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Teacher & Administrator Supply & Demand in Missouri: *Analyzing the Trends*

by David L. Hough, Ph.D.

The Need:

➤ *Missouri will need over 21,000 new teachers and administrators by 2010, almost one third of the current workforce.*

➤ *While demand is increasing, supplies are decreasing. If these trends continue, 5,000 Missouri PK-12 classrooms will be staffed by less than fully certified teachers by the beginning of the 2004-05 academic school year.*

Supply and demand curves often constitute more complex equations than initially conceptualized, perhaps, by the uninformed. This policy brief addresses teacher and administrator supply and demand curves in Missouri by providing information that can be used to understand better (1) areas where teacher and administrator shortages exist / persist, (2) factors leading to these shortages, (3) approaches being implemented to address demand, as well as (4) suggestions for increasing the supply of fully certified, qualified teachers and administrators to address shortages.

SMSU has conducted an annual Teacher Supply & Demand Study for over 30 years, adding administrators into the equation in 1997 when the Institute for School Improvement began conducting the study. In 1999, the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MDESE) began requesting these same data from Missouri public school districts (using slightly modified versions of the ISI survey data collection instruments) as part of its annual CORE DATA state reporting system. In order to avoid duplication of efforts, beginning in 2001 ISI no longer collects, via survey, teacher and administrator data directly from school districts. These data should now be readily accessible, however, from CORE DATA.

In prior years, ISI mailed survey questionnaires directly to each of Missouri's 524 school districts in September. A second mailing was made in November to districts that had not returned completed questionnaires. Follow-up telephone calls were made in December and January to encourage other districts to report data. These efforts produced response rates ranging from 87% to 98% across the ten geographic regions as identified by MDESE. Overall response rates over the past 10 years averaged 92% with the State's two largest school districts in St. Louis and Kansas City sometimes responding, sometimes not.

Both the number and geographic location of individual districts constituting the sample each year are important factors to consider when attempting to identify State totals and comparing descriptive statistics across years. All aggregated regional and State numbers are based on data supplied by responding public school districts.

AREAS WHERE SHORTAGES EXIST

Supplies to Meet Demand

Calculating the number of individuals available for PK-12 classroom teaching and administrative positions in schools involves a combination of facts and speculation. Approximately 40% of all students who have been trained as teachers in colleges and universities never enter teaching as an occupation (Darling-Hammond, 2000). And, while data from studies attempting to track the supply of teachers and administrators at a national level over the past two decades indicate that approximately 40-50% of all beginning teachers leave the profession sometime within the first five years, much of these data are aggregated differently by states and often do not include all 50 states plus the District of Columbia. While no one appears to have a complete understanding of the number of individuals holding teacher and administrator certificates who are not employed as educators, many scholars agree that the “real” supply exceeds demand, even in subject areas where critical shortages exist. Therefore, policies addressing “educator dropout” need to be considered. Policy development is problematic, given the dearth of accurate data regarding the “real” supply.

➤ *As many as 40% of those who earn teaching degrees never enter the profession.*

➤ *40%-50% of teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching.*

➤ *Early retirement bonuses and incentives may exacerbate the shortages.*

➤ *Policy development is problematic, given the dearth of the accurate data regarding “real” supply.*

Table 1.
Comparisons of Numbers and Percents of Missouri Certificates Issued from 7/1/96 to 6/30/00

Certification Area		Elementary Education	Middle School	Secondary Education	Totals
Number of Certificates Issued	1996-97	6,032	1,855	7,348	15,235
	1997-98	4,485	1,285	6,570	12,340
	1998-99	3,858	825	5,376	10,059
	1999-00	3,428	862	5,705	9,995
	1999-00	5,829	1,681	7,124	14,634
1996-97 to 1997-98	Difference	-1,547	-570	-778	-2,895
	% Decrease	-25.65%	-30.73%	-10.59%	-19.00%
1997-98 to 1998-99	Difference	-627	-460	-1,194	-2,281
	% Decrease	-13.98%	-35.80%	-18.17%	-18.48%
1998-99 to 1999-00	Difference	-430	37	329	-64
	% Decrease	-11.15%	4.48%	6.12%	-0.64%
1998-99 to 1999-00	Difference	1,971	856	1,748	4,575
	% Decrease	51.09%	103.76%	32.51%	31.26%
1996-97 to 1999-00	Difference	-2,604	-993	-1,643	-5,240
	% Decrease	-43.17%	-53.53%	-22.36%	-34.39%
1996-97 to 1999-00	Difference	-203	-174	-224	-601
	% Decrease	-3.37%	-9.38%	-3.05%	-3.94%

All numbers were supplied by MDESE; shaded cells indicate "corrected" numbers provided by MDESE on April 2001.

The number of Missouri teaching certificates issued between 1996-97 and 1999-2000 decreased by almost 35% from 15,235 to 9,995. Data supplied by MDESE prior to 2000 and used to make this observation may not be accurate, however (Hough, et al., 2000). Generally speaking, over the past ten years since 1991, while Missouri's supply of elementary teachers has exceeded demand by almost one third each year, in rural areas over the past three years, the number of applications to fill elementary positions has steadily declined. The supply of middle and high school teachers is almost equal to demand, making selection during the hiring process problematic. Since 1997, the number of individuals certified to hold administrative positions has begun to decline as well as making the hiring of building level principals a growing problem. Similar trends have been documented nationally.

The Debate:

Will raising teacher licensure and certification standards...

➤increase the quality of applicants?

➤increase the number of teachers in the workforce?

➤increase the supply?

➤improve teacher retention?

➤lead to higher salaries?

➤improve student learning?

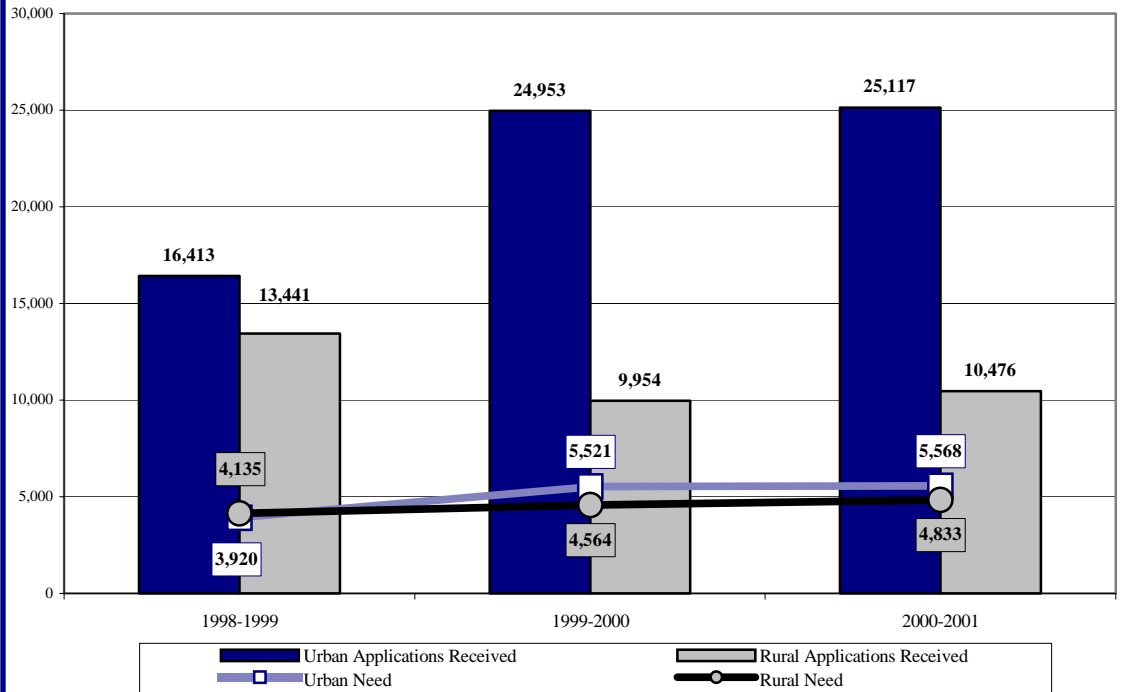
**Table 2.
A Three-Year Comparison of Hires, Need, Applications, Employment Ratios and Employment Indices**

CERTIFICATION AREA	Reporting Year							
	Return Rates							
	1998-1999		1999-2000		2000-2001		3 Years Combined	
	92%		92%		92%		92%	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
New Hires Fully Certified	3,535	3,328	4,001	3,652	4,632	3,785	12,168	10,764
Positions in Need of Fully Certified Personnel	384	808	1,519	912	936	1,049	2,840	2,768
Subtotal	3,919	4,135	5,521	4,564	5,568	4,833	15,008	13,533
Number of Applications Received	16,413	13,441	24,953	9,954	25,177	10,476	66,544	33,871
Employment Ratio [NH / (NH + PN)]	90%	80%	72%	80%	83%	78%	81%	80%
State Averages	85%		76%		81%		80%	
Employment Index [100%-(NH + PN)/APP]	76%	69%	78%	54%	78%	54%	77%	60%
State Averages	73%		71%		71%		72%	

To examine teacher supply and demand more carefully, employment ratios and indices were developed by the ISI research team. By dividing the total number of fully certified new hires by the sum of new hires and positions in need of fully certified personnel [NH / (NH + PN)] an employment ratio is produced, providing a measure of demand that has been met. The employment index is calculated by subtracting from 100% the sum of fully certified new hires and positions in need of fully certified personnel divided by the number of applications [100% - (NH + PN) / APP]. This employment index provides a measure of supply.

The employment index produces a conservative estimate because individuals may make multiple applications within and across districts. Also, applications may be made by recently certified teachers, prospective teachers, individuals who want to reenter teaching or administration after having been employed in another occupation for some period of time, or by career teachers seeking to change assignments. The number of applicants, therefore, could potentially be far fewer than the number of applications.

Figure 1.
Three Year Comparison of Number of Applications Received and Overall Need
Urban vs. Rural
1998-99 to 2000-01



[Note: Need is the total of the following: New Hires Fully Certified, New Hires Less Than Fully Certified, Positions Still Vacant, Positions Filled with Substitutes and New Hires with One or More Assignments Outside Area of Certification.]

➤ *Urban districts in Missouri received approximately five applications for every vacancy, while rural districts received two applications for each vacancy.*

➤ *Critical shortages persist in special education, math, the physical sciences (especially chemistry and physics), music, art, foreign languages, and computer science.*

Elementary education teaching positions in Missouri (2000-01) produced an employment index of 20%, meaning that roughly five applications were made for each position needed to fill existing vacancies. In secondary education, the employment index was 26%, meaning that approximately four applications were made for each position needed (Hough, et al., 2001).

During the 2000-01 school year, 2,305 applications were made for approximately 1,157 special education positions in Missouri, producing an employment index of 50%. This index indicates that one special education teacher was hired for every two applications that were made (Hough, et al., 2001).

By far, the most striking employment index indicating a wide discrepancy between applications made for available positions is found in the area of administration. Approximately nine applications were made for each available position, producing an employment index of 13% (Hough, et al., 2001).

The urban areas of St. Louis, Kansas City, and Springfield generally receive many more applications than rural districts, resulting in lower employment ratios and higher indices for urban areas than for rural areas. The gap between urban and rural employment indices over the last three years has increased, making the hiring of fully certified educators much more difficult for rural districts. Urban districts receive almost five applications, on average, for every teaching position to be filled; rural districts receive approximately two applications for each position to be filled.

➤ *Missouri schools hired over twice the number of educators in 2001 (8,417) than they did ten years ago (1991 = 3,919).*

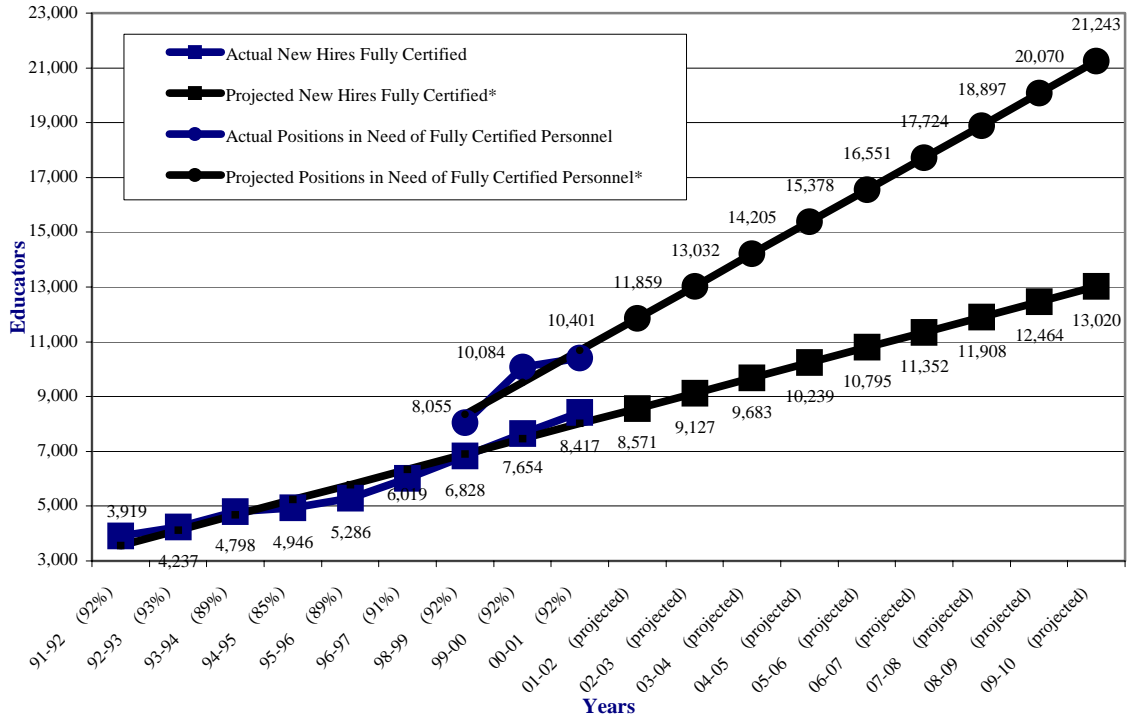
➤ *Doubling the number of new hires over the past decade did not solve the problem; almost 2,000 more educators were still needed to fill the 10,401 vacancies in 2001.*

➤ *The gap between positions in need of fully certified personnel and the number of educators hired is growing wider.*

Demand Trends

Nationally, predictions of the number of teachers that will be needed in United States public school classrooms over the next decade reach as high as 2.5 million (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In Missouri, our research indicates that over 21,000 teachers and administrators will be needed by the beginning of the 2010 academic school year, approximately one-third of the current teaching force. If current trends continue in which teaching positions are filled with individuals who are less than fully certified, substitutes, newly hired teachers to teach subjects outside their certification areas, and leaving positions unfilled, a very conservative estimate is that Missouri schools will hire only 10,239 fully certified personnel for 15,378 positions by the 2004-05 school year. If this happens, by the beginning of the 2004-05 academic school year over 5,000 Missouri classrooms (more than one of every ten) would be staffed by individuals not fully certified to teach the subject to which they are assigned.

Figure 2.
Trend Lines for New Hires and Positions Needed



[Note: The 1997-98 academic school year is not included in this analysis due to the low response rate of 77%.]

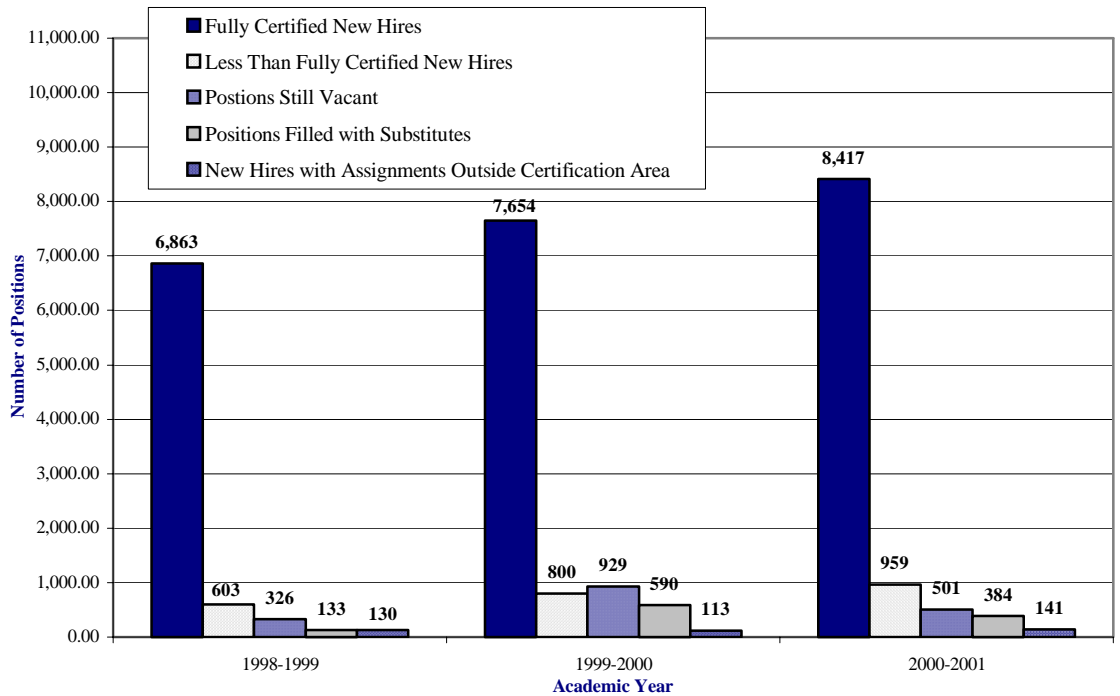
*Projection line formulas were calculated using the least squares method.

Projected New Hires Fully Certified: $y = 556.24x + 3008.1$

Projected Total Positions in Need of Fully Certified: $y = 1173x + 130$

As has been the case over the last decade, areas of critical shortage will continue to be special education, foreign languages, mathematics, and the physical sciences. Most recently, music, art, computer science, and pupil services have now moved into the critical need category, as well.

Figure 3.
Three-Year Comparison of Positions Needed



➤ *An alarming trend over the last three years finds that the number of less than fully certified teachers has increased state-wide by almost 60%. In secondary education classrooms, this increase has been 113%.*

➤ *Positions filled with substitutes increased from 133 in 1998-99 to 590 in 1999-2000; a 344% increase. In 2000-01, 384 substitutes were hired, an increase of 251 (189%) since 1998-99.*

Fully Certified Personnel

Missouri school districts reported a total of 6,863 new hires during the 1998-99 school year and increased by 23% to 8,417 during the 2000-01 school year. Most new hires over the last three years have been made in urban districts, and the majority of this increase has been in elementary certifications. All but two certification areas, middle school and special education, have seen consistent increases in new hires of fully certified teachers across all three years (Hough et al., 1999, 2000, 2001).

Less Than Fully Certified Personnel

Data over the last three years indicate an overall increase of 59% in the total number of less than fully certified personnel filling positions in Missouri schools. The greatest increase has been in the secondary education certification area with a total of 196 less than fully certified personnel hired during the 1998-99 school year and 418 less than fully certified staff hired during the 2000-01 school year, an increase of 113%. The only certification area which has not seen an increase is middle school. This trend is consistent for both urban and rural districts years (Hough et al., 1999, 2000, 2001).

The Policy Issue:

➤ *The overall demand to fill vacant teaching positions state-wide increased by 29% from 1998-99 to the 2000-01 academic school year. If this trend continues, the demand for teachers by the 2005-06 school year will have increased by 105% since 1998.*

The Question:

- *Who is (or should be) qualified to teach?*
- *Should Missouri move from college credit-hour requirements to performance-based requirements?*

The Answer?

➤ *To examine such a model, see the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium @ www.ccsso.org/intasc.html*

➤ *Trend line predictions indicate that the number of Missouri certificates needed to meet demand will fall more than 1,546 short by the beginning of the 2004-05 academic school year.*

Positions Still Vacant

On average, approximately 585 positions have remained unfilled throughout Missouri's school districts each year since the fall of 1998. Most positions remaining vacant were found to be either in secondary education or special education. A total of 603 ($\bar{M} = 201$) secondary positions remained unfilled over the last three years, while 586 ($\bar{M} = 195$) special education positions went unfilled during that same time. (Hough et al., 1999, 2000, 2001).

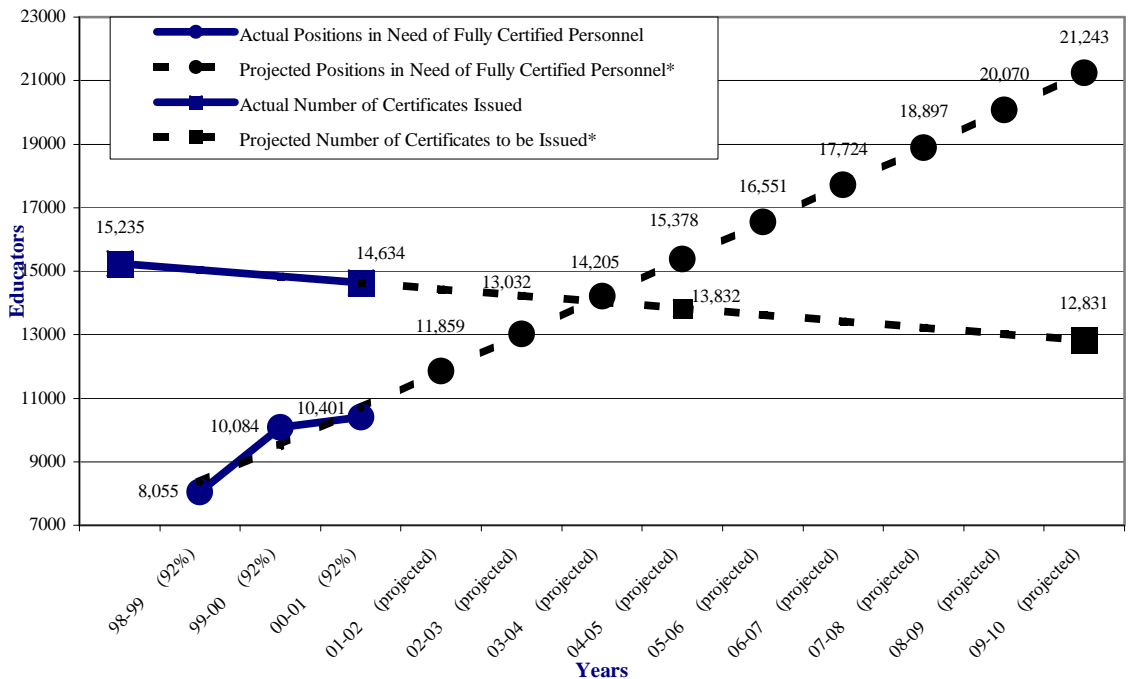
Assignments Outside Certification Areas

On average, 128 assignments outside their area(s) of certification were given to new hires over the last three years. Of these assignments, 53 (41%) were made in secondary education. Urban districts' average placements outside certification areas over the last three years (n = 36) represents 28% compared to 72% of the average number of placements outside certification areas (n = 92) in rural districts over the same time period (Hough et al., 1999, 2000, 2001).

Substitutes

Another alternative to schools that cannot find qualified personnel to fill teaching and administrative positions is to hire substitutes. Statewide, an average of 369 substitutes were hired by school districts for the 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-01 academic school years. The use of substitutes to fill teaching positions in Missouri has increased by 189% from the 1998-99 school year to the 2000-01 school year. The greatest increase over this three-year period was found in secondary classrooms (1998-99 = 65 to 2000-01 = 205). More substitutes have been hired by Missouri school districts for vacancies at the secondary level than at any other level of certification (Hough et al., 1999, 2000, 2001).

Figure 4.
Trend Lines of Education Positions in Need of Fully Certified Personnel and Number of Certificate Issues in Missouri



*Projection line formulas were calculated using the least squares method.
 Projected positions in Need of Fully Certified Personnel: $y = 1173x + 130$
 Projected Number of Certificates to be Issued: $y = -200.33x + 15,435$

➤ *Each fall, more and more Missouri school children enter classrooms staffed by someone other than a fully certificated teacher. After the 2003-04 academic school year, this trend may escalate.*

➤ *By 2009-10, Missouri may need 7,000 more certificated personnel than would be available if current trends continue.*

➤ *Policies must target:*

- (1) *high school juniors and seniors*
- (2) *pre-service teachers*
- (3) *career teachers*
- (4) *mid-career changers*
- (5) *non-traditional students (i.e. adults with little or no prior college education)*
- (6) *mid-career professionals with bachelors' degrees.*

➤ *Policies should target:*

- (1) *school districts*
- (2) *colleges and universities*
- (3) *state departments of education*
- (4) *business and industry*

FACTORS LEADING TO SHORTAGES

While a variety of factors impact State efforts to attract and retain teachers and administrators, superintendent perceptions in Missouri indicate that excessive certification requirements and low salaries are the primary culprits. Missouri superintendents also believe that colleges and universities do not produce enough educators, and that requirements are too cumbersome.

As noted previously, many teachers leave the profession within the first few years; others transfer or seek employment in a neighboring school outside the district. While school and community characteristics are consistently cited as having little impact on prospective applicants, rural schools (in general and on average) are experiencing continued disproportionate degrees of difficulty in attracting and retaining teachers as compared to urban areas.

CURRENT APPROACHES TO INCREASE SUPPLY

Over the last several years, the focus regarding teacher shortage has been placed on recruitment initiatives such as alternative licensing programs, financial incentives, signing bonuses, loan forgiveness and housing incentives; all these are designed to supply more available teachers to meet the increasing demand (Ingersoll, 2001). One such example of addressing the demand for teachers is alternative certification routes. According to Wright (2001), approximately 41 states have adopted such programs in order to meet the public's demand for teachers.

Alternative Certification

Colleges and universities should continue to explore alternative certification programs that allow students to work in the field while completing their undergraduate teacher preparation programs. In order for such programs to work, a strong commitment must be made between both the school districts and universities involved. Support mechanisms are essential to ensure that, under such arrangements, PK-12 children learn at high levels along with their teachers.

Accelerated Certification

Accelerated certification programs for students with degrees from accredited colleges/universities are being explored to attract mid-career adults into teaching. Accelerated certification is an aggressive and fast-paced approach to addressing the demand for teachers. It enables most students to complete certification requirements within a one-year time frame and is much more structured in terms of when courses must be taken. One such program, the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT), at SMSU places mid-career professionals with bachelors' degrees into the classroom for one year after an initial summer school experience while they earn both a master's degree and obtain certification to teach in Missouri.

Post-Baccalaureate Teacher Certification

In addition to accelerated certification, many institutions of higher education also provide a post-baccalaureate teacher certification program, enabling students to pursue certification at an individual rate of progression. Individuals with families and/or those needing to continue employment while working towards completing certification requirements may find these programs more appropriate routes to obtaining teacher certification.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDRESSING DEMAND

Design Policies to Retain Career Teachers

Although current approaches addressing the need to increase the supply of new teachers may offer some solution to the teacher shortage dilemma, more emphasis must be placed on decreasing demand. “In plain terms, teacher recruitment programs alone will not solve the staffing problems of schools if they do not also address the organizational sources of low retention” (Ingersoll, 2001). Merrow (1999) explained teacher shortage through the “leaking pool” metaphor. His argument considered the following: “You wouldn’t expect that pouring more and more water into the [leaking] pool would in time fix the leak...” Instead of fixing the leak, early retirement incentives may, in fact, be creating an even greater crack in the pool. According to some studies, the reason which stands above all others for teacher shortage problems is attrition (McCreight, 2000); i.e., teachers leaving the profession in disproportionate numbers at both ends of the age continuum – beginning teachers (usually under age 30 and before their sixth year of teaching) and seasoned, career teachers (often “baby boomers” and/or individuals with 20+ years’ teaching experience).

Policies Specific to Geographical Regions

Policies need to be developed that are aimed at recruiting individuals from specific, targeted geographic regions to gain certification in high need areas (i.e. special education, sciences, mathematics, music, foreign languages etc.). Institutions of higher education would be well advised to expand programs in high need areas of certification and deliver such programs in geographic locations where these teaching shortages are greatest. Additionally, prospective students should be advised as to the supply side of the equation so they have a better understanding of the labor market and areas of certification that are and will be priorities (Hough, et al., 1999).

National Board Certification

National Board Certification may be a way to help professionalize the occupation of teaching by attracting more individuals into the field. This might be especially helpful to the supply and demand imbalance if it were somehow tied to certification areas of high need. For example, if policies were enacted to support science teachers and/or special education teachers to receive National Board Certification and higher salaries as a result of having obtained such distinction, prospective teachers might choose high need fields after weighing the potential benefits made possible through greater professional opportunities in that field (Hough, et al. 2000).

Beginning Educator Assistance

According to Wong & Wong (2001), approximately 50% of newly hired teachers nationwide will leave the profession within the first three to five years. In order to address the increasing problem of retaining newly hired teachers, SMSU has implemented the Beginning Educator Assistance, Renewal and Support (BEARS) program. The BEARS program is a collaborative effort among various university offices and organizations, and provides support for PK-12 teachers throughout their first three years of classroom teaching, and beyond, if career teachers so choose. Support and services include dissemination of information regarding certification updates and university events for teachers, professional development workshops on various aspects of teaching, web-based chat rooms for teachers to communicate with colleagues, and mentoring of beginning teachers as well as professional development for their mentors.

➤ *Most teachers are not geographically mobile; they tend to return to their hometowns to live and work.*

➤ *Policies should differentiate between urban and rural areas.*

➤ *Policies should target both critical need content areas and specific geographic locations in order to recruit prospective teachers and administrators from the districts in need.*

Summary

In sum, the four entities that have the most direct control over teacher supply and demand, (1) school systems, (2) institutions of higher education, (3) state departments of education and (4) pre-service and career teachers themselves, should collaborate to address imbalances. Policies should address both personnel and market factors. Pre-service teachers, career teachers, second career and/or mid-career changers, and so-called “non-traditional” college students, and even high school students should be included in the mix of policy considerations. Recruitment, preparation, induction, and support mechanisms should be tailored to each cohort. Market factors should target high need certification areas and content fields, address urban and rural geographic regions differently, and provide appropriate incentives for advancement and professional growth/status in certification areas with the greatest needs, i.e. highest demand and lowest supply.

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Each year on June 1st the United States Department of Education submits to Congress an annual report titled The Coalition of Education. This report is prepared by the National Center for Education Statistics. For the most recent report (June 2001) contact:

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Institute for School Improvement

Southwest Missouri State University

“Linking Theory and Practice”

The Southwest Missouri State University Institute for School Improvement provides administrative oversight for a number of professional development programs and conducts research to examine the impact of such programs on teaching and learning.

Professional Development

Professional development projects include the Southwest Regional Professional Development Center (SWRPDC), Select Teachers As Regional Resources (STARR), Missouri Assessment Program (MAP), Accelerated Schools, Missouri Math Initiative, Missouri Reading Initiative, DESE Area Supervisor, Blindness Literacy Specialist, SMSU Literacy Center, and the SMSU/ISI Outreach Coordinator for Continuing Education. These professional development activities target PK-12 teachers, administrators and university faculty.

Research

Research activities include the Annual Teacher & Administrator Supply & Demand Study, Missouri Blindness Literacy Study, Early Childhood Special Educational IEP Study, College of Education Graduate Follow-up Study; and program evaluations of the State Regional Professional Development Centers, Select Teachers As Regional Resources, and SuccessLink. The Institute utilizes both qualitative and quantitative approaches to conduct evaluative, descriptive, predictive, and applied research studies that focus primarily on curricular and instructional processes as they relate to classroom practice and student outcomes, including but not limited to achievement.

Organization

The Institute for School Improvement was established in September 1998, upon approval by the SMSU Board of Governors. ISI is currently one of three support units in the College of Education and an affiliate of the Professional Education Unit.

Institute Staff

The ISI Director is Dr. David Hough, Dean, College of Education; Director of Research and ISI Assistant Director is Ms. Vicki Schmitt; Ms. Rhonda Haynes, Ms. Amber Beggs, Ms. Julianna Crighton, and Ms. Sheila Beth Klein are Research Assistants; Mr. Ayman Rizvan and Ms. Marcela Ruales are Graduate Assistants.

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