

# UNDERSTANDING CHRONIC TEACHER SHORTAGES IN ILLINOIS

CAUSES OF SHORTAGES AND REACTIONS TO POLICY  
2022-2023 SCHOOL YEAR

## SUMMARY

Survey responses from superintendents in districts with and without chronically severe teacher shortages were compared to understand how their experiences on the causes of shortages and the impacts of policies on shortages vary. Districts with chronically severe shortages (i.e., Chronic districts) experienced high levels of teacher shortages over multiple years, whereas districts without (i.e., Other districts) may have seen less severe shortages, sporadic shortages, or no shortages at all. Both types of districts identified common causes and effective policies for recruitment and retention. However, districts with chronically severe shortages emphasized out-of-state compensation as a barrier. Furthermore, fewer of these districts reported that partnerships with universities for student-teacher placements led to better recruitment and retention, revealing key distinctions in their perspectives compared to all other districts. Findings shed light on the challenges and strategies related to teacher shortages and how they vary across districts statewide.

## KEY FINDINGS

Superintendents in districts with and without chronically severe shortages reported that **staff collegiality and leadership** are not significant recruitment and retention issues. Superintendents in both types of districts view **incentivizing additional endorsements** as a positive strategy. However, differences emerge as fewer districts with chronically severe shortages reported that proactive university partnerships positively impacted recruitment and retention, potentially indicating a gap in such collaborations. Additionally, districts with chronically severe shortages emphasize **educators seeking better compensation** across state lines as a key barrier, underscoring the importance of competitive salaries.

This study looked at how superintendents viewed the causes of and solutions to the educator shortage problem. Surprisingly, superintendents in districts with and without chronically severe shortages had very similar views. The figure below is one example of this similarity.

Districts with and without chronically severe shortages did see some things differently. The figure below reveals a difference in the perception of university partnerships for student-teacher placements across such districts. Such partnerships might be a potential lever for reducing shortages.



**Recruitment and Retention Could be Positively Impacted If ISBE/Legislature Made It Easier to Learn About How to Become a Teacher**



**My District Proactively Worked with Universities to Place Student Teachers in Our District, Positively Impacting Recruitment and Retention**

## EXPLORE FURTHER

While Illinois has taken proactive steps to address shortages, compensation remains a critical concern. Additionally, improving the supply side of the educator pipeline, scholarships, and incentives for additional endorsements are valued strategies. Explore our full report to gain deeper insights and uncover potential solutions for addressing teacher shortages in your region.

Read more here: [go.illinois.edu/WP3](https://go.illinois.edu/WP3).

