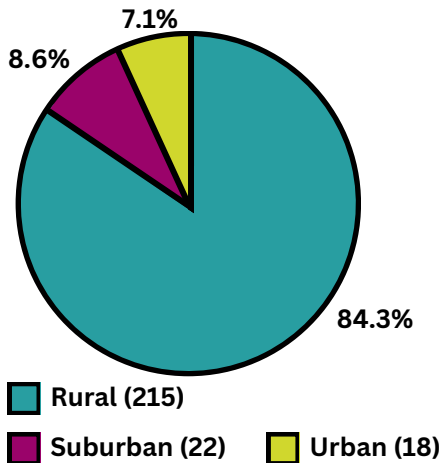


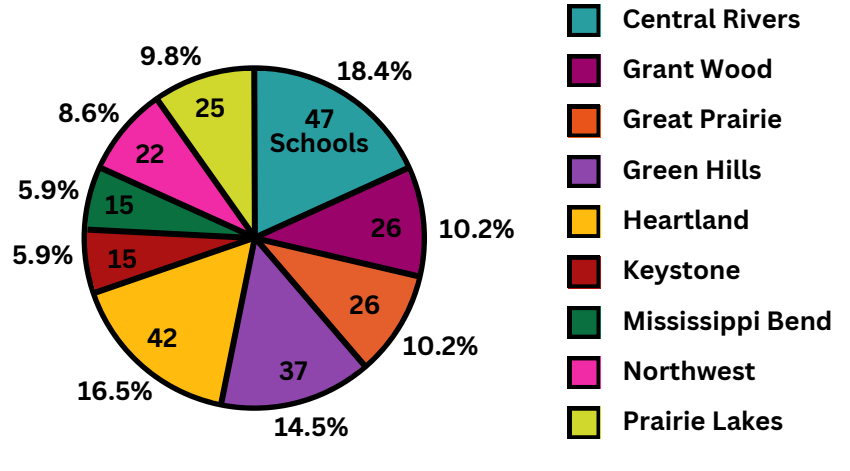
IOWA SCHOOLS 2023-24 STAFF SHORTAGES

SAI surveyed all Iowa superintendents to get a pulse on the number of openings in Iowa at the start of the 2023-24 school year as well as the number of positions filled by not “fully qualified” staff. There were 255 school districts that responded (78%).

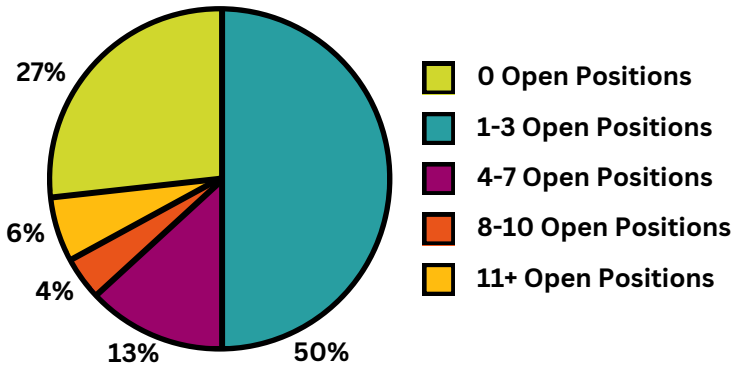
School District Type



Responding School Districts by AEA



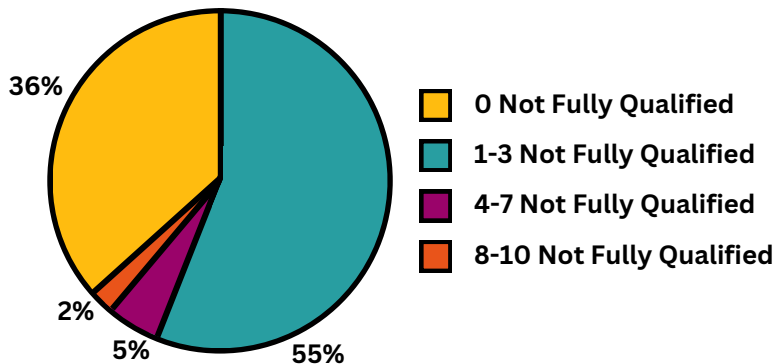
Number of open teaching positions at the beginning of the 2023-24 school year



Total number of open teaching positions at the beginning 2023-24
1,012.5*

*Rural - 536, Suburban - 46.5, Urban - 430

Positions filled with not “fully qualified” teachers



Total number of positions filled with not “fully qualified” teachers
822*

*Rural - 674, Suburban - 30, Urban - 118

Total number of students impacted is projected by respondents to be **37,447**
Range of open and/or not appropriately filled support staff positions reported is **0 - 130**
with a total number open and/or not appropriately filled of **1,498**.

The staff shortage data indicates several recurring issues and concerns within the education system. Schools are facing challenges in finding and retaining qualified teachers, leading to vacancies and understaffed classrooms. The shortage not only affects teaching positions but also extends to support staff, bus drivers, and substitute teachers. This situation puts a strain on the education system, as schools will continue to welcome students regardless of staffing difficulties. Additional comments on the survey identified the following themes.

The most common challenges faced by schools due to staffing shortages are:

- Difficulty finding qualified candidates for teaching positions. This is especially true for hard-to-fill positions such as special education, math, science, music, and English learners.
- Shortage of bus drivers and substitute teachers. This can lead to disruptions in transportation and instruction.
- Limited number of applicants for classified staff positions. This includes positions such as paraeducators, maintenance workers, and food service workers.

Other challenges that were mentioned in the comments include:

- Negative perception of the teaching profession, influenced by public criticism and the political environment.
- Difficulty being competitive with compensation plans in comparison to other industries, leading to challenges in attracting and retaining qualified staff.
- Having to move instructional coaches and other support staff back into the classroom.
- Not being able to offer all desired courses and programs due to staffing shortages.
- Having to rely on long-term substitutes and underqualified teachers.
- Increased workload for existing staff.
- Adverse impact on student learning.

The comments also suggest that the staffing shortages are getting worse and that they are a major concern for schools moving forward. Some potential solutions that were mentioned in the comments include:

- Increasing teacher salaries.
- Providing more mentoring and support for underqualified teachers.
- Working with the state to address the shortage of bus drivers and substitute teachers.

It is important to note that there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the staffing shortages. The best approach will vary depending on the specific needs of each school district. Overall, the data highlights the urgent need to address the teacher shortage issue by implementing measures that enhance the overall attractiveness and support of the teaching profession.