

College of Education Cooperating/Collaborating Teacher Surveys: Fall 2013- Spring 2014

The College of Education Cooperating and Collaborating Teacher surveys assessed the cooperating teachers' experiences with teacher candidates and their experience with Rowan University's cooperating teaching program. Questions addressed how well prepared teacher candidates were for student teaching, how well the cooperating teacher was prepared, and recommendations for the teacher candidate before and during student teaching. The surveys were administered in both the Fall and Spring semesters of the 2013-2014 academic year.

The collaborating teachers responded that they currently teach lower elementary, upper elementary and high school. 36.8% (Fall) and 37.0% (Spring) indicated being an elementary teacher, with 23.2% (Fall) and 20.5% (Spring) being a health and physical education teacher. Additionally, the majority of cooperating teachers have been teaching for more than 15 years and about half of all respondents reported a Bachelor's degree as the highest degree completed. Regarding Elementary and Early Childhood Education teacher candidates, only 7.7% (Spring) were in the MST program. For those in Subject Matter Education, 20.6% (Spring) were in the MST program.

Cooperating teachers reported that the majority of teacher candidates' content knowledge as excellent (Spring). The majority of cooperating teachers reported engaging in cooperative teaching, collaborative teaching, project-oriented lessons, integration of technology, and reflective practice very frequently with the teacher candidate (Fall). Cooperating teachers assessed that teacher candidates were very prepared (Fall: 57.0%) for the beginning teacher experience. Specifically, in Spring 2014, the majority of teacher candidates were rated as very prepared for applying strategies to differentiate for diverse learners, recognizing the role of instructional technology integrating appropriate technologies into instructional design, demonstrating a cooperative disposition, reflecting on practice, designing and implementing instructional plans, teaching collaboratively, and demonstrating personal responsibility, integrity and professionalism.

The majority of the respondents (Fall: 50.5%; Spring: 53.0%) indicated that they were very prepared for the role of a cooperating teacher. In Fall 2013, only 6.5% of collaborating teachers attended the Rowan orientation session for cooperating teachers. However, in Spring 2014, 54.5% attended the Rowan orientation session or completed the online orientation for cooperating teachers. Overall, cooperating teacher experience with Rowan University was rated as excellent (Fall: 60.2%; Spring: 65.7%). Experiences with Rowan University supervisors were positive, as collaborating teachers reported excellent and good experiences. Additionally, in Spring 2014, the majority of cooperating teachers stated they had an excellent experience with Rowan University supervisors regarding the quality of communication, collaboration in assessment of the teacher candidate, clear understanding of roles and responsibilities of each, and level of professionalism demonstrated. Collaborating teachers had the opportunity, to a great

extent (Fall: 45.7%), to collaborate with the Rowan University supervisors to evaluate the teacher candidate.

Specific questions were incorporated to address the impact of the College of Education's Conceptual Framework on student's preparation. The four pillars of the Conceptual Framework are *Knowledge*, *Diversity*, *Impact on Learners*, and *Technology*. The pillars of the Conceptual Framework were only assessed in Spring 2014. For *Knowledge*, respondents assessed teacher candidates' content knowledge in Subject Matter Education as excellent. Additionally, Early Childhood and Elementary Education teacher candidates were assessed overall as excellent for their content knowledge. For Special Education, 55.6% rating teacher candidates content knowledge as good, with 33.3% as excellent. For *Diversity*, 46% were very prepared for applying strategies to differentiate for diverse learners and 42% were very prepared to understand the role of diversity and culturally responsive teaching that emphasizes social justice. The *Impact on Learners* was measured by their preparation to use data to assess impact on learning, which 42% were very prepared. 57% were very prepared to recognizing the role of instructional technology and integrating appropriate technologies into instructional design, which addresses the *Technology* pillar.

Respondents suggested that the blended teacher candidate should split time evenly between a regular and special education settings. Recommendations to better prepare individuals to be cooperating teachers include orientation to provide guidelines, lighten university workload, and more real life experience. Suggestions on how to improve the collaborating teacher experience include more effective communication, formal expectations and timelines, and allow for the school district's policy to be incorporated into the review of the teacher candidate. Other recommendations to improve the program include adjusting lesson plans to fit with district's format, change rubrics to match NJ requirements, and give cooperating teachers more input on grading.