2025

SURVEY OF NOVICE TEACHERS AND THEIR SUPERVISORS

IOWA

EDUCATION

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Executive Summary

This project was administered by Jeremy Penn, Ph.D., M.P.H., jeremy-penn@uiowa.edu, University of Iowa College of Education, and was supported with funding from the Iowa Department of Education. The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the University of Iowa College of Education or the Iowa Department of Education. Teacher preparation programs with at least one response will receive their own summary of results. Individual institutional reports are not available publicly due to agreements with the preparation programs and the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board.

Novice Teachers

Overall Results

- Novice teachers reported high levels of preparation with most novice teachers reporting being well or very well prepared across 16 of 17 teaching practice areas (Table 5).
- Novice teachers' perceptions of their level of preparation in 2025 were significantly lower in 11 areas in comparison to perceptions of novice teachers in 2024 (Table 5).
- Many novice teachers expressed their gratitude at being well-prepared by their teacher preparation program to serve as a teacher (Figure 4).

Mental Health

- Novice teachers were significantly more likely to report being well prepared to support their own mental health in comparison to results in 2024 and 2023 (Table 7).

Student Teaching

- Nearly 75% of novice teachers completed a full-semester-length student teaching experience (Table 8).
- Although they varied in length somewhat, nearly all novice teachers agreed that their student teaching experience was the right length (Table 9).
- Novice teachers highly valued their student teaching experiences in preparing them to serve as a teacher (Table 11).
- Novice teachers who were more satisfied with their student teaching experiences were more likely to report a higher level of preparation to serve as a novice teacher (Table 12).

Artificial Intelligence

- Novice teachers were not prepared to use artificial intelligence or to manage their students' use of artificial intelligence (Table 6 and Figure 9).

Prior Paid School Experiences

- Over 40% of novice teachers reported some kind of prior paid school experience (Table 13). Few of these novice teachers used those experiences to shorten student teaching.

Figure 1. Novice Teachers: Overall Results (part 1).

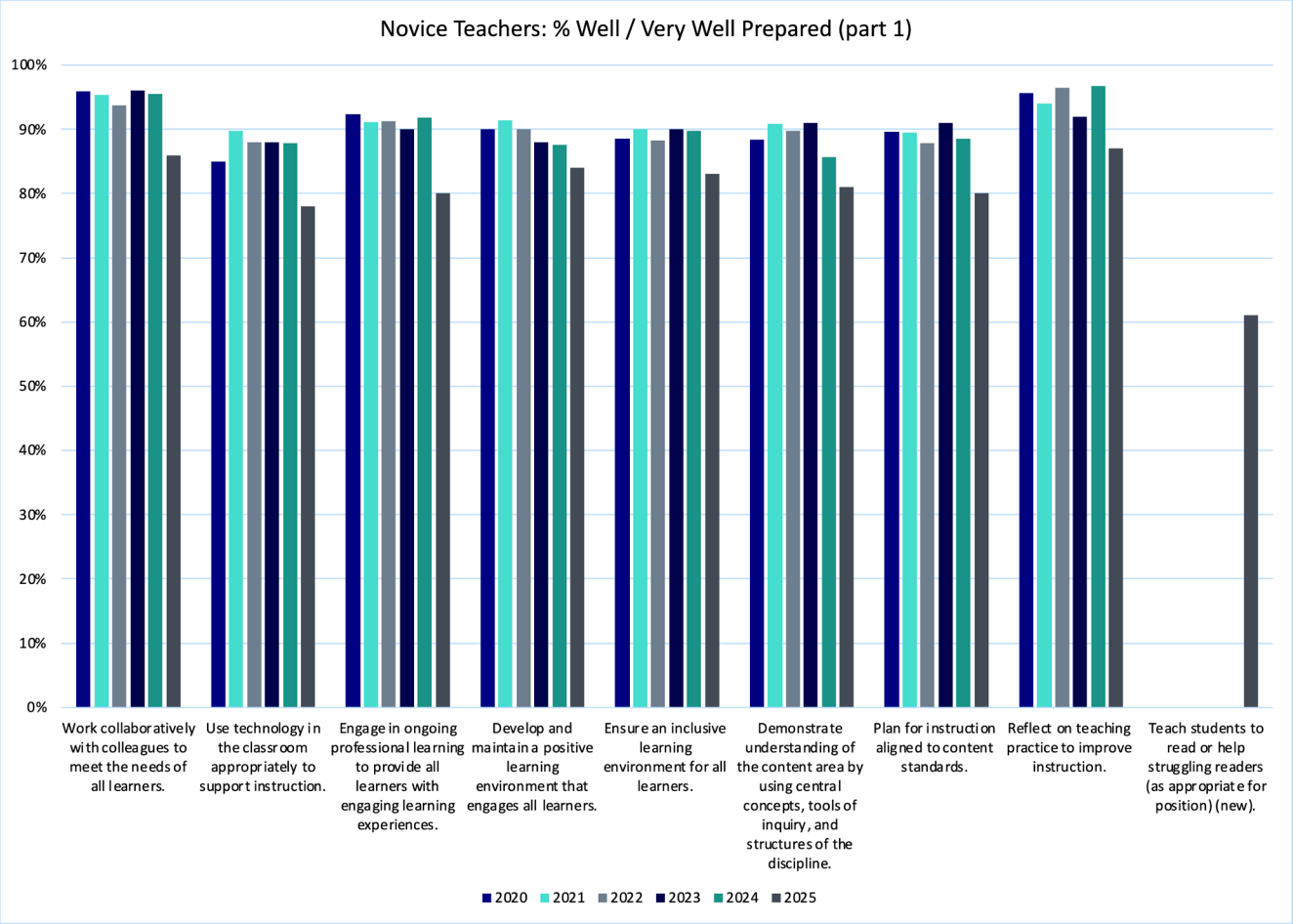


Figure 2. Novice Teachers: Overall Results (part 2).

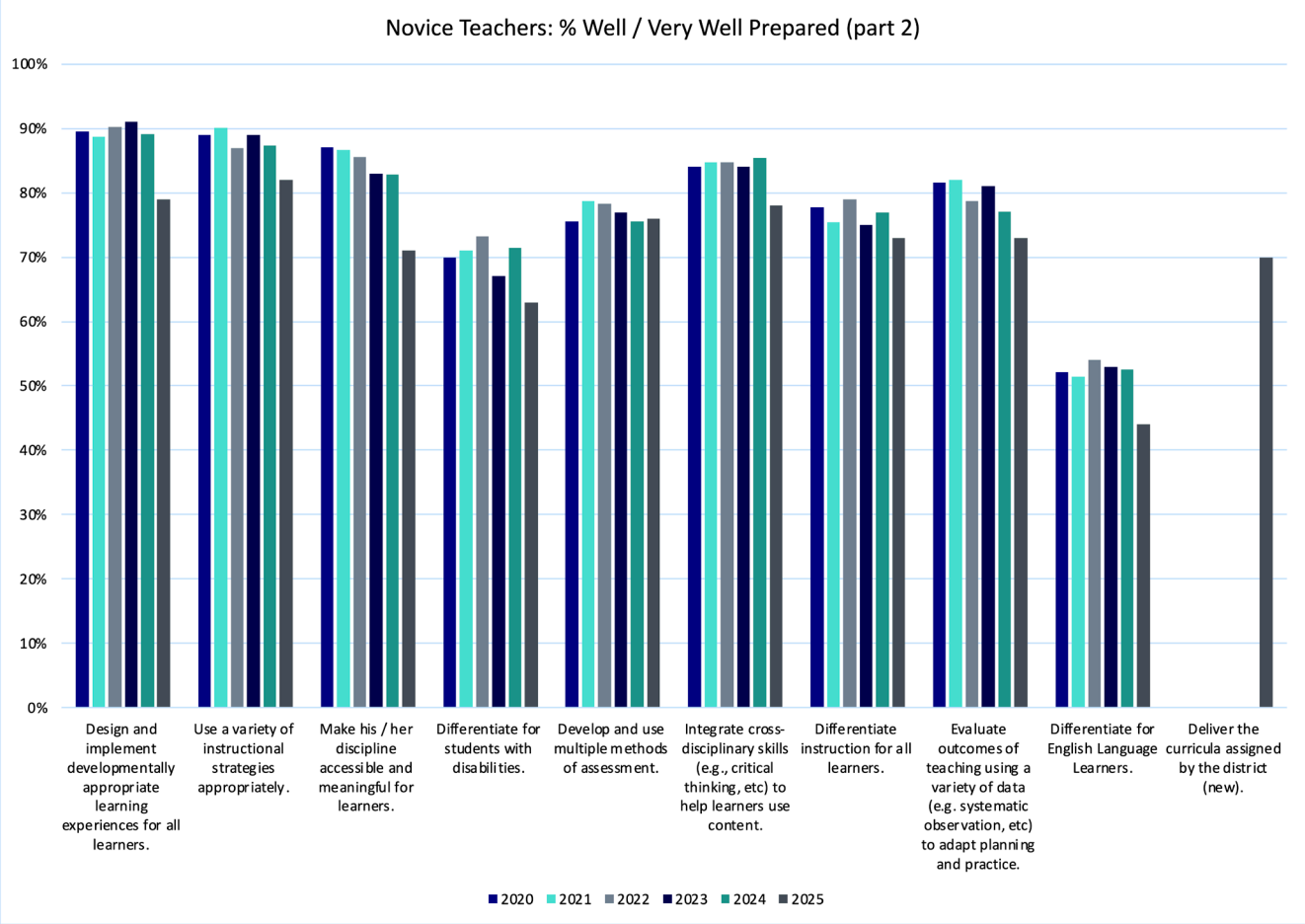


Figure 3. Novice Teachers: Supporting Mental Health.

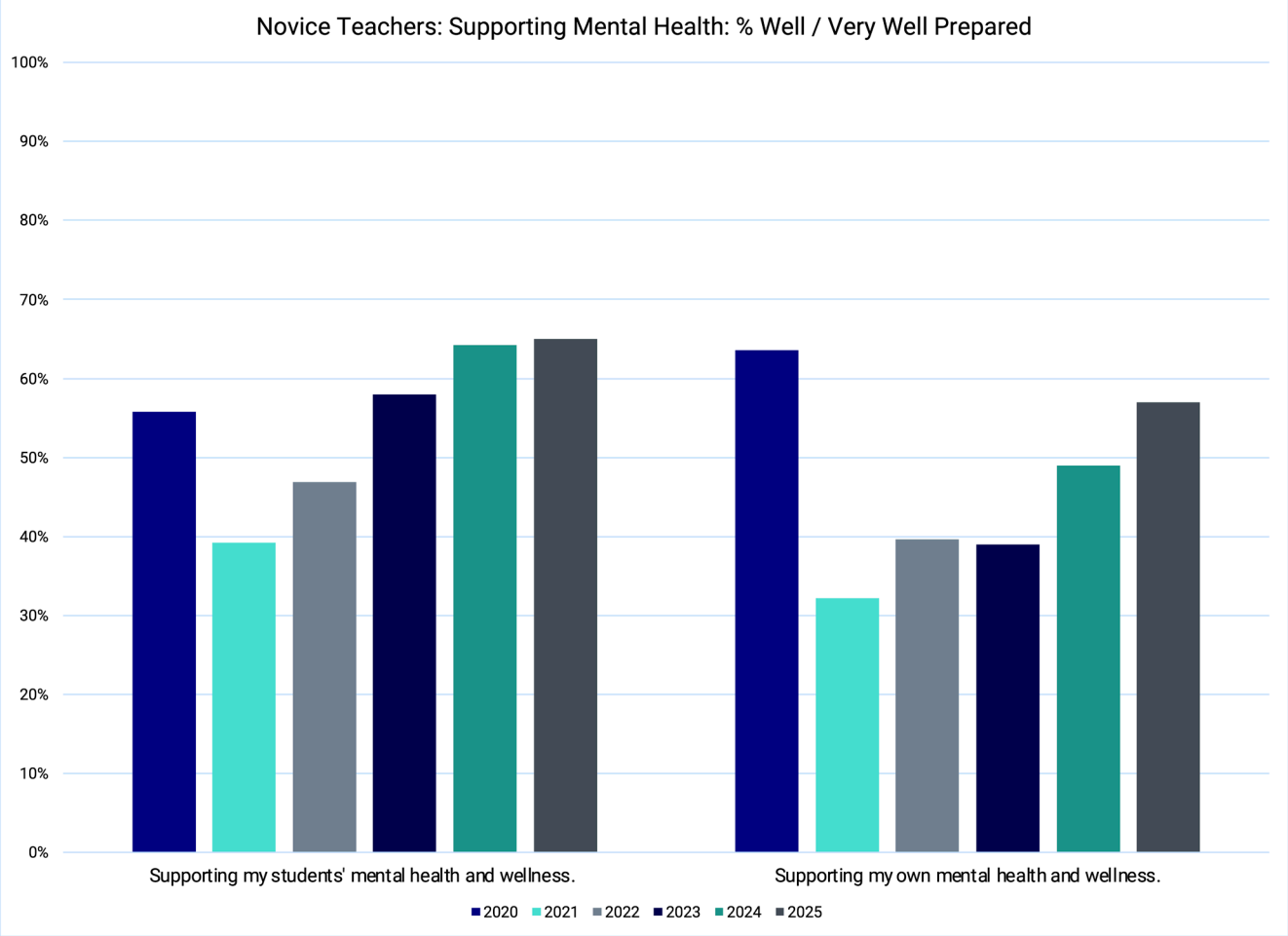
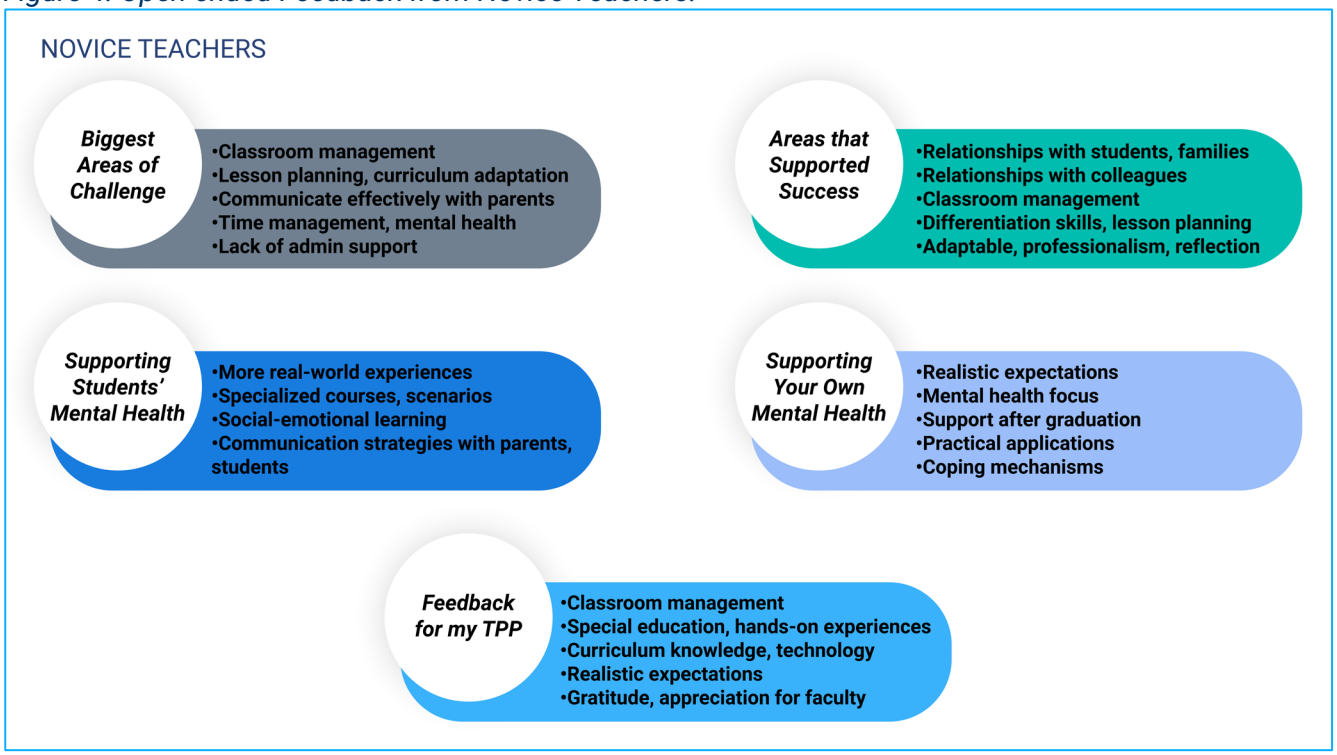


Figure 4. Open-ended Feedback from Novice Teachers.



Supervisors of Novice Teachers

Overall Results

- Most supervisors of novice teachers reported the novice teachers were well-prepared to serve across all 17 areas of preparation (Table 5).
- Supervisors' perceptions of novice teachers' preparation were significantly lower in 2025 in comparison to 2024 on their ability to "integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content" (Table 5).

Mental Health

- Supervisors of novice teachers believed novice teachers were well prepared to support students' mental health and wellness (65%) and the novice teachers' own mental health and wellness (70%, Table 7).
- There was a large gap between novice teachers' perceptions of their ability to support their own mental health and wellness (57%) and supervisors' perceptions of novice teachers' ability to support their mental health and wellness (70%, Table 7).

Open-ended Comments

- In open-ended comments, supervisors of novice teachers identified a range of areas where novice teachers' preparation could be improved, particularly classroom management, behavior management, differentiation, classroom discipline, communicating with parents, accepting criticism, and engaging with students effectively (Figure 8).
- In open-ended comments, many supervisors of novice teachers identified areas that supported the success of novice teachers, including content knowledge, effective planning, classroom management, reflective, adaptive and engaged, collaborative, and commitment to growth (Figure 8).
- Many supervisors of novice teachers expressed their gratitude for the high level of preparation they observed in novice teachers.

Figure 5. Supervisors of Novice Teachers: Overall Results (part 1).

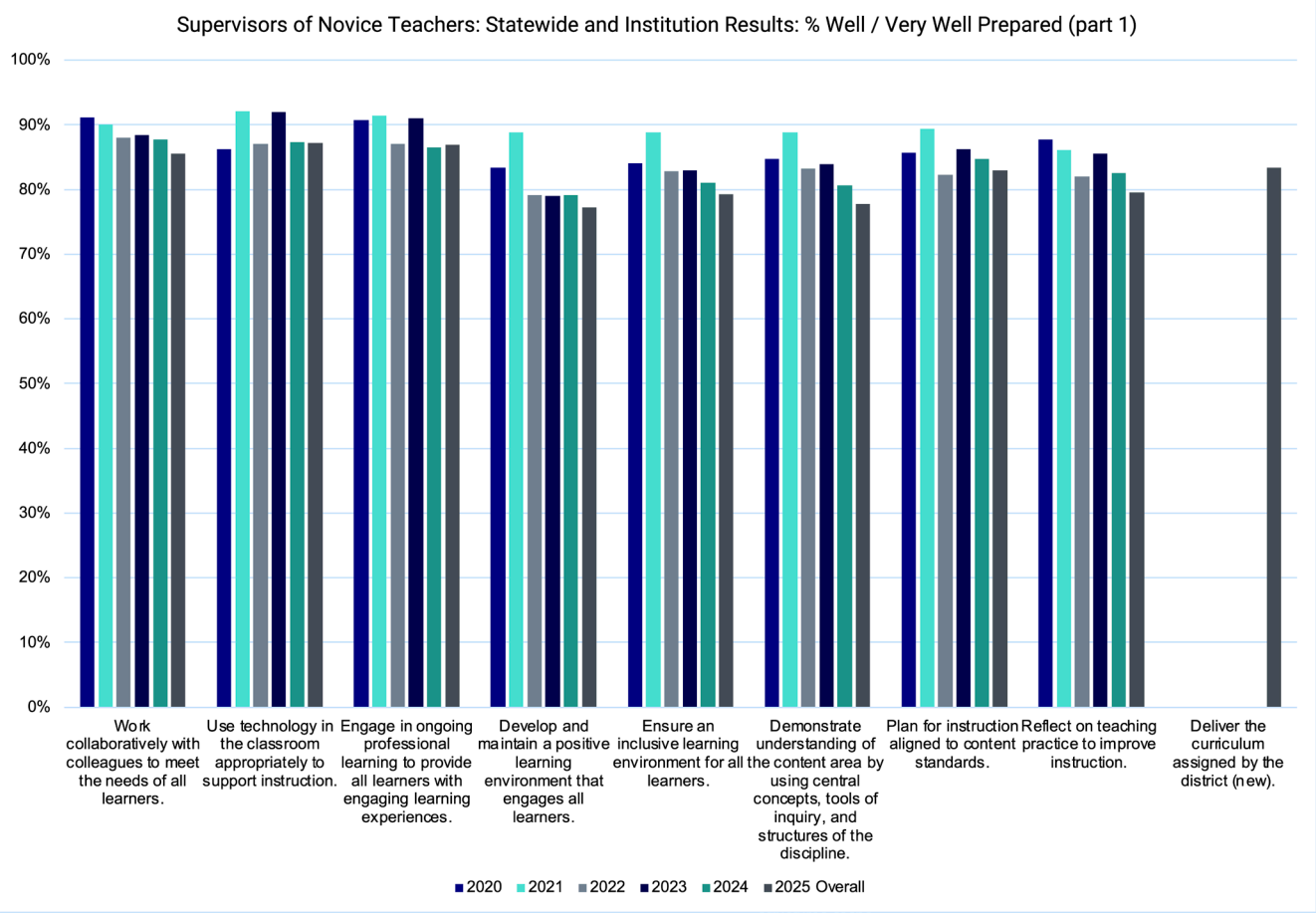


Figure 6. Supervisors of Novice Teachers: Overall Results (part 2).

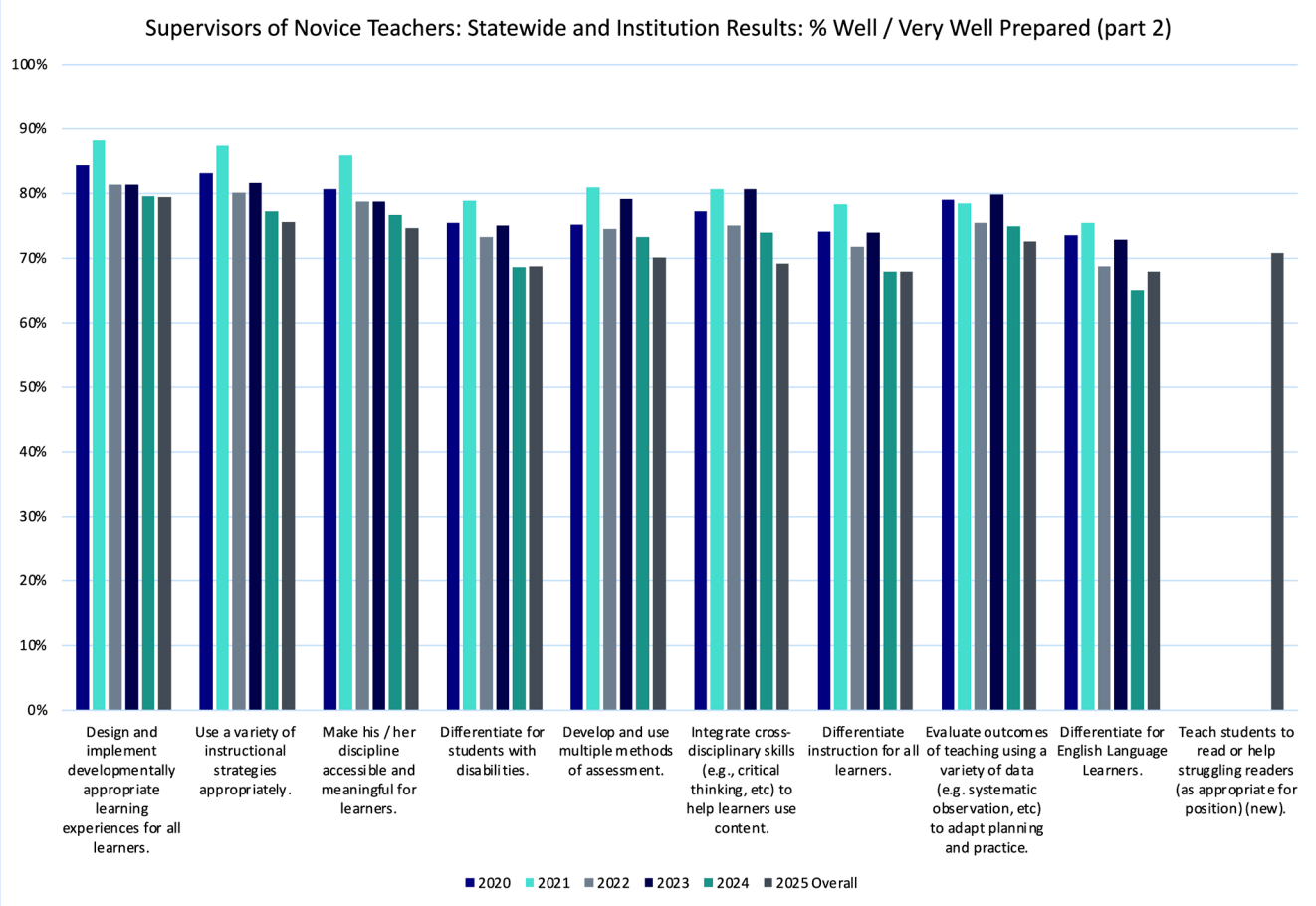


Figure 7. Supervisors of Novice Teachers: Supporting Mental Health.

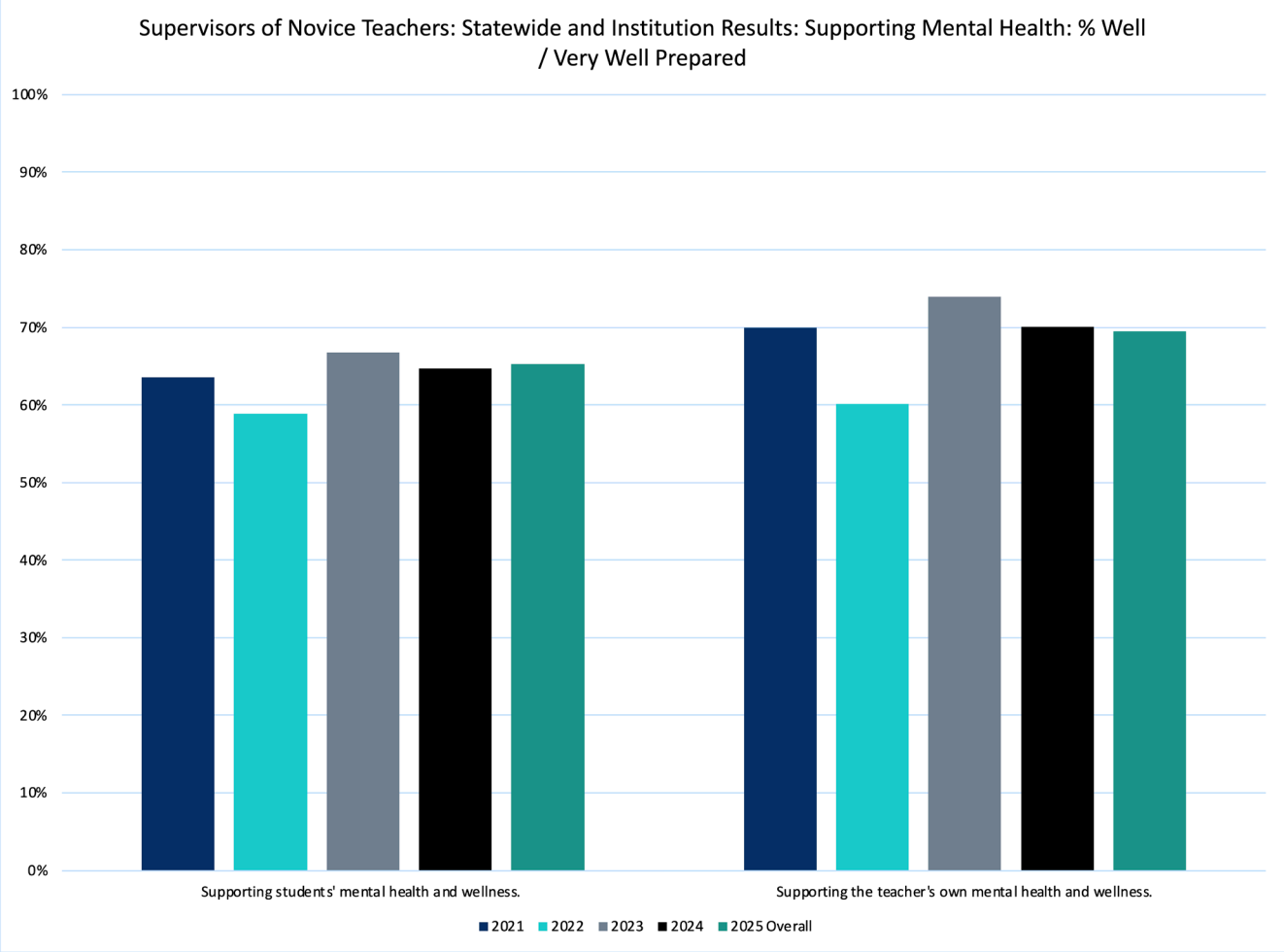
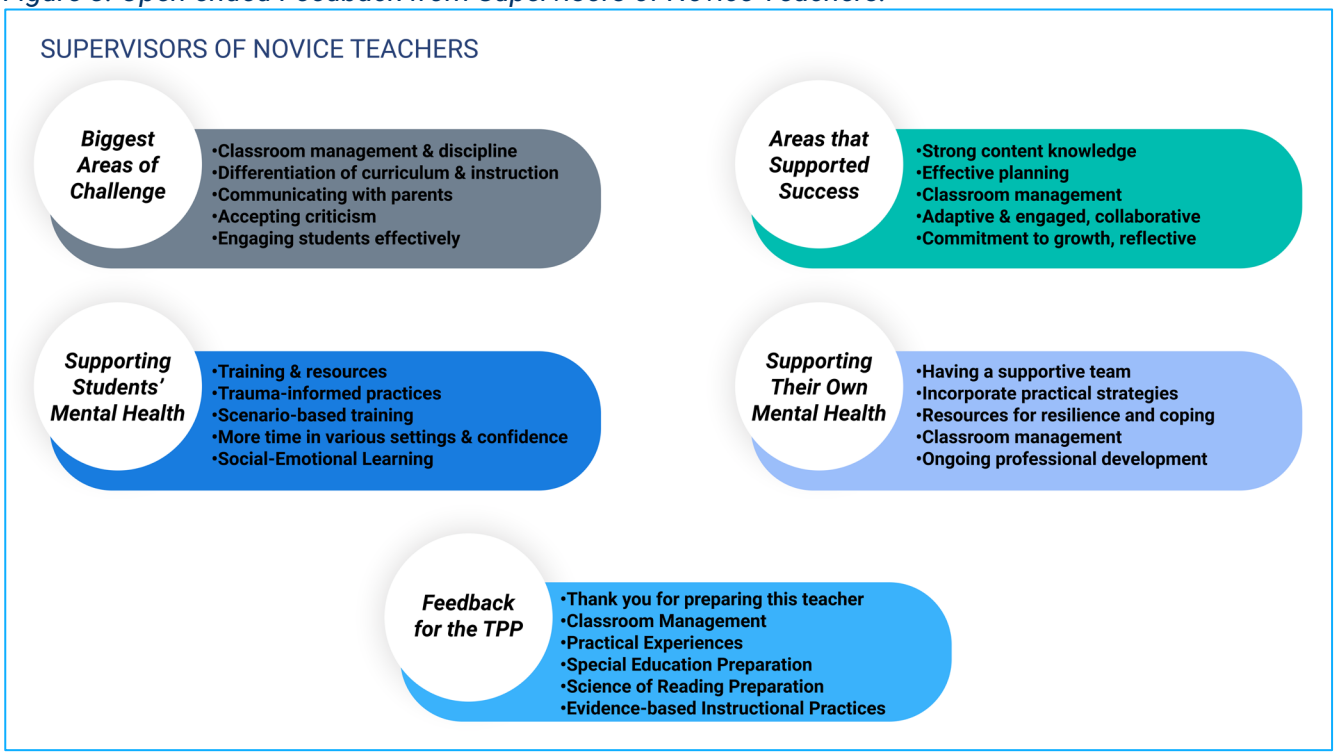


Figure 8. Open-ended Feedback from Supervisors of Novice Teachers.



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Methods

Questionnaire Design and Administration

- The questionnaires were designed through a collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education and the Iowa Association for Teacher Education (IACTE).
- New items were added in 2025 on artificial intelligence, preparation for teaching district curricula, teaching and supporting struggling readers, prior paid school experiences, and whether student teaching was shortened.
- The survey was administered through the University of Iowa's Qualtrics license from April 7, 2025, to May 31, 2025. Up to four reminder emails were sent to those individuals who had not responded or who had not completed the survey.
- The project was approved by the University of Iowa's Institutional Review Board.

Survey Population

- The Iowa Department of Education generated a list of individuals who were believed to be novice teachers and included their licensure email address and school assignment.
- Teacher preparation programs were asked to send the names and contact information for recent graduates from their programs and their school assignments and supervisors, if known.
- These lists were merged with a list of school administrators from the Iowa Department of Education to create the contact list for the supervisors of novice teachers.
- If available, novice teachers' school email addresses and personal email addresses were used to send survey invitations. Novice teachers were asked to only respond once.

Response Rate

Novice Teachers

- A total of 2,009 emails were sent to the primary email address provided by the teacher preparation institution. If the initial email invitation did not produce a response, reminders were sent to the primary email address or to alternative email addresses (including personal, teacher preparation institution, or employing school) if those addresses were available. A total of 531 responses were received for a response rate of 26.4% (531 / 2,009). Some respondents did not answer every question, so the total number of responses per item varies.
- To encourage response, 606 postcards were mailed through physical mail to novice teachers' school addresses to a sample of novice teachers who had not responded to initial email invitations.

Supervisors of Novice Teachers

- A total of 1,191 emails were sent. 593 responses were received from 441 unique email addresses for a response rate of 49.8%. The number of responses for each item varies since some respondents did not respond to every item.
- While matching was performed to create the survey contact lists and to give the supervisor of each novice teacher the name of a novice teacher to review, the results of the surveys are not necessarily matched (that is to say, the results may include novice teachers whose supervisors did not respond to the survey and may include responses of supervisors of novice teachers who did not respond to the survey).
- Teachers (and their supervisors) who were known to not be in their first two years of teaching were removed from the survey results.

Results

Demographics of Respondents

Novice Teachers

- Responses were received from novice teachers who had attended twenty-nine of the thirty teacher preparation programs in Iowa (Table 1).

Table 1. Where did you complete your teacher preparation program?

Response	Contacted	Responded	Response Rate	% of Total
Briar Cliff University	10	7	70.0%	1.3%
Buena Vista University	133	44	33.1%	8.3%
Central College	23	7	30.4%	1.3%
Clarke University	25	8	32.0%	1.5%
Coe College	22	10	45.5%	1.9%
Cornell College	18	5	27.8%	0.9%
Dordt University	35	9	25.7%	1.7%
Drake University	64	31	48.4%	5.8%
Emmaus University	6	4	66.7%	0.8%
Faith Baptist Bible College and Theological Seminary	12	5	41.7%	0.9%
Graceland University	25	8	32.0%	1.5%
Grand View University	6	0	0.0%	0.0%
Grinnell College	4	2	50.0%	0.4%
Iowa State University	280	67	23.9%	12.6%
Loras College	16	2	12.5%	0.4%
Luther College	37	8	21.6%	1.5%
Morningside University	31	7	22.6%	1.3%
Morningside University Alternative Licensure	89	32	36.0%	6.0%
Mount Mercy University	24	5	20.8%	0.9%
Northwestern College	49	11	22.4%	2.1%
RAPIL (Regents Alternative Pathway)	37	30	81.1%	5.6%
Saint Ambrose University	42	5	11.9%	0.9%
Simpson College	20	7	35.0%	1.3%
University of Dubuque	29	12	41.4%	2.3%
University of Iowa	245	32	13.1%	6.0%
University of Northern Iowa	542	110	20.3%	20.7%
Upper Iowa University	70	12	17.1%	2.3%
Waldorf University	17	4	23.5%	0.8%
Wartburg College	31	12	38.7%	2.3%
William Penn University	67	35	52.2%	6.6%
None of these	0	0	0%	0%
Total	**2,009**	**531**	**26.4%**	**100%**

- Slightly more than 18% of respondents were currently teaching in a subject area for which they needed to obtain conditional endorsement (Table 2).

Table 2. Are you currently teaching in a subject area for which you needed to obtain a conditional endorsement?

Response	N	Percent
Yes	79	18.5%
No	347	81.5%
Total	426	100%

- If respondents indicated they were currently teaching in an area in which they needed to obtain a conditional endorsement, they were asked to indicate the area the area in which they were teaching that required a conditional endorsement (Table 3). The most frequently reported area requiring a conditional endorsement was Special Education.

Table 3. In what area are you teaching that requires a conditional endorsement?

Response	n
Business	2
English Language Arts	3
ELL	3
Elementary Education	2
Health	1
Instrumental Music	2
Music	3
Math	3
Middle Math	2
Middle Science	1
Physical Education	2
Reading / Title 1	2
Secondary English	2
Secondary Science	4
Secondary Social Studies	3
Science	2
Sociology / Psychology	1
Special Education (level not specified)	21
Special Education (Strategist 1)	6
Special Education (Strategist 2)	7
Special Education (Strategist 3)	2
Speech / Theater	2

Supervisors of Novice Teachers

- Responses in Table 4 represent 441 different supervisors who answered the survey one or more times. Four supervisors answered the survey 5 times, 8 answered the survey 4 times, 21 answered the survey 3 times, and 46 answered it twice.

Table 4. What teacher preparation program did this teacher attend?

Response	Contacted	Responded	Response Rate	% of total
Briar Cliff University	11	2	18.2%	0.3%
Buena Vista University	105	49	46.7%	8.3%
Central College	24	12	50.0%	2.0%
Clarke University	13	5	38.5%	0.8%
Coe College	17	5	29.4%	0.8%
Cornell College	15	7	46.7%	1.2%
Dordt University	33	14	42.4%	2.4%
Drake University	44	19	43.2%	3.2%
Emmaus University	3	2	66.7%	0.3%
Faith Baptist Bible College	9	3	33.3%	0.5%
Graceland University	20	6	30.0%	1.0%
Grand View University	9	3	33.3%	0.5%
Grinnell College	2	1	50.0%	0.2%
Iowa State University	172	84	48.8%	14.2%
Loras College	12	7	58.3%	1.2%
Luther College	11	5	45.5%	0.8%
Morningside University	27	18	66.7%	3.0%
Morningside University Alternative Licensure	76	28	36.8%	4.7%
Mount Mercy University	17	7	41.2%	1.2%
Northwestern College	17	8	47.1%	1.3%
RAPIL (Regents Alternative Pathway to Licensure)	32	16	50.0%	2.7%
Saint Ambrose University	23	10	43.5%	1.7%
Simpson College	18	11	61.1%	1.9%
University of Dubuque	27	13	48.1%	2.2%
University of Iowa	97	46	47.4%	7.8%
University of Northern Iowa	231	138	59.7%	23.3%
Upper Iowa University	28	13	46.4%	2.2%
Waldorf University	12	7	58.3%	1.2%
Wartburg College	28	13	46.4%	2.2%
William Penn University	58	41	70.7%	6.9%
None of these	0	0	NA	0.0%
Total	**1,191**	**593**	**49.8%**	

Overall Results

- Novice teachers were most likely to report being well or very well prepared to reflect on teaching practice to improve instruction, to work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners, and to develop and maintain a positive learning environment that engages all learners.
- Novice teachers' perceptions of their level of preparation were significantly lower in 2025 in 11 different areas of preparation (marked in red) in comparison to 2024.
- Supervisors of novice teachers were most likely to report novice teachers being well prepared to use technology in the classroom to appropriately support instruction, to engage in ongoing professional learning to provide all learners with engaging learning experiences, and to work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.
- In comparison to 2024, supervisors of novice teachers were significantly less likely to perceive their novice teacher(s) as being well or very well prepared to integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content.

Table 5. Overall results.

"How well can you / How well is this teacher able to:"	Novice Teachers					Supervisors of Novice Teachers				
	n	M	Percent Well / Very Well	Compare to 2024	Compare to 2023	n	M	Percent Well / Very Well	Compare to 2024	Compare to 2023
Work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.	468	3.34***	86%	3.58	3.60	532	3.33	86%	3.41	3.39
Use technology in the classroom appropriately to support instruction.	471	3.12***	78%	3.37	3.41	524	3.27	87%	3.34	3.41
Engage in ongoing professional learning to provide all learners with engaging learning experiences.	469	3.16***	80%	3.42	3.42	532	3.32	87%	3.34	3.39
Develop and maintain a positive learning environment that engages all learners.	498	3.24	84%	3.32	3.33	541	3.14	77%	3.21	3.19
Ensure an inclusive learning environment for all learners.	498	3.21*	83%	3.33	3.34	541	3.19	79%	3.24	3.25
Demonstrate understanding of the content area by using central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline.	495	3.15	81%	3.23	3.33	541	3.13	78%	3.17	3.21
Plan for instruction aligned to content standards.	465	3.13***	80%	3.32	3.35	530	3.18	83%	3.26	3.26
Reflect on teaching practice to improve instruction.	472	3.33***	87%	3.52	3.48	531	3.15	80%	3.25	3.28
Design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all learners.	498	3.10*	79%	3.22	3.26	542	3.11	79%	3.16	3.16
Use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately.	471	3.18	82%	3.27	3.30	532	3.05	76%	3.10	3.17
Make his / her (your) discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.	493	2.94***	71%	3.13	3.16	540	3.03	75%	3.10	3.09
Differentiate for students with disabilities.	463	2.81**	63%	2.96	2.87	514	2.90	69%	2.94	3.04
Develop and use multiple methods of assessment.	496	3.07	76%	3.05	3.08	538	2.92	70%	3.01	3.07
Integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content.	496	3.07**	78%	3.22	3.19	536	2.90**	69%	3.04	3.08
Differentiate instruction for all learners.	472	2.98	73%	3.06	3.01	531	2.89	68%	2.93	2.99
Evaluate outcomes of teaching using a variety of data (e.g. systematic observation, information about learners, research) to adapt planning and practice.	469	2.99	73%	3.07	3.12	529	2.95	73%	3.04	3.08
Differentiate for English Language Learners.	435	2.41**	44%	2.57	2.58	380	2.89	68%	2.85	2.95
Deliver the curricula assigned by the district.	472	2.90	70%	New	New	531	3.21	84%	New	New
Teach students to read or help struggling readers (as appropriate for position).	442	2.74	61%	New	New	462	2.96	71%	New	New

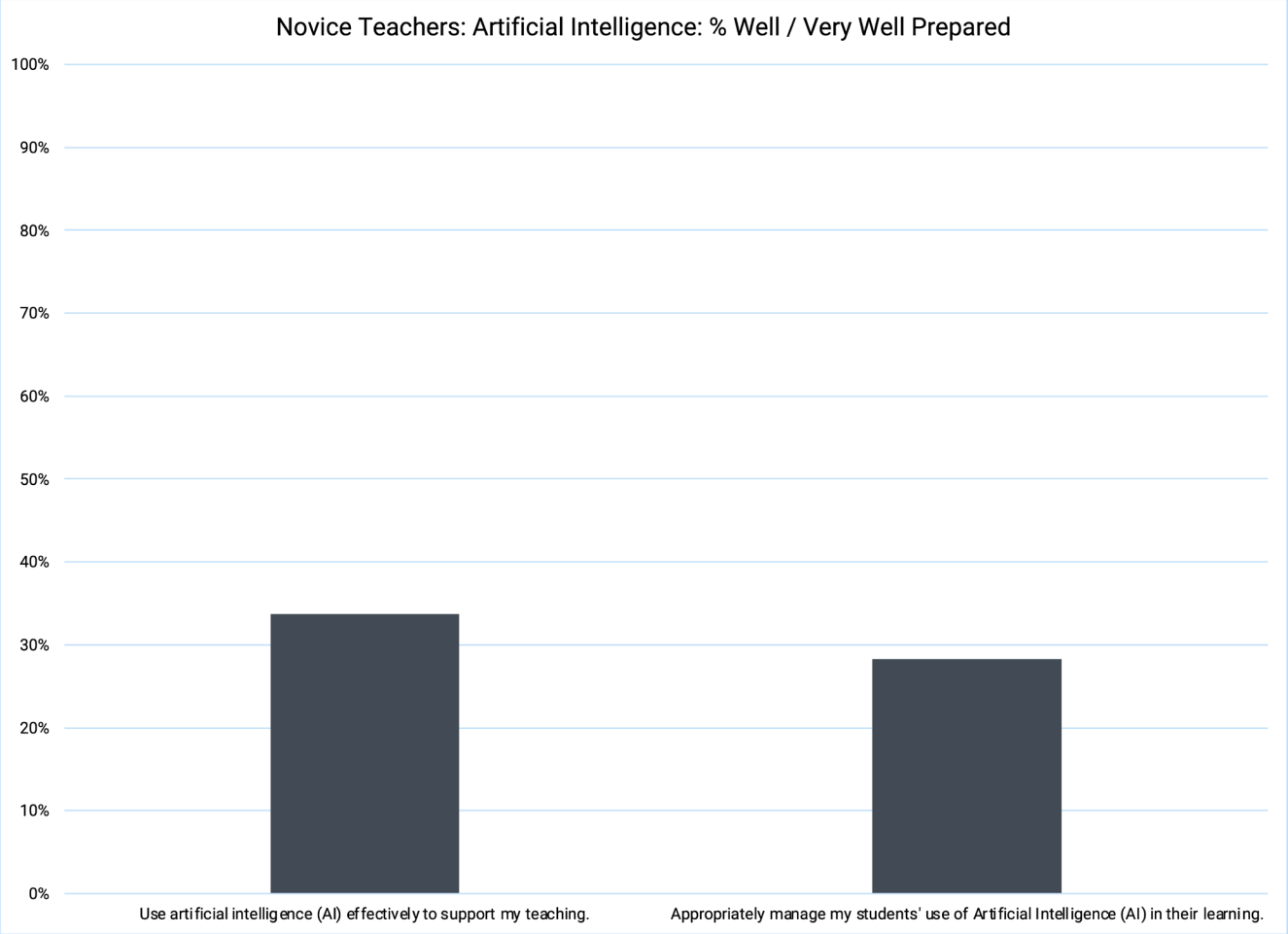
Scale: 1 = Not Very Well; 2 = Somewhat Well; 3 = Well; 4 = Very Well.

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$, statistically compared to scores from 2024.

Table 6. Novice Teachers: Preparation for Artificial Intelligence.

Item	n	M	% Well / Very Well
Use artificial intelligence (AI) effectively to support my teaching.	404	2.06	33.7%
Appropriately manage my students' use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their learning.	385	1.93	28.3%

Figure 9. Novice Teachers' Level of Preparation for Artificial Intelligence.



Level of Preparation for Supporting Mental Health

- Novice teachers reported a statistically significantly higher level of preparation to support their own mental health and wellness in comparison to results in 2024 (Table 7).
- Supervisors of novice teachers reported perceiving novice teachers as moderately well prepared to support students' mental health and wellness (65% well / very well) and the novice teachers' own mental health and wellness (70% well / very well, Table 7).
- Supervisors of novice teachers perceived novice teachers as much more well prepared to support their own mental health and wellness (70%) than novice teachers perceived themselves (57%).

Table 7. Overall level of preparation for supporting mental health.

"How well were you / was this teacher prepared for:"	**Novice Teachers**					**Supervisors of Novice Teachers**				
	n	M	% Well / Very Well	Compare to 2024	Compare to 2023	n	M	% Well / Very Well	Compare to 2024	Compare to 2023
Supporting students' mental health and wellness.	461	2.81	65%	2.81	2.69	528	2.84	65%	2.82	2.82
Supporting your own / the teacher's own mental health and wellness.	462	2.67**	57%	2.48	2.28	528	2.90	70%	2.87	2.92

Scale: 1 = Not very well prepared; 2 = Somewhat well prepared; 3 = Well prepared; 4 = Very well prepared.
*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$, statistically compared to scores from 2024.

Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Student Teaching

- Most respondents had a full-semester student teaching experience (14-16 weeks, Table 8).
- Nearly all respondents agreed that their student teaching experience was the right length (Table 9). Caution should be used in interpreting results for the response categories that had a small number of respondents.

Table 8. Length of student teaching (novice teachers only).

How long was your student teaching experience?	n	Percent
Student teaching was not required for my program	19	4.1%
Fewer than 6 weeks	9	2.0%
6-8 weeks	32	6.9%
9-11 weeks	7	1.5%
12-13 weeks	17	3.7%
14-16 weeks (full semester)	342	74.2%
More than 16 weeks	22	4.8%
Other (please specify):	13	2.8%
Total	**461**	**100%**

Open-ended comments:

2 years
80 hours field experience
Certain days here and there.
Field experience through RAPIL
I did both a long term substitute teaching position and 2 separate student teaching / observation requirements
I had an hours requirement through RAPIL
I had to do a field experience not student teaching
I had two practicums instead of student teaching
I participated in a full year of student teaching. The first semester was ½ days and the second semester was full days.
Intern year with shadowing 2 teachers over the course of a year
No student teaching was done for the internship program. I was suppose to be provided with a mentor at my school but that did not happen as planned. The teacher assigned showed me a few things during the first couple of weeks of school then nothing the rest of the year.
RAPIL-Intern Year
Teacher intern program

Table 9. Perceptions of the length of student teaching (novice teachers only).

Length of student teaching:	n	My student teaching experience was too short	My student teaching experience was just the right length	My student teaching experience was too long
Fewer than 6 weeks	7	29%	**71%**	0%
6-8 weeks	29	7%	**83%**	10%
9-11 weeks	7	14%	**86%**	0%
12-13 weeks	17	6%	**88%**	6%
14-16 weeks (full semester)	323	4%	**89%**	7%
More than 16 weeks	20	0%	**85%**	15%

- Novice teachers were satisfied with their student teaching experiences (Table 10). (Novice teachers who did not complete a student teaching experience were removed from results.)
- Novice teachers' satisfaction with student teaching was significantly higher in 2025 in comparison to 2024 (marked in green).

Table 10. Satisfaction with student teaching experiences (novice teachers only).

Satisfaction with:	**Statewide** (n = 437)		
	M	% Satisfied (5, 6, 7)	Compare to 2024
My cooperating teacher.	6.22*	89%	6.02
My placement school(s).	6.34***	91%	6.02
Other teachers and administrators in my placement school(s).	6.06**	87%	5.79
My college / university supervisor(s).	6.19**	88%	5.93
Student teaching experience overall.	6.17**	92%	5.92

7-point scale, where 1 = completely dissatisfied, 4 = neutral, and 7 = completely satisfied.

*$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$, statistically compared to scores from 2024.

- Student teaching and college / university courses were viewed as having an important role by novice teachers in developing their teaching skills and abilities (Table 11).

Table 11. Importance of courses or student teaching in developing abilities (novice teachers only).

Topic (n = 423)	**% College / University courses were much / somewhat more important**	**% College / University Courses and student teaching were equally important**	**% Student teaching was much / somewhat more important**
Knowledge of the discipline(s) I am teaching.	28%	**37%**	35%
Classroom management.	5%	17%	**78%**
Develop and use effective assessments.	22%	**40%**	39%
Design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experience**s** for all learners.	13%	**45%**	43%
Use technology effectively in the classroom.	17%	35%	**48%**
Differentiate instruction.	18%	36%	**46%**
Manage difficult student behaviors.	4%	12%	**84%**
Build relationships with students and their families.	3%	13%	**84%**
Plan effective lessons that meet content standards.	20%	**42%**	38%
Diagnostic and responsive teaching.	11%	36%	**53%**

- Novice teachers who were more satisfied with their student teaching experiences were more likely to report a higher level of performance as a novice teacher (Table 12). (Respondents who did not report completing student teaching were excluded.)

Table 12. Correlation of novice teachers' perception of level of preparation with overall satisfaction with student teaching.

Correlation with "student teaching experience overall." (n = 437)	**Correlation (95% CI)**
Work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.	**0.22** (.13 - .31)
Use technology in the classroom appropriately to support instruction.	**0.17** (.08 - .26)
Engage in ongoing professional learning to provide all learners with engaging learning experiences.	**0.17** (.08 - .26)
Develop and maintain a positive learning environment that engages all learners.	**0.34** (.26 - .42)
Ensure an inclusive learning environment for all learners.	**0.21** (.12 - .30)
Demonstrate understanding of the content area by using central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline.	**0.28** (.20 - .37)
Plan for instruction aligned to content standards.	**0.29** (.20 - .38)
Reflect on teaching practice to improve instruction.	**0.17** (.08 - .26)
Design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all learners.	**0.35** (.27 - .43)
Use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately.	**0.29** (.21 - .38)
Make his / her discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.	**0.30** (.21 - .38)
Differentiate for students with disabilities.	**0.25** (.16 - .34)
Develop and use multiple methods of assessment.	**0.21** (.11 - .29)
Integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content.	**0.25** (.16 - .33)
Differentiate instruction for all learners.	**0.23** (.14 - .32)
Evaluate outcomes of teaching using a variety of data (e.g. systematic observation, information about learners, research) to adapt planning and practice.	**0.23** (.14 - .32)
Differentiate for English Language Learners.	**0.14** (.05 - .24)
Teach students to read or help struggling readers (as appropriate for my endorsement).	**0.29** (.19 - .38)
Deliver the curricula assigned by my school district.	**0.31** (.22 - .39)
Use Artificial Intelligence (AI) effectively to support my teaching.	**0.10** (.01 - .20)
Appropriately manage my students' use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their learning.	**0.13** (.03 - .23)
Supporting my students' mental health and wellness.	**0.18** (.08 - .27)
Supporting my own mental health and wellness.	**0.32** (.24 - .41)

*All correlations are statistically significantly different from 0.

What feedback, if any, would you like to give to your teacher preparation institution about your student teaching experience?

- Need for better mentorship and guidance from cooperating teachers
    - "Make sure that cooperating teachers are doing this for the right reason. I had a very poor experience during student teaching where I was left alone on the first full week and week 3, for my program with no lesson plans and was expected just to make it work. This happened repeatedly."
- Stipends or financial support to relieve the financial strain of student teaching
    - "Pay student teachers! Or provide some type of grant for those who have to work"
- Improve placement quality, ensure diverse experiences, and preparation in classroom management
    - "First placement should not have been approved as a cooperating teacher, but there was no real way to know that until a student teacher was placed with them. I would recommend observational variety to expose student teachers to urban, suburban, rural, and remote schools before student teaching."
- Positive experience overall

Prior Paid School Experiences

New in 2025, novice teachers were asked about their prior paid experiences in schools.

- Over 40% of novice teachers reported some kind of paid employment in a school prior to completing a teacher preparation program (Table 13).
- Of those who reported prior paid school experiences, the most common reported prior paid experience (Table 14) was substitute teaching (58% of employed, 24% of total respondents), followed by paraeducator (55% of employed, 23% of total respondents).
- Novice teachers who reported paid employment in a school prior to their completion of their Teacher Preparation Program were significantly more likely to report being well prepared to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities (the score differences on the other areas of preparation were not statistically significantly different).

Table 13. Prior Paid School Experiences.

Did you have paid employment in any school prior to your completion of a Teacher Preparation Program?	**Statewide** (n = 449)	
	n	%
Yes, I had paid employment in a school prior to completing a Teacher Preparation Program.	186	41%
No, I did not have paid employment in a school prior to completing a Teacher Preparation Program.	263	59%

Table 14. Paid Employment Roles.

Which role(s) below describe your paid employment in a school prior to your completion of a Teacher Preparation Program (select all that apply): Includes only those who reported prior paid employment.	**Statewide** (n = 186)	
	n	% of employed (% of total)
Substitute Teacher	107	**58%** (24%)
Paraeducator	103	**55%** (23%)
Athletic Coach, Performing Arts Staff, or other paid student club / activity role	33	**18%** (7%)
Before School / After School Programs	22	**12%** (5%)
Teacher (i.e., provisional, conditional, or emergency license)	18	**10%** (4%)
Student tutoring or extended learning programs	12	**6%** (3%)
Nutrition Services, Custodial Services, Office Staff, Secretary, or other Support Services such as IT	3	**2%** (1%)
Other	12	**6%** (3%)

Other text: Behavior Tech, Childcare Director, Classroom Aid with America Reads America Counts, Daycare teacher, Daycare / preschool teacher in a private school, I worked as a business teacher with a CTE authorization while also supervising online math classes for high school students until I completed my TPP, Library associate, Long term sub (3 weeks right after student teaching), School Health Associate, Substitute Paraeducator, Summer School, Teacher with intern license.

- Only 8 paraeducators (8%) reported having their student teaching hours reduced based on their prior work as a paraeducator. The others either chose to have a full student teaching experience (3%), did not have their request for a shorter student teaching experience approved (10%), or the option was not available at the time or they did not know it was an option (80%).
- Only 6 other novice teachers (4%) reported having their student teaching hours reduced based on their prior employment in a school. The others either chose to have a full student teaching experience (8%), did not have their request for a shorter student teaching experience approved (8%), or the option was not available at the time or they did not know it was an option (80%).

Open-ended Items: Differentiation of Instruction

Themes for open-ended items were developed with the support of privacy-protected Copilot AI (submitted text was not stored by Microsoft). The full text of the open-ended items, with names removed, was provided to each Teacher Preparation Program.

Novice Teachers: How could your Teacher Preparation Program have better prepared you to differentiate instruction for all learners?

- More practical, real-life scenarios
    - "Have us actually work with students who are different learners."
- Courses and learning on special education, ELL, and diverse learners
    - "Having more than just one course regarding teaching students in special education programs (that didn't explain any instructional methods), as well as having education related to differentiating for learners who are already meeting the standards."
- Technology, instructional tools, and resources to support differentiation
    - "I think that AI planning tools would be valuable, I learned a lot of systems during my first year and was able to lead a PD about the tools I found useful."

Novice Teachers: How could your Teacher Preparation Program have better prepared you to differentiate instruction for students with disabilities?

- More practical experiences and collaborations with special education teachers
    - "I think actually working with students with disabilities is the best way to learn this practice."
- Real-world application, training on accommodations, and development of specific strategies
    - "Giving students more opportunities to learn about different disabilities as well as the different strategies used. I think having more knowledge and more general strategies would be a good place to start. I also think ensuring students in college get an opportunity to be an adapted class would be beneficial."
- Understanding neurodiversity and meeting diverse learning needs
    - "Understanding how to work with differences between neurodivergent students and others when conflicts arise."

Novice Teachers: How could your Teacher Preparation Program have better prepared you to differentiate instruction for English Language Learners?

- Practical experiences and collaboration with ELL teachers
    - "I have 5 ELL students this year and I do not feel confident in my abilities to support them what-so-ever. I would've liked hearing from a current ELL teacher and how they envision working with general education teachers. In our staff PD meetings I did learn about a few ways to support the students with visuals and charts but I

feel like this is something that could've been taught more in depth at the university."

- Explicit instruction in differentiation strategies for ELLs
    - "Give examples of differentiation that are effective. I don't feel we touched very much on the subject."
- Communication strategies with families and ELLs
    - "Best way to communicate with their families. What visuals are helpful and what isn't? What other strategies can you do with younger ELL students who speak no English"

Open-ended Items: Preparation to Support Mental Health

Themes for open-ended items were developed with the support of privacy-protected Copilot AI (submitted text was not stored by Microsoft). The full text of the open-ended items was provided to each Teacher Preparation Program. Direct quotes are provided from respondents as associated with each theme.

Novice Teachers: What, if anything, could your preparation program have done to better prepare you to support your students' mental health?

- Real-world experiences
  - "Allow us to have more experiences with those who struggle."
- Specialized courses, exposure to scenarios, and in-depth training on social-emotional learning
  - "Be exposed to more sufficient scenarios of mental health."
- Communication strategies for working with parents and students around mental health
  - "Discussing how to have conversations with parents about their student's mental health."
  - "Discussing more about how to talk with students who are struggling and how to help them overcome such feelings."

Supervisors of Novice Teachers: In what ways, if any, could this teacher have been better prepared to support their students' mental health and wellness?

- Practical experience, recognition, awareness, and understanding of mental health
  - "more targeted coursework or training in recognizing signs of anxiety, trauma, or depression in students. Many teacher prep programs only briefly touch on this, so more depth here could have helped her feel more confident and responsive."
- Relationship building, collaboration with support systems, and adaptability
  - "She builds good relationships with her students and does a good job of helping their social emotional needs."
- Access to ongoing professional development
  - "Mental health is something that we call could benefit from continuous learning around and about for best ways to support from our youngest students to our oldest staff members."

Novice Teachers: What, if anything, could your preparation program have done to better prepare you to support your own mental health?

- Realistic expectations and increasing mental health focus
  - "During college they always tell you that your first year is terrible. I think that having to plan out lessons that correlate with a REAL curriculum would have helped my mental health a lot. Learning how to deal with behaviors in the REAL world, in real

scenarios. I also think that even just being more prepared to set up your classroom, meet with parents, etc."

- Support after graduation, such as resources, strategies, open discussions, and maintaining work-life balance
    - "Additional support after graduation. I am currently teaching pre-k through 12 in a rural district with little to no support, and it has been really rough."
- Practical applications and coping mechanisms
    - "Teaching educators how to prioritize tasks outside of managing their classroom; all of the elements of teaching that come with the "job" such as engaging in meetings or professional development, collaborating with teachers within the school, utilizing IEP/BIP data to better support students, analyzing progress monitoring data, etc."

Supervisors of Novice Teachers: In what ways, if any, could this teacher have been better prepared to support their own mental health and wellness?

- Learn and engage in self-care practices, and manage work-life balance
    - "I think she does a lot of self-work outside of school which makes her very well prepared and able to support her own mental health and wellness. I am not sure if that is due to her own personal experiences and choices, or based on her teacher prep program, but she knows when she needs to recharge and when she is at her best, and what her own triggers are."
- Utilize strong support systems, including colleagues and mentors, and having a willingness to ask for help
    - "Knowing when to ask for help and support - that she doesn't have to do it all alone. She has embraced her team and they have helped support her."
- Having realistic expectations and engaging in ongoing reflection and growth
    - "This teacher is reflective and always trying to improve. Taking care of self does not mean lowering professional expectations. Showing how to keep expectations but take care of self is always a good reminder."

Open-ended Responses: Strengths, Challenges, and Feedback

Themes for open-ended items were developed with the support of privacy-protected Copilot AI (submitted text was not stored by Microsoft). The full text of the open-ended items was provided to each Teacher Preparation Program. Direct quotes are provided from respondents as associated with each theme.

Novice Teachers: What are examples of the knowledge, skills, or dispositions you learned in your program that helped you succeed in your career as a teacher?

- Building relationships with students, families, and colleagues
    - "The importance of building relationships with both families, students, and colleagues."
- Classroom management, differentiation skills, lesson planning
    - "I learned how to develop my own curriculum and use the standards to base my teaching. As a teacher now I teach the curriculum, but I most importantly teach the standards that students need to master. I felt that skill was crucial for the teaching I use daily. I also learned how to pace lessons and make sure I state the objective of the lesson throughout teaching. It is effective not only for any visitor in my classroom, but also that my students know exactly the expectation at the end of the lesson."
- Adaptability, flexibility, professionalism, and reflection
    - "My teacher preparation program equipped me with a strong foundation in child development, lesson planning, and classroom management. I learned how to differentiate instruction to meet diverse student needs and developed skills in reflective practice and collaboration. Most importantly, the program helped me build a growth mindset and the resilience needed to navigate the challenges of teaching."

Supervisors of Novice Teachers: What are examples of the knowledge, skills, or dispositions [TEACHER NAME] demonstrated this year that most supported their success?

- Strong content knowledge and effective planning
    - "[Name] knows her content really well. Using new curriculum this year has made her realize which standards she needs to hit and how to sequence her lesson plans."
- Classroom management
    - "She is solid on classroom management and holding kids accountable to the expectations of the building."
- Reflective, adaptive, and engaged

    - “[Name] was always willing to accept and act on feedback from colleagues and supervisors. [Name] acted on suggestions for improvement in classroom practices, especially in the area of engagement strategies.”
- Collaborative
    - “[Name] is collaborative with other teachers in our building. [Name] has a working knowledge of the program from a paraprofessional standpoint so that aided her in acclimating to a new role within the same building.”
- Commitment to growth
    - “What sets [Name] apart from other first year teachers is her willingness to ask for help and seeks out feedback from instructional coaches and her peers. Most first year teachers shy away from getting feedback and this has set her apart from others.”

Novice Teachers: What are the knowledge, skills, or dispositions that have been the greatest challenge in your first years of teaching?

- Challenges in classroom management, lesson planning, and curriculum adaptation
    - “Classroom management - my first year especially I was at a school that was not a good fit, and I did not understand how to work with young adolescent children. I have had to learn how to operate with stricter boundaries and less nuance, which was a difficult adjustment for me. I didn't understand that students would see my flexibility as an opportunity for anarchy, and it was a deeply terrible experience. I also didn't understand that certain types of instructions would be developmentally inappropriate, e.g. they did not understand when I told them that a classroom expectation was for them to not act in ways that disrupt other students' learning. I also operated under the assumption that people would engage with me in good faith, which is naive, idealistic, and wrong. Another challenge is decision fatigue--I really, really struggled to make the hundreds of decisions teachers make every day.”
- Inability to communicate effectively with parents
    - “One of the greatest challenges this year has been controlling my nerves during parent-teacher conferences. While I feel confident in my knowledge of my students and their progress, speaking with families—especially when discussing concerns—can feel intimidating. Over time, I've grown more comfortable by preparing thoroughly, focusing on partnership, and reminding myself that parents and teachers ultimately share the same goal: supporting the child.”
- Insufficient time management and emotional and mental health management
    - “Time management, more so that I have so many students that need extra help, but I don't have enough time in the day to get them all.”
- Lack of support from administration in the school

    - "Lack of support from administration with student behavior."

Supervisors of Novice Teachers: What are the knowledge, skills, or dispositions that have been the greatest challenge for [TEACHER NAME] this year?

- Classroom management, classroom discipline, and engaging students effectively
    - "Close to no classroom management. I did give a lot of support and suggestions."
- Differentiation of curriculum and instruction
    - "Differentiating for both students with prior exposure (PS and TK) and ELL students is difficult. As first year teachers, they will hopefully continue to develop instructional strategies to support these students. I have asked her to practice more flexible small groups, tiered activities, incorporating visuals or using sentence frames that can support all learners."
- Communicating with parents
    - "One of [Name]'s biggest challenges this year has been communication with parents. As a first-year teacher, navigating when and how to communicate—especially when addressing concerns—can feel overwhelming. Building confidence in having proactive, clear, and consistent communication with families is an area for continued growth. With support and practice, this will become a strength that enhances her relationships with families and deepens their trust in her as their child's teacher."
- Accepting criticism
    - "Her greatest challenge is taking the feedback that was given to her by the administration and coaches and implementing it. She also had difficulty being consistent with expectations and procedures."

Novice Teachers: What feedback do you have for the college / university that prepared you to be a teacher?

- More training in classroom management and special education, and more hands-on experiences
    - "I wish I would've known more about special ed as a gen ed teacher. the courses we had weren't enough for all that I have had to learn from my co-workers or on my own this year. It has added a lot of stress that could've been relieved had a base level been taught in gen ed classes."
- Curriculum knowledge, technology integration, and having realistic expectations
    - "Overall I felt prepared. But I needed more knowledge on how to take a list of Iowa Core Standards and create a whole class from them from nothing. The school provided no curriculum or out of date curriculum requiring me to figure out how to make it work from scratch. I had some help from the Instructional coach. Some help from AEA, but overall I was on my own. It would have been nice to have more instruction on grading and how to grade."

- Gratitude and satisfaction with the program, and appreciative of supportive faculty
    - “I am very thankful for the education and support I received from Briar Cliff University. The teacher preparation program gave me a strong foundation in instructional strategies, classroom management, and educational theory, all of which have been essential in my early years of teaching. I had the privilege of learning from some of the best professors. I’m proud to have been part of Briar Cliff’s education program, and I’m grateful for the preparation it provided for my teaching career.”

Supervisors of Novice Teachers: What feedback do you have for the college/ university that prepared this teacher?

- Thank you for effectively preparing this teacher
    - “The college did a great job of preparing [Name] for her professional career.”
- More classroom management and practical experiences
    - “Get the teachers in the classroom as much as possible. They learn the most from veteran teachers and real life situation.”
- More preparation in special education, science of reading, and evidence-based instructional practices
    - “More specific understanding of early literacy and science of reading.”