

Illinois Association of Regional School Superintendents

Teacher Shortage Survey & Lessons Learned

June 28, 2024 *Midwestern Legislative Conference; Education and Workforce Development*

The Council of State Governments, Midwestern Office



What was the genesis of the survey?



Our offices are the first line of engagement.

- Our offices serve as resources for principals and superintendents when it comes to filling positions. We are who they ask when they can't find an appropriately certified position.
- Our organization felt it seemed logical that the 2011 changes in licensure would lead to fewer appropriately certified teachers. In seeking “highly qualified,” it inherently becomes more difficult to be appropriately certified.
- In an effort to elevate those who received degrees in Illinois, it became more difficult to embrace reciprocity.

Key takeaways from our 2023 survey



Download the report for deeper details

- 91% of those responding see the teacher shortage as an issue. Even with efforts made to solve the issue, school leaders continue to see this as a problem.
- Consistently more than 80% of school leaders report that they have too few applicants to ensure a competitive hiring process.
- Burnout, Compensation, and Increases in Responsibility were the top 3 reasons identified by school leaders for the teacher shortage.

Impactful short term efforts being made to help solve the problem



- Increasing access to certified teachers through an expansion of reciprocity with other states.
- There has been an expansion of the number of days our retired teachers are able to work without a penalty to their pension.
- Increased flexibility, providing for provisional and emergency credentials that allow educators to teach outside their area of certification.

Impactful & sustainable efforts we need to consider to help solve the problem



- Alternative pathways for candidates that already hold a college degree or career experience (CTE)
- Efficient and economical pathways for staff who've served as paraprofessionals
- Engage in a more comprehensive conversation about creating sustainable pathways for our current high schools students to pursue careers in education. Embracing learning through experiencing and applying those competency based learning experiences across other contents for credit.
- Consider that every “good” idea needs to be understood more deeply before becoming policy. Don't build unintentional barriers within the system. Capitalize on the knowledge of experts within the system.
 - TRS and grow your own
 - Robust teacher evaluation but content tests
 - New curricular mandates expected within an already finite time frame

Additional considerations



- In all careers, lifetime earning potential matters when deciding what profession to pursue and whether to sustain within the profession. In career and post career compensation are a relevant variable in addressing this challenge.
- Supply side matters, we have to have enough candidates to meet the demand and there has to be a large enough volume to ensure a competitive environment.
- The economic model of “work” has changed and public education has to figure out how to compete in this new dynamic.
- Uncertainty can’t keep us from building new systems that are more responsive to this rapidly changing educational environment.

Should you be asking similar questions?



It never hurts to be curious...

- Make sure you have the right people asking the right questions.
 - Nearly 80% response rate
- The rate of change is significant, it's better to plan for a circumstance than to respond to a circumstance.
- Make sure the report is consumable by multiple audiences.
- Share the information transparently and honestly.
- Be willing to build new systems given new conditions.

We need to better understand what is meant by “working conditions.”



“Working Conditions” were identified as one of the primary disincentives to remain in public education.

- Determine the definition of working conditions***
- Determine if we can have a positive influence on the conditions***
- Determine who has the power to influence the conditions***
- Execute to improve the conditions***

Teacher Shortage Survey Resources

<https://iarss.org/2023-educator-shortage/>

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Conversations

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