

2017-2018 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary

The Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) conducted the 2017-2018 Teacher Vacancy Survey in the fall of 2017. This is the third 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 471 Nebraska districts/systems (245 PK-12 public school districts, 17 ESUs, and 209 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 (70%) was down from last year based, we believe, on moving the survey to a different area of the NDE Portal. The response rate for districts (88%) was down slightly, while the nonpublic systems rate (48%) was down significantly. Based upon these response rates, the completed surveys are still 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	16.32%	42.00	14.50	Industrial Technology/Skilled and Technical Science	3.50%	9.00	1.00
Language Arts	8.08%	20.80	2.00	Family and Consumer Science	3.43%	8.83	
Speech-Language Pathology	7.38%	19.00	4.00	School Library	3.11%	8.00	
School Counselor	4.86%	12.50	2.00	Agriculture Education	2.72%	7.00	
Science	4.86%	12.50	1.00	Mathematics	2.53%	6.50	
World Languages	4.76%	12.25	1.75	Health and/or Physical Education	1.94%	5.00	1.00
School Psychologist	4.04%	10.40	5.00	Art	0.97%	2.50	0.87
BMIT	3.69%	9.50	1.00	ESL/ELL [†]	2.72%	7.00	
Music/Instrumental/ Vocal	3.69%	9.50	2.50	Bilingual [†]	0.78%	2.00	
Early Childhood Education	3.59%	9.25					

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

Districts/Systems reported 2,667 positions as available in 2017-2018, 258 positions as unfilled with fully qualified personnel, and 41 left vacant. Of those 258 positions, 97 positions (38%) were in district/systems with less than 500 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 55 unfilled positions, 39 have teachers and 16 were left vacant.

2017-2018 Teacher Vacancy Survey Report Summary Continued

There were 101 district/systems (31% of the returned surveys) with unfilled positions at the beginning of the 2017-18 school year.

Region	Districts/Systems with Unfilled** Positions		Number of Unfilled** Positions		Vacant***	
	No. of Districts/Systems	%	No. of Unfilled	%	No. Vacant	% of Unfilled for Region
Central	26	26%	56	22%	9	16%
Metro	16	16%	54	21%	5	9%
Northeast	19	19%	27	10%	5	19%
Southeast	18	18%	69	27%	16	22%
West Central	13	12%	30	11%	3	10%
Western	9	9%	22	9%	3	14%
Total	101	100%	258	100%	41	

District/systems were allowed to identify multiple reasons for unfilled** positions. The top reasons were “No Applicants” (19%) and “Preferred a specific non-fully qualified applicant over fully-qualified applicant(s)” (23%). Nonpublic systems had a larger portion of “No applicants who were fully qualified* based on endorsement area” than did the districts (35% compared to 17%).

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 permit” (26%); “Hired a person who holds a provisional endorsement in the content area” (16%); and “Position was not filled” (16%). Nonpublic systems had a larger portion of solutions of “Hired a person not appropriately endorsed in the content area” than did the districts (26% compared to 10%).

Of the 19 endorsement shortage areas, five have been designated shortage areas each year for the last 15 years: Language Arts, Science, Special Education, Speech Language Pathology, and World Language. In addition to these, eleven others have been designated shortage areas in each of the last five years: Agricultural Education, Art, BMIT, Early Childhood Education, Family and Consumer Science, Health and/or Physical Education, Industrial Technology, Math, School Counselor, School Library, and School Psychologist.

Find the full report at <https://www.education.ne.gov/educatorprep/teacher-shortage-survey/>. Tables included in the Report Summary combine public and nonpublic system responses. The full report provides an analysis of public and nonpublic in separate tables as well.

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 55 unfilled positions, 39 have teachers and 16 were left vacant.