



AACPS STAFFING INITIATIVES (August 2022)

As Anne Arundel County Public Schools confronts ongoing decline in the number of available teacher candidates, we remain committed to maximizing instructional quality without diminishing opportunities for students. Across the state, more than 5,500 teachers left their positions in 2022, according to the Maryland State Department of Education (“Maryland’s Teacher Workforce: Supply, Demand, and Diversity,” July 26, 2022).

As of August 10, 2022, AACPS has 351 classroom teacher vacancies that impact all clusters and all school levels. We intend to address this issue with the following initiatives at this time:

- Staff in the Division of Human Resources continues its around-the-clock work to aggressively recruit, hire, and onboard high-quality classroom teachers to fill vacancies across the system.
- Freezing Central Office hires of internal school-based candidates so as not to take staffing from schools until vacancies are resolved.
- Temporarily shifting work locations for identified staff in central and satellite offices, moving them to schools to fill vacancies where prudent and practical.
- Reviewing class sizes at all levels to determine if under enrolled classes can be combined, thereby reducing the number of vacancies at a school or allowing a teacher to be moved to an existing vacancy within the same school.
- Adjusting class size target ratios upward *slightly* at all levels in non-Title I schools and at kindergarten in Title I schools.
 - This could result in somewhat larger class rosters (2-4 students in most cases) at the elementary level but will allow schools to shift staff where prudent and practical to reconcile vacancies within their own buildings. Schools will not lose vacant teacher allocations, so future hires and shifts could be easily accomplished.
- In accordance with the new target ratios, collapse and combine classes where prudent and practical. The Office of School Performance continues to work with school leaders to maximize staffing.
 - At the elementary level, this may result in collapsing of classes in grade levels that are under enrolled in situations that would maintain recommended class size ratios in Title I schools and meet the adjusted class size ratios in non-Title I schools.
 - At the secondary level, this could include combining under enrolled classes in the same subject, collapsing under enrolled classes and shifting staff to critical shortage areas.
- Utilizing ESSER funds to continue use of extended substitutes, who are assigned to a single school to support daily classroom vacancies.
- Continuing the exploration of Board-approved staffing agency contracts to fill vacancies, particularly in special education.
- Continuing to compensate Unit I employees for additional class coverage (subject to resolution of impasse proceedings with Teachers Association of Anne Arundel County).
- Utilizing virtual options and distance learning where prudent and practical.

- This could include opportunities both in a single school or among several schools in which a teacher simultaneously instructs several classes or utilization of grant funding to pay for instruction for students at Anne Arundel Community College.

AACPS has also:

- contacted conditionally certificated teachers who were not previously eligible for continued employment but became eligible under the extended certification period waiver adopted by the Maryland State Board of Education on July 26, 2022.
- reached out to retired AACPS teachers who continue to hold certifications to gauge their interest in teaching either full-time or part-time schedules.
- reached out to business partners and other community stakeholders to gauge part-time adjunct teacher interest.

It is our belief that the above measures, while temporary, will vastly mitigate the issues that are present as the 2022-23 school year approaches and maximize the quality of instruction students across our school system receive. AACPS will continue to closely examine vacancies and class sizes at every school and discuss further measures as they may become necessary.