

APPENDIX II – 17

Background

The number of vacancies remaining in Tucson Unified as this school year begins should not be viewed in a vacuum. Indeed, it must be interpreted and evaluated within a proper context. TUSD, and all of Arizona, faces a teacher shortage crisis. In June of 2015, just 25 Phoenix valley school districts reported nearly 1000 classroom vacancies between them. Lowe, M. (2015, June 10).¹

The data contained in a report from the Arizona Department of Education² is also compelling in its implications for recruitment of qualified staff into the District:

- 62% of Arizona school districts surveyed during the 2013-2014 school year, reported having open teaching positions within their schools in November of that school year
- Districts and charters reported 938 teaching positions open were filled by substitutes during this period
- Arizona has fewer people entering the teaching profession. The state has observed a 7% decrease from 2012 in the number of students enrolling in educator preparation programs (citing U.S. Department of Education, Title II HEOA (<https://title2.ed.gov/Public/Report/StateHome.aspx>)).
- The state is not retaining teachers who do join the profession; during the 2013-2014 school year, 24% of first year teachers and 20% of second year teachers left the profession.

There are a host of reasons for Arizona's and TUSD's teacher shortage. These reasons are well known and need not be elaborated on for purposes of this response. They are documented in the ADE Report and have been observed even nationally.³

One of primary reasons often cited for the shortage of teachers in Arizona, of course, is low salaries. The ADE Report states that the average pay for a starting teacher in Arizona in 2015 was \$31,874. TUSD's starting salary for a first-year teacher for the 2016-2017 school year, however, is approximately \$35,700. With performance pay and other incentives, a brand new teacher in Tucson Unified has the very likely potential of earning up to \$38,700. The District is therefore highly competitive with respect to the major factor of compensation within the State but is still low nationally.

The District's competitive efforts are evidenced in the current vacancy data. While any unfilled classroom is of concern, it should be noted that there are less than five vacancies in those job classifications targeted by paragraph B of the Stipulation (see chart below). The overall vacancy rate in the District is 5.2%; the vacancy rate for all magnet schools is 1.4%. This is an achievement – one still to be improved on --but the progress is notable given the Arizona shortage backdrop.

¹ *AZ teacher exodus leaves more than 1K Valley classrooms vacant.* CBS 5 News (KPHO Broadcasting Corporation). Retrieved from <http://www.cbs5az.com/story/29292218/az-teacher-exodus-leaves-more-than-1k-valley-classrooms-vacant>.

² *Educator Recruitment & Retention Task Force Report*, Arizona Dep't of Education, January 2015 (<http://www.azed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/err-initial-report-final.pdf>).

³ See, e.g., Strauss, V. (2015, June 19). *Why teachers are fleeing Arizona in droves.* The Washington Post. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answer-sheet/wp/2015/06/19/why-teachers-are-fleeing-arizona-in-droves/>.

Magnet Stipulation, Paragraph B (Eight Schools)

The Magnet Stip requires the District to “take steps to ensure that the schools or programs identified in Paragraph 6 above remain fully staffed (as to certificated staff, administrators, and all teaching aids and other personnel identified in the Improvement Plan as contributing to the school’s effort to improve achievement and close the achievement gap between racial groups at the school) prior to the start of the 2016-17 school year.” ECF 1865 at 7, paragraph B. Paragraph 6 lists eight schools: Bonillas, Holladay, Ochoa, Robison, Safford K-8, Utterback, Cholla, and Pueblo. The chart below provides information as to the status of “certificated staff, administrators, and all teaching aids and other personnel identified in the Improvement Plan as contributing to the school’s effort to improve achievement and close the achievement gap...” at the eight schools identified in paragraph 6.

School	Positions Identified in Magnet Plans	Filled	Unfilled	Comment
Bonillas All 7 filled	Magnet Coordinator Magnet Teachers (2) Teaching Assistants (4)	1 2 4		
Holladay 9.5 of 10.5 filled	Magnet Coordinator Reading Interventionist Reading/Math Specialist (2) Instructional Specialists (3) Teachers - Perf/Visual Arts (2) Community Liaison Counselor (.5)	1 1 2 2 2 1 .5	1	Instructional Specialist was filled but resigned two weeks before school started
Ochoa .75 of 1.75 filled	Magnet Coordinator Teaching Assistant (.75)	0 .75	1	
Robison All 5.3 filled	Magnet Coordinator Math Coach Magnet Teachers, Music/PE (1.5) Classified Tech Community Liaison (.8)	1 1 1.5 1 .8		
Safford 14.2 of 15.2 filled	Magnet Coordinator Librarian Counselor Curriculum Service Provider Magnet Teachers (11.2)	1 1 1 1 10.2	1	Vacant IB Spanish teacher
Utterback 6 of 7 filled	Magnet Coordinator Data Coach Magnet Teachers (5)	1 1 4	1	Vacant Art teacher (currently filled with a long-term sub who is in the process of obtaining her teaching certification)
Cholla 13.2 of 14 filled	Magnet Coordinator IB Coordinator School Resource Officer IB Teachers (10) Math Intervention, 6/5ths (1)	1 1 1 10 .2	.8	
Pueblo All 8 filled	Magnet Coordinator Media Specialist Data Specialist Magnet Teachers (5)	1 1 1 5		
Total to be Filled = 68.75	Total Filled	63.95	4.8	Total Unfilled

