

SUMMER UI BENEFITS FOR SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF: EVIDENCE FROM ILLINOIS AND WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN FOR MINNESOTA IN SF 4091

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**Economic
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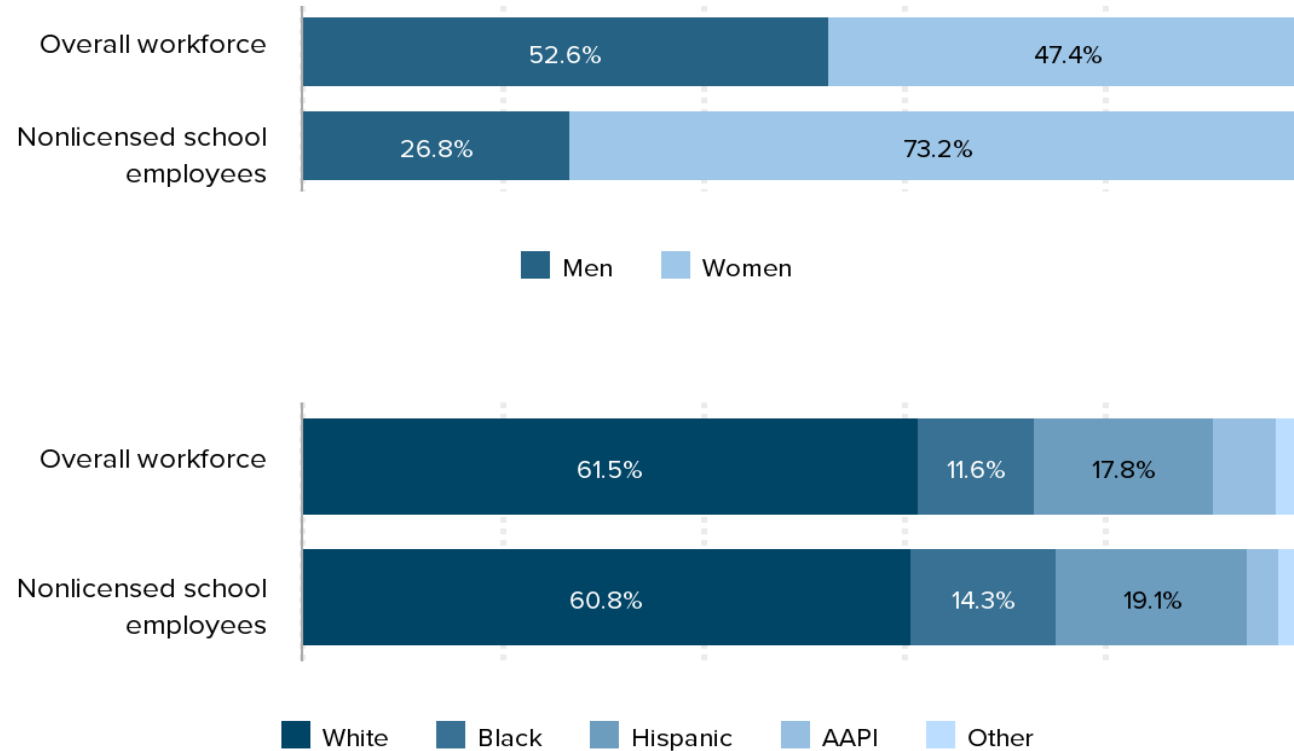
Posted May 12, 2021 at 3:01 pm by **Julia Wolfe** and **Dave Kamper**

Illinois extended unemployment benefits to school workers in the summer, and Minnesota should follow suit



WHO ARE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF?

Women, Black, and Hispanic workers are disproportionately represented in nonlicensed education occupations



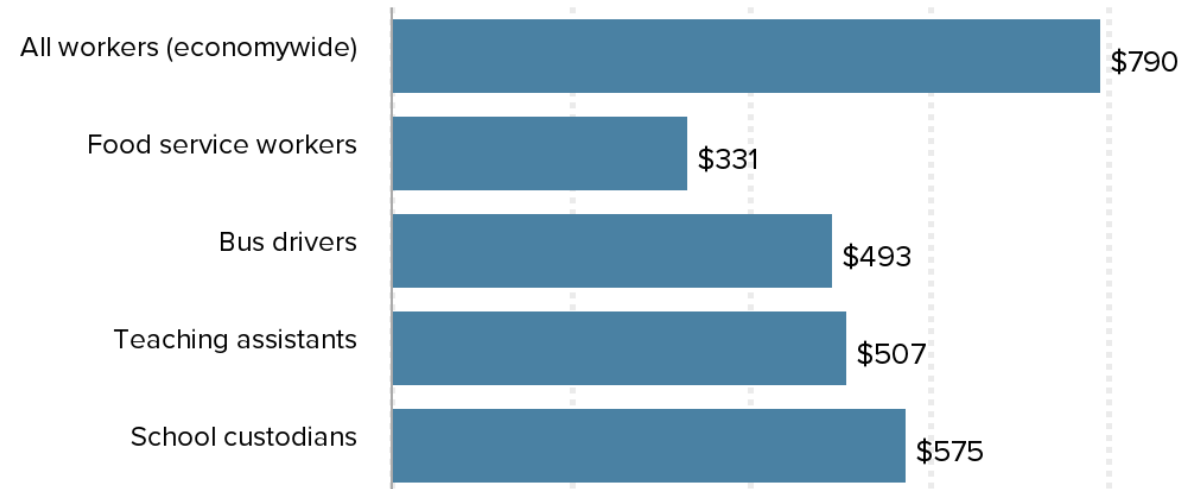
Source: EPI analysis of 2019 ACS microdata.



WHO ARE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF?

Education support staff are paid very low wages

Weekly median wages of all workers and K–12 public education support workers



Source: Dave Cooper and Sebastian Martinez Hickey, "Raising Pay in Public K-12 Schools Is Critical to Solving Staffing Shortages" <https://www.epi.org/publication/solving-k-12-staffing-shortages/>

Notes: Weekly wages in 2020 dollars.

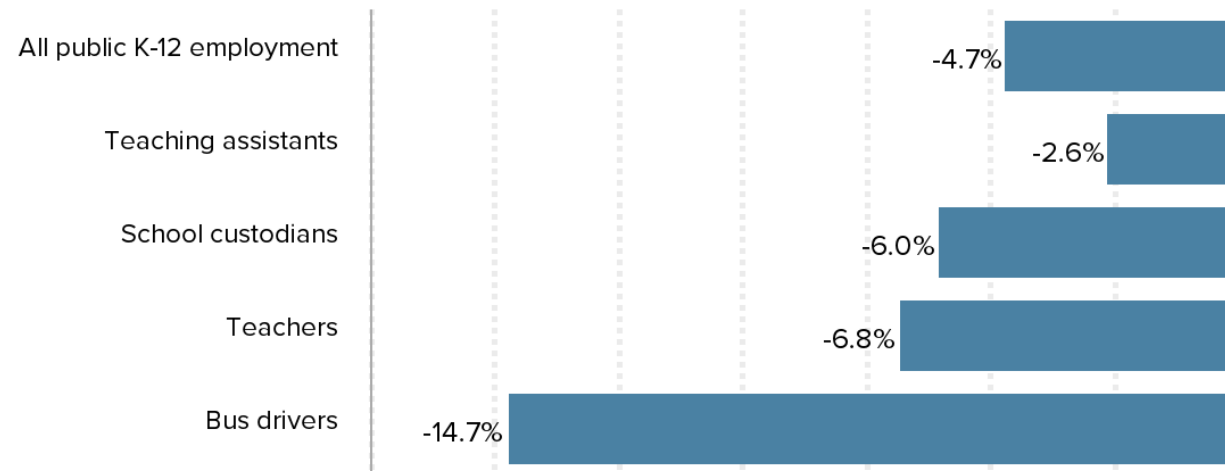
Source: EPI analysis of 2014–2019 pooled Current Population Survey microdata.



WHO ARE SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF?

Bus drivers, teachers, and school custodians have experienced particularly large declines in employment during the pandemic

Percent change in employment levels from October 2019 to October 2021 for select K–12 public education occupations



Notes: Data reflect the 12-month average in employment ending in October 2021 relative to the 12-month average of employment ending in October 2019.

Source: Economic Policy Institute analysis of BLS Current Employment Statistics series and Current Population Survey microdata.

Source: Dave Cooper and Sebastian Martinez Hickey, "Raising Pay in Public K-12 Schools Is Critical to Solving Staffing Shortages" <https://www.epi.org/publication/solving-k-12-staffing-shortages/>



CALCULATING THE EFFECTS OF SUMMER UI FOR NONLICENSED SCHOOL STAFF

- **Recipiency** - *MN pre-pandemic rate was 39-45%*
- **Costs / Benefits**

[reminder: in MN, school districts directly reimburse UI system for actual costs, so there is no overall impact on the UI Trust Fund]

EVIDENCE FROM ILLINOIS:

- Enacted summer UI for school support staff in 2020
- Approximately **11% of the workforce** used this benefit – the recipiency rate (adjusted for job losses in 2020)



If that pattern is followed in Minnesota:



- Approximately 62,375 nonlicensed school staff in Minnesota K-12 institutions
- We estimate **75,753 weeks** of unemployment would be claimed in Minnesota by approximately 6800 employees
- UI compensation is 50% of average weekly earnings
- Average pay is \$738, 11 weeks of benefits over the summer would be **\$4,058**

NET COSTS

- \$738 average weekly wages *times* 50% benefit *times* 75,753 total weeks claimed = ~\$28,000,000
- Total MN school district fund balances (per MDE data) at end of 2020 was \$2,643,996,300
- **Total amount spent on UI for K-12 nonlicensed staff in the summer would amount to ~1.1% of school districts' total reserves.**

THANK YOU!

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