

Early Retirement Factors (Retire-Rehire) School District Survey

The attached results are a high-level summary of the survey responses received by the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP).

Background

Issue

During the 2014 Legislative Interim, the SCPP received [correspondence from stakeholders](#) asking the committee to study a particular early retirement provision and its potential impacts on substitute teachers. According to that correspondence, the provision in question may be at least partly contributing to a shortage of substitute teachers in Washington.

At the [November 18, 2014](#), meeting of the SCPP, staff presented a briefing on the early retirement provision (see agenda item six).

Survey

Following the November 18 meeting, the Executive Committee instructed staff to work with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) to poll all 295 of Washington's school districts for information about substitute teachers, and present the results at the SCPP meeting on [December 16, 2014](#).

Over the next few days, staff worked with OSPI to draft neutral questions intended to determine if a shortage of substitutes exists, and whether any such shortage may be at least partly attributed to the early retirement provision. The survey was emailed to OSPI's human resources listserv on November 24, 2014.

Districts were asked to respond by December 3, 2014, but staff continued to accept responses as late as they were received. The last response was received on December 8, 2014.

Questions

The questions on the results worksheet have been slightly reworded in order to more accurately reflect the responses.

For reference, here are the original questions.

At the November 18, 2014, meeting of the Select Committee on Pension Policy (SCPP), the SCPP instructed staff to find statewide data related to substitute teacher fill rates, and present that data at the December 16 meeting. For more context on this issue, please see the [SCPP Website](#) (specifically agenda item six).

Any response would be helpful, but in order to make the material preparation deadlines, **we are asking for a response to the questions below by December 3.** We understand this is a very short turnaround time, and hope you will assist us. **Please email responses to: Aaron.Gutierrez@leg.wa.gov.**

For certificated substitute teachers:

1. Do you have a substitute teacher shortage?
 - a. If so, is it for certain grades or subjects?
2. What is the daily compensation rate for substitutes?
3. How many applicants have applied to substitute teach?
 - a. Of those, how many of them does your district consider viable (i.e. have successfully interviewed or met all of your district's criteria for hiring)?
 - b. If they are not viable, what are the most prevalent reasons why?
4. How many substitutes are needed in your district?
 - a. On an average day?
 - b. Over the course of an average school year?
5. What percentage of requests go unfilled in your district?
 - a. On an average day?
 - b. Over the course of an average school year?
6. Have these numbers increased or decreased over the last few years?
7. If the fill rate is less than 100%:
 - a. Have you identified the root cause(s)?
 - b. Do you have any suggested solutions that could help your district improve its fill rate?
8. What other types of substitute employees (e.g. substitute bus drivers, and classroom assistants) does your district employ? Please answer the above questions for each type of temporary employee.

Responses

Summary Methodology

Answers directly related to the Early Retirement Factors/retire-rehire rule in question will be highlighted on the Final Results Excel worksheet, on the [Publications page](#) of the SCPP website.

In the interest of getting this information to the public as quickly as possible, staff will not be following up with districts to clarify responses or obtain responses from districts that chose not to participate.

Some questions received responses that were more difficult to categorize and quantify. In the interest of getting the ERF-related responses before the committee in a timely manner, not all questions have been logged in the results worksheet.

Copies of the original district emails are available on request.

Interpretations and judgment calls needed to be made in order to categorize and summarize the responses. Others might categorize the data differently. In any conflict between the attached summary and the district's response, the district's response should be favored over the summary.

Unclear or unresponsive answers will be marked with a "U." Responses may be marked "U" for many reasons. For reference, here are four examples of responses that would be marked with a "U":

- ❖ The response did not answer the question.
- ❖ More than one person responded on behalf of the district, and the responses conflict.
- ❖ The question called for a headcount, but the response provided a percentage (with no clear numerator or denominator for reference).
- ❖ The question called for a yes/no answer, but the response said something like "sometimes" or "not on most days."

Pay: When ranges were provided, we cited the lowest number in the range.

Applicants: When ranges were provided, we cited the highest number in the range.

Percentage of Unfilled Requests: When ranges were provided, we cited the highest number in the range. We assumed any numbers provided for this question were percentages unless the context clearly showed otherwise.

Summary Highlights

Total responses	94
Total districts	93
Total ESDs	1
Total enrollment in reporting districts (2011)	451,860
Total statewide enrollment (2011)	1,043,365
Reporting districts as a percentage of total enrollment (rounded)	43%
Average enrollment in reporting districts (rounded)	4,859

Is there a shortage of substitutes in your district?	
Yes	84
No	1
Unclear/Unresponsive	9
Total	94

Is it harder to fill certain grades or subjects?	
Yes	33
No	54
Unclear/Unresponsive	7
Total	94

Did the district identify ERFs/Retire-Rehire as cause or potential solution?	
Yes	9
No	85
Unclear/Unresponsive	0
Total	94

Average full day base pay for reporting districts	
	\$119.84
Low	96.26
High	\$153.22

Has the shortage increased, decreased, or stayed the same?	
Increase	61
Decrease	3
Same	16
Unclear/Unresponsive	14
Total	94

Has your district identified a shortage in other job classes?	
Yes	53
No	21
Unclear/Unresponsive	20
Total	94

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