

2005 Illinois Public Colleges Teacher Graduate Survey Overview and Results:

*Aggregate Findings for the Twelve
Illinois Public Colleges of Education*

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Aggregate Findings for the Twelve Illinois Public Colleges of Education

First year teachers indicate they are well prepared to enter teaching and plan to remain working in education. The results of the first year of the Teacher Graduate Assessment project, which is an effort to survey first year teachers who graduated from an Illinois public university and their principals, indicate that a very large percentage felt they were well prepared to begin their careers. The teachers also indicated that, while they may change jobs in education or might take a break from teaching for family duties, they intend to dedicate their careers to education.

Project Overview

The Teacher Graduate Assessment project is an assessment of teachers in their first year of instruction directly following graduation from one of the twelve public colleges of education in the State of Illinois. The project is a cooperative effort of the Illinois Association of Deans of Public Colleges of Education (IADPCE) in conjunction with the Illinois Teacher Data Warehouse. The participating institutions, The Joyce Foundation, Illinois Board of Higher Education (IBHE) and the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) have provided financial support for the project. By surveying first year teachers and their immediate supervisors, information is generated that is used for teacher education program improvement and is responsive to broader state education needs. Specifically, the project goals include:

1. Provide a standardized assessment of new teacher graduates of all public colleges in Illinois assessing teacher preparation programs.
2. Provide a specific examination of teacher skills related to Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and Illinois Learning Standards for the purpose of identifying areas of strength and possible improvement for teacher preparation programs.
3. Provide information concerning the professional development needs of first year teachers.
4. Provide institutions with institution-specific data on recent graduates that will assist with program improvement efforts.
5. Proactively respond to calls for accountability related to teacher preparation by gathering information that can inform policy makers and the public about teacher preparation programs in Illinois and new teacher practice during the first year of instruction.

The need to examine the performance of teachers during their first year of instruction grows out of issues of induction, retention and teaching quality. The importance of understanding new teacher graduates' knowledge and experiences in their first year of instruction is underscored by the results reported in the recent American Education Research Association book on teacher education that highlights findings on teacher education preparation research. The case is clearly made that preparation is a key ingredient in student achievement and teacher retention (Cochran-Smith, Zeichner, 2005). Darling-Hammond (2001) notes that the level of teacher preparation relates positively to both the increased likelihood of teacher retention and to student performance. In Illinois, the framework for *Restructuring Recruitment, Preparation, Licensing and Continuing Professional Development of Teachers* (1996) identifies incongruence between teacher preparation programs and instructional needs in calling for Illinois standards for teaching. The Teacher Graduate Assessment project provides an improvement-focused evaluation of teacher education linked to the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards and core teacher preparation instruction areas.



The need for an assessment of new teacher preparation is further underlined by the Illinois Education Research Council data published in December 2002 revealing that only 59% of 1999-2000 newly certified teachers were

working as teachers in 2000-2001 (DeAngelis, Peddle, Trott, & Bergeron, 2002). While current research has attempted to describe teacher pipeline and attrition issues, this assessment generates data to inform stakeholders as to how to strengthen the capacity of teacher education programs to respond to emerging new teacher needs. The collection and dissemination of findings is intended to assist preparatory programs in making data driven modifications or additions to pre-service programs and assist with the identification of needed in-service professional development for new teachers.



Survey Administration Methodology

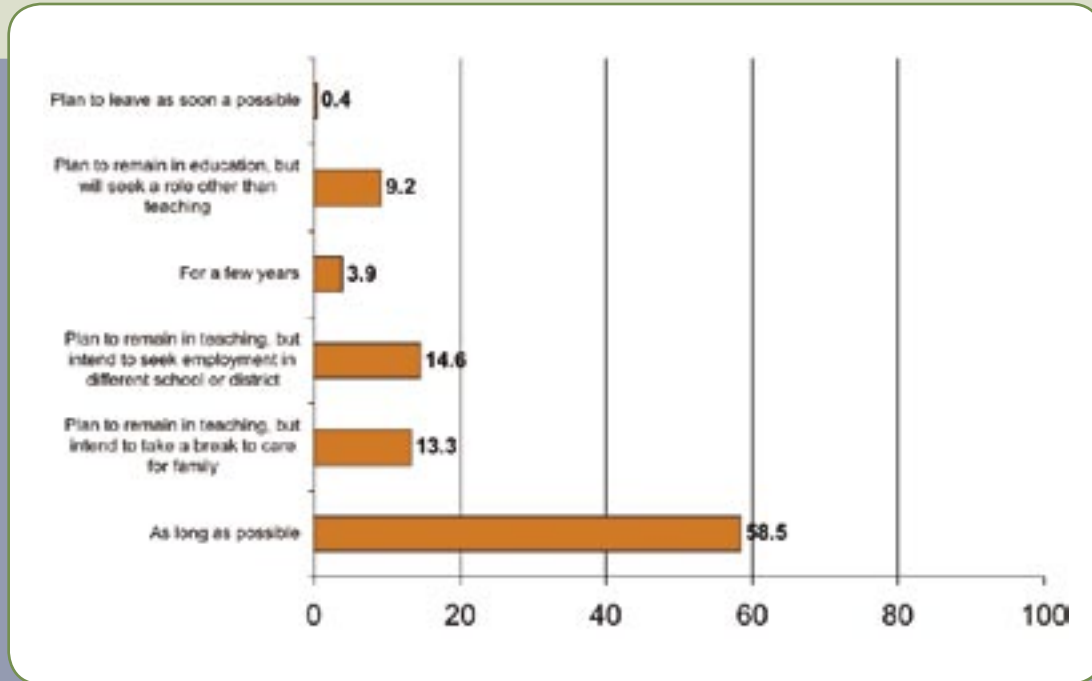
Survey administration draws upon existing data resources in identifying 2003-04 graduates from a teacher preparation program from one of the 12 public colleges of education who are teaching in Illinois Public Schools during the 2004-05 academic year. On March 31st of 2005 a paper and web survey link were sent to 2221 recent graduates who were identified as teaching in Illinois Public Schools along with their corresponding immediate supervisors. Overall survey response was 58% for both the teacher and supervisor surveys combined, with a 52% response rate from new teachers and a 64% response from supervisors. In total, the assessment generated at least a teacher or supervisor response from over 82% of identified new public school teachers in Illinois.

2004-05 Assessment Findings

Key findings of the first year of the project begin with the success of the project to identify and collect data from recent teacher graduates from public colleges of education in Illinois. The data reveal trends along seven dimensions including: 1) Length of time first year teacher plans to remain in teaching; 2) Satisfaction with teaching and preparation programs; 3) Extent to which Teacher Education Programs prepared new graduates to be successful teachers; 4) Knowledge and use of Illinois Professional Teaching Standards; 5) Induction and mentoring being provided for the teacher; 6) Supervisor view of preparation that the teacher received; 7) Similarity between teacher and supervisor responses. These seven areas highlight lessons learned from the first administration of the Teacher Graduate and Supervisor Surveys.

Dimension One: New teachers plan to remain in education

Over 95% of survey responses indicated a plan to remain in education long term, with over 85% intending to remain in a teaching position. Of those responding, 28% indicated they intend to either take a break to care for children or seek employment in a different school or district.



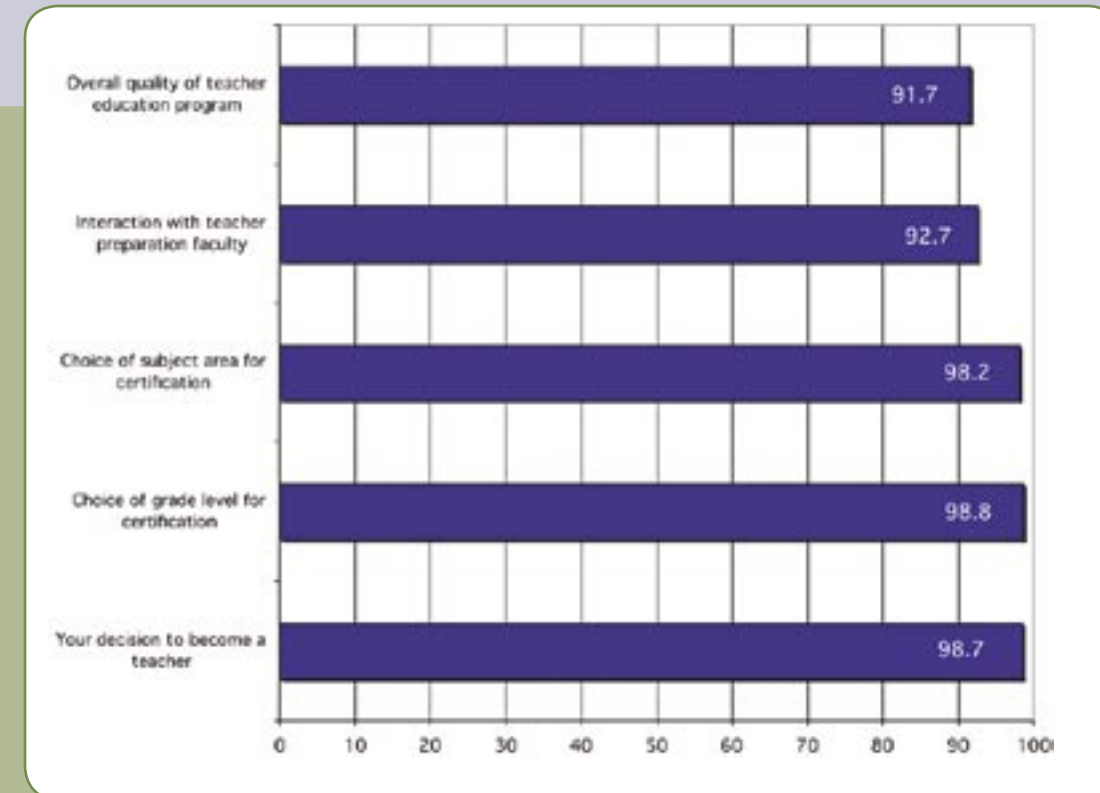
Dimension 1



Dimension Two: Satisfaction with teaching and preparation programs is high

New teachers have high satisfaction with their decision to become a teacher, along with their choice of certification level and subject matter; over 98% report being satisfied or very satisfied.

New teachers report high satisfaction with the quality of their public institution teacher preparation program and their interactions with faculty; over 91% report being satisfied or very satisfied.



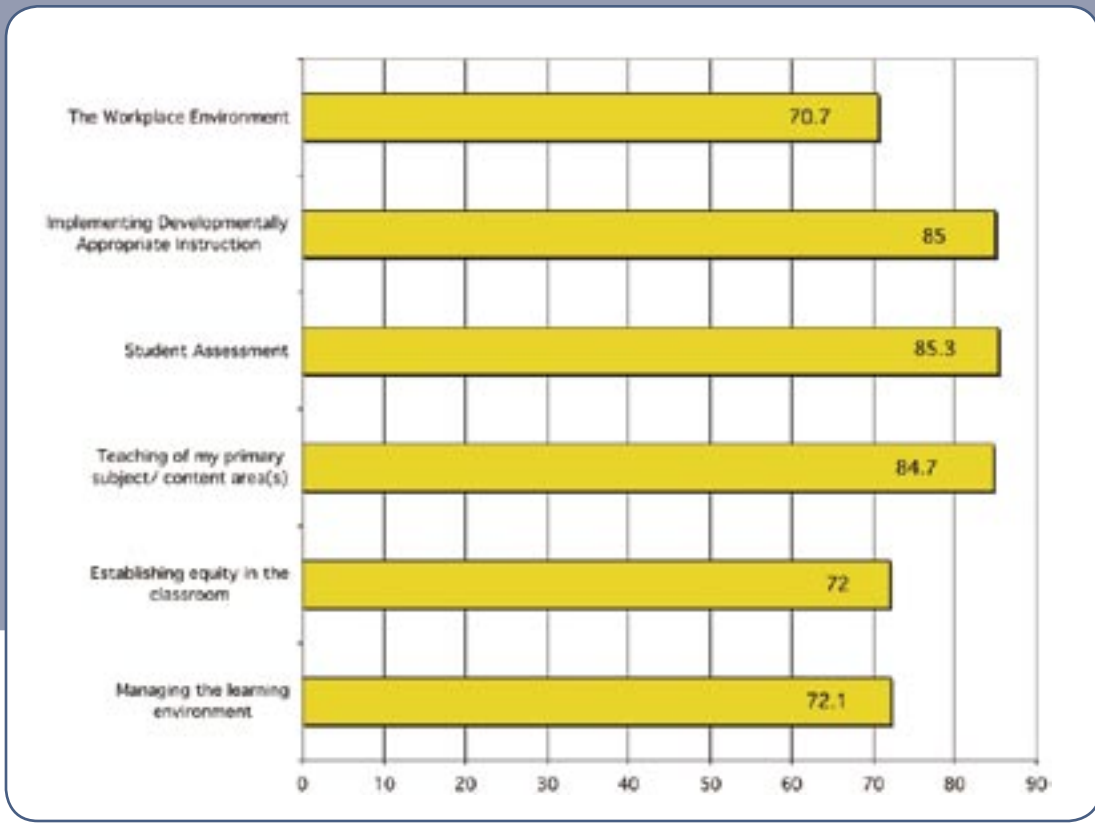
Dimension 2



Dimension Three: Extent to which Teacher Education Program prepared new graduates to be successful teachers

Teachers felt most prepared by their programs to be successful teachers in the areas of student assessment; implementing developmentally appropriate instruction; teaching their primary subject/content areas; managing the learning environment; establishing equity in the classroom; and functioning in their workplace environment. Most prepared is defined by over 70% of respondents reporting moderately or extremely as extent of their satisfaction with preparation.

Teachers felt less prepared, when compared to other areas in the survey, to be successful teachers in the areas of teaching English language learners; working with school administration; working with parents/guardians; and working in a high accountability environment (as defined by less than 60% reporting moderately or extremely as extent of preparation).



Dimension 3

Dimension Four: Knowledge and use of educational standards is high among new teachers

All eleven Illinois Professional Teaching Standards were reported to be understood mostly or completely by over 90% of respondents. Similarly 94.7% of new teachers reported understanding mostly or completely the Illinois Learning Standards.



Over 85% of new teacher respondents reported applying the eleven Illinois Professional Teaching Standards most or all of the time. Similarly, 90.6% of new teachers reported applying the Illinois Learning Standards most or all of the time.

The Illinois Technology Standards were less well known and significantly less often applied than the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards or the Illinois Learning Standards. Only between 53 and 57.5% of respondents reported applying the technology standards most or all of the time.

Knowledge and Use of Illinois Educational Standards

Standard	Have most or complete knowledge of...	Use most or all of the time...
Illinois Professional Teaching Standards	92.9%	86.6%
Technology Standards	79.7%	55.3%
Illinois Learning Standards	94.7%	90.6%

Dimension 4

Dimension Five: A Majority of New Teachers Have Access to Mentoring and Induction Programs

Four out of five new teachers responding to the survey indicated that they were supported by a formally assigned coach, mentor or master teacher during their first year of teaching. Of those supported by a coach, mentor or master teacher, the majority report that this individual is from their same content or subject area, is a significant help, and that they met with this individual at least once per week. In addition to mentoring support, 80% of first year teachers responding indicated they received support in the form of supportive supervisor communication and access to workshops during their first year of instruction.



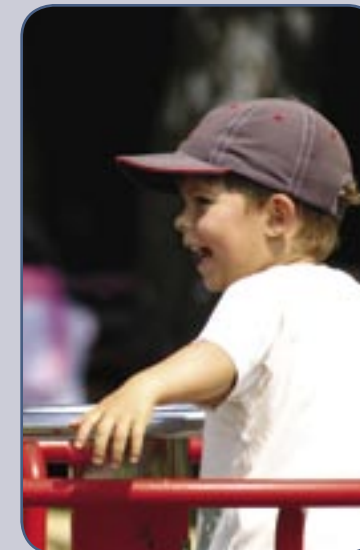
Mentor, Coach or Master Teacher Support For New Teachers

Type of Coach, Mentor or Master Teacher Support	Among teachers reporting a coach, mentor or master teacher
Mentor from same subject or content area	73%
Extent of help is moderate or great	68.1%
Met at least once per week	74.2%

Dimension 5

Dimension Six: Supervisor Responses

Over 80% of supervisor responses are from principals, with 90.4% of respondents indicating they have visited new teachers' classrooms three or more times during the past year and 79.8% have discussed teaching with the new teacher three or more times in the past year. Of those responding, 89% indicate that a mentoring or induction program is available at their school with 80% indicating that the teacher they are responding about in the survey has participated actively in the mentoring program.



Supervisors report the perception that the Illinois Professional Teaching Standards most utilized relate to context expertise, instructional planning and function in the professional field of education. It is the perception of supervisors that 86.6% of new teachers use the Illinois Learning Standards most or all of the time. Supervisors report the use of technology standards as the lowest among the standards items on the survey. Between 63 and 71% of respondents indicated that new teachers utilized the standards most or all of the time.

Supervisor Perception of Knowledge and Use of Education Standards

Standard	Use most or all of the time...
Illinois Professional Teaching Standards	80.8%
Technology Standards	67%
Illinois Learning Standards	86.8%

Dimension 6

Dimension Seven: Combined Teacher and Supervisor Responses

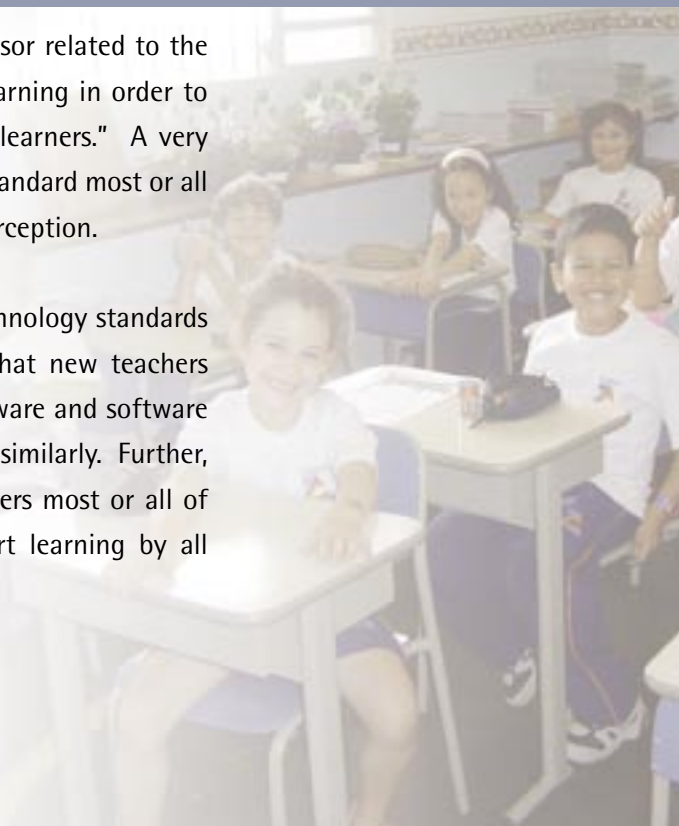
There are three types of interesting findings related to teacher and supervisor matched survey responses of the application of Illinois education standards. First, there are educational standard questions where teacher and supervisor responses are nearly identical. Second, there are questions that teachers scored themselves significantly higher and finally there are standard questions that supervisors scored their teachers higher than the teacher themselves.



Approximately 85% of teachers and supervisors report that teachers use most or all of the time the following two standards: (1) The central concepts, methods of inquiry and structures of the discipline(s) that are necessary to create learning experiences that make the content meaningful to all students. (2) How individuals grow, develop, and learn in order to provide learning opportunities to support the intellectual, social, and personal development of all students.

Teachers reported higher self-scores than their supervisor related to the standard "How students differ in their approach to learning in order to create instructional opportunities adapted to diverse learners." A very high number (88.8%) of teachers indicated using this standard most or all of the time, but 78.8% of supervisors held the same perception.

Supervisors reported a higher perception of use of technology standards than did teachers. Of supervisors, 72.5% reported that new teachers utilized the standard associated with integrating hardware and software into their classroom while 58.1% of teachers indicated similarly. Further, supervisors were more likely to report that new teachers most or all of the time integrate technology into classes to support learning by all students.



Conclusion

Several ideas can be gleaned from the results of the assessment of 2003-04 teacher graduates of the public colleges of education in Illinois. First, the responses from new teachers in public schools in Illinois indicate they plan to continue working in the field of education. The intention of new teachers to continue working in education combined with the satisfaction that teachers have with their choice to enter education and their specific education program are very positive indicators for the preparation that new teachers receive in public colleges of education.



Survey data indicate positive support for the instructional preparation received by recent graduates from public institutions. Those instructional items they felt the most prepared for include instruction in their primary area, student assessment, and creating instruction that is developmentally appropriate. While overall responses are quite positive, areas scoring lower and reflecting areas for improvement include preparation to teach English language learners, working with school administrators and working in a high accountability environment.



Conclusion

The teacher and supervisor surveys contained a key section related to Illinois education standards. Analysis of the responses to these questions finds that there is considerable agreement that new teachers know about and routinely use Illinois Learning Standards along with standards related to instructional pedagogy and student developmental level. Survey results also indicate that the application and use of technology standards are less well known and applied.

The success of the assessment project in identifying and gathering new data about the view of teachers and their supervisors concerning the preparation recent teacher graduates received in public colleges in Illinois is a significant forward step in obtaining data that institutions of higher education can use to drive programmatic improvement. Results obtained from this effort paint a portrait that teacher education in public colleges in Illinois is on the right track, with the assessment project serving as a vital source of information for the state on the preparation of new teachers serving in Illinois.

The Teacher Graduate Assessment project is intended to be an on-going project that will provide a yearly assessment of new teachers and their principals. A specific aim of the project is to develop year-to-year trends of new teacher responses so as to be able to describe how colleges of education in Illinois are responding to the on-going call to provide the highest quality teachers for public schools in Illinois.

