

2009-2010 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary

The 2009-2010 Teacher Vacancy Survey was conducted in the fall of 2009 by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln College of Education and Human Sciences in cooperation with the Nebraska Department of Education. The survey of all 253 K-12 school districts in the state requested the following information:

- The number of districts that could not find fully qualified teachers (defined as individuals who hold a teaching certificate and the appropriate endorsement for the classes assigned to teach);
- The number of teacher positions for which districts could not find fully qualified teachers at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year;
- The endorsement areas of the unfilled positions;
- The reasons why the individuals in the applicant pool were not sufficient/appropriate for the positions; and
- What the district did to address the unfilled positions.

The response rate was lower than in previous years, but was still high (88.5%) with 224 school districts completing and returning the survey. Based upon community college region boundaries, a variation of 0.63% (average of all six regions) indicates the returned surveys are regionally representative of K-12 school districts in the state.

A total of 65 unfilled positions were reported: 31 positions (54%) were in school districts with less than 500 students and 43 positions (74%) were in districts with less than 1,000 students. The endorsement areas with the largest number of unfilled positions were:

| | | | |
|---------------------------|-------|-----------------------------|------|
| Special Education | 26.2% | Industrial Technology | 4.6% |
| Natural Science | 12.3% | Mathematics | 4.6% |
| Foreign Language | 10.8% | Art | 3.1% |
| Business Education | 7.7% | Language Arts | 1.7% |
| ESL/ELL | 6.2% | Family and Consumer Science | 1.7% |
| Speech-Language Pathology | 4.6% | | |

There were 50 school districts (19.8% of the returned surveys) with unfilled positions at the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year.

| Region | Districts with Unfilled Positions | | Unfilled Positions | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| Panhandle | 5 | 10.0% | 6 | 9.2% |
| West Central | 12 | 24.0% | 16 | 24.6% |
| Northeast | 12 | 24.0% | 14 | 21.5% |
| Central | 12 | 24.0% | 16 | 24.6% |
| Southeast | 5 | 10.0% | 7 | 10.8% |
| Omaha Metro | 4 | 8.0% | 6 | 9.2% |
| Total | 50 | 100.0% | 65 | 100.0% |

Schools districts were allowed to identify multiple reasons for unfilled positions. The top four reasons were: 1) no applicants with the proper endorsement (49.2% of the responses); 2) no quality applicants (40.0%); 3) qualified applicant refused offer for the position (29.2%); and 4) no applicants with regular certificate (12.3%).

The survey offered solutions for school districts to choose from when identifying how it solved the dilemma of unfilled positions. The three most reported solutions were:

- 1) Hired a person who was fully certified but not endorsed in the required area;
- 2) Hired a person with a provisional endorsement; and
- 3) Hired a person with a provisional certificate.