**From:** David Mustonen [mailto:mustond@dearbornschools.org]   
**Sent:** Monday, June 26, 2017 3:10 PM  
**To:** Gantert, Tom E. <Gantert@mackinac.org>

Hello Tom,

Below is a bit more information from our HR department. Hope this is helpful.

Take care,

David

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Mr. Gantert,

Thanks for your interest in writing about the teacher shortage in Michigan. This is a very important and complex topic that needs to be communicated to the public.

The information we provided to legally fulfill your FOIA request may not be the most accurate way, or best tool to use, to understand and analyze the teacher shortage issue.  We provided a raw data report of our applicant tracking system.  It certainly needs some explanation.  To suggest we have on average 38 applicants per position would not be accurate.  Thanks for seeking clarification.

Perhaps we should have sent this information with our response but FOIA request don’t always allow the responding agency time to give explanations.  Especially this time of year when we are working on placing approximately 1,300 teachers into their 2017-18 assignment, accepting retirement and resignations notices, and doing intake interviews for 8-14 new hires per week.

The data we sent  included many non- teaching positions.   It is also not reflective of a direct tie between a single open position and the number of candidates available for that position.  In many cases we are posting multiple open positions.  We also see the same candidate applying for multiple positions.

The data comes out of our online Applicant Tracking system.  We contract with Frontline Technologies to administer the program through the Wayne County Regional Educational Service Agency (WRESA).  This is a consortium of schools districts and charters that work together and share an application process.  Dearborn School joined this consortium in the Fall of 2016.  Prior to that we used an online system that was restricted to Dearborn School applications only.

I am aware of similar consortiums in Oakland and Washtenaw counties.  Frontline Technologies is a national company and serves districts throughout the nation.  It may be helpful to understand how applications are obtained and screened.  I suggest you contact the consortium administrator for a demonstration.

We are using the application software to find candidates and it is working well.  We have not spent much time working with the reports and analysis functionality of the system.  We are very pleased with the ability of the system to recruit candidates and compile pools of candidates for a particular position.   This certainly helps with combating the teacher shortage and was a major factor in joining the consortium.   We are still experiencing a shortage of quality candidates for specific positions.

The data can be used for some limited analysis. For example, the School Psychologist position.  This is not a teaching position but is an area where there are shortages.  We posted 2 psychologist positions and had received only 4 applications tied to those postings.

The Elementary teacher for 2017-18 posting received 381 applications.  Dearborn will likely hire 50-70 elementary teachers starting in the spring and throughout the summer.  Those same 381 applicants likely are applying for posting throughout Wayne County and the state.  To apply, candidates that have applications in the WRESA system simply need to add their name to any posting that shows in the system.

The same applies for the 178 applicants that applied for our High School/Middle School Multiple positions.  We will likely be hiring 50-60 secondary teachers.  Some of these 178 applicants may also have applied to one of our more specific postings.  For example they could be in the Physical Education (30 Candidates) pool or the High School language arts (44 candidates) pool.

With secondary teachers we also have to deal with the  specific subject they will teach and assure that they have the proper certification.  We are not seeing a shortage in secondary social studies applicants.  We are seeing a shortage in secondary Math, Science, Family and Consumer Science, and Industrial Arts (i.e; Welding, Woodworking, Auto Mechanics).

English as a Second language certifications are also in shortage.  In many urban areas we need teachers certified to teach students that speak a language other than English as their primary language at home.   Because of the shortage, Dearborn has to get a state permit to allow staff to teach outside their certification.  We hire staff willing to obtain the endorsement and allow them to take classes over their first 4 years.

Special Education certified staff are also in high demand with low supply.  Dearborn and several other Wayne County Districts are struggling to find staff certified to teach the growing population of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).  In Special Education I anticipate needing to hire 40-60 teachers and other professionals (Social Workers, Psychologist, Nurses, Occupational and Physical Therapist).

As members of the WRESA consortium we also have access to any applicant that fills out an online application in the Consortium.    In some cases we pull candidates from the major county wide pools.  Currently (6-26-17) there are 2,097 elementary candidates, 1,961 middle school candidates and 1,642 high school candidates.  This is very raw as anyone can apply regardless of qualifications,  Middle School Candidates could also be in the Elementary or High school pool.

Please keep in mind that the pool of applicants also includes current teachers looking to change  jobs.   Dearborn hires many candidates out of charters and other districts.  When we hire them, their former employer has a vacancy to fill.  We also lose teachers to other districts for a variety of reasons.   This time of year there are many positions being added simply because of the movement of current staff.

I hope this information is helpful. As I said it is a complex issue.  Keep in mind that Dearborn’s issue are in some cases different than Detroit, Bloomfield Hills, Clarkston, Alpena or Mackinac Island.  We are a growing district and are greatly impacted by the teacher shortage.

I hired 145 new teachers this past school year.  Already, I have identified 56 current staff not returning next year.  In addition, we anticipate adding 60 additional positions. Retiring Administrators will also be replaced by teaching staff promoted into administration.  It is likely we will bring in 175-200 new hire teachers and other professional for 2017-18.

There is also a huge Substitute Teaching Shortage and qualified teachers are hired out of the sub pool.  Dearborn has less of an issue with the sub shortage but starting in 2016-17 we did experience more unfilled positions that in prior years.   We see this as a growing issue.