



Impact of Staff Shortages on School Districts

Nationally, growing student population needs, and school accountability combined with declining enrollments in teacher preparation programs are threatening to undermine the quality of schools.

	Current Issues	Support needed
Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased certification requirements in NYS have impacted teacher candidates who successfully complete their academic program but are unable to complete the credentialing requirements. Work force availability has been unpredictably impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of available substitute teachers, has declined significantly. School districts are competing for substitute teachers needed for teacher release time required by mandate compliance and training. The tax levy cap contributes to constraints on competitive starting salaries for teaching staff. After years of negative messaging about public education as a failing institution and multiple misguided reform measures, teachers are looking to leave the profession at higher rates and students are indicating that they do not wish to enter the field of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Foundation Aid needs to be fully funded so that schools have the necessary operation aid in order to recruit and retain teaching and support staff. ✓ Additional federal relief is required to maintain the workforce in the pandemic (childcare, substitutes, etc). ✓ Federal Title II needs to be fully funded to ensure educators receive the tools to be successful from their teacher preparation programs. ✓ The Federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program and TEACH Grant program need to be implemented as designed with funding released according to statute and transparent, consistent guidance on loan consolidations options. ✓ New funding is needed for training that has proven to generate higher student outcomes (i.e., culturally sensitive classroom practices, mental health needs and restorative behavioral initiatives). ✓ Perception of teaching as a noble and highly skilled profession needs to be reset so that schools can recruit and retain teachers.
Support Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recent data shows one in five children may suffer from a mental health related issue and the COVID-19 pandemic has escalated students' mental health needs. On-site mental health clinics are underfunded by NYS and rely primarily on insurance-based funding not all families can access. Paraprofessionals are instrumental in providing student support for school age children needs. The tax levy cap and minimum wage increases have added to the complexity of filling positions. The financial viability of early intervention (EI) and preschool service providers has been limited by low reimbursement rates and slow payouts from Monroe County and NYS. Growing wait lists exist for children eligible for these services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dedicated funding is needed for mental health, teacher training and coordination of services to families in crisis so districts are not forced to choose between academic programing and meeting student's needs. ✓ NYS should create a sufficient, long-term viable funding source for Community Schools, and make it available at the school building level for districts where the building demographics meet the poverty criteria. ✓ NYS and Monroe County should increase funding for EI and preschool service programs so providers can afford to hire and retain staff. ✓ Research has documented that early intervention services are significant factors in the education success of children once they enter school.

MCSBA urges Federal, State and County legislators to help school districts remediate staff shortages to better serve students.