



2026

SURVEY OF NOVICE ADMINISTRATORS
AND THEIR SUPERVISORS

IOWA

EDUCATION



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Executive Summary

This project was administered by Jeremy Penn, Ph.D., M.P.H., University of Iowa College of Education, and supported with funding from the Iowa Department of Education. The views and opinions expressed in this report are those of the author or of the anonymous survey respondents and do not necessarily reflect the views and opinions of the University of Iowa College of Education or the Iowa Department of Education. Questions about this survey or the results should be directed to jeremy-penn@uiowa.edu.

Overall Results

- Most novice administrators (including those who were and were not employed as administrators) reported being well or very well prepared (Table 7).
- Supervisors of novice administrators agreed, with a majority (69% - 100%) perceiving the novice administrator they supervised as well or very well prepared across the overall areas of preparation (Table 8).

MTSS Results

- Most novice administrators (52% - 86%) – including those employed as administrators and not employed as administrators – reported being well prepared to support MTSS (Table 9).
- Nearly all (81% - 100%) supervisors of novice administrators perceived the novice administrator they supervised as well or very well prepared for various aspects of MTSS (Table 9).

Mental Health and Wellness Results

- Novice administrators' perceptions of their ability to support mental health and wellness in 2026 was somewhat mixed in comparison to results in 2025 and continues to be an area of opportunity for improvement (Figure 7).
- Supervisors of novice administrators were more positive about the level of preparation of novice administrators' ability to support mental health (Figure 8).
- In open-ended comments, several novice administrators described particularly challenging situations around mental health issues.

Open-Ended Comments

- Open-ended comments are offered verbatim to provide additional insight into the preparation of novice administrators.
- Topics mentioned by respondents included specific mental health challenges and managing stress, teacher evaluations, knowledge in school law, building trust and relationships with staff members, practical experiences and mentoring, and support and guidance for seeking an administrative position.

Action Items

- Address preparation around mental health support for students, faculty and staff in the school or district being served, and the novice administrator.
- Examine and update curricula in administrator preparation programs to address the rapidly changing context and to ensure all critical topics – such as school law – are sufficiently addressed.
- Increase the support offered for the transition from the administrator preparation program to employment as an administrator, including additional support for job seeking and job transition.
- Consider alternative or additional strategies for gathering data on the preparation of novice administrators. Many who complete an administrator preparation program do not seek or obtain employment as an administrator right away, which makes it difficult to know their level of preparation for service as an administrator. Additionally, with small program sizes and shrinking response rates to surveys, it is increasingly difficult to get actionable feedback through 1-year post-graduation surveys alone. One strategy to consider would be to offer a 1-credit free / pre-paid seminar to be taken during the first semester of administrative employment where the novice administrator receives mentorship and coaching from their administrator preparation program and the program receives feedback from the novice administrator about the challenges they are experiencing in their new role. Other innovative strategies or solutions should be considered to ensure programs are receiving the feedback they need and novice administrators are receiving the transition support necessary for success.

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Methods

Questionnaire Design and Administration

- The questionnaires were designed through a collaboration between the Iowa Department of Education and the School Administrators of Iowa. The questionnaires were updated in 2022 to reflect the updated standards for school administrators.
- The full text of responses to the open-ended survey items is presented. Individual names have been removed from the open-ended comments.
- The survey was administered using the University of Iowa's Qualtrics license.
- The surveys were administered from April 27 to May 25, 2026, which is about three weeks later than the 2025 survey.

Survey Population

- Administrator preparation programs were asked to send the names and contact information for their recent graduates.
- The Iowa Department of Education provided a list of new administrators serving schools in Iowa.
- Matching was used to generate the contact list for supervisors of novice administrators. However, not all novice administrators who responded to the survey had their supervisors respond to the survey and vice versa.

Response Rate

- 226 novice administrators were contacted, and responses were received from 39, for a response rate of 17.3%. Not all respondents were currently serving as administrators (this is noted throughout the results where relevant). Not all respondents answered every question so the number of responses per item varies.
- 38 supervisors of novice administrators were contacted, and responses were received from 15, for a response rate of 39.5%.

Results

Demographics of Respondents

Novice Administrators

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

Institution	Contacted	Responded	Response Rate	% of total
Dordt	18	2	11.1%	5.1%
Drake University	43	11	25.6%	28.2%
Iowa State University	8	4	50.0%	10.3%
Mount Mercy University	7	1	14.3%	2.6%
Northwestern College	66	10	15.2%	25.6%
University of Iowa	9	1	11.1%	2.6%
University of Northern Iowa	48	7	14.6%	17.9%
Viterbo University	27	3	11.1%	7.7%
Total:	226	39	17.3%	100%

Novice Administrators

Table 2. Are you currently employed in a school or district administration role?

	n	Percent
Yes, I am currently employed as a school or district administrator	22	56.4%
No, I am not currently employed as a school or district administrator, but I was employed as a school or district administrator in the past	1	2.6%
No, I am not currently employed as a school or district administrator, and I have NEVER been employed as a school or district administrator	16	41.0%
Total:	39	100%

Novice Administrators

Table 3. (If respondent is currently serving as school or district administrator) Which statement best describes your current role?

	n	Percent
I am currently employed as a school administrator	18	81.8%
I am currently employed as a district administrator	3	13.6%
I am currently employed with an Area Education Agency (AEA)	1	4.5%
Other	0	0%
Total:	22	100%

Novice Administrators

Table 4. (If respondent is not currently serving as a school or district administrator) Which statement describes your current employment status?

	n	Percent
I am employed in K-12 education, but not as a school or district administrator	16	94.1%
I am employed outside of K-12 education	0	0%
I am not employed, but I am seeking employment	0	0%
I am not employed and I am not seeking employment	0	0%
Other	1	5.9%
Total:	17	100%

Other: Working for the Iowa Department of Education.

Novice Administrators

Table 5. (If respondent is not currently serving as a school or district administrator) To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following are reasons why you are not employed as a school, school district, or AEA administrator?

	n	M	% Agree / Strongly Agree
I am waiting for the right job to become available.	16	3.19	81.3%
I am happy with my current job and am not interested in taking an administrative job right now.	16	2.56	50.1%
I am not interested in school / district / AEA administration.	16	1.50	0%
I have pursued administrative openings but have not received an acceptable offer.	16	2.63	62.6%
Personal / family / life circumstances make it difficult to pursue an administrative position at this time.	16	2.13	31.3%

Scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, 4 = strongly agree.

Supervisors of Novice Administrators

Supervisors of novice administrators were asked to report the preparation institution attended by the person they were evaluating. If the supervisors did not know the institution the novice administrator had attended, this information was entered by the survey administrator by examining the contact lists sent by institutions.

Supervisors of Novice Administrators

Table 6. What preparation institution did the novice administrator you are reviewing attend?

Institution	Contacted	Responded	Response Rate	% of Total
Dordt University	7	3	43%	20%
Drake University	3	2	67%	13%
Iowa State University	0	0	0%	0%
Mount Mercy University	0	0	0%	0%
Northwestern College	6	3	50%	20%
University of Iowa	1	0	0%	0%
University of Northern Iowa	2	2	100%	13%
Viterbo University	19	5	26%	33%
Total:	38	15	39.5%	100%

Overall Level of Preparation

Table 7. Overall level of preparation: All novice administrators.

“How well were you prepared to:”	Novice Administrators (Including those not employed as administrators)		
	n	M	% Well / Very Well
Advocate for ethical decisions and cultivate and enact professional norms.	34	3.47	91.2%
Develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture.	34	3.29	82.4%
Build the school’s professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning.	34	3.09	76.5%
Strengthen student learning, support school improvement, and advocate for the needs of the school and community.	34	3.38	82.4%
Collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.	34	3.24	82.3%
Improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems to develop and improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations.	34	3.18	79.4%
Evaluate, develop, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports, and assessment.	34	3.09	70.6%
Support educators in classroom management.	34	3.03	67.7%
Effectively manage special education.	34	2.91	73.6%
Support literacy initiatives.	34	2.82	61.8%
Support evidence-based math instruction.	34	2.79	55.6%
Effectively manage the growth of English Language Learners.	34	2.53	52.9%

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

Table 8. Overall level of preparation and performance: those with school or district administrator employment experience.

	Novice Administrators (only those serving / served) (n = 18)			Supervisors of Novice Administrators (n = 16 prepared; 14 perform)	
		M	% Well / Very Well	M	% Well / Very Well
Advocate for ethical decisions and cultivate and enact professional norms.	Prepared	3.39	89%	3.69	100%
	Perform	3.24	82%	3.64	93%
Develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive school culture.	Prepared	3.11	72%	3.63	100%
	Perform	3.12	82%	3.64	93%
Build the school's professional capacity, engage staff in the development of a collaborative professional culture, and improve systems of staff supervision, evaluation, support, and professional learning.	Prepared	2.78	61%	3.25	88%
	Perform	2.76	59%	3.40	87%
Strengthen student learning, support school improvement, and advocate for the needs of the school and community.	Prepared	3.17	72%	3.69	100%
	Perform	3.24	77%	3.71	100%
Collaboratively lead, design, and implement a school mission, vision, and process for continuous improvement that reflects a core set of values and priorities that include data use, technology, equity, diversity, digital citizenship, and community.	Prepared	3.06	72%	3.56	100%
	Perform	3.00	71%	3.64	93%
Improve management, communication, technology, school-level governance, and operation systems to develop and improve data-informed and equitable school resource plans and to apply laws, policies, and regulations.	Prepared	2.94	67%	3.25	94%
	Perform	2.88	71%	3.14	86%
Evaluate, develop, and implement coherent systems of curriculum, instruction, data systems, supports, and assessment.	Prepared	2.83	61%	3.44	100%
	Perform	2.94	71%	3.43	93%
Support educators in classroom management.	Prepared	2.67	50%	3.31	88%
	Perform	3.24	88%	3.40	93%
Effectively manage special education.	Prepared	2.67	61%	3.06	75%
	Perform	2.88	71%	3.07	73%
Support literacy initiatives.	Prepared	2.50	45%	3.13	81%
	Perform	2.88	71%	3.07	80%
Support evidence-based math instruction.	Prepared	2.39	33%	3.06	75%
	Perform	2.82	59%	3.00	73%
Effectively manage the growth of English Language Learners.	Prepared	2.06	33%	3.06	69%
	Perform	2.41	41%	3.13	73%

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

Figure 1. Novice Administrator Results. Overall % well / very well prepared. (Includes only those who served as an administrator; part 1).

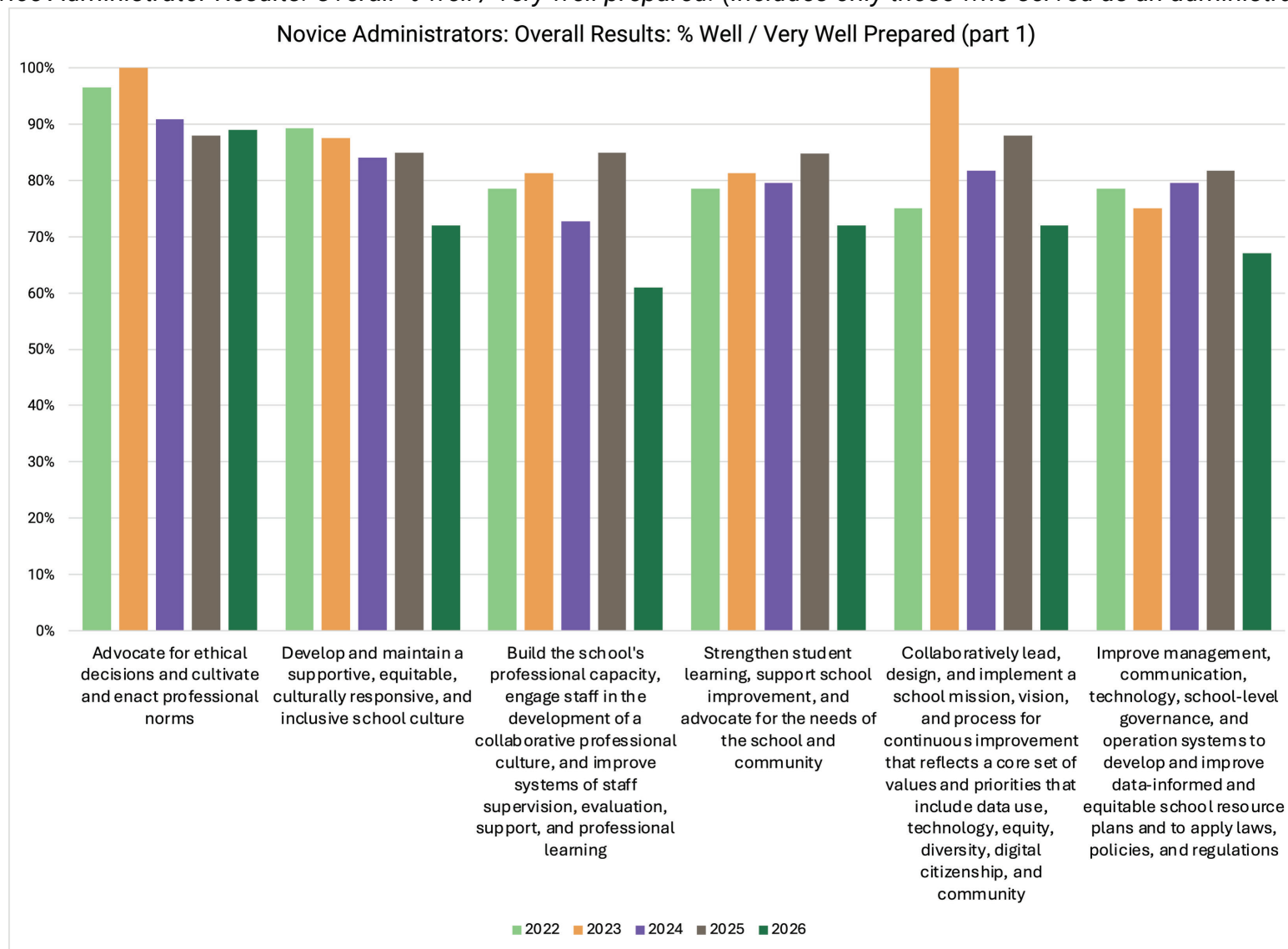


Figure 2. Novice Administrator Results: Overall % well / very well prepared (includes only those who served as an administrator; part 2).

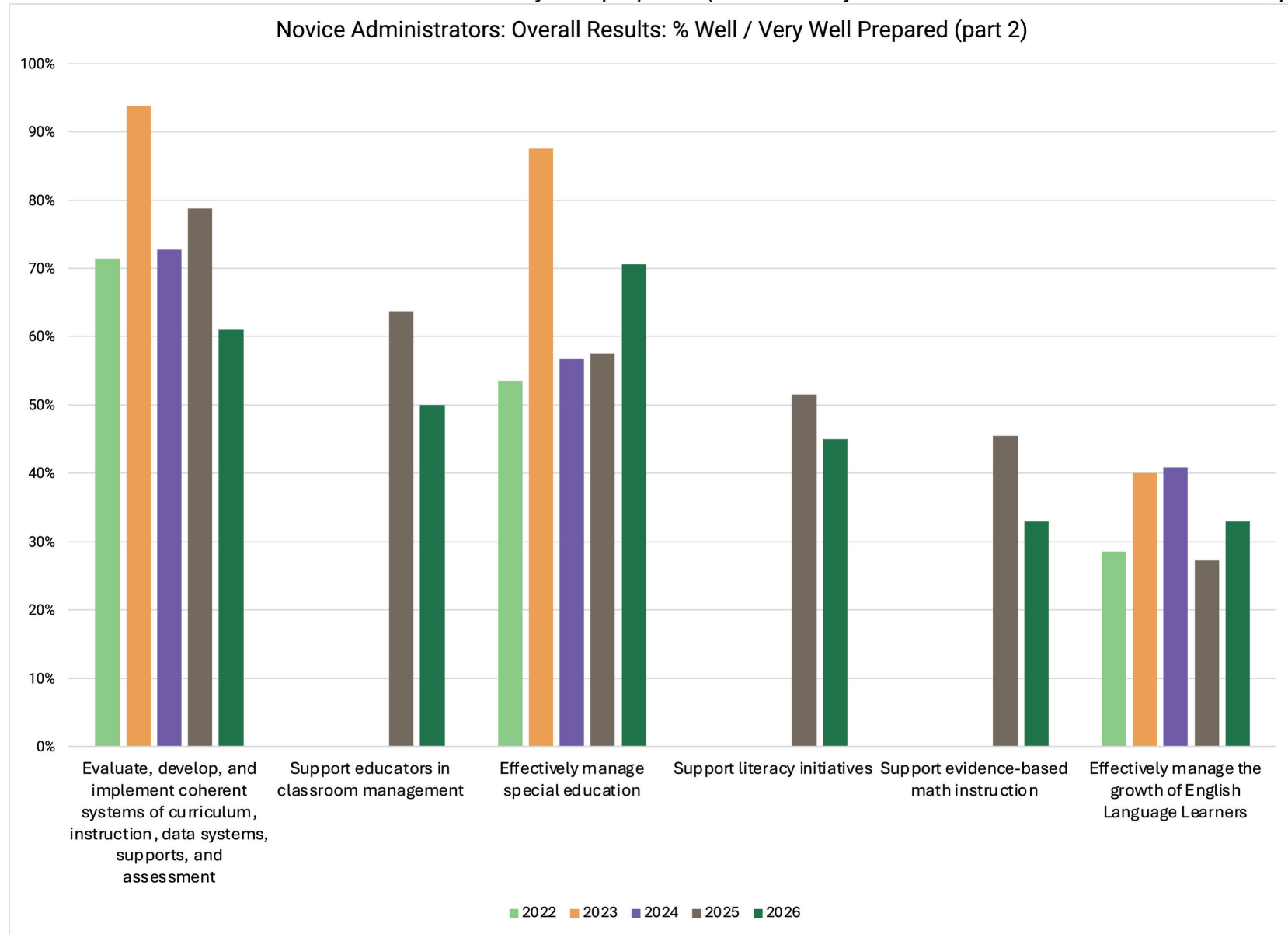


Figure 3. Results from Supervisors of Novice Administrators. Overall % well / very well prepared (part 1).

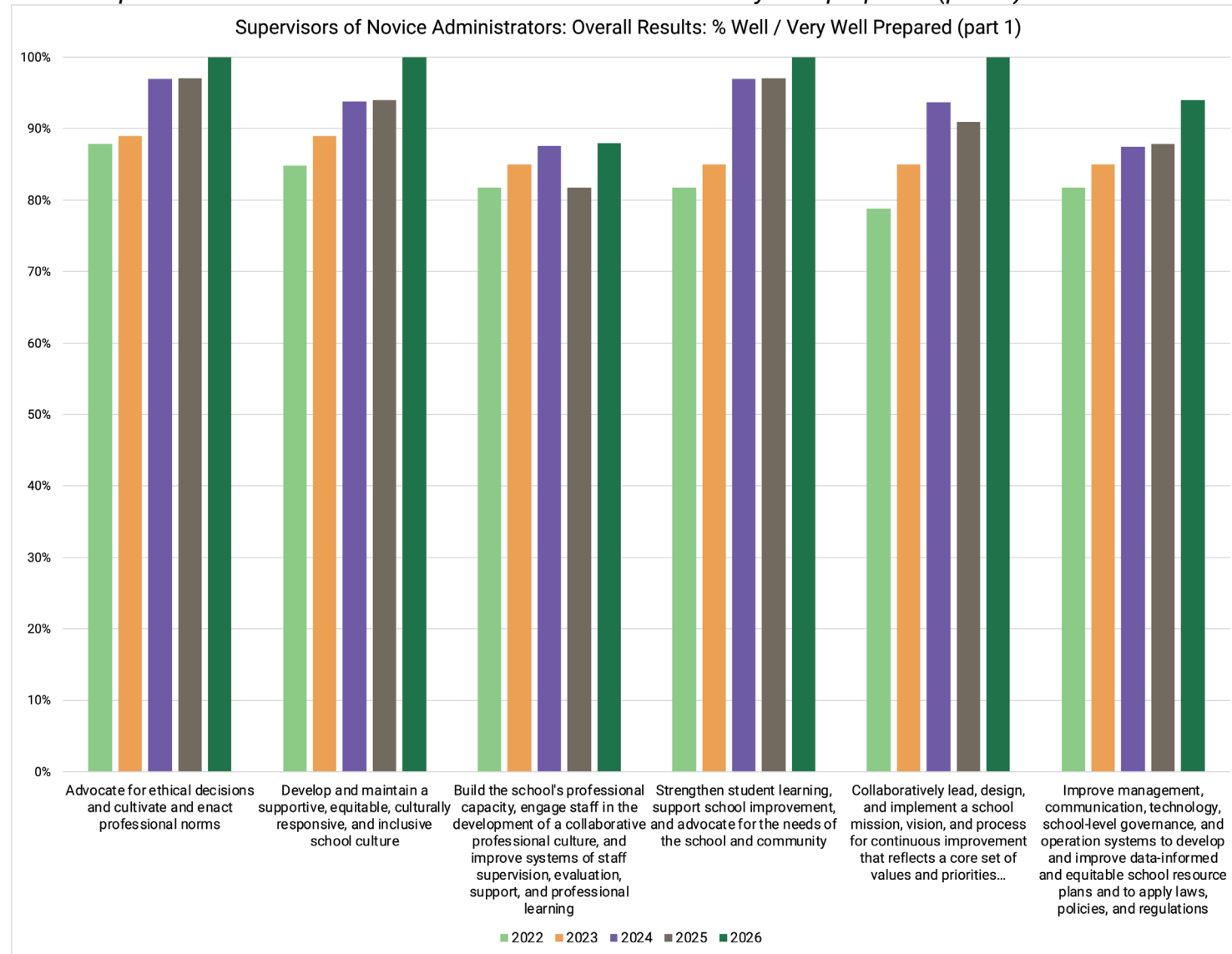
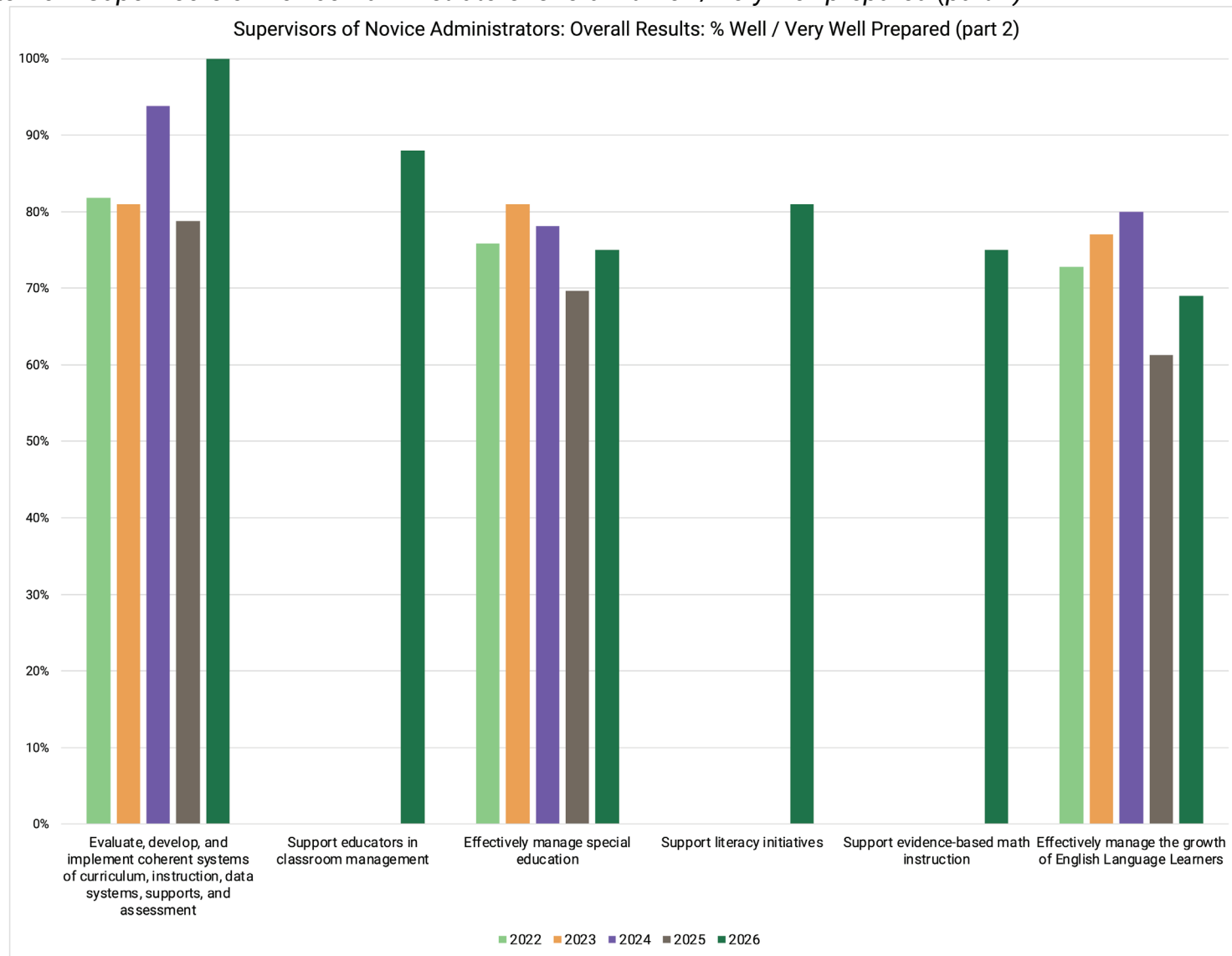


Figure 4. Results from Supervisors of Novice Administrators. Overall % well / very well prepared (part 2).



Preparation to Engage in Aspects of a Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)

Table 9. Overall preparation in the aspects of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS).

“How well did your administrator preparation program prepare you for each of the following aspects of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)?”		Novice Administrators					Supervisors of Novice Administrators (n = 16)			
		n	M	% Well / Very Well 2026	% Well / Very Well 2025	% Well / Very Well 2024	M	% Well / Very Well 2026	% Well / Very Well 2025	% Well / Very Well 2024
Engage in data-based decision-making / interventions.	All	34	3.41	91%	89%	86%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	3.17	83%	88%	84%	3.25	94%	84%	90%
Participate in collaborative inquiry.	All	34	3.38	85%	84%	82%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	3.06	72%	88%	77%	3.44	88%	87%	90%
Support equity for all students.	All	34	3.24	82%	82%	85%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	3.06	78%	88%	82%	3.53	100%	94%	94%
Collaborate with teachers, school staff, and administrators on RtI or MTSS.	All	34	3.21	77%	72%	69%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	3.00	67%	74%	66%	3.50	94%	83%	94%
Support implementation of evidence-based instruction.	All	34	3.03	71%	69%	68%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	2.67	61%	72%	61%	3.27	94%	81%	97%
Develop evidence-based interventions.	All	34	2.85	71%	67%	66%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	2.44	56%	66%	66%	3.25	94%	74%	90%
Participate in school-based initiatives that support Iowa’s Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) plan.	All	34	2.97	68%	64%	59%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	2.72	56%	60%	59%	3.07	80%	79%	93%
Support the completion of progress monitoring.	All	34	2.94	65%	65%	58%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	18	2.44	45%	71%	52%	3.25	81%	87%	90%
Support the performance of universal screening.	All	-	-	-	62%	64%	-	-	-	-
	Employed	-	-	-	65%	59%	3.29	93%	84%	97%

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

Figure 5. Novice Administrators. MTSS % Well / Very Well Prepared. (Includes only those who served as an administrator).

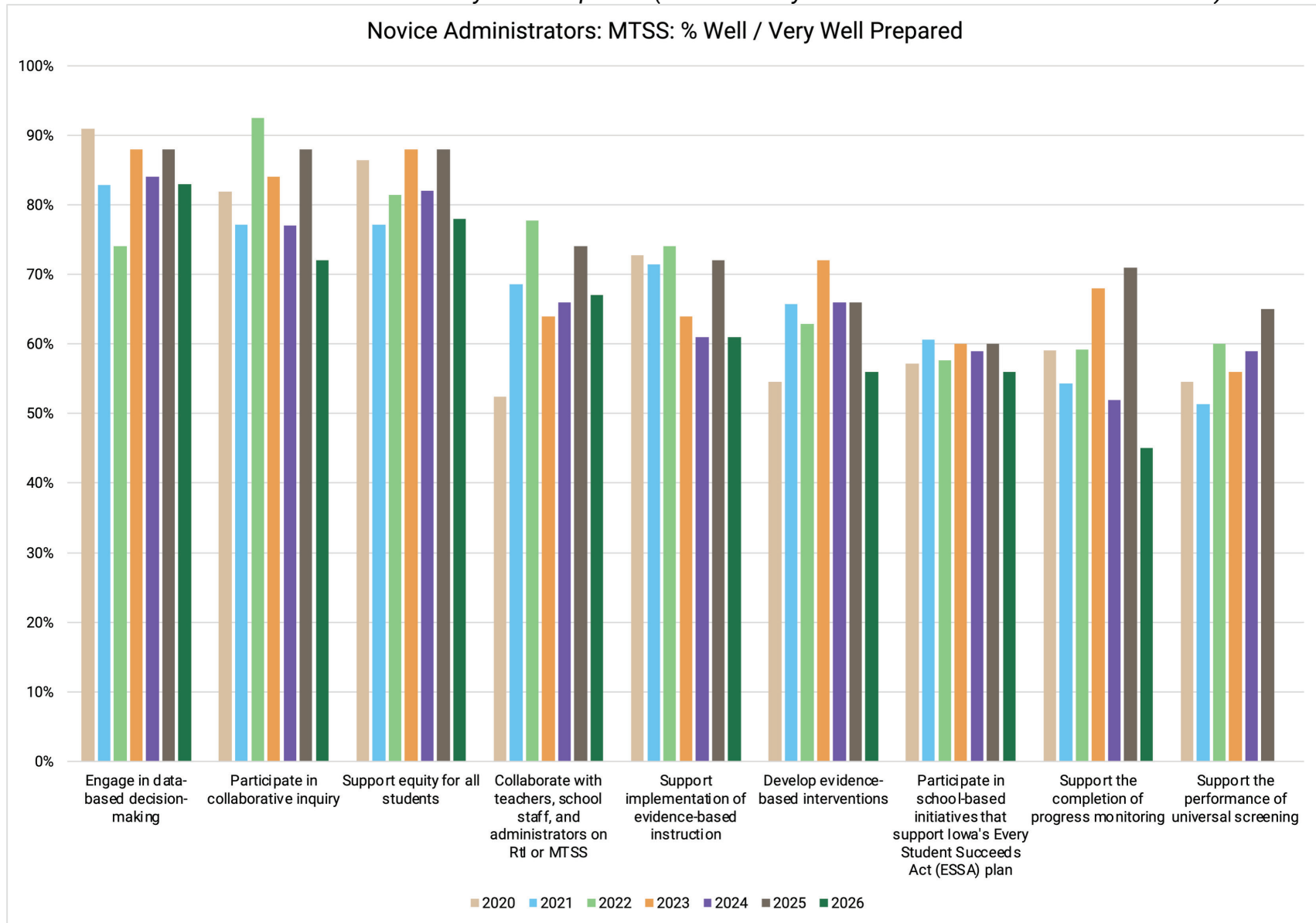
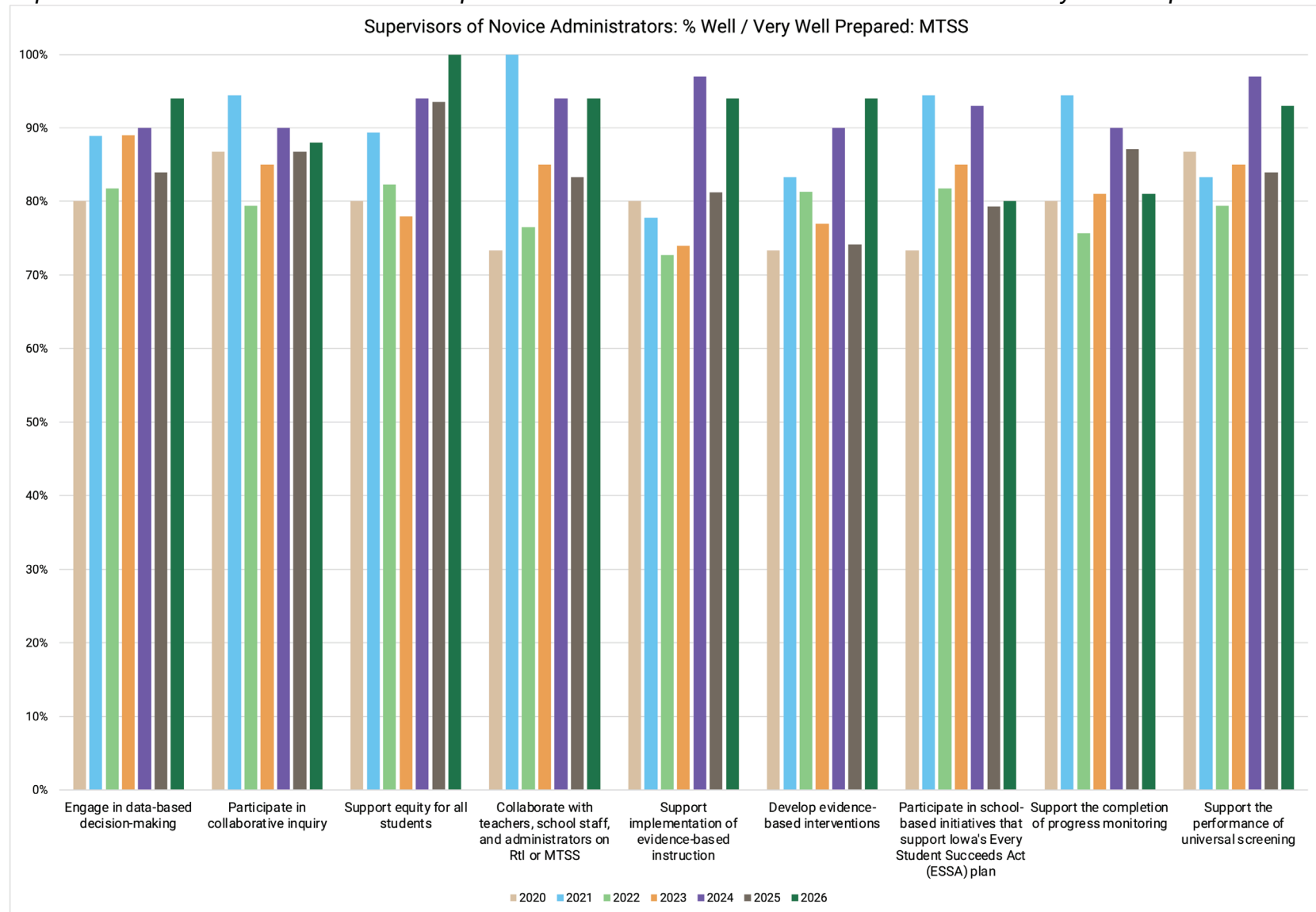


Figure 6. Supervisors of Novice Administrators. Supervisors of Novice Administrators: MTSS % Well / Very Well Prepared.



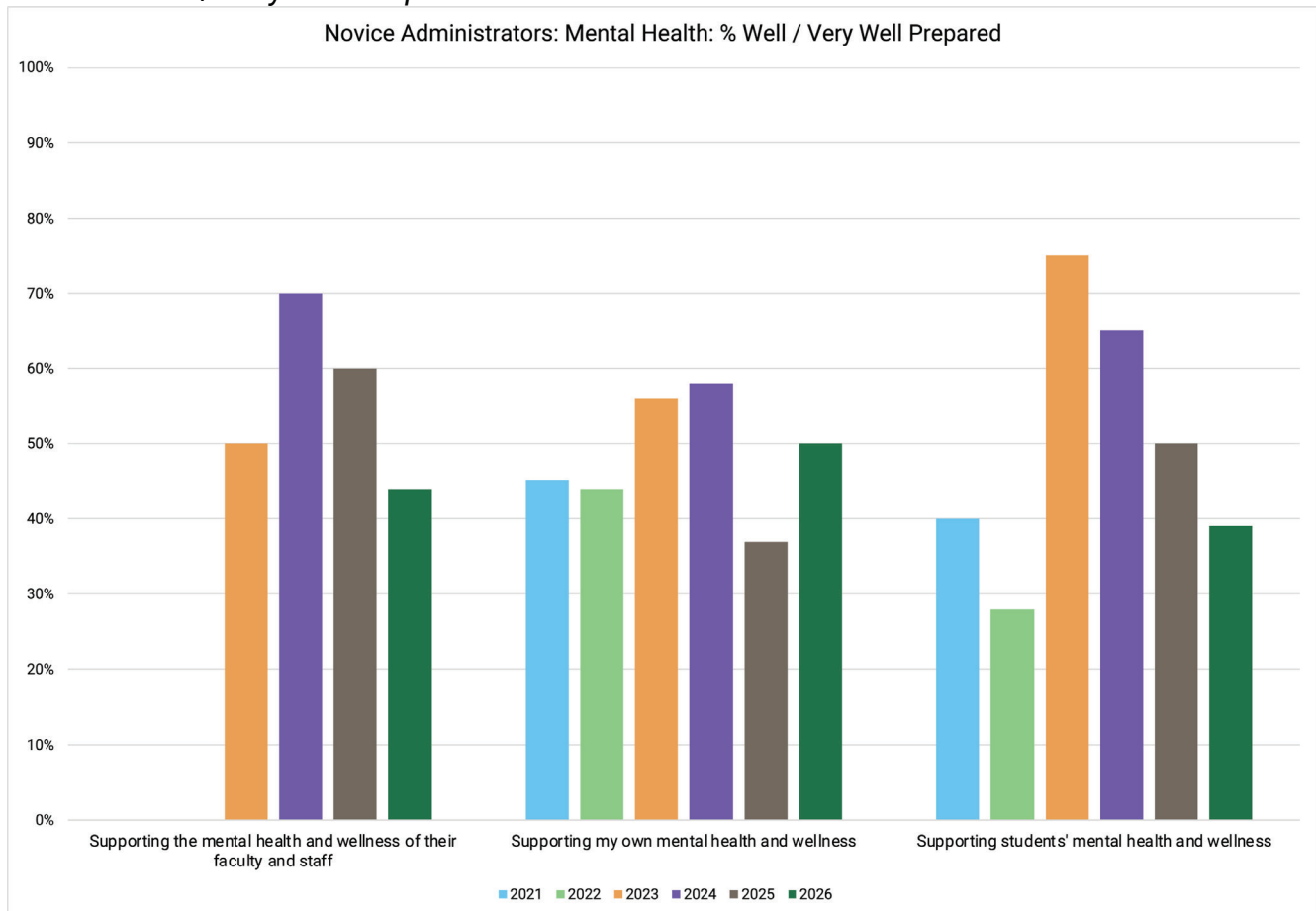
Level of Preparation for Supporting Mental Health

Table 10. Overall level of preparation to support mental health.

		Novice Administrators (n = 34 all; 18 employed)		Supervisors of Novice Administrators (n = 15)	
How well prepared...?		M	% Well / Very Well	M	% Well / Very Well
Supporting students' mental health and wellness	All	2.82	56%	-	-
	Employed	2.50	39%	3.40	87%
Supporting the mental health and wellness of their faculty and staff	All	2.94	59%	-	-
	Employed	2.56	44%	3.27	87%
Supporting their own [my own] mental health and wellness	All	2.88	65%	-	-
	Employed	2.50	50%	3.20	87%

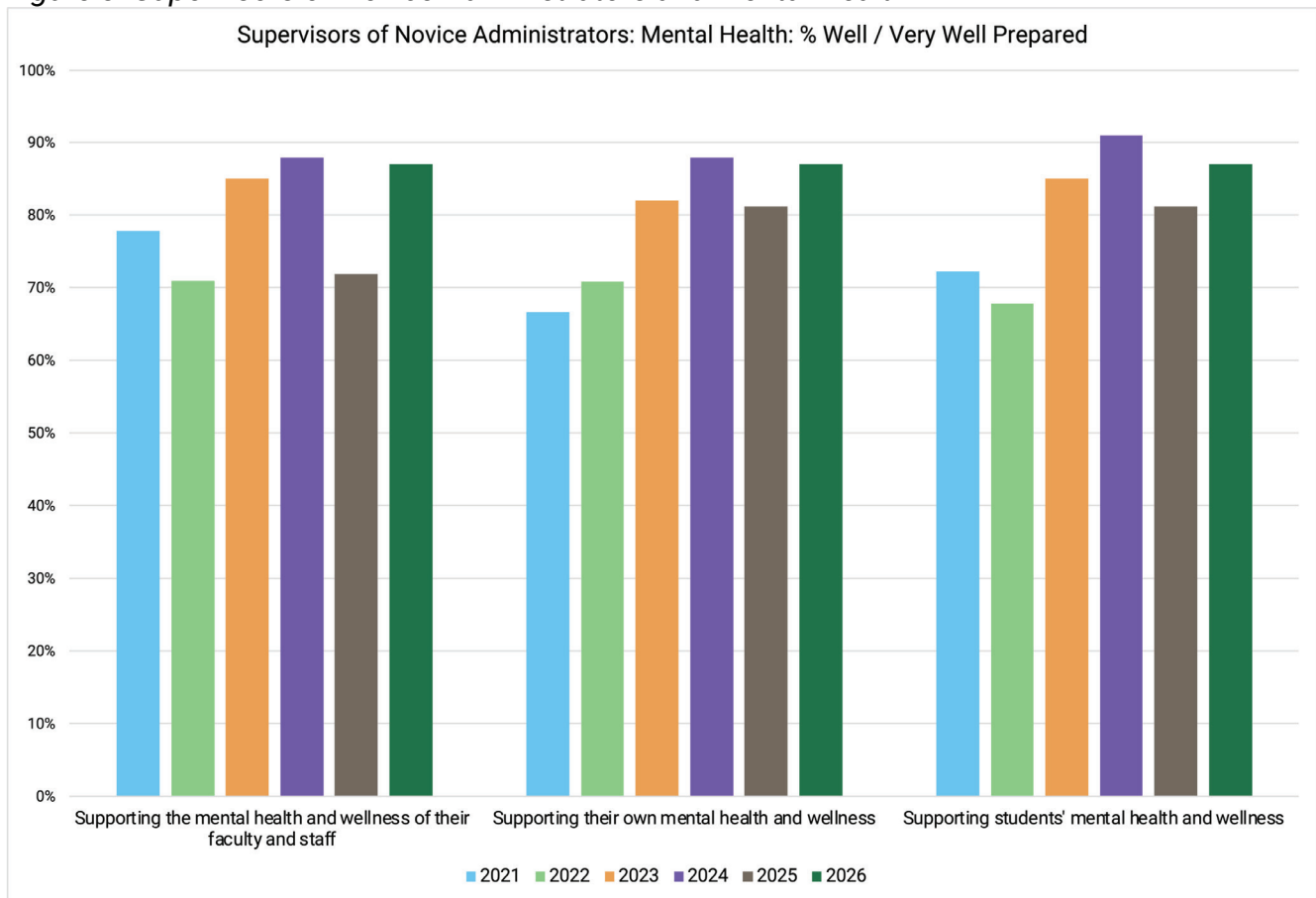
Scale: 1 = Not very well prepared; 2 = Somewhat well prepared; 3 = Well prepared; 4 = Very well prepared.

Figure 7. Novice Administrators and Mental Health (employed as administrators). Mental Health % Well / Very Well Prepared.



Note: The item "supporting the mental health and wellness of their faculty and staff" was different in 2022 and 2021, so no comparative results are available.

Figure 8. Supervisors of Novice Administrators and Mental Health.



Open-ended Responses

Responses are provided verbatim unless a specific novice administrator was named.

Novice Administrators: What, if anything, could your preparation program have done to better prepare you to support the mental health of your faculty, staff, and students?

Add in some type of mental health course

Additional perspectives from educators in urban school districts and structures in place to support educators.

I am not sure. I lived one of the toughest "first years" of an administrator. We had students pass away early in the school year and their siblings were in our building. The mother of two of the students who passed away was a cook in our building. About 3 weeks later, my father passed away and about a month later we had a staff member pass away. All of these situations are tough, things you don't anticipate and neither does Admin prep programs while setting up their courses/curriculum. I also got to work through some unique student issues while on my first year, which again, I don't think my Admin prep program could have prepared me for.

I don't know what could have been done better. This is a tough topic that is evolving all the time as our students' needs and circumstances continue to change.

I don't recall my preparation program covering this content at all - my level of preparedness came from my previous experience as a teacher and manager.

I don't think this topic was often discussed.

I feel like I am as prepared as I can be, but considering the issues that may arise and ongoing concerns I am not sure I will ever feel well prepared.

I think this is an area that needs continuous attention and strategies to ensure all stakeholders and students are healthy; not necessarily anything more but just the idea of continuous improvement.

Just needed more of a focus put on it.

Maybe some projects centered around it? I know I learned the most when creating "mock" PD projects, etc. and have actually used those things in my current role.

My program did a good job preparing me, but the first year is still always hard.

Not sure. Maybe set up time with a local professionals to discuss how to help inform staff of the resources and benefits.

Nothing more

Real life examples of the different processes schools can use.

Support the nuanced conversations that need to occur to support team members and families- go beyond here are resources or you may need to seek out resources and apply learning/skills to thoughtfully support boundaries, balance and naming the needs in a empathetic manner

We created an entire plan for ourselves, so maybe one for others. I also believe it's being ready for the moment.

Supervisors of Novice Administrators: What, if anything, could [Name]’s preparation program have done to better prepare them to support mental health and wellness of their faculty, staff, and students?

I feel that they did an excellent job. This category is a "learn to live in it" type of challenge. Being prepared is once thing, but adapting to situations is key. You learn from experience.

NA

None, she excells in all areas.

Nothing at this time

[Name] is an outstanding individual who came to our district ready to learn and ready to work. [Name] was quick to build trust and relationships with his staff. [Name]’s strong communication skills and organization also helped him establish himself as a leader in the school building.

The plans and ideas have been there about personal/professional balance of duties and making time for both, but reality can be a different story. Until you are in it, it is hard to explain or grasp how much the workflow can ebb/flow and how much you learn to prioritize tasks. It becomes a balancing act of big picture and working on future plans, but dealing with realities in the moment of the day to day!

There were questions on here that did not match his position as school counselor. Things directly tied to his program are in place, just needs more time to learn the processes.

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

Discuss appropriate boundaries, habit setting and endorse coaching/mental health services as a high leverage practice for admin- normalize that these supports are needed to ensure you thrive in administration and allow you to create structures that help you team thrive

I think that better preparation for how lonely it is to be a leader, how to find/develop a professional network, practice in dealing with the myriad of stressful parent/student/faculty/staff situations - all would have been beneficial.

I'm not sure what else could have been done.

Maybe more time on establishing a work/life balance, though we did discuss the needs of administrator throughout the program.

n/a

Not sure. Our professors were very honest about the job requirements.

Nothing more

Provide additional coping strategies and for high stress situations. Add a requirement for students to research the response protocols for significant student discipline issues.

Quite simply, just talked about it in coursework.

Same as above

See above. One thing I am happy about is that I took my Admin prep through Dordt University and that helped me strengthen my Faith. My first year rocked me to my core as a person and my Faith and family helped me keep pushing forward. I should also mention that I had a staff member make a formal complaint against me for inappropriate comments. When I shared my situation with two superintendents, I have relationships with, they said that it was surprising how my situation was handled. I shared my situation with an attorney, they advised me to keep following the plan put in place by the school, as I have a new job in a different district next year. Again, if it wasn't for my Faith and family, this first year of administration and the above situation could have driven me out of education.

Some instructors talked about reality of an administrator's mental health and work life balance, but it was never content directly covered through an assigned reading, discussion, or task.

UNI did a great job of offering a summer institute on being conscientious of our own mental health and wellness in order to be able pour into students and staff.

Supervisors of Novice Administrators: What, if anything, could [Name]’s preparation program have done to better prepare them to support their own mental health and wellness?

I don't know how to prep someone for that. It is something learned on the job. You learn what is best for you, your family, the situations, etc. It is important to keep your appointments and set aside time for you or the things you love, otherwise the work can be overwhelming!

I think that this is something that you cannot prepare enough for. This is self-identification and a willingness to accept that you are human and asking for help. Little things can compound. This is a blessing to have this internal self-awareness.

NA

Nothing

nothing at this time

She does this well. Self cares.

Novice Administrators (employed as administrators): What are examples of the knowledge, skills, or dispositions you learned in your preparation program that helped you succeed this year as a school or district administrator?

A deep understanding that it is essential to be supportive of your instructional staff and get to know them and their motivations for the work they do.

I appreciated the coursework for effective evaluations.

Knowledge about school law

Patience, collaboration, communication and Faith. Knowledge of MTSS and PBIS were helpful as well. Awareness of current student issues, such as anxiety, ODD, depression and the impact of online activities by teenagers was also helpful. This is hard, as at my current job and time in my life, I feel like there has been more challenges than successes. I have been approached by students and their families expressing their concern and sadness knowing that we are leaving this school district.

The special education content was helpful - the HR content was good, but really could have used more than the one course on it. My experience taught me more than any of my courses.

The systems-thinking preparation helped me and helped me learn how to be a leader and think differently.

To use systems thinking, to not be afraid to not have an answer/not make up an answer to give a staff member one in the moment

To work collaboratively and lead with the big picture of what's good for kids in mind at all times.

Supervisor of Novice Administrator: What has been [administrator]'s biggest success so far this year?

Addressing staff issues with HR collaboratively.

Building positive relationships with staff and students. She has been working hard to build partnerships with parents and isn't afraid of tough conversations!

[Name] has done an excellent job of supervising and providing feedback to staff around instructional integrity and classroom management.

He continues to grow in confidence as he experiences "firsts". Even if you have experience, no two situations are identical.

His relationship building with staff and students.

Increasing staff moral and support.

Leading her staff in conversations and practices that align their work with the school's mission.

[Name] has done a great job in his first full year. He's led the elementary team through a new literacy curriculum adoption process and has been very diligent in working through the process with the staff.

She has done a great job in year one recalibrating our Special Education services, programs, and overall system.

[Name] walked into a building where the staff had a rough year with an administrator who could not perform the duties required effectively. [Name]'s ability to turn this staff around, rebuild trust that was lost, and create a focused vision for future success was his biggest accomplishment.

The ability to ask questions when he does not understand a situation.

[Name] has grown remarkably throughout in his confidence. He could always do the job but now he knows he can!

Novice Administrators (employed as administrators): What are the knowledge, skills, or dispositions that have been the greatest challenge for you as a school or district administrator?

Balancing all of the expectations and the high level of stress due to all of the decision making required as an administrator

Balancing my time - wanting to be in the classroom, but having to take care of all the other things that demand time and attention.

Challenges: school attendance law monitoring. Who is in charge of monitoring? How often should you be monitoring? What forms does the school use to monitor and communicate with parents? PD - putting together a plan for a staff/building that you are trying to get to know. What was the previous plan and what were/are the next steps? Local discipline plans - is there a guide for discipline and the steps/levels of escalating behaviors?

Evaluations have been hard. Even though we were prepared in theory, actually doing it with real teachers was a challenge this year.

Knowledge of how to address staffing shortages

The district is not as supportive as I thought.

Supervisor of Novice Administrator: What has been [name]'s biggest challenge so far this year?

Adapting to a new role while working in the same district he has previously worked in as a teacher. He's embraced the challenge and has quickly earned the respect of his colleagues in his new role.

Balancing all of the expectations with personal life.

Balancing the wide diversity of tasks to achieve on a daily basis and to meet the needs of space with limited resources.

Being willing to ask for help. I think this a challenge all of us face.

Dealing with upset staff.

Figuring out the balance of personal / professional.

Finding time to observe teachers as often as she would like.

Just the overall management of special education programming in a district the size of CCA. She has done it phenomenally, but I worry about her ability to not get burnt out.

Learning the High School building.

Rebuilding trust with a staff that was fractured from the previous administration.

Special Education, IEPs, and specialized programs

Typical growing pains of a new administrator.

Novice Administrators (all respondents): Is there anything else you would like to share about your level of preparation?

A mock administrative interview would be great for preparation.

Consider additional opportunities for administrators to shadow/learn from other administrators

I appreciate the expertise our instructors provided to us and in any type of higher learning situation, most people have to seek out their own resources.

I do believe you get out of a program what you put in; I worked hard and loved my learning experience at UNI. I'm happy with my experience which helped me prepare for landing my dream job at the Iowa Department of Education in the division of Special Education.

I feel extremely well prepared based on my education received at Northwestern. My district is just very competitive and I have been a finalist in a couple rounds of interviews.

I feel that Dordt University and my 5 years as an instructional coach gave me the best chance to be ready for my first year on the job. My first year was tough, I am glad it happened to me and not someone else, as I believe I was put in this situation for a reason that I will come to know later.

I feel that I learned about the principal position from a birdseye view. The courses teach about the position. It is tough to replicate, but I do not feel that my coursed prepared me to immediately take an administrative position. We did not learn the day to day things. I am serving as an administrative intern currently, and everyday I am learning something new. Experience may be the only path to learn the day to day lessons, but thats what I felt the courses lack. I reference my legal course often, but at this point I have not referenced other courses.

I felt like I got no actual instruction on the managerial side of administration. Things like how to help create a master schedule, handling associate schedules, etc. were things that I did not learn that I have noticed many administrators struggle with when they start.

I have applied for ~100 administrative positions over the past two years and not yet received a job offer. The biggest hindrance, I believe, is SPED administration. I don't think this was adequately covered in my degree program. The experiences in my program did not give me good resume points that are attractive to employers. That is the biggest area for improvement in my program. Our SPED leadership class should have included a portfolio project in special programs leadership.

I have no idea what I am doing wrong with getting a job in Admin. Would love to have had more training on getting a job as I am not even able to get a screener for any position.

I think we were given a wide range of preparation rather than going more in depth on a few. Which was fine, but some of the more unique circumstances we face sometimes leaves me feeling ill prepared.

I would recommend the Drake program to anyone who wants to be an administrator. It was very good.

No

The best preparation I got was from doing the job. Having a good mentor is incredibly helpful. The coursework I took had useful components but was too focused on academia and not rooted in the reality of practice. For example - doing research was good, but writing a literature review was not practical or helpful. What would have been rooted in the reality of practice would have been to complete research and then create (and implement) a PD program for teachers.

Supervisor of Novice Administrator: What, if anything, could [Name]’s administrator preparation program have done to better prepare this principal?

Additional development in specialized programs

I can't answer that since he is not in an administrative role at this time.

In my opinion, administrator preparation programs need to focus less on instructional leadership and more on trust, relationships, and systems. Without those three things, success will not happen. Public schools today face so many challenges, and if building leadership does not have the trust of the building, they will not succeed. Systems are also so vital to the success of new administrators, and they cannot take this for granted. Instructional leadership will come with time, but if strong systems are not in place, the school will not be perceived as a safe place to learn and work.

More school law. I believe that is becoming a bigger part of our everyday conversations.

NA

Not just UNI, but all prep programs, better practice on building a master schedule and what key components/features need to be included.

Nothing in particular.

Nothing.

She is an amazing leader, so I am not sure about this one.