

2011 NEW EDUCATOR SURVEY REPORT

July 2012

Department of Accountability



ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Tables.....	ii
List of Figures.....	ii
List of Appendices.....	iv
Introduction.....	1
Demographic Information.....	1
Employment Considerations.....	5
Teacher’s Sense of Efficacy.....	6
Student Engagement.....	6
Instructional Strategies.....	7
Classroom Management.....	8
Teacher Efficacy Measures by Current Teaching Level.....	8
Student Conduct and Safety.....	9
School Leadership.....	11
New Teacher Orientation.....	14
Human Resources Orientation.....	14
Technology Services Orientation.....	15
Curriculum and Instruction Orientation.....	15
Content Area/Grade Level Breakouts.....	16
New Teacher Orientation Score by Current Employment Level.....	16
Summative Findings for the New Teacher Orientation.....	17
Professional Development Needs.....	18
Teacher Mentor.....	19
Short and Long Term Professional Plans.....	21
Overall Satisfaction.....	22
Free Response.....	25
Like About Being in ACPS.....	25
Dislike About Being in ACPS.....	25

Wish I Had Known.....	25
To Improve Achievement for All.....	26
Summary.....	26
References.....	26

List of Tables

Table 1	2011 New Educators’ Current Employment School Level.....	2
Table 2	2011 New Educators by Current Employment School Level and Gender.....	2
Table 3	2011 New Educators’ Current Position.....	6
Table 4	2011 New Teachers: Average Teacher Efficacy Score by Current Teaching Level.....	8
Table 5	2011 New Teachers: Average Teacher Efficacy Score by Years of Teaching Experience.....	9
Table 6	2011 New Educators’ Current Employment School Level and Average Student Conduct Score.....	11
Table 7	2011 New Educators’ Current Employment School Level and Average New Teacher Orientation Scores.....	17
Table 8	2011 New Educators’ Professional Development Needs.....	19
Table 9	2011 New Educators’ Short and Long Term Plans.....	22

List of Figures

Figure 1	2011 New Educators by Gender.....	1
Figure 2	2011 New Educators’ Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino/a.....	2
Figure 3	2011 New Educators by Race.....	3

Figure 4	2011 New Educators by Age Range.....	3
Figure 5	2011 New Educators' Prior Teaching Experience.....	4
Figure 6	2011 New Educators' Most Recent Full-Time Position.....	4
Figure 7	2011 New Educators' Employment Considerations.....	5
Figure 8	2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Student Engagement (Q12 b, c, d, k).....	7
Figure 9	2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Instructional Strategies (Q12 e, i, j, l).....	7
Figure 10	2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Classroom Management (Q12 a, f, g, h).....	8
Figure 11	2011 New Educators' Conduct and Safety Responses (Q13 a, b, c, i).....	10
Figure 12	2011 New Educators' Conduct and Safety Responses (Q13 d, e, f, g, h, j).....	10
Figure 13	2011 New Educators' Results: Who Provides the Most Instructional Leadership.....	12
Figure 14	2011 New Educators' School Leadership Responses (Q15 b, e, f, h).....	13
Figure 15	2011 New Educators' School Leadership Responses (Q15 a, c, d, g, i, j).....	13
Figure 16	2011 New Educators' Attendance at August 2010 New Teacher Orientation.....	14
Figure 17	Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Human Resources.....	14
Figure 18	Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Technology Services.....	15
Figure 19	Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Curriculum and Instruction.....	15
Figure 20	Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Content Area/Grade Level Breakout.....	16
Figure 21	Aug 2010 Orientation Prepared Me for the First Weeks of School.....	17
Figure 22	Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation Overall Rating.....	18
Figure 23	2011 New Educators' Top 5 Professional Development Needs.....	18
Figure 24	2011 New Educators' Teacher Mentor Assignment for 2010-2011.....	19
Figure 25	2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q23 a, b, c).....	20
Figure 26	2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q23 d, e, f).....	20

Figure 27	2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q24, Q25).....	21
Figure 28	2011 New Educators’ Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: School is a Good Place to Develop Professionally.....	23
Figure 29	2011 New Educators’ Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: School is a Good Place to Work.....	23
Figure 30	2011 New Educators’ Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: Satisfied Working in Current School.....	24
Figure 31	2011 New Educators’ Overall School Responses.....	24

List of Appendices

Appendix A.....	28
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Introduction

The opening of the 2010-2011 school year in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) welcomed a cohort of 236 new educators. This represented the largest cohort of new educators that ACPS had experienced in recent history. The Department of Accountability developed the New Educator Survey to analyze the unique experiences, impressions, and opinions of this large cohort over their first several years of employment within ACPS. The New Educator Survey was developed by incorporating existing survey scales across multiple domains and forming questions that were unique to ACPS. Accountability will continue to administer various versions of the New Educator Survey annually to this cohort over the next several years. Results will be reported out annually with a culminating report to come at the conclusion of the longitudinal study.

This report provides an analysis of data collected from the first administration of the New Educator Survey administered during the spring of 2011. The survey was distributed via email to 236 identified new educators within ACPS. The survey was completed by participants online. Participants were notified that all individual survey results were highly confidential, and that data would be reported only in aggregate form. *K12 Insight* was used to distribute the survey and manage electronic responses.

The New Educator Survey contained 35 items. These 35 items included 24 selected response multiple-choice questions, two multiple response questions, and nine open response questions. Of the 236 new educators who were distributed the survey, 45 percent (n=106) submitted responses.

Demographic Information

Many new educators in 2010-2011 worked in elementary schools (40%) and were overwhelmingly female (78%). New female educators were likely to work in elementary schools (44%), while new male educators were likely to work in high schools (44%) compared to elementary schools (22%) (see Figure 1 and Tables 1 & 2).

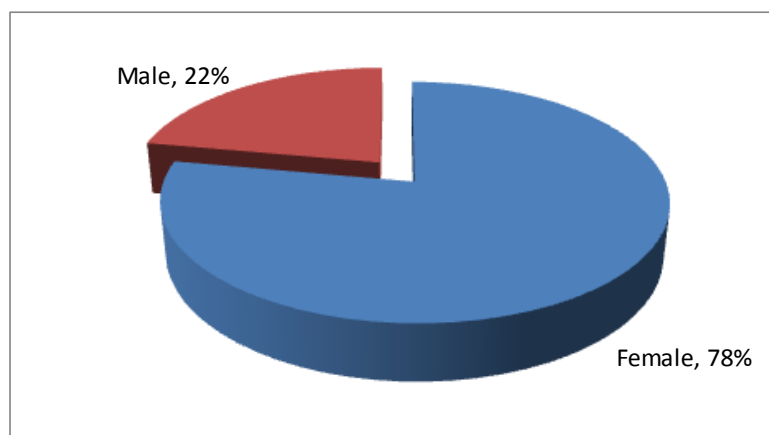


FIGURE 1. 2011 New Educators by Gender

TABLE 1
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Current Employment School Level

Employment School Level	%	n
Elementary School	40%	42
Middle School	23%	24
High School	29%	31
Other	8%	9
Total	100%	106

TABLE 2
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators by Current Employment School Level and Gender

Employment School Level	Female		Male	
	% ^a	n	%	n
Elementary School	44%	36	22%	5
Middle School	22%	18	26%	6
High School	25%	20	44%	10
Other	9%	7	9%	2
Total	100%	81	100%	23

^a Sum may not equal 100% due to rounding

Of the survey respondents, 90 percent identified their ethnicity as non-Hispanic or Latino/a. Racially, 74 percent identified as White, 21 percent as Black/African American, five percent as Asian, and four percent as American Indian/Alaska Native (see Figures 2 & 3).

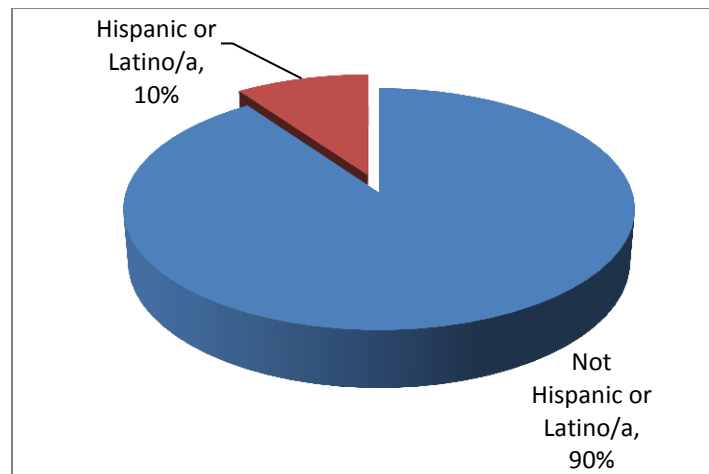


FIGURE 2. 2011 New Educators' Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino/a

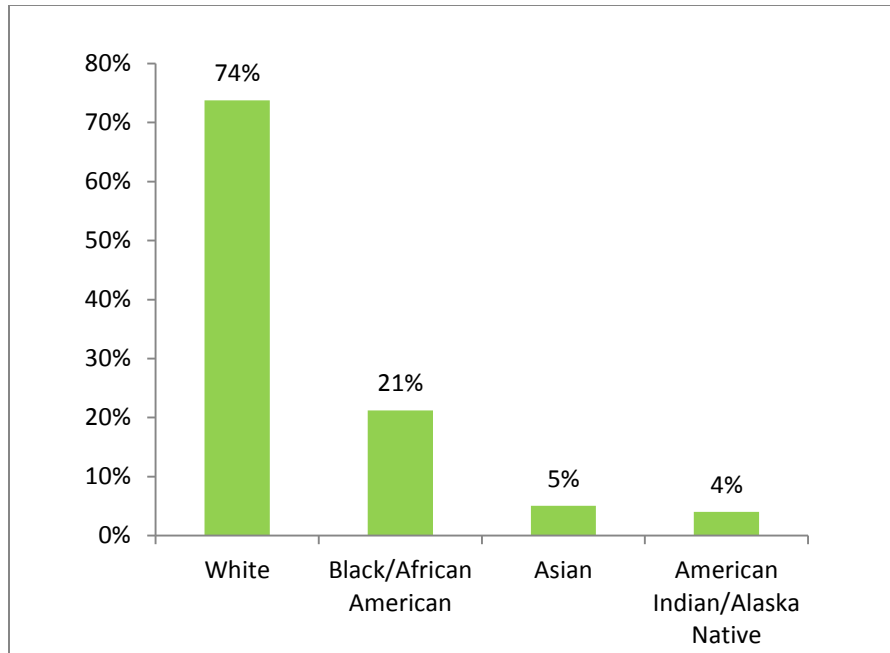


FIGURE 3. 2011 New Educators by Race

Approximately a quarter of new hires were between 18 and 25 years of age; nearly half were between 26 to 35 years of age (45%) (see Figure 4). Half of all respondents were relatively new to the profession with zero to three years of teaching experience (see Figure 5). Previous positions of new ACPS educators included a classroom teacher (58%), a non-classroom educator (16%), a student (8%), and employed in a profession outside of education (3%) (see Figure 6).

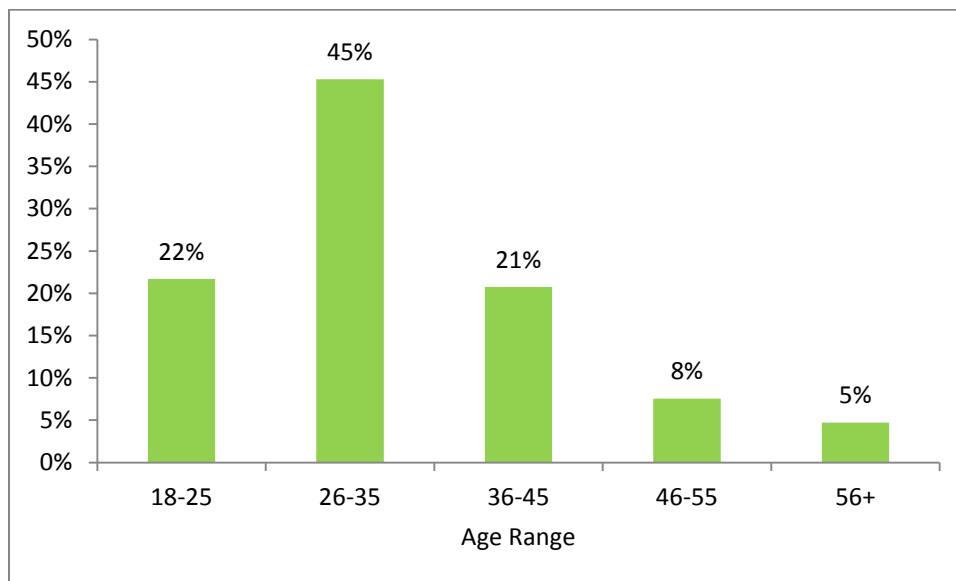


FIGURE 4. 2011 New Educators by Age Range

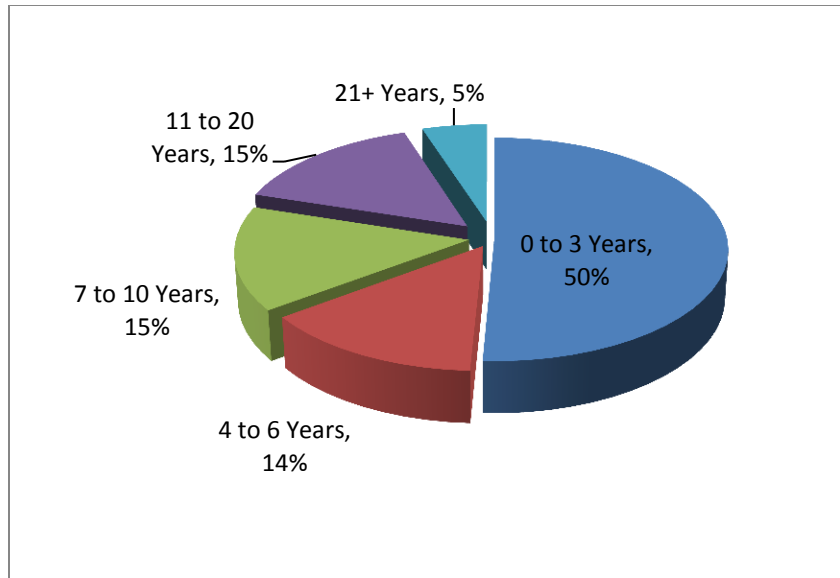


FIGURE 5. 2011 New Educators' Prior Teaching Experience

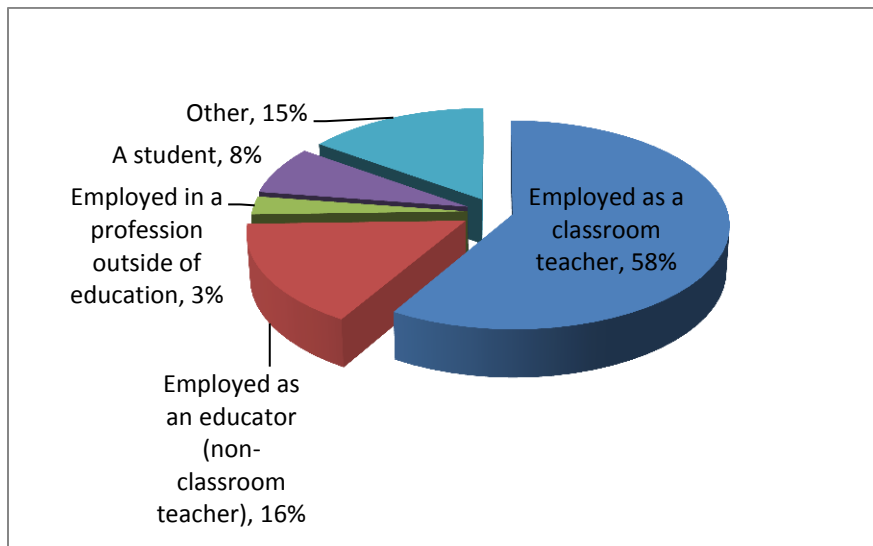


FIGURE 6. 2011 New Educators' Most Recent Full-Time Position

Based on a free-response question on why the new hires chose education as a profession, new ACPS educators overwhelmingly responded along three related veins: their love of children, their lifelong interest and passion for teaching, and their belief in the power of education to change lives.

Employment Considerations

New ACPS hires were asked to rate a variety of factors that led them to choosing ACPS. These data are shown in Figure 7. Responses ranged from 1 (“not important”) to 4 (“very important”), and were truncated into two categories: “important/very important” and “not important/somewhat important.”

The three most important factors were the working environment (81%), salary (75%), and location (70%). Approximately two-thirds of respondents also reported that the benefits offered and the work schedule were important considerations in choosing ACPS. The factor with the least importance was the recruitment process, with only 41 percent of new hires selecting this answer as “important” or “very important.” The majority of new ACPS educators were hired as classroom teachers (54%), English language learner (ELL) teachers (12%), and special education teachers (10%) (see Table 3).

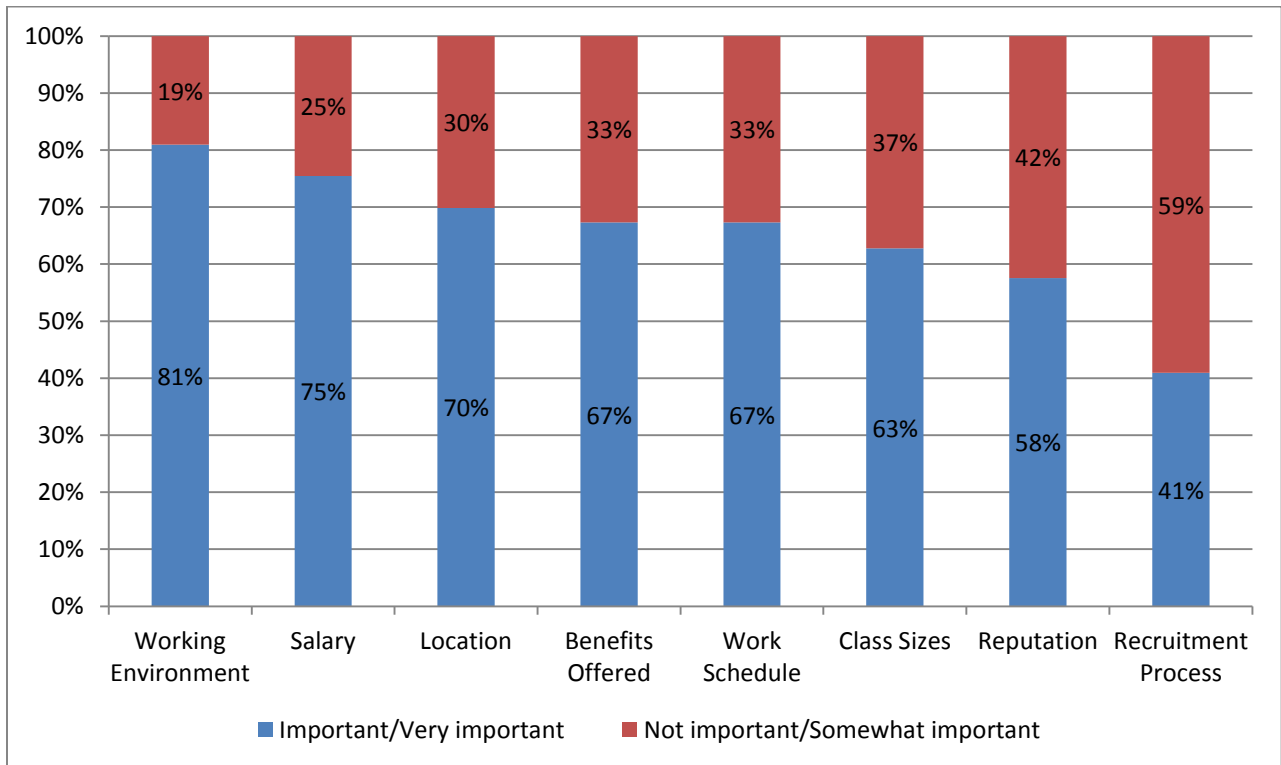


FIGURE 7. 2011 New Educators' Employment Considerations

TABLE 3
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Current Position

Current Position	%	n
Classroom Teacher	54%	57
ELL Teacher	12%	13
Special Education Teacher	10%	11
Instructional or School Improvement Coach	4%	4
Counselor	4%	4
Physical Education Teacher	3%	3
Speech Pathologist	3%	3
Fine Arts Teacher (Art and Music)	1%	1
Other	9%	10

Teacher's Sense of Efficacy

This section presents results from questions designed to gather information on a teacher's sense of efficacy, or their belief in their abilities in the classroom. These responses are presented as teacher's efficacy in student engagement, efficacy in instructional strategies, and efficacy in classroom management. These measures are based on the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy (TSES) scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001) and range from 1 to 9, with 1 representing "nothing/not at all," 3 representing "very little," 5 representing "some influence," 7 representing "quite a bit," and 9 representing "a great deal." Only new hires that worked in a classroom-type setting (classroom, English language learner (ELL), fine arts, physical education, and special education teachers) were asked about their feelings of efficacy.

Figures 8, 9, and 10 display the item responses. Due to response rates, responses were combined as follows: 1 and 2 represents "nothing/not at all"; 3 and 4 represents "very little"; 5 represents "some influence"; 6 and 7 represents "quite a bit"; and 8 and 9 represents "a great deal."

Student Engagement

New teachers felt the least efficacious in their ability to motivate students with low interest in school work, and in their ability to assist families in helping their children do well in school: 35 percent and 39 percent, respectively, responded having "some influence" or less.

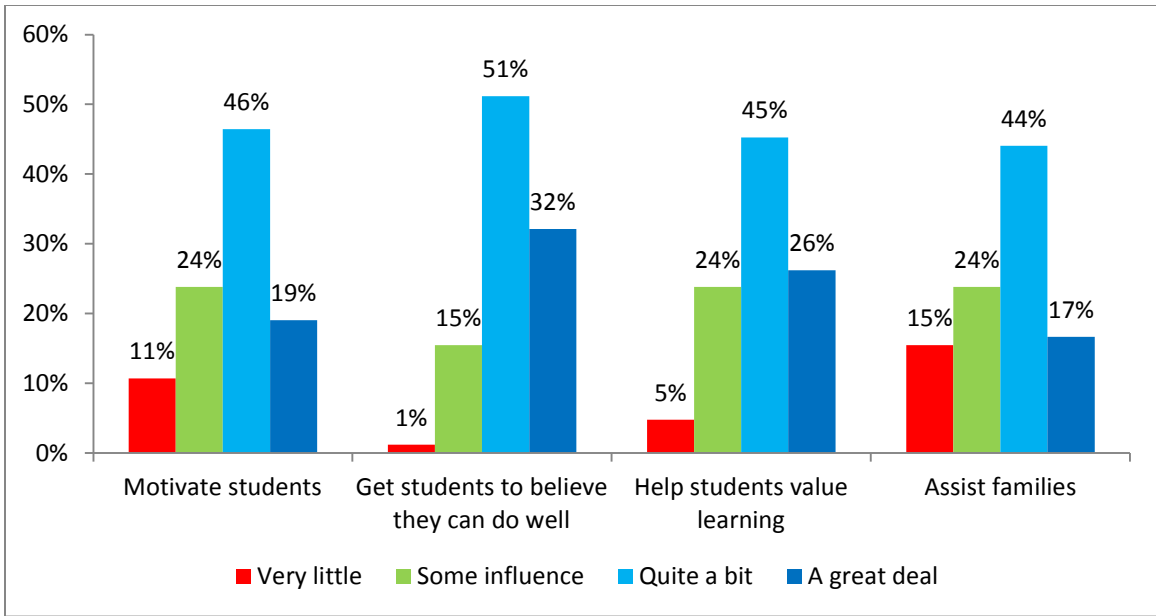


FIGURE 8. 2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Student Engagement (Q12 b, c, d, k)

Instructional Strategies

New ACPS classroom teachers felt the most efficacious on measures regarding their instructional abilities. Of those that responded “quite a bit” or “a great deal,” 92 percent felt a strong ability to craft good questions, 89 percent believed that they could use a variety of assessment strategies, 96 percent felt they could provide alternative explanations or examples for confused students, and 83 percent believed that they could implement alternative strategies in their classroom.

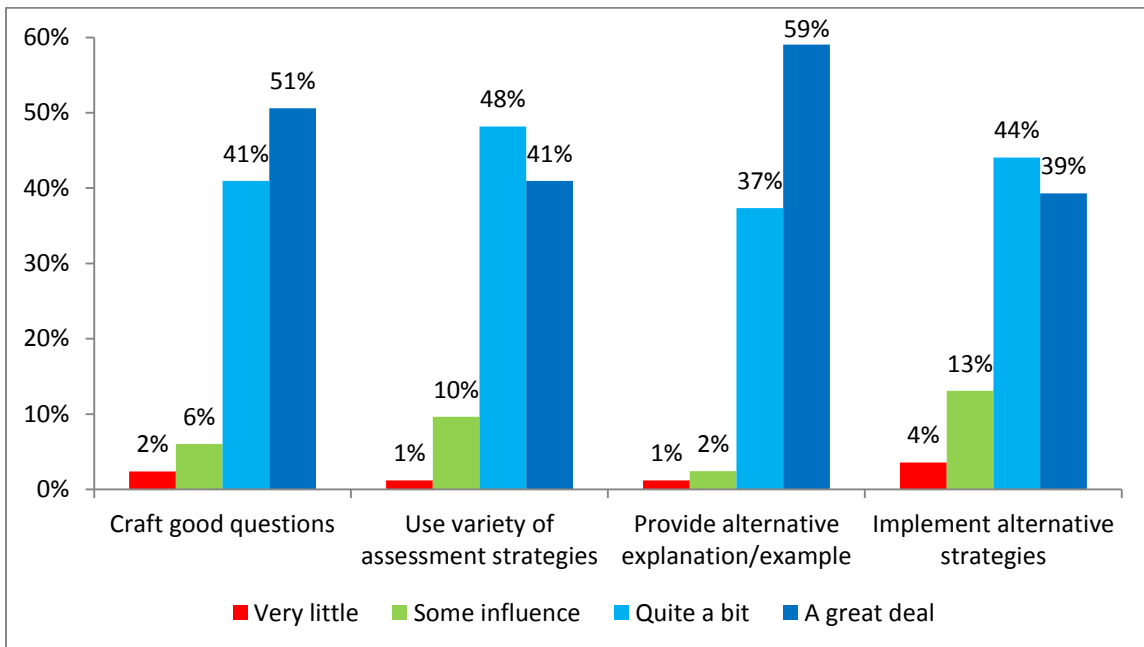


FIGURE 9. 2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Instructional Strategies (Q12 e, i, j, l)

Classroom Management

The majority of new teachers felt “quite a bit” or “a great deal” of influence in their ability to control disruptive behavior in the classroom, get children to follow classroom rules, calm a disruptive or noisy student, and establish a classroom management system with each group of students. Responses ranged from 75 to 79 percent.

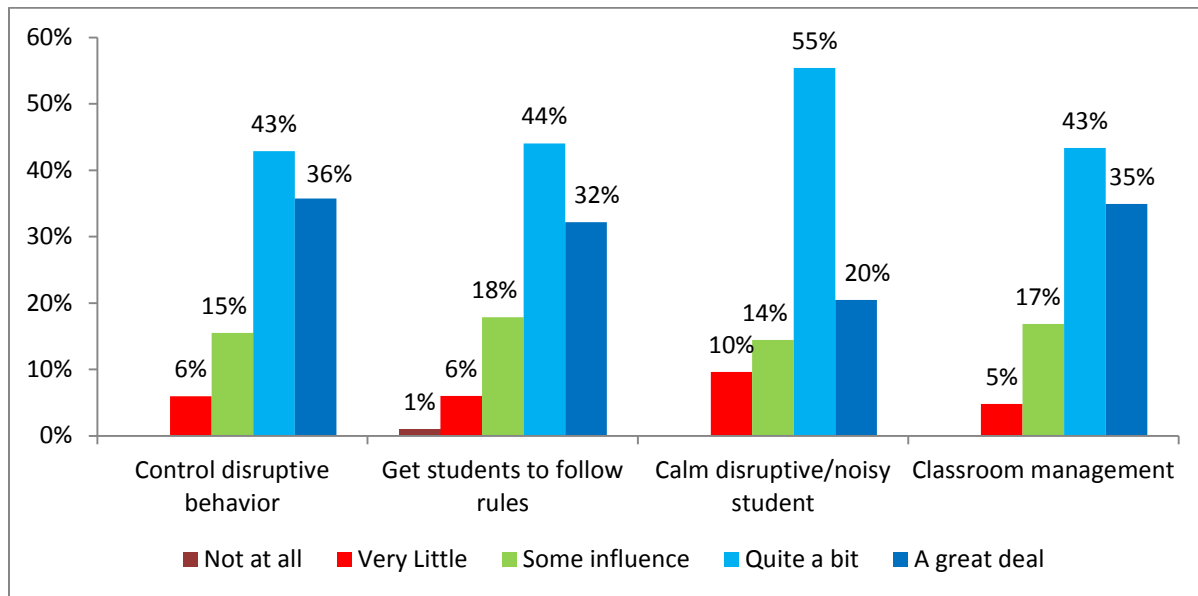


FIGURE 10. 2011 New Teachers: Efficacy in Classroom Management (Q12 a, f, g, h)

Teacher Efficacy Measures by Current Teaching Level

Table 4 provides information of average teacher efficacy by teachers’ current grade level of employment. TSES is the average of all 12 items measured for Question 12. High school teachers had the lowest average student engagement efficacy (6.2), although they had the highest feelings of efficacy in instructional strategies (7.6). Classroom management ratings saw a decline at the middle school (6.3) level, when compared to elementary (6.9) and high school (6.9).

TABLE 4
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Teachers: Average Teacher Efficacy Score by Current Teaching Level

Efficacy Measures	Current Teaching Level							
	All ^a		Elementary		Middle		High	
	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n
TSES	6.9	79	7.0	30	6.8	17	6.9	30
Engagement	6.5	84	6.7	33	6.7	19	6.2	30
Instruction	7.4	81	7.3	31	7.3	18	7.6	30
Classroom Management	6.8	82	6.9	32	6.3	18	6.9	30

^a This group includes elementary, K-8, middle, and high school teachers

Table 5 provides information on average teacher efficacy by years of experience. Teachers with the least amount of experience had the lowest feelings of overall efficacy (6.5), student engagement (6.2), instruction (6.9), and classroom management efficacy (6.2). Teachers felt more efficacious after their first year of teaching experience; however, a plateau in efficacy ratings occurred for teachers that ranged from one to 11 plus years of experience.

TABLE 5
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Teachers: Average Teacher Efficacy Score by Years of Teaching Experience

Efficacy Measures	Years of Teaching Experience									
	All		<1 Years		1-3 Years		4-10 Years		11+ Years	
	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n
TSES	6.9	79	6.5	27	7.0	19	7.2	22	7.1	11
Engagement	6.5	84	6.2	28	6.7	22	6.7	23	6.8	11
Instruction	7.4	81	6.9	27	7.6	21	7.8	22	7.6	11
Classroom Management	6.8	82	6.2	28	6.9	20	7.2	23	7.0	11

^a This group includes elementary, K-8, middle, high school teachers

Student Conduct and Safety

New ACPS educators responded to 10 items about their feelings on student conduct and safety in their school. These survey items are based on a section from the 2010 Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) Teacher Working Conditions Survey (Fairfax County Public Schools, 2010) and use a Likert scale.¹ These data are presented in Figures 11 and 12.

On one hand, the majority of new hires felt that students understood the expectations of their conduct (68% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”), that students were caring toward one another (57% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”), and that the physical layout of the school made students feel safe (66% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”). On the other hand, responses for the item, “Students make efforts to stop bullying in this school” were divided equally amongst those that agreed (34% “somewhat” or “strongly”), disagreed (32% “somewhat” or “strongly”) or felt neutral (35%) about the statement.

Whereas only one-third of students were perceived to attempt to stop bullying, new hires reported that 77 percent (i.e., 55% “somewhat” and 22% “strongly”) of faculty members made efforts to stop bullying. The majority of respondents also stated that policies and procedures about student conduct were clearly understood by faculty (56% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”), efforts to maintain classroom discipline were supported (55% agreed “somewhat” or

¹ Likert scales are response choices that measure a range. For example, this section of the survey used a five-point Likert scale where “1” represented strong feelings of disagreement, and “5” represented strong feelings of agreement.

“strongly”), they worked in a safe environment (80% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”), and that the rules for student conduct were clearly laid out for faculty (53% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”). Only about a third of new educators felt that the rules were consistently enforced (39% agreed “somewhat” or “strongly”).

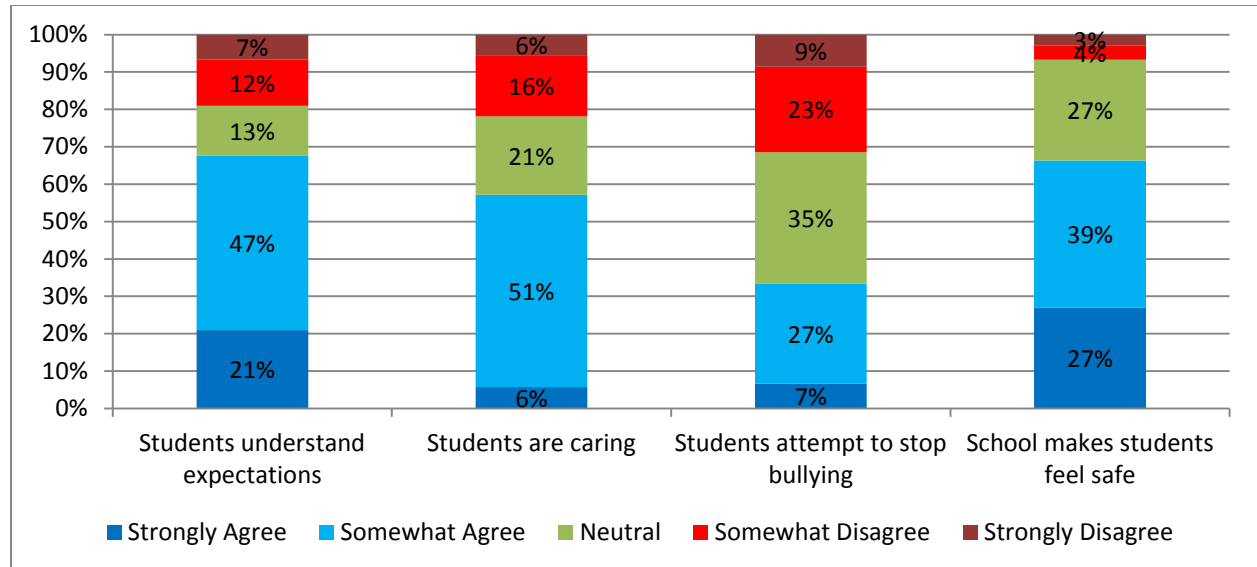


FIGURE 11. 2011 New Educators’ Conduct and Safety Responses (Q13 a, b, c, i)

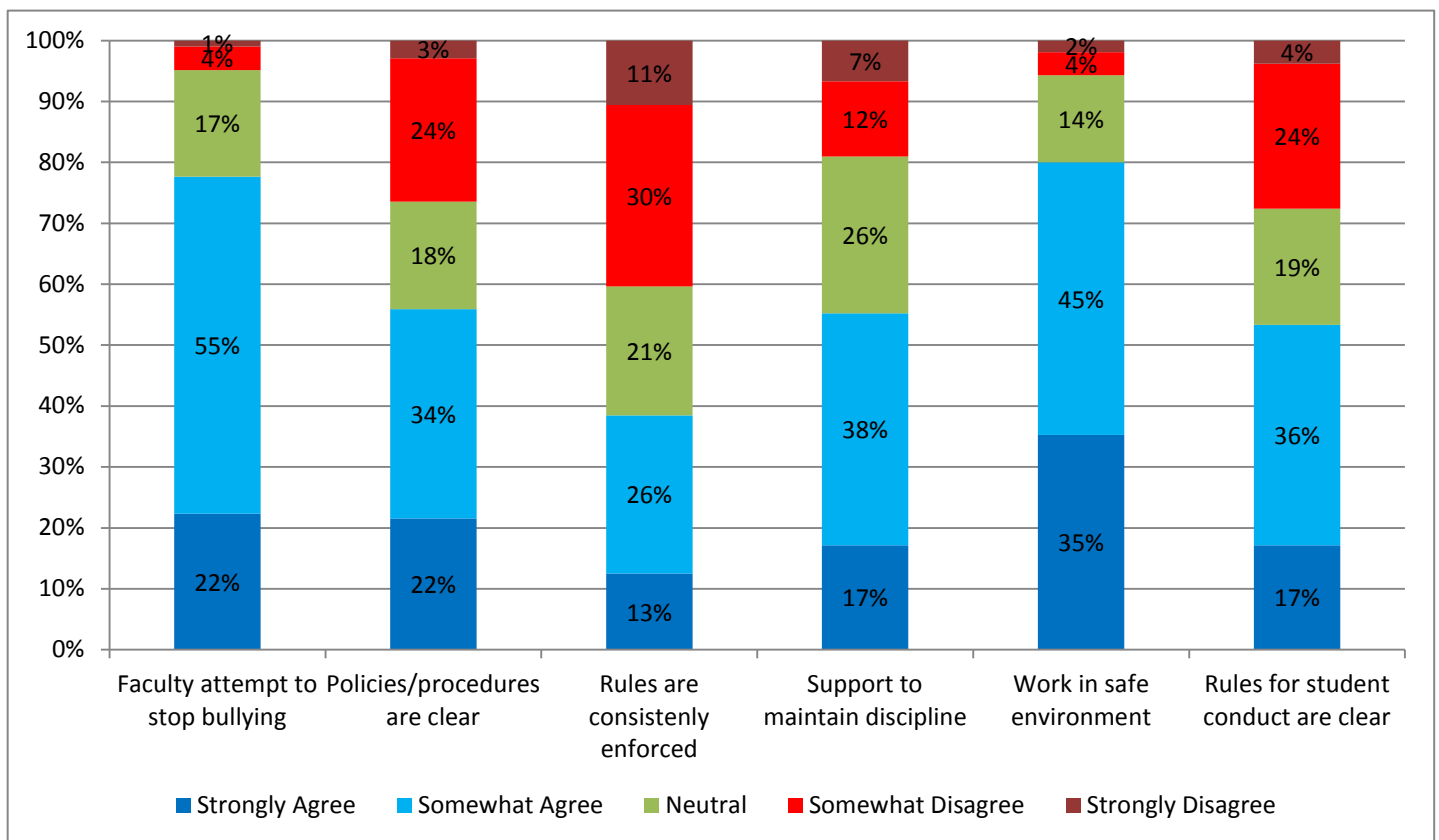


FIGURE 12. 2011 New Educators’ Conduct and Safety Responses (Q13 d, e, f, g, h, j)

Table 6 illustrates the average student conduct and safety score by the new hires' current employment school level. The student conduct and safety score was the average score of all 10 items for Question 13. Interpreting averages for Likert scale responses are somewhat controversial, since distances between response 1 and 2 may not be equal to response 2 and 3, and so forth. However, this item has a relatively normal distribution, and as such, we cautiously interpret and present these data as a continuous variable.

These scores range from 1 to 5 (higher scores represent more positive feelings of student conduct and safety), with an average of 3.6 for all educators (i.e., only elementary, middle, and high school teachers). As a group, elementary school educators had more positive feelings of student conduct and safety (3.8) than middle (3.1) or high school educators (3.6).

TABLE 6
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Current Employment School Level and
Average Student Conduct Score

Employment School Level	Student Conduct Score	
	average	n
Elementary	3.8	38
Middle	3.1	22
High	3.6	31
Total ^a	3.6	91

^a *This group only includes elementary, middle and high school teachers*

School Leadership

New ACPS hires were asked to respond to a series of questions regarding their school leadership. School leadership may include an individual, group of individuals, or team within the respondent's school that focuses on management and decision making. These survey items were drawn from the 2010 FCPS Teacher Working Conditions Survey (Fairfax County Public Schools, 2010). Respondents identified a principal (28%), a fellow teacher (20%), the department/grade level chair (16%), or an instructional coach (16%) as the individual that provided the most instructional leadership (see Figure 13).

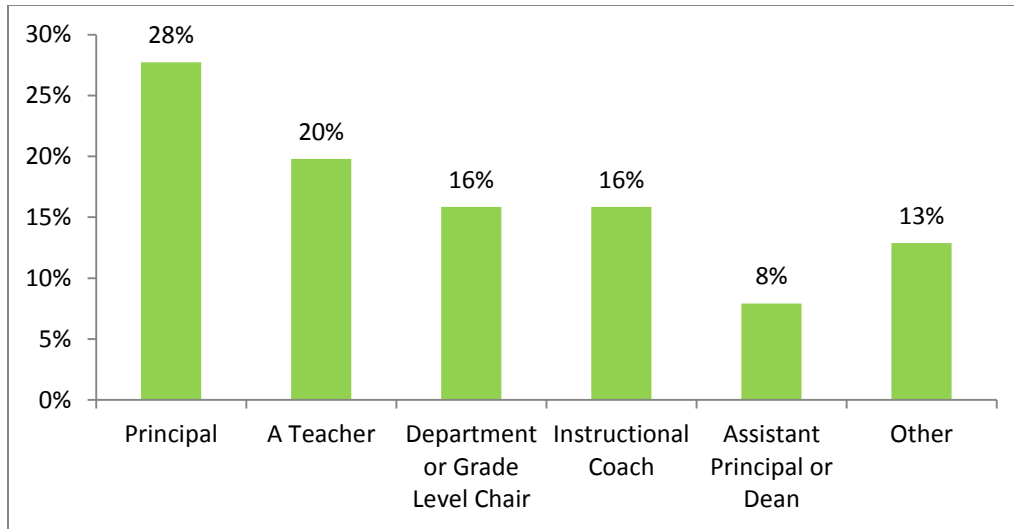


FIGURE 13. 2011 New Educators’ Results: Who Provides the Most Instructional Leadership?

Figures 14 and 15 graphically show responses to Question 15 from the 2011 New Educator Survey. New hires responded on a Likert scale, ranging from 1 (“strongly disagree”) to 5 (“strongly agree”).

While 52 percent of respondents “somewhat” or “strongly” agreed that their school leadership communicated clear expectations to students and parents, only 38 percent (22% “somewhat” and 16% “strongly”) reported that their school leadership effectively communicated policies. In addition, 41 percent (30% “somewhat” and 11% “strongly”) of new hires felt that school leadership shielded teachers from disruptions, and 45 percent (31% “somewhat” and 14% “strongly”) felt that these leaders consistently supported teachers. Despite these sentiments of support, there were also consistent themes of disagreement about school leadership.

Overwhelmingly, the respondents felt that faculty was committed to helping every student learn (53% “somewhat” and 34% “strongly” agreed), and that teachers were held to high professional standards for delivering instruction (38% “somewhat” and 38% “strongly” agreed). A little more than half of new hires reported that their school had an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect (43% “somewhat” and 11% “strongly”), and were recognized for their accomplishments (36% “somewhat” and 18% “strongly”). Nonetheless, less than half agreed with the notion of a shared vision or comfort level about raising important issues and concerns: only 48 percent agreed “somewhat” or “strongly” that the faculty and staff had a shared vision, and only 47 percent agreed “somewhat” or “strongly” that teachers felt comfortable raising issues and concerns that were important to them.

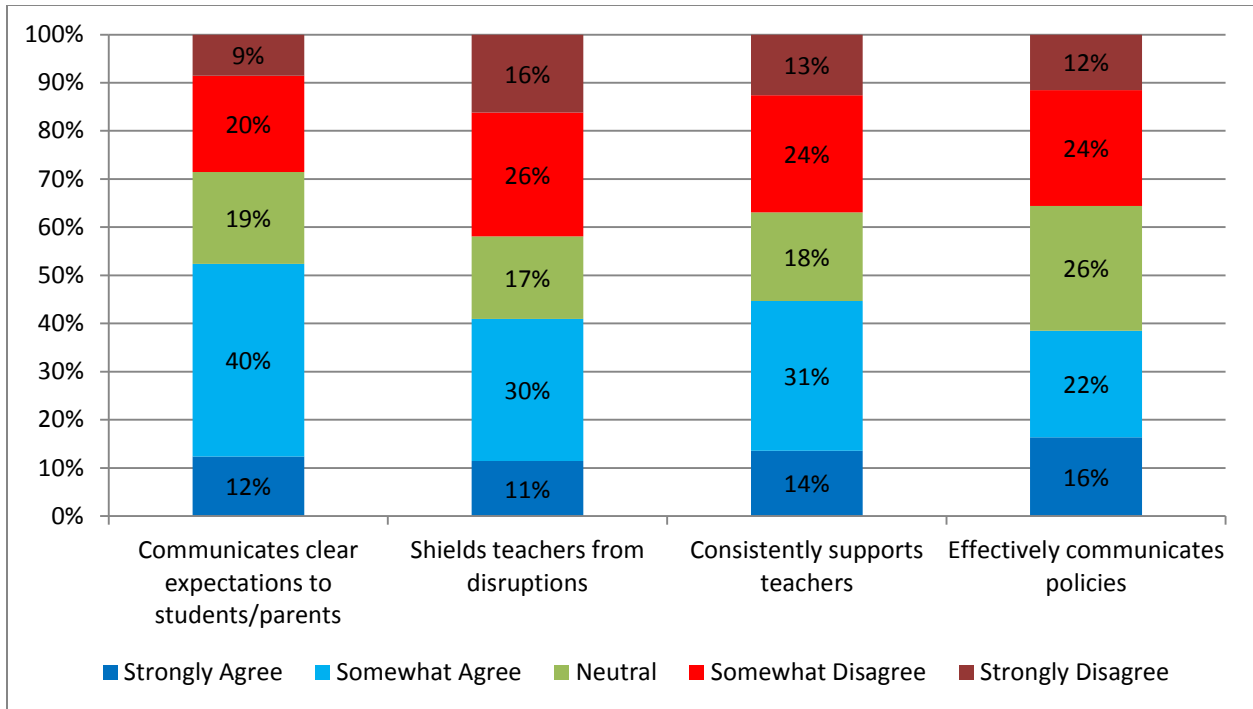


FIGURE 14. 2011 New Educators' School Leadership Responses (Q15 b, e, f, h)

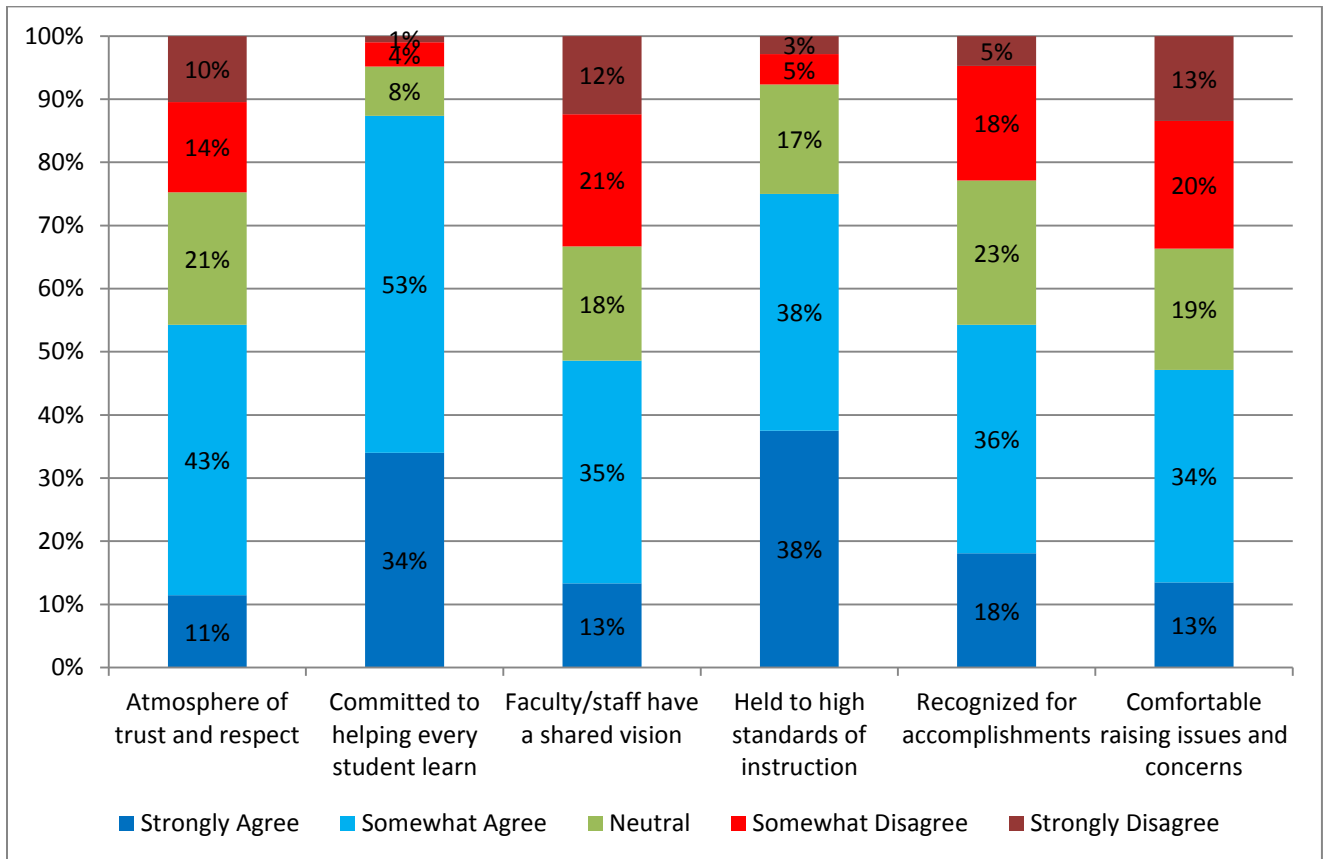


FIGURE 15. 2011 New Educators' School Leadership Responses (Q15 a, c, d, g, i, j)

New Teacher Orientation

Figures 16 to 22 display the results from responses regarding the New Teacher Orientation that was held in August 2010. Responses in this section were collapsed: “strongly disagree” and “somewhat disagree” were combined to represent “disagree”; “strongly agree” and “somewhat agree” were combined to represent “agree.” Of those that completed the 2011 New Educator Survey, 79 percent attended the New Teacher Orientation.

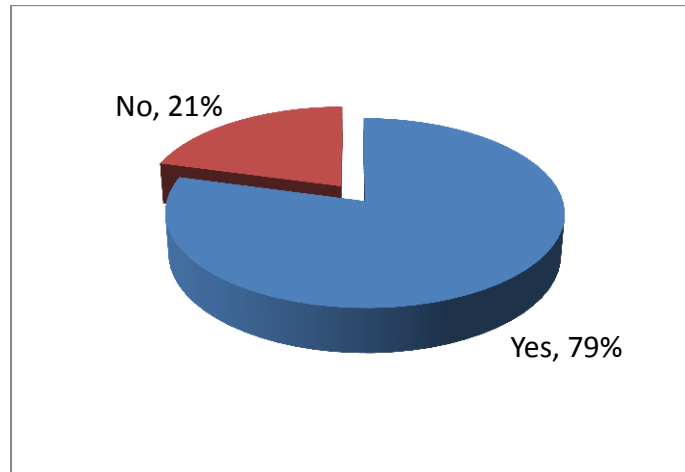


FIGURE 16. 2011 New Educators' Attendance at Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation

Human Resources Orientation

Approximately half of respondents (49%) felt that the information provided in the Human Resources (HR) orientation provided the knowledge needed to perform adequately in their professional role. Many felt the information was presented in a clear manner: 69 percent “somewhat” or “strongly” agreed to this question (see Figure 17).

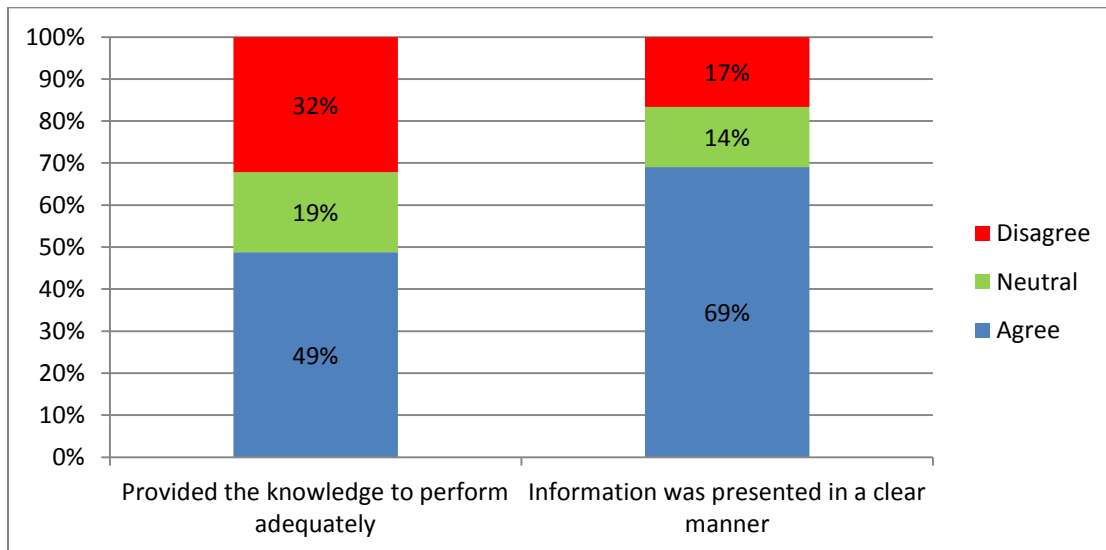


FIGURE 17. Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Human Resources

Technology Services Orientation

The Technology Services Orientation included topics such as laptops, email, Blackboard, and ERO. Approximately two-thirds of attendees (68%) felt that the information presented in this orientation provided them with the knowledge needed to perform adequately in their professional role. The majority of attendees felt that this information was presented in a clear manner (67%) (see Figure 18).

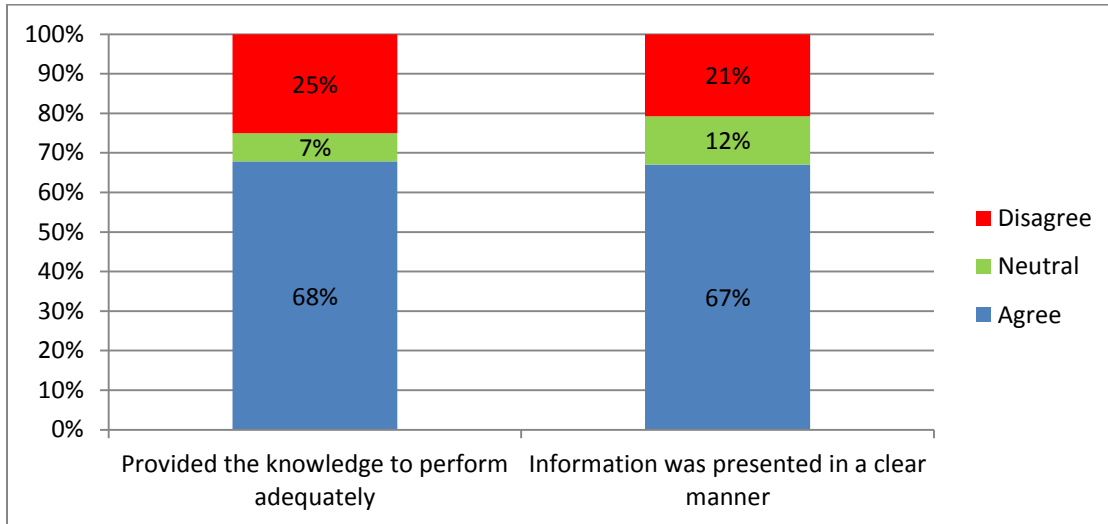


FIGURE 18. Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Technology Services

Curriculum and Instruction Orientation

The Curriculum and Instruction Orientation consisted of topics including belief systems, the ACPS Learning Model, curriculum design, instructional practice, coaching model, Alliance for Learning and Leading (ALL), Personal Learning Plans (PLPs), and Individual Achievement Plans (IAPs). Of attendees, only 38 percent felt that this portion of the New Teacher Orientation provided respondents the knowledge needed to perform adequately in their professional role. The majority of responses fell in the “strongly disagree” or “somewhat disagree” categories. Approximately 41 percent felt that the Curriculum and Instruction Orientation was presented in a clear manner.

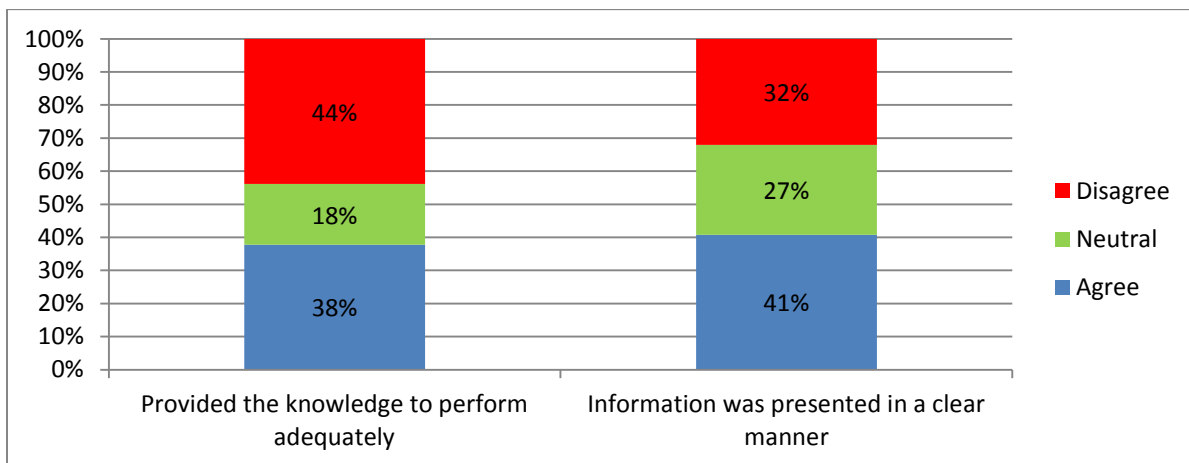


FIGURE 19. Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Curriculum & Instruction

Content Area/Grade Level Breakouts

Content Area/Grade Level Breakout sessions included curriculum documents, resources, and lesson planning. Figure 20 illustrates the results from these responses. Forty-four percent (44%) of responses fell into the “strongly disagree” and “somewhat disagree” categories for the item that pertained to whether these breakout sessions provided respondents the knowledge needed to perform their professional role adequately. Only 40 percent felt that these sessions were presented in a clear manner.

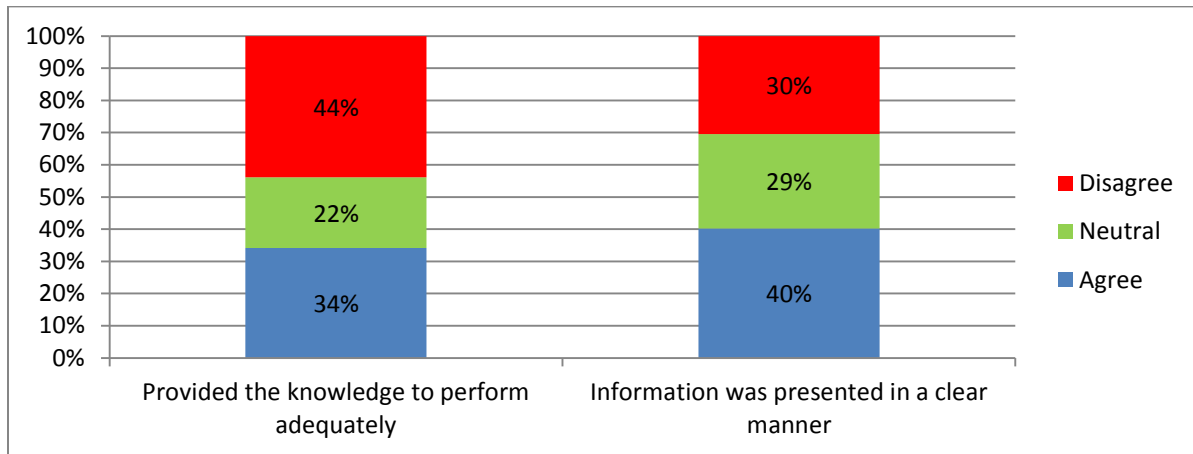


FIGURE 20. Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation: Content Area/Grade Level Breakout

New Teacher Orientation Score by Current Employment School Level

Table 7 provides information on the average scores from the New Teacher Orientation by current employment grade level. These scores range from 1 to 5, 1 representing strong negative feelings, 3 representing neutral feelings, and 5 representing strong positive feeling of usefulness and clarity. Again, interpretation of these averages should be used with caution, since the answer choices were on a five-point Likert scale and were not continuous in nature.

In general, elementary school teachers felt the technology services session to be the most helpful (3.6), whereas both middle and high school teachers felt the human resources session to be the most helpful (3.6 and 3.8, respectively). Across all grade level teachers (excluding K-8 teachers), the curriculum and instruction session (2.9) and content area/grade level breakout sessions (3.0) were rated the least useful and clear of the four breakout sessions.

TABLE 7
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Current Employment School Level and Average New Teacher Orientation Score

Current Employment School Level	All Orientation Sessions		Human Resources		Technology Services		Curriculum and Instruction		Content Area/Grade Level Breakout Session	
	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n	ave	n
Elementary	2.9	33	3.2	37	3.6	36	2.6	34	2.7	36
Middle	3.3	19	3.6	20	3.5	19	3.2	19	3.1	19
High	3.4	24	3.8	24	3.4	24	3.2	24	3.3	24
Total ^a	3.2	76	3.4	81	3.5	79	2.9	77	3.0	79

^a This group only includes elementary, middle and high school teachers

Summative Findings for the New Teacher Orientation

Forty percent agreed to some degree to the survey statement, “Overall the division level new teacher orientation trainings prepared me for the first weeks of school.” The majority of responses (44%) either “somewhat” or “strongly” disagreed with the survey item.

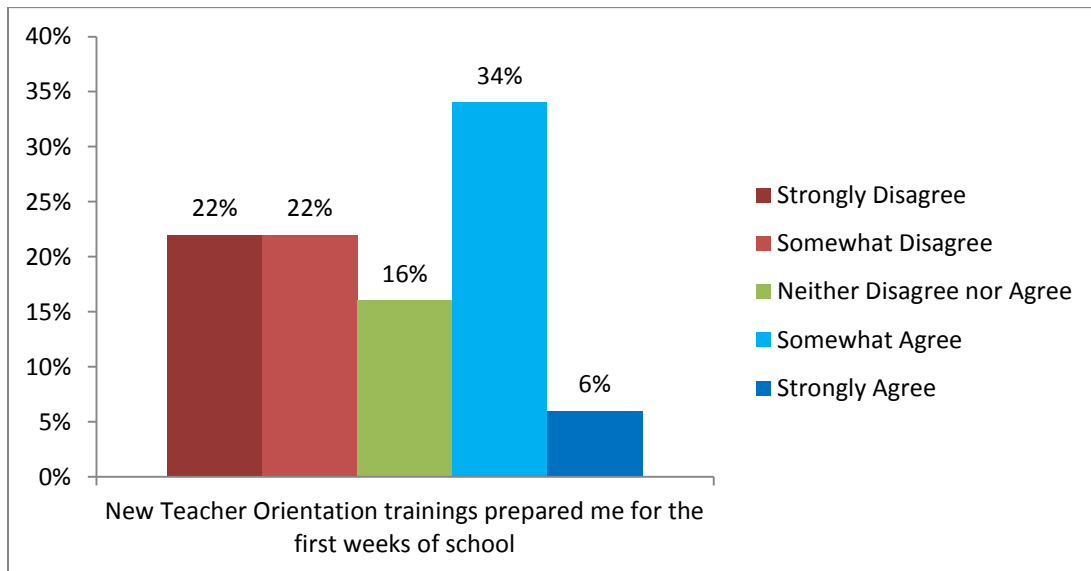


FIGURE 21. Aug 2010 Orientation Prepared Me for the First Weeks of School

Attendees were asked to rate the 2010 New Teacher Orientation on a scale of 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent) (see Figure 22). The majority of responses fell somewhere in the middle of the scale: 32 percent rated the orientation a “2”; 45 percent rated the orientation a “3.”

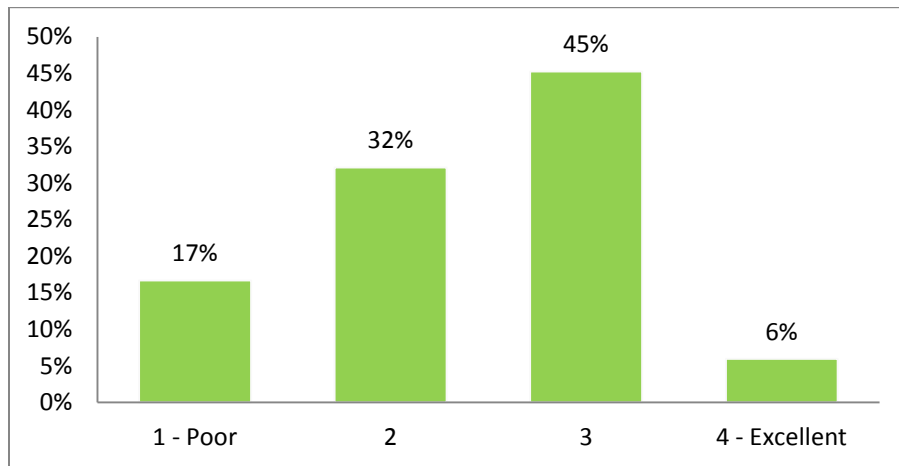


FIGURE 22. Aug 2010 New Teacher Orientation Overall Rating

Professional Development Needs

New hires were asked which areas of professional development they needed additional support to effectively teach their students. These survey items were drawn from the 2010 FCPS Teacher Working Conditions Survey (Fairfax County Public Schools, 2010). These responses are shown as Figure 23 and Table 8. Respondents had the option to select more than one answer. The top five areas included special education (37%), classroom management techniques (33%), closing the achievement gap (27%), ELL students (25%), and collaborating with colleagues (21%).

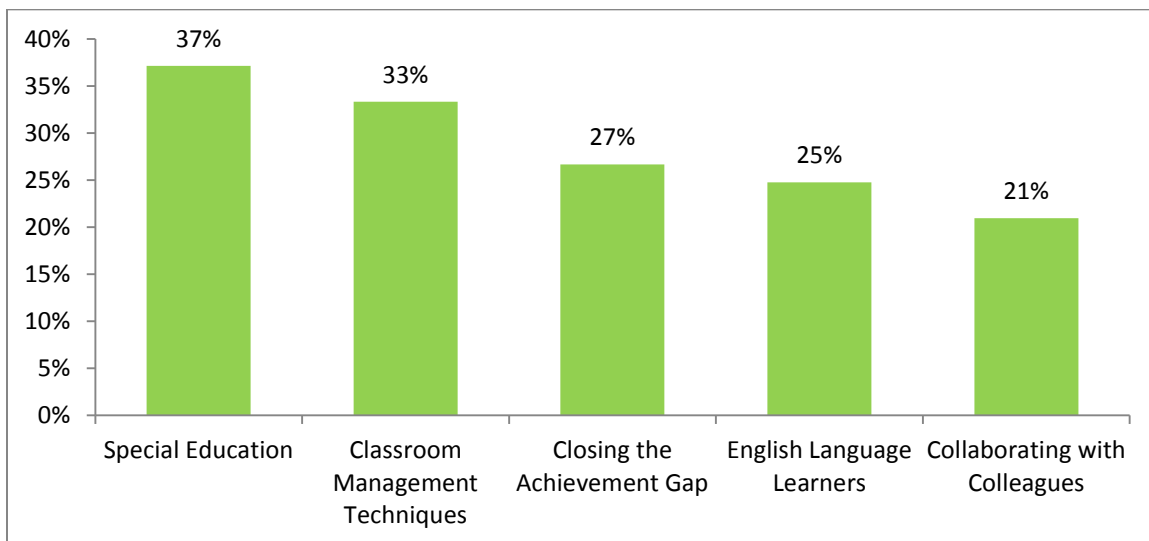


FIGURE 23. 2011 New Educators’ Top 5 Professional Development Needs

TABLE 8
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Professional Development Needs

Responses	% ^a
Special Education	37%
Classroom Management Techniques	33%
Closing the Achievement Gap	27%
English Language Learners	25%
Collaborating with Colleagues	21%
Teaching a Culturally Diverse Student Population	20%
Methods of Teaching	19%
Using Data for Decision Making	19%
My Content Area(s)	16%
Academically Gifted Students	15%
Reading Strategies	15%
Student Assessment	14%
No Professional Development Needed at this Time	10%
Leadership Skills	9%
Continuous Improvement	9%
Other	8%
School Improvement Planning	8%

^a Multiple responses per participant possible

Teacher Mentor

Of those that responded to the New Educator Survey, 76 percent (n=81) were assigned a mentor for the 2010-2011 school year (see Figure 24). Mentees were questioned on whether their mentors met the various divisional recommendations for the mentor position. Approximately half (49%) of mentees reported that their mentor worked with them at least two hours per week, while the other half (51%) responded “no” to such statement. Sixty-percent (60%) met with their mentor at least once a week. A minority of mentees (20%) were observed at least once a month.

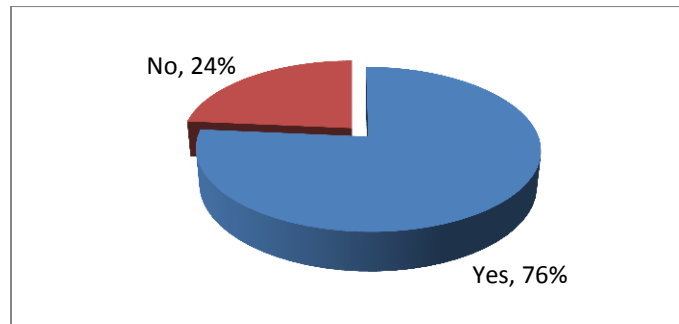


FIGURE 24. 2011 New Educators' Teacher Mentor Assignment for 2010-2011

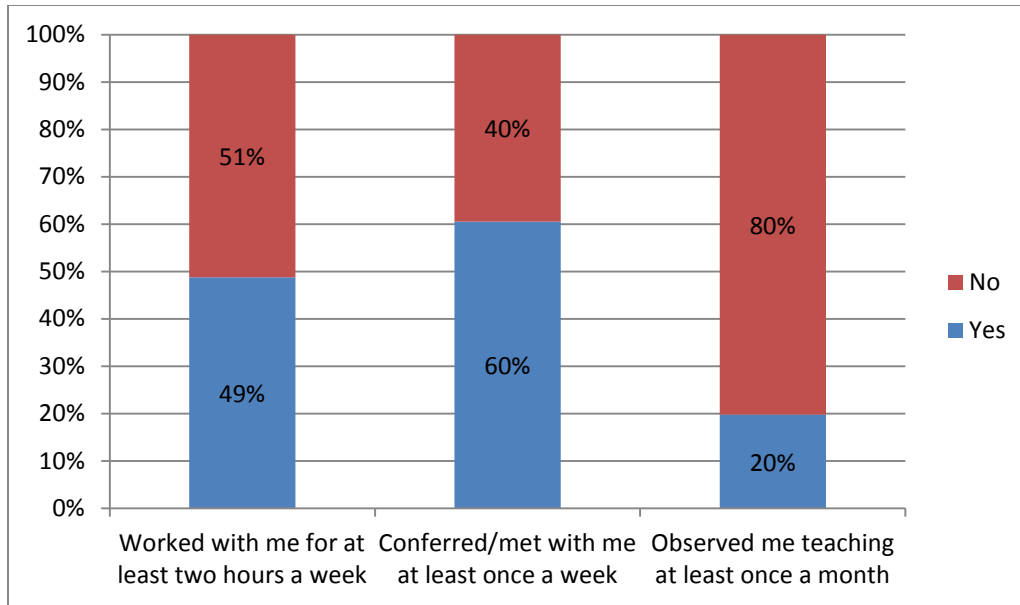


FIGURE 25. 2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q23 a, b, c)

A large majority of those teachers with mentors held discussions regarding job concerns (83%), and were linked to resources and individuals within ACPS (73%). Less than half of respondents' mentors demonstrated lessons and techniques for their mentees (47%).

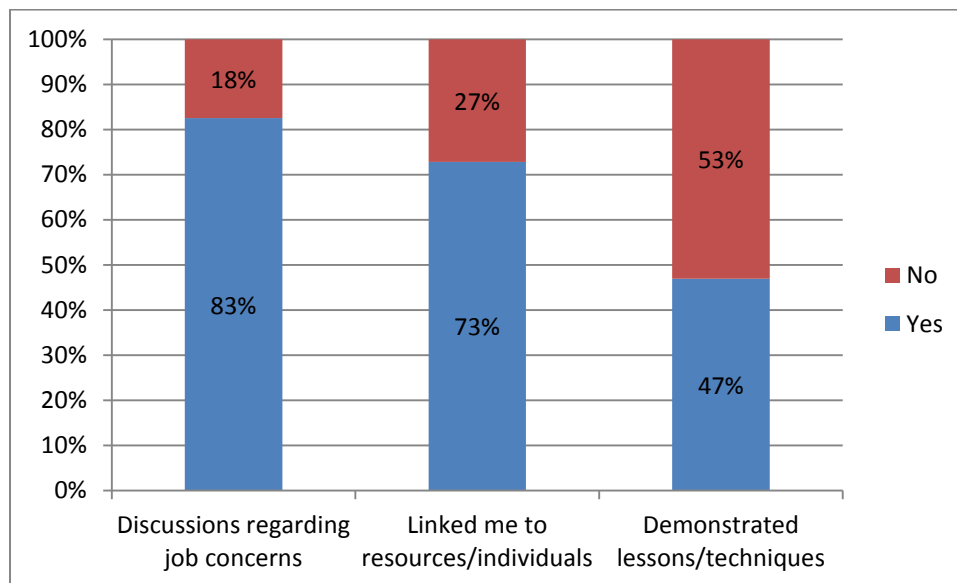


FIGURE 26. 2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q23 d, e, f)

Overall, these teachers felt that their mentor helped with their transition into ACPS (61% “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed to this item). Approximately half of mentees indicated their mentors helped them grow professionally as an educator (49% “strongly” or “somewhat” agreed to this item).

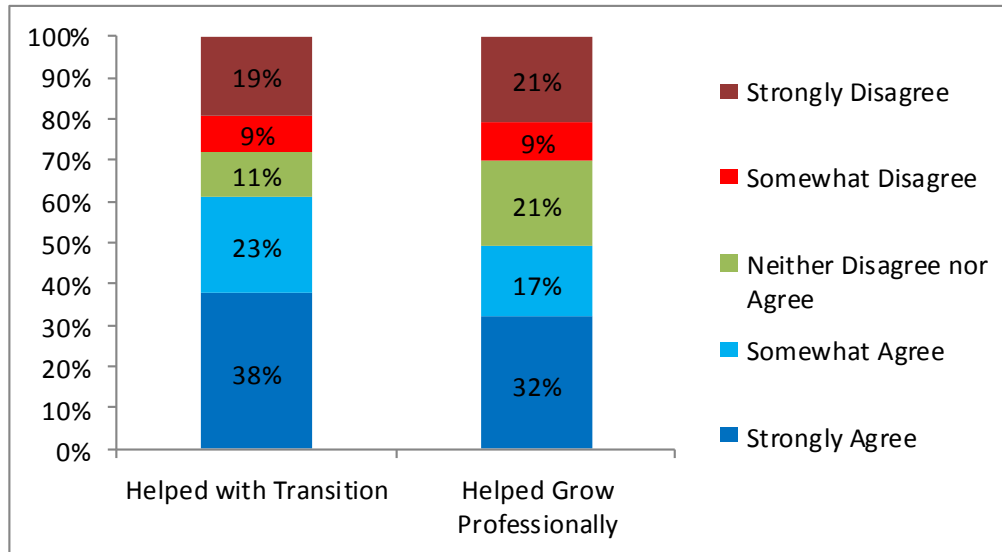


FIGURE 27. 2010-2011 Teacher Mentor Responses (Q24 & Q25)

Short and Long Term Professional Plans

New ACPS educators responded to survey items regarding their short and long term plans. These survey items were based on the 2010 FCPS Teacher Working Conditions Survey (Fairfax County Public Schools, 2010). Short term plans are professional plans in the next two years, whereas long term plans are professional plans in the next three to 10 years (see Table 9).

In the short term, 72 percent responded that they planned to continue working in their current position at their current school; however, only 31 percent of new hires planned to continue working in their current position at their current school in the long term. In the short term, only five percent of respondents planned to work in the same position but leave ACPS, compared to 13 percent who planned to do so in the long term.

Most new hires that responded in the “other” category for either their short or long term plans were unsure of their future plans due to changes in family situations, or had plans to pursue higher education.

As of September 1, 2011, approximately one year after the cohort of 236 new educators began work at ACPS, 17 percent (n=40) no longer held their position within ACPS. The majority of those no longer with ACPS resigned (n=36), with “personal reasons” (n=11) being the most selected reason for departure.

TABLE 9
Alexandria City Public Schools
2011 New Educators' Short and Long Term Plans

Future Professional Plans	Short Term (next 2 years)	Long Term (3 to 10 years)
	%	
Continue working in my position at my current school.	72%	31%
Continue working in my position in ACPS but leave this school.	8%	4%
Continue working in the same position but leave ACPS.	5%	13%
Continue working in ACPS but pursue an administrative position.	4%	9%
Continue working in ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.	1%	10%
Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue an administrative position.	1%	4%
Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.	4%	10%
Continue working but in a field outside of education.	0%	5%
Other	6%	16%

Overall Satisfaction

Figures 28 through 31 illustrate new ACPS educators' overall satisfaction and feelings toward their schools. Responses were distinguished between those who taught elementary, middle, and high school, in addition to the total survey sample (represented as "All").

For the three survey items, and across all four employment categories, there was a general upward trend towards positive feelings about their schools. A majority of respondents agreed ("strongly" and "somewhat") that their school was a good place to develop professionally, that their school was an overall good place to work, and that they were satisfied working in their current school. The most distinct difference between grade levels was for Question 27 (Figure 29): while 63 percent of middle school teachers "somewhat" agreed to this statement, 29 percent and 39 percent of elementary and high school educators, respectively, "somewhat" agreed to this statement.

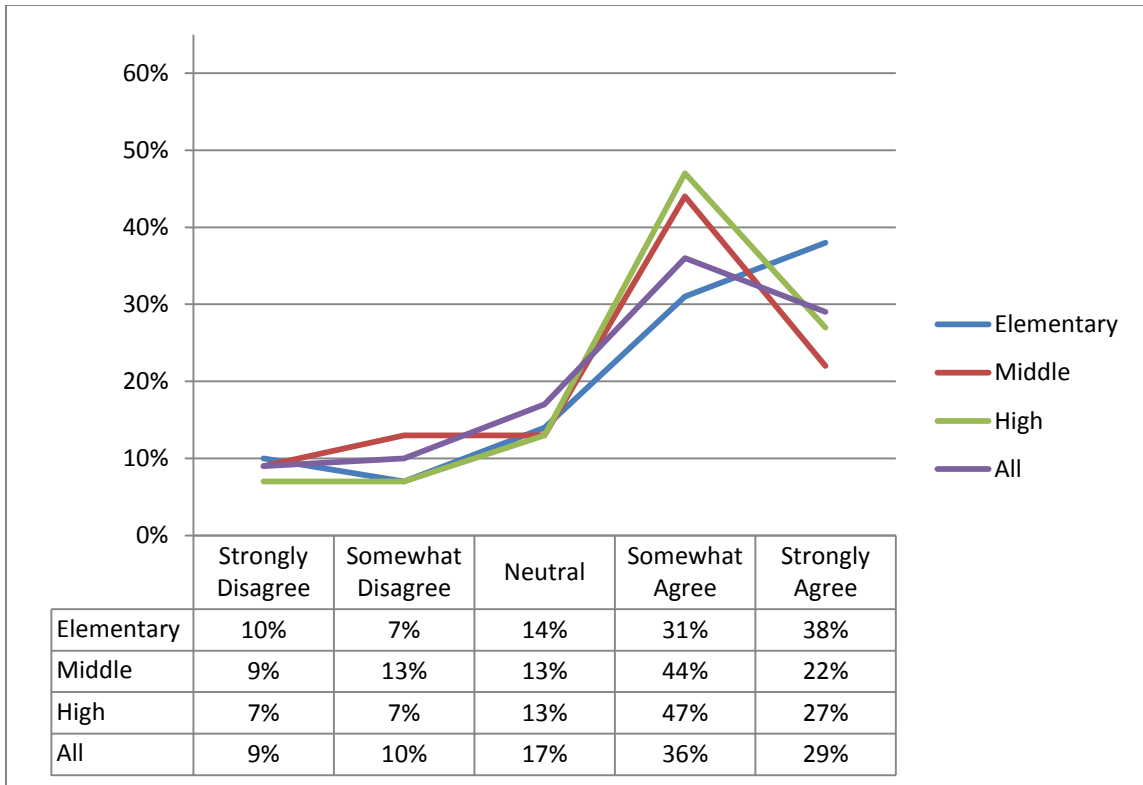


FIGURE 28. 2011 New Educators' Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: School is a Good Place to Develop Professionally

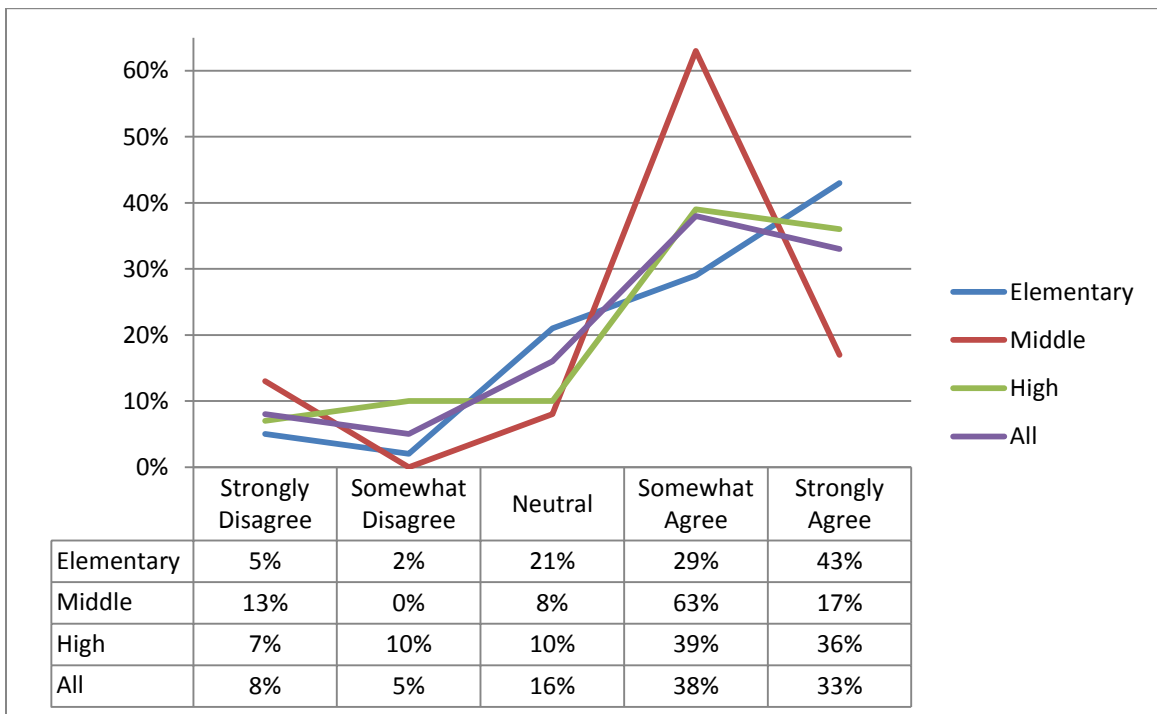


FIGURE 29. 2011 New Educators' Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: School is a Good Place to Work

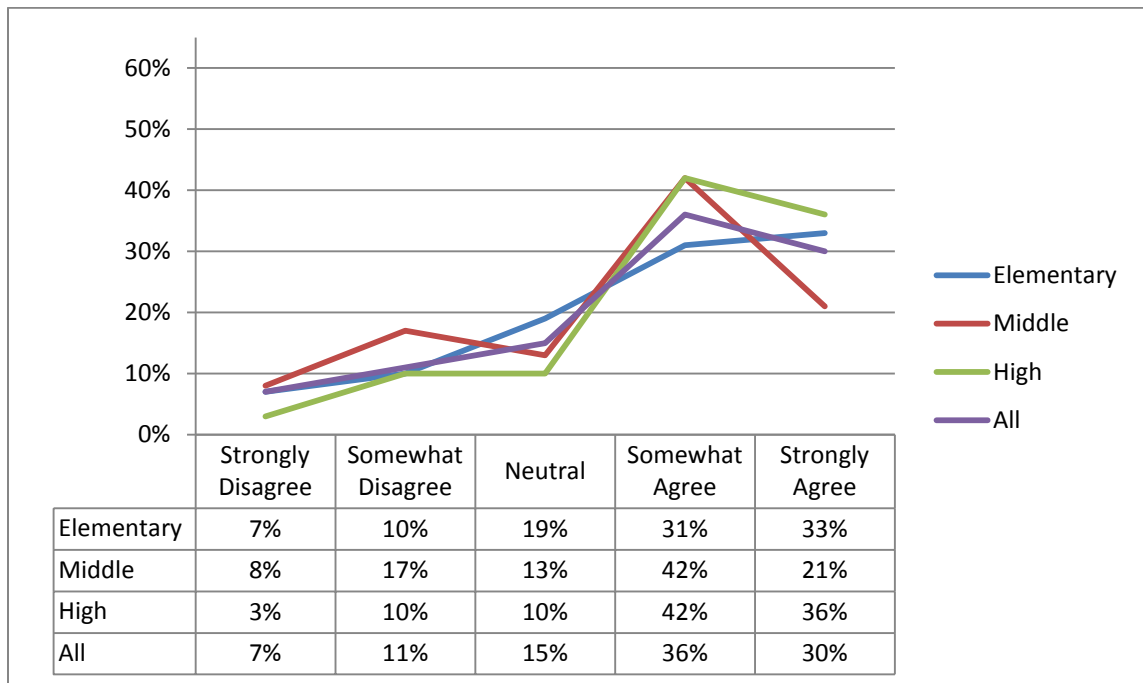


FIGURE 30. 2011 New Educators' Overall Response by Current Employment School Level: Satisfied Working in Current School

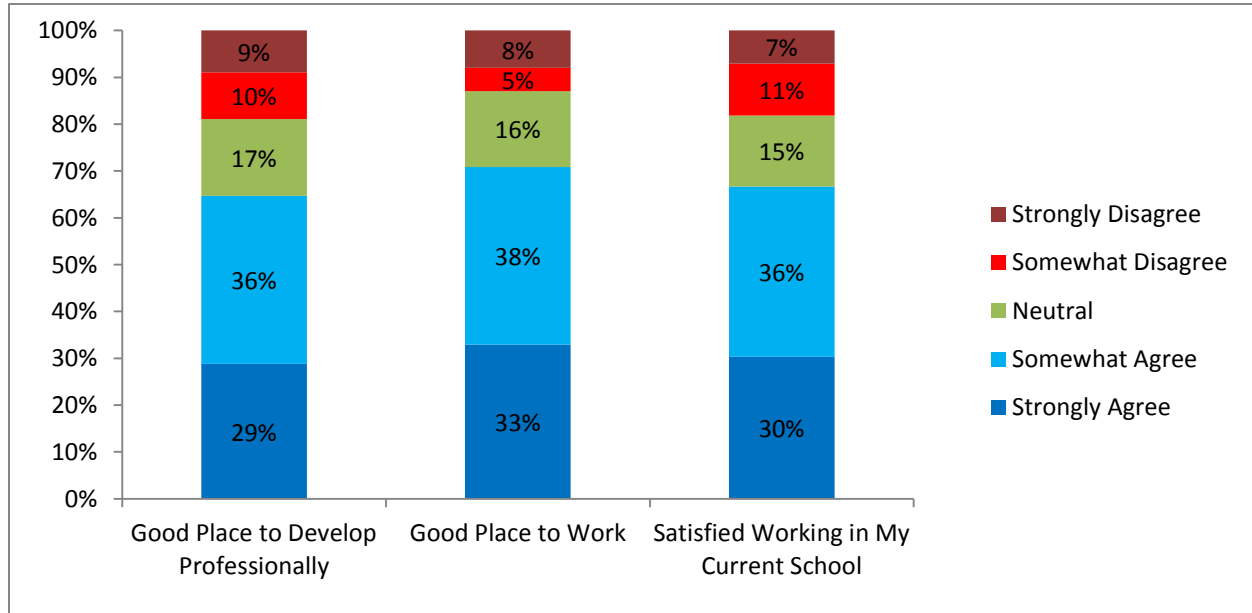


FIGURE 31. 2011 New Educators' Overall School Responses

Free Response Section

The following section summarizes responses received from four free response questions that asked new educators to share what they liked about being in ACPS, what they disliked about being in ACPS, things they wish they had known prior to starting work at ACPS, and the one thing that ACPS should do to improve achievement for all students.

Like About Being in ACPS

Respondents were asked to state one thing they liked most about being a new educator in ACPS. Of the 59 responses, over half of new hires (n=32) responded in favor of their school environment and fellow colleagues. One respondent stated, “I might not have chosen ACPS if it weren't for the great teachers I work with in my grade level.” Others reported that “The support/involvement of my building principal” was what they liked most.

Furthermore, eight respondents found that working with diverse populations, and another four respondents found that the professional development opportunities at ACPS were the most enjoyable aspects of working in the division.

Dislike About Being in ACPS

Respondents were asked to state the one thing they disliked most about being a new educator in ACPS. Of the 58 new hires that responded to this question, the largest number of responses were related to teaching and within classroom issues (n=15). One respondent disliked the “lack of training and preparedness,” while another reported that “it has been a challenge confronting the behavioral/disciplinary concerns.”

Respondents also cited the ACPS administration, both central office and school staff, as one thing they disliked most (n=13). One new hire stated that “The school level issues are caused by division-level indecision or lack of decision-making.” Another new hire reported an “Atmosphere of distrust between teachers and Division.” Other respondents shared that there was a lack of clarity on the school administration structure and the administration’s goals.

Other common threads included the lack of communication, especially in regards to new programs, initiatives, and policies within the schools (n=8), and problems associated with implementing these programs, initiatives, and policies (n=7).

Wish I Had Known

Respondents were asked to state the one thing they wish they had known when they started working in ACPS. Approximately half of those surveyed responded to this free response question (n=51). The majority of responses emphasized many needs within the classroom. Some respondents wished for better or more planning time with fellow teachers, both prior to the start of school and during the school day (n=3). Other respondents commented on the number of special education students, the transient school population, the changes that occur during the school year, and the lack of resources to support these various populations and efforts (n=14).

Moreover, new hires reported that they wished they knew the amount of time needed towards activities outside of the classroom, such as the amount of time needed to create IAPs, IEPs, and

other tasks (n=7). One teacher wished he/she knew “That so much data and paperwork would be needed, almost to the point where I have to focus on it more than my actual lesson preparation.”

To Improve Achievement for All

Respondents were asked to provide the one thing ACPS should do to improve achievement for all students. This free response question was answered by 60 respondents, of which 11 suggested changes to the curriculum or classroom instruction as one way ACPS should improve achievement for all students. One teacher stated, “Decide on a common curriculum, materials, assesment [sic] methods, and protocols, train the teachers both old and new thoroughly, and then stick to your guns with administrators about holding teachers accountable for administering the curriculum.”

Other common responses included the need for consistency in school discipline and attendance (n=7), the importance of parent and community involvement (n=5), and the benefits of flexibility for teachers and children in the classroom (n=4).

Summary

The 2011 New Educator Survey examined a cohort of educators that began their first year of employment during the 2010-2011 school year. This survey collected demographic data, in addition to items related to feelings of efficacy, school conduct and safety, and school leadership. The 2010 New Teacher Orientation was examined, as was the role of mentors during their first year in ACPS. New educators shared their short and long term plans, and their level of satisfaction in working at their schools.

Many new educators felt that ACPS was a good place to develop professionally, and were satisfied working in their current school. While many new teachers felt quite efficacious and felt that their schools were safe, many new educators expressed the need for continued support in teaching the diverse population of students that attend ACPS. The implementation and communication that surrounded new initiatives and programs were noted by some new educators as areas of concern.

A first follow-up survey will be administered to this cohort of new educators in the spring of 2012. The follow-up survey and resultant report will examine similar measures of efficacy, school conduct and safety, and school leadership. Additional information on the nature of their relationship with their 2010-2011 mentor will also be garnered. A second follow-up survey is planned for spring 2013. After this second follow-up, a forthcoming report will provide a longitudinal picture of the 2010-2011 new educator cohort during their first three years at ACPS.

References

Fairfax County Public Schools. (2010). 2010 FCPS Working Conditions Survey. Retrieved from <http://fcpswcs.org/index>

Tschannen-Moran, M. & Hoy, A.W. (2001). Teacher efficacy. Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17, 783-805.

Appendix A
2011 New Educator Survey



*** Required Information**

page 1

1. Please select the school level where you are currently employed. (Select one option)

- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other (please specify) _____

2. Gender: (select one option) (Select one option)

- Female
- Male

3. Ethnicity: Are you Hispanic or Latino? (select one option) (Select one option)

- No, not Hispanic or Latino
- Yes, Hispanic or Latino

4. What is your race? (select all that apply)

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White

5. Age: (select one option) (Select one option)

- 18-25
- 26-35
- 36-45
- 46-55
- 56-65
- 66+

6. Before working for Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) how many years had you been employed as an educator? (Select one option)

- Less than 1 Year
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4 to 6 Years
- 7 to 10 Years
- 11 to 20 Years
- 21+ Years

7. Which best describes your most recent full-time position prior to working for ACPS? (Select one option)

- Employed as a classroom teacher
- Employed as an educator (non-classroom teacher)
- Employed in a profession outside of education
- A student
- Other (please specify) _____

8. Please rate the following regarding your employment considerations before choosing to work in the ACPS.

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
(a) Location (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Reputation (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Salary (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Recruitment Process (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Working Environment (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) Benefits Offered (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) Class Sizes (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) Work Schedule (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. Please provide any other employment considerations that influenced you to choose ACPS.

10. Why did you choose education as a profession?

*** 11. Please indicate your present teaching position. (Select one option)**

- Classroom Teacher Go to Page No. 2
- Counselor Go to Page No. 3
- ELL Teacher Go to Page No. 2
- Fine Arts Teacher (Art and Music) Go to Page No. 2
- Instructional or School Improvement Coach Go to Page No. 3
- Physical Education Teacher Go to Page No. 2
- Special Education Teacher Go to Page No. 2
- Speech Pathologist Go to Page No. 3
- Other (please specify) _____ Go to Page No. 3

page 2

Teacher Beliefs

12. Directions: This questionnaire is designed to help us gain a better understanding of the kinds of things that create difficulties for teachers in their school activities. Please indicate your opinion about each of the statements below. Your answers are confidential.

	Nothing/Not at All (1)	(2)	Very Little (3)	(4)	Some Influence (5)	(6)	Quite A Bit (7)	(8)	A Great Deal (9)
(a) How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(d) How much can you do to help your students value learning? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) To what extent can you craft good questions for your students? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(k) How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(l) How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom? (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Student Conduct and Safety

13. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about student conduct and safety in your school.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
(a) Students at this school understand expectations for their conduct. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Students are caring toward one another. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Students make efforts to stop bullying in this school. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) The faculty make efforts to stop bullying in this school. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Policies and procedures about student conduct are clearly understood by the faculty. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) The rules for student conduct are enforced consistently. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) Teachers' efforts to maintain discipline in the classroom are supported. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) Teachers and staff work in a school environment that is safe. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) The physical plant of the school makes the students feel safe. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) The rules for student conduct are clearly laid out for faculty. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

14. Please provide any additional comments you have regarding Student Conduct and Safety.

Leadership:

15. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about leadership in your school. (School leadership may include an individual, group of individuals, or team within your school that focuses on management and decision making.)

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
(a) There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect within the school. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) The school leadership communicates clear expectations to students and parents. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) The faculty are committed to helping every student learn. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) The school leadership shields teachers from disruptions, allowing them to focus on educating students. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) The school leadership consistently supports teachers when needed. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) The faculty and staff have a shared vision. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) The school leadership effectively communicates policies. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(i) Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(j) Staff members are recognized for accomplishments. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

16. Please provide any additional comments you have regarding Leadership.

17. Which position BEST describes the person who provides the most instructional leadership at your school? (Select one option)

- Principal
- Assistant Principal or Dean
- Department or Grade Level Chair
- Instructional Coach
- Central Office Curriculum Personnel
- A Teacher
- Other (please specify) _____

page 5

*** 18. I attended the division level New Teacher Orientation provided in August 2010. (Select one option)**

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----|------------------|
| <input type="radio"/> | Yes | Go to Page No. 6 |
| <input type="radio"/> | No | Go to Page No. 7 |

Professional Development:

19. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about the division level New Teacher Orientation provided in August 2010.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
(a) In retrospect, the information in the Human Resources (HR) Orientation provided me the knowledge needed to perform adequately in my professional role. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) The information in the HR Orientation was presented in a clear manner. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) In retrospect, the information in the Technology Services Orientation (Laptops, Email, Blackboard, ERO) provided me the knowledge needed to perform adequately in my professional role. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) The information in the Technology Services Orientation was presented in a clear manner. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) In retrospect, the information in the Curriculum and Instruction Orientation (Belief Systems, ACPS Learning Model, Curriculum Design, Instructional Practice, Coaching Model, ALL, PLPs, IAPs) provided me the knowledge needed to perform adequately in my professional role. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) The information in the Curriculum and Instruction Orientation was presented in a clear manner. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) In retrospect, the information presented in the Content Area/Grade Level Breakouts (Curriculum Documents, Resources, Lesson Planning, First two weeks of school) provided me the knowledge needed to perform adequately in my professional role. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) The information presented in the Content Area/Grade Level Breakouts was presented in a clear manner. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

(i) Overall, the division level new teacher orientation trainings prepared me for the first weeks of school. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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20. Please rate the value of the August 2010 Division level New Teacher Orientation Training with 1 being "Poor" and 4 being "Excellent." (Select one option)

Poor 1	2	3	Excellent 4
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

page 7

21. Professional Development Needs: Please check any of the areas below in which you need additional support RIGHT NOW to effectively teach your students. (select all that apply)

- Special Education
- Academically Gifted Students
- English Language Learners
- Closing the Achievement Gap
- My Content Area(s)
- Methods of Teaching
- Student Assessment
- Classroom Management Techniques
- Reading Strategies
- Leadership Skills

- Using Data for Decision Making
- Continuous Improvement
- Collaborating with Colleagues
- School Improvement Planning
- Teaching a Culturally Diverse Student Population
- No Professional Development Needed at this Time
- Other (please specify) _____

*** 22. I have been assigned a Teacher Mentor for the 2010-2011 school year.**
(Select one option)

- Yes Go to Page No. 8
- No Go to Page No. 9

If Did Not Answer Then Go to Page No. 8

page 8

Teacher Mentor Experience:

23. My assigned Teacher Mentor has...

	YES	NO
(a) Worked with me for at least two hours a week (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Observed me teaching at least once a month (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Conferred/met with me at least once a week (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Had discussions with me regarding my concerns surrounding my job (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Demonstrated lessons and techniques for me. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) Linked me to resources and individuals within ACPS. (Select one option)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

24. Overall, my teacher mentor has helped with my transition into ACPS.
(Select one option)

- Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

25. Overall, my teacher mentor has helped me grow professionally as an educator. (Select one option)

- Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

26. Please provide any additional comments you have regarding your Teacher Mentor experience.

page 9

27. Overall, my school is a good place to work. (Select one option)

- Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

28. Overall, my school is a good place to develop professionally. (Select one option)

- Strongly Disagree Somewhat Disagree Neither Disagree nor Agree Somewhat Agree Strongly Agree

29. Which BEST describes your professional plans for the short term (next two years)? (Select one option)

- Continue working in my position at my current school.
- Continue working in my position in ACPS but leave this school.
- Continue working in the same position but leave ACPS.
- Continue working in ACPS but pursue an administrative position.

- Continue working in ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.
- Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue an administrative position.
- Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.
- Continue working but in a field outside of education.
- Retire
- Other (please specify) _____

30. Which BEST describes your professional plans for the long term (next 3 to 10 years)? (Select one option)

- Continue working in my position at my current school.
- Continue working in my position in ACPS but leave this school.
- Continue working in the same position but leave ACPS.
- Continue working in ACPS but pursue an administrative position.
- Continue working in ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.
- Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue an administrative position.
- Continue working in education outside ACPS but pursue a different non-administrative position.
- Continue working but in a field outside of education.
- Retire
- Other (please specify) _____

31. I am satisfied working in my current school. (Select one option)

- Strongly Disagree
- Somewhat Disagree
- Neither Disagree nor Agree
- Somewhat Agree
- Strongly Agree

32. The one thing I LIKE the most about being a new educator in ACPS is...

33. The one thing I DISLIKE the most about being a new educator in ACPS is...

34. The one thing I wish I'd known when I started working in ACPS is...

35. In my opinion the one thing that ACPS should do to improve achievement for ALL students is...
