Adequacy Study 2024

Superintendent
Survey Responses

Prepared for the House and Senate Committees on Education

Table of Contents

Introduction

Survey Distributed:	May 24, 2023	**255**
Survey Due:	June 16, 2023	
Final submittal:	July 24, 2023	**255**
Response Rate:	**100%**	

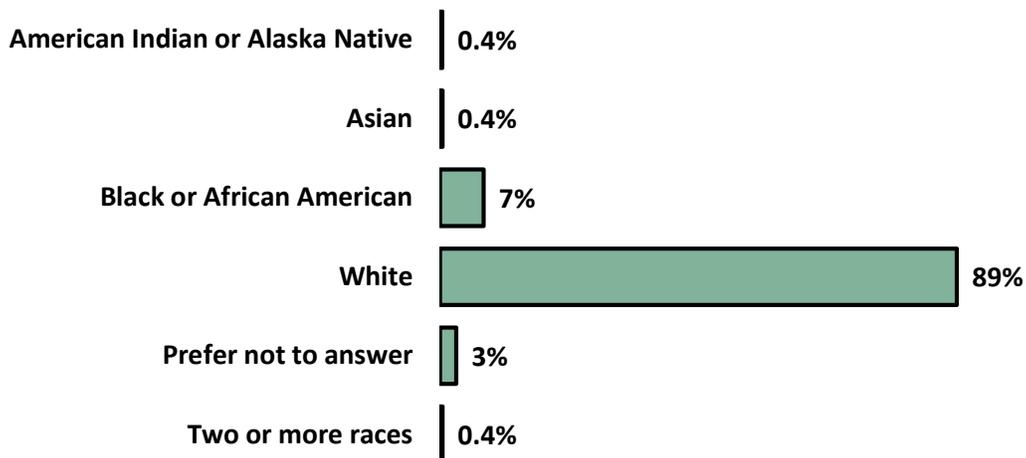*Note: All questions in the survey require a response except the comment questions or if the question is not applicable to the principal.*

Background

1. Are you of Hispanic or Latino origin?

Yes
5%

No
95%
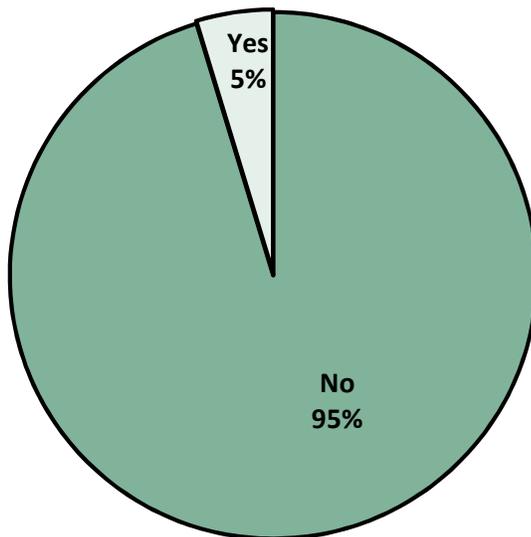
2. How would you describe yourself?

American Indian or Alaska Native — 0.4%

Asian — 0.4%

Black or African American — 7%

White — 89%

Prefer not to answer — 3%
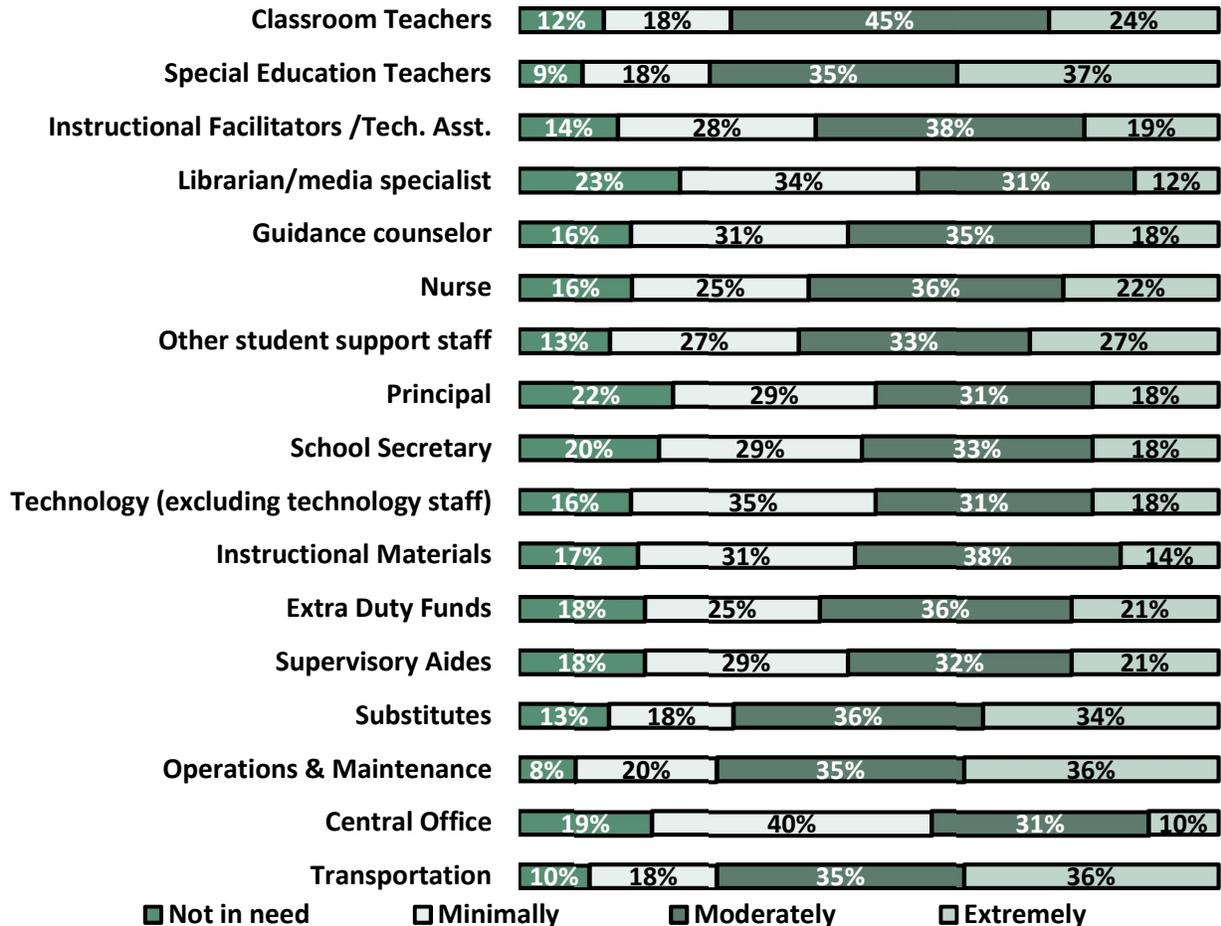
Two or more races — 0.4%

Adequacy Funding: Matrix and Categorical

3. For the current (2022-2023) school year, to what extent have you used the matrix to guide your district's spending and staffing levels?

	Not at all	Minimally	Moderately	Extensively
Spending	4%	26%	50%	19%
Staffing	5%	25%	48%	23%

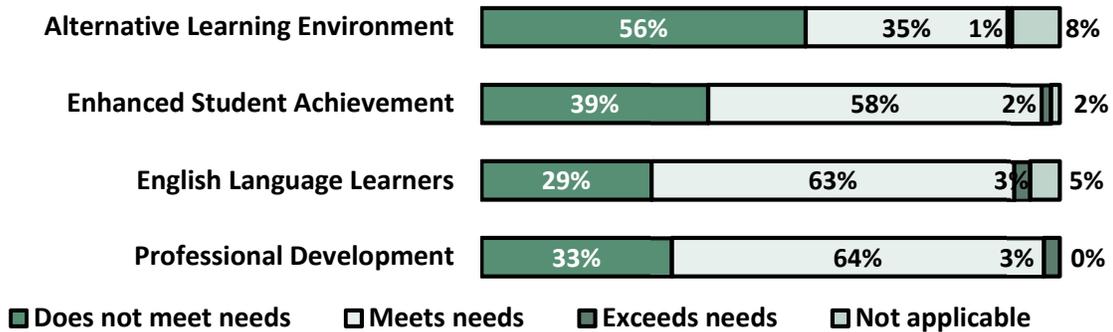☐ Not at all   ☐ Minimally   ☐ Moderately   ☐ Extensively

4. For each of the following resources in the MATRIX, please use the scale provided to identify if your school district/charter school system needed additional funding **during this school year** and, if so, the extent to which it is needed.

	Not in need	Minimally	Moderately	Extremely
Classroom Teachers	12%	18%	45%	24%
Special Education Teachers	9%	18%	35%	37%
Instructional Facilitators /Tech. Asst.	14%	28%	38%	19%
Librarian/media specialist	23%	34%	31%	12%
Guidance counselor	16%	31%	35%	18%
Nurse	16%	25%	36%	22%
Other student support staff	13%	27%	33%	27%
Principal	22%	29%	31%	18%
School Secretary	20%	29%	33%	18%
Technology (excluding technology staff)	16%	35%	31%	18%
Instructional Materials	17%	31%	38%	14%
Extra Duty Funds	18%	25%	36%	21%
Supervisory Aides	18%	29%	32%	21%
Substitutes	13%	18%	36%	34%
Operations & Maintenance	8%	20%	35%	36%
Central Office	19%	40%	31%	10%
Transportation	10%	18%	35%	36%

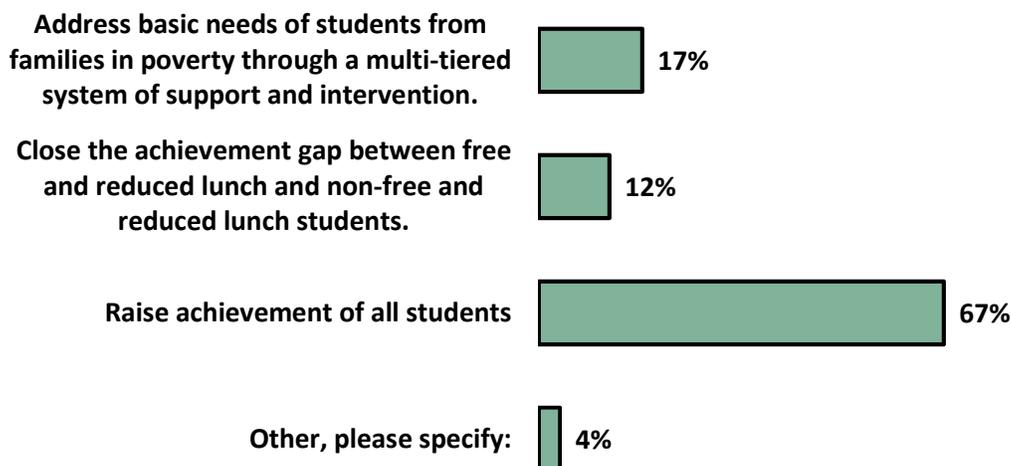☐ Not in need   ☐ Minimally   ☐ Moderately   ☐ Extremely

5. Please share if there is anything **NOT included in the Matrix** that you believe is an important part of providing an adequate education: **Respondents were allowed to make comments, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.**

6. Please **RATE** the extent to which the following categorical funds meet your district's needs.

Alternative Learning Environment: 56% Does not meet needs, 35% Meets needs, 1% Exceeds needs, 8% Not applicable

Enhanced Student Achievement: 39% Does not meet needs, 58% Meets needs, 2% Exceeds needs, 2% Not applicable

English Language Learners: 29% Does not meet needs, 63% Meets needs, 3% Exceeds needs, 5% Not applicable

Professional Development: 33% Does not meet needs, 64% Meets needs, 3% Exceeds needs, 0% Not applicable

☐ Does not meet needs   ☐ Meets needs   ☐ Exceeds needs   ☐ Not applicable

7. What is the primary goal your district wants to achieve through the use of ESA funds as reflected in the ESA Plans submitted to the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education for the 2022-2023 school year?
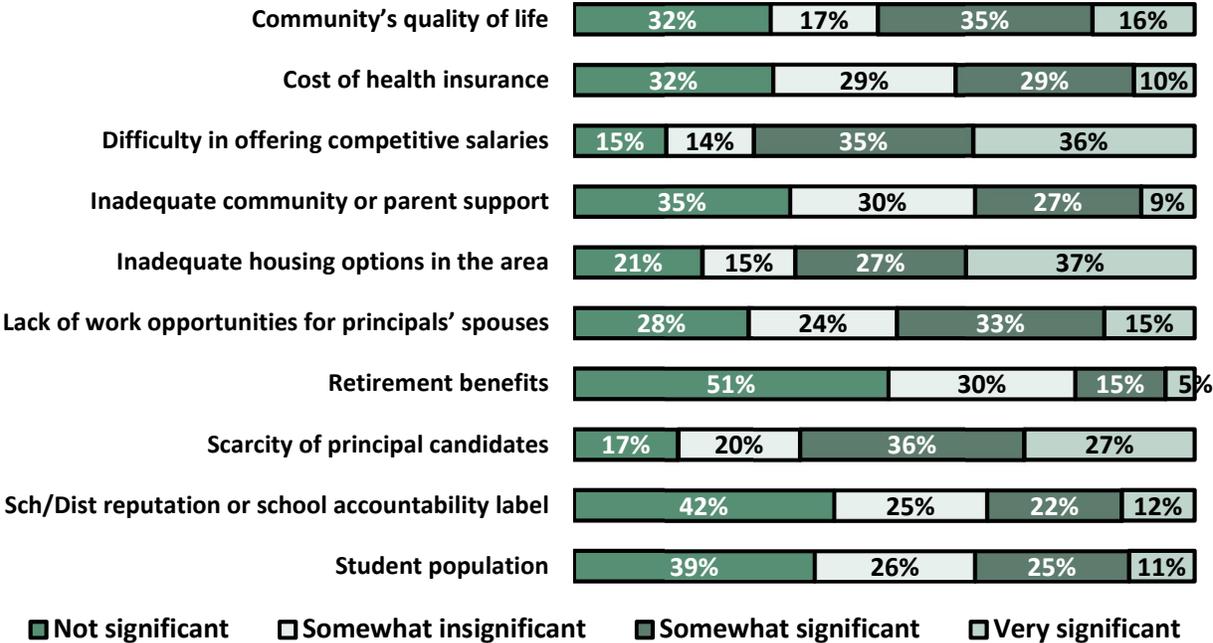
- **Address basic needs of students from families in poverty through a multi-tiered system of support and intervention.** — 17%
- **Close the achievement gap between free and reduced lunch and non-free and reduced lunch students.** — 12%
- **Raise achievement of all students** — 67%
- **Other, please specify:** — 4%

"Other" Responses: Provide as many learning opportunities as possible through more staffing and providing the resources needed to enhance that learning; Pre-K Program; growth of all students; Ensure all students are reading on grade level.; we use the vast majority of our ESA funds to staff nurses and our school safety staff; all of the above, but primarily those students from poverty. In addition, we try to make sure we are meeting the social emotional needs of students with this funding. Also, we try to help our families learn how to help their kids with school work with this money. There are also extra positions that we use this money for like SRO and school safety; raise achievement of students not meeting grade level standards regardless of economic status.
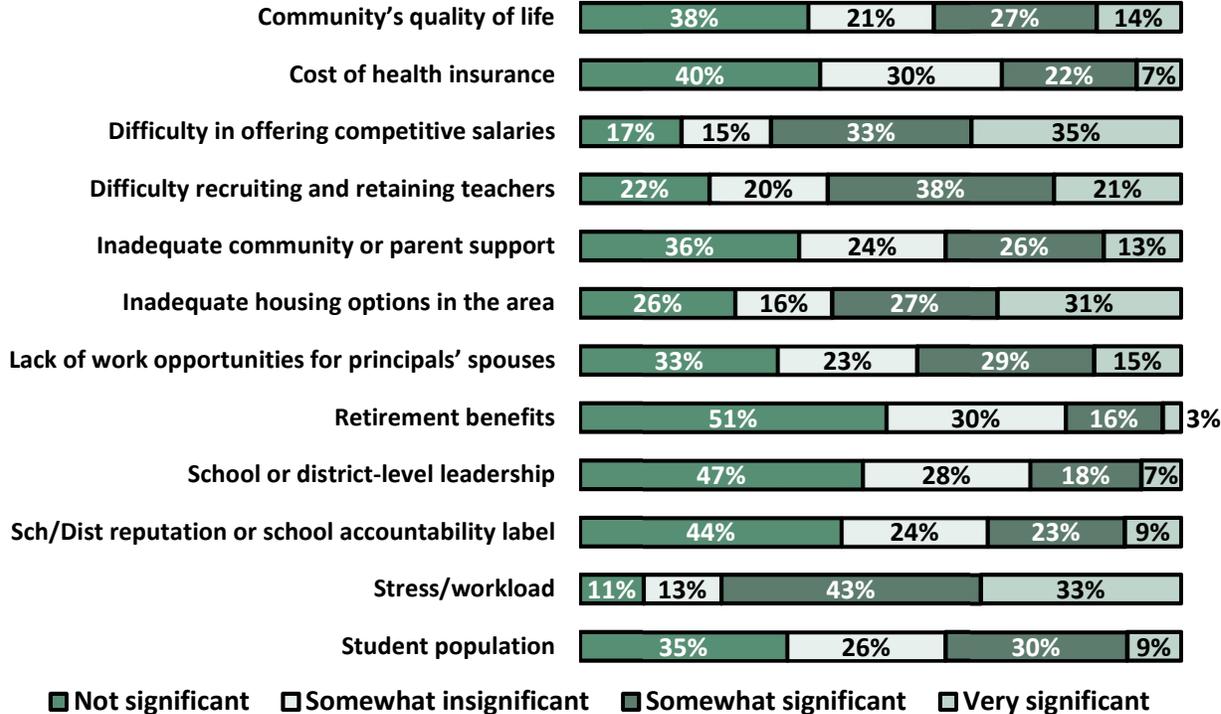
8. **ADEQUACY FUNDING** – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Principal Recruitment and Retention

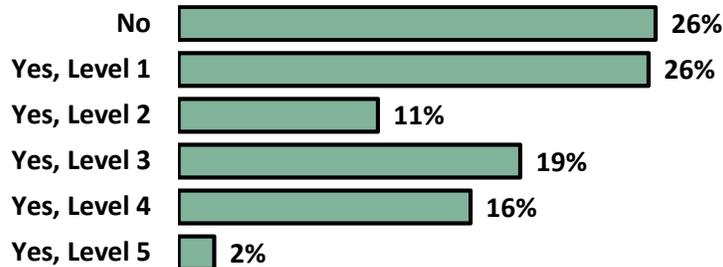**9.** How significant are the following challenges in **RECRUITING PRINCIPALS** to your district?

	Not significant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Very significant
Community's quality of life	32%	17%	35%	16%
Cost of health insurance	32%	29%	29%	10%
Difficulty in offering competitive salaries	15%	14%	35%	36%
Inadequate community or parent support	35%	30%	27%	9%
Inadequate housing options in the area	21%	15%	27%	37%
Lack of work opportunities for principals' spouses	28%	24%	33%	15%
Retirement benefits	51%	30%	15%	5%
Scarcity of principal candidates	17%	20%	36%	27%
Sch/Dist reputation or school accountability label	42%	25%	22%	12%
Student population	39%	26%	25%	11%

■ Not significant □ Somewhat insignificant ■ Somewhat significant □ Very significant

10. How significant are the following challenges in **RETAINING PRINCIPALS** in your district?

	Not significant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Very significant
Community's quality of life	38%	21%	27%	14%
Cost of health insurance	40%	30%	22%	7%
Difficulty in offering competitive salaries	17%	15%	33%	35%
Difficulty recruiting and retaining teachers	22%	20%	38%	21%
Inadequate community or parent support	36%	24%	26%	13%
Inadequate housing options in the area	26%	16%	27%	31%
Lack of work opportunities for principals' spouses	33%	23%	29%	15%
Retirement benefits	51%	30%	16%	3%
School or district-level leadership	47%	28%	18%	7%
Sch/Dist reputation or school accountability label	44%	24%	23%	9%
Stress/workload	11%	13%	43%	33%
Student population	35%	26%	30%	9%

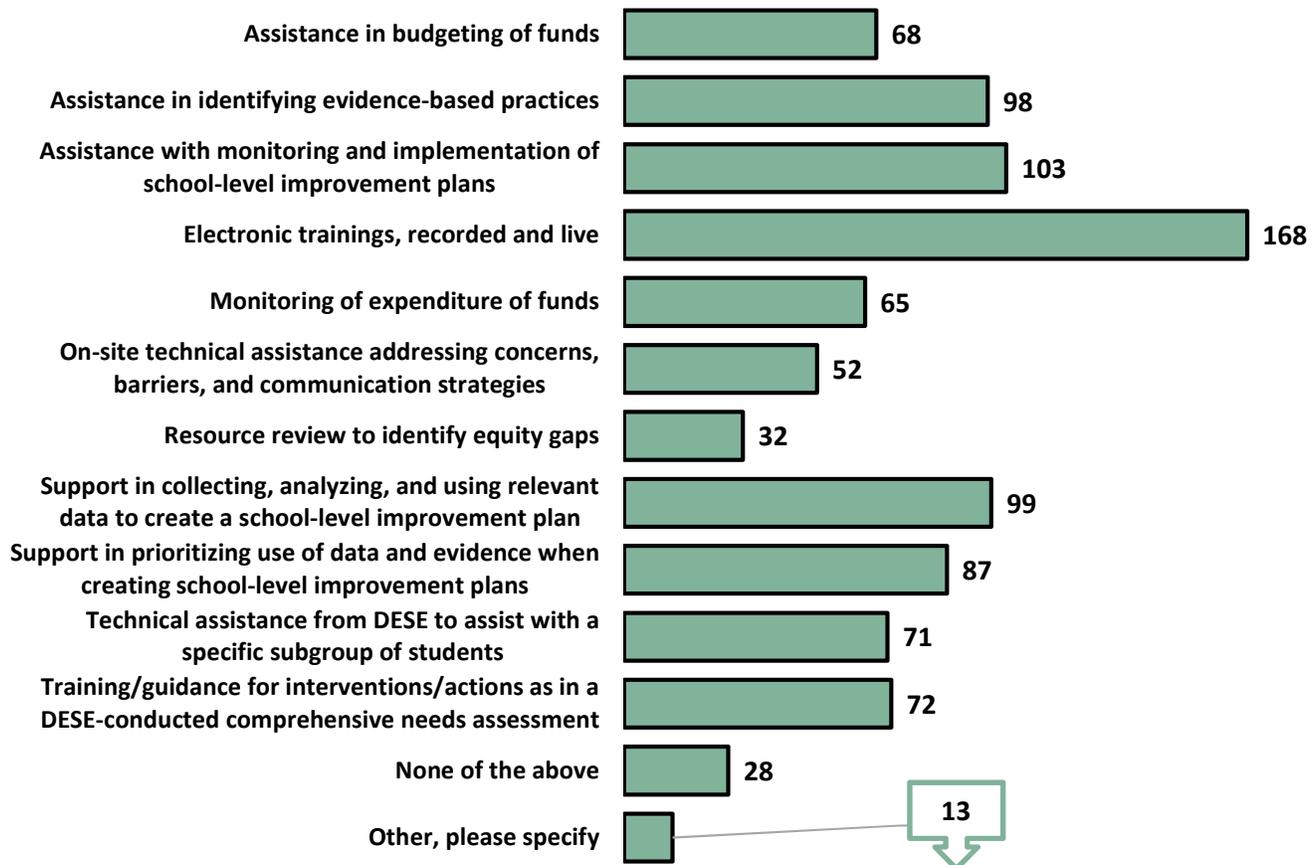■ Not significant □ Somewhat insignificant ■ Somewhat significant □ Very significant

11. PRINCIPAL RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

School Accountability

12. The accountability system assigns "**Levels of Support**" to school districts. Do you know which level of support your district is considered to be in?
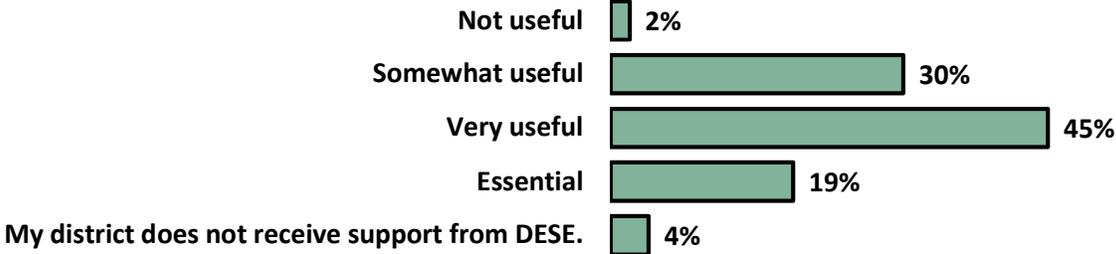
Response	Percentage
No	26%
Yes, Level 1	26%
Yes, Level 2	11%
Yes, Level 3	19%
Yes, Level 4	16%
Yes, Level 5	2%

13. DESE provides various methods of support for districts. Which of the following did your district use in 2022-2023? *(Check all that apply.)*

Method	Count
Assistance in budgeting of funds	68
Assistance in identifying evidence-based practices	98
Assistance with monitoring and implementation of school-level improvement plans	103
Electronic trainings, recorded and live	168
Monitoring of expenditure of funds	65
On-site technical assistance addressing concerns, barriers, and communication strategies	52
Resource review to identify equity gaps	32
Support in collecting, analyzing, and using relevant data to create a school-level improvement plan	99
Support in prioritizing use of data and evidence when creating school-level improvement plans	87
Technical assistance from DESE to assist with a specific subgroup of students	71
Training/guidance for interventions/actions as in a DESE-conducted comprehensive needs assessment	72
None of the above	28
Other, please specify	13

"Other" Responses: Collaborative support visits and reviews with DESE officials; We do all of these things, but receive support from NIET for much of it; eFinance, MySchool Info., eSchool, School Dude, annual statistical report etc; work with NIET; basic phone calls to the appropriate DESS offices whenever assistance is needed; We strongly support the work that is being done with Solution Tree around PLC's. We have been a recipient of this grant and utilized ESA and ESSER.; EES Support; PLCs; Project support - CTE Support (all as requested); We reviewed plans with a team from our district, COOP, and DESE to raise our district's reading scores.; Attending co-op meetings and AAEA zooms; ESSER funds and expenditures and accreditation; Quarterly Reports to DESE at WDMESC

14. How useful is the support your district receives from Division of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)?

Not useful	2%
Somewhat useful	30%
Very useful	45%
Essential	19%
My district does not receive support from DESE.	4%

15. **SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY –** Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

School-Based Mental Health

16. In 2022-2023**,** did your district have mental health therapists, including both employee and non-employee therapists, working in your schools to provide mental health therapy services directly to students? Therapists include school psychology specialists, psychologists, licensed associate counselors, licensed professional counselors, and psychiatrists who **provide therapy services**. Do not count school guidance counselors.
(If no, skip to question 19.)

No 15%

Yes 85%
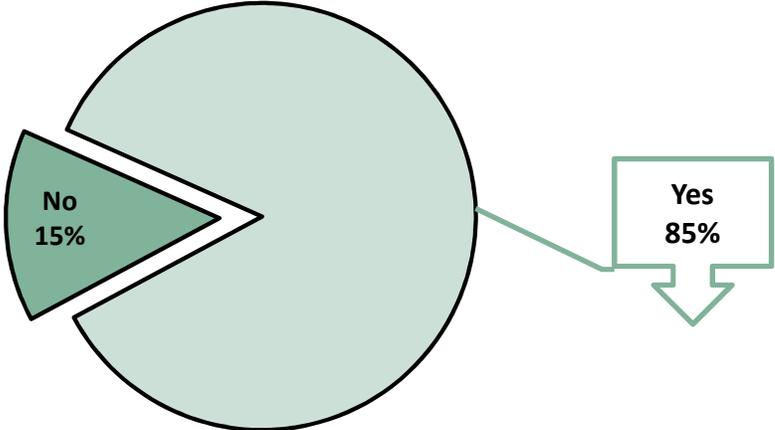
Count part-time therapists as a portion of an FTE. For example, a therapist in your schools three full days each week would count as 0.6 of an FTE. Only account for the time spent providing therapy services.

17. In 2022-2023, how many mental health FTEs were **employed directly by the district?**
160.25   *Total Responding = 218 superintendents*

18. In 2022-2023 how many mental health FTEs were **employed by an agency or other organization?** **899.25**   *Total Responding = 218 superintendents*

19. **SCHOOL-BASED MENTAL HEALTH** – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Nurses

20. In 2022-2023, please provide the number of **F**TEs Nurses **employed directly by the district?**
1,000.47

21. In 2022-2023, please provide the number of FTEs Nurses **hired through purchased services?**
31.55

22. NURSES – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.
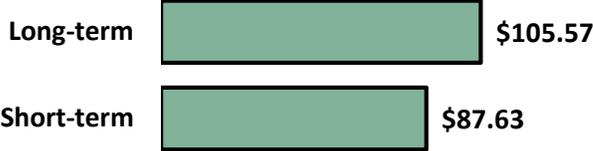
Substitutes

23. What is your district's **AVERAGE DAILY RATE of pay** for each of the following types of **short-term and long-term SUBSTITUTES**? *(Please enter "0" where the number is zero.)*

Substitute Certified Teachers

Short-term	$163.40
Long-term	$141.53

Substitute Non-certified with a Degree

Long-term	$105.57
Short-term	$87.63

Substitute Non-certified no Degree

Short-term	$83.49
Long-term	$78.51

24. SUBSTITUTES – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Alternative Learning Environment (ALE)

25. In 2022-2023, does your district pay another **district** or **education service cooperative** to provide Alternative Learning Environment (ALE) services (educational or full ALE services) to any of your students *(e.g., through a consortia arrangement or Arch Ford's Hub program)*? Do not include contractors you paid solely for mental or behavioral health services. ***(If no, skip to question 27.)***

No 74%

Yes 26%
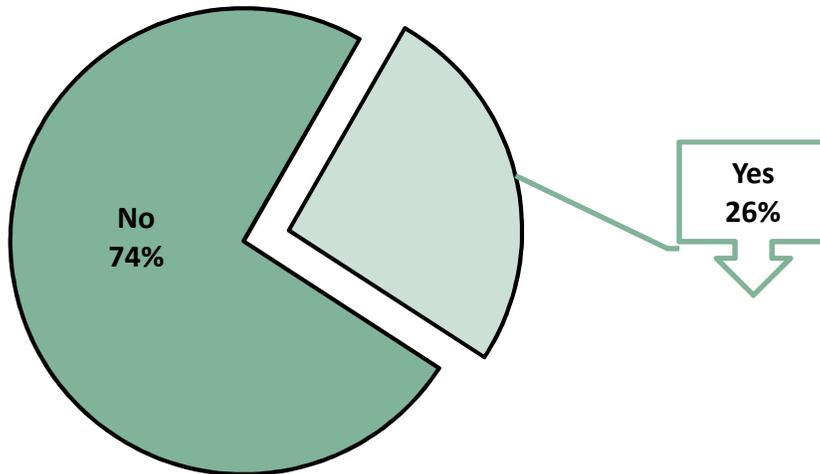
26. Please specify the district or education service cooperative your district pays for the ALE program, the total amount your district will have paid to the district or cooperative in 2022-2023 for the ALE program, and the total number of **FTE** ALE students your district has sent to the district or cooperative in 2022-2023. **Total Responding = 66 superintendents**

| School District (SD) or Education Service Cooperative (ESC) Paid	# of Districts Paying	Total Amt. Paid	Total FTE Students
Arch Ford ESC	45	$9,795,704	2,069.60
Arkansas River ESC	4	$1,307,078	160.11
Bald Knob SD	1	$51,500	10
Bismarck SD	1		
El Dorado SD	2	$30,000	6.50
Jonesboro SD	4	$288,040	33.50
Mountain Home SD	4	$170,500	13
Rogers SD	1	$254,292	19.47

School District Notes:
Osceola indicated they pay themselves, so they were not included as a "yes" to paying another district or cooperative.
Des Arc indicated they have their own ALE programs, their "yes" to paying another district/cooperative was not included.
Berryville, Clinton, Nettleton, and Magazine indicated "yes" to paying another district or cooperative, but did not report amounts paid or student FTEs. They are included in the "yes" counts, but not in the total paid or FTEs.
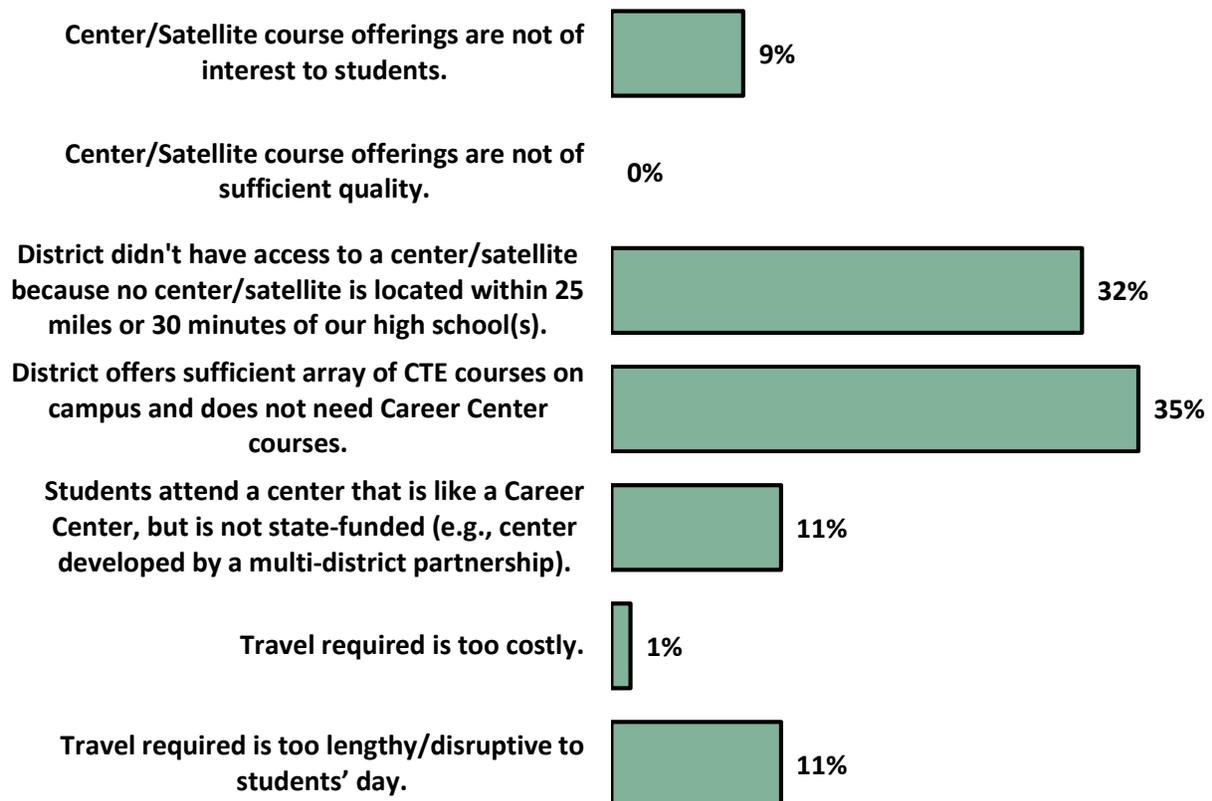
27. ALTERNATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (ALE) – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Career and Technical Education (CTE)

28. Did any of your district's students **actually attend** a state-funded Secondary Career Center or satellite in 2022-2023? *(If yes, skip to question 30.)*
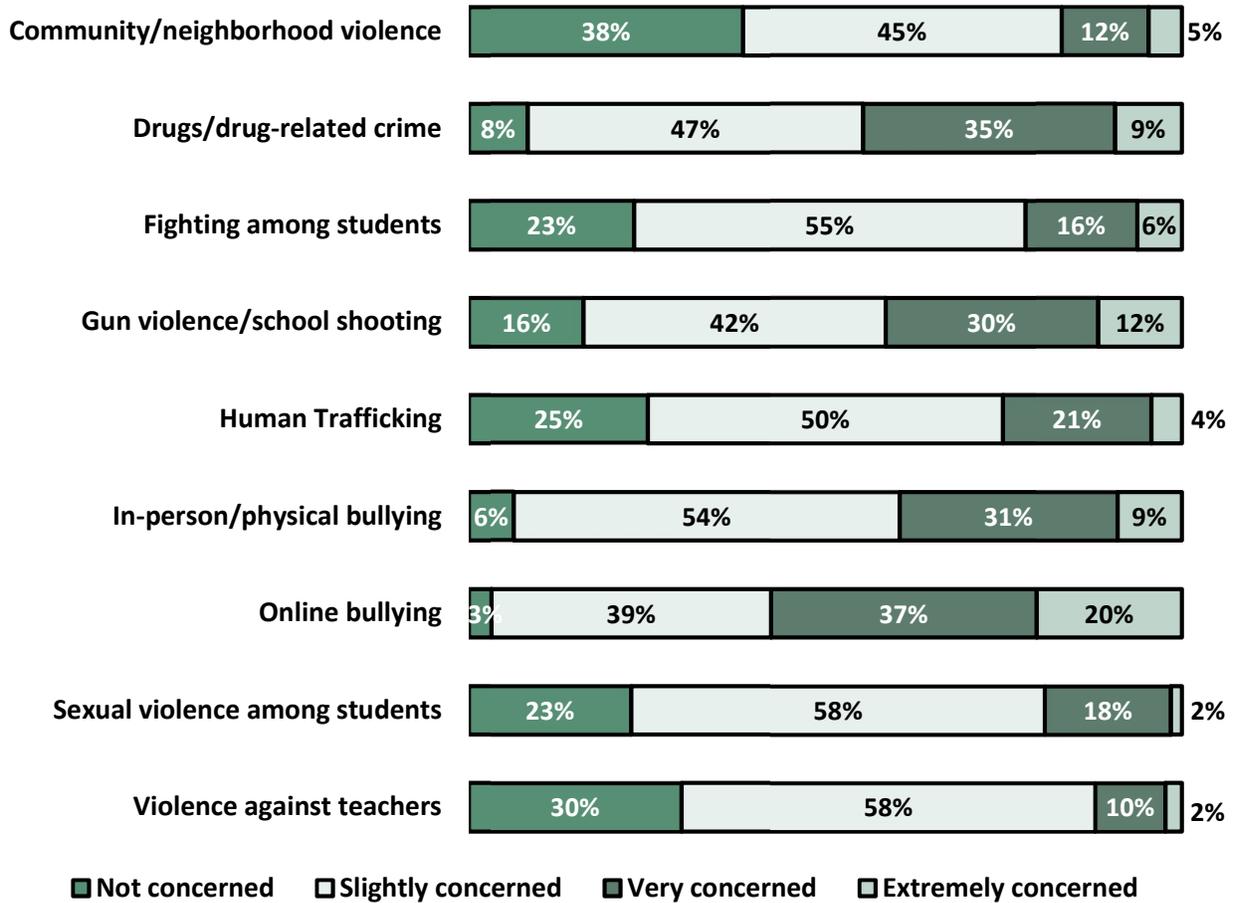
Yes 69%

No 31%
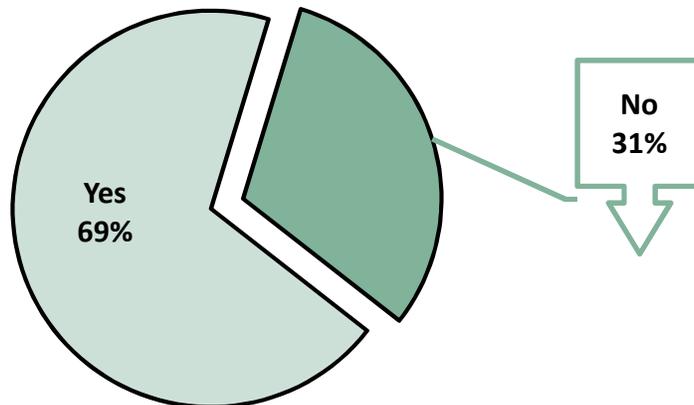
29. Please select the primary reason your district did not send any students to a state-funded Secondary Career Center or satellite in 2022-2023. **Total Responding = 79 superintendents**

Center/Satellite course offerings are not of interest to students. — 9%

Center/Satellite course offerings are not of sufficient quality. — 0%

District didn't have access to a center/satellite because no center/satellite is located within 25 miles or 30 minutes of our high school(s). — 32%

District offers sufficient array of CTE courses on campus and does not need Career Center courses. — 35%

Students attend a center that is like a Career Center, but is not state-funded (e.g., center developed by a multi-district partnership). — 11%

Travel required is too costly. — 1%

Travel required is too lengthy/disruptive to students' day. — 11%

30. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.
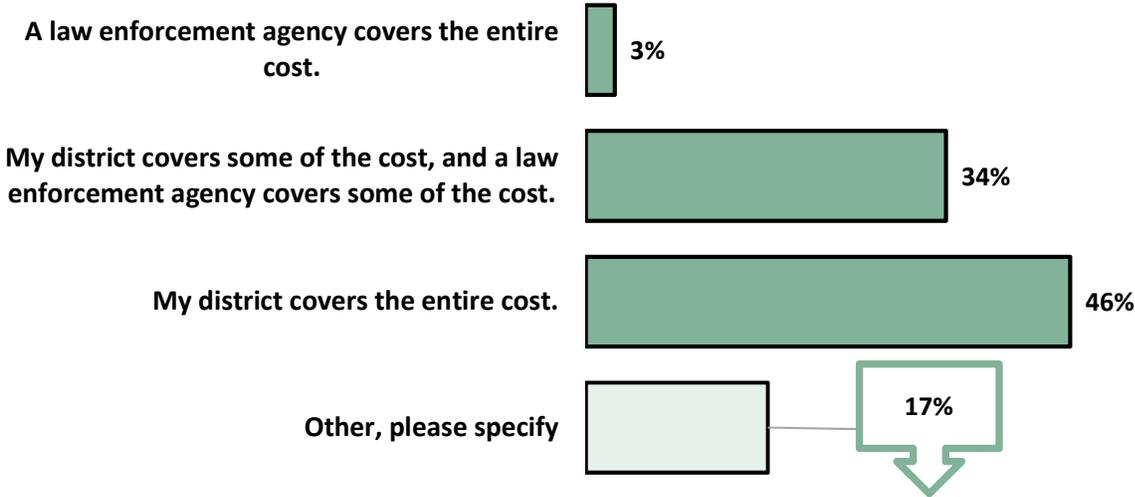
School Safety

31. Please **RATE** the extent to which you are **concerned** with the following **safety issues** in your district.

Issue	Not concerned	Slightly concerned	Very concerned	Extremely concerned
Community/neighborhood violence	38%	45%	12%	5%
Drugs/drug-related crime	8%	47%	35%	9%
Fighting among students	23%	55%	16%	6%
Gun violence/school shooting	16%	42%	30%	12%
Human Trafficking	25%	50%	21%	4%
In-person/physical bullying	6%	54%	31%	9%
Online bullying	3%	39%	37%	20%
Sexual violence among students	23%	58%	18%	2%
Violence against teachers	30%	58%	10%	2%

☐ Not concerned　☐ Slightly concerned　☐ Very concerned　☐ Extremely concerned

32. In how many of your district's schools are the following security areas **in place** AND **in satisfactory operational condition**?

Security Area	No Schools	Some Schools	Most Schools	All Schools
Alterations to fire alarm systems to control school-wide notifications and opening of facility doors	32%	12%	9%	47%
Assigned numbers to windows to assist first responders in locating students and intruders	28%	10%	10%	52%
Bullet resistant glass and walls for receiving areas	67%	13%	5%	15%
Designs that do not require students to go outside to change classes	28%	37%	24%	11%
Electronic access for exterior doors	9%	15%	14%	62%
Exterior fencing to verify visitors before they enter a building	49%	23%	11%	17%
Intruder lockset hardware on all classroom and staff doors	16%	22%	12%	49%
Landscaping alterations to eliminate hiding places for intruders	17%	26%	23%	35%
Limit external glass and openings into common areas and classrooms	23%	44%	20%	13%
Location of classroom doors that provide areas for students to be out of view and to "hide"	5%	23%	28%	44%
Positioned staff to verify visitors before they enter a building	5%	11%	16%	69%
Remote door release for interior doors at reception/main entrance	16%	12%	12%	60%
Safe rooms with intruder safety concepts	67%	15%	9%	9%
Secure roof openings and roof access	25%	15%	11%	49%
Single entry point into district buildings with security vestibule	23%	22%	21%	35%
Vehicle Ram protections at school entrances	51%	25%	13%	12%
Video intercom systems at reception	16%	11%	9%	63%
Video surveillance of campus space	2%	2%	7%	88%
Visitor Management System managed at the reception desk	12%	7%	8%	72%

Legend: ■ No Schools □ Some Schools ■ Most Schools □ All Schools

33. How are **school resource officers** funded within your district?

A law enforcement agency covers the entire cost. — 3%

My district covers some of the cost, and a law enforcement agency covers some of the cost. — 34%

My district covers the entire cost. — 46%

Other, please specify — 17%

Top "Other" Responses: Do not have a school resource officer; have CSSOs (Commissioned School Security Officers) instead of SROs; share cost with city, county, or law enforcement agency

Note: When asked to add any additional comments about school safety, the comment mentioned most often is that they do not have a school resource officer. Eight districts indicated they have Commissioned School Security Officers instead of SROs. Superintendents also made a few different comments regarding how they fund their security officer functions, such as, sharing the cost with a city or county or the district covering most or all of the cost.

34. SCHOOL SAFETY – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

School Facilities

35. Is your district virtual only *(If yes, skip to next section.)*

Yes 2%

No 98%
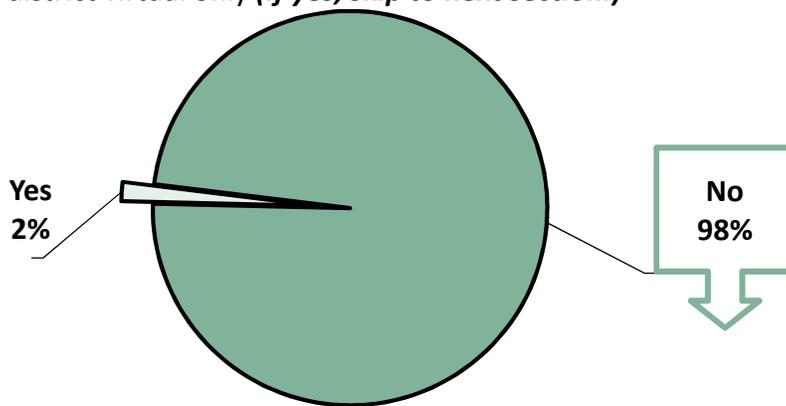
36. What is the likelihood that your school district will be able to fully address identified facility needs requiring **IMMEDIATE ATTENTION** in the coming school year?

Total Responding = 251 superintendents

Not very likely	23%
Somewhat likely	23%
Likely	30%
Very likely	14%
No response	11%
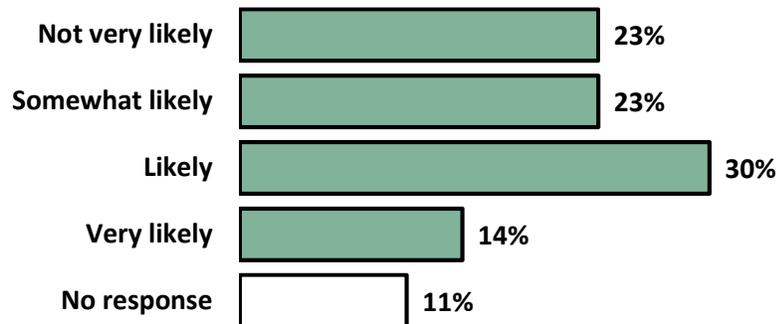
37. What do you anticipate being the greatest unmet facility need?

Space Projects (New facilities, additions/add-ons, or space conversions to accommodate growing district population)	18%
Warm, Safe, Dry Space Replacement Projects (New facilities, additions or conversions to replace existing school facilities)	22%
Warm, Safe, Dry Systems Projects (Electrical, HVAC, fire/safety, plumbing, roof)	19%
General maintenance issue	18%
I do not anticipate having any unmet facility needs.	12%
No response	11%

38. How would you describe the physical condition **of the school buildings in your district?**
(Please refer to the list in question 39 below to see factors considered in a conducive learning environment.)

All create a conducive learning environment	39%
Most create a conducive learning environment	41%
Some create a conducive learning environment	8.6%
None create a conducive learning environment	0.4%
No response	11%
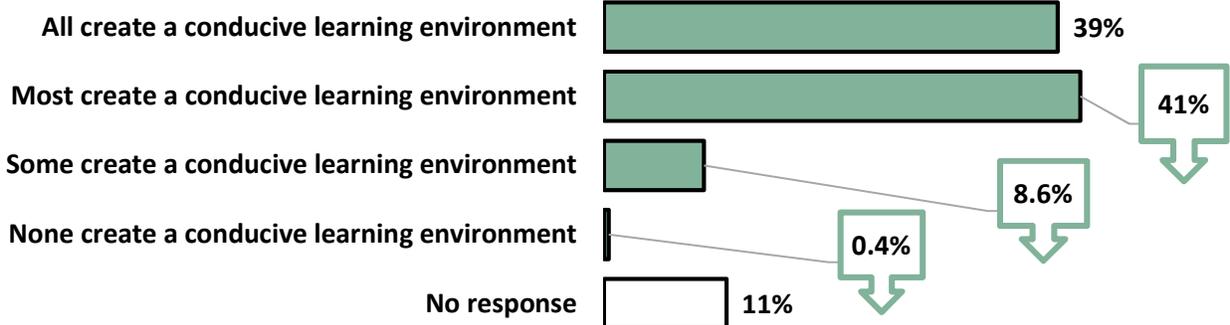
39. If you responded that **most, some, or none** of your school buildings create a conducive learning environment, please identify the types of building problems below.

(Check all that apply.) | **Multiple responses from 128 superintendents**

Building does not feel safe and secure	34
Building is aesthetically unattractive	71
Building size is inadequate	43
Building structure is inadequate	37
Electrical system is inadequate	31
Heating, Air Conditioning and Ventilation are inadequate	49
Plumbing is inadequate	50
Technology capabilities are inadequate	22
Other, please explain	29
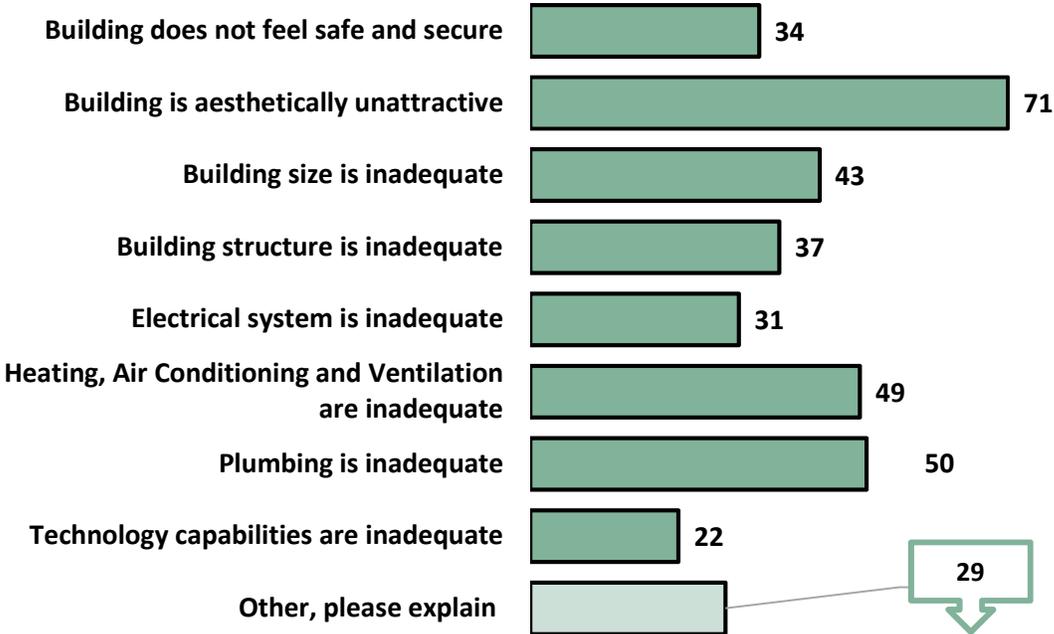
Top "Other" Responses*:* Roofing is inadequate; building is old and in need of repair or replacement; design problems with the building

Note: Roofing problems were the most often mentioned building problems that were not enumerated in question 39, with building age and need for repairs and/or replacement the second most cited building problem.

40. Are there any additional State supports and/or oversight that you think are needed to assist your district as you seek to provide and maintain adequate facilities for students

No response 10%

Yes 31%

No 59%
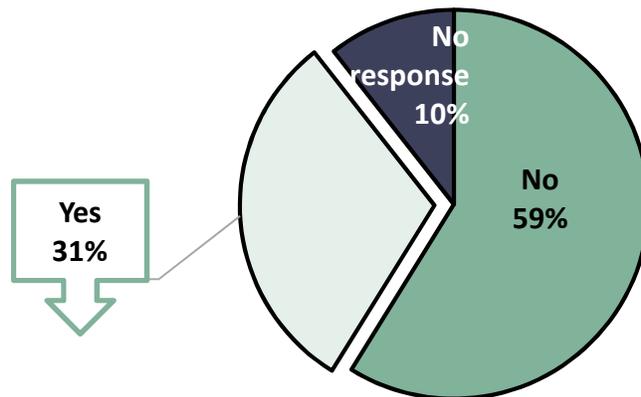
41. If yes, please specify what type of support or oversight you think is needed.

Total Responding = 78 Superintendent

Top Response: The most often mentioned type of support/oversight needed was the need for additional funding for various facility needs, including funding for safety measures, maintenance and operations, facility systems such as electrical and plumbing systems, and increased construction costs due to inflation.

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42. What is/are the greatest impediments to correcting any school facility deficiencies you identified above: *(Check all that apply.)*

Availability of land to make necessary expansions	32
Availability of necessary professionals (architects, engineers, contractors, etc.) to complete the work	7
Availability of qualified staff to maintain buildings	30
Availability of state funding	165
*Facility needs are not eligible for Partnership Program funding	88
Inability to pass a local millage for repair or replacement of facilities	60
Lack of existing school district funds/balances to fund projects	103
Other, please specify	21

* Central office, facility needs do not meet minimum project cost

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Top "Other" Responses: Rising construction costs or inflation, safe room requirements that have increased costs, and passing local millages.

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43. **SCHOOL FACILITIES –** Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.
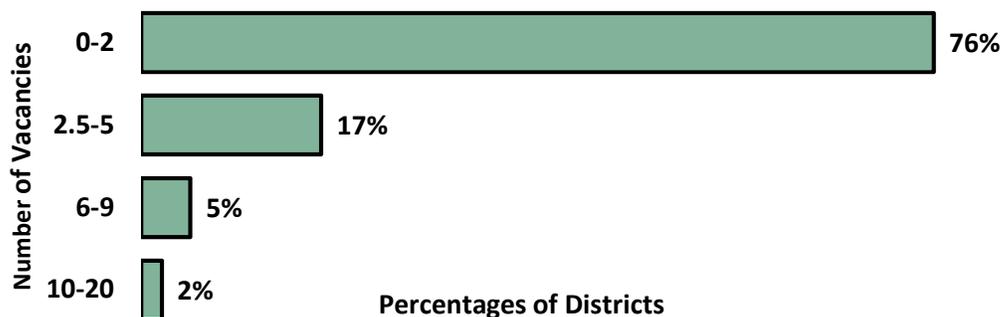
District Operations

44. To what extent have you had great difficulty recruiting and retaining school bus drivers for your academic transportation routes?
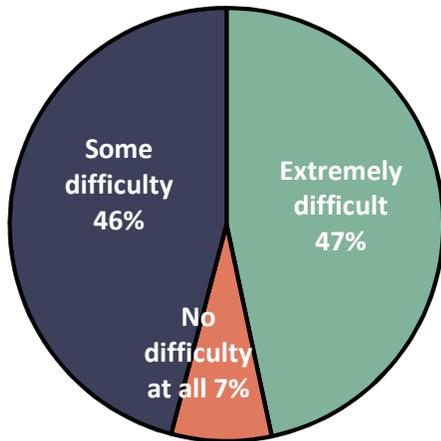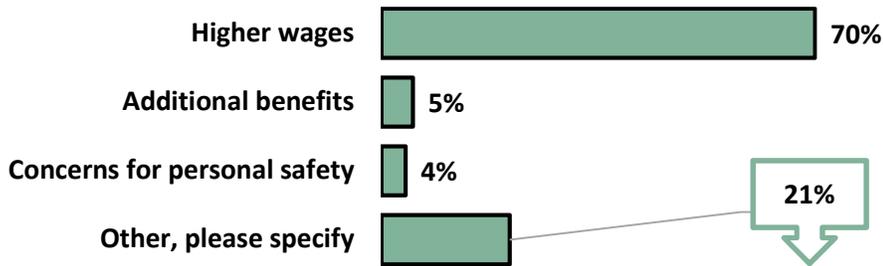

45. How many positions do you currently have for school bus driver positions?
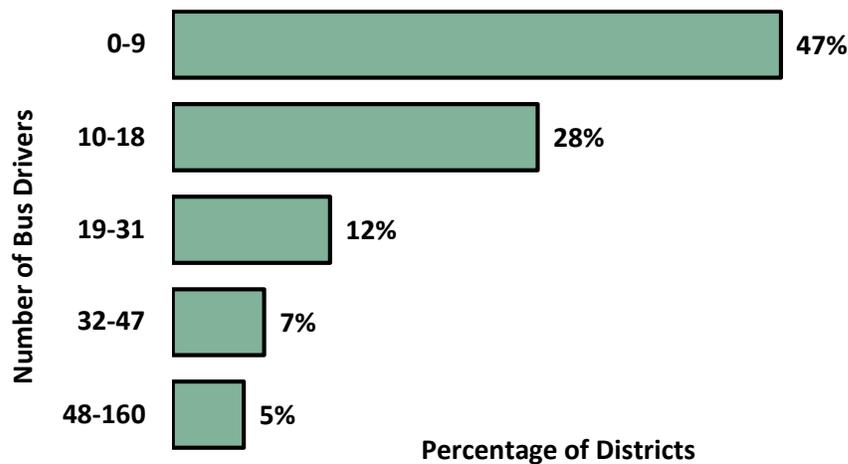

46. How many vacancies?

47. What is the greatest need to recruiting individuals to fill school bus driver positions?
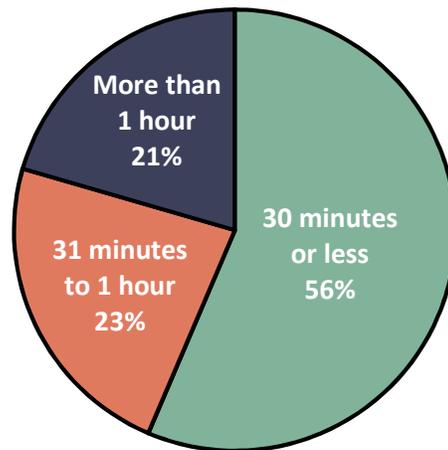
- Higher wages — **70%**
- Additional benefits — **5%**
- Concerns for personal safety — **4%**
- Other, please specify — **21%**

Top "Other" Responses: Challenge of obtaining a CDL license; schedule of bus drivers not attractive to prospective applicants (not full-time); lack of available workforce; and a need for higher salaries and benefits.

48. Have any students missed instructional time due to bus driver staffing problems? *(If no, skip to Question 51.)*

No **85%**
Yes **15%**
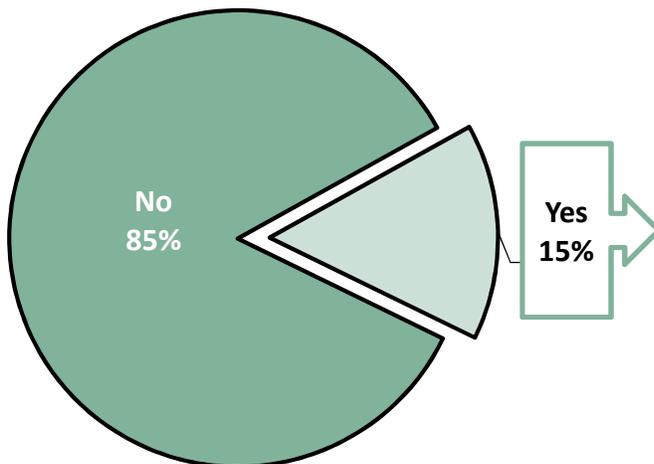
49. On average, how much instructional time was lost? *Total Responding = 39 Supt.*

- More than 1 hour **21%**
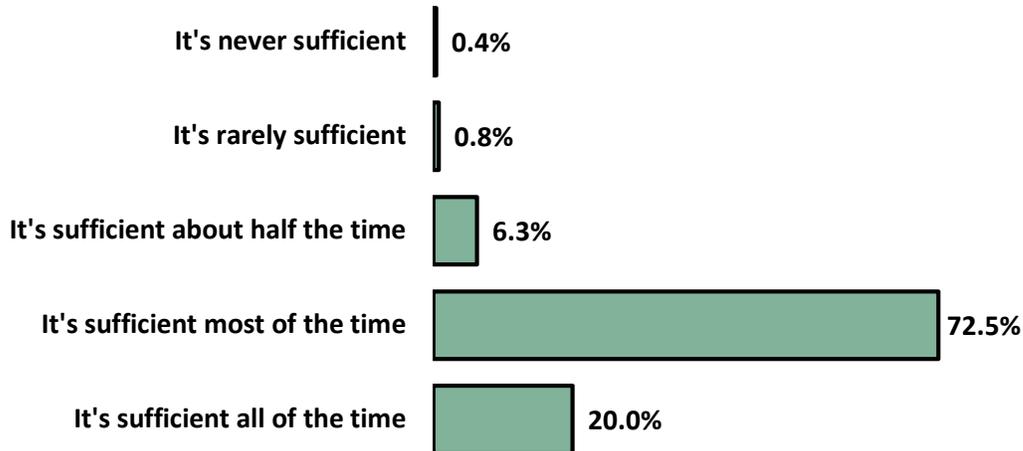- 31 minutes to 1 hour **23%**
- 30 minutes or less **56%**

50. What percentage of your student body has lost instructional time due to bus driver staffing problems? *Total Responding = 39 Supt.*

- Less than 10 percent **64%**
- 10-25 percent **21%**
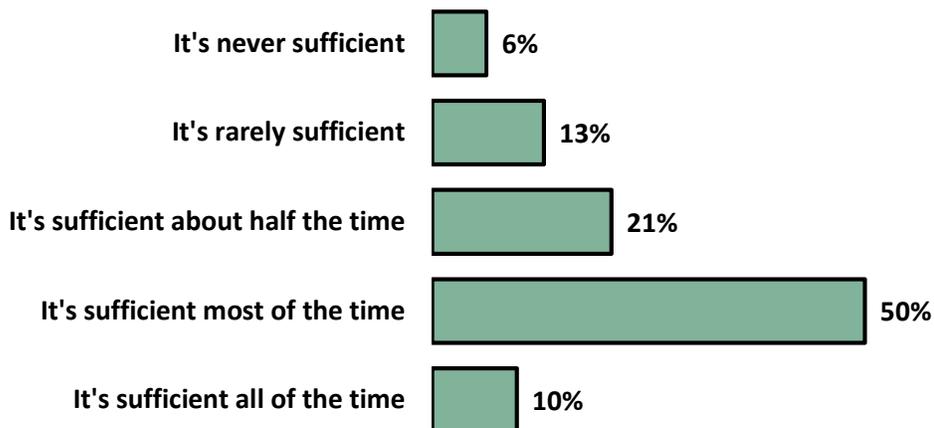- 26-50 percent **10%**
- Over 50 percent **5%**
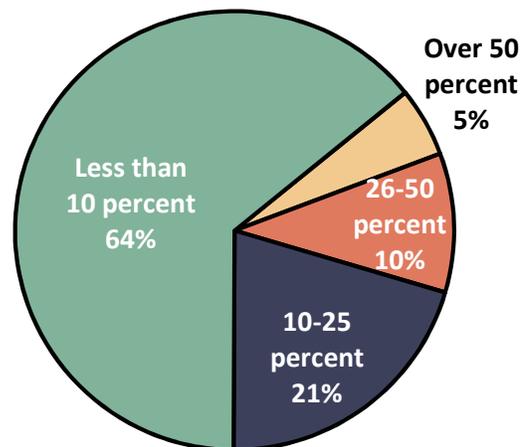
51. DISTRICT OPERATIONS – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Technology and Digital Learning

52. How sufficient is your **school district's broadband** in allowing for smooth operations of all instructional and administrative functions?

Response	Percentage
It's never sufficient	0.4%
It's rarely sufficient	0.8%
It's sufficient about half the time	6.3%
It's sufficient most of the time	72.5%
It's sufficient all of the time	20.0%

53. How sufficient is your **community's broadband** in allowing for smooth operations of all instructional and administrative functions?

| Response	Percentage
It's never sufficient	6%
It's rarely sufficient	13%
It's sufficient about half the time	21%
It's sufficient most of the time	50%
It's sufficient all of the time	10%

54. What percentage of your district's students are **allowed to take home a school-owned computer/tablet** this school year: **Average of 69%**

55. What percentage of your district's students **already have access to a computer at home** so do not need a school computer: (include students even if they did take home a school computer). Please put unknown if your answer is not known. **Average of 45.50%**

56. TECHNOLOGY AND DIGITAL LEARNING – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Preschool Program

57. Does your district operate a preschool program? *(If not, skip to next section).*
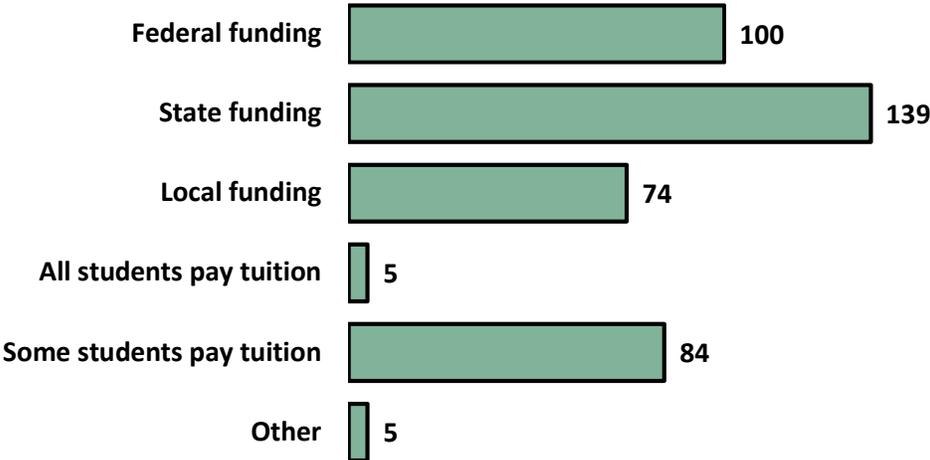

No 34%

Yes 66%
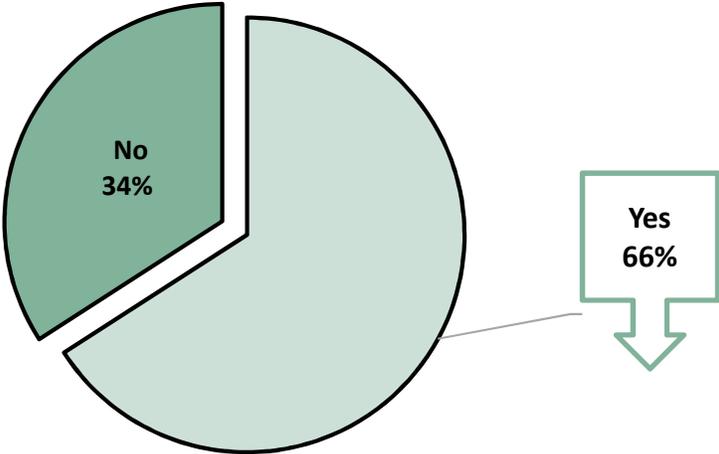
58. What ages does your preschool program serve?
(Check all that apply.) Multiple responses from 168 superintendents.

Four years old	152
Three years old	123
Younger than three years old	19

59. What kinds of funding does your district use to fund preschool?
(Check all that apply.) Multiple responses from 168 superintendents.

Federal funding	100
State funding	139
Local funding	74
All students pay tuition	5
Some students pay tuition	84
Other	5

60. For the 2022-23 school year, what was your district's October 1 preschool enrollment?

Enrollment	Number
Average	88
Highest	299
Lowest	10

61. Does your district offer preschool for every four-year old in your district?

Yes 35%

No 65%
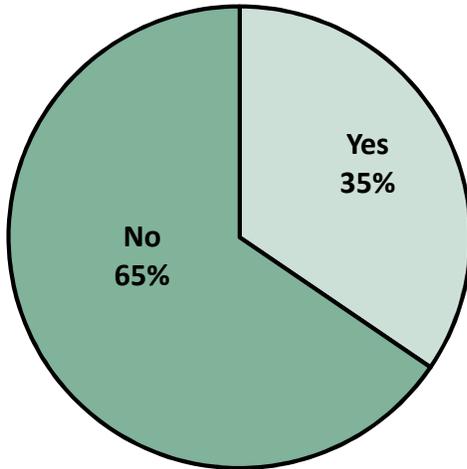
62. In the 2022-23 school year, how much per preschool student did your district spend on preschool?

Preschool Spending	Amount
Average	$12,509
High	$9,515
Low	$75

63. PRESCHOOL PROGRAM – Respondents were allowed to make comments about the preceding topic, some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.

Comments

64. OVERALL – Respondents were allowed to make overall comments some of which will be used in relevant adequacy reports.