



2016 Nebraska First Year Teacher Survey

Content Analysis of the Open-ended Questions Statewide Summary

Purpose

The primary purpose of the content analysis of the two open-ended questions in the Nebraska First Year Teacher Survey is to provide a structured overview of survey respondents' opinions on what preparation institutions in Nebraska can provide to better prepare first year teachers.

Methodology

Survey comments were coded at an individual level. One graduate assistant was assigned to conduct the coding, and each individual response was coded on: the length of the response, the sentiment of the response, the theme(s) of the response, the number of themes included in the response, and whether the response aims at the individual teacher.

The length of the response was coded based on the letter count of the comments, for example, the comment "Behavior management needs to be improved" was coded 40 for length. The sentiment of the response was coded based on the attitude of the comment, for example, "Our first year teacher was well prepared to run her own classroom. We are very pleased" was coded as positive, "She takes very little initiative especially when working with Special Education students" was coded as negative, while "Teachers need to be trained on a classroom management model before starting student teaching" was coded as neutral. The theme(s) of the response was developed based on the meaning of the response, and themes were extracted from comments, for example, "Teachers need more familiarity with student data and the processes available to use/implement this information in the classroom. Most districts are using NWEA MAPS testing. At a minimum, give some exposure to this testing system and how to interpret and use the results" was coded as "data using". One comment could contain multiple themes, therefore, the number of themes was also coded per unit of analysis. Whether the response aims at the individual teacher was coded to test for possible measurement error. If the response targeted the individual teacher rather than the institution, it was marked "yes" for individual, for example, "[This graduate] does a good job in the classroom. I am pleased with his ability" was coded "yes" for individual, while "Continue to group in classroom management and diversity training" was coded "no" for this variable.

Comments like "None", "N/A", and "No comments" were excluded from the content analysis. General comments like "she is a great teacher" and "the institution prepares excellent teachers" did not receive any theme coding. Question 13 "Comments to inform the institution that prepared this teacher with its continuing improvement efforts toward preparing classroom-ready teachers" results are provided at the institution level, while question 14 "Comments to inform all Nebraska teacher preparation programs to better prepare first year teachers for evolving needs in Nebraska schools" results are provided at the State level. The themes were broken into two categories based on the sentiment: positive responses

were presented as positive response themes, while negative or neutral responses were presented as themes needing improvement.

Results for Question 13

Three hundred and twenty-three out of 683 respondents provided information for question 13, 19 out of the 323 comments were ineligible inputs, resulting in a total of 304 analyzable statements.

There were 167 statements targeted specifically at the first year teachers, 33 negative statements, 134 neutral statements and 137 positive statements. A cross table of individual statements and sentiment can be seen in figure 1.

Figure 1. Cross-Table of Individual Statements and Sentiment

Sentiment	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Individual	130	13	24	167
Non-Individual	7	121	9	137
Total	137	134	33	304

Professionalism, content knowledge, adaptive skills, and field experience were themes respondents thought first year teachers were well equipped with. They expressed their satisfaction about these areas:

“I’m very pleased with [the graduate] and what he brings to [us]. [The graduate] was prepared; he took part in the mentoring program through ESU 6. He consults with his mentor on a regular basis. [The graduate] takes part in district professional development. I am pleased with his attitude and willingness to adjust for individual student needs as well as the needs of the district. He has a great attitude and is a team player.”

“[The graduate] is well-prepared and confident in her role as an art specialist.”

“[The graduate] has a vast understanding of how to provide Special Education services to students. She is also open to suggestions and is an important part of our movement towards a more co-teaching approach with General Education teachers.

“[The graduate] is technology savvy and uses it well. She is an expert in individualizing lessons for her class and this year she has a very difficult class both academically and behaviorally.”

“Teachers are coming in more prepared to handle the daily challenges of the profession.”

Figure 2 provides the frequency of positive responses according to the themes identified for the analysis.

Figure 2. Frequency of Positive Response Themes

Themes	Frequency	Percentage
Professionalism	22	18.80%
Content Knowledge	14	11.97%

Adaptive Skills	12	10.26%
Field Experience	12	10.26%
Classroom Management	10	8.55%
Implement Of Instructional Strategies	10	8.55%
Lesson Planning	10	8.55%
Relationship Building With Students	9	7.69%
Relationship Building With Peers	8	6.84%
Engagement Strategies	5	4.27%
Technology	3	2.56%
Diversity Training	1	0.85%
Relationship Building With Parents	1	0.85%

Classroom management, implementation of instructional strategies, field experience, diversity training and lesson planning were the themes respondents indicated institutions should focus on:

“Classroom management and consistent rigor are not where we would like to see them in a first year teacher. Considerably behind first year piers in these areas.”

“Classroom management and understanding the different methods to manage a class. Reminding new teachers that perceptual data is critical to their success through the eyes of students, parents and staff. New teachers are in the spot light and models for their students. Everything they do and say will be interpreted. Use caution have a plan for establishing high expectations for all students. Develop clear plans for Procedures and Routines without this content will never be reached.”

“I highly recommend that teacher candidates be more prepared in the area of instructional strategies (APL, Marzano and etc.) as this is a strong focus for all schools in Nebraska. If students were more prepared to implement instructional strategies during their first year in the field, I believe they would enjoy even greater success.”

“The pre-service teachers need to be in classroom situations as soon as possible. We need candidates who understand Urban, Suburban and Rural.”

“continued focus upon how to effectively plan for all levels of ability in a classroom.”

Figure 3 provides the frequency of needing improvement responses according to the themes identified for the analysis.

Figure 3. Frequency of Needing Improvement Response Themes

Themes	Frequency	Percentage
Classroom Management	67	24.36%
Implement Instructional Strategies	35	12.73%
Field Experience	30	10.91%

Diversity Training	22	8.00%
Lesson Planning	21	7.64%
Professionalism	17	6.18%
Relationship Building With Peers	16	5.82%
Engagement Strategies	14	5.09%
Relationship Building With Students	12	4.36%
Data Usage	7	2.55%
Content Knowledge	6	2.18%
State Standards Knowledge	6	2.18%
Technology	6	2.18%
Adaptive Skills	5	1.82%
Relationship Building With Parents	4	1.45%
Communication With Stakeholders	3	1.09%
Confidence	1	0.36%
Leadership Skills	1	0.36%
Organization Skills	1	0.36%
Other	1	0.36%

Results for Question 14

Two hundred and fifty-nine out of 683 respondents provided information for question 14, 32 out of the 259 comments were ineligible inputs, resulting in a total of 227 analyzable statements.

There were 18 statements targeted specifically at the first year teachers, 11 negative statements, 199 neutral statements and 17 positive statements. A cross table of individual statements and sentiment can be seen in figure 4.

Figure 4. Cross-Table of Individual Statements and Sentiment

Sentiment	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
Individual	11	4	3	18
Non-Individual	6	195	8	209
Total	17	199	11	227

Classroom management, diversity training, field experience, implementation of instructional strategies and lesson planning were the themes respondents indicated all preparation programs should focus on:

“All candidates could use some skills in de-escalating behavioral issues with students.”

“Classroom management. Students are coming to us with a variety of backgrounds, needs and supports. New teachers often come in thinking it will be like what they experienced that is not always the case. They need to be prepared and open to the challenges we face in an ever changing society.”

“Continue to identify ways to get pre-service teachers in to schools more often and for great lengths of time. They need multiple ways to put the theory they have learned in to practice.”

“Education with MAPS testing and SKILLS NAVIGATOR would be essential for the future.”

“Elementary teacher preparation programs need to put more emphasis on training teachers how to instruct for reading, writing and math. Many of 1st year teachers I have worked with over the last few years rely only on the teacher guides and do not appear to have been taught how to provide instruction.”

Figure 5 provides the frequency of needing improvement responses according to the themes identified for the analysis.

Figure 5. Frequency of Needing Improvement Response Themes

Themes	Frequency	Percentage
Classroom Management	66	21.22%
Diversity Training	42	13.50%
Field Experience	34	10.93%
Implementation Of Instructional Strategies	33	10.61%
Lesson Planning	30	9.65%
Engagement Strategies	19	6.11%
Relationship Building With Peers	15	4.82%
Relationship Building With Parents	14	4.50%
Professionalism	10	3.22%
Relationship Building With Students	10	3.22%
State Standards Knowledge	10	3.22%
Technology	8	2.57%
Data Usage	6	1.93%
Adaptive Skills	5	1.61%
Content Knowledge	3	0.96%
Others	3	0.96%
Add Health Endorsement	1	0.32%
Change The Survey Design	1	0.32%
Support During 1st Year	1	0.32%