



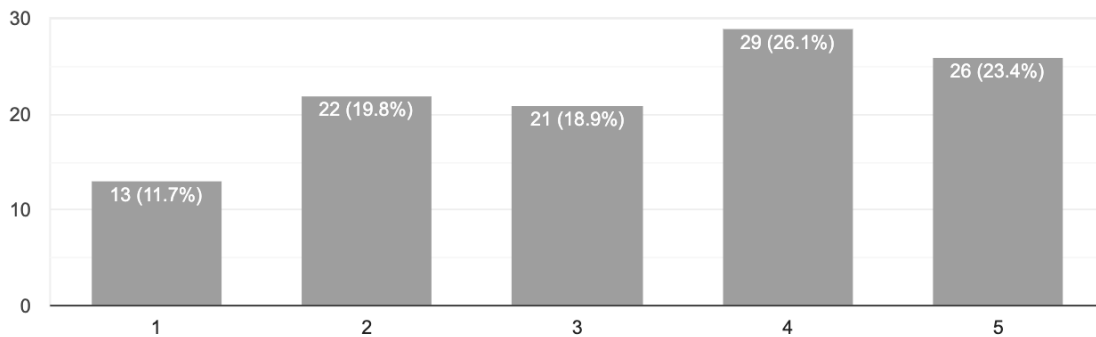
\*\*The following survey was completed by Vermont Principals' Association members on May 4th & 5th of 2021. As of 9pm on 5/5/21 there were 111 respondents. A few comments have had identifying information removed.

## VPA Hiring/Workforce Survey: May 4th & 5th, 2021

### Question 1

How likely is your school to have open positions go unfilled for the next school year? (1 = not likely, 5 = very likely)

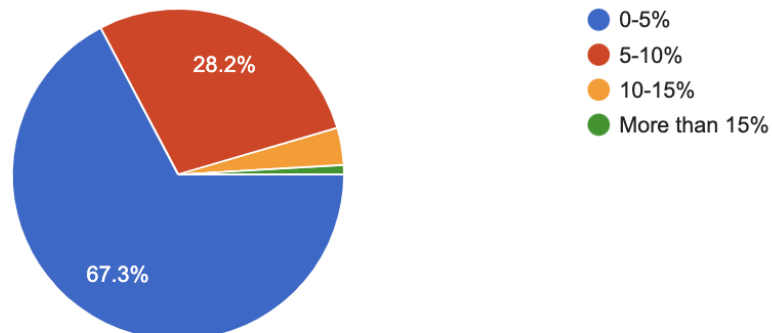
111 responses



### Question 2

Can you estimate the percentage of positions (in your school) that may go unfilled for next school year?

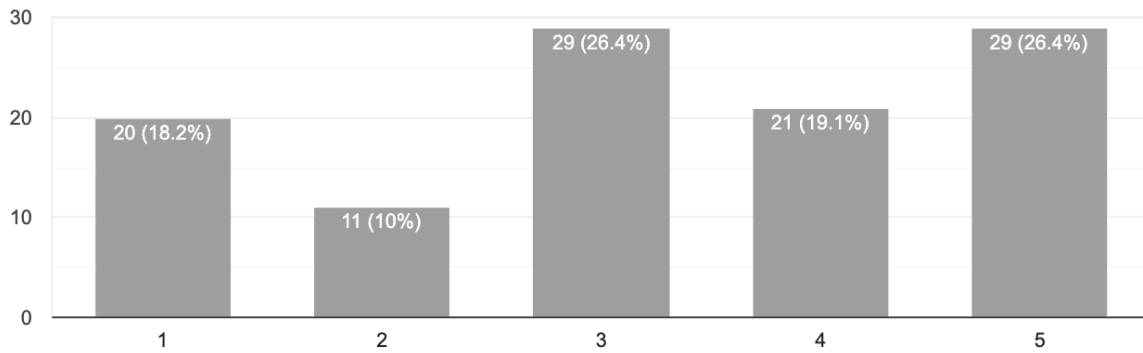
110 responses



### Question 3

Is concern for being able to fill positions shaping your plans/decisions for ESSER related resources? (1 = no, not at all, 5 = yes definitely)

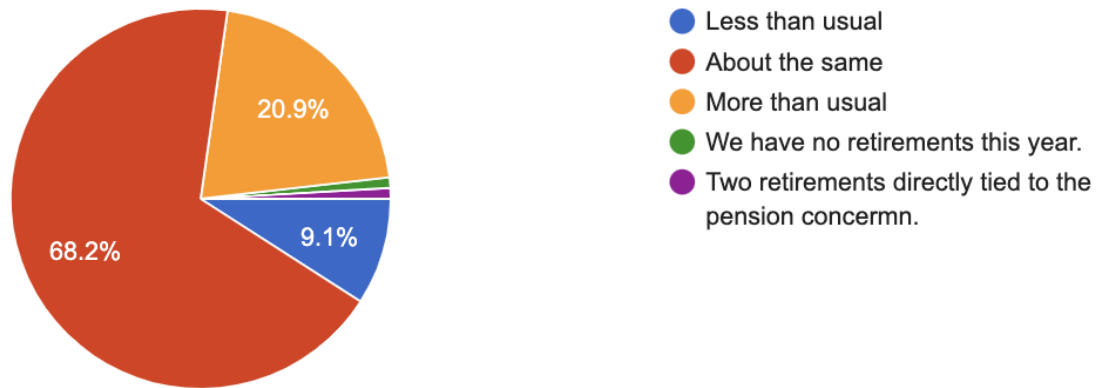
110 responses



### Question 4

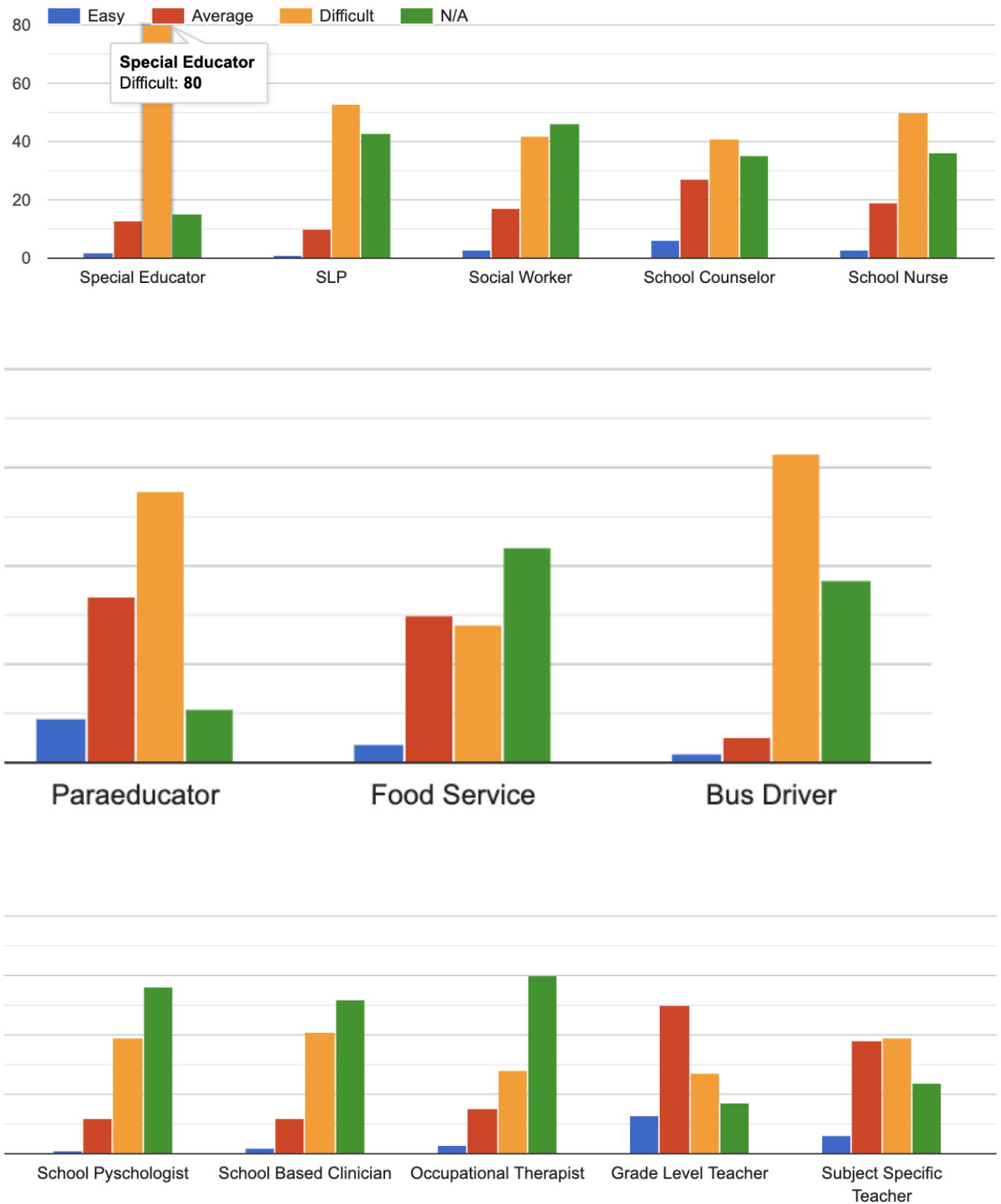
Choose one of the following: The quantity of retirements this year (2020-21) is:

110 responses



## Question 5

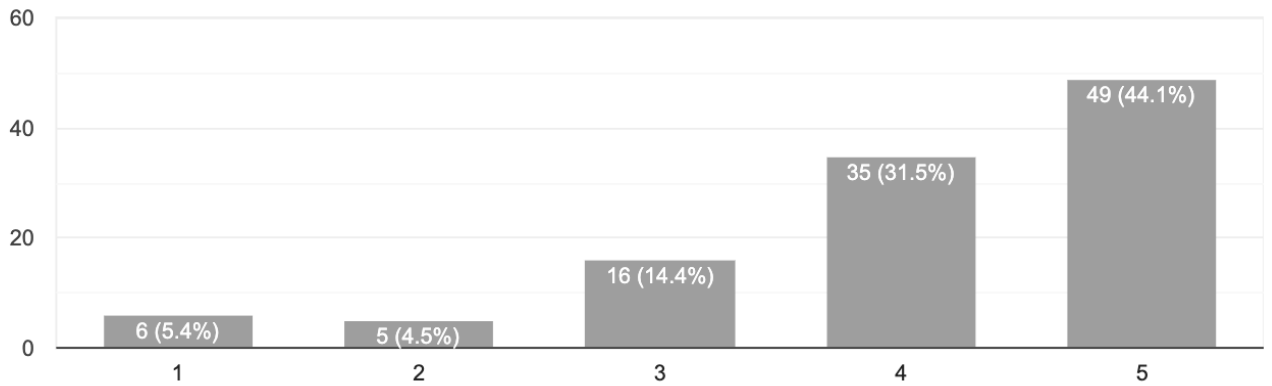
Rate the difficulty in filling the following roles



## Question 6

How helpful would it be to have more licensing flexibility in filling roles? (1 = not at all helpful, 5 = very helpful)

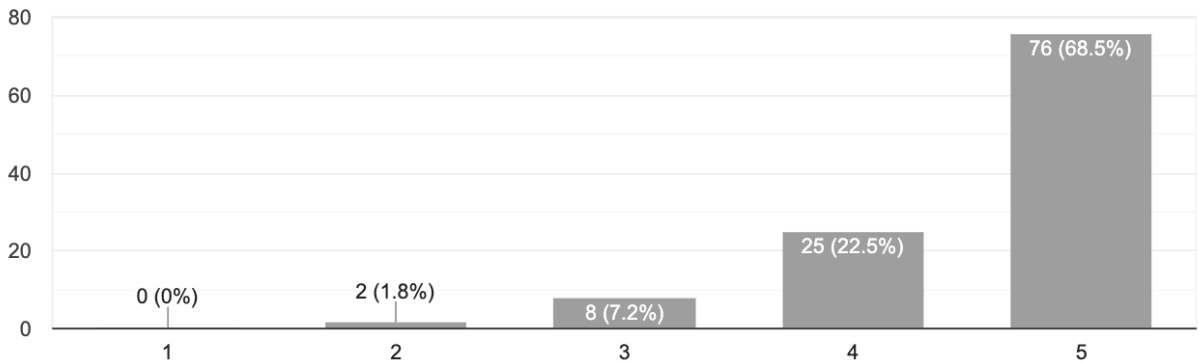
111 responses



## Question 7

Would your school or district benefit from a statewide campaign for recruiting and retaining educators? (1 = No, not at all, 5 = Yes, very much)

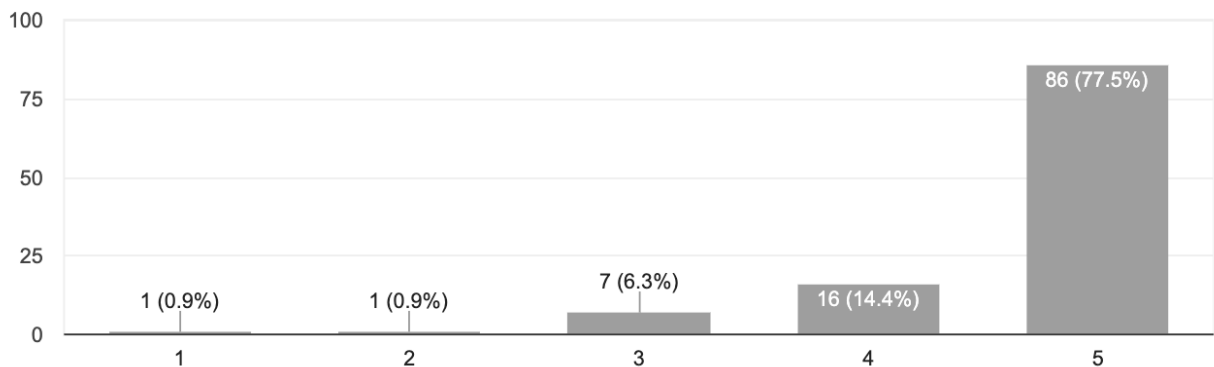
111 responses



## Question 8

Would your school or district benefit from a statewide campaign for recruiting and retaining a more diverse educator workforce? (1 = No, not at all, 5 = Yes, very much)

111 responses



## Optional Comment Box

We are experiencing a relatively high number of resignations in the intermediate and middle grades (due to moving closer to home or changing to a different position due to the past year's challenges). Most of these positions are content specific and some (SS, ELA) are garnering a number of applicants while others (math, science) are not. MS math has been posted for more than a month and we have one applicant.... There's not much of a draw to the NEK and to schools at this time...

We previously (about 5 years ago) would have over 100 applicants for a grade level teaching position. This year, with an opening in 5th, we have less than 10 applicants. The amount of stress, low wages for folks with higher education, scrutiny from communities regarding professionalism (what they believe teachers should do -- parent, teach, police, feed, clothe, etc.) simply makes teaching look unattractive. We have teachers that make as much or more than local administrators as well -- finding licensed principals is being a serious issue.

Being a small school in a rural location makes all hiring (even average positions) somewhat more difficult. It is especially an issue with part time positions. It might be useful to have an informal statewide list of part time positions that principals could work together to find ways to help staff cobble together full positions. In general, I am not sure licensing flexibility will do much to address the concerns since we already utilize a wide variety of flexibility and still have trouble recruiting and retaining.

We're hiring as a district, so while I answered these questions for my school only, my answers don't reflect the overall hiring issues that we're facing. We may need as many as 5 special education teachers for next year. This is not because people are retiring, but because they are leaving to work closer to home. Because of ESSR funds, there are a ton of openings and it's hurting those of us in remote areas. Lyndon and Johnson are turning out far fewer licensed teachers than they have prior. We need to improve these programs so that they attract young adults. Lyndon used to have a great program. It doesn't anymore.

This year I feel fortunate in my building's staffing but I know my district will struggle.

Licensing is a choke point, both in terms of recruiting a diverse workforce and in terms of retention. My teachers are wasting time on elaborate bureaucratic compliance rather than planning their lessons and delivering high quality instruction. AOE's so-called "Educator Quality" division cannot create policies to ensure quality from 35,000 feet. Rather, they need to focus on "safe to practice" and leave matters of quality to the local level - the conversation between administrator and teacher. Administrators are trained to evaluate and support, and we need to be trusted to do our jobs, not be second guessed by bureaucrats. The licensing/relicensing mechanism is at best tangential to the in-the-trenches work of real educators, and at worst a ball and chain on our work.

Regional contracts for salary purposes would be helpful.

I wonder if some of the challenges in finding staff is shaped by region (ie. Chittenden County versus the rest of Vermont)

A big challenge in this pandemic year is managing all the additional work that is going into planning for summer and next year. Finding time to complete a well structured hiring process is very difficult as there are so many more details manage on a daily basis

The salary scale for our school is much lower than our neighboring states and the schools in the Burlington area. We have lost many candidates due to salary and benefit packages.

I would add to the list above: BIs, academic interventionists, custodians, academic coaches, preschool staff, after-school staff and administrative positions (admin assistants, health assistants, and central office admin positions), especially in rural districts. I don't think flexibility of licensing is a good answer for many specialized positions - we need people with the skills that licensing insures. Just putting bodies into positions isn't effective. After trying to sell the public on the importance of summer school for students, the politicians then shifted to "hire high school students" as the answer to staffing challenges. Too often we put the least qualified people with the students with the most needs. Or these unqualified people need extensive training and/or supervision from existing staff. The problem isn't new, but increased needs are exacerbating the historical reality - especially in areas of the state that are sparsely populated, have low pay, or jobs that are part time and don't offer benefits. The issue is complex and multi-layered. It isn't just about more bodies or waving licensing requirements. This should be about a long term plan

to solve a long term historical problem. If we use ESSER monies with an investment mindset instead of short term solutions, we'll be in a better place when that money disappears. We should be thinking equitably about small rural schools and districts as much as the larger wealthier districts. Thanks for the opportunity for input.

The low level of pay offered by our district is causing an increasing number of teachers to ride the train to Chittenden County as well as other districts at much greater numbers than ever before. Our percentage of teachers turning over is on the rise and may be as high as 10% which is the highest it has ever been in my twenty years at our school. I have expressed my feelings about the need to better compensate our teachers, but it appears to fall on deaf ears year after year.

Helping people understand and navigate the opportunity for student loan forgiveness for working in identified shortage areas may be helpful in recruiting educators to this state.

Also not asked, how difficult to fill administrative positions - somewhat difficult.

Hiring is a definite challenge this year. I am finding that there is not much diversity in the candidate pool at all. I believe that active outreach in areas with more diversity would definitely help. Thanks for asking!

Influx in money, and therefore positions, has allowed for more shifting of people into other roles in the SU. The workforce coming to us (out of state or from college) is not keeping up.

Please stop messing with retirement (I know it's not VPA, but that's been a difficult factor).

This state needs to work harder to make teaching here an attractive option. Right now it feels like the governor and AOE just want people to quit and leave the state. Frankly, it's discouraging.

I anticipate that due to our district's approach to the next couple years (proposed "repurposing" 3 schools for FY23), people will be reluctant to apply to our district.

As an independent school, I am doubtful that a statewide campaign would include us, hence my neutral response. I think it's a good idea, though.

We must also consider the current pension crisis in our state, and the impact it is having on attracting new teachers. Why would new teachers want to start out here and why would experienced teachers want to come here to teach?

We need to attract and retain a more diverse teaching staff that better represents the population I am serving . We have 26 languages spoken in our school building.

The last question is the most critical and an area where we have had absolutely no help.

I get applications, but I'm finding the quality of the potential candidates is not as good as I remember from years past.

I would love to be able to compensate people better.

I would love to see a state effort at recruiting and retaining minority educators. As you know all students benefit from this.

Also working super hard and spending long hours on recruitment of all positions.

Our current challenge is to fill an opening for a Science Teacher. We are entering our third round of new interviews. We move rather quickly on these openings, but by the time I get to offering the position to someone, they already have taken a job.

I believe a state-wide teacher contract would level the playing field. My school district pays teachers more than most and tend to get many high quality candidates for all positions. All the controversy over the retirement system has caused some great educators to retire early and I fear is discouraging others from coming to our state.

I am very concerned about finding highly qualified people to help support the schools plans for the next couple of years. We have always found it difficult to fill part time positions- school nurse, music teacher, librarians and at times PE teachers.

We have a very high turnover for special education positions district-wide. This is creating significant challenges for us when thinking about meeting the needs of our students. I'd say it's the number one concern.

Our school would benefit if the state would make better health insurance (cost) and retirement available.

we would benefit from the recruitment, however when Chittenden COunty pays 10k or more per, I guess we would not get any folks..... just sayin

Math and Science positions have received the fewest applicants and have been the most difficult to fill with qualified teachers.

In addition to above: a shoring up and improvement of teachers pension situation would go a long way for existing teachers, as well as for recruiting new teachers. Secondly, the recruitment of educators of color to Vermont and possibly an exchange or fellowship program between schools/districts/the state and communities of color would be a step in the right direction.

This is a huge problem. Thank you for bringing attention to it.

Perhaps our greatest challenge is retaining teachers in science and mathematics after they gain a few years of experience and positions open up in neighboring districts or counties. Additionally not having a teacher education program in vocational education in Vermont makes it difficult to fill vacancies in vocational and technical education.