

Colorado Teacher Retention – Recruitment Issues: Metro and Pikes Peak School Districts
2018-19

In early October 2018, the Colorado School Finance Project (CSFP) asked Superintendents and CFOs/Budget Managers what they are experiencing in teacher recruitment/retention issues.

For the past 10 years, Colorado school districts have been and continue to be impacted by the Budget Stabilization / Negative Factor. The impact to districts and classrooms has been ongoing, as the cumulative loss is over \$7 billion.

To date, we have received responses from over 60 districts across the state.

Following is some of what we heard from districts in the Metro area:

- Continual shortages: Special Education areas, Math, Science, Concurrent Enrollment, Career & Technical Ed, AP/IB, World Languages, Mental Health, English Language Learners. The pool is shallow overall across the state as evidenced by the 5-year decline in completers from our state higher education institutions.
- We are short 3 elementary teachers, 1 High School Social Studies teacher, 1 High School Math teacher, 1 Elementary Music teacher, 1 High School English teacher. This is an ongoing issue.
- Substitute teachers are hard to find – we face shortages weekly.
- We have lost 20% of our teaching staff every year for the past 3-5 years. Hard to measure the loss of knowledge and student impact that left our district.
- For the past 5 or more years, we have had unfilled paraprofessional aide positions to support special education students / general teacher support at the elementary level and secondary level.
- Short 69 SPED Parapro – this is an ongoing issue.
- At the elementary level special education students are those most greatly impacted by our inability to fill Special Ed positions – this is already a highly impacted group.
- We have an 87% daily fill rate on average for substitutes.

Following is some of what we heard from districts in the Pikes Peak Region:

- Short 3 teachers (1st grade, 2 Severely/Seriously Emotionally Disturbed), 2 Speech/Language Teachers, 1 Occupational Therapist. Ongoing issue with special education.
- Short 3 Special Education Paraprofessionals – ongoing issue. These positions are hard to find and keep.
- Normally we can fill all positions. However, if a staff person leaves mid-year, that is a struggle to fill because of availability of qualified staff. Recently, could not fill middle school math position mid-year.
- Could not find a music teacher – first time this has been an issue.
- Struggle to fill Special Education and English Language Learner Teacher vacancies.
- No shortages this year – but it is more and more difficult to find substitutes.
- Short 2 middle school math teachers.
- Substitutes have been easier to find with our 4-day week.
- Last year we never filled the Middle School Moderate Needs Special Ed position.