



NEWS RELEASE

For additional information, please contact David Jespersen by phone (402-471-4537) or email (david.jespersen@nebraska.gov)

JANUARY 18, 2023

COMMITMENT TO TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The Nebraska Department of Education is committed to preparing and supporting quality teachers and other professional educators as a vital component of the NDE mission. As the nation recovers from the effects of the pandemic this is a critical time to support schools and the teachers that will lead Nebraska's students into the future.

Every year the NDE conducts the Teacher Vacancy Survey to determine Nebraska teacher shortages and what the district did to address those shortages. Shortage areas in Nebraska are reported to the US Department of Education for the next academic year and are used for federal loan forgiveness.

This year 402 public and nonpublic school districts and Educational Service Units responded to the survey, up from 324 in 2021. The number of unfilled positions, positions that were either left vacant or filled by someone other than a fully qualified teacher, was up significantly from 482 in 2021 to 768 positions in 2022. The number of positions left vacant also rose from 68 in 2021 to 208 in 2022.

The NDE is working to expand the recruitment of quality teachers and help districts retain the outstanding teachers they already have. In April the NDE developed the Educator Pipeline Grant to address immediate shortages, provide funding and develop partnerships to address long term educator shortages. A total of 15 grants worth almost \$1.6 million were awarded across the state. Work within those grants began immediately and are continuing to address the issue.

The NDE has also invested an additional \$40,000 in the past year into Educators Rising. Educators Rising is an organization that helps make sure teachers have the experience and skills they need to be ready for the classroom. Starting with high school students, the program provides hands-on teaching experience, helps sustain student interest in the profession, and helps students cultivate the skills they need to be successful educators.

Along with those recent investments, the NDE has many programs aimed at recruitment, preparation, and retention of quality teachers. The Attracting Excellence to Teaching Program (AETP) provides forgivable loans to eligible students who are enrolled in teacher education programs at eligible Nebraska institutions. The NDE also has programs aimed at helping new teachers enter Career and Technical Education programs, websites dedicated to helping pair new teachers with opportunities at schools around the state, and programs dedicated to helping blind and visually impaired teachers.

The NDE is also working on Rule revisions that would help more students complete the necessary coursework to obtain teaching certificates and provide more alternate pathways into the teaching profession.

For current teachers, the NDE hosts a number of summits, workshops, conferences, and professional development

opportunities to grow skills and open new career opportunities.

The NDE is committed to finding and developing new opportunities for new and veteran teachers to help support them in the vital work they do to teach Nebraska's children.

You can learn more about the programs NDE offers at education.ne.gov and the full Teacher Vacancy Survey is available at <https://www.education.ne.gov/educatorprep/teacher-shortage-survey/>.

####

David Jespersen
Public Information Officer, Nebraska Department of Education
402-471-4537
david.jespersen@nebraska.gov
@NDE_News