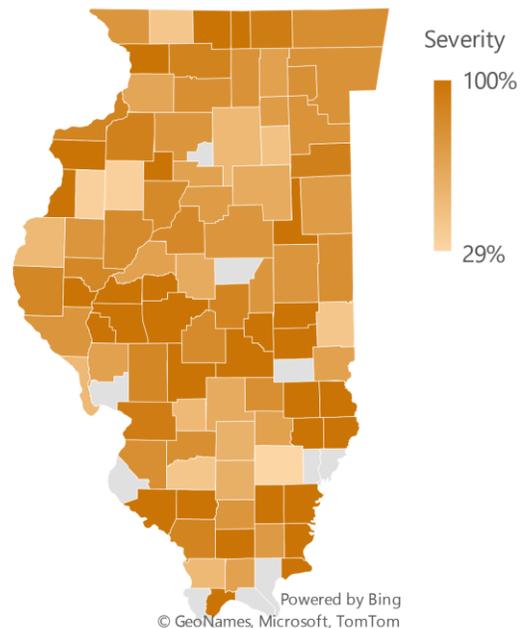
**Figure 53: Leaders' Perceptions of Paraprofessional Shortages**

81% of education leaders indicated a minor, serious or very serious problem with paraprofessional shortages.



**Figure 54: Leaders' Perceptions of Paraprofessional Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 29% to 100%.

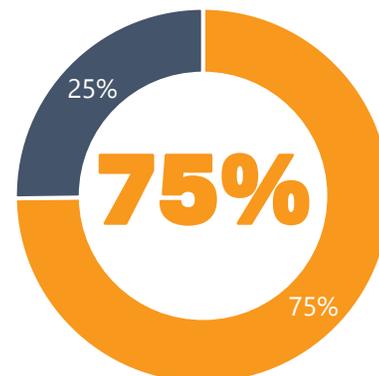


### Quantity of Applicants

Education entity leaders were also asked about the quantity of applicants for open positions. For open paraprofessional positions, 75% of education entity leaders (491 of 657) indicated they received none or very few (<5) applicants, on average, per open position (see Figure 55). Conversely, 25% of education entity leaders (166 of 657) indicated they received some (6-10), sufficient (11-20), or more than sufficient (20+) applicants, on average, per open paraprofessional position.

**Figure 55: Leaders Reporting Very Few Paraprofessional Applicants**

75% of education leaders indicated "None" or "Very few (<5)" applicants per open paraprofessional position.



### Change in Need Compared to Last Year

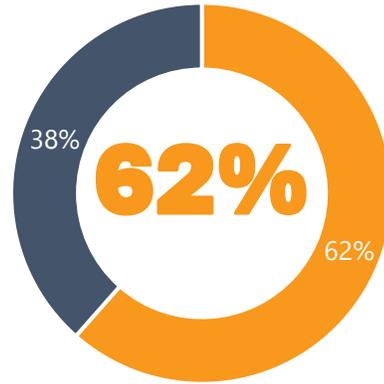
Education entity leaders reported on how their needs for positions changed compared to last year (SY24). For paraprofessional positions, 62% of education entity leaders (422 of 683) indicated their need for paraprofessionals increased or increased substantially compared to last year (see Figure 56). Conversely, 38% of education entity leaders (261 of 683) indicated their need for paraprofessionals remained the same, decreased or decreased substantially compared to last year.

### Anticipated Need for Next Year

Education entity leaders reported on how they anticipate their needs for positions will change for next year (SY26). For paraprofessional positions, 62% of education entity leaders (431 of 697) indicated they anticipate their need for paraprofessionals will increase or increase substantially for next year (see Figure 57). Conversely, 38% of education entity leaders (266 of 697) indicated they anticipate their need for paraprofessionals will remain the same, decrease or decrease substantially for next year.

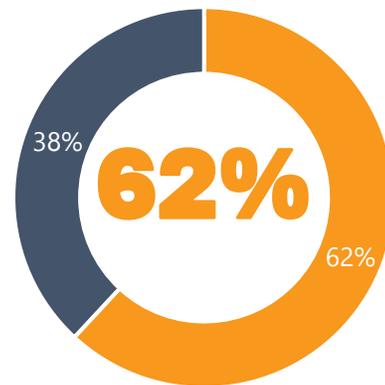
**Figure 56: Leaders Reporting Increased Need for Paraprofessionals**

62% of education leaders indicated their need for paraprofessionals increased compared to last year.



**Figure 57: Leaders Reporting Their Need for Paraprofessionals Will Increase**

62% of education leaders anticipate their need for paraprofessionals will increase for next year.



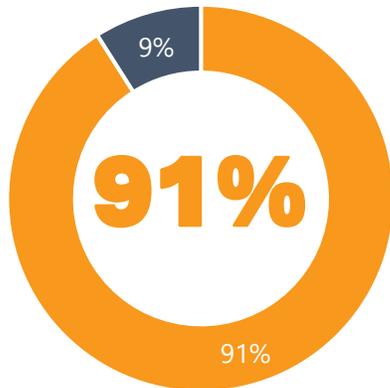
## Substitute Shortages

### Shortage Severity

Education entity leaders rated the severity of their substitute shortages. For substitutes, 91% of education entity leaders (647 of 711) indicated a serious or very serious problem with shortages (see Figure 58). The severity of substitute shortages varies by district. Figure 59 shows the percentage of education entities that indicated a serious or very serious problem with substitute shortages by county.

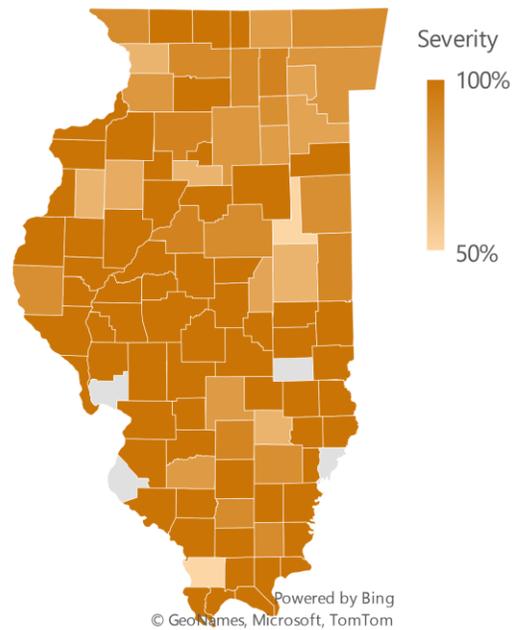
**Figure 58: Leaders' Perceptions of Substitute Shortages**

91% of education leaders indicated a **minor, serious** or **very serious** problem with substitute shortages.



**Figure 59: Leaders' Perceptions of Substitute Shortages by County**

The percent of education entities reporting a minor to very serious problem ranges from 50% to 100%.



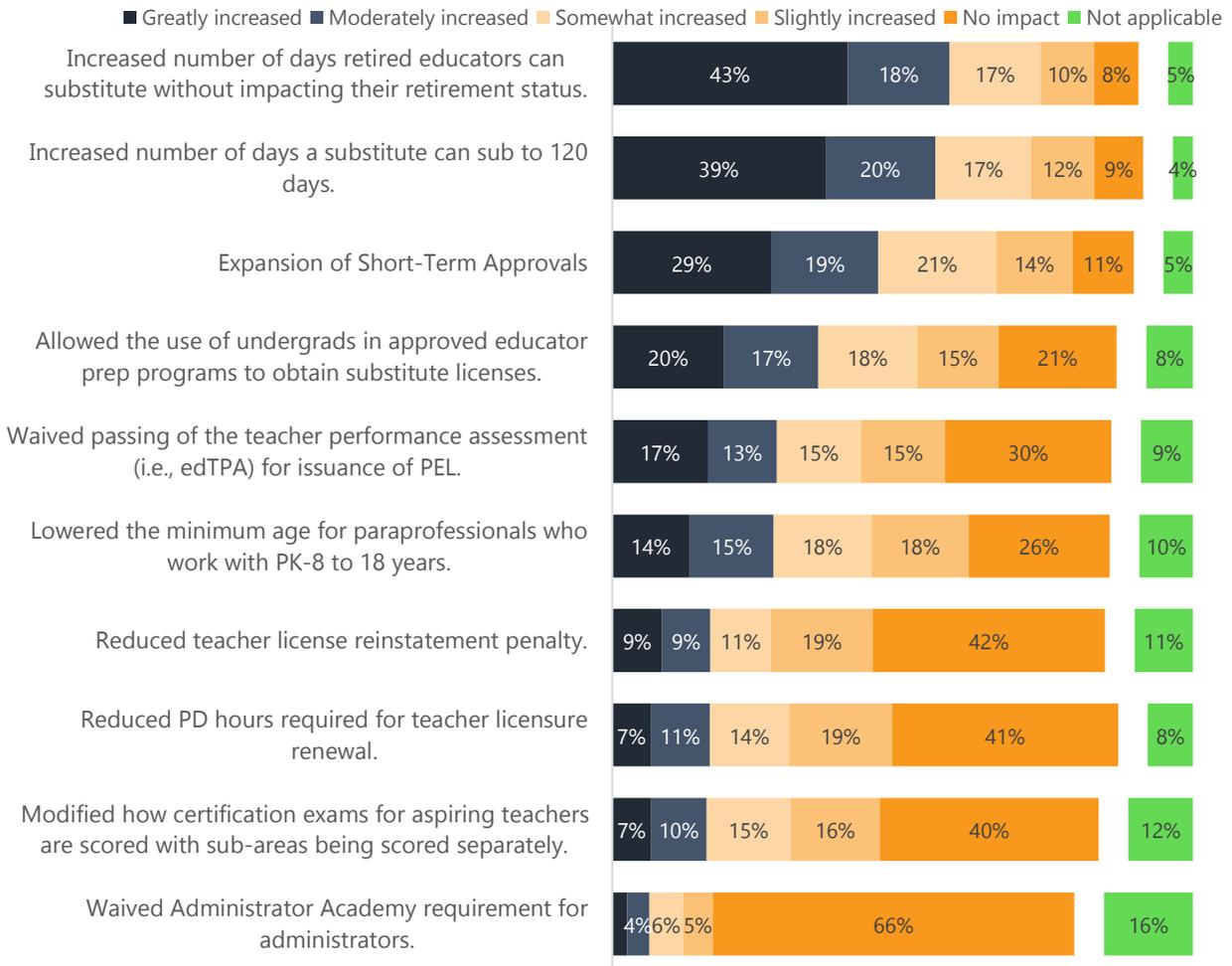
## Impact of ISBE Licensure Changes

Education entity leaders were asked to rate the impact of various changes to language on licensure and certification on their recruitment and/or retention of educators. Of the 709 who responded, 61% (434) indicated that "ISBE/ILGA increased number of days retired educators can substitute without impacting their retirement status" greatly or moderately increased their recruitment or retention (see Figure 60). Conversely, 7% (48 of 712) indicated that "ISBE/ILGA waived Administrator Academy requirement for administrators" impacted their recruitment and/or retention somewhat, slightly, or not at all. Furthermore, 8% (60 of 709) indicated that "allowed the use of undergrads in approved educator prep programs to obtain substitute licenses" was not applicable or "I don't know."

**Figure 60: Leaders Reported Increased Number of Days a Retirees Can Sub Increased Recruitment and Retention of Educators**

61% of education leaders indicated that "increased the number of days retired educators can substitute without impacting their retirement status" moderately or greatly increased their educator recruitment and/or retention.

ISBE/ILGA...



## Leaders' Top 3 Causes for Shortages

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt "What are the top 3 specific issues your district faces with CAUSES for educator shortages?" Among the 694 leaders who responded, 1,770 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 8 broad themes with 43 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes. Appendix F shows more details related to the sub-themes.

**Table 1: Broad Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to CAUSES for Educator Shortages**

CAUSES	N	%	Sample Quote
<b>Limited Applicants</b>	395	57%	<i>Illinois has made it so difficult to become a teacher, the majority of our applicants are now from Grand Canyon University instead of Southern Illinois University and since there is a shortage, they know that they can continue to move until they find the highest salary.</i>
<b>Issues Related to Salary/Benefits</b>	382	55%	<i>I believe salary and pension contribute to the shortage. Many of my folks have left the field for jobs in the private sector.</i>
<b>Poor Working Conditions</b>	239	34%	<i>Negative publicity and/or personal attacks on social media surrounding education/educators which is causing undo stress on health, marriages, families, and lives.</i>
<b>Certified Staff Shortages</b>	175	25%	<i>Finding competent and licensed teachers, specifically in Math and Special Education. We struggle with all of the Student Services positions. It is difficult to compete for the handful of qualified and competent teachers against unit school districts because their pay seems to be much higher.</i>
<b>Geographic Specific Issues</b>	152	22%	<i>Our location with quality jobs for the candidate's spouse can give our school district a tough time competing with other districts.</i>
<b>Difficulty with Recruitment or Retention</b>	143	21%	<i>The changes to Tier 2 retirement have significantly reduced interest in teaching and 2nd career individuals from entering the profession. While the pay during their career may not be great there was always a good retirement to work towards. Now they don't have either.</i>
<b>No Shortages</b>	27	4%	<i>We are not experiencing any shortage at this time. Pay has been a factor in the past.</i>
<b>Other</b>	1	0%	

## Leaders' Top 3 Impacts of Shortages

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt "What are the top 3 specific issues your district faces with SEVERITY for educator shortages?" Among the 665 leaders who responded, 1,466 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 8 broad themes with 43 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes. Appendix F shows more details related to the sub-themes.

**Table 2: Broad Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to IMPACT of Educator Shortages**

IMPACT	N	%	Sample Quote
<b>Certified Staff Shortages</b>	339	51%	<i>It is difficult to get one or more qualified teachers to apply. We are fortunate if we get three applications. Of course, it continues to be extremely difficult to get Special Education, Math, Science, Foreign Language, and middle school teachers (namely because of the needed endorsements).</i>
<b>Limited Applicants</b>	320	48%	<i>Due to the shortage of qualified educators, particularly in math, science, and special education, we have had to hire staff who do not hold full certification in these areas. While they are dedicated and willing to help, they lack the specialized training necessary to effectively teach these subjects, which compromises the quality of instruction and student achievement.</i>
<b>Poor Working Conditions</b>	246	37%	<i>Many of our qualified teachers have to take on more courses and are working harder to cover the required course offerings, leading to teacher burnout.</i>
<b>Issues related to Salary/Benefits</b>	107	16%	<i>One of the most severe issues we face is the difficulty in retaining educators, particularly due to our district's less competitive wages and benefits compared to neighboring districts. Teachers are often drawn to districts offering higher pay, better health benefits, and stronger retirement packages, leading to a high turnover rate and leaving critical positions unfilled.</i>
<b>Difficulty with Recruitment or Retention</b>	66	10%	<i>Retention issues due to educators being overwhelmed due to shortage of staff.</i>
<b>No Shortages</b>	51	8%	<i>This is the 1st year in 3 years in which we have been able to fill all special education teaching positions.</i>
<b>Geographic Specific Issues</b>	34	5%	<i>Our rural setting limits the potential pool of candidates seeking careers in education.</i>
<b>Other</b>	4	1%	<i>Need for too much out of the box thinking to get a qualified candidate.</i>

## Leaders' Top 3 Strategies to Mitigate Shortages

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt "What are the top 3 specific strategies your district has implemented to alleviate the challenge of educator shortages?" Among the 688 leaders who responded, 1,680 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 9 broad themes with 52 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes. Appendix F shows more details related to the sub-themes.

**Table 3: Broad Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to CURRENT STRATEGIES to Alleviate Educator Shortages**

STRATEGY	N	%	Sample Quote
<b>Improve Recruitment</b>	442	64%	<i>Huge Social media presence to brag on our current staff, advertise about the great things happening in our district, and community outreach.</i>
<b>Provide Incentives</b>	402	58%	<i>Offer all years of experience and education credit on the salary schedule to qualified candidates.</i>
<b>Support for Staff</b>	166	24%	<i>We have put in a mentor program to help our young teachers become more comfortable and stay in the teaching field.</i>
<b>Improve Climate/Culture</b>	123	18%	<i>Districts are making efforts to shift from management/staff models and are working hard to create cultures that are more united in the challenges of educating students.</i>
<b>State/Federal Support</b>	101	15%	<i>We have used people with a bachelor's in history, for example, then had them complete a teaching program, typically out of state.</i>
<b>Reduce Needed Staff</b>	55	8%	<i>Increasing class sizes, maxing out SLP caseloads to 60 students, increasing school psychology: student ratios.</i>
<b>Reduce Responsibilities</b>	30	4%	<i>Our small class sizes enable us to be more proactive with academic and SEL interventions, leading to a very positive school climate. Our substitute teachers report they love coming to our school because of the polite manners and good behavior of our students as well as the pleasant and friendly educational environment established by our faculty.</i>
<b>None</b>	26	4%	<i>Frankly...we do without. We no longer have a band program or music program.</i>
<b>Other</b>	0	0%	

## Leaders' Top 3 Desired Solutions to Combat Shortages

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt "What are the top 3 solutions to educator shortages that you wish were available to your district and are not currently available?" Among the 634 leaders who responded, 1,183 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 9 broad themes with 52 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes. Appendix F shows more details related to the sub-themes.

**Table 4: Broad Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to DESIRED SOLUTIONS Leaders Wishd Were Available**

SOLUTION	N	%	Sample Quote
<b>State/Federal Support</b>	375	59%	<i>I wish we would get more help from our legislatures. We are now willing to take anyone from a different state to make them certified, but we are not willing to make changes to our state requirements to make it easier for those people to get a degree.</i>
<b>Provide Incentives</b>	219	35%	<i>Overall increase for starting salary; programs to pay tuition if attend state university such as the special ed tuition waiver program</i>
<b>Improve Recruitment</b>	214	34%	<i>More access to teaching candidates in college (other than taking on student teachers, sending flyers, etc.) More connection to universities about how to prepare teachers</i>
<b>Support for Staff</b>	61	10%	<i>A more robust mentoring program for new staff that is supported and implemented by the ROE.</i>
<b>Improve Climate/Culture</b>	55	9%	<i>People who are doing their best don't want to get blasted on social media by people with limited knowledge or information. Who wants to work in a \$50,000 job as a Teacher or \$18/hour as a Teacher Aide and suffer the kind of abuse educators do when districts can't counter narratives that are false publicly.</i>
<b>None</b>	37	6%	<i>I honestly don't know.</i>
<b>Reduce Responsibilities</b>	14	2%	<i>Stop all the mandated training. These people want to teach and coach. Not be overloaded with nonstop training. I'm at the elementary level and these people want to teach math, reading, writing, and some technology. We are asking these people to do everything for everybody. They just simply want to teach.</i>
<b>Reduce Needed Staff</b>	15	2%	<i>Ability to "share" time/staff across districts to fill critical areas of need.</i>
<b>Other</b>	1	0%	

## ESSER Funds Used to Create or Fund Positions

Education leaders were asked how they utilized ESSER funds in relation to creating or supporting positions.

### Teaching Positions

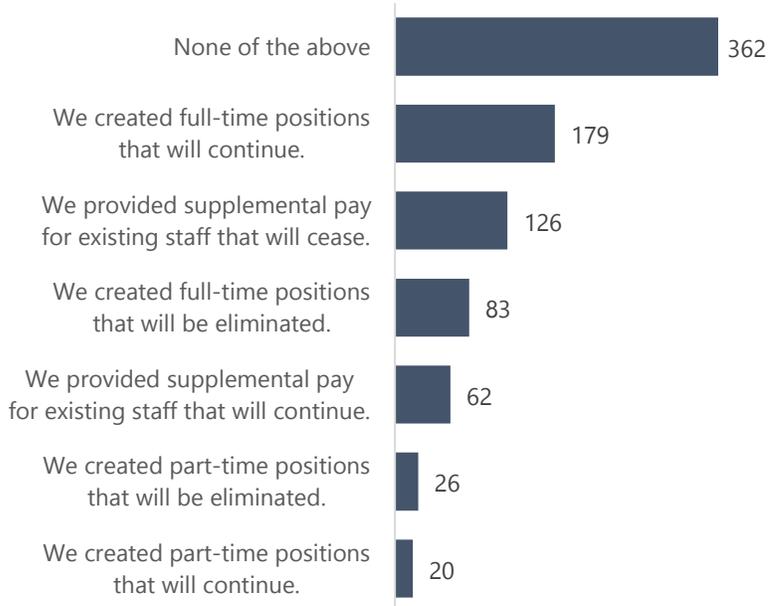
For teaching positions, 362 of 722 education leaders indicated they did not use ESSER funds to create or support positions (see Figure 61). However, 179 education leaders indicated they created full-time positions using ESSER funds that will continue when ESSER funding ceases. Another 83 education leaders indicated they have teaching positions that were created through ESSER funds that will be eliminated.

### Special Education Teachers

Compared to teaching positions, fewer special education teaching positions will be impacted when ESSER funding ceases. Of the 691 education leaders who responded, 571 indicated they did not use ESSER funds to create or support special education positions (see Figure 62). Only 51 indicated they provided supplemental pay for existing staff that will cease. Another 11 education leaders indicated they created full-time special education teaching positions that will be eliminated when ESSER funding ceases.

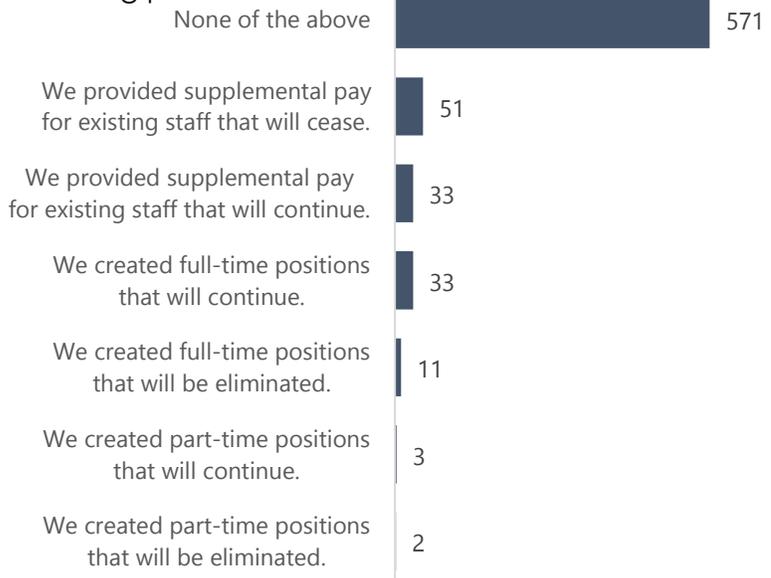
**Figure 61: Few Leaders Utilized ESSER Funds to Finance Teaching Positions**

362 education leaders indicated they did not utilize ESSER funds to create or pay for teaching positions.



**Figure 62: Few Leaders Utilized ESSER Funds to Finance Special Education Teaching Positions**

571 education leaders indicated they did not utilize ESSER funds to create or pay for special education teaching positions.

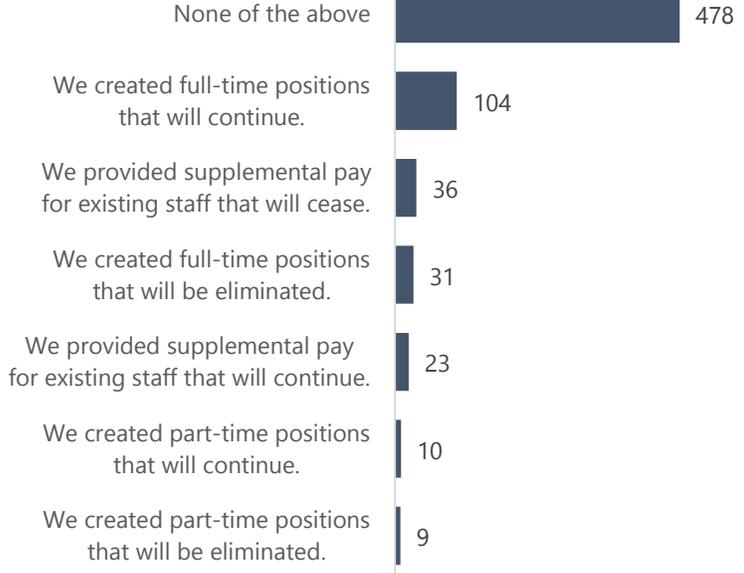


### School Support Personnel

As with special education teachers, few school support personnel positions were created or supported through ESSER funds. Of the 655 education leaders who responded, 478 indicated they did not use ESSER funds to create or support school support personnel positions (see Figure 63). Another 104 education leaders indicated they created full-time school support personnel positions through ESSER funding that will continue once funding ceases. Only 31 education leaders indicated they created full-time school support personnel positions through ESSER funding that will be eliminated when funding ceases.

**Figure 63: Few Leaders Utilized ESSER Funds to Finance School Support Personnel Positions**

478 education leaders indicated they did not utilize ESSER funds to create or pay for school support personnel positions.



## Who Responded: Unfilled Positions Data Collection

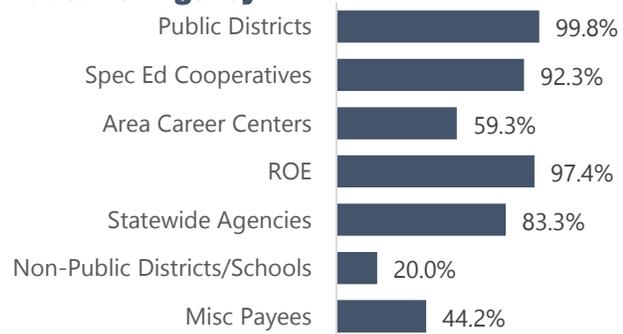
### Overall

The Unfilled Positions data was collected by the Illinois State Board of Education between October 1<sup>st</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025. In that time, 1,029 education entities reported their filled and unfilled positions, with only 91 agencies not responding. That represents a 91.9% response rate across all education entity types.

### By Type of Agency

Public school districts had the highest response rate with 99.8% of districts (857 of 859) (see Figure 64). Only two districts did not respond. For special education cooperatives, 92.3% (60 of 65) responded. For area career centers, 59.3% (16 of 27) responded. For regional offices of education, 97.4% (37 of 38) responded. For statewide agencies, 83.3% (5 of 6) responded. For non-public districts, 20.0% (1 of 5) responded. For miscellaneous payees, 44.2% (53 of 120) responded.

**Figure 64: Response Rate by Type of Education Agency**



## Who Responded: Educator Shortage Survey

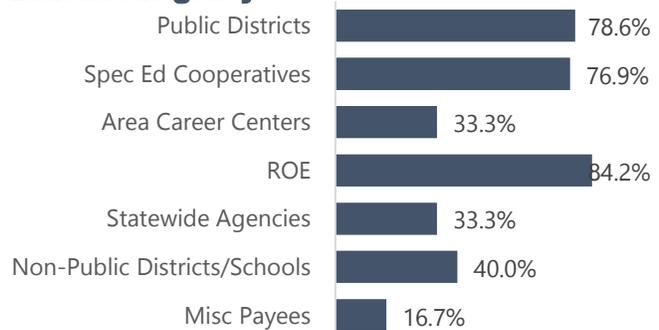
### Overall

The Educator Shortage Survey was sent to 951 education leaders at public schools, special education cooperatives and area career centers. By December 5<sup>th</sup>, 734 education leaders responded to the survey. Additional responses were received from education leaders at ROE's, Other State Funded Districts or Schools, Miscellaneous Payees and Non-Public Districts or Schools.

### By Type of Agency

Response rates varied by type of education entity (see Figure 65). Public school districts had a response rate of 78.6% (675 of 859). For special education cooperatives, 76.9% (50 of 65) responded. The response rate for area career centers was 33.3% (9 of 27). For ROEs, 84.2% (32 of 38) responded and 33.3% (2 of 6) for statewide agencies. For non-public districts, 40.0% (2 of 5) responded and for miscellaneous payees 16.7% (20 of 120) responded. Note the sections of this report related the IARSS survey only display results from public districts, special education cooperative and area career centers. Data from regional offices of education, statewide agencies, non-public districts and miscellaneous payees is available through the online interactive data dashboard.

**Figure 65: Response Rate by Type of Education Agency**



### By Type of District

Public school districts are categorized as unit, elementary or high school. While there is some variation, unit districts serve all grade levels (K-12), elementary districts typically serve either K-5 or K-8, high school districts typically serve 9-12 or 6-12. For Unit Districts, 335 of 397 (84%) responded (see Figure 66). For Elementary Districts, 274 of 367 (75%) responded. For High School Districts, 66 of 95 (69%) responded.

**Figure 66: Response Rate by Type of District**



### By District Locale

The National Center for Education Statistics (2024) provides locale information for all public school districts. Districts are categorized based on census data into four types, Rural, Town, Suburban and City, based on population size or proximity to

**Figure 67: Response Rate by District Locale**



populated areas (NCES, 2024). Response rates, for public school districts, vary by locale (see Figure 67). Rural districts had the highest response rate, 88% (280 of 320). For districts in town areas, 84% (137 of 164) responded. The response rate for suburban districts was 70% (241 of 342) and for districts in cities 68% (19 of 28). While Chicago Public Schools (CPS) did not complete the survey, 3 charter schools within the CPS system completed the survey.

### By Geographic Location

Illinois public school districts are organized by county, ROE/ISC and area. Response rates vary greatly across geographic regions. Figure 68 shows the response rates by county. The lowest response rate, 25%, was from Alexander and Douglas Counties with 1 of 4 districts responding each. There were 53 counties with 100% response rate. There were three counties with no responses: Cumberland (0 of 2), Jersey (0 of 1) and Monroe (0 of 3). There were 8 ROE/ISC with 100% response rates but the lowest was from ISC 7 with 45% (34 of 75 districts responded). Figure 69 shows the response rates by area with Northwest at 92% and Suburban Cook at 54%.

Figure 68: Response Rate by County

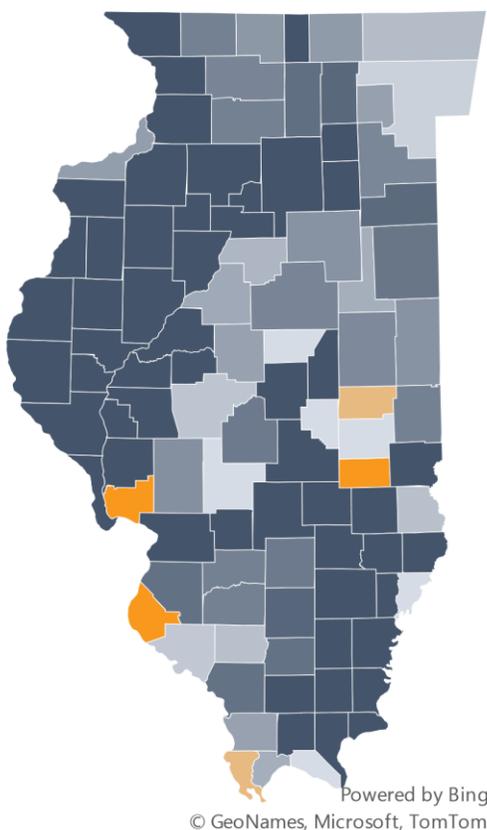
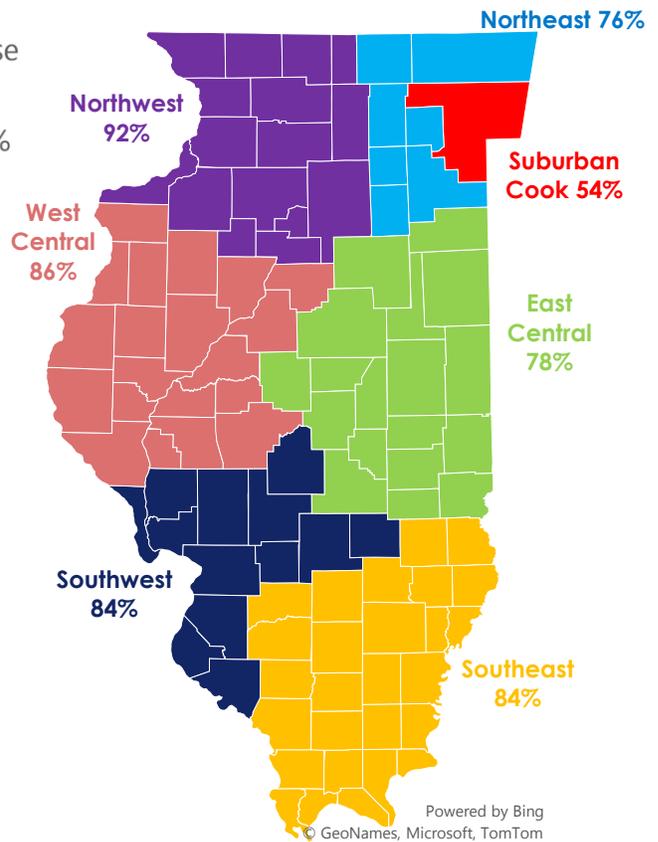


Figure 69: Response Rate by Area



## Shortages Over Time

### Teachers

For SY25, 3,864.1 teaching positions were reported unfilled, a decrease from the previous year of 4,096.5. This decrease has also led to a lower overall approximate vacancy rate, 2.8% in SY25 compared to 3.0% in SY24. Note that the Filled FTE lag the Unfilled FTE by one school year.

Table 5: Unfilled Positions Data for SY23, SY24 and SY25

	Position Type	Unfilled FTE	Filled FTE	Vacancy Rate
SY23	Administrative	125.0	12421.5	1.0%
	Paraprofessionals	2684.2	34875.0	7.1%
	School Support Personnel	821.1	18320.7	4.3%
	Teaching	3558.2	134183.5	2.6%
SY24	Administrative	162.1	12906.4	1.2%
	Paraprofessionals	2754.7	35672.2	7.2%
	School Support Personnel	1095.2	18972.9	5.5%
	Teaching	4096.5	134214.8	3.0%
SY25	Administrative	189.2	13253.7	1.4%
	Paraprofessionals	2415.4	39709.6	5.7%
	School Support Personnel	996.4	20184.5	4.7%
	Teaching	3864.1	136092.1	2.8%
Change (SY24 to SY25)	Administrative	27.1	347.3	0.2%
	Paraprofessionals	-339.3	4037.4	-1.5%
	School Support Personnel	-98.8	1211.6	-0.8%
	Teaching	-232.4	1877.3	-0.2%

This past fall, for school year 2024 – 2025, district superintendents use of substitutes and retirees for fill unfilled positions was comparable with SY24, but still much higher than in previous years (see Figure 70). Superintendents' perceptions of the severity of teacher

Figure 70: Number of Teaching Positions Filled by Substitutes/Retirees

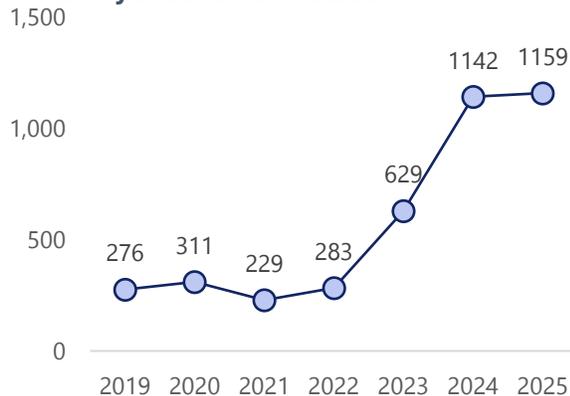
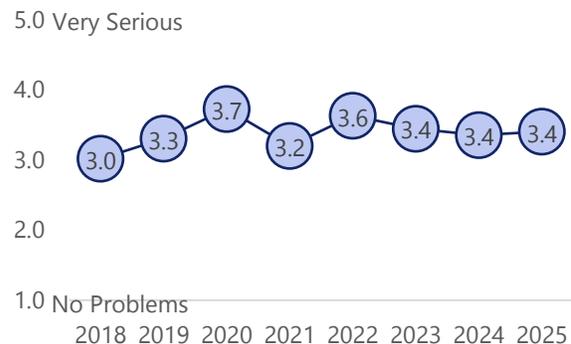


Figure 71: Superintendents Severity of Teacher Shortage Ratings Over the Past 7 Years



shortages remained consistent with last year at 3.4 or between minor and serious problems (see Figure 71). To be consistent with previous years' reports<sup>15</sup>, the following include only schools and districts that are part of the Illinois Report Card, which excludes Special Education Districts/Cooperatives and Vocational Districts/Schools. It should also be noted that there are many factors that may contribute to the apparent increase in the use of substitutes and retirees.

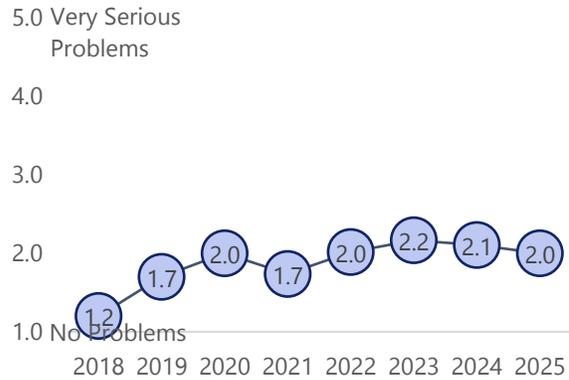
### Administrators

For SY25, 189 positions were reported unfilled, an increase from the previous year of 162. This increase has also led to a higher overall approximate vacancy rate, 1.4% in SY25 compared to 1.2% in SY24. Superintendents' ratings of administrator shortage severity remain consistent with previous years (see Figure 72). As in the previous section, to be consistent with past years only public-school districts were used all types of administrators were included.

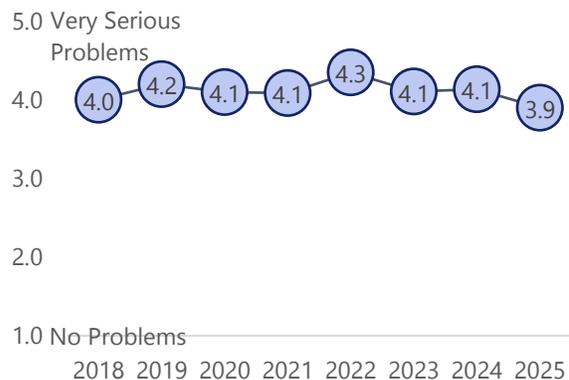
### Substitutes

Superintendents' ratings of substitute shortage severity remain consistently high, between serious and very serious problems (see Figure 73). As in the previous sections, to be consistent with past years only public-school districts were used.

**Figure 72: Superintendents Severity of Administrator Shortage Ratings Over the Past 8 Years**



**Figure 73: Superintendents Severity of Substitute Shortage Ratings Over the Past 8 Years**



<sup>15</sup> For both the IARSS survey and UFP data collection, the collection systems have improved over time and the response rates have increased substantially. For the IARSS survey, definitions of “unfilled” and “underfilled” have been clarified over the years.

## Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge and thank the many contributors for their guidance and input on the development and distribution of the survey as well as their thoughtfulness in interpreting the findings.

Special thanks to Advance IL for their continued support and collaboration. Thank you to Robin Steans, Jim O'Connor, and Mercedes Wentworth-Nice.

Thank you to the Large Unit District Association (LUDA) and the Illinois Association of School Personnel Administrators (IASPA) for supporting the distribution of the survey and keeping this work in the forefront. Thank you to LaTesh Travis and John Burkey.

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 Kendra Hubbard  
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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Method

The Unfilled Positions data was collected by the Illinois State Board of Education through the Illinois Web Application System (IWAS). Data was collected from October 1<sup>st</sup> through November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The publicly available data was downloaded and analyzed for group and subgroup totals. See Table 6 below for specific business rules on how the publicly available Unfilled Positions data set for SY25 was used to develop totals by district.

**Table 6: Business Rules for Charts and Figures Aggregated by Goshen and IWERC from Unfilled Positions Public Data Set**

Figure	Data Source	Filter	Aggregation
Figure 4: Top 10 Unfilled Teaching Positions by Subject	UFP Public Data Source: GradeSubject- EmployerWorkingLoc	WorkingLocationName: Exclude "All Schools and Entities"	Sum TotalUnfilledFTE by SubjectAreaDescription
Figure 76: Vacancy Rate by Role, Area, Type of Agency, Locale, EBF Tier, Students of Color and Poverty Level	UFP Public Data Source: GradeSubject- EmployerWorkingLoc	WorkingLocationName: Exclude "All Schools and Entities"	Average ApproximateVacancyRate by UFPReportingCategoryDescription and Researched DistrictType, Locale, EBF Tier, %Adequacy, %Students of Color and Poverty from IRC24 and NCES.

The Educator Shortage survey was developed by a committee from the IARSS in 2017. The Educator Shortage survey for school year 2024-2025 was adapted from previous versions to be aligned with the Unfilled Positions data collection administered by ISBE. The survey was distributed via email through the Qualtrics platform between October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 through November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Additional follow up with districts leaders continued through December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024.

The survey was administered by Goshen Consulting, a neutral third-party education consulting practice. The survey data was downloaded and analyzed for group and sub-group frequencies and descriptive statistics. Further analysis included the use of existing data sources such as the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the 2023 – 2024 Illinois Report Card.

This report follows several additional reports and 7 years of previous survey administrations. All research and interactive data dashboards can be found on the IARSS website: [www.iarss.org](http://www.iarss.org).

The survey instrument is available upon request. Please contact Tom Withee at [tom@goshenconsulting.net](mailto:tom@goshenconsulting.net) or Shereen Beilstein at [beilste2@uillinois.edu](mailto:beilste2@uillinois.edu) to request a copy of the instrument.

Additional data was pulled from the Illinois Report Card for the 2023–2024 school year, the National Center for Education Statistics and ISBE Directory of Educational Entities to add building-, school-, and district-level characteristics for further analysis.

## Appendix B: Definitions

### *GENERAL DEFINITIONS*

SY25 - The 2024-25 school year

Open - A position that needed to be filled for SY25 and was posted for applicants to apply for the position.

Qualified and Filled - A position that was filled by an employee who holds the full renewable credential(s) for the position (e.g., has a PEL, ELS-PARA, ELS-CTE, CTEP, PCTE, etc.).

Temporary or Non-Renewable Qualification and Filled - A position that was filled by an employee that holds temporary or non-renewable credentials such as Short-term Approvals (STA), Short-term Emergency Approval (STE), Alternative Professional Educator (APE), Transitional Bilingual Educator (TBE) or Visiting International Teacher (VIT). This would also include a position that was filled by licensed educator who is working "out of field" (e.g., a math teacher who is teaching computer science without the applicable endorsement, etc.).

Unfilled - A position that was not filled by an fully renewable credentialed educator for that position as of Oct. 1, 2024. This position may be vacant or may include a position that was filled by an employee who DOES NOT hold the proper credentials for the position (e.g., no PEL, no ELS, etc.), such as a substitute. This may also include courses/classes that were closed, canceled, or outsourced.

NA - No data available (likely the LEA is not included in the Illinois Report Card).

### *STAFF DEFINITIONS (BASED ON LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS)*

Teachers - Teacher of Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle, Secondary / High School, CTE, Specials, Bilingual, or ESL, and Resource teacher.

Special Educators - Teacher of General Special Education, students with Multiple Disabilities, Bilingual Special Education, Deaf or Hard of Hearing students, Blind or Visually Impaired students. Curriculum Adaptation Specialist, Transition Specialist, Behavior Interventionist.

School Support Personnel - School Psychologist, School Counselor, School Social Worker, School Nurse, Speech-Language Pathologist, Curriculum Specialist, Instructional Coach, Library Information Specialist, Technology Specialist.

Administrators - Asst. Principal, Principal, CSBO, Dir. of Special Education, Asst. Superintendent, Superintendent, Other Admin that requires Administrative Endorsement.

Substitutes - A temporary or long-term substitute to fill a full-time position. Includes positions that require either a Short-Term Substitute License or a Substitute License.

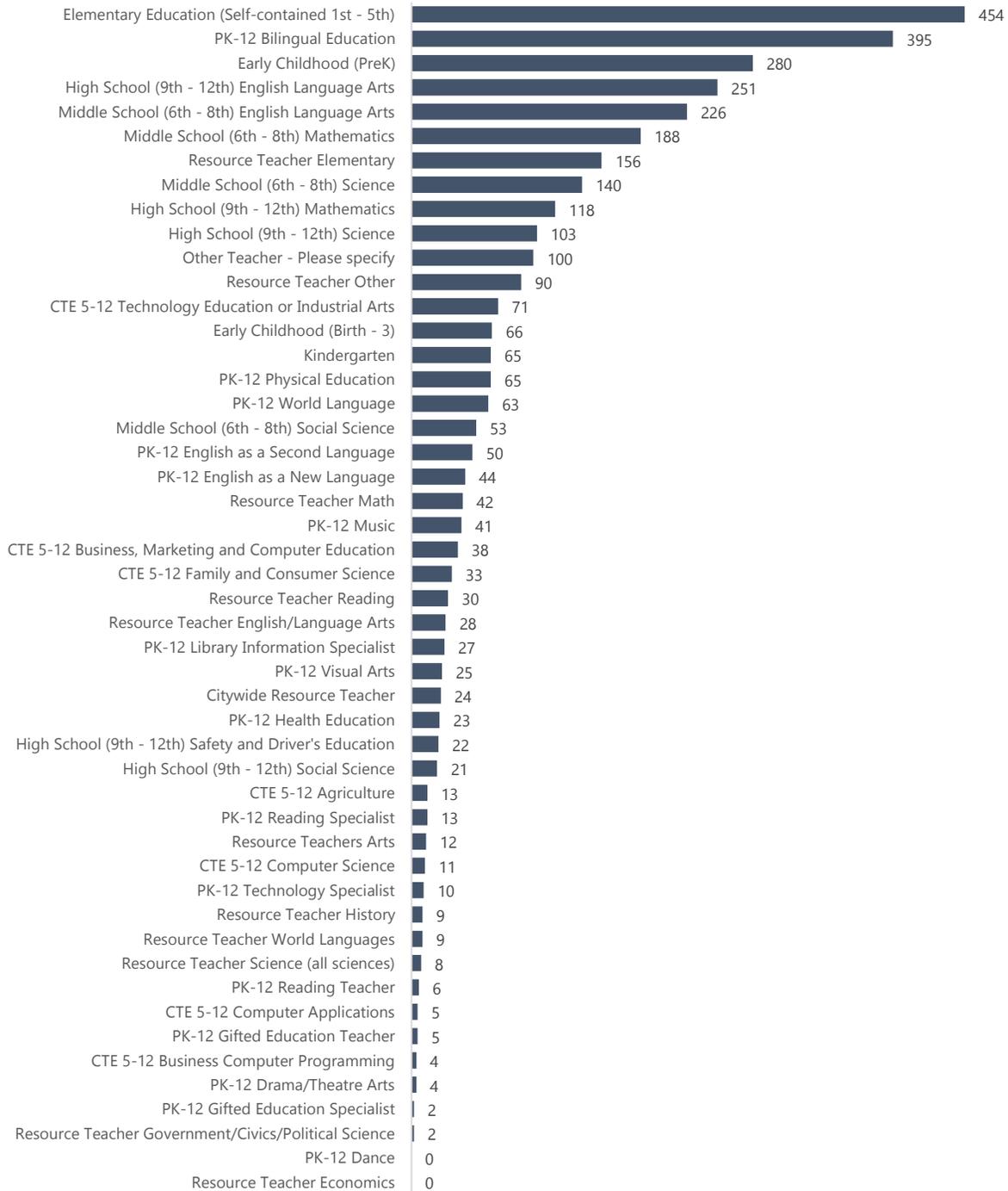
Paraprofessionals - An individual who works at the direction of a teacher of record. Includes positions that require at least a ELS-PARA, or paraprofessional approval.

## Appendix C: All Classroom Teaching Positions Remedied

Figure 74 shows all the positions that were indicated as “remedied by alternative measures” by education leaders. This is an extension of figure 7 on page 9 which only shows the top 10 positions.

**Figure 74: Teaching Positions Remedied by Alternative Measures**

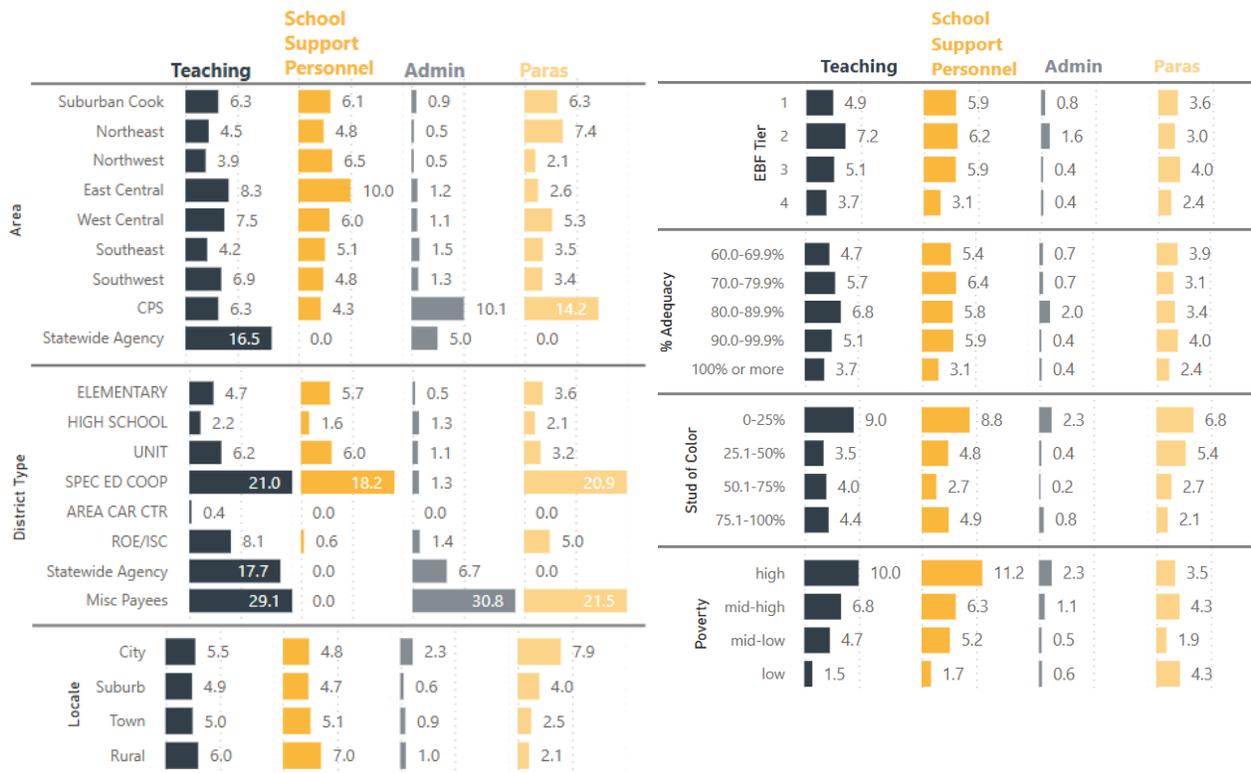
454 elementary education teaching positions were remedied through alternative measures.



### Appendix D: Vacancy Rates Broken Out by Role, Area, District Type, Locale, EBF Tier, District Percent Students of Color and Poverty Level.

Utilizing data within the Illinois Report Card and National Center for Education Statistics, education entities were grouped by EBF Tier, district percent low-income, district percent students of color, geographics area (locale), type of agency and area of the state. The following charts show the averaged vacancy rate by broad role and these major subgroups. The data were analyzed by staff at Goshen Consulting for further consideration.

**Figure 75: Vacancy Rate by Role, Area, Type of Agency, Locale, EBF Tier, Students of Color and Poverty Level**



## Appendix E: Severity, Quality and Quantity Broken out by Role, District Locale, Type of Agency, and Area

Utilizing data within the Illinois Report Card and National Center for Education Statistics, education entities were grouped by geographics area (locale), type of agency and area of the state. The following charts show the detailed breakdown of key items by broad role and these major subgroups.

**Figure 76: Percentage of Leaders Who Indicated Minor, Serious or Very Serious Problems with Educator Shortages by Role, Area, Type and Locale**

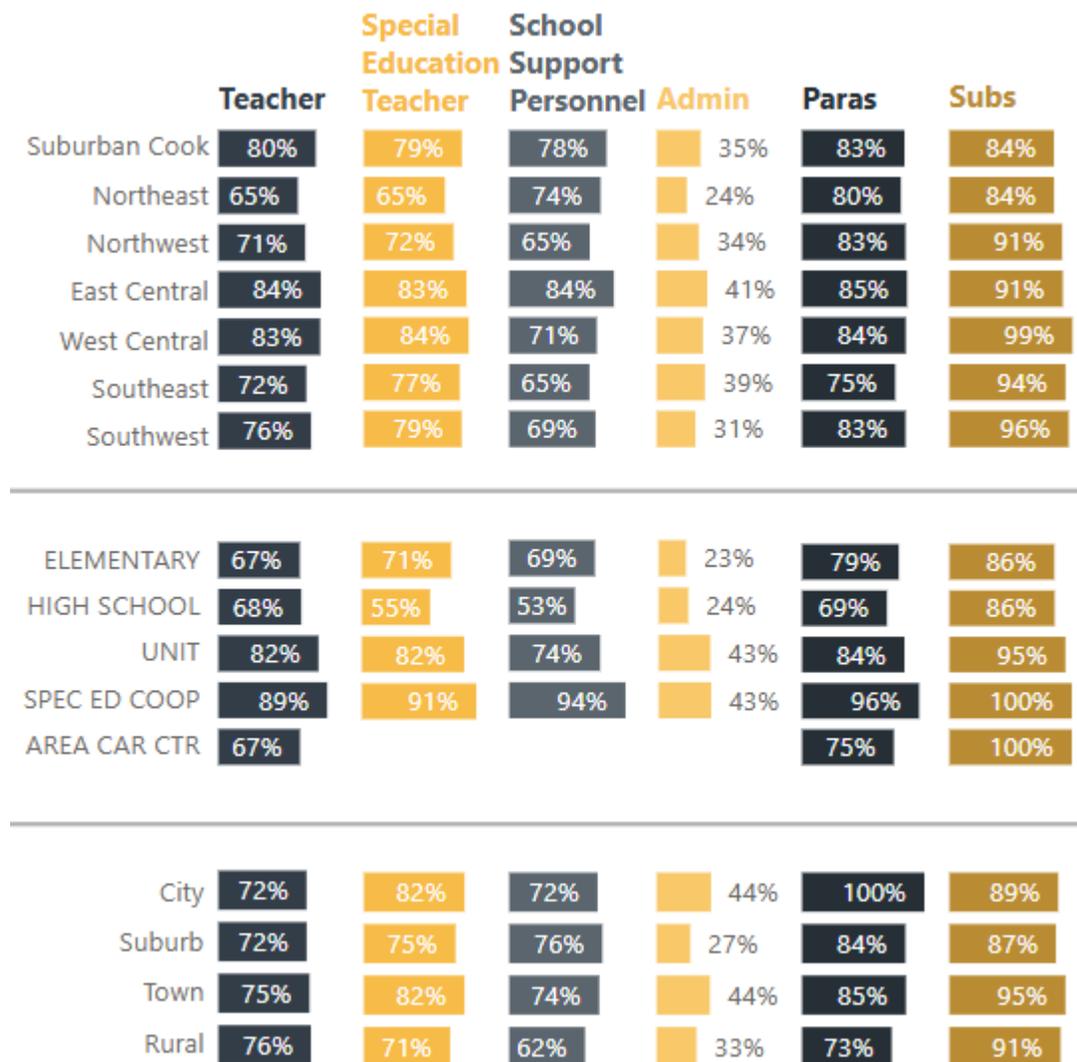


Figure 77: Percentage of Leaders Who Reported Less Than 50% of Applicants Were Qualified by Role, Area, Type and Locale

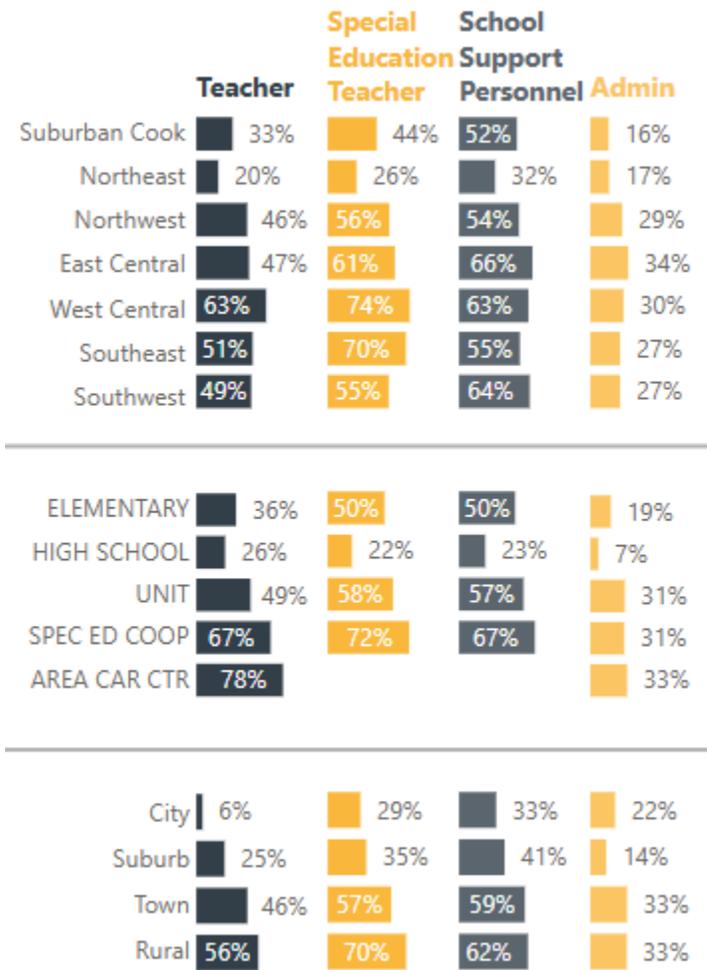
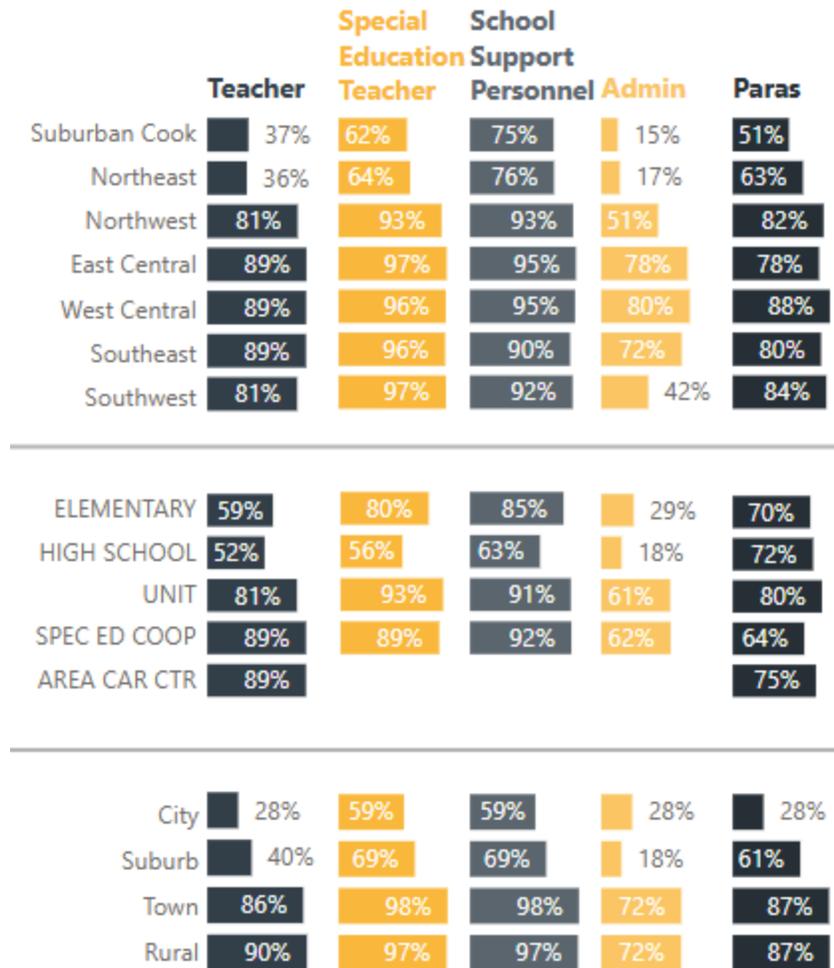


Figure 78: Percentage of Leaders Who Reported None or Very Few Applicants by Role, Area, Type and Locale



## Appendix F: Leaders' Comments Grouped by Sub-Theme

### LEADERS' TOP 3 CAUSES FOR SHORTAGES

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt “What are the top 3 specific issues your district faces with CAUSES for educator shortages?” Among the 694 leaders who responded, 1,770 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 8 broad themes with 43 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the sub-themes.

**Table 8: Sub-Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to CAUSES for Educator Shortages**

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
<b>Limited Applicants</b>	General lack of qualified applicants	247	36%
	Decreased enrollment in teacher preparation programs	81	12%
	Lack of qualified applicants related to certification	77	11%
	Lack of flexibility with certification	68	10%
	Decrease in education graduates	11	2%
<b>Issues Related to Salary/Benefits</b>	Inadequate compensation	191	28%
	Better compensation in a neighboring Illinois district	74	11%
	Budget or lack of funding	48	7%
	Better compensation in larger school districts	41	6%
	Better compensation in another profession	31	4%
	Poor benefits	27	4%
	Better compensation in private sector	9	1%
Better compensation at a district in a nearby state	6	1%	
<b>Poor Working Conditions</b>	Poor community perceptions of the education profession	85	12%
	Increased responsibilities and workload	59	9%
	Student behavior issues	54	8%
	Employee burnout from working conditions	50	7%
	Increased class sizes	14	2%
	Reduced course offerings	14	2%
	Lack of professional development	9	1%
	Unable to provide special services to students	7	1%
	Increasing Mandates	6	1%
	Increased desire to work from home	5	1%
	Decreased Student Achievement	3	0%
	Contract or union limitations	2	0%
	Poor leadership approaches	2	0%
<b>Certified Staff Shortages</b>	Difficulty recruiting specialized staff	90	13%
	Lack of special education teachers	37	5%
	Lack of bilingual teachers	25	4%
	General staff shortages	23	3%

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
	Lack of qualified teachers working in district	13	2%
	Lack of CTE certified teachers	10	1%
	Lack of substitute teachers	10	1%
	Lack of paraprofessionals	6	1%
<b>Geographic Specific Issues</b>	Rural location of district	137	20%
	High living expenses or housing	13	2%
	Low attendance or enrollment	8	1%
	Undesirable community	3	0%
<b>Difficulty with recruitment or retention</b>	Retirement system issues	96	14%
	Difficulty retaining	23	3%
	Resignations	14	2%
	Staff retiring	9	1%
	High turnover rate	4	1%
<b>Other</b>		1	0%
<b>No Shortages</b>		27	4%

*LEADERS' TOP 3 IMPACTS OF SHORTAGES*

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt “What are the top 3 specific issues your district faces with SEVERITY for educator shortages?” Among the 665 leaders who responded, 1,466 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 8 broad themes with 43 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes.

**Table 9: Sub-Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to Impacts of Educator Shortages**

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
<b>Limited Applicants</b>	General lack of qualified applicants	277	40%
	Lack of qualified applicants related to certification	35	5%
	Lack of flexibility with certification	28	4%
	Decreased enrollment in teacher preparation programs	12	2%
	Decrease in education graduates	4	1%
<b>Issues Related to Salary/Benefits</b>	Inadequate compensation	54	8%
	Better compensation in a neighboring Illinois district	24	3%
	Budget or lack of funding	24	3%
	Better compensation in another profession	8	1%
	Better compensation in larger school districts	6	1%
	Poor benefits	5	1%
	Better compensation in private sector	2	0%
Better compensation at a district in a nearby state	1	0%	
<b>Poor Working Conditions</b>	Increased responsibilities and workload	68	10%
	Reduced course offerings	61	9%
	Employee burnout from working conditions	56	8%
	Unable to provide special services to students	49	7%
	Increased class sizes	47	7%
	Student behavior issues	25	4%
	Decreased Student Achievement	20	3%
	Poor community perceptions of the education profession	10	1%
	Increasing Mandates	9	1%
	Contract or union limitations	5	1%
	Lack of professional development	3	0%
	Poor leadership approaches	1	0%
	Increased desire to work from home	0	0%
<b>Certified Staff Shortages</b>	Lack of special education teachers	120	17%
	General staff shortages	101	15%
	Lack of qualified teachers working in district	72	10%
	Difficulty recruiting specialized staff	70	10%
	Lack of substitute teachers	40	6%
Lack of bilingual teachers	39	6%	

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
	Lack of paraprofessionals	22	3%
	Lack of CTE certified teachers	9	1%
<b>Geographic Specific Issues</b>	Rural location of district	27	4%
	High living expenses or housing	5	1%
	Low attendance or enrollment	2	0%
	Undesirable community	1	0%
<b>Difficulty with recruitment or retention</b>	Difficulty retaining	27	4%
	Retirement system issues	15	2%
	High turnover rate	13	2%
	Resignations	11	2%
	Staff retiring	3	0%
<b>Other</b>		4	1%
<b>No Shortages</b>		51	7%

*LEADERS' TOP 3 STRATEGIES TO MITIGATE SHORTAGES*

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt “What are the top 3 specific strategies your district has implemented to alleviate the challenge educator shortages?” Among the 688 leaders who responded, 1,680 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 9 broad themes with 52 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes.

**Table 10: Sub-Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to CURRENT STRATEGIES to Alleviate Educator Shortages**

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
<b>Improve Recruitment</b>	Aggressive recruiting	131	19%
	Grow Your Own Programs	117	17%
	Connect with colleges	81	12%
	Hiring incentives	80	12%
	Advertise more	65	9%
	Get student teachers	64	9%
	Active recruitment from colleges & job fairs	38	6%
	Hire earlier	29	4%
	Recruit International Teachers	16	2%
	Connect with businesses	14	2%
	Use CCPE as pathway to graduation	5	1%
More Applicants	2	0%	
<b>Provide Incentives</b>	Adjust pay scale	223	32%
	Provide incentives for continuing education	150	22%
	Provide additional benefits	51	7%
	Provide bonuses	42	6%
	Recognize all years of previous teaching experience	15	2%
	Student loan forgiveness	9	1%
	Provide additional sick leave	7	1%
Offset Living Expenses	0	0%	
<b>Support for Staff</b>	Provide mentoring	75	11%
	Build substitute roster	49	7%
	Provide professional development	30	4%
	Utilize retired educators	13	2%
	Add Instructional coaches	10	1%
	Increase number of paraprofessionals	10	1%
	Add staff	5	1%
	Support student social/emotional learning	1	0%
Improve teacher prep	0	0%	
<b>Improve Culture/Climate</b>	Provide a supportive culture & climate	85	12%
	Retain staff	13	2%
	Better community perception	13	2%
	Celebrate successes	11	2%

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
	Administration more present	5	1%
	Better security/facilities	2	0%
<b>State/Federal Support</b>	Support flexibility with certification	42	6%
	Support alternate certification	34	5%
	Use grants to increase funds	24	3%
	Improve retirement system	6	1%
	Less mandates	0	0%
	Provide additional funding	0	0%
	Unique creative solutions	0	0%
	Utilize alternative Schools	0	0%
<b>Reduce Needed Staff</b>	Combine duties & responsibilities	33	5%
	Share teachers & staff	12	2%
	Creative staffing/scheduling	6	1%
	Utilize virtual/remote options	4	1%
	Utilize contracted services	2	0%
<b>Reduce Responsibilities</b>	Decrease class sizes	15	2%
	Administration taking on additional duties	6	1%
	Decrease responsibilities	5	1%
	Decrease number of students enrolled	4	1%
<b>Other</b>		0	0%
<b>None</b>		26	4%

*LEADERS TOP 3 DESIRED SOLUTIONS TO COMBAT SHORTAGES*

Education leaders responded to the open-ended prompt “What are the top 3 solutions to educator shortages that you wish were available to your district and are not currently available?” Among the 634 leaders who responded, 1,183 comments were thematically coded. The comments were grouped into 9 broad themes with 52 sub-themes. The table below highlights findings among the broad themes.

**Table 11: Sub-Themes from Education Leaders Comments Related to DESIRED SOLUTIONS Leaders Wished Were Available**

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
<b>Improve Recruitment</b>	More Applicants	81	13%
	Connect with colleges	53	8%
	Hiring incentives	37	6%
	Get student teachers	23	4%
	Grow Your Own Programs	20	3%
	Aggressive recruiting	7	1%
	Advertise more	7	1%
	Use CCPE as pathway to graduation	5	1%
	Active recruitment from colleges & job fairs	4	1%
	Recruit International Teachers	4	1%
	Hire earlier	1	0%
Connect with businesses	0	0%	
<b>Provide Incentives</b>	Adjust pay scale	145	23%
	Student loan forgiveness	37	6%
	Provide additional benefits	29	5%
	Provide incentives for continuing education	24	4%
	Offset Living Expenses	11	2%
	Provide bonuses	2	0%
	Recognize all years of previous teaching experience	1	0%
Provide additional sick leave	0	0%	
<b>Support for Staff</b>	Add staff	17	3%
	Utilize retired educators	11	2%
	Provide mentoring	9	1%
	Build substitute roster	9	1%
	Provide professional development	6	1%
	Improve teacher prep	5	1%
	Add Instructional coaches	4	1%
	Increase number of paraprofessionals	2	0%
Support student social/emotional learning	2	0%	
<b>Improve Culture/Climate</b>	Better community perception	30	5%
	Provide a supportive culture & climate	10	2%
	Retain staff	7	1%
	Better security/facilities	6	1%

Broad Theme	Sub-Theme	N	%
	Administration more present	3	0%
	Celebrate successes	0	0%
<b>State/Federal Support</b>	Support alternate certification	121	19%
	Provide additional funding	113	18%
	Improve retirement system	113	18%
	Support flexibility with certification	80	13%
	Less mandates	41	6%
	Use grants to increase funds	23	4%
	Unique creative solutions	8	1%
	Utilize alternative Schools	5	1%
<b>Reduce Needed Staff</b>	Creative staffing/scheduling	7	1%
	Share teachers & staff	4	1%
	Utilize contracted services	3	0%
	Administration taking on additional duties	1	0%
	Combine duties & responsibilities	0	0%
<b>Reduce Responsibilities</b>	Decrease responsibilities	12	2%
	Decrease class sizes	2	0%
	Decrease number of students enrolled	0	0%
	Administration taking on additional duties	0	0%
<b>Other</b>		1	0%
<b>None</b>		37	6%

## Appendix G: Detailed Likert Item Charts

The following charts so more detailed data related to the Likert style items in the Educator Shortage survey that were presented as binary donut charts in the preceding sections.

### TEACHERS

#### Shortage Severity



■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems

#### Qualified Applicants



■ None or very few (0 - 25%) ■ Some (26 - 50%) ■ Most (51 - 74%) ■ Nearly all or all (75 - 100%)

#### Quantity of Applicants



■ None ■ Very few (<5) ■ Some (6 - 10) ■ Sufficient (11 - 20) ■ More than sufficient (20+)

#### Change in Need Compared to Last Year



■ Decreased substantially ■ Decreased minimally ■ Remained the same ■ Increased minimally ■ Increased substantially

#### Anticipated Need for Next Year



■ Decrease substantially. ■ Decrease minimally. ■ Remain the same. ■ Increase minimally. ■ Increase substantially.

SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS

Shortage Severity



■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems

Qualified Applicants



■ None or very few (0 - 25%) ■ Some (26 - 50%) ■ Most (51 - 74%) ■ Nearly all or all (75 - 100%)

Quantity of Applicants



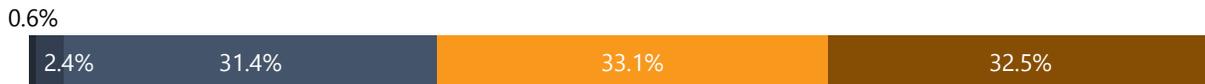
■ None ■ Very few (<5) ■ Some (6 - 10) ■ Sufficient (11 - 20) ■ More than sufficient (20+)

Change in Need Compared to Last Year



■ Decreased substantially ■ Decreased minimally ■ Remained the same ■ Increased minimally ■ Increased substantially

Anticipated Need for Next Year



■ Decrease substantially. ■ Decrease minimally. ■ Remain the same. ■ Increase minimally. ■ Increase substantially.

SCHOOL SUPPORT PERSONNEL

Shortage Severity



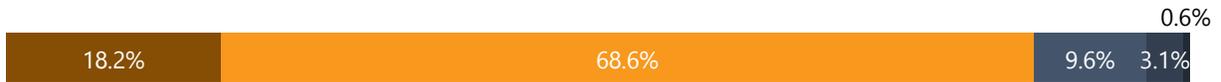
■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems

Qualified Applicants



■ None or very few (0 - 25%) ■ Some (26 - 50%) ■ Most (51 - 74%) ■ Nearly all or all (75 - 100%)

Quantity of Applicants



■ None ■ Very few (<5) ■ Some (6 - 10) ■ Sufficient (11 - 20) ■ More than sufficient (20+)

Change in Need Compared to Last Year



■ Decreased substantially ■ Decreased minimally ■ Remained the same ■ Increased minimally ■ Increased substantially

Anticipated Need for Next Year



■ Decrease substantially. ■ Decrease minimally. ■ Remain the same. ■ Increase minimally. ■ Increase substantially.

ADMINISTRATORS

Shortage Severity



■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems

Qualified Applicants



■ None or very few (0 - 25%) ■ Some (26 - 50%) ■ Most (51 - 74%) ■ Nearly all or all (75 - 100%)

Quantity of Applicants



■ None ■ Very few (<5) ■ Some (6 - 10) ■ Sufficient (11 - 20) ■ More than sufficient (20+)

Change in Need Compared to Last Year



■ Decreased substantially ■ Decreased minimally ■ Remained the same ■ Increased minimally ■ Increased substantially

Anticipated Need for Next Year



■ Decrease substantially. ■ Decrease minimally. ■ Remain the same. ■ Increase minimally. ■ Increase substantially.

PARAPROFESSIONALS

Shortage Severity



■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems

Quantity of Applicants



■ None ■ Very few (<5) ■ Some (6 - 10) ■ Sufficient (11 - 20) ■ More than sufficient (20+)

Change in Need Compared to Last Year



■ Decreased substantially ■ Decreased minimally ■ Remained the same ■ Increased minimally ■ Increased substantially

Anticipated Need for Next Year



■ Decrease substantially. ■ Decrease minimally. ■ Remain the same. ■ Increase minimally. ■ Increase substantially.

SUBSTITUTES

Shortage Severity



■ Very serious problems ■ Serious problems ■ Minor problems ■ Little problems ■ No problems