

From Good to Great: Exemplary Teachers' Perspectives on Increasing Teacher Effectiveness Across the Career Continuum



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Washington, D.C.

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Center on
GREAT TEACHERS & LEADERS

at American Institutes for Research ■

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The Need for This Study

- Tremendous public and policy interest in teacher effectiveness
- A dearth in research on teachers' perspectives on increasing teacher effectiveness
 - The first comprehensive study of *effective teachers'* views on increasing teacher effectiveness
- An interest in teacher engagement in the research process
 - A true collaboration of partners and a true collaboration with teacher leaders who served as
 - Authors
 - Focus group participants
 - Field testers of the online survey
 - The impetus for the study
 - Collaborators throughout each stage

The Study Partners

- National Network of State Teachers of the Year
- Center on Great Teachers and Leaders at American Institutes for Research
- American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education
- Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Education Association
- National Council on Teacher Quality

Study Overview

- An exploratory survey of the perspectives of State and National Teachers of the Year on the professional experiences and supports that moved them “from good to great”
 - An online survey
 - Over 300 respondents (41 percent)

The Key Research Question

- What experiences and supports across the professional career continuum led these exemplary teachers to become so effective?

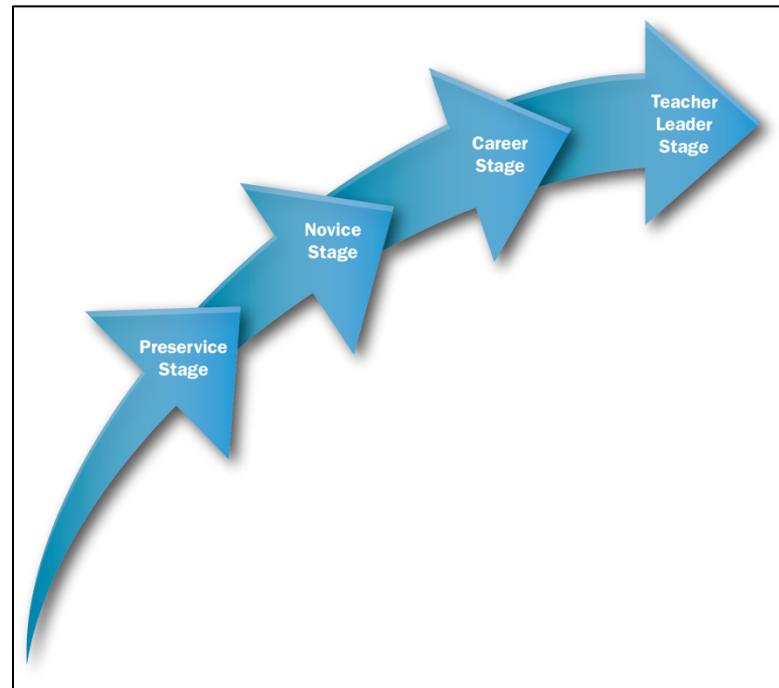


Figure 1. The Professional Career Continuum

Survey Respondent Demographics

- Nearly 60 percent have more than 20 years of teaching experience and are over 50 years old.
- 50 percent are currently classroom teachers.
- 99 percent teach or taught in traditional public schools.
- About 60 percent teach or taught at the high school level.
- Two-thirds were certified through a Bachelor's program.
- The full range of subject areas, urbanicity, and FRL are represented.

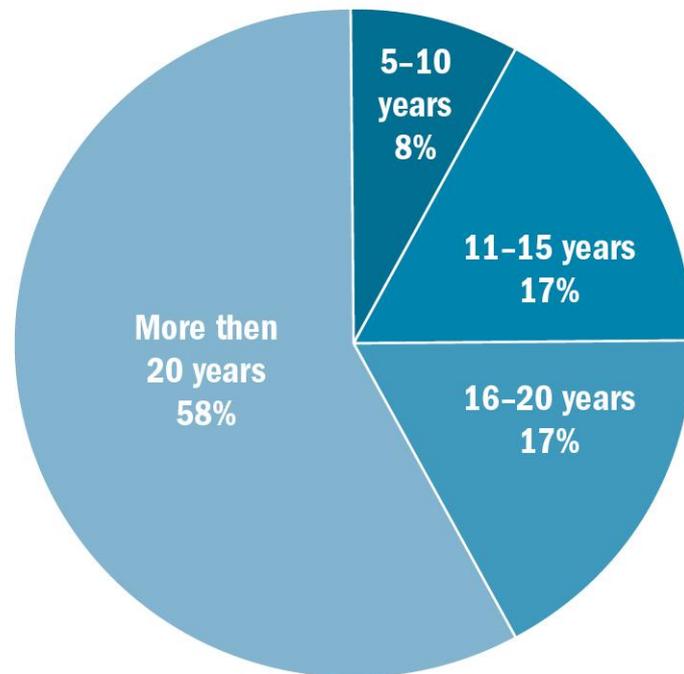
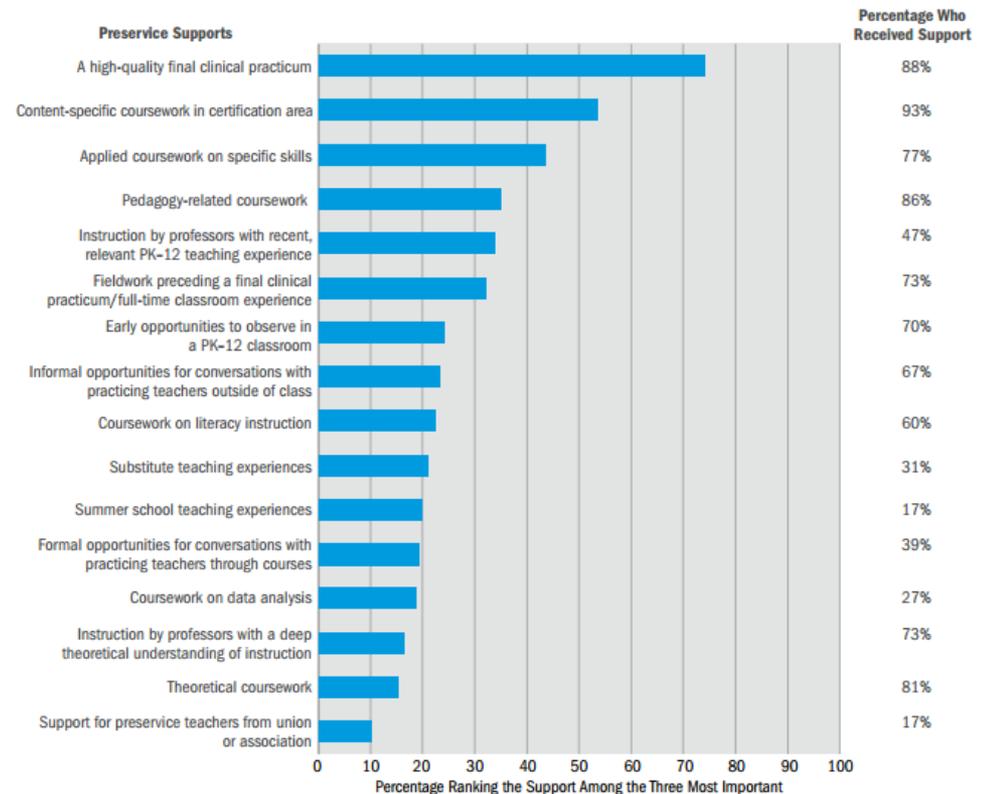


Figure 2. Respondents' Years of Teaching Experience

The Findings

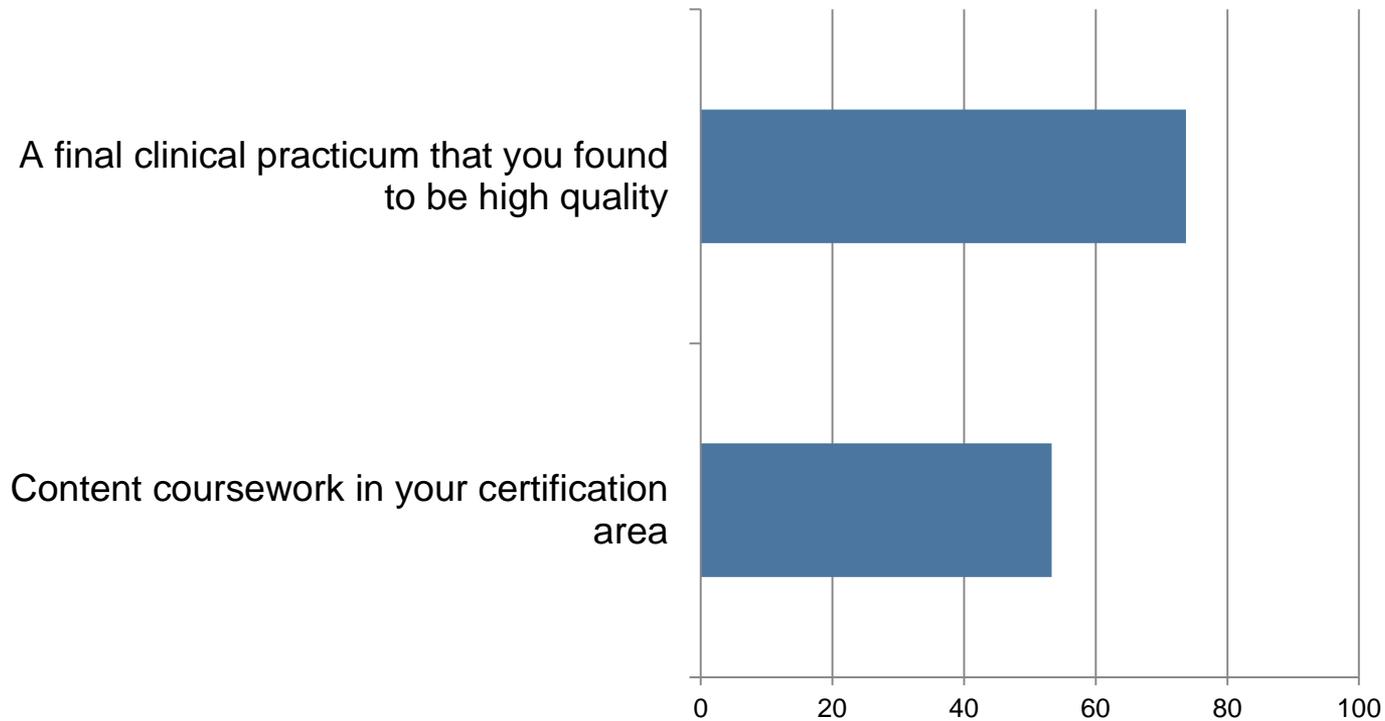
- The most important experiences and supports:
 - At the preservice stage:
 - High-quality preservice clinical experiences with effective cooperating teachers
 - Preservice coursework in their content area

Figure 3. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Preservice Support Among the “Top Three” for Developing Their Effectiveness as a Teacher



The Findings

Preservice Stage: Rated Very Important



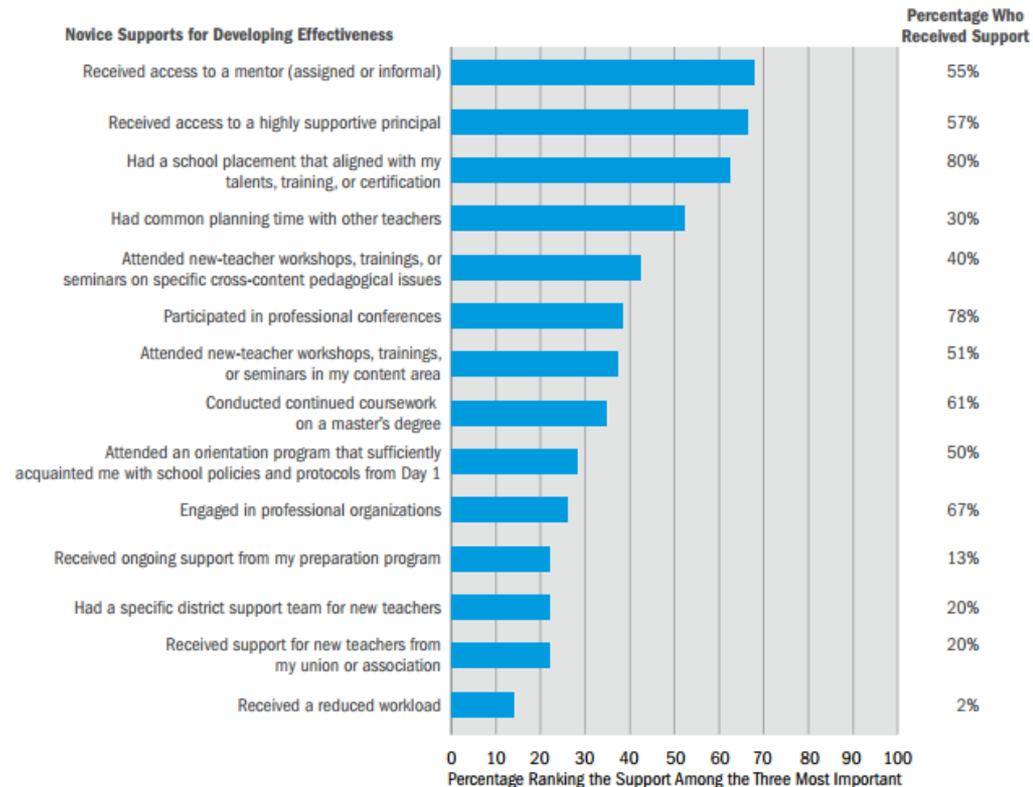
Tabletop Discussion Questions

1. What efforts are underway to expand the availability of yearlong clinical experiences in your school, district, or state? What would need to happen to enable creation of longer, higher quality clinical residencies? Who would need to be involved?
2. What are the best opportunities for preparation programs and districts to collaborate to improve the quality and relevance of teacher preparation coursework? What are the five most important improvements that would make this coursework most useful for new teachers?

The Findings

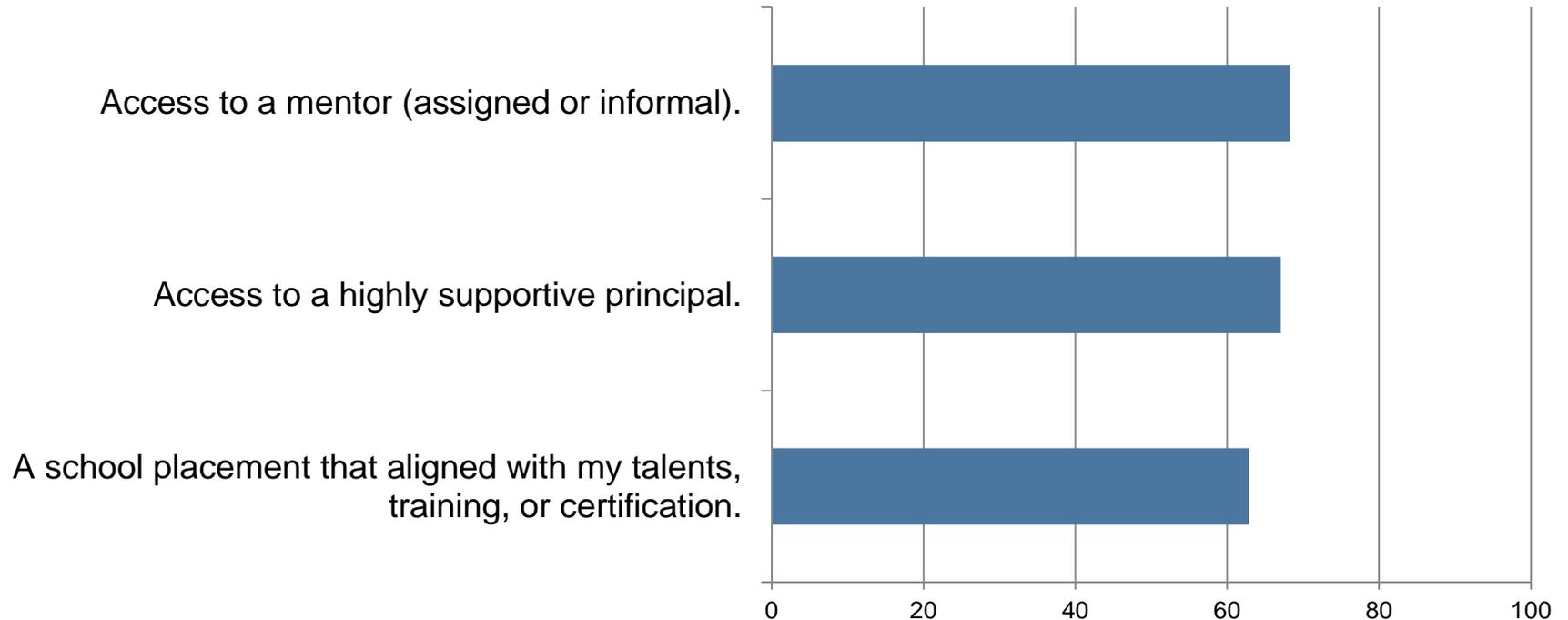
- At the novice stage:
 - Access to mentors and supportive principals
 - Appropriate placements that match their training

Figure 5. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Novice Stage Experience Among Their “Top Three” for Developing Their Effectiveness as a Teacher



The Findings

Novice Stage: Rated Very Important



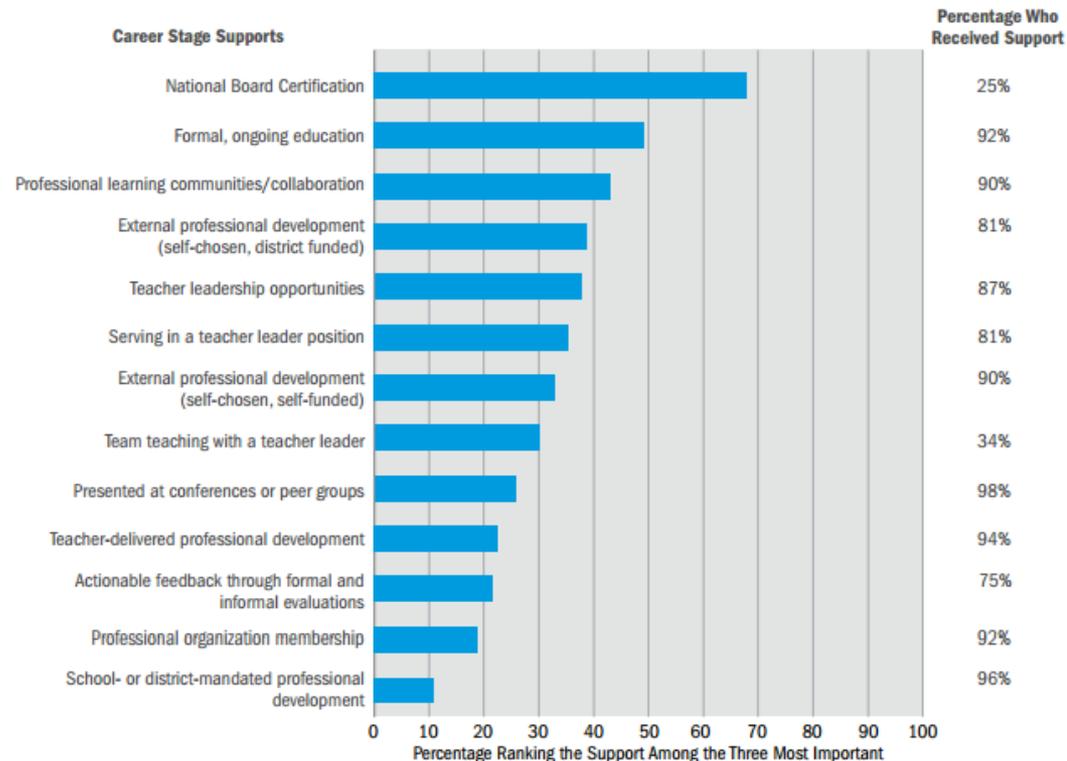
Tabletop Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of opportunities do novice teachers in your school, district, or state have for receiving mentoring or support from experienced teachers? What opportunities do they have for observing the practice of experienced and effective teachers?
2. What additional supports, training, or resources do school leaders need to better meet teachers' needs?
3. What options are available to ensure that new teachers are placed appropriately—in light of their training, certification, and interests?

The Findings

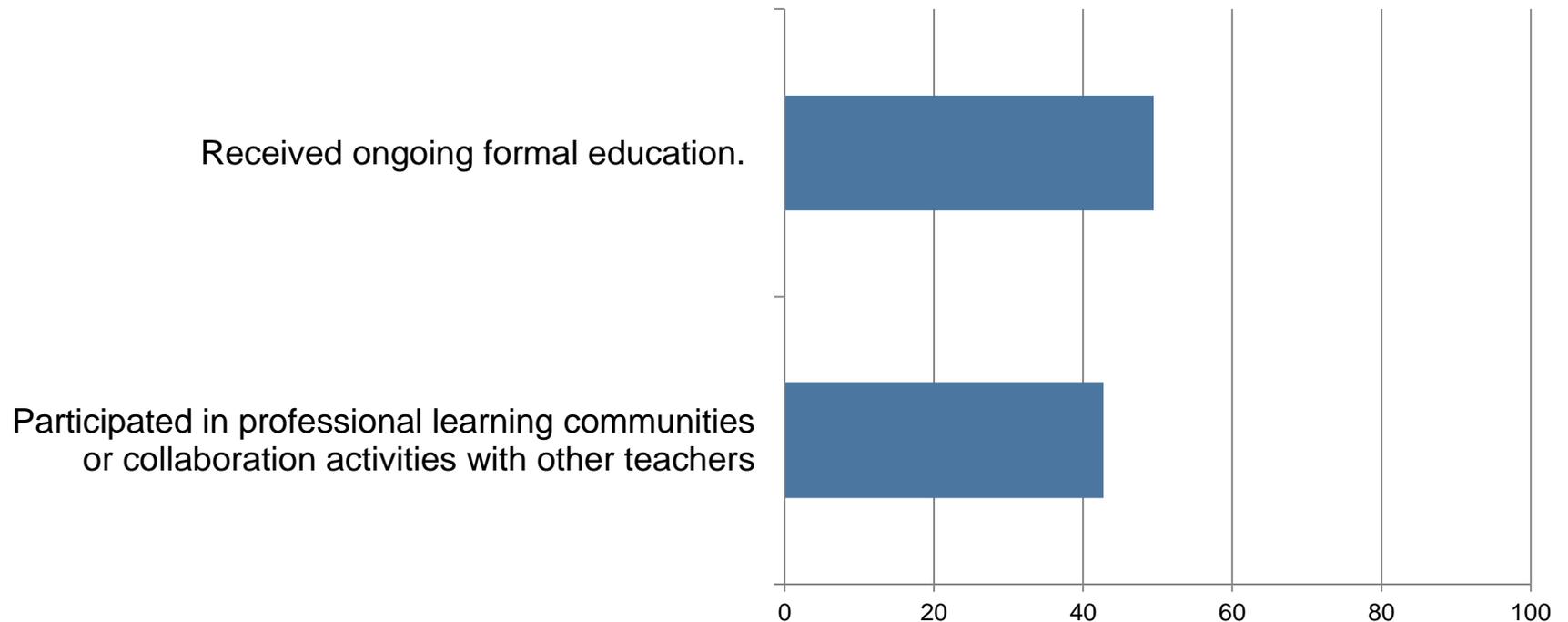
- At the career stage:
 - Formal ongoing education
 - Opportunities for collaboration and reflection

Figure 8. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Career Stage Support Among the “Top Three” for Developing Their Effectiveness as a Teacher



The Findings

Career Stage: Rated Very Important



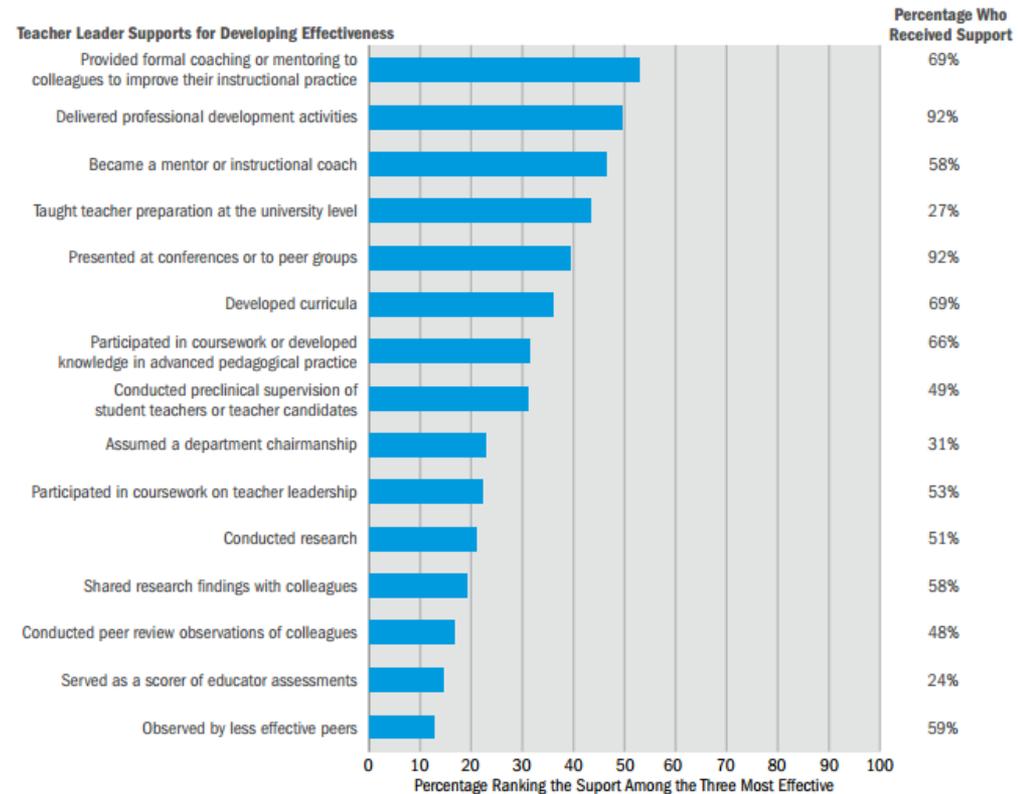
Tabletop Discussion Questions

1. What can states or districts do to identify and incentivize aspects of ongoing formal education that will support increasing teacher effectiveness?
2. Several policies and structures—such as professional learning communities, opportunities to observe, and time to collaborate—can support collegial and collaborative environments. Given your school or district context, how can these structures be strengthened or formalized?

The Findings

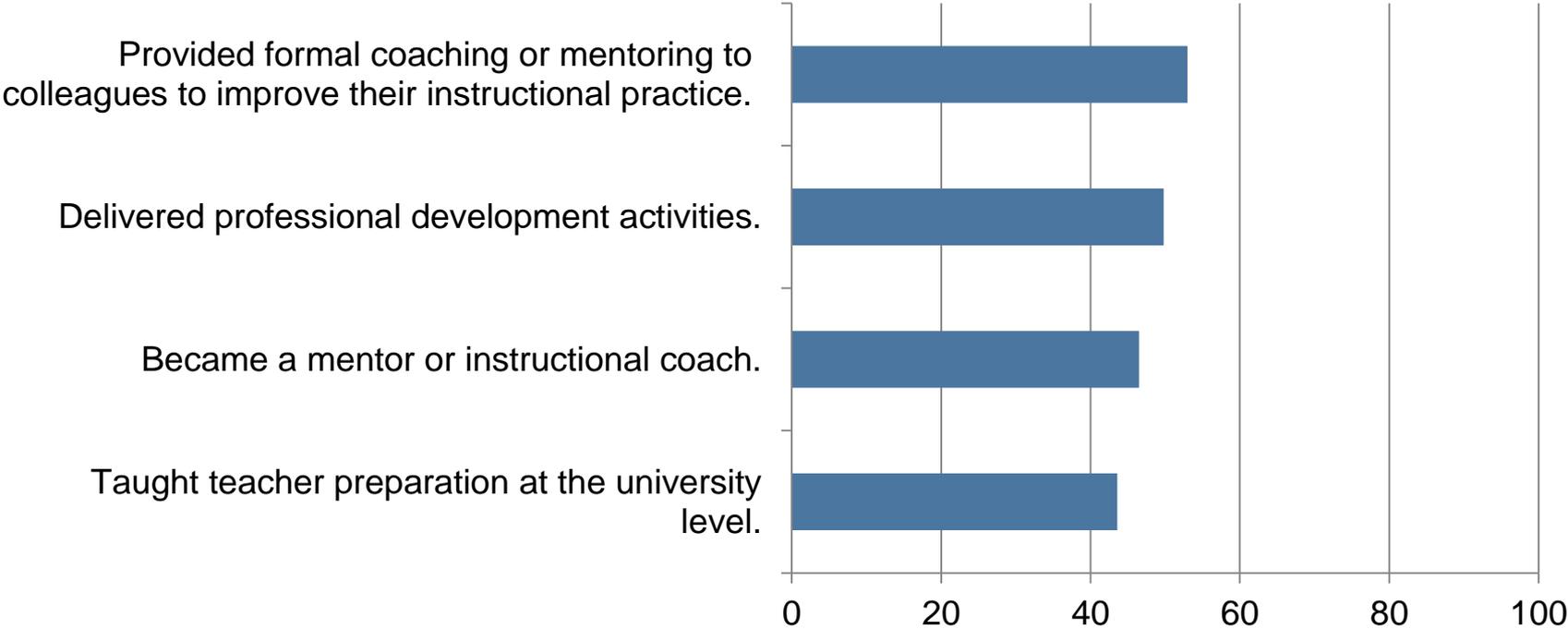
- At the teacher leader stage:
 - Opportunities for teacher leaders to help less effective teachers improve

Figure 9. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Experience Among the “Top Three” for Developing Their Effectiveness During the Teacher Leader Stage



The Findings

Teacher Leader Stage: Rated Very Important



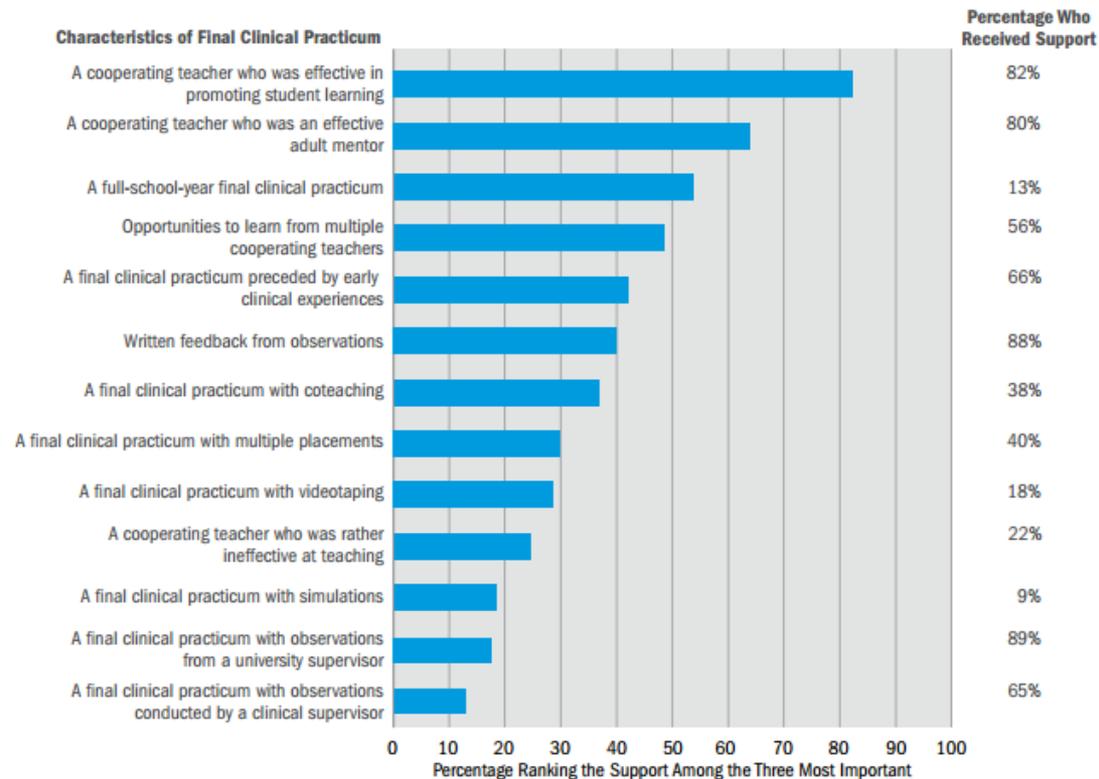
Tabletop Discussion Questions

1. What types of *formal* teacher leader roles are available in your school, district, or state? Do teacher leaders have opportunities to mentor and lead novice teachers? To coach struggling teachers? To serve as cooperating teachers for preservice teachers?
2. Is there regular time built into the school-day schedule for teacher leaders to support other teachers or work with administrators without overburdening or taking the teacher leaders out of the classroom? If not, what would it take to build in time for this work during the school day?

The Findings

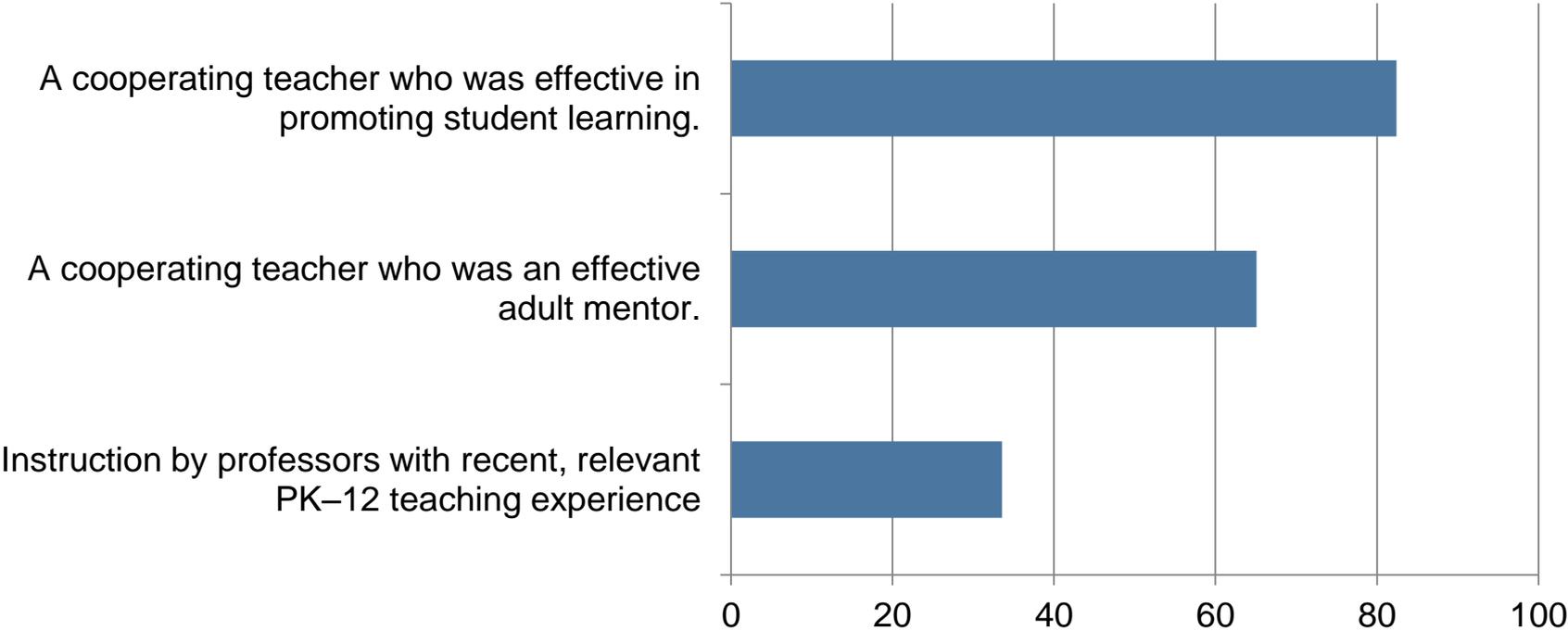
- Preservice teachers viewed as very important access to
 - Cooperating teachers who are effective with students and as adult mentors
 - Professors with recent K–12 teaching experience

Figure 4. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Characteristic of Their Final Clinical Practicum Among the “Top Three” for Developing Their Effectiveness as a Teacher



The Findings

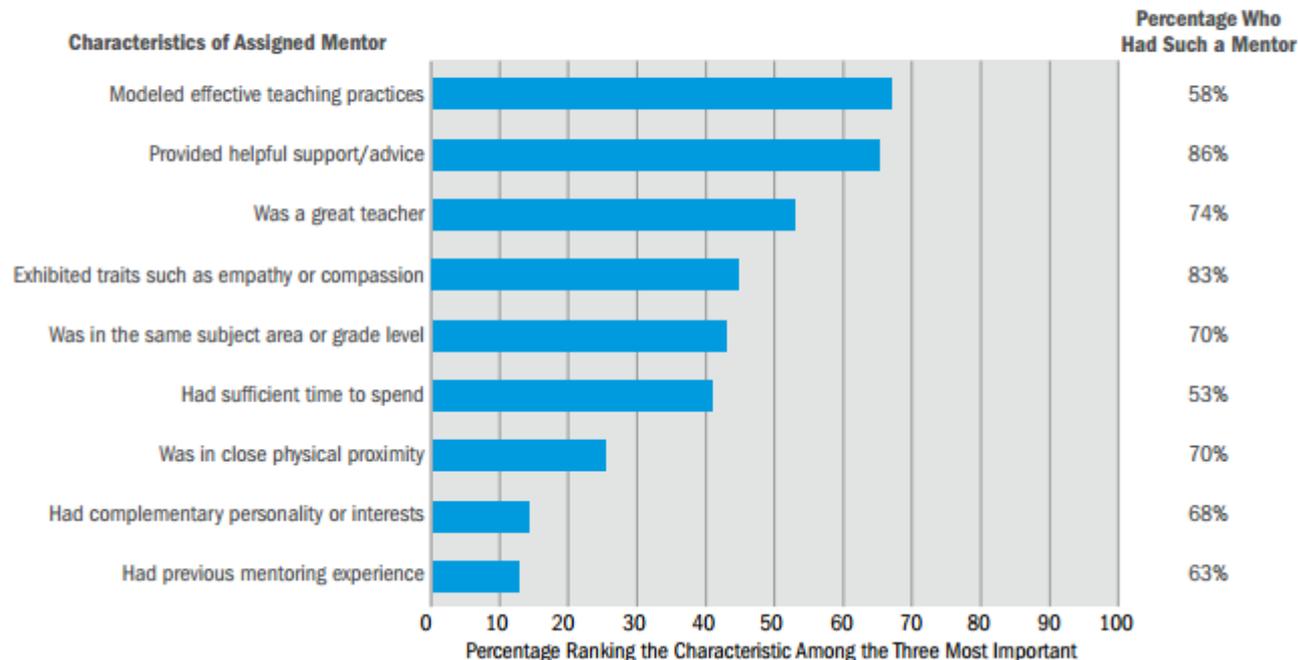
Preservice Stage: Rated Very Important



The Findings

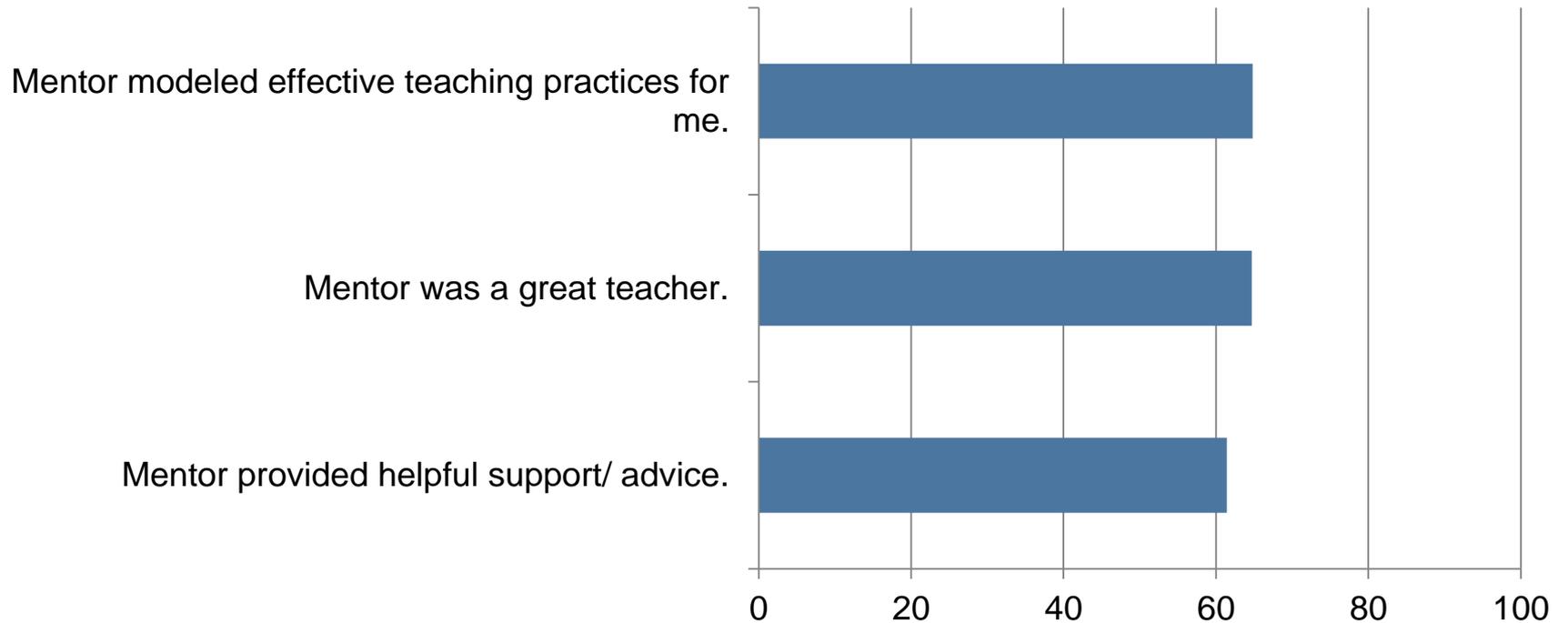
- Novice teachers viewed as very important access to
 - Mentors who model effective teaching and provide useful advice

Figure 7. Percentage of National and State Teachers of the Year Who Ranked Each Characteristic of Their Assigned Mentor Among the “Top Three” Most Important Characteristics for Developing Their Effectiveness as a Teacher



The Findings

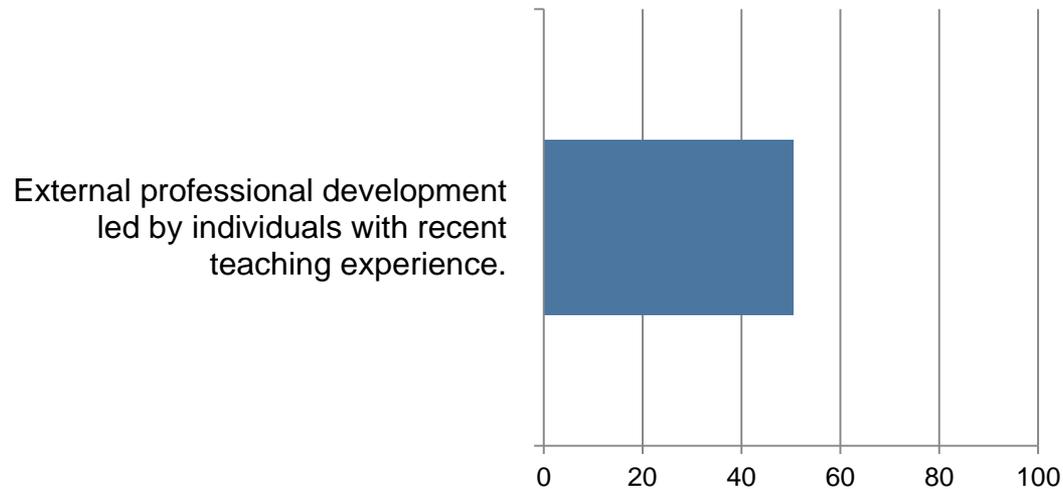
Novice Stage: Rated Very Important



The Findings

- Career teachers viewed as very important access to
 - Professional learning opportunities led by individuals with recent K–12 teaching experience

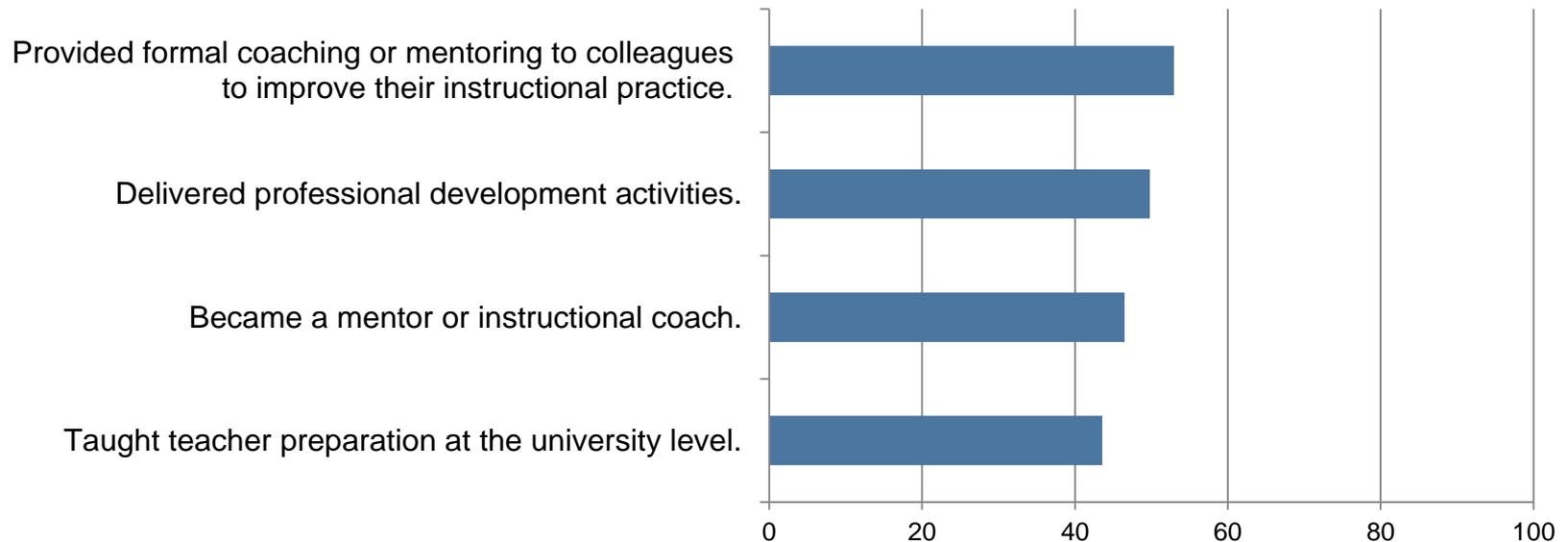
Career Stage: Rated Very Important



The Findings

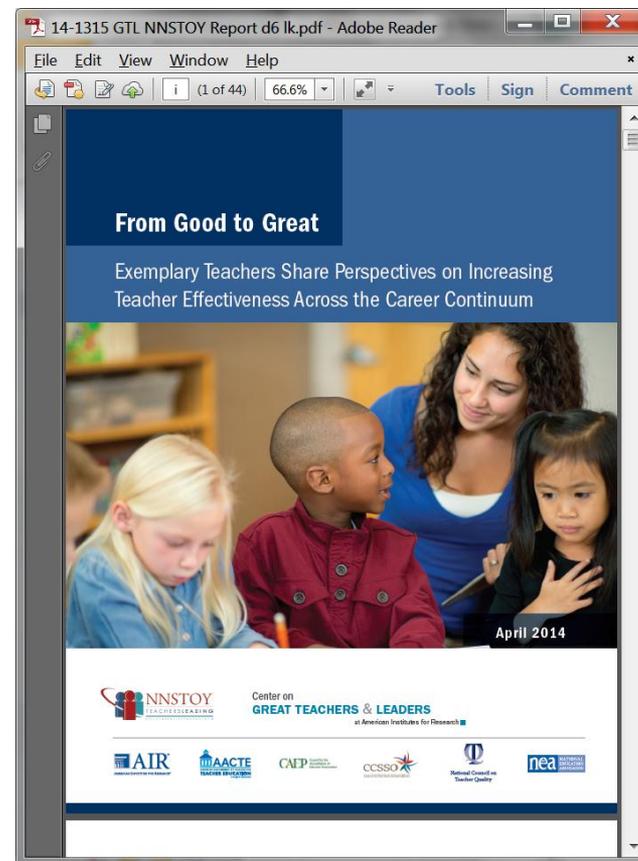
- Teacher leaders viewed as very important

Teacher Leader Stage: Rated Very Important



The Report and Companion Material

- Full report
- Executive summary
- Survey instrument
- Survey results
- Discussion starter tool



Innovative Discussion Tool

- Builds on the report's findings to help educators and leaders generate constructive dialogue about the types of supports that should be available to help all teachers become more effective
- Provides a framework to guide meetings, focus groups, or discussions about improving teacher effectiveness



Why Use the Discussion Tool?

- Spark research-based conversations around evaluation and professional growth
- Build buy-in for implementing supports and initiatives
- Leverage existing programs or initiatives to further develop teachers' effectiveness and, in turn, student learning

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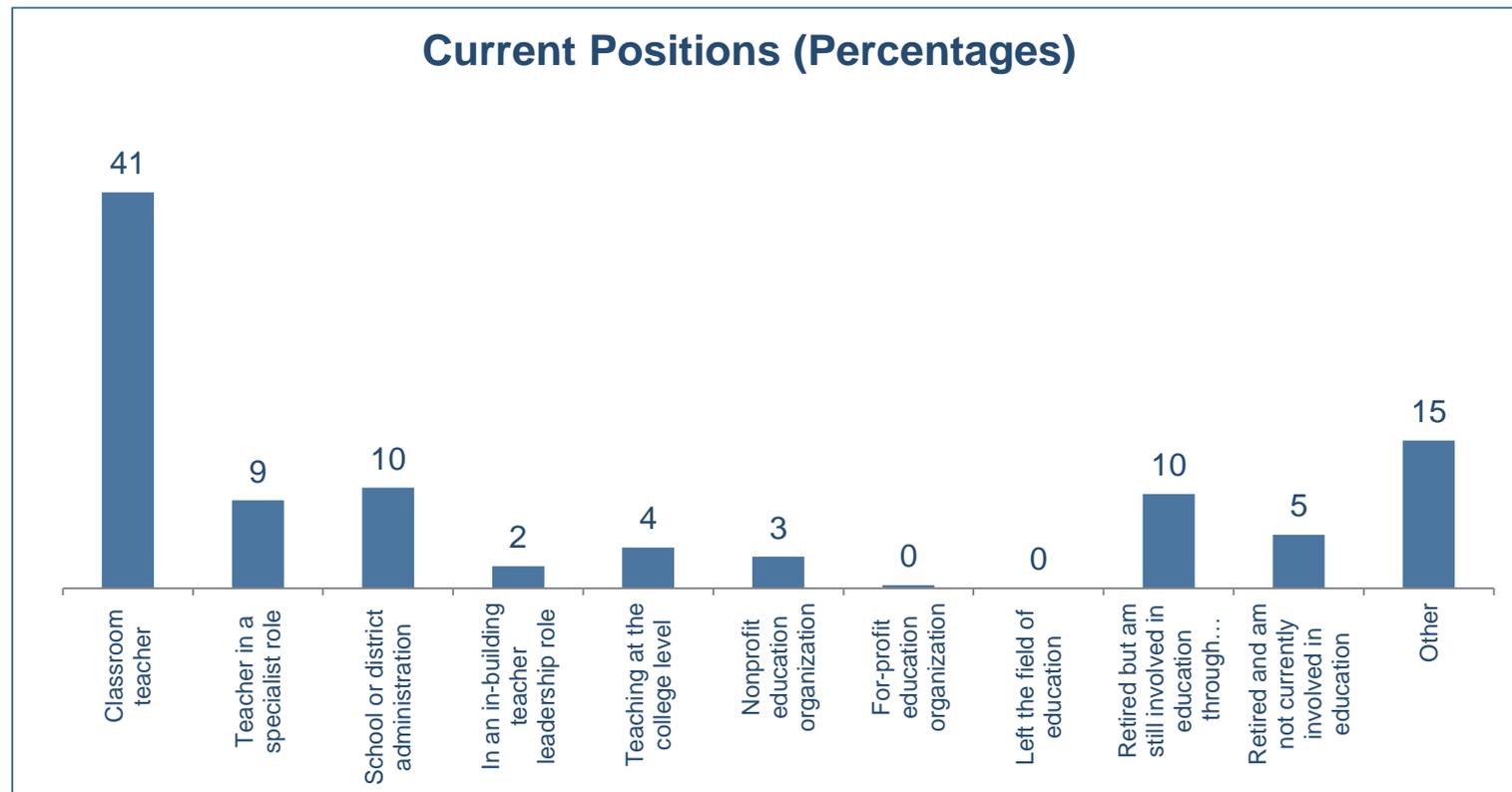
▶ *Advancing state efforts to grow, respect, and retain great teachers and leaders for all students*

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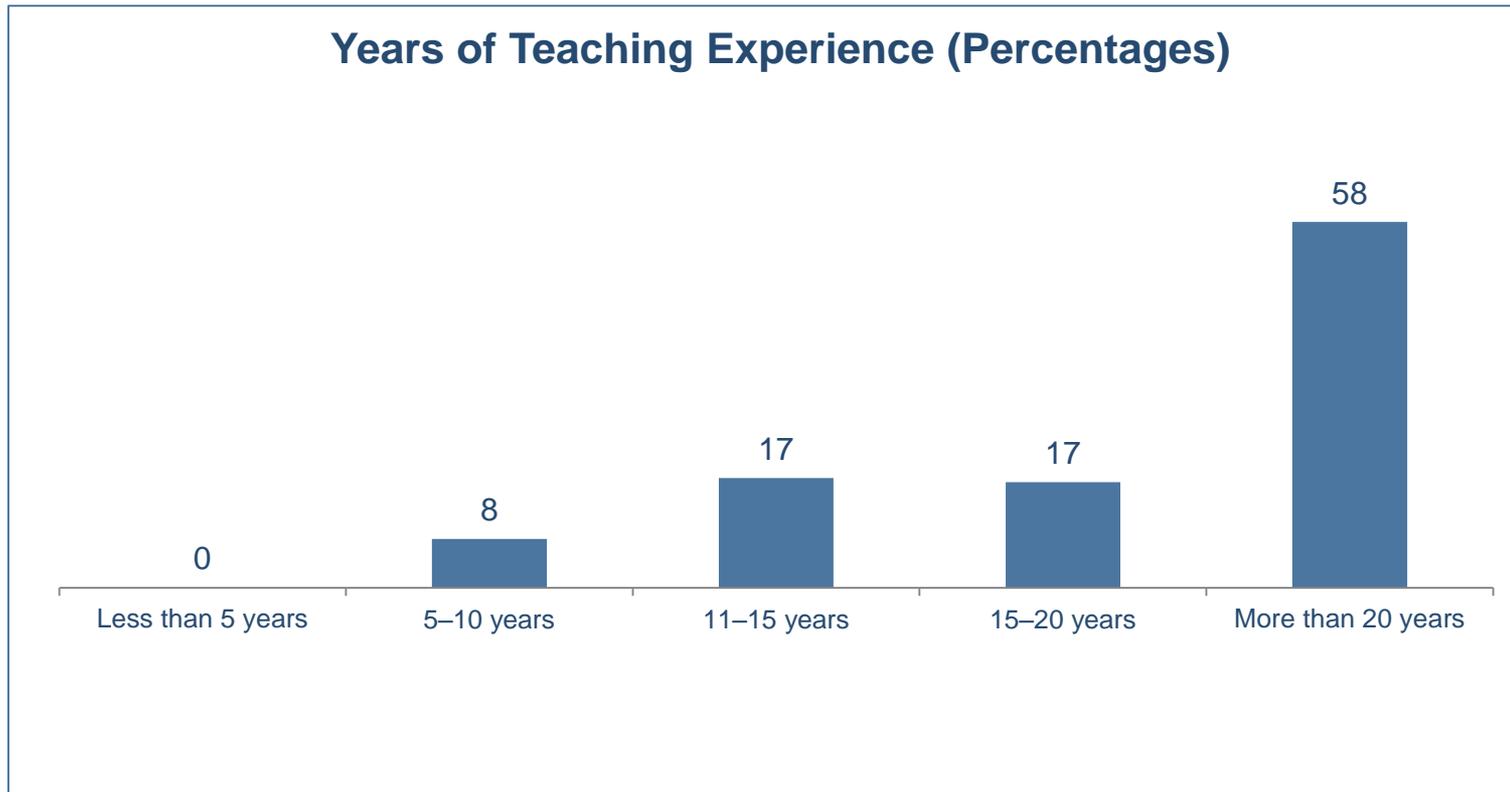
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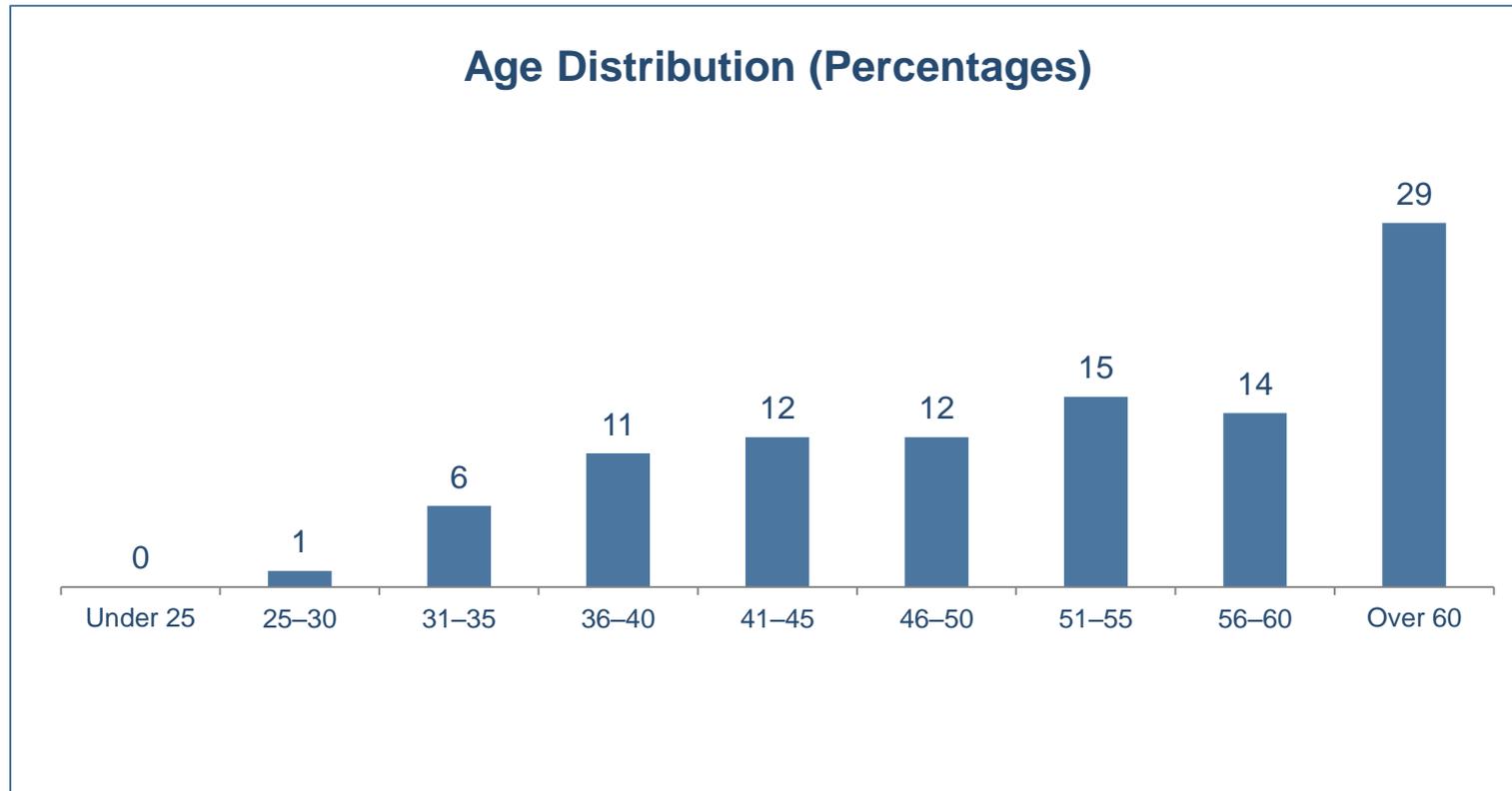
Demographics



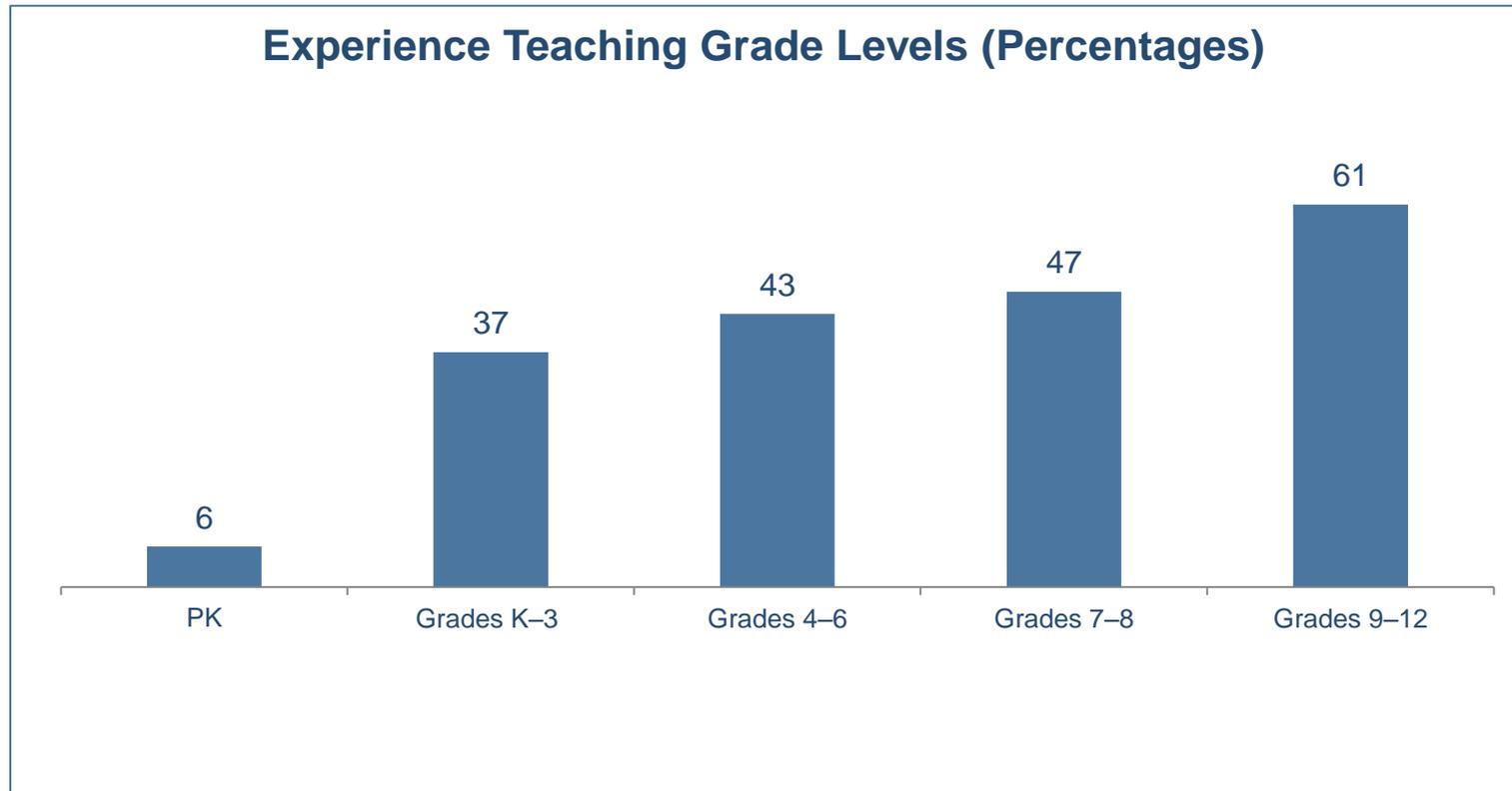
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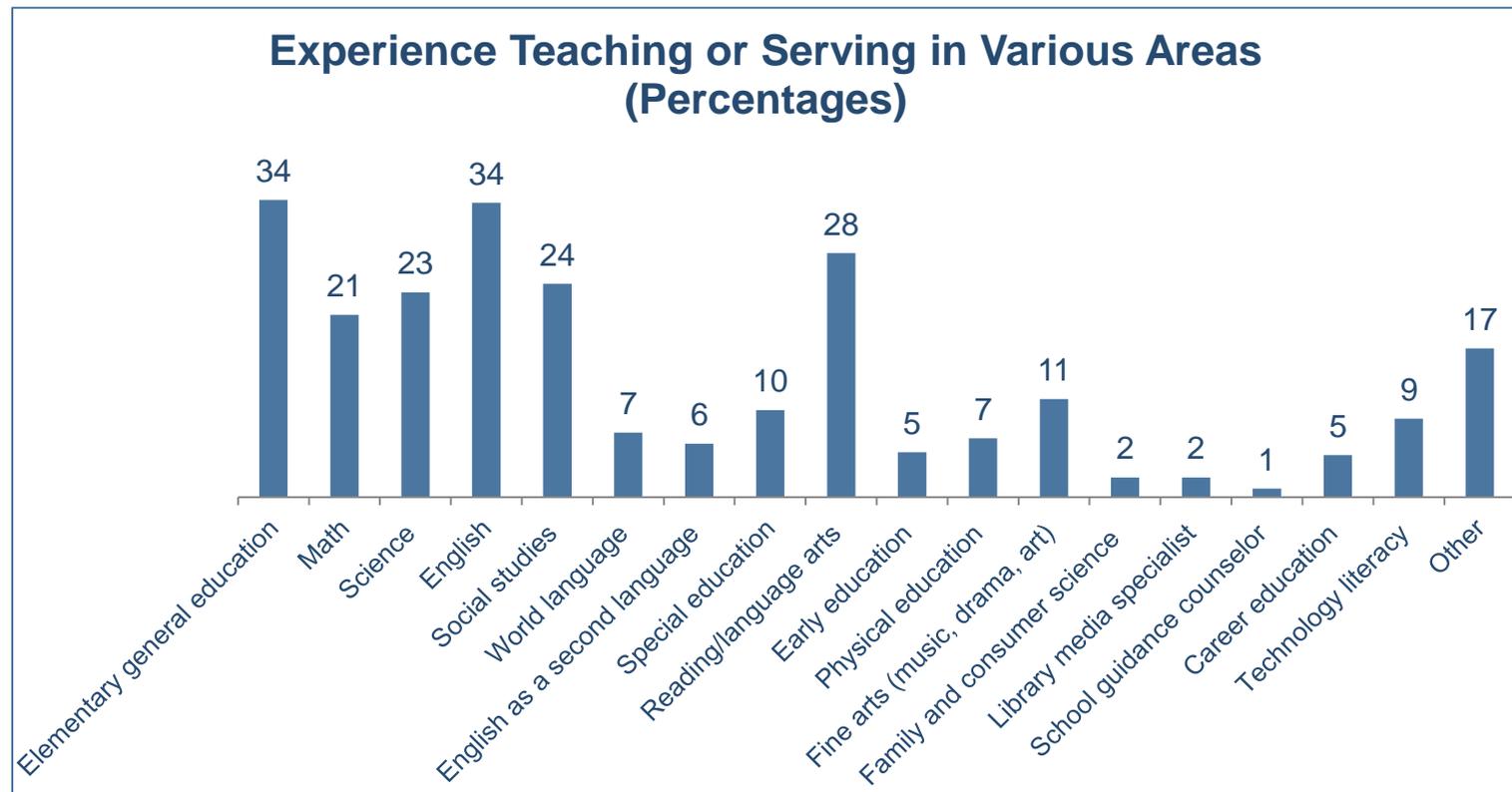
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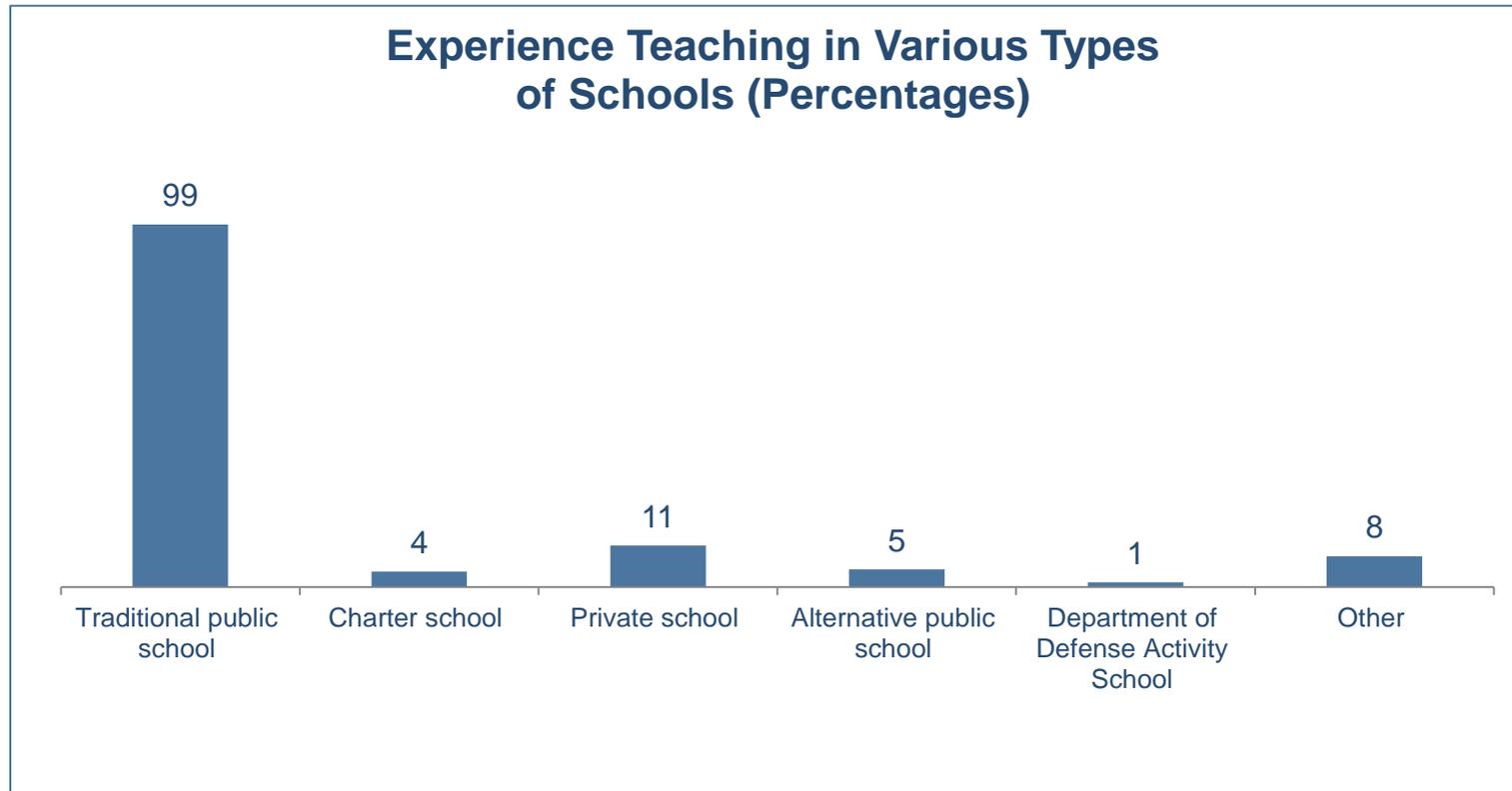
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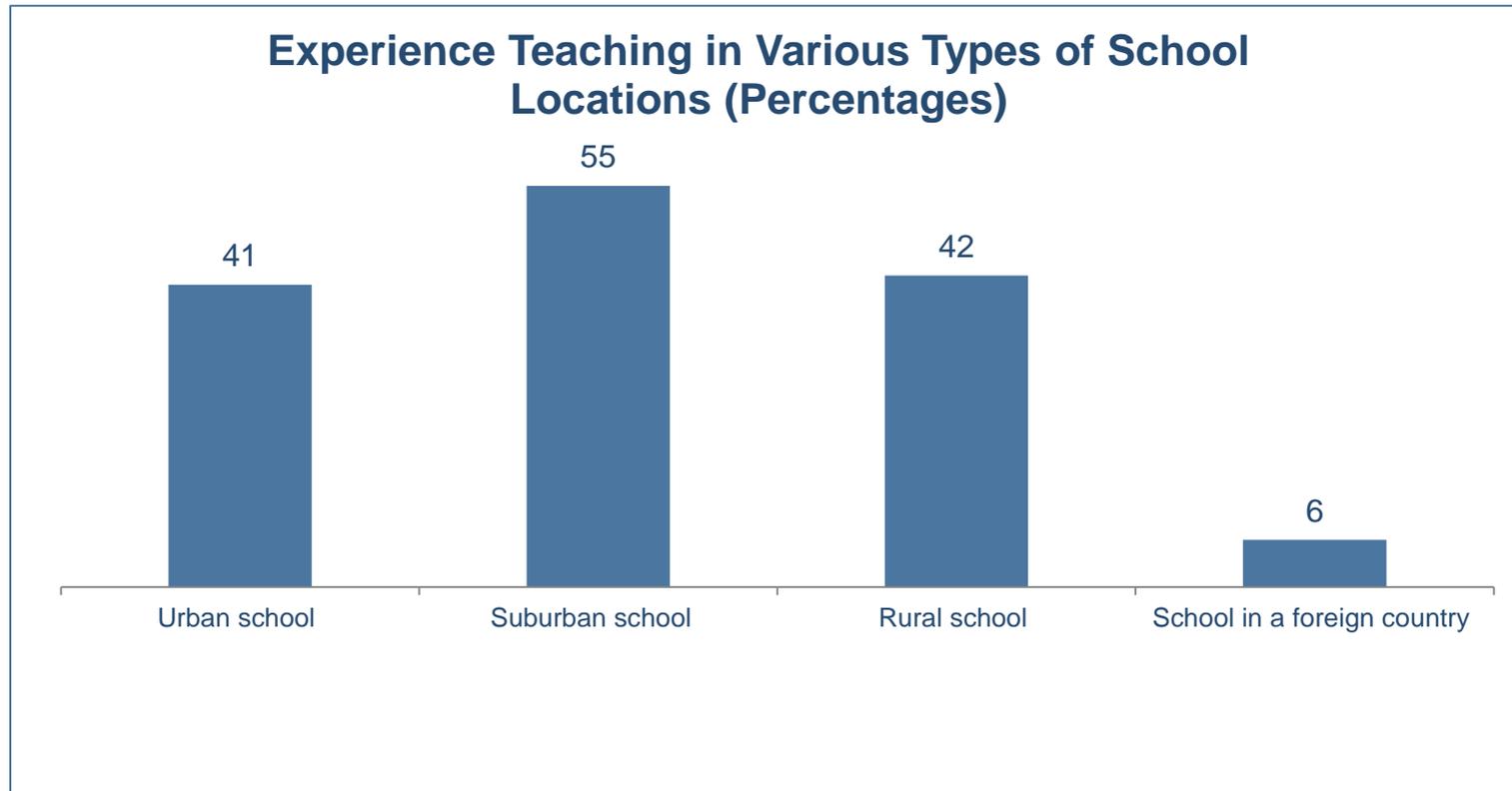
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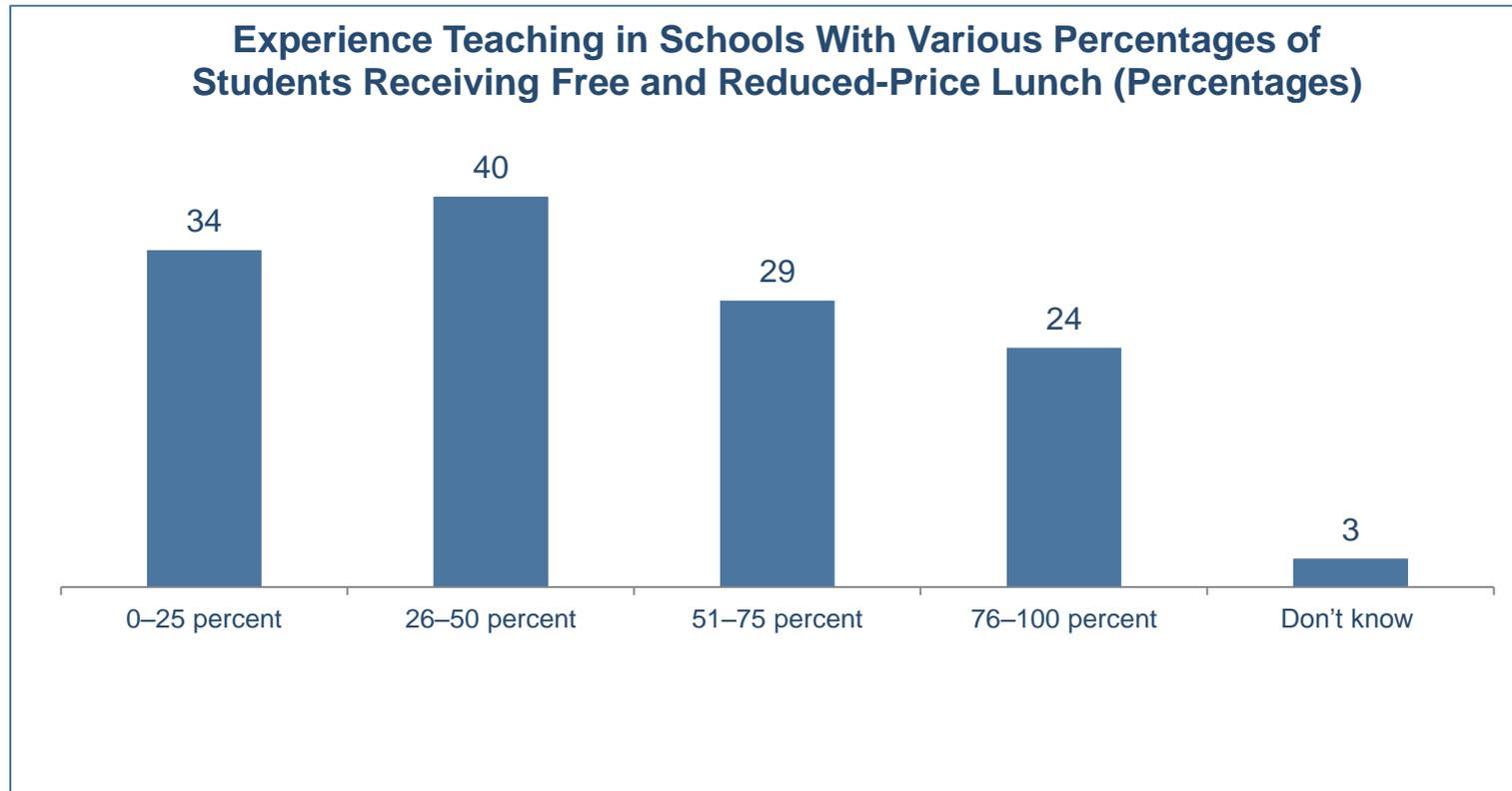
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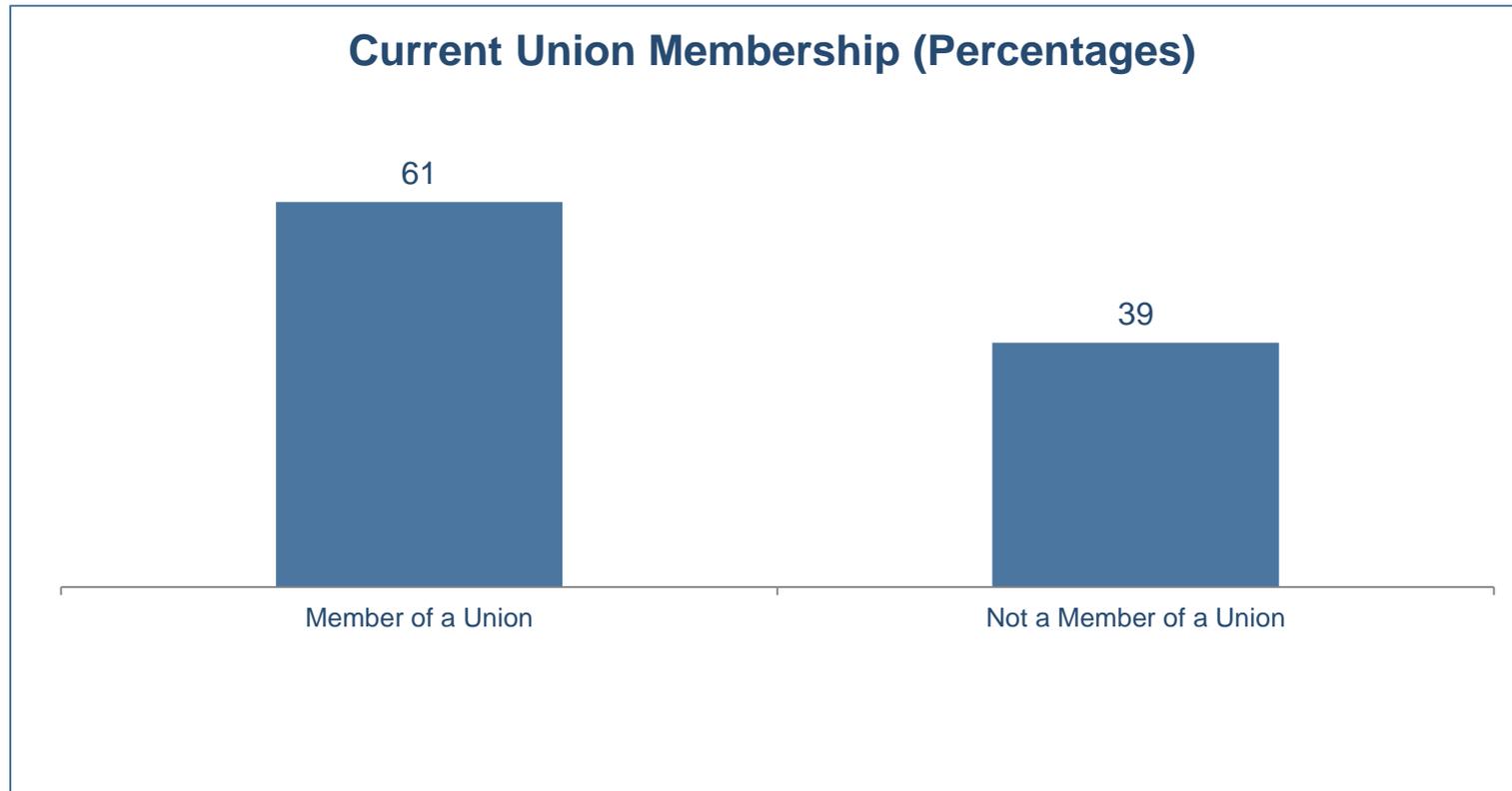
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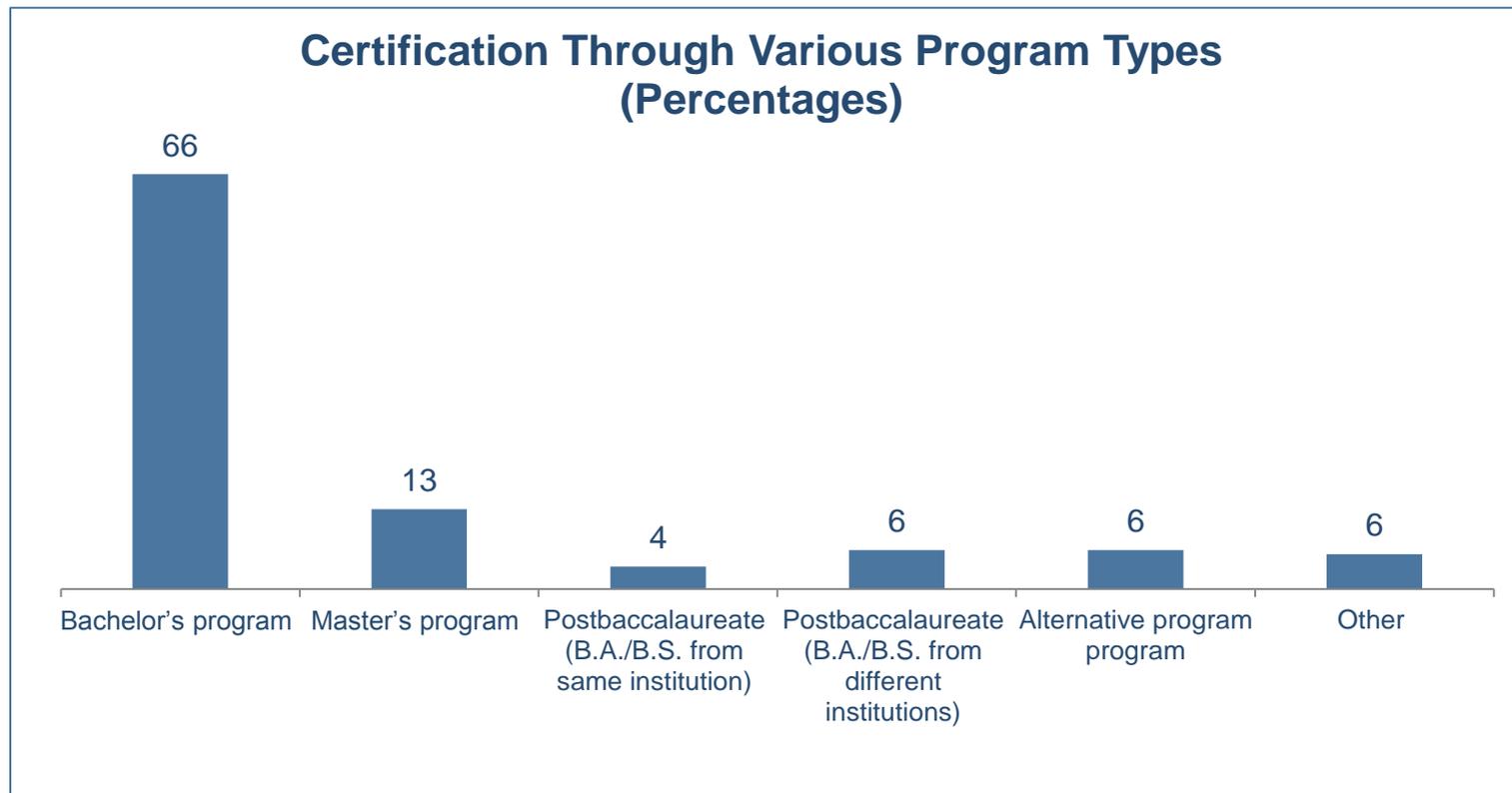
Demographics



Demographics



Demographics



Key Findings: Preservice Access to...

	%
A cooperating teacher who was effective in promoting student learning	82.41
A cooperating teacher who was an effective adult mentor	65.07
A final clinical practicum that lasted one full school year	54.55
Opportunities to learn from multiple cooperating teachers	48.65
A final clinical practicum preceded by early clinical experiences before or at the start of coursework	41.95
Written feedback from observations	40.43
A final clinical practicum that involved coteaching	36.73
A final clinical practicum that included multiple placements	30.48
A final clinical practicum that involved videotaping	29.17
A cooperating teacher who was rather ineffective at teaching	25
A final clinical practicum that involved simulations	18.18
A final clinical practicum that included observations from a university supervisor	17.6
A final clinical practicum that involved observations conducted by clinical supervisors	13.02

Key Findings: Novice Stage Experiences and Supports

	%
Received access to a mentor (assigned or informal)	68
Received access to a highly supportive principal	67
Had a school placement that aligned with talents, training, or certification	63
Had common planning time with other teachers	52
Attended new-teacher workshops, trainings, or seminars on specific cross-content pedagogical issues such as classroom management, college- and career readiness standards, state teaching standards, or special student populations	43
Participated in professional conferences	38
Attended content-specific new-teacher workshops, trainings, or seminars	37
Continued coursework on a master's degree	35
Attended an orientation program on school policies and protocols	28
Participated in professional organizations	26
Received ongoing support from preparation program	22
Had a specific district support team for new teachers	22
Received support for new teachers from union or association	22
Received a reduced workload	14

Key Findings: Novice Access to...

	%
A mentor who modeled effective teaching practices	67
A mentor who provided helpful support/advice	65
A mentor who was a great teacher	53
A mentor with empathy or compassion	45
A mentor in the same subject area or grade level	43
A mentor with sufficient time	41
A mentor in close physical proximity within the school	25
A mentor with complementary personality or interests	14
A mentor with previous mentoring experience	13

Key Findings: Career Stage Experiences and Supports

	%
Achieved National Board Certification	68
Received ongoing formal education	49
Participated in professional learning communities/collaboration activities with other teachers	43
Received external professional development chosen by the teacher and funded by the district	39
Received career advancement/teacher leader opportunities	38
Served as a teacher leader	36
Received self-directed, self-funded external professional development	32
Taught on a team with a teacher leader jointly accountable for students' outcomes	30
Presented at conferences or to peer groups	26
Received professional development delivered by teachers	23
Received actionable feedback through formal and informal evaluation	21
Participated in activities aimed at improving awareness of teaching as a profession, such as membership in a professional association or teachers' union	19
Received school- or district-mandated professional development	11

Key Findings: Career Access to...

	%
External professional development self-selected to be specifically relevant to the teacher	79
External, job-embedded professional development	78
External professional development led by individuals with recent teaching experience	51
External professional development sustained over a significant period of time	49
External professional development offered during school hours with substitute teachers available to cover classes	13

Key Findings: Teacher Leader Stage Experiences and Supports

	%
Provided formal coaching or mentoring to colleagues to improve their instructional practice	53
Delivered professional development activities	50
Became a mentor or instructional coach	46
Taught teacher preparation at the university level	44
Presented at conferences or to peer groups	40
Conducted curriculum development	36
Participated in coursework or developed knowledge in advanced pedagogical practice	32
Conducted preclinical supervision of student teachers/teacher candidates	31
Assumed a department chairmanship	23
Participated in coursework on teacher leadership	22
Conducted research	21
Shared research findings with colleagues	19
Conducted peer review observations of colleagues	17
Scored educator assessments	15
Was observed by less effective peers	13