

'The Set': How Do Aspiring Educators Rate Their Student Teaching Experience?

A Data Brief from the Delaware Department of Education's Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Branch

In the spring of 2016, the Delaware Department of Education administered its second annual Aspiring Educator Survey. The survey was designed to learn more about the professional plans and preferences of graduates from various educator preparation programs that have a history of preparing Delaware educators. This data brief provides a summary of the 2016 survey results. This year's survey included questions that asked aspiring educators about their student teaching experience in Delaware; those results are highlighted on the second page of this brief.

Who Are Our Aspiring Educators?

- For the purpose of the survey, an aspiring educator is defined as a graduate from an educator preparation program with 0-5 years of teaching experience.
- This year's survey was sent to 357 aspiring educators who attended the University of Delaware's annual teacher job fair.
- 41% responded to the survey.
- 81% of respondents identified as female and 19% identified as male.
- 85% of respondents planned to seek a position in education, 9% currently have a position in education, and 5% planned to pursue a graduate degree before seeking employment in education.
- 34% of respondents lived in Delaware before college.
- 88% of respondents self-identified as White/Caucasian, 4% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 3% as Hispanic American, 3% as African American, and 3% as multiple ethnicity/Other.
- 84% of respondents were between the ages of 22 and 25.

Do Aspiring Educators Want to Teach in Delaware?

- Delaware was the state selected most often as aspiring educators' top choice teaching destination, with 55% of respondents choosing the state.
- The desire to teach in Delaware appears to stem from having a prior connection with the state: the two most selected explanations for why respondents chose Delaware as their top choice destination were "I have family and/or friends there" (37%) and "I grew up there" (36%).
- However, this attachment to Delaware is not exclusive to individuals who grew up in the state prior to college: 29% of individuals who did not live in Delaware prior to college still selected Delaware as their top choice destination.
- The opportunity to have an impact on students was selected as being "extremely important" for accepting a teaching position by a majority of respondents (80%), including respondents who chose Delaware as their top choice teaching destination (86%).

Figure 1: Top Choice Teaching Destinations

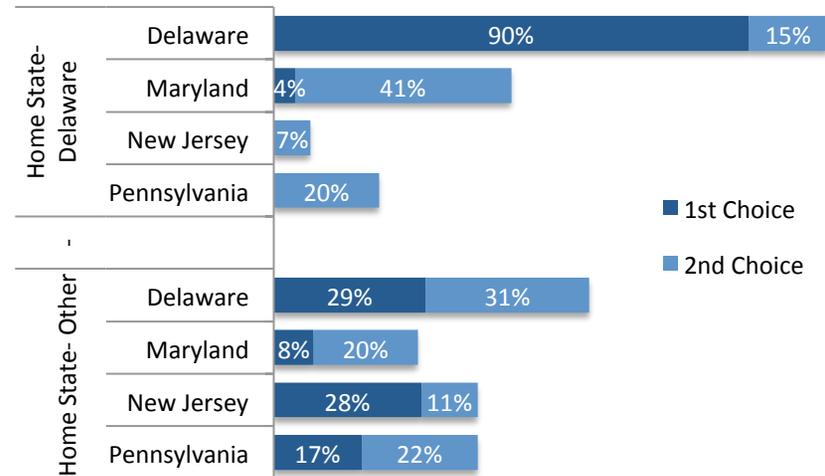
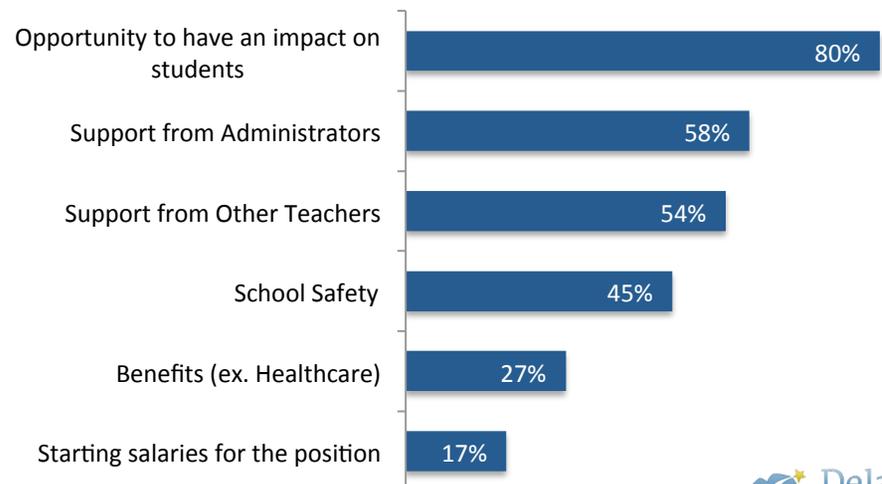


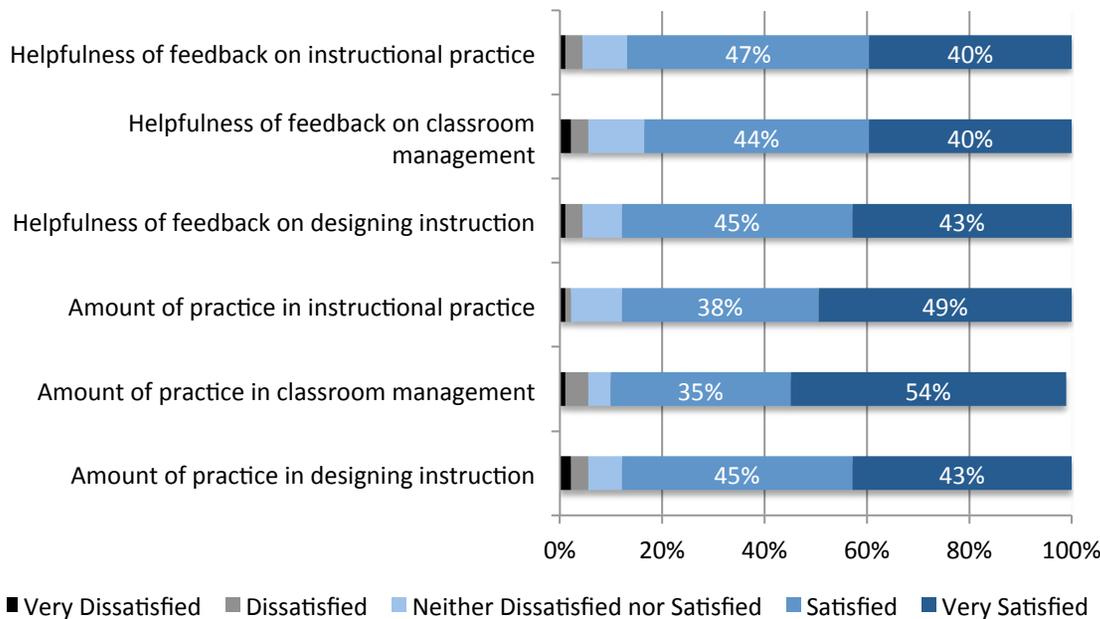
Figure 2: What Decision Factors Did Respondents Select as "Extremely Important" for Accepting a Teaching Position?



What Do Aspiring Educators Think About Student Teaching in Delaware?

- Student teaching placement can have a large impact on where educators decide to teach: A study conducted in Washington state found student teaching placements to be a stronger predictor of where aspiring educators end up teaching than their hometown.¹
- New Castle County is the most popular location for student teaching within the state of Delaware, with 71% of respondents having completed or were completing their student teaching in the Colonial, Christina, Red Clay, or Appoquinimink school districts.
- Respondents who have completed or were completing their student teaching are generally satisfied with their student teaching experience: more than half reported being either satisfied or very satisfied with the amount of practice and the helpfulness of the feedback they’ve received on designing instruction, classroom management, and instructional practice.

Figure 3: Satisfaction Ratings of Student Teaching Experience



What Do Aspiring Educators Say About Their Student Teaching Experiences?

“The 12 week placement although a lot of hard work and very stressful, gave me such good experience and really prepared me to become a full time teacher.”

“The university needs to do better with making sure that the cooperative teachers are following the student teaching path that is laid out for them and not trying to throw their student teachers into anything they are not ready for.”

“I was satisfied because I had a really great middle school math placement, however I was unsatisfied because I did not receive a lot of support from my university supervisor.”

“I was satisfied with my student teaching experience but it would’ve been great to have had an opportunity to teach in Sussex County.”

“I was very satisfied with my clinical educator at this placement, however the fluctuating administration was a little confusing and hard to read.”

“I had the opportunity to participate in a Yearlong Residency program that gave me excellent preparation.”

1. “Strategic Student Placement.” Policy Analysis for California Education. <http://edpolicyinca.org/blog/strategic-student-teaching-placement-.V3WPLAFYt70.twitter>