

The background of the slide is a collage of two images. The top-left portion shows a line of yellow school buses, with the number '32' visible on the front of the lead bus. The bottom-right portion shows a classroom interior with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. Several small, square tables with chairs are arranged in the room.

Superintendents Webcast

October 14, 2025



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Agenda

Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher, Commissioner of Education

Kentucky Department of Education Update

Jennifer Ginn, KDE Director of Communications

2025 Kentucky Educator Shortage Survey

Associate Commissioner Meredith Brewer, Ph.D., Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

Combo COVID-19/Flu A&B Testing Supplies, K-12 Public and Private Schools

Tiffany Hubbard, Medical Countermeasures Program Manager

Jennifer A. Broussard, COVID-19 Testing Project Manager

Kentucky Department for Public Health

Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker, Office of Teaching and Learning

Michelle Sircy, Ed.D., Program Coordinator for Comprehensive School Counseling, Office of Teaching and Learning

SAT, Accountability Release Update

Associate Commissioner Jennifer Stafford, Office of Assessment and Accountability

Questions and Answers

Important Dates

A collage of two images: the top left shows yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' and the number '32' visible; the bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, colorful balloons, and desks.

Welcome and Updates

Dr. Robbie Fletcher
Commissioner of Education



Spencer County Educator Michelle Gross Named 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year

- Michelle Gross, a mathematics teacher at Spencer County Middle School, was named the 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year during a ceremony in Frankfort on Oct. 7.
- Gross has 22 years of experience teaching math, including 20 years in Spencer County. She teaches 7th-grade math classes and a gifted and talented class called The Academy, where students pick a subject area to dig into deeper.
- Kara Byrn Dowdy, an English teacher and department chair at Mayfield High School (Mayfield Independent) with 21 years of experience in the classroom, was named the 2026 Kentucky High School Teacher of the Year Finalist.
- Melanie Howard, a dedicated special education moderate and severe disabilities (MSD) educator at Corbin Primary School (Corbin Independent) with 21 years of teaching experience, was named the 2026 Kentucky Teacher of the Year Elementary School Finalist.
- Congratulations to all of our [Teacher Achievement Award winners!](#)



From left, Melanie Howard, Michelle Gross and Kara Byrn Dowdy. Photo by Myles Young, Kentucky Department of Education, Oct. 7, 2025

Former Student KBE Member Honored with NASBE Distinguished Student Service Award

- The National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE) will present the Distinguished Student Service Award to Preston Graham, a former non-voting student member of the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE).
- NASBE created this award in 2023 to recognize the dedication and education policy impact of student representatives on state boards of education.
- Graham, a senior at Woodford County High School, served on the Kentucky state board from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. He still serves on the Commissioner's Student Advisory Council.
- Graham connected with students across Kentucky, bringing their voices and experiences to board meetings and even to the Kentucky General Assembly. During the 2025 legislative session, he gathered input from his peers on a bill limiting student cell phone use in schools and shared it with the KBE.



Two Kentucky Students Named 2025 U.S. Presidential Scholars

- Two Kentucky students are among 161 high school students named to the U.S. Presidential Scholars class of 2025 for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical education fields. They are:
 - Maya K. Davis, Paul Laurence Dunbar High School (Fayette County), and
 - Palmer M. Schmidt, The Craft Academy for Excellence in Science and Mathematics at Morehead State University.
- Of the 3.9 million students that graduated from high school this year, more than 6,400 candidates qualified for the award based on outstanding performance on the SAT or ACT exam, or nominations made by chief state school officers and partner recognition organizations.



***TWO KENTUCKY STUDENTS NAMED
2025 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS***

 Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

New Waiver Request Submission Process

- Several changes have been made to the waiver request process, 701 KAR 5:170 and 701 KAR 5:170E, as a result of [Senate Bill \(SB\) 207](#) from the 2025 regular legislative session.
- SB 207 provides a new process for requesting waivers from the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE). Local school boards may request waivers from the requirements of an administrative regulation promulgated by the KBE or from a statute over which the KBE has enforcement authority. Certain regulations cannot be waived, including any statute or regulation relating to health and safety, civil rights, compulsory attendance or anything required by federal law.
- The new regulations outline four major types of waiver requests – new applications, renewals, amendment applications and special education maximum class size waiver applications.
- District leaders can find more information and relevant waiver forms on the [KDE Kentucky Laws and Regulations webpage](#). All forms should be submitted to the [KDE waiver requests inbox](#).
- Forms must be complete when submitted, so double-check that all of the required information is provided. The statute states waiver requests will be considered during the next KBE meeting, but if they are submitted less than 45 days prior to the next meeting, the waiver request will automatically be recommended for denial. KDE staff members will work with districts to ensure requests submitted within this time window are still considered at a future meeting.

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KDE Updates

Jennifer Ginn

KDE Director of Communications



Competitive Grants from KDE

FY26 Read to Achieve (RTA) Grant

Grant applications due: Nov. 3, at 4 p.m. ET

Award Amount: \$70,000 per year, up to four years

Matching Funds Requirement: Yes

The purpose of the RTA grant is to help teachers and library media specialists improve the reading skills of struggling readers in kindergarten through grade 3 who read at low levels and need accelerated learning. Important Update: For this grant cycle, salary is once again an allowable expense.

FY26 CTE Innovation and Support Grant (CTEI)

Grant applications due: Nov. 20, at 4 p.m. ET

Award Amount: \$100,000

Matching Funds Requirement: No

The purpose of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Innovation and Support grant is to support innovation in new or emerging career fields. The school district must submit a separate application for each CTE school or CTE program in a comprehensive high school. Area Technology Centers (ATC) can submit an independent application.

Competitive Grants from KDE (2)

FY26 Supporting Postsecondary Achievement and Resources for Kentucky Students with Disabilities (SPARK) Grant

Grant applications due: Nov. 25, 4 p.m. ET

Award Amount: \$75,000 per awarded district

Matching Funds Requirement: No

KDE is issuing a Request for Application (RFA) for the KY Transition 360 SPARK: Supporting Postsecondary Achievement and Resources for Kentucky students with disabilities (SPARK). This initiative strengthens education by enhancing interagency collaboration, building strong family partnerships, supporting students and promoting the use of high-quality transition assessments to improve post-school outcomes for students with disabilities.

FY26 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Grant

Grant applications due: Jan. 20, 2026, at 4 p.m. ET

Award Amount: \$150,000 per year for up to 3 years.

Matching Funds Requirement: No

The 21st CCLC program offers academic, artistic and cultural enrichment opportunities for students attending high-poverty and low-performing schools, helping them meet challenging state academic standards through effective out-of-school programs that improve student achievement and social development.

Applicants are responsible for monitoring KDE's Competitive Grants webpage for amendments and updates to the posted RFAs and supporting materials. More information about grants can be found on the [KDE Competitive Grants webpage](#) or by emailing [Jennifer Bryant](#).



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

Applications Sought for Technology Standards and Assessment Review Committees

- KDE is accepting applications for the Technology Standards and Assessment Review Committee and Advisory Panels.
- KDE is seeking current K-12 classroom teachers to participate in this work. Applicants will meet in the fall of 2025 through the spring of 2026.
- Selected applicants will be asked to verify the willingness of their school or district to release them for work dates.
- This [Kentucky Academic Standards for Technology writing team application](#) will be posted for 30 days. Applications will be accepted through Oct. 22.
- Questions on this process can be emailed to standards@education.ky.gov.

Feedback Sought on Kentucky Academic Standards for Technology

- KDE is seeking feedback on the current *Kentucky Academic Standards for Technology*.
- Standards outline what students are expected to learn in each grade to successfully transition to the next level of learning.
- [Use this survey to provide feedback on the technology standards](#). Due to the amount of text within the survey, it is recommended that surveys be completed on a full-size computer or laptop screen. Participants are provided with the opportunity to give feedback on all standards or self-selected areas of interest.
- Feedback on the current technology standards will be collected through Oct. 22.
- Questions on this process can be directed to standards@education.ky.gov.



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2025 Kentucky Educator Shortage Survey

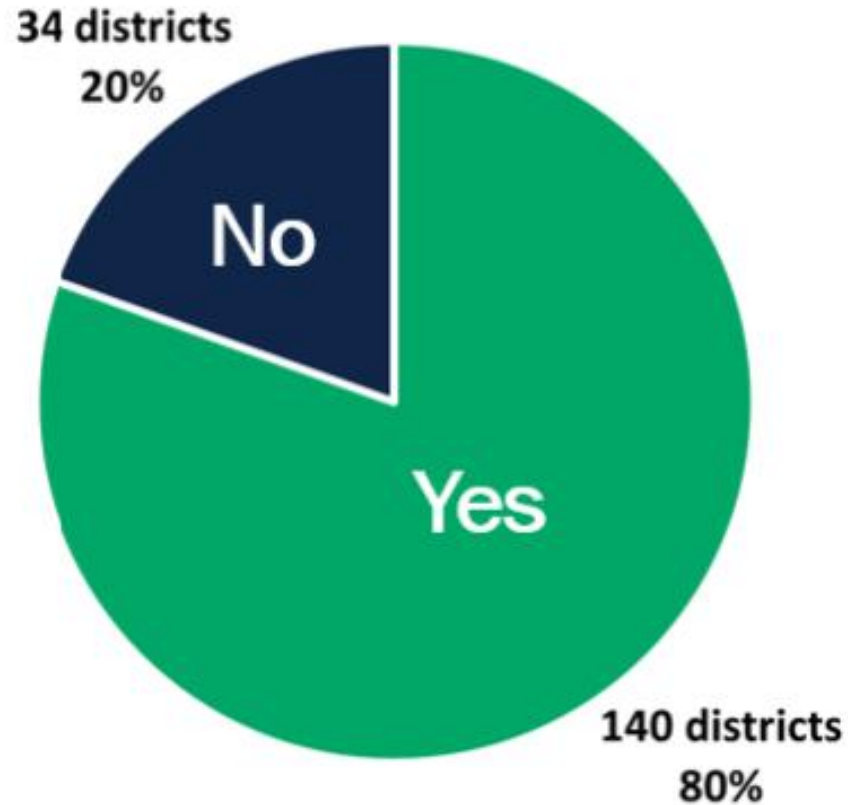
Associate Commissioner Meredith Brewer, Ph.D.
Office of Educator Licensure and Effectiveness

Purpose of Survey

- Designed to collect real-time data on educator vacancies across the state, along with information on district-level strategies for addressing staffing shortages
- Helps KDE to identify critical shortage areas and support the development of policies and initiatives to recruit and retain qualified school personnel



As of September 1, 2025, are there any unfilled certified, classified, or licensed positions in your district?

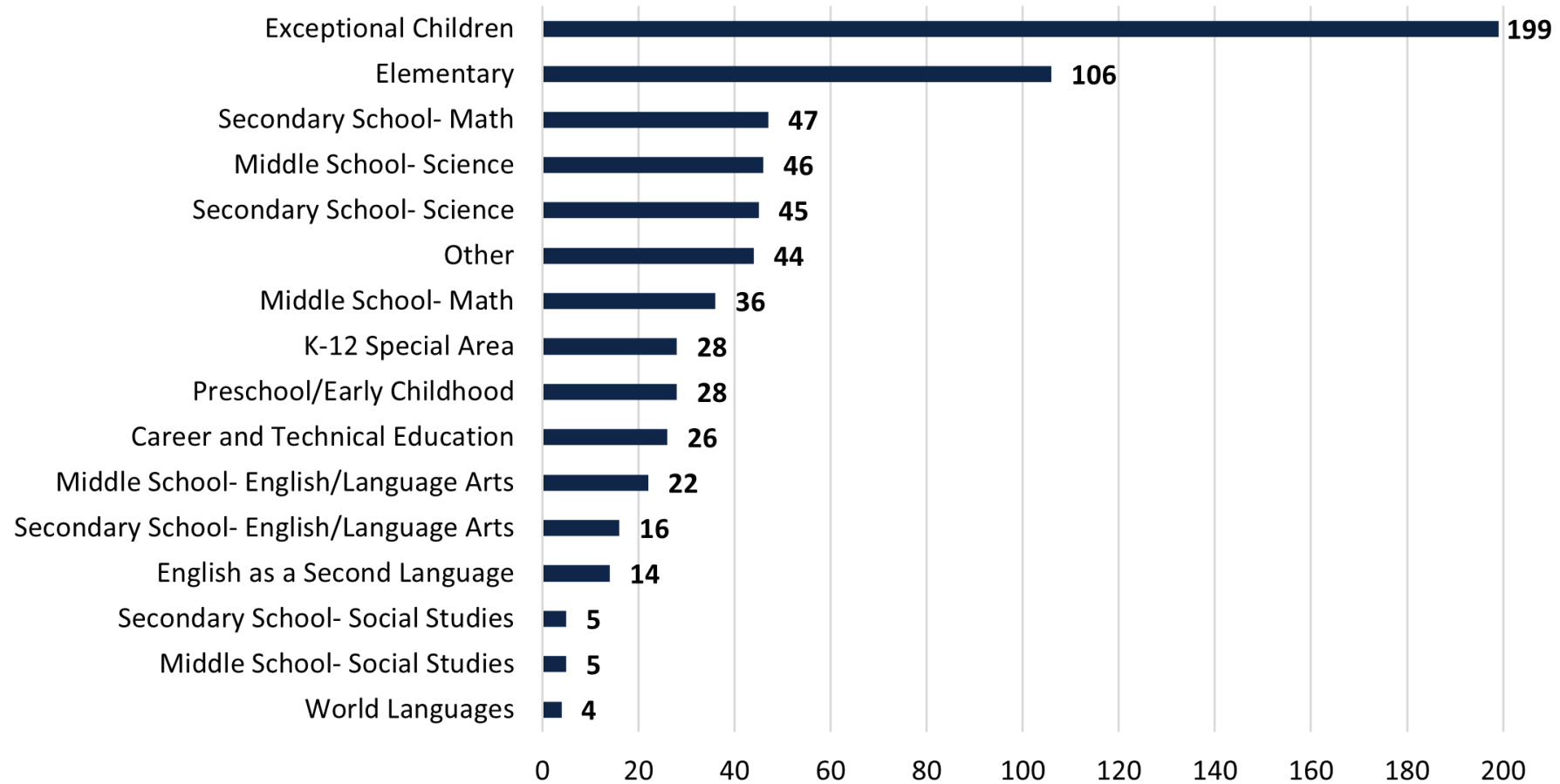


All 171 public school districts, along with the Kentucky School for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Deaf, and the Kentucky Tech System, completed the survey.

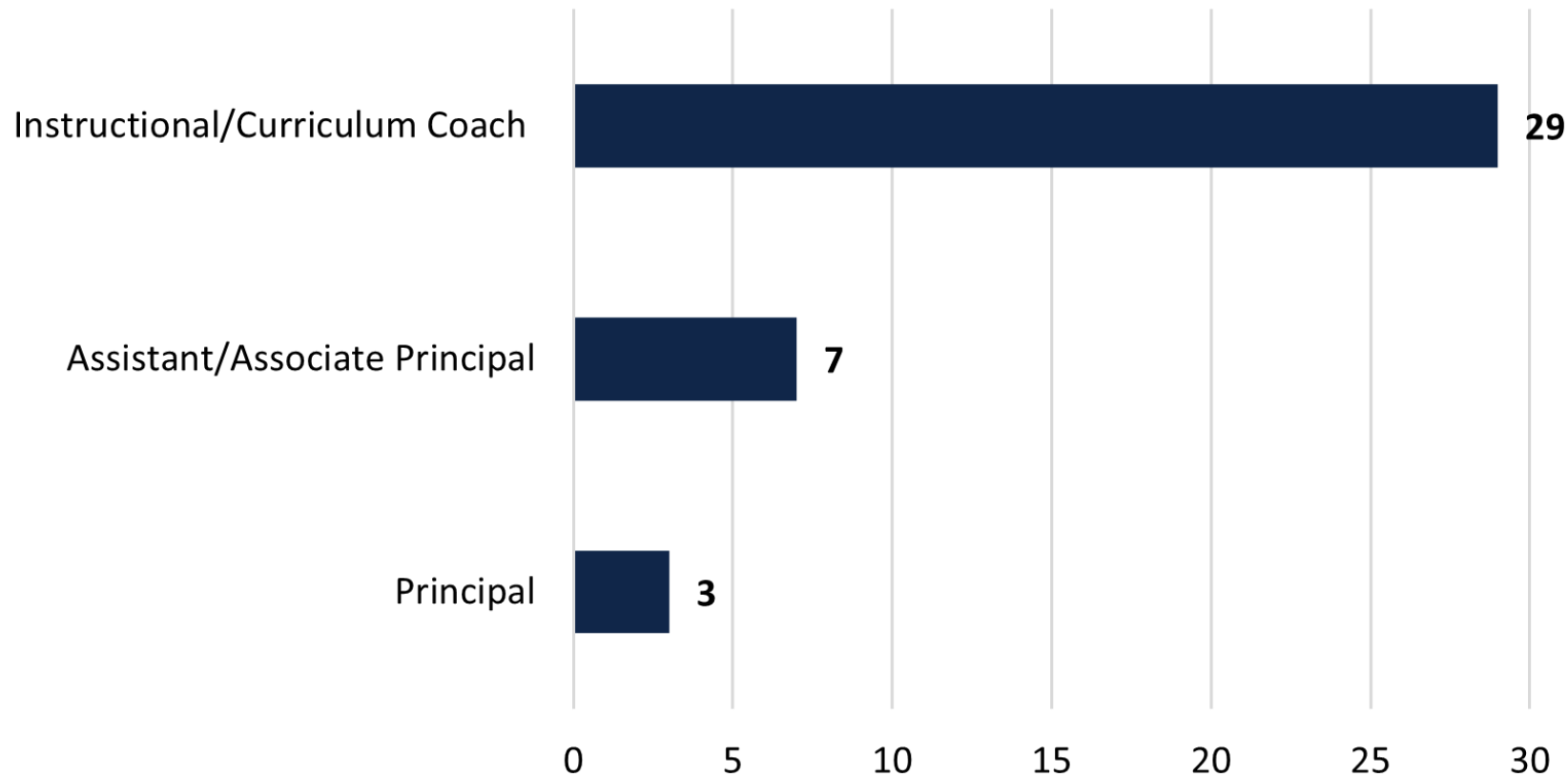
Reported Vacancies

Educator Role	Count
Certified Vacancies	671
Administrator Vacancies	39
Classified Vacancies	1,621
Licensed Educator Vacancies	90
Total Vacancies	2,421

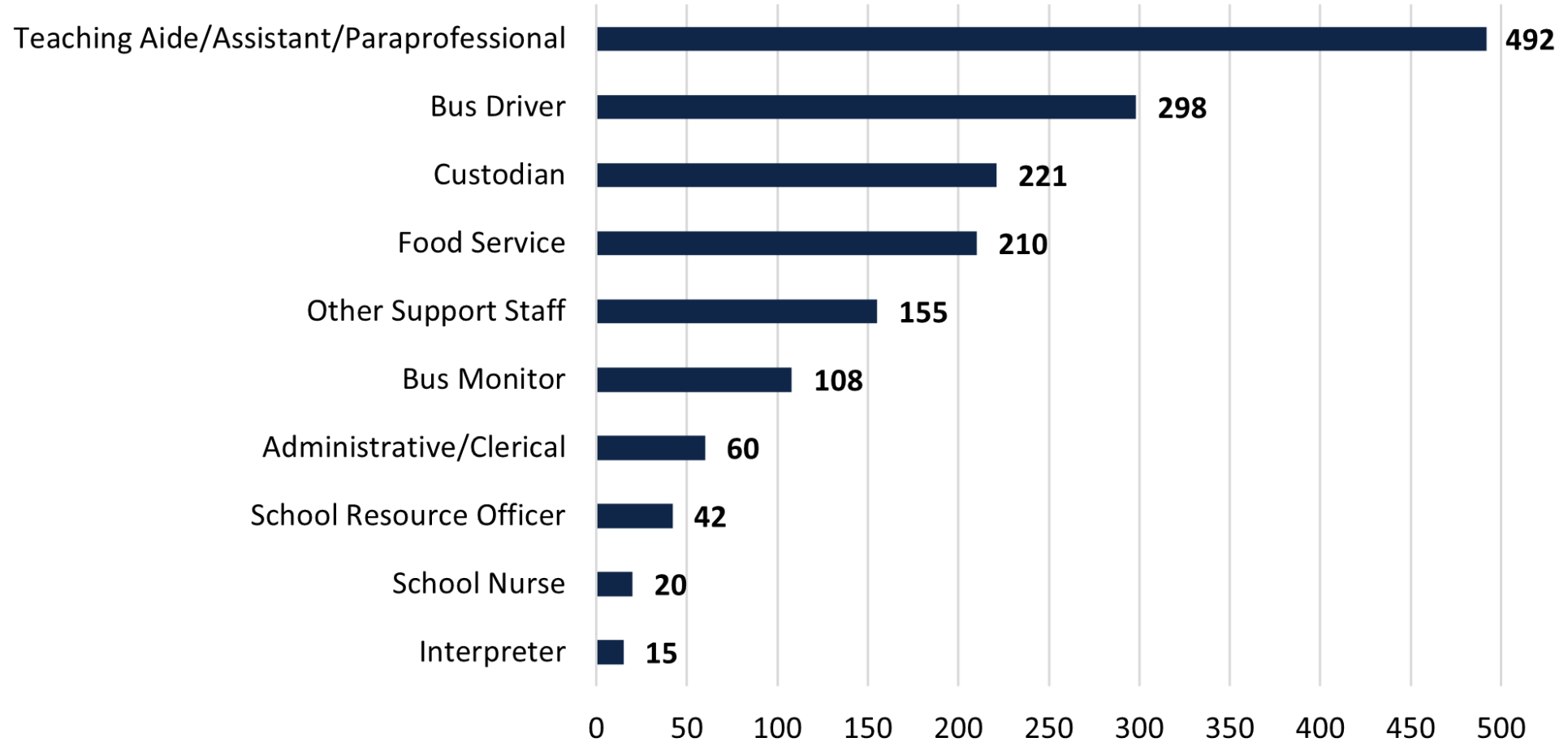
Certified Vacancies



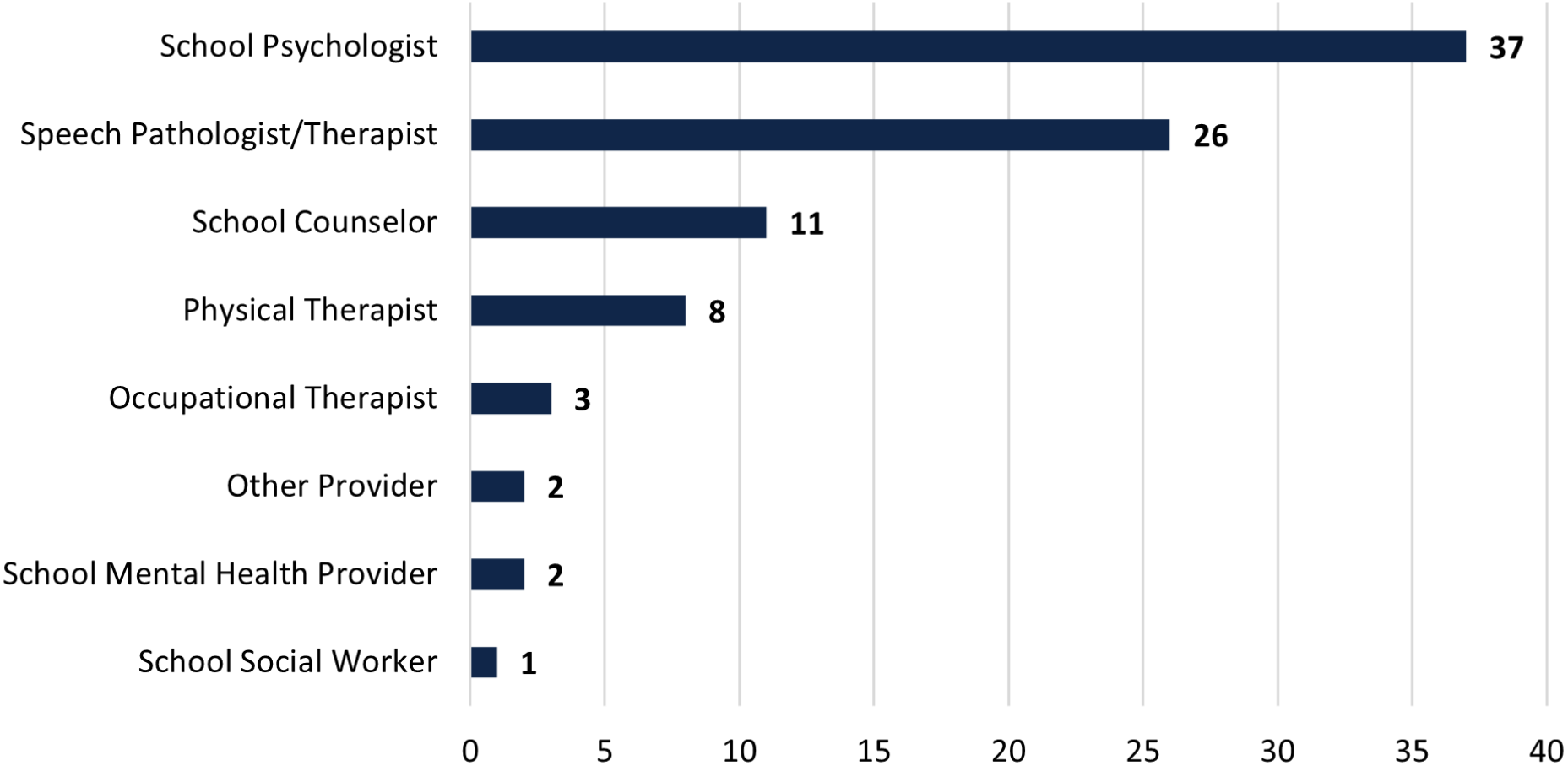
Administrator Vacancies



Classified Vacancies



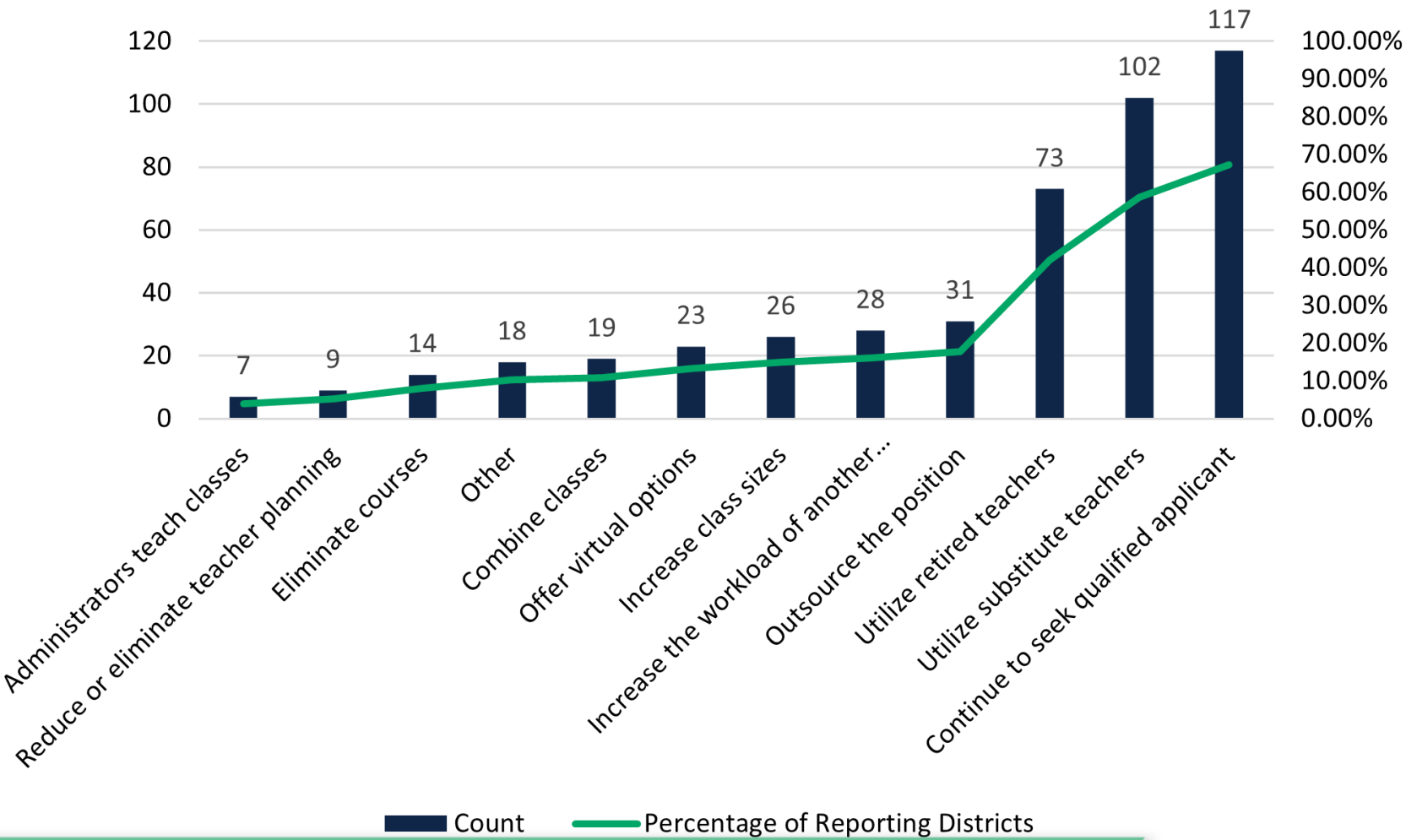
Licensed Educator Vacancies



Emergency Certifications

- If a school district's recruiting efforts are unsuccessful and the district is unable to secure a qualified teacher for a vacancy, the district can request an emergency certificate from the Education Professional Standards Board.
- This certificate can only be issued to individuals who meet the minimum requirements in 16 KAR 2:120. The use of an emergency certificate is strictly limited. It is only valid for the specific job and only for the current school term.
- As of September 1, 2025, EPSB has issued **401 emergency certificates** for the 2025-2026 school year.

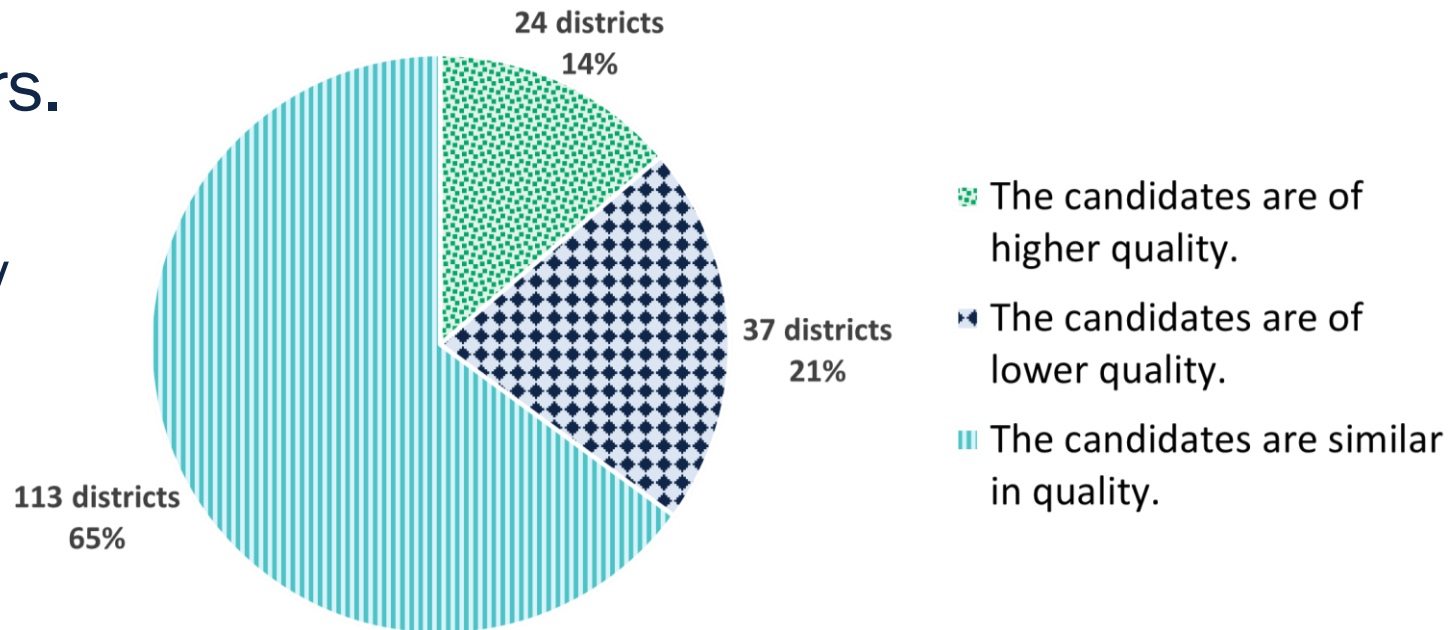
District Plans to Address Vacancies



Quality of Applicants

- 65% (113 districts) of districts indicated applicants were similar in quality to prior years.
- 21% (37 districts) indicated applicants were lower quality than previous years.

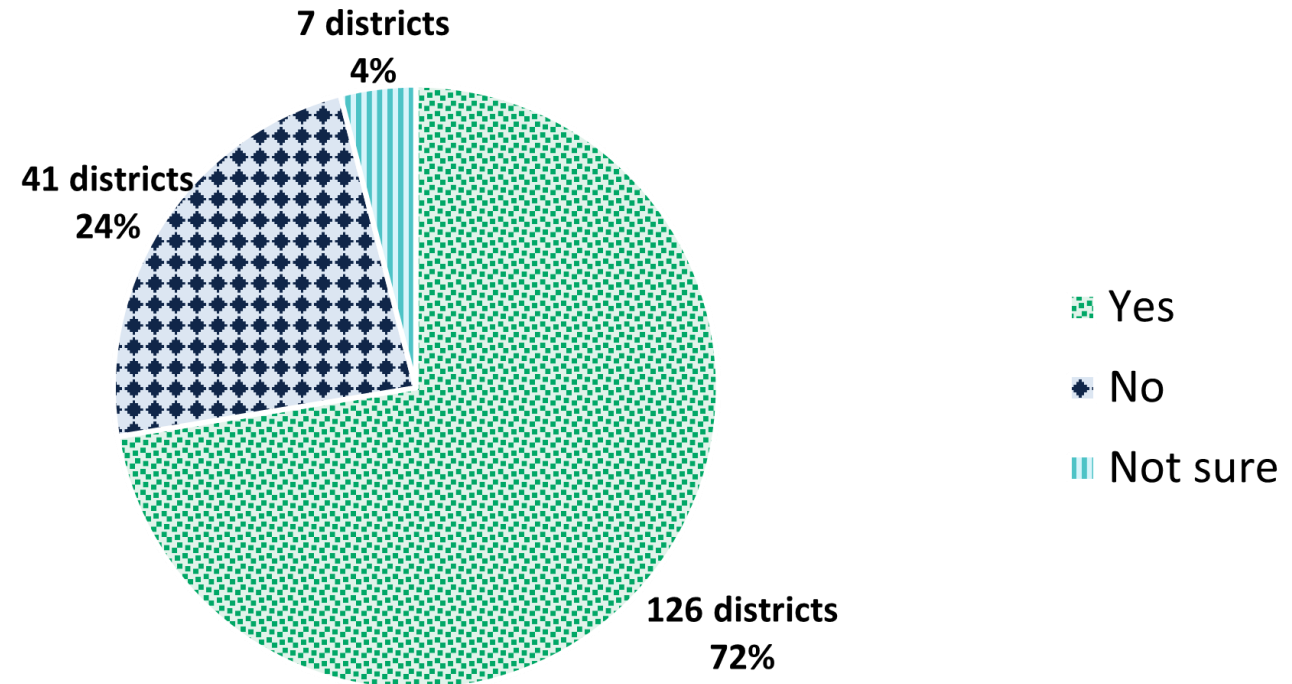
How do the quality of applicants this year (2025-2026) compare to previous years?



Decrease in Qualified Candidates

- A large majority of districts reported observing a decrease.
- In contrast, only 24% of districts reported seeing no decrease, with a small remaining percentage being unsure.

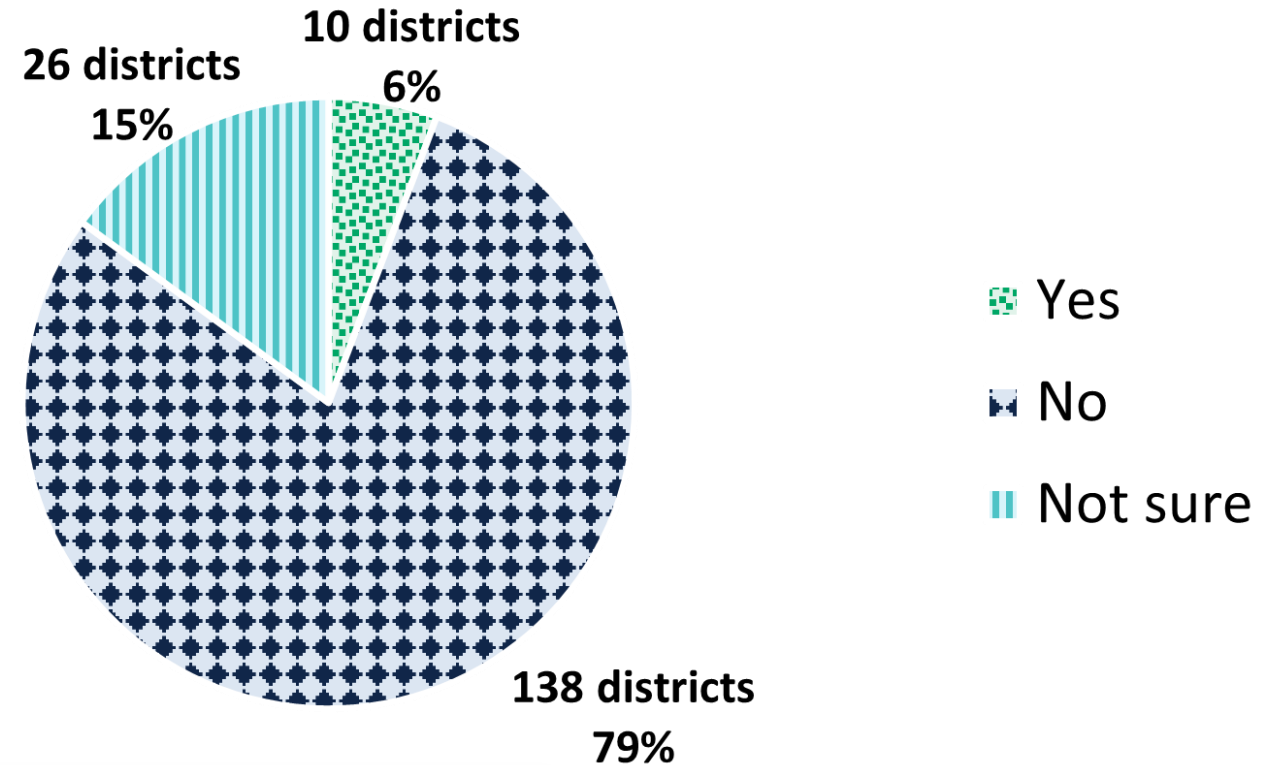
Over the past two years, have you observed a decrease in the number of qualified candidates applying for positions in your district?



Impact on Course Offerings

- An overwhelming majority of districts are not considering canceling classes as a response to staffing issues.
- Only a small fraction of districts indicated they would consider this measure, while the remaining were unsure.

Will you need to cancel any classes or programs this year (2025-2026) because of a shortage of qualified applicants?



Combo COVID-19/Flu A&B Testing Supplies K-12 Public and Private Schools

Tiffany Hubbard, MSN, APRN, FNP-C

Jennifer Broussard, M.C, M.A.Ed

October 14, 2025



Current Trends

Kentucky Respiratory Disease Dashboard

DPH-RSP-001 Last Updated On: 10/2/2025 9:47:08 AM



- Introduction
- All Conditions
- COVID-19
- Influenza
- RSV
- Influenza-like Illness
- Deaths
- Laboratory Reporting

- Condition
- COVID-19
- Influenza
- All Conditions
- Maps

Season

2024-2025

Condition

(Multiple values)

Region

(All)

Age Group

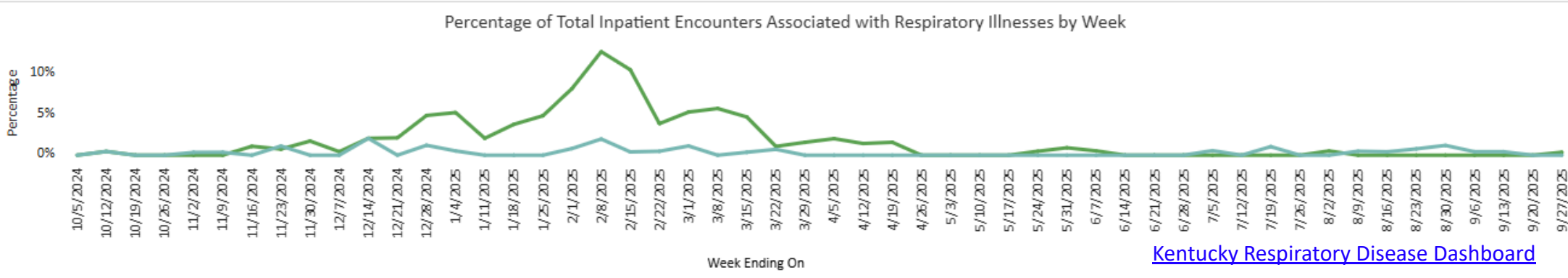
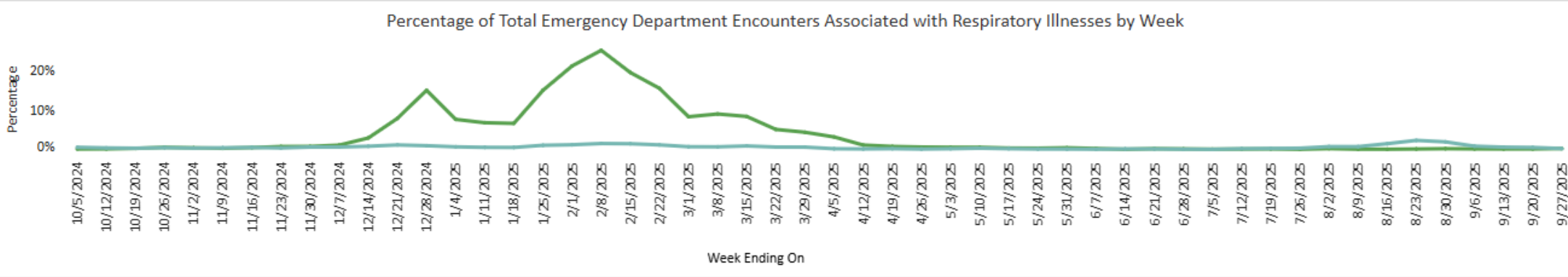
05-17

Race

(All)

Ethnicity

(All)



[Kentucky Respiratory Disease Dashboard](#)

Overview

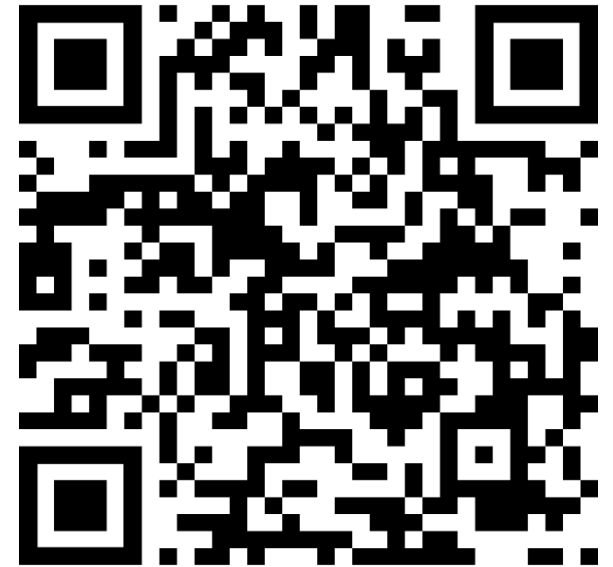
- 🛡️ The Kentucky Department for Public Health will begin distributing combo COVID-19/Flu A&B antigen testing supplies to support safe, in-person learning in public and private schools for the 2025-2026 school year.
 - Distribution begins on October 15, 2025.
- 🛡️ Abbott BinaxNOW™ COVID-19/Flu A&B antigen testing
 - Single nasal swab to simultaneously detect COVID-19, influenza A and influenza B.
 - Results available in 15 minutes.

Testing Supplies Available

- 🛡️ BinaxNOW™ COVID-19/Flu A&B point-of-care (POC) and over the counter (OTC) testing supplies will be distributed through a direct shipment from McKesson.
- 🛡️ Over the counter testing supplies are shipped to **ONE** primary address indicated for the district.
 - The school district will coordinate distribution to each school.
- 🛡️ Point of care are available for request
 - Require a valid CLIA license or waiver.
 - Only be shipped to the registered facility and address.
 - Please contact KYCOVIDTesting@ky.gov or Jennifer.Broussard@ky.gov for more information.

How to request

- 🛡️ Complete the [Resource Request Form](#)
 - The quantity ordered should be based on the projected 30-day utilization.
- 🛡️ Districts that did not complete the pre-registration form remain eligible to request testing supplies.
 - Delivery may be delayed while the new shipping address is added with McKesson.



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Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report

Deputy Commissioner Thomas Tucker,
Office of Teaching and Learning

Michelle Sircy, Ed.D., Program Coordinator for Comprehensive
School Counseling, Office of Teaching and Learning

Per KRS 158.4416(3)(f), by Nov. 1 of each year, "the local school district superintendent shall report to the department ...

- a. the number of school-based mental health service providers;
- b. the position held;
- c. placement in the district;
- d. certification or licensure held;
- e. the source of funding for each position;
- f. a summary of the job duties and work undertaken by each school-based mental health service provider;
- g. and the approximate percent of time devoted to each duty over the course of the year."

[KRS 156.4416\(3\)\(h\)](#) further requires KDE to collect the information reported by each district superintendent for submission to the Interim Joint Committee on Education. Definitions for school-based mental health services providers are provided under [KRS 158.4416\(1\)](#).

Process Components Include ...

Collection



Excel Spreadsheet

The screenshot shows an Excel spreadsheet with the following content:

- Header:** Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) Counselor and School-Based Mental Health Providers' Use of Time Superintendent's Report
- Text:** Per KRS 158.4416(3)(f), by November 1st of each year, "the local school district superintendent shall report to the department ..."
- List:** a) the number of school-based mental health service providers, b) the position held, c) placement in the district, d) certification or licensure held, e) the source of funding for each position, f) a summary of the job duties and work undertaken by each school-based mental health service provider, g) and the approximate percent of time devoted to each duty over the course of the year."
- Text:** KRS 156.4416(3)(h) further requires the KDE to collect the information reported by each district superintendent for submission to the Interim Joint Committee on Education.
- Text:** Definitions for school-based mental health services providers are provided under KRS 158.4416(1).
- Frequently Asked Questions:**
 - Q1:** We have several staff members in our district who have the school social worker certification but serve as the counselor in a couple of our schools and the categories about how they use their time would probably be more appropriate under the counselor tab. Should I list them in the counselor tab or in the school-based mental health provider tab?
 - Answer:** According to current legislation - KRS 161.020(1)(a) provides "No person shall be eligible to hold the position of superintendent, principal, teacher, supervisor, director of pupil personnel, or other public school position for which certificates may be issued, or receive salary for services

Navigation tabs at the bottom: ReadMeFirst, Report Completers Info, Instructions for Entering Couns, 5 Counselor Data Entry, Instructions or Entering.

Submission



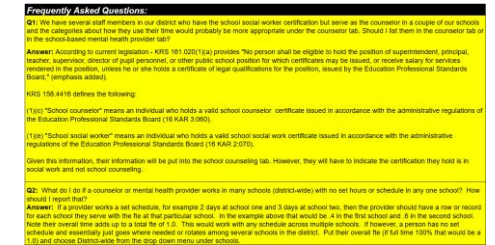
Sharepoint

The screenshot shows a SharePoint site with the following content:

- Header:** Kentucky Department of Education, Counselor and Mental Health Use of Time Superintendent Report Collection Tool KRS 158.4416
- Navigation:** Home, Documents, Site contents
- Section:** Use of Time Collection Tool
- Text:** The purpose of this site is to collect district level use of time information for counselors and other mental health providers for the Superintendent's Report due by November 1st, 2025.
- Text:** Please ensure the document is an Excel file prior to beginning the upload process. Do not save the file as a PDF.
- Section:** Document Submission Instructions:
 1. Select Upload below from the Document Submission Library. (Alternatively, you can choose to drag and drop your Excel file into the Document Submission Library space below. Move to step 3 if you choose to drag and drop instead.)
 2. Select the Excel file to upload.
 3. A pop-up window will automatically appear after upload with additional document properties to complete for the file. To successfully submit, you MUST complete the following properties after uploading:
 1. School District
 2. Superintendent's Name
 4. Files that have been successfully submitted will automatically be MOVED from this location after 30 minutes. You will receive an email notification verifying your submission once the file has been moved.
- *Notes:**

Districts are encouraged to ...

- Ensure compliance, completeness and accuracy of district submissions;
- Refer to the *Frequently Asked Questions* section of the excel spreadsheet located in the “ReadMeFirst” tab; and
- Watch the *Completing and Submitting Video* included with this presentation and available as a link in the “ReadMeFirst” tab.



Questions

For technical questions or assistance, please contact: Leslie McKinney at Leslie.mckinney@education.ky.gov.

If you require clarification or have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to contact Michelle Sircy at Michelle.sircy@education.ky.gov.



SAT, Accountability Release Update

Associate Commissioner Jennifer Stafford, Office of
Assessment and Accountability

SAT: Kentucky's College Admissions Exam

College Admissions Exam – New Vendor

- Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, College Board was awarded the contract based on a competitive bid process to provide the SAT for the state administration of the college admissions exam as required by [KRS 158.6453](#).
- Seniors (Class of 2026) took the ACT. Juniors (Class of 2027) will be impacted by this contract.
- Many districts are already familiar with College Board through the Advanced Placement (AP) courses and exams. This existing relationship is expected to ease the transition and support a smooth implementation across Kentucky high schools.
- This transition will provide students with a high-quality assessment that continues to support Postsecondary Readiness. The [SAT benchmark scores](#) that determine academic readiness are established by the Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education. More information can be found on how [SAT assesses college and career readiness](#).

College Admissions Exam – SAT Assessment and Test Window

- The SAT Junior State Administration is an online adaptive exam. It is a two hour and 14-minute exam that assesses students' reading, writing, math and science skills. The test has two sections, Reading & Writing and Math.
- Through its unique design, the SAT also delivers an Analysis in Science score generated by students' performance on relevant questions within the Reading & Writing and Math sections.
- Analysis of Science score meets Kentucky's statutory requirements.
- The six-week test window will be March 2 through April 10, 2026, allowing schools to determine their own test administration dates.

College Admissions Exam – Cost

- The initial four-year contract, with a cost of \$30 per student locked in over the four years, can be extended up to nine years.
- It has the potential to save the Commonwealth up to \$350,000 annually.

College Admissions Exam – Resources

- For educators:
 - Alignment to Kentucky Academic Standards
 - Free [instructional planning tools](#), including an educator question bank, student skill insights, and resources to integrate questions into daily lessons
- For parents/students:
 - Easy-to-access scores plus personalized college and career planning guidance
 - [Guide to help students and families understand scores](#)
 - Opportunities to connect with colleges and scholarship programs through the [BigFuture application](#)
 - [Step-by-step guides to help parents support student preparation](#)
 - [Free personalized practice resources](#): full-length tests, question banks, and exclusive Khan Academy courses

SAT Upcoming Trainings

- SAT State Administration Office Hour #1 – Tues. Oct. 14
- SAT/OAA Spring 2026 Junior State Administration In-Person Trainings
 - West Kentucky Educational Cooperative (Eddyville) – Wed., Nov. 5
 - Northern Kentucky Cooperative for Educational Services (Alexandria) – Thurs., Nov. 6
 - Kentucky Educational Development Corporation (Ashland) – Fri., Nov. 7
 - Southeast/South Central Education Cooperative (London) – Mon., Nov. 10
 - Kentucky Department of Education (Frankfort) – Mon., Nov. 17
 - Kentucky Valley Educational Cooperative (Hazard) – Wed., Nov. 19
 - Green River Regional Educational Cooperative (Bowling Green) – Fri., Nov. 21

Note: additional trainings and support will be provided as the process progresses.

New Science Kentucky Summative Assessment and Tentative Public Reporting Timeline

New Science Kentucky Summative Assessment (KSA)

Assessment Alignment:

- The Kentucky Department of Education updated the summative science assessment in winter 2024–2025 based on the 2023 revised academic content standards.

New Assessment:

- New assessment with short cluster and stand-alone items. Unable to compare to previous science assessment scores.

Science Performance Level Descriptors (PLD) workshop:

- PLDs were updated in June by a group of Kentucky educators through a PLD workshop.

Standard Setting Process:

- To ensure valid and reliable results, a formal standard-setting process was conducted virtually on Sept. 4–5.
- Three committees of Kentucky educators, 32 panelists in total, established performance cut scores for Grades 4, 7 and 11.

Score Release Timeline:

- Science scores are scheduled to be released next week, tentatively scheduled for Oct. 21 at 9 a.m. ET in PearsonAccess^{Next}.

Timeline for 2025 Public Reporting - original

TENTATIVE

Nov. 17

- District embargo opens at 8 a.m. ET

Nov. 17

- Media embargo opens
- Districts may begin discussing data under embargo privately with media at 1 p.m. ET

Nov. 19

- Embargo ends
- Public release of School Accountability and test results at 12:01 a.m. ET

Nov. 19 - Dec. 4

- 10-day Regulatory Data Review for new individual student change requests in SDRR begins at 9 a.m. ET and closes for new tickets at 5 p.m. ET



Kentucky Department of
EDUCATION

The background is a composite image. The top left shows yellow school buses with 'SCHOOL BUS' written on them. The bottom left shows a classroom with blue walls, decorated with colorful balloons and framed pictures. Desks and chairs are visible in the foreground of the classroom.

Question and Answer Session

(Submit Questions in Teams)

KDE Leadership





Important Dates

Education Professional Standards Board

Oct. 21

Commissioners Student Advisory Council (in-person)

Oct. 30

Superintendents Advisory Council

Nov. 5

Superintendents Webcast

Nov. 18 at 2:30 p.m. ET

Kentucky Board of Education

Dec. 3-4