

Teacher Vacancy Grant Analysis

July 2026

Summary

Trends indicate that the Teacher Vacancy Grant (TVG) districts continue to show lower vacancy rates in the 2025-26 school year. The vacancy rate difference between TVG districts and non-TVG districts in the 2023-24 school year was 3.4 percentage points; in the 2025-26 school year, the difference was 2.4 percentage points. Regular teachers and special education (SPED) teachers have the most unfilled positions, so improvements in the vacancy rate for those positions drive the statewide and overall improvements.

Data Notes

The data used for this report comes from the annual [Unfilled Positions Reports](#) using the Total Full-time Equivalent (FTE) teachers needed and Vacancy Rate data calculated from the Employment Information System annual collection. Data used is limited to public districts.

Importantly, the vacancy rates reported in this analysis are the vacancy rate calculated using the formula below for the aggregation in question. So, for example, the vacancy rate for the TVG districts in the Southwest region uses the sum of the unfilled and filled FTE from those districts — it is not the average vacancy rate among those districts. The definition of a vacancy rate is as follows:

$$\text{Approximate Vacancy Rate SY 2026} = \frac{\text{Unfilled FTE SY 2026}}{\text{Unfilled FTE SY 2026} + \text{Filled FTE SY 2025}} * 100$$

Within this report you will find:

1. State level trends comparing TVG and non-TVG districts
2. Regional trends comparing TVG and non-TVG districts
3. Comparison of SPED, SPED bilingual, and bilingual teacher vacancies for TVG and non-TVG districts

One important factor to consider when comparing the TVG and non-TVG districts is that the Teacher Vacancy Grant districts were selected due to their high vacancy rates, which means that the districts that were not selected typically had much lower vacancy rates and fewer submitted records. Consequently, about 79% of all Unfilled Positions FTE are in the TVG district group. Furthermore, TVG districts were often starting from a higher baseline of approximate vacancy rate.

Vacancy Rate Over Time

Figure 1: Since SY 2024, vacancy rates for TVG districts have decreased more than non-TVG districts statewide.

Vacancy Rate Comparison of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts

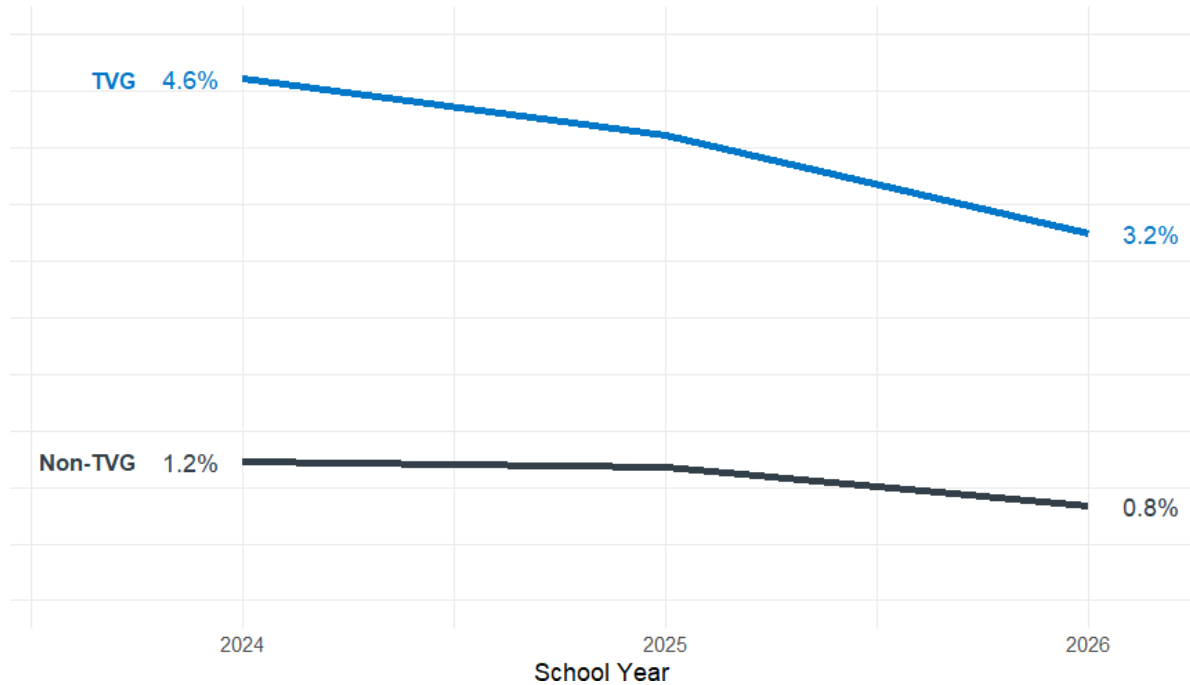


Figure 1 shows the comparison of average vacancy rate among TVG and non-TVG districts. Vacancy rates for TVG districts continue to decrease year-over-year while non-TVG districts have shown less change. TVG districts reduced their vacancy rates from 4.6% to 3.2% from SY 2024 to SY 2026. Non-TVG districts vacancy rate decreased from 1.2% to 0.8% over the same time.

Figure 2: Since SY 2024, the vacancy rate has increased more rapidly for TVG districts statewide.

Vacancy Rate Comparison of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts

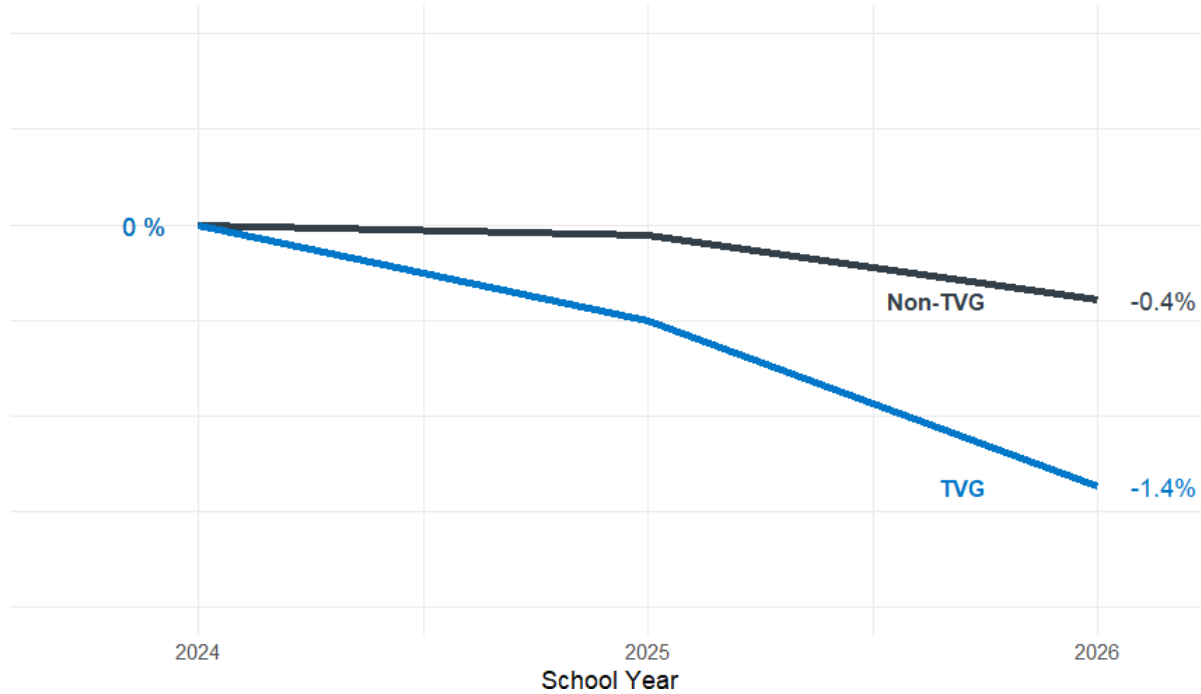


Figure 2 shows the vacancy rate changes since 2024 with all trends starting at zero change in SY 2024, establishing a baseline to more clearly see change. The vacancy rate for non-TVG districts showed an overall 0.4 percentage point decrease from SY 2024 to SY 2026. TVG districts showed decreases such that, by SY 2026, the average vacancy rate at those districts decreased by 1.4 percentage points.

Geographic Differences

There is no clear difference in trends in vacancy rates between TVG and non-TVG districts when comparing the data across geographic region from SY 2024 to SY 2026. Appendix I shows the trends for the City of Chicago, North Regions, Central Regions, and South Regions in graphic form.¹ The Southeast Region TVG districts and City of Chicago Region Non-TVG districts did show a more rapid decrease in vacancy rate than their regional counterparts, but this is likely due to the few unfilled FTEs in these aggregations. Those differences should therefore be interpreted with caution.

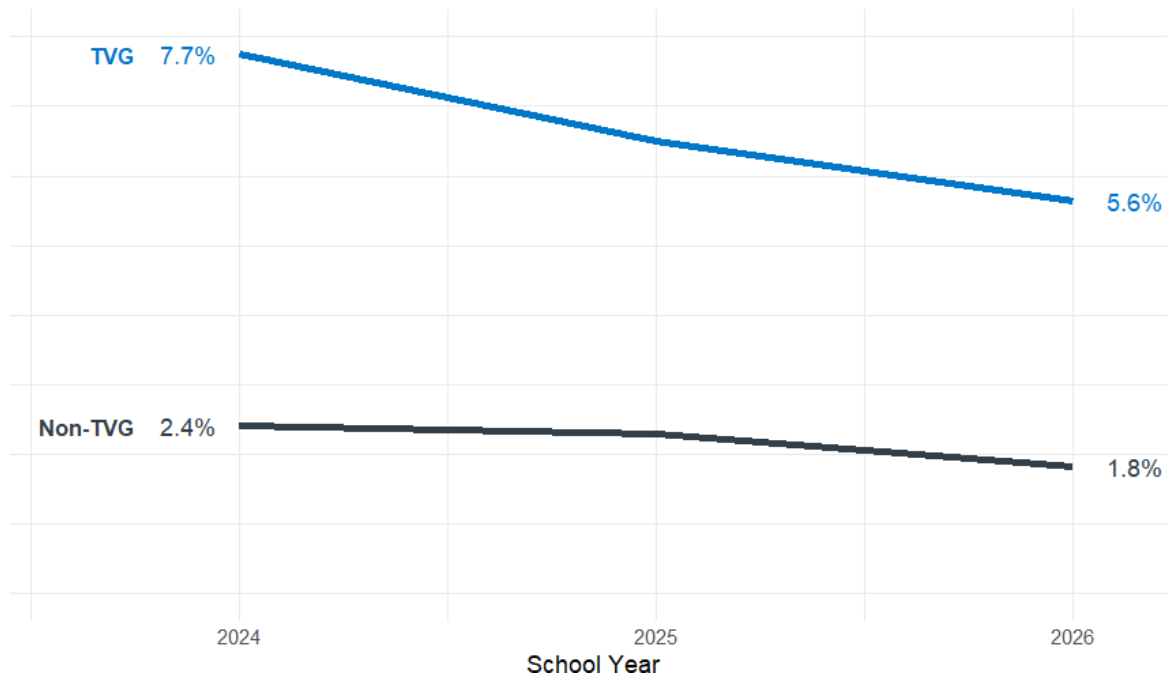
Also of importance, disaggregating the sets of TVG and non-TVG districts by geographic region resulted in low values for some groups' total FTE. For example, the Unfilled Positions FTE total for non-TVG districts in the Southwest region ranged from 58 FTE to 73.2 FTE from SY 2024 to SY 2026. These small sample sizes can tend to lead to large changes in the data from year to year, including the two examples discussed above. Additional years of data may clarify if the patterns shown are due to small-sample randomness or are a real trend.

¹ It should be noted that the geographic area of 'Other' was not included in a chart because a TVG district would never fall into this group, so there is no equivalent comparison.

SPED Positions

Figure 3. Vacancy rates for Special Education positions have increased since 2024, but more rapidly for TVG districts than for non-TVG districts.

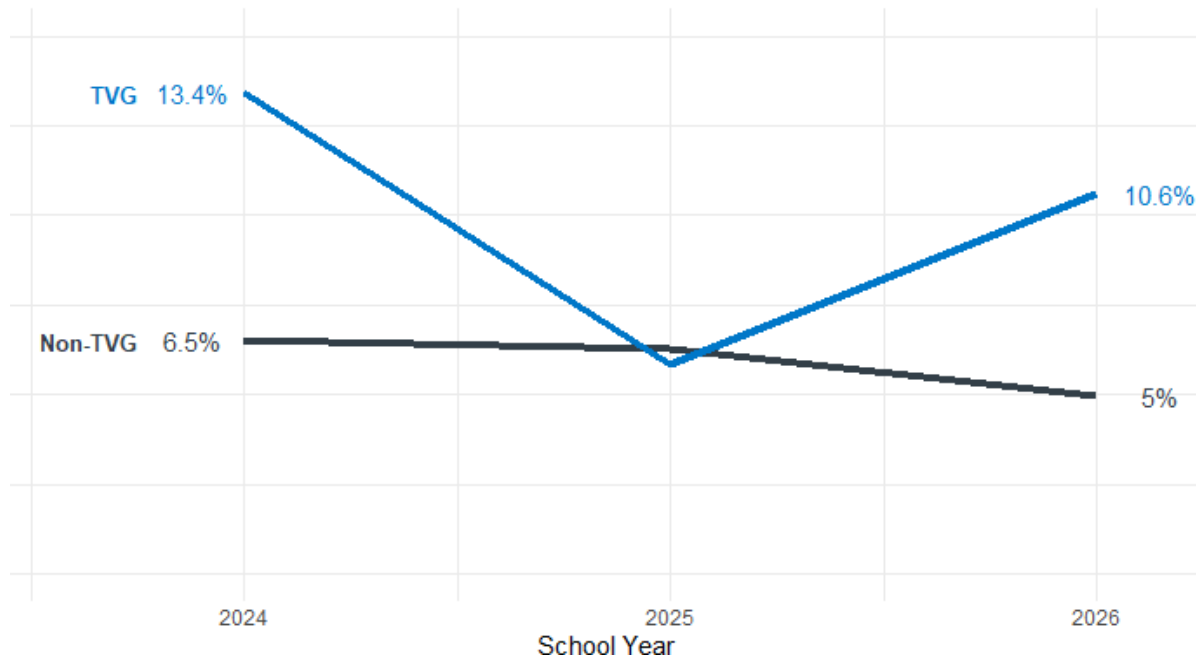
SPED Teacher Vacancy Rate Comparison of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts



As shown in Figure 3, SPED teacher vacancy rates at TVG and non-TVG districts followed similar trends, although TVG districts showed a more rapid and larger decrease in yearly vacancy rate, narrowing the difference between TVG and non-TVG districts. By SY 2026, the TVG districts had a vacancy rate of 5.6% and the non-TVG districts had a vacancy rate of 1.8% for a difference of 3.8%. The difference in SY 2024 was 5.3%.

Figure 4. Vacancy rate for bilingual SPED teacher positions since 2024 has shown significant variability for TVG districts.

**Bilingual SPED Teacher Vacancy Rate Comparison
of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts**

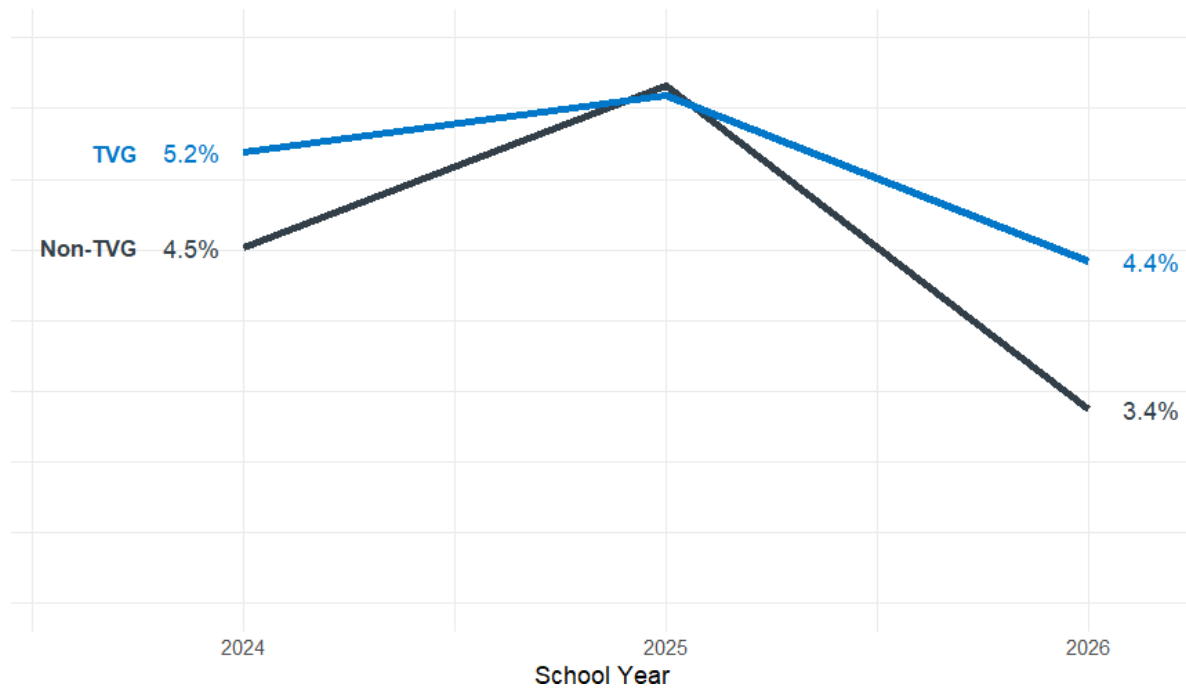


Bilingual SPED teacher vacancy rate changed significantly from year-to-year as reflected in Figure 4. The total FTE for these groups is very small, with only 14 FTE to 33.5 FTE teacher positions being reported as unfilled. That means that changes in how one district reports can have significant impact on the trend and these patterns should be interpreted with extreme caution.

Bilingual Teachers

Figure 5. Vacancy rate of bilingual teacher positions since SY 2024 has shown similar trends and vacancy rates.

Bilingual Teacher Vacancy Rate Comparison of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts



Statewide trends in vacancy rates for Bilingual Teachers at TVG and Non-TVG districts were similar between SY 2024 and SY 2026. The vacancy rate for this position decreased by 1.2 percentage points in non-TVG districts and by 0.8 percentage points in TVG districts.

Figure 6. The change in percentage points of vacancy rate of bilingual teachers from non-TVG and TVG districts was very similar when calculating the change since 2024.

Bilingual Teacher Vacancy Rate Comparison of TVG Districts versus Non-TVG Districts

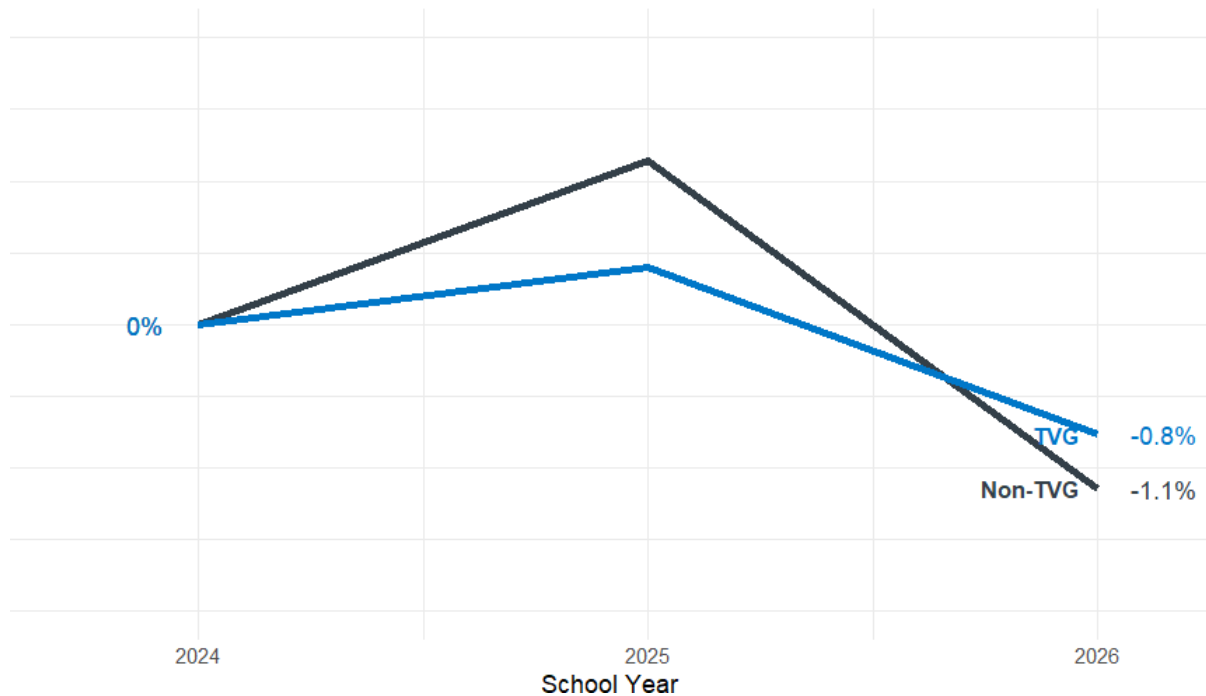


Figure 6 shows vacancy rate changes since SY 2024 with all trends starting at zero in 2024 for a comparison baseline. The vacancy rates both increased and decreased during the same time periods. The TVG districts showed less of an increase during this time, as described in the discussion of Figure 5. The vacancy rate for non-TVG districts is based on a small number of reported unfilled positions that ranged from 43 FTE to 73.8 FTE over the four-year period, so these results should be interpreted with caution. It should also be noted that the non-TVG percent change is between -1.1 and -1.2 percentage points and the difference between the two charts is due to rounding.

Comparison of Teacher Positions over Time

Figure 7. Change in Approximate Vacancy Rate by Position Between SY 2024 and SY 2026

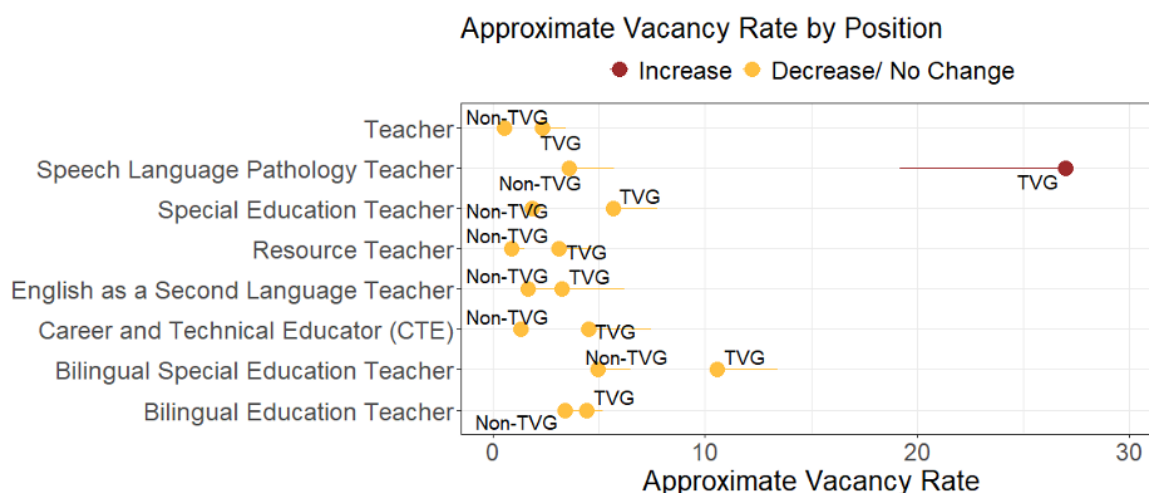
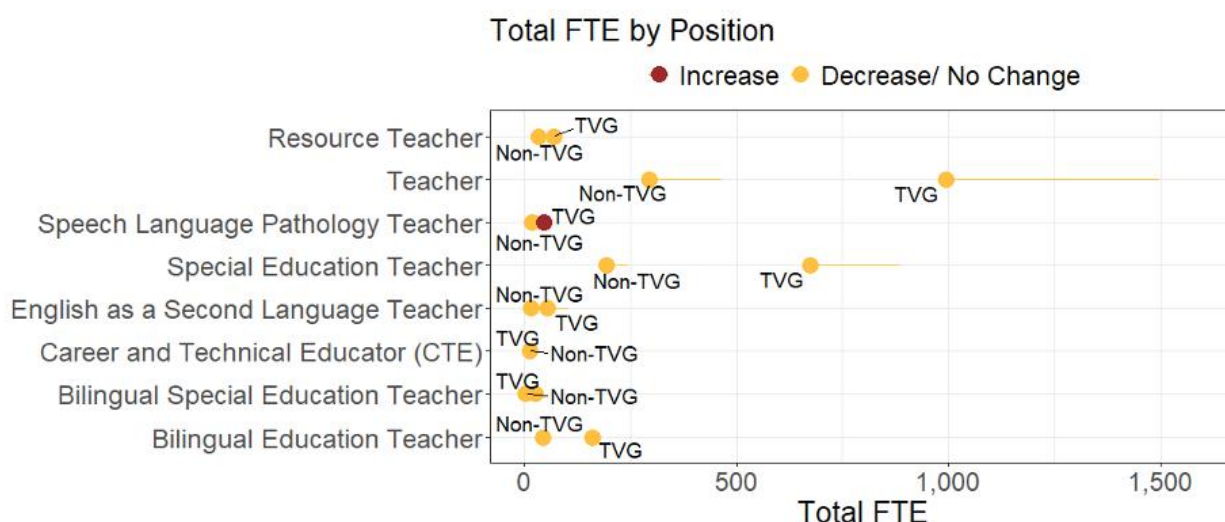


Figure 7 shows the vacancy rates for teacher positions, disaggregated by position and by TVG/non-TVG districts to allow for a comparison over time. Each position has a trend for the TVG districts and the non-TVG districts. The school year 2026 vacancy rate is represented with a point, and a line extends to the vacancy rate from 2024.² Combining the point and line indicates the overall change that has occurred for teacher vacancy.

Both TVG and non-TVG districts have higher overall vacancy rates for bilingual education teachers and speech language pathology teachers than for other positions. The vacancy rate for speech language pathology has increased between 2024 and 2026 and has the most dramatic change, going from a vacancy rate of 19.2% to 27%. Speech language pathology is the only position that saw an increase during this time period.

² Figures 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 also follow this format and interpretation.

Figure 8. Change in Unfilled Positions FTE by Position by School Year Between SY 2024 and SY 2026



As shown in Figure 8, the positions with the most Unfilled Position FTEs are regular teachers and SPED teachers for both TVG and non-TVG districts. This is important context for interpreting Figure 7, as some of the positions with the lowest vacancy rates have the highest numbers of unfilled FTE. Since these positions are the most common, the state overall vacancy rate is impacted more by these positions than positions with a high vacancy rate and a small population.

Appendix I

Geographic Trends:

Figure 9. Regional vacancy rates for TVG and non-TVG districts showed mostly decreases with the Southeast region TVG and City of Chicago non-TVG having the largest changes.

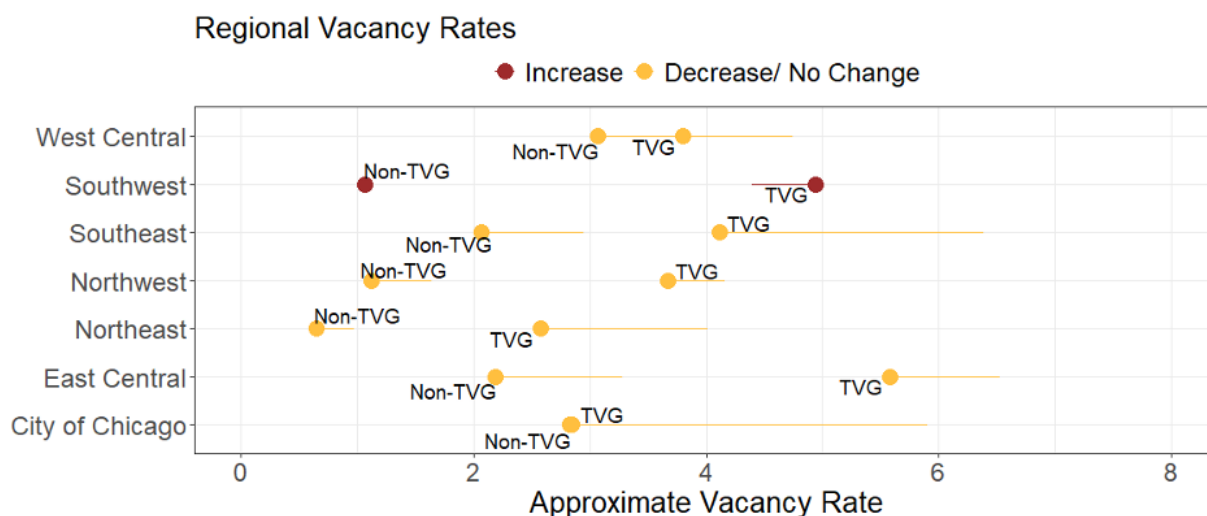


Figure 9 shows the SY 2026 vacancy rate as a point and the line extending from that point terminates at the approximate vacancy rate for SY 2024. For example, the Southwest non-TVG vacancy rate has not changed by much since 2024, as illustrated by the fact that there is no line extending from the point that represents its 2026 vacancy rate. When comparing the Southeast region, it is noticeable that the TVG district vacancy rate changed by much more than the non-TVG districts as indicated by the different lengths of the lines.

Other Comparisons Trends:

Figure 10. Vacancy Rate by Evidence Based Funding Tiers and Year of TVG and Non-TVG Districts

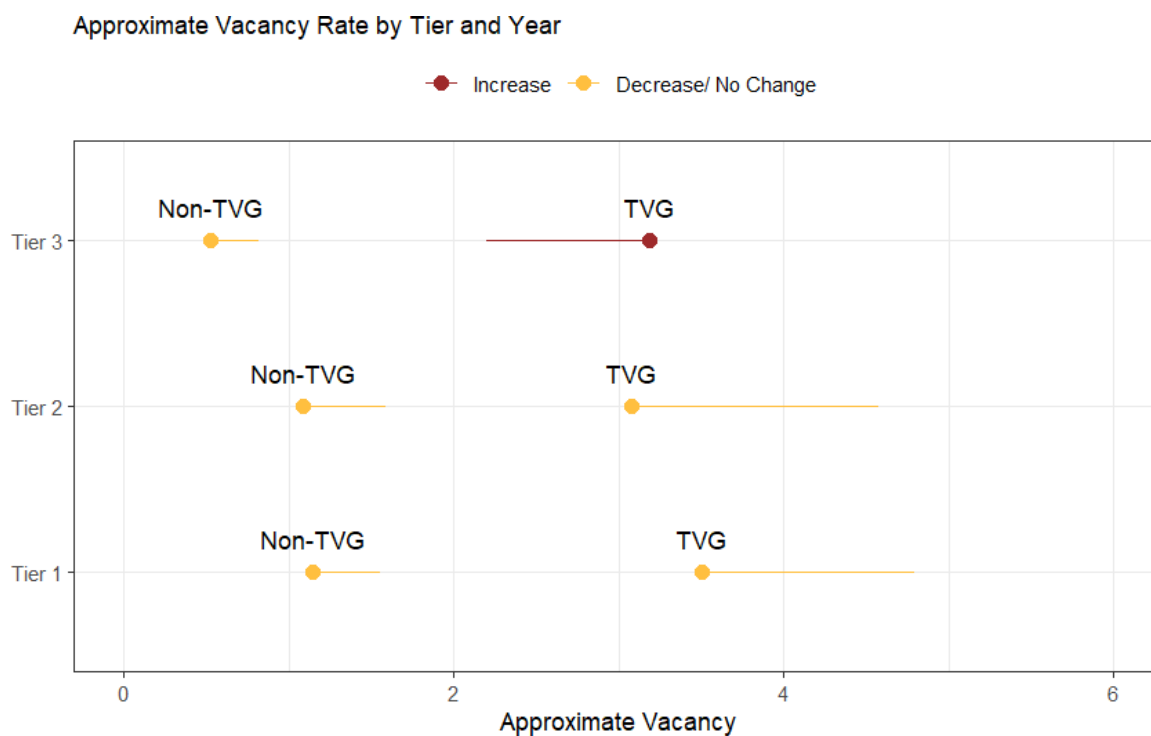


Figure 10 shows the vacancy rate for TVG and non-TVG districts from SY 2024 to SY 2026, assigning districts to tiers based on their Fiscal Year 2023 Evidence Based Funding (EBF) tiers. Districts with an EBF Tier 4 classification were not selected for the TVG grant based on the [selection criteria](#).

Figure 11. Vacancy Rate by District Type and Year of TVG and Non-TVG Districts

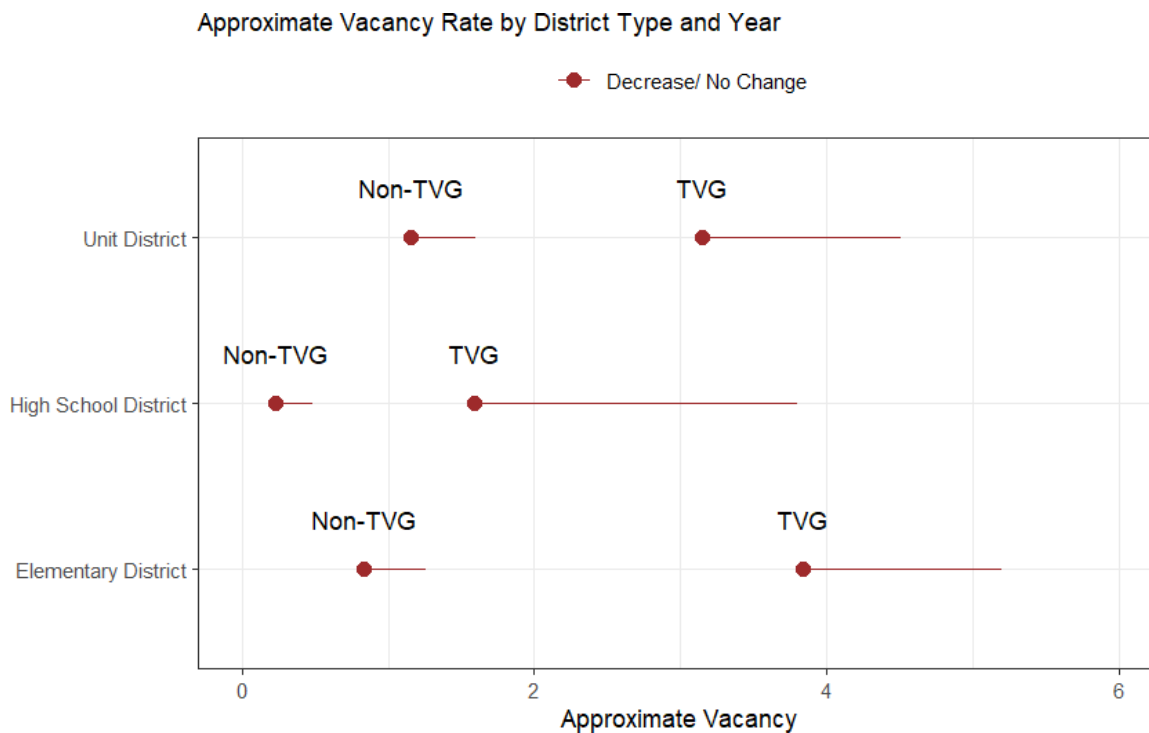


Figure 11 shows greater changes in approximate vacancy rate with TVG Districts than Non-TVG Districts. High school TVG Districts showed the largest changes from SY 2024 to SY 2026.



isbe.net