

Teacher Vacancy Data

Rationale for systematic data collection on teacher vacancies

Historically, the Department of Education has collected many data points about teachers. As more attention began focusing on the teacher shortage, the need for continuing to refine the data collected in this area emerged. At present, data tracking teacher vacancies or “unfilled teaching positions” are not collected in a formalized or systematic manner by the Department of Education. Attempts at collecting teacher vacancy data have been made over the past two years. The data collected through these efforts have not been reliable due to a low response rate and the districts’ lack of maintaining data from the previous year. With the exception of DROP data, annual data collected by the Department concerning the need for classroom teachers are estimates and projections of teacher resignations, terminations and retirements. While these projections include factors such as student growth and make adjustments for the class size amendment, they do not reflect actual unfilled teaching positions. In order to track statewide progress in the area of supply and demand for teachers, consistent reporting in regularly scheduled intervals is needed so that comparisons over time can be made. Targeting resources and assistance to the districts with the greatest need for teachers can only be effective if data are complete, accurate and consistent. Such data permits comparisons on unfilled teaching positions between and among districts, relative to geographic regions and size so that resources and assistance can be targeted to those with the greatest need. The following is a plan to begin the process of formalized data collection for tracking unfilled teacher positions.

Action Plan for regularly scheduled data collection on teacher vacancies

<i>Task</i>	<i>Start Date</i>	<i>Completion Date</i>
Develop survey for data collection on unfilled teacher positions	9/8/03	9/15/03
Elicit input from select district personnel directors on clarity and accuracy of questions	9/15/03	10/15/03
Collaborate with DOE MIS and Technology staff to create a web-based system for districts to provide data	9/8/03	10/30/03
Establish district report dates	11/4/03	11/4/03
Prepare Memorandum to District Personnel Directors concerning the tri-annual reporting of unfilled teacher positions	10/30/03	11/5/03
First data reporting and compilation	12/1/03	12/15/03
Second data reporting and compilation	6/1/04	6/1/04
Third data reporting and compilation	9/15/04	9/15/04
Summary Report on 2003-04 data collected	9/30/04	9/30/04