

2023 Survey of Novice Teachers & their Supervisors

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Jeremy Penn, Ph.D., M.P.H.
jeremy-penn@uiowa.edu

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.

Overall Results

Novice Teachers

- Novice teachers continued to report a high level of preparation for teaching (Figure 1 and Figure 2).
- Ability to differentiate instruction – for English Language Learners, for students with disabilities, and for all learners – continued to be the area where novice teachers felt least well prepared.
- Novice teachers reported an increase in their ability to support students' mental health and wellness (Figure 3). However, the percent of novice teachers who reported being well or very well prepared to support their own mental health was below 40% (Figure 3).
- New survey items in 2023 found novice teachers who were more satisfied with their student teaching experiences were more likely to report being well prepared to serve as a novice teacher (Table 9). This finding highlights the importance of high-quality student teaching experiences in building novice teachers' perceptions of preparation.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 4) around **supporting students' mental health**, novice teachers suggested an additional course or course content on mental health, more experience with mental health in students, more preparation for behavior issues, and access to resources would be helpful to them.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 4) around **supporting their own mental health**, novice teachers suggested strategies for finding balance and avoiding burnout, being realistic about the first year of teaching, and access to resources, knowledge, and support would be helpful to them.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 4), novice teachers felt **their success was supported** by their content knowledge, by classroom management and planning skills, by relationships and communication skills, and by opportunities to have practiced in student teaching before beginning as a novice teacher.

- In open-ended comments (Figure 4), novice teachers reported their **biggest areas of challenge** included classroom management, behavior management, time management, and issues related to curriculum, differentiation, IEPs, and relationships with parents, paraeducators, other teachers, and communication with these various groups.
- The **top areas of feedback** for the college / university that prepared the novice teacher (Figure 4) included focusing preparation on the reality of a first year teaching experience, feeling like they were well-prepared, and more focus on classroom management and behavior management.

Figure 1.

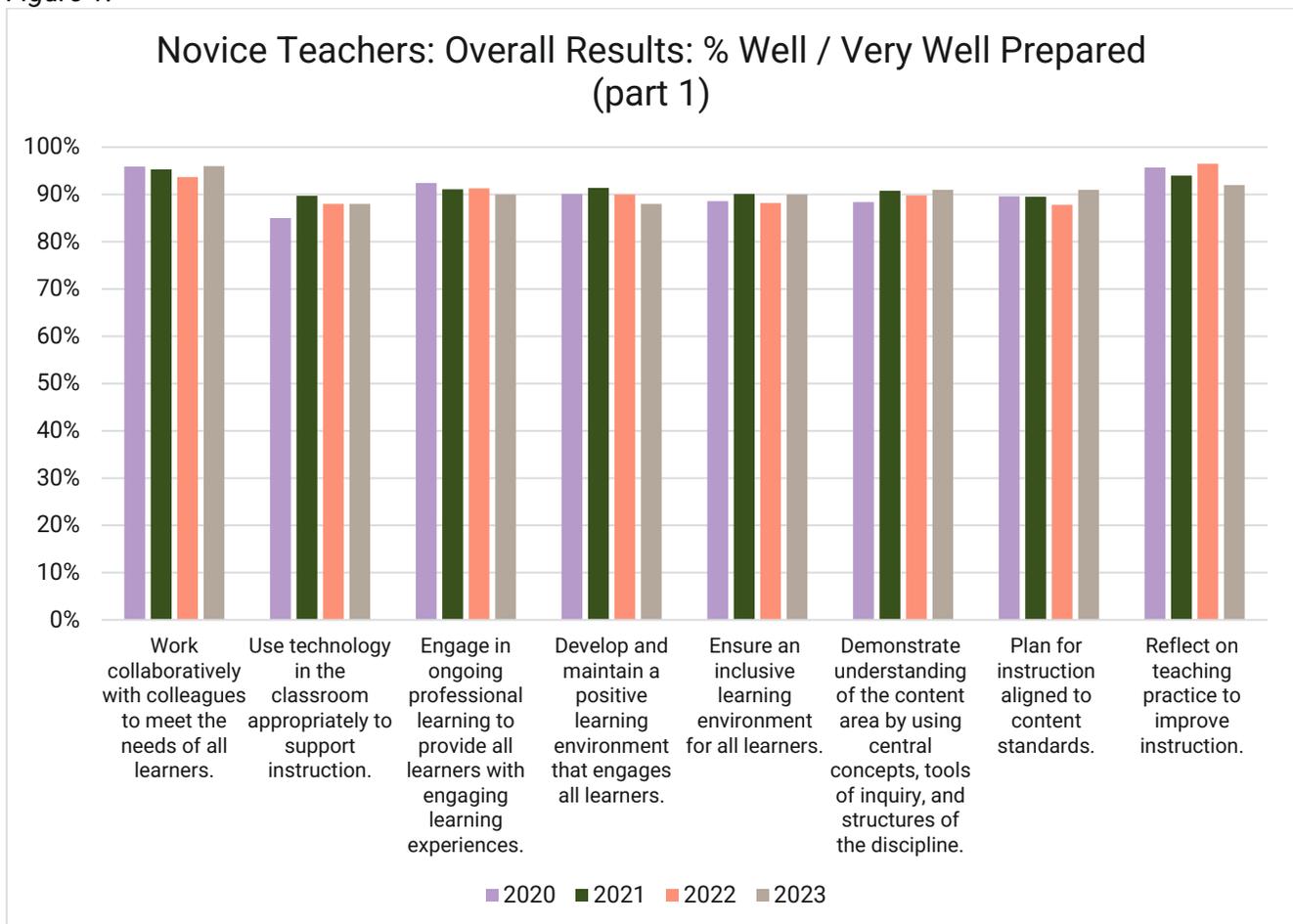


Figure 2.

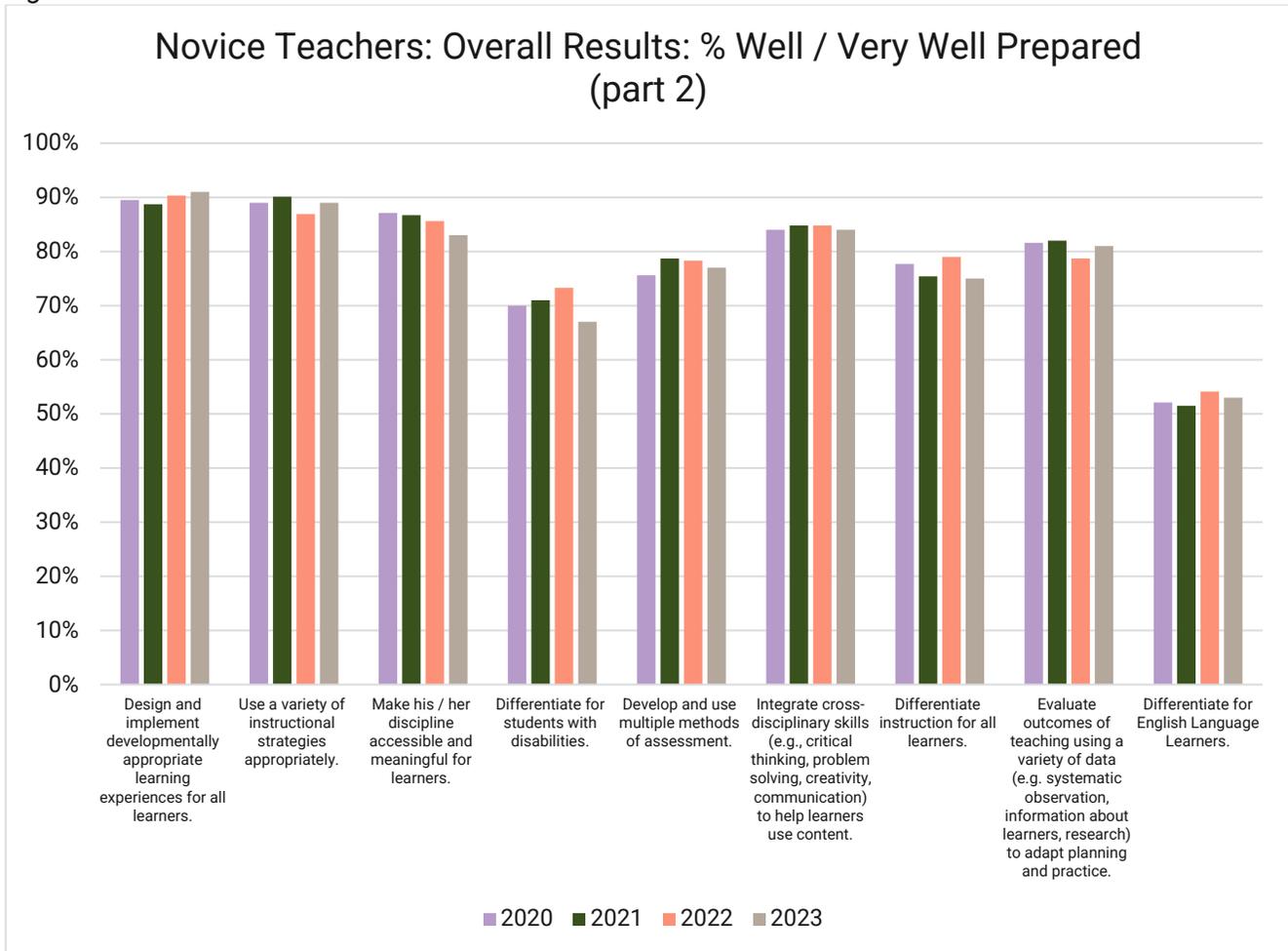


Figure 3.

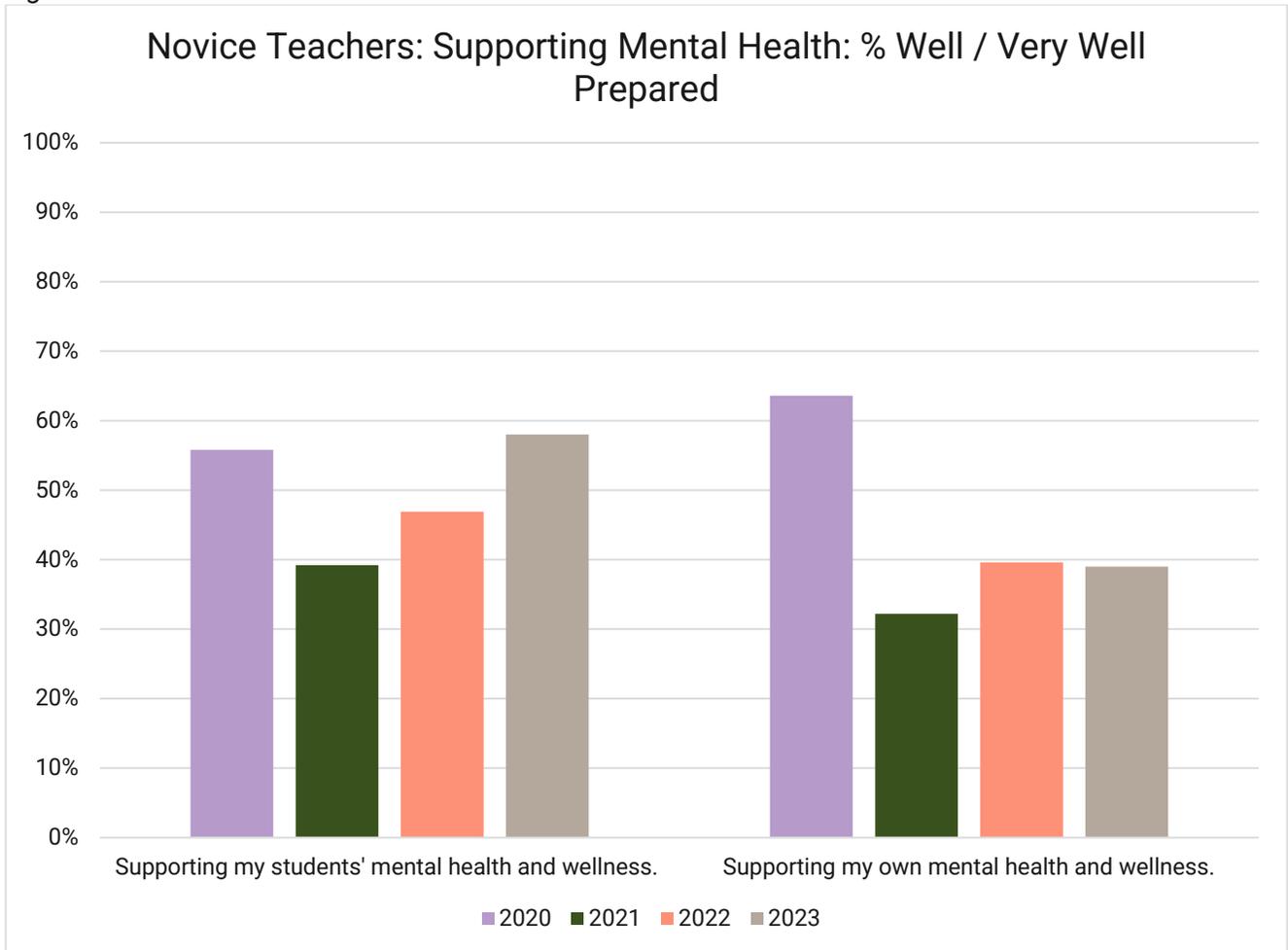


Figure 4.

Open-ended Feedback from Novice Teachers



Supporting Students' Mental Health

- Additional course or course content
- More experience with mental health and students
- More preparation on behavior issues
- More access to resources



Supporting Novice Teachers' Own Mental Health

- Additional strategies for finding balance and avoiding burnout
- Be realistic about the first year of teaching
- More access to resources, knowledge, and support



Feedback for your Preparation Program

- Focus more attention on preparing us for success in our first year of teaching
- The program did a good job of preparing me
- More classroom management and behavior management



Biggest Areas of Challenge

- Classroom management, behavior management, time management
- Curriculum, differentiation, IEPs
- Relationships with parents, paraeducators, other teachers, and communication



Biggest Areas that Supported my Success

- Content knowledge, classroom management and planning skills
- Building relationships and good communication
- Opportunities to have practiced in student teaching before having my own classroom

Supervisors of Novice Teachers

- Supervisors of novice teachers generally agreed that novice teachers were well prepared (Figure 5 and Figure 6).
- Supervisors of novice teachers continued to rate novice teachers' ability to differentiate instruction for English Language Learners as the area where novice teachers were least well prepared (Figure 6).
- Supervisors of novice teachers rated novice teachers' ability to support students' mental health and to support their own mental health as higher in 2023 than in 2022 (Figure 7).
- Supervisors of novice teachers reported statistically similar levels of preparation in 2023 in most areas in comparison to results from 2022 (see Table 7 for details).
- In open-ended comments (Figure 8), in **supporting students' mental health**, supervisors mentioned more exposure to standards, laws, regulations, and strategies, behavior management and classroom management, and more time and experience.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 8), for novice teachers' ability to **support their own mental health**, supervisors described a need for a better understanding of work / life balance, higher engagement of novice teachers in self-care, and a need for more experience.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 8), supervisors noted positive relationships, readiness to learn, and strong content knowledge were the areas that most **supported novice teachers' success**.
- In open-ended comments (Figure 8), supervisors identified classroom management, student behaviors, and issues related to teamwork and professionalism as issues that were the **biggest challenges** to novice teachers.
- **Additional feedback** for the preparation programs included the novice teacher being well prepared, a need for more experience for the novice teacher, and additional preparation in classroom management (Figure 8).

Figure 5.

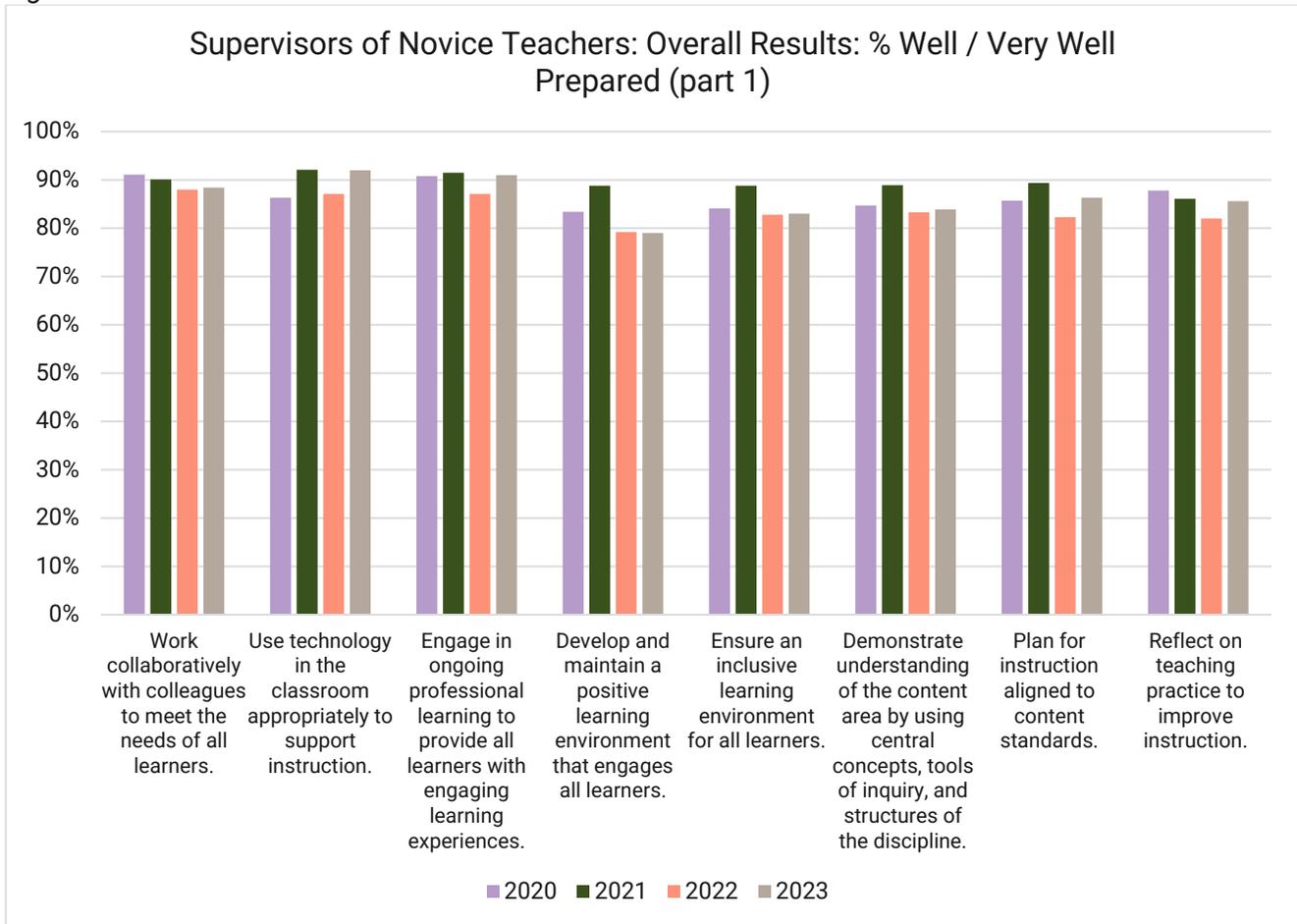


Figure 6.

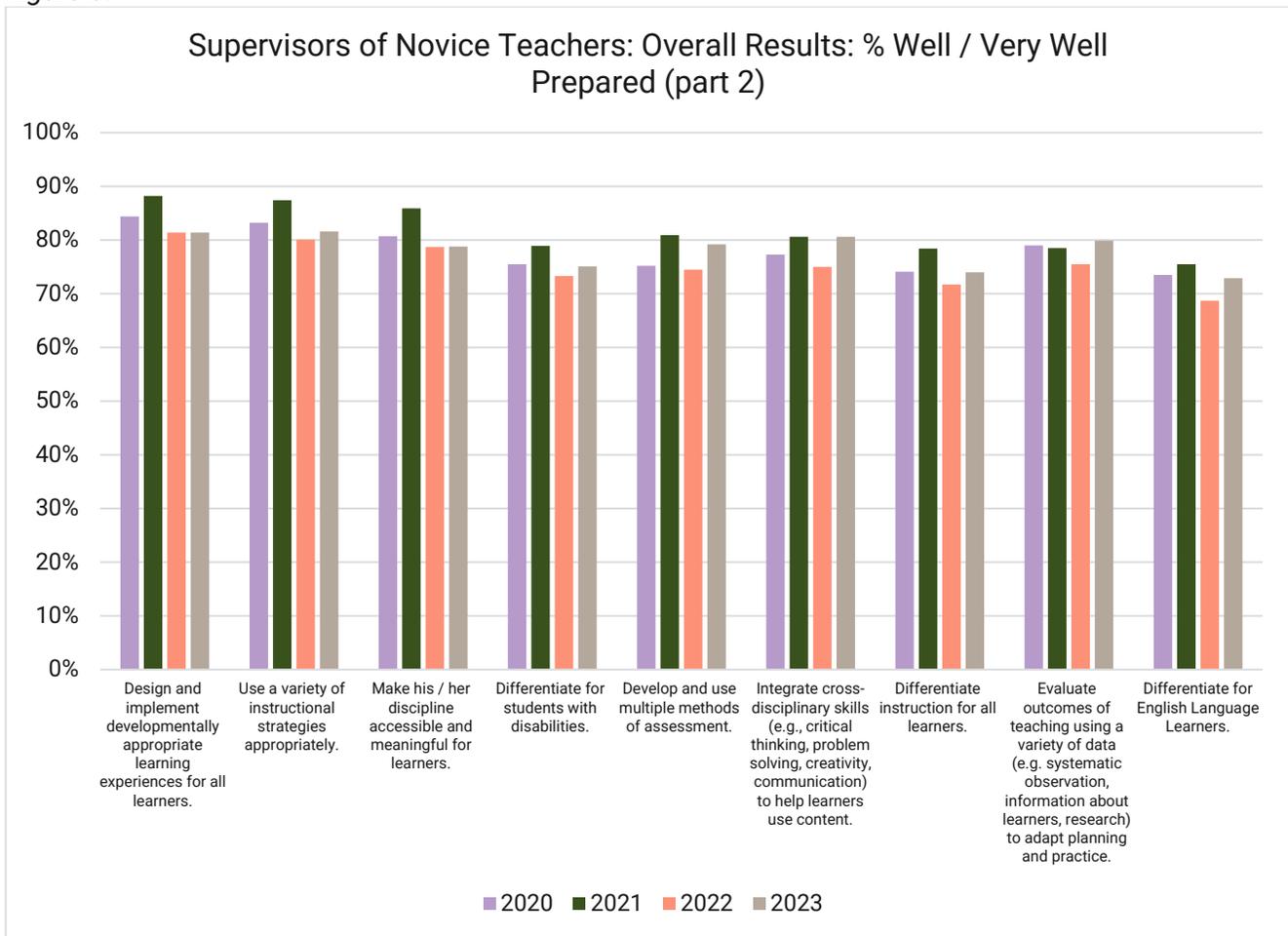


Figure 7.

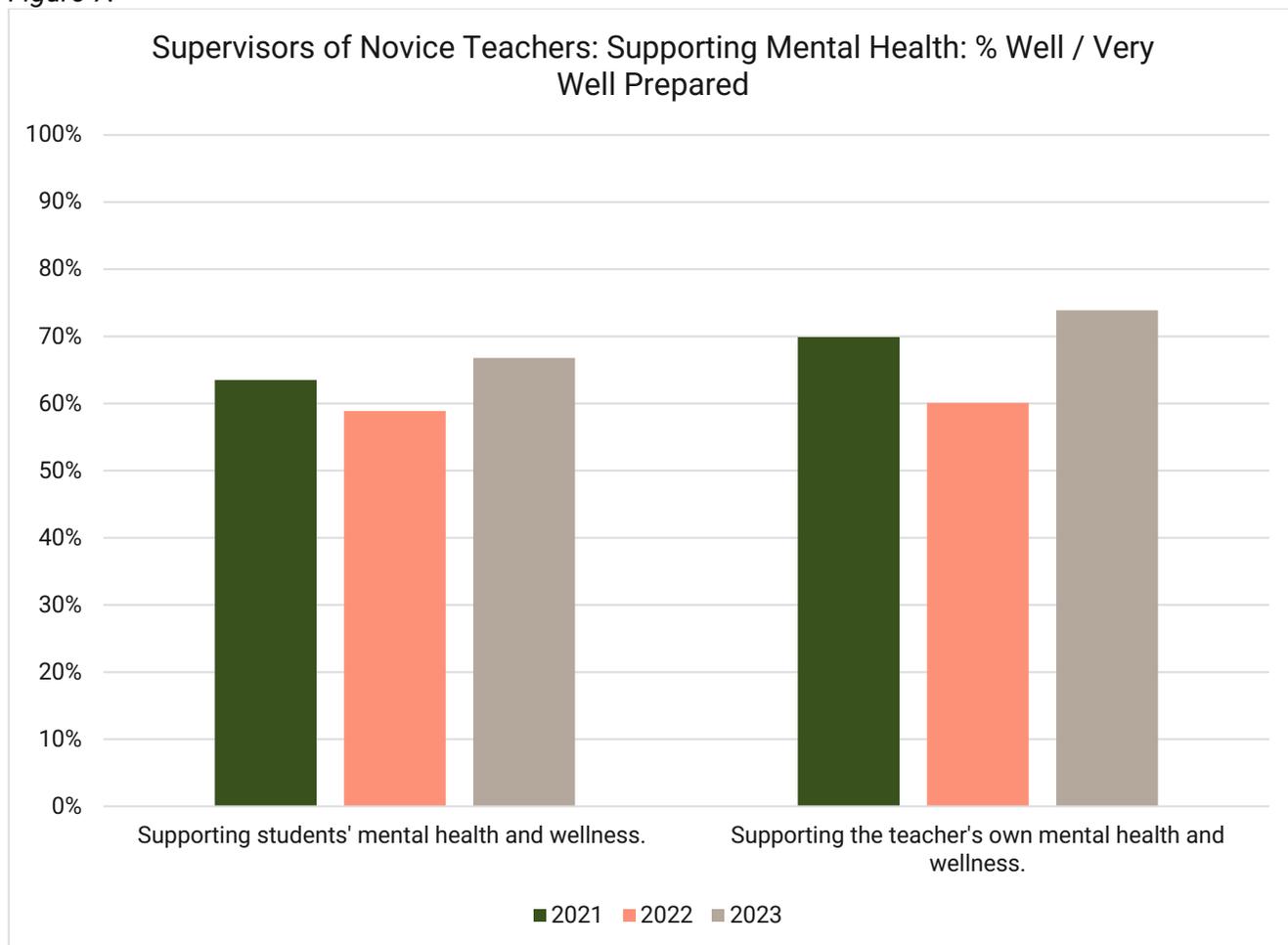


Figure 8.

Open-ended Feedback from Supervisors of Novice Teachers



Supporting Students' Mental Health

- More exposure to standards, laws, regulations
- More strategies, classroom management, behavior management
- More time and experience



Supporting Novice Teachers' Own Mental Health

- Better understanding of work / life balance
- More engagement in self-care
- More experience



Feedback for the Preparation Program

- This teacher was well prepared - thank you
- More classroom, real-world experience
- More classroom management preparation



Biggest Areas of Challenge

- Classroom management
- Managing difficult student behaviors
- Teamwork and professionalism



Biggest Areas that Supported their-Success

- Building positive relationships
- Readiness to learn
- Strong content knowledge

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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).
- There were no significant changes to the existing survey questions in 2023. New questions about novice teachers' experiences during student teaching were added in 2023.
- Administered through the University of Iowa's Qualtrics license from April 3, 2023, to May 11, 2023. Up to four reminder emails were sent to those individuals who had not responded or who had not completed the survey.
- As a pilot test for improving response rates, reminder postcards were sent to 250 novice teachers at their school address.
- 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 1,208 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 458 responses were received for a response rate of 37.9% (458 / 1,208). Some respondents did not answer every question, so the total number of responses per item varies.
- To encourage response, 250 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. Those who received a postcard were significantly more likely to respond to the survey in comparison to a similar group of novice teachers who did not

receive a postcard. The odds of response were 2.02 times higher for those who received a postcard (26% response rate) than for those who did not (14.8% response rate).

- Calculated another way, sending 250 postcards produced an additional 28 responses. If budget allows, and if contact information is available, in future years this may be considered as a potential strategy for increasing the response rate.
- Supervisors of novice teachers: A total of 964 emails were sent to 720 unique email addresses. 503 responses were received from 364 unique email addresses for a response rate of 52.2% (503 / 964). The number of responses for each item varies since some respondents did not respond to every item. If the supervisee was known to not be in their first two years of teaching, the responses were also removed.
- 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).

Results

Demographics of Respondents

Novice Teachers

- 95.8% of the initial respondents were in their first or second year of teaching as a licensed teacher (Table 1). Those who were not in their first or second year of teaching or who were not currently teaching and not currently working in an educational setting were removed from all subsequent analyses (n = 9).

Table 1. Please select the statement that best describes your teaching experience.

Response	n	Percent
This is my first or second year of teaching as a licensed teacher	429	95.8%
I have more than two years of experience as a licensed teacher	3	0.7%
I am NOT currently teaching but I am working in an educational setting	10	2.2%
I am NOT currently teaching and I am NOT currently working in an educational setting	6	1.3%

- Responses were received from novice teachers who had attended thirty of the thirty-one teacher preparation programs in Iowa (Table 2).

Table 2. Where did you complete your teacher preparation program?

Response	n	Percent
Briar Cliff University	4	0.9%
Buena Vista University	33	7.5%
Central College	9	2.0%
Clarke University	1	0.2%
Coe College	7	1.6%
Cornell College	13	2.9%
Dordt University	9	2.0%
Drake University	10	2.3%
Emmaus Bible College	1	0.2%
Faith Baptist Bible College	2	0.5%
Graceland University	9	2.0%
Grand View University	0	0
Grinnell College	3	0.7%
Iowa State University	65	14.7%
Iowa Wesleyan University	4	0.9%
Loras College	3	0.7%
Luther College	22	5.0%
Morningside University	6	1.4%
Morningside University Alternative Licensure	10	2.3%
Mount Mercy University	8	1.8%
Northwestern College	10	2.3%
RAPIL (Regents Alternative Pathway to Licensure)	9	2.0%
Saint Ambrose University	4	0.9%
Simpson College	12	2.7%
University of Dubuque	5	1.1%
University of Iowa	50	11.3%
University of Northern Iowa	64	14.5%
Upper Iowa University	26	5.9%
Waldorf University	6	1.4%
Wartburg College	14	3.2%
William Penn University	23	5.2%
None of these	0	0
Total	442	100%

- Nearly one-quarter of respondents were currently teaching in a subject area for which they needed to obtain conditional endorsement (Table 3).

Table 3. Are you currently teaching in a subject area for which you needed to obtain a conditional endorsement?

Response	n	Percent
Yes	94	24.1%
No	296	75.9%
Total	390	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 4). Responses were aggregated together if they were similar. The most frequently reported area requiring a conditional endorsement was Special Education.

Table 4. In what area are you teaching that requires a conditional endorsement?

Response	n	Percent
Special Education	18	23%
Strat II	8	10%
Music	6	8%
ELL / ESL	5	6%
Reading	4	5%
Science (secondary)	4	5%
Social Studies (secondary)	4	5%
English (secondary)	3	4%
Math (secondary)	3	4%
Preschool	3	4%
Strat I	3	4%
Art	2	3%
Health	2	3%
Spanish	2	3%
Business	1	1%
Elementary Education	1	1%
Family & Consumer Sciences	1	1%
G&T	1	1%
Industrial Technology	1	1%
Introduction to Engineering and Design	1	1%
Language Arts	1	1%
Physical Education	1	1%
Speech / Theatre	1	1%
Talented & Gifted	1	1%
Total	77	100%

Supervisors of Novice Teachers

- 98.8% of the initial responses received from supervisors of novice teachers were for teachers who were known to be in their first two years of serving as a teacher. Throughout the rest of this report, unless otherwise indicated, responses for those who were known to not be in their first year of teaching were removed (n = 3).

Table 5. To your knowledge, is [TEACHER NAME] in their first or second year of teaching as a licensed teacher?

Response	n	Percent
Yes, this is this person's first or second year serving as a licensed teacher	429	98.8%
No, this is NOT this person's first or second year serving as a licensed teacher	3	0.7%
I don't know	2	0.5%
Total	434	100%

- Teacher preparation program attendance was provided by the Iowa Department of Education, by the teacher preparation programs, and verified by supervisors (if known).

Table 6. What teacher preparation program did this teacher attend?

Response	n	Percent of total responses
Briar Cliff University	2	0.5%
Buena Vista University	52	12.1%
Central College	7	1.6%
Clarke University	3	0.7%
Coe College	0	0%
Cornell College	6	1.4%
Dordt University	11	2.6%
Drake University	5	1.2%
Emmaus Bible College	1	0.2%
Faith Baptist Bible College	4	0.9%
Graceland University	4	0.9%
Grand View University	0	0%
Grinnell College	2	0.5%
Iowa State University	55	12.8%
Iowa Wesleyan University	3	0.7%
Loras College	10	2.3%
Luther College	5	1.2%
Morningside University	10	2.3%
Morningside University Alternative Licensure	18	4.2%
Mount Mercy University	4	0.9%
Northwestern College	7	1.6%
RAPIL (Regents Alternative Pathway to Licensure)	9	2.1%
Saint Ambrose University	11	2.6%
Simpson College	15	3.5%
University of Dubuque	9	2.1%
University of Iowa	26	6.0%
University of Northern Iowa	111	25.8%
Upper Iowa University	12	2.8%
Waldorf University	7	1.6%
Wartburg College	10	2.3%
William Penn University	12	2.8%
None of these	0	0%
Total	431	100%

Overall Results

- Novice teachers' ratings of their level of preparation in 2023 were not significantly different from the ratings received in 2022 except for ability to differentiate for students with disabilities, which was significantly lower in 2023 (Table 7).
- Novice teachers rated themselves highest in their ability to “work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.”
- Novice teachers rated themselves the lowest in their ability to “differentiate for English Language Learners.”
- Supervisors of novice teachers in 2023 rated the performance of novice teachers statistically similar to the ratings in 2022 in most areas (Table 7).
- Supervisors of novice teachers in 2023 rated the performance of novice teachers significantly lower than the ratings in 2021 in seven areas. (Table 7)
- Supervisors of novice teachers rated them highest in their ability to “use technology in the classroom appropriately to support instruction.”
- Supervisors of novice teachers rated them the lowest in their ability to “differentiate for English Language Learners.”

Table 7. Overall results.

Item "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 2022	Compare to 2021	n	M	Percent Well / Very Well	Compare to 2022	Compare to 2021
Work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.	404	3.60	96%	-	-	424	3.39	88%	-	-
Use technology in the classroom appropriately to support instruction.	407	3.41	88%	-	-	423	3.41	92%	↑↑↑	-
Engage in ongoing professional learning to provide all learners with engaging learning experiences.	408	3.42	90%	-	-	423	3.39	91%	-	-
Develop and maintain a positive learning environment that engages all learners.	424	3.33	88%	-	-	429	3.19	79%	-	↓↓↓
Ensure an inclusive learning environment for all learners.	424	3.34	90%	-	-	428	3.25	83%	-	↓
Demonstrate understanding of the content area by using central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline.	423	3.33	91%	-	-	429	3.21	84%	-	↓↓
Plan for instruction aligned to content standards.	409	3.35	91%	-	-	424	3.26	86%	-	-
Reflect on teaching practice to improve instruction.	408	3.48	92%	-	-	424	3.28	86%	-	-
Design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all learners.	424	3.26	91%	-	-	429	3.16	81%	-	↓↓
Use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately.	409	3.30	89%	-	-	424	3.17	82%	-	↓
Make his / her discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.	423	3.16	83%	-	-	429	3.09	79%	-	↓↓
Differentiate for students with disabilities.	409	2.87	67%	↓↓	↓	422	3.04	75%	-	-
Develop and use multiple methods of assessment.	423	3.08	77%	-	-	429	3.07	79%	-	-
Integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content.	421	3.19	84%	-	-	428	3.08	81%	-	-
Differentiate instruction for all learners.	409	3.01	75%	-	-	423	2.99	74%	-	↓↓
Evaluate outcomes of teaching using a variety of data (e.g. systematic observation, information about learners, research) to adapt planning and practice.	408	3.12	81%	-	-	423	3.08	80%	-	-
Differentiate for English Language Learners.	404	2.58	53%	-	-	407	2.95	73%	-	-

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

↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .05$.

↑↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .01$.

↑↑↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .001$.

↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .05$.

↓↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .01$.

↓↓↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .001$.

Level of Preparation for Supporting Mental Health

- Novice teachers reported being significantly better prepared to support students' mental health and wellness (58% well / very well) in comparison to results in 2022 and 2021 (Table 8).
- Less than 40% of novice teachers reported being well or very well prepared to support their own mental health and wellness – a result that was statistically similar to results in 2022 but significantly better than results in 2021 (Table 8).
- Supervisors of novice teachers reported novice teachers were much more prepared in 2023 to support their own mental health and wellness (74%) than in 2022 (60%) (Table 8).
- 67% of supervisors of novice teachers reported novice teachers were prepared to support students' mental health and wellness (Table 8).

Table 8. Overall level of preparation for teaching in a pandemic and supporting mental health.

"How well were you / was this teacher prepared for:"	Novice Teachers					Supervisors of Novice Teachers				
	n	M	Percent Well / Very Well	Compare to 2022	Compare to 2021	n	M	Percent Well / Very Well	Compare to 2022	Compare to 2021
Supporting students' mental health and wellness.	395	2.69	58%	↑↑↑	↑↑↑	422	2.82	67%	-	-
Supporting your own / the teacher's own mental health and wellness.	394	2.28	39%	-	↑↑↑	421	2.92	74%	↑↑↑	-

*Scale: 1 = Not very well prepared; 2 = Somewhat well prepared; 3 = Well prepared; 4 = Very well prepared.

↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .05$.

↑↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .01$.

↑↑↑ : Indicates statistically significantly higher, $p < .001$.

↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .05$.

↓↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .01$.

↓↓↓ : Indicates statistically significantly lower, $p < .001$.

Student Teaching and Novice Teachers' Perceptions of Preparation

- Novice teachers were generally satisfied with their student teaching experiences (Table 9), with 90% satisfied with their overall student teaching experience. (Respondents who did not report completing student teaching were excluded.)

Table 9. Satisfaction with student teaching experiences.

Satisfaction with:	Statewide (n = 380)	
	M	% Satisfied (5, 6, 7)
My cooperating teacher.	6.26	91%
My placement school(s).	6.28	92%
Other teachers and administrators in my placement school(s).	6.00	86%
My college / university supervisor(s).	6.13	86%
Student teaching experience overall.	6.09	90%

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

- 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 10). (Respondents who did not report completing student teaching were excluded.)

Table 10. Correlation of novice teachers' perception of level of preparation with overall satisfaction with student teaching.

Correlation with "student teaching experience overall."	n	Correlation
Work collaboratively with colleagues to meet the needs of all learners.	374	.21***
Use technology in the classroom appropriately to support instruction.	375	.09
Engage in ongoing professional learning to provide all learners with engaging learning experiences.	376	.03
Develop and maintain a positive learning environment that engages all learners.	377	.22***
Ensure an inclusive learning environment for all learners.	377	.18***
Demonstrate understanding of the content area by using central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline.	377	.15**
Plan for instruction aligned to content standards.	377	.19***
Reflect on teaching practice to improve instruction.	376	.15**
Design and implement developmentally appropriate learning experiences for all learners.	377	.20***
Use a variety of instructional strategies appropriately.	377	.24***
Make his / her discipline accessible and meaningful for learners.	377	.20***
Differentiate for students with disabilities.	377	.15**
Develop and use multiple methods of assessment.	377	.12*
Integrate cross-disciplinary skills (e.g., critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication) to help learners use content.	375	.20***
Differentiate instruction for all learners.	377	.16**
Evaluate outcomes of teaching using a variety of data (e.g. systematic observation, information about learners, research) to adapt planning and practice.	376	.15**
Differentiate for English Language Learners.	373	.14**
Supporting my students' mental health and wellness.	377	.24***
Supporting my own mental health and wellness.	377	.28***

* $p < 0.05$.

** $p < 0.01$.

*** $p < 0.001$.

Open-ended Items: Preparation to Support Mental Health

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

- Additional courses or additional course content, more exposure to various scenarios that occur, learn how to address trauma, and more preparation in social-emotional learning.
 - “Design a class around mental health in students and how to teach in a way that helps grow and develop a strong mental health in our students.”
 - “I would've liked to take a more in-depth educational psychology course that helps me understand what various conditions students typically deal with in middle / high school, where these come from, and how I am supposed to react to them. Do I send kids to the counselor? Do I take it on myself? When and how do I determine the type of mental support my students need and how can I make sure to give it to them?”
 - “Do activities where a student says something to you about their mental health and you act out how you would respond.”
 - “I think my teaching program did an okay job of preparing me, but I have had a LOT of trauma in my classroom in my class and could have used assistance from other organizations to help with the trauma in my classroom.”
- More experience with mental health in students, more preparation to address behavior issues, cultural competence.
 - “Had experiences / conversations in the classroom setting practicing those conversations with others BEFORE student teaching.”
 - “Given me more opportunities to look and write IEPs.”
 - “Less time writing extensive lesson plans that are not realistic and spending more time on learning mental health and classroom management strategies.”
- Know what resources are available and how to help students access those resources.
 - “Giving resources that we can use to support students' mental health as I feel that is not something I know much about.”
 - “Tools or resources to provide to students.”

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

- More exposure to standards, laws, and regulations, to trauma informed care, and strategies for supporting students.
 - “Understand how mental health in children manifests often in behaviors; having tight routines / procedures and predictability help support good mental health.”
 - “It is just shocking to new teachers on what they will see and hear from students about their lives outside of school. This can be very hard to manage in the

classroom—not knowing how to balance expectations with mental health needs of students.”

- “More training in trauma informed care.”
- Behavior management and classroom management.
 - “Behavioral challenges in the classroom are constant at various levels. Requiring time in a setting of multiple behaviors and instruction on what strategies to use.”
 - “more of an understanding of strategies to support students with behavioral needs.”
 - “Classroom management is everything. If a teacher does not understand the need for routines, procedures, etc., then the rest doesn’t matter. A good lesson goes nowhere without classroom management. Also, MTSS. Knowing how to do a whole group lesson then pull students for small group needs is vital.”
- More time and experience.
 - “This is something I feel comes with experience. She just needs opportunities to work with kids, be able to read them to see when they need a break, when work needs to be adjusted or broken down, and just the experience of working with students who have mental wellness needs.”
 - “We can all get better here, and he is well prepared and willing to ask when he needs help.”
- Other themes included professional development, communicating with parents, accessing resources, and that the novice teacher was well prepared.

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

- Learning to find balance between job as teacher and personal life, avoid burnout, and setting boundaries.
 - “My preparation program could have stopped pushing the idea that, as a teacher, we should expect to stay past our contract hours, without getting compensation. That is something that should not be normalized. What they should have prepared us for is setting priorities so that work gets done during contracted hours so that we are not so quickly burnt out and sacrifice our personal relationships outside of the class. They need to also stop pushing the idea of “doing it for the kids.” There needs to be an emphasis on us as human beings first and that we come first before the students. If I cannot take care of myself first, I cannot care to the needs of my students’ learning.”
 - “My own mental health really fell down the drain this year. I think some lessons on self-care and how to avoid burnout as a teacher would have been beneficial as well.”

- “I would have appreciated candid conversations about how to set appropriate boundaries for work. Teaching can be a profession that makes it difficult to set mental boundaries.”
- Be realistic about what to expect in the first year and strategies for addressing common challenges.
 - “Nobody tells you how difficult teaching is and how much extra work you put in. Until you get into the profession, or unless you talk to people that are actively in it, you have no idea.”
 - “I feel like they tried to give us little seminars on teacher wellness, but nobody was brutally honest about how hard it is, and how to actually have a life when you’re a first year teacher. We never talked about what to do after a super rough day, it was just kind of glossed over.”
 - “Set realistic expectations about difficulty of first year. Don’t put pressure on candidates to reinvent the teaching wheel (too much emphasis on inquiry skills), but help candidates master the basics (how to lecture well, how to teach reading skills).”
- Access to additional resources, knowledge around time management, and support from the school and district where they teach.
 - “Provide me with further resources for support for new teachers.”
 - “Where to find resources. Different ways to balance work and things outside of work.”
 - “I think some instruction over time management and giving students feedback would have been helpful. The first couple of months teaching this is something I really struggled with and it would have helped to figure out how to give effective feedback with a short amount of time to do so.”

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

- The novice teacher was well prepared.
 - “[Name] has many strategies to support her own mental health.”
 - “He is very reflective and is conscious of taking care of himself mentally and physically.”
- Better understanding of work and life balance and engaging in self-care.
 - “Talk about work-life balance and give them an understanding of the ups and downs that come within a school year.”
 - “This teacher has struggled greatly with his own mental health this year. At times, it has impacted his ability to teach in the classroom. Helping him and future teachers to balance the demands of the job will be key. One of the things that seems to be especially hard for beginning teachers is to not take on the worries of their

students and allow it to impact them in a way that harms their own mental wellness."

- "Get more sleep."
- More experience is needed.
 - "Time and experience will allow [Name]'s skills in this area to grow."
 - "Not sure – this really is an area that is lacking in education and more training for all is much needed."
- Other themes included working with a mentor and building collaborations during the year, having a growth mindset, and managing stress.

Open-ended Responses: Strengths, Challenges, and Feedback

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?

- Content knowledge.
 - “I feel extremely well prepared in the content - I am comfortable teaching the class and have few questions about that area of my teaching.”
 - “I feel very well equipped in the actual content knowledge of music. But not at all in how to teach it.”
 - “I think I gained a strong knowledge of content and different instructional strategies from my teacher education program.”
- Classroom management, planning, differentiation.
 - “I learned successful skills about classroom management and lesson planning that have helped me as a first year teacher.”
 - “Classroom Management was the most memorable class, as it taught me to prioritize the student to teacher relationship, and build trust in the classroom.”
 - “I felt I was prepared very well to plan and teach lesson plans. We were given a very solid format and process for developing lesson plans that I continue to use. I am a music teacher and I was given a wide range of resources and ideas to draw from to help my first year be successful. There was a specific plan to help the first year go smoothly.”
- Building positive relationships and communication skills.
 - “Relationship building tactics, ways to make the information relevant beyond just the classroom, adding purpose to everyday, and much more.”
 - “...that building relationships is the most important thing that you can do, with both students as well as their parents.”
 - “Implementation of several communication methods with admin and parents of students”
- Opportunities to put what I was learning into practice.
 - “I feel like most of my applicable knowledge was gained during student teaching placements. There are some things that you just need to be hands-on to learn.”
 - “A lot of the stuff we learned was very abstract to me until I got into student teaching. Then, we were putting practices that we had learned about abstractly into practice (blooms taxonomy, culturally relevant teaching, etc.). I would have liked my practicums to include more applicable applications of these abstract concepts so I could start getting a firmer grasp of them sooner.”
 - “There were a tremendous amount of skills, knowledge, and dispositions that I learned while student teaching. I valued time spent with my mentor teacher as I

was able to have conversations with them about the teaching field. I learned that relationships are so important when being a teacher (with students AND parents).”

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

- Building positive relationships with students and staff members and engaging in collaboration.
 - “Willingness to work with others and learn from her mentor teacher.”
 - “[Name] is great at building meaningful relationships with his students. In return, he is cognitively aware of their needs and provides the appropriate support when needed.”
 - “He establishes positive relationships with students and collaborates well with his colleagues.”
- Being ready to learn, to receive feedback, and work to improve.
 - “[Name] is a great lifelong learner. She is always setting goals for herself to improve her practice as a teacher and push her instruction to the next level.”
 - “[Name] has demonstrated the willingness to engage in professional development and actively implement what he learns from this into his classroom. He has learned how to be more collaborative.”
- Having strong content knowledge.
 - “[Name] is a master at teaching students how to play instruments.”
 - “[Name] is very strong in his content-area knowledge.”
- Other themes included adaptability, having a positive attitude, good classroom management skills, ability to differentiate instruction, instructional skills, organization and planning skills, reflective practice, and being well prepared overall.

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

- Classroom management and addressing student behaviors.
 - “Learning what works and what doesn't as well as classroom management. There are a million things circling your head in the first bit of teaching, and classroom management is not as easily taught.”
 - “Classroom management! I feel like college did not prepare me for the reality of classroom management. When going into other teachers' classrooms for practicum and student teaching, you only see the “finished product” and not the work it took to get there.”
 - “CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT - especially students who should have IEPs but don't because their parents don't want to meet with me or accept that their kid needs help.”
- Making the most of the available time and getting everything done.

- “Time management in planning, grading, and all the things!”
- Issues related to curriculum, differentiation, and IEPs.
 - “The college of education strictly teaches how to design lesson plans from scratch. In all of my practicums and student teaching, we were told to use scripted curriculum. The same is for the school I am at now. I felt very unprepared for how to use this, as we were not taught how to.”
 - “There was very little teaching done on phonics and syllable types. I had not heard of the six syllable types before coming across it in my curriculum. This was a major disservice to me as a future educator and is a gap that needs to be addressed.”
 - “Understanding the correct level of rigor for my students, providing accurate models to help students learn, engaging students from day to day, dealing with unexpected behaviors, keeping up with students who are chronically absent, keeping up parent communication, having the stamina to perform direct instruction despite my mood or the general stress of the day, building units of a brand new curriculum without other lock-step teachers always helping me plan assessment, adjusting a lesson to make it help students, and just generally keeping a positive attitude when teaching can feel isolating. Separating work and my home life has also been difficult as I am always working in the evening.”
- Relationships with parents, paraeducators, other teachers, and communication.
 - “Learning how to be in charge of other adults (para-professionals). This is one area that I never expected to be difficult. Building schedules, making sure those adults are doing their job, talking to them when they aren't, etc.”
 - “The most challenging part of my first year has been the parents by far.”

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 management was a challenge. Not having proper planning or preparation was a challenge.”
 - “Leading in a classroom in ways that promote high engagement, high levels of student learning, and high expectations.”
 - “[Name]’s greatest challenge has been his lack of classroom management. He does not handle discipline in his classroom and does not properly report issues. He is also fairly laid-back, which can be a good thing, but he is lax on completing paperwork and reporting issues.”
- Student behaviors.
 - “She didn’t have as much experience with students with strong behaviors. It is difficult from one student to another, so it is difficult and time consuming to build up one’s stamina.”

- “She was shocked on day one at the behaviors that some students brought with them. I think all teachers including [Name] need exposure to really difficult kids to put reality into perspective.”
- Teamwork and professionalism.
 - “She was late often even after being asked to correct it. She also missed meetings. So time management was a struggle.”
 - “Always maintaining a professional nature. Refrain from sarcastic humor with students.”
 - “[Name] came in believing he didn’t need other’s help. He needs to recognize the value of his colleagues.”
- Other themes included asking for help and accepting feedback, curriculum, differentiation, instructional quality, work / life balance and mental health, being overwhelmed, working with parents and paraprofessionals, and being well prepared overall.

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

- Prepare for the reality of the classroom / schools and the first-year teacher experience.
 - “As I reflect on my teacher preparation courses, the highlights that stick in my memory are the real world examples that were shared as examples. It does not do young teachers any good to shield them from the real world of teaching - I feel that they need to be exposed to it during the duration of their preparation. Consider discussing more educational controversies, responding to angry parents, remaining professional in stressful situations etc.”
 - “Be more focused on shorter lesson plans and more about how to create a unit of lessons and implement a unit verse ONE lesson. Teach us what we NEED as a first year teacher. How to communicate with parents for negative & positive behaviors within the classroom.”
 - “Be realistic with teaching and don’t make it seem perfect all the time. Make students go through different situations so they have some experience(classroom management)”
- Good job preparing new teachers.
 - “I feel like overall my university did a good job with preparing me to be a teacher. Most of the classes were beneficial, and taught me strategies to be successful in my career. I will say the class that I took called "Classroom Management / Assessment was not super beneficial despite it's name, hence struggling in that area a bit.”
 - “I am very grateful for my education.”
 - “I had a great time, I feel well prepared overall. If there was any way to practice behavior management before getting out of school that would be great to

implement. During student teaching, I didn't have to deal with any behavior issues so I kind of started from scratch there."

- More needed with classroom management and behavior management.
 - "If institutions are expecting teachers to stay in the profession, they all MUST focus more on behavior management strategies. In methods classes, it would have been helpful for students to fake bad behavior to force teaching candidates to pay attention and evaluate throughout a lesson. In addition, I did not feel prepared to present my students with a set of rules or behavior management plan at all, so had to turn to additional literature in order to get some guidance. This has by far been the biggest challenge during my first year, and I know others feel similarly based on conversations and experiences I've had."

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

- Well prepared.
 - "Outstanding teacher! Hands down!"
 - "I believe [Name] had a good foundation and was prepared very well for his first teaching experience."
 - "She has been a top-notch addition to our program. Well done!"
- More experience.
 - "Continue to offer the teachers real-life experiences in diverse settings so that they are prepared for the variety of experiences that they will be facing."
 - "There should have been some adjustment to the fact that she did not receive as much in-educational environment time because of COVID."
 - "Get the teachers in the classroom more, experience more interactions with parents."
- Classroom management.
 - "Working on management beyond theory and having the student witness schools with diverse populations and that may have some discipline that they did not witness in student teaching."
 - "Classroom management. Students have this idea of what is going to happen in a class and they are not prepared for the curve balls of student behavior, lack of student understanding, and reflective of practices. I need teachers to know how to better formatively assess ELA."
- Other themes included mental health, working with parents, professionalism, teaching reading, and feedback on novice teachers that struggled.