

## 2015-2016 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary

The 2015-2016 Teacher Vacancy Survey was conducted in the fall of 2015 by the Nebraska Department of Education. This is the second year that the nonpublic school systems and Educational Service Units (ESU) have been included in the collection of data. For purposes of this report, the ESU data has been combined with the public school data (district) while the nonpublic data (system) is combined with them into the total counts. This summary shows the totals, for the separate district and system counts, see the full report.

The survey of all 454 Nebraska districts/systems (245 PK-12 public school districts, 17 ESUs, and 192 nonpublic school systems) in the state requested the following information:

- The number of district/systems that could not find fully qualified teachers\* to fill teacher positions;
- The endorsement areas of the positions that were unfilled\*\*;
- The reasons why the applicant pool was not sufficient; and
- What the district/system did to address the unfilled positions.

The overall response rate (87%) was up from last year with a 15% increase in response from the nonpublic systems. The response rate for districts (96%) was comparable to past years, while the nonpublic systems rate was (74%). Based upon these response rates, the completed surveys are regionally representative of PK-12 districts and systems in the state. The endorsement areas with the largest number of unfilled positions were:

Endorsement Area	Unfilled**		Vacant***	Endorsement Area	Unfilled**		Vacant***
	%	#	#		%	#	#
Special Education	40	24%	9	Mathematics	6	3%	
Speech-Language Pathology	17	10%	1	Industrial Technology/Skilled and Technical Science	5	3%	1
Family and Consumer Science	13	8%	1	Agriculture Education	5	3%	1
Science	13	8%		School Library	5	3%	
Early Childhood Education	11	6%		Music/Instrumental/Vocal	4	2%	
School Counselor	11	6%		Health and/or Physical Education	4	2%	
School Psychologist	10	6%		Art	3	2%	
Language Arts	8	5%		Business Marketing or Information Technology (BMIT)	2	1%	
World Languages	6	3%					

\*Bilingual and English as a Second Language/English Language Learners are traditional shortage areas for federal programs so are recognized by Nebraska as well.

A total of 3046 positions were reported as available in 2015-2016. A total 172 positions were reported as unfilled, 13 of which were left vacant. Of those 172 positions, 62 positions (36%) were in district/systems with less than 500 students and 76 positions (45%) were in district/systems with over 2500 students.

For the purposes of this survey:

**\*Fully qualified teacher** is an individual who holds an Initial, Standard, or Professional, Nebraska teaching certificate with the appropriate endorsement for the assigned class, and the professional attributes sought by the school district.

**\*\*Unfilled** refers to a position that was filled by someone other than a fully qualified teacher **or** a position that was left vacant.

**\*\*\*Vacant** refers to a position that was not filled at all – i.e. in Special Education of the 40 unfilled positions, 31 have teachers and 9 were left vacant.

## 2015-2016 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary Continued

There were 87 district/systems (22% of the completed surveys) with unfilled positions at the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year.

Region	District/Systems with Unfilled** Positions		Number of Unfilled** Positions		Vacant***	
	No.	% of Total	No.	% of Total	No.	% Unfilled for Region
Central	19	22%	29	17%	3	10%
Metro	12	14%	52	30%	1	2%
Northeast	20	23%	28	16%		
Southeast	15	17%	40	23%	7	18%
West Central	8	9%	8	5%		
Western	13	15%	15	9%	2	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>13</b>	

District/systems were allowed to identify multiple reasons for unfilled\*\* positions. The top reasons were: “No fully qualified applicants based on endorsement area” (38%); “No applicants” (21%); and “Preferred a specific non-fully qualified applicant over fully-qualified applicant(s)” (13%). Nonpublic systems had a larger portion of “Qualified applicant refused offer for position” than did the districts (19% compared to 7%). While the districts had a larger number of “No applicants” than the nonpublic systems (23% compared to 6%).

The survey offered solutions for district/systems to choose from when identifying how it solved the dilemma of unfilled\*\* positions. The three most reported solutions were: “Hired a person who holds a provisional or temporary certificate” (24%); “Hired a person who holds a provisional endorsement in the content area” (22%); and “Hired a person who holds a transitional certificate” (15%). Districts had a larger number of “Hired a person who holds a provisional or temporary certificate” (26% compared to 9%). While the nonpublic systems had a larger portion of “Hired a person who holds a transitional certificate” (27% compared to 14%).

Of the 19 endorsement shortage areas, four have been designated shortage areas each year for the last 14 years; Language Arts, Science, Special Education, and World Language. In addition to these, five others have been designated shortage areas in, at least, each of the last five years; Family and Consumer Science, Mathematics, Music, School Psychologist, and Speech Language Pathology.

The full report can be found at <http://www.education.ne.gov/EducatorPrep/TopPages/TeShortage.html#Info>. Tables included in the Report Summary combine public and nonpublic system responses. The full report provides an analysis of public and nonpublic as separate tables as well.

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