

Elementary Education Program: Analysis of Completers' Perceived Preparation Effectiveness

Data Analysis

An analysis of completers' perceived effectiveness was conducted using survey responses from graduates of the Elementary Education teacher education program. The survey was distributed in Spring 2025 to program completers from three graduating cohorts. For the purposes of this analysis, first-year completers represent graduates from the 2023–2024 academic year, second-year completers represent graduates from the 2022–2023 academic year, and third-year completers represent graduates from the 2021–2022 academic year. Because the survey continued to be administered across multiple years, the total number of responses varied slightly by survey item, resulting in differences in the total n across questions. Due to the relatively low number of responses within each individual cohort, results from the three years were combined to provide a more stable representation of completer perceptions regarding the effectiveness of their preparation.

Results indicate that completers perceived their preparation to be highly effective across the areas aligned with the West Virginia Professional Teaching Standards (WVPTS), InTASC Standards, and CAEP Standard 1. Mean scores across all survey items ranged from (m=4.36) to (m=4.92), indicating that completers consistently rated their preparation between effective and highly effective. These findings suggest that teacher education programs at Marshall University are preparing candidates with the knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional dispositions necessary for effective classroom practice.

In the area of content knowledge and pedagogy, completers reported strong preparation in understanding disciplinary content and the pedagogical approaches needed to support student learning. The item related to deep knowledge of content and its interrelatedness across disciplines received a mean score of (m=4.36), while knowledge of the art and science of teaching in specific content areas received a mean score of (m=4.50). Completers also reported strong preparation in setting instructional goals and objectives aligned with standards-based instruction (m=4.43) and in designing instruction that engages students in meaningful learning aligned with state standards (m=4.91), which was among the highest rated items.

Preparation related to student assessment and instructional planning was also rated highly. Completers indicated that they learned to implement a balanced approach to assessment for and of learning (m=4.43) and to use both formative and summative assessment to guide instructional decisions (m=4.75). Additionally, respondents reported that they were well prepared to adjust instruction based on student needs and emerging instructional opportunities, with flexibility and responsiveness receiving a mean score of (m=4.67). Completers also reported strong preparation in understanding learners and supporting diverse student needs. The item related to understanding intellectual, social, and emotional development and designing developmentally appropriate instruction received a mean score of (m=4.45). Similarly, organizing safe and supportive learning environments received a mean score of (m=4.58), indicating that completers believed their preparation supported their ability to design learning environments that engage all students.

Survey responses related to classroom climate and management were among the strongest areas reported by completers. Respectful interactions and high expectations for students received the highest mean score of all items (m=4.92). Establishing a culture for learning (m=4.77), implementing classroom procedures (m=4.77), and managing student behavior through collaborative norms (m=4.69) were also rated highly, indicating that completers felt well prepared to create positive and structured classroom environments that support student learning. Instructional delivery and student engagement also demonstrated strong ratings. Completers indicated that they were prepared to use questioning techniques and discussion to engage students (m=4.42) and to deliver instruction that promotes deep understanding of content (m=4.42). These findings suggest that teacher education programs are effectively supporting candidates in developing instructional practices that actively involve students in the learning process.

Professional practice and collaboration were also areas of strength. Completers reported that their preparation supported ongoing professional learning (m=4.75), reflective practice based on data (m=4.58), and participation in building learner-centered cultures within schools (m=4.75). Collaboration with principals and colleagues to support student learning systems received a mean score of (m=4.50), indicating that completers recognized the importance of collaborative professional practice. Ethical professional behavior received a mean score of (m=4.67), suggesting that candidates leave the program with strong professional dispositions aligned with expectations of the teaching profession.

The results demonstrate that completers consistently perceive their preparation as highly effective across content knowledge, instructional design, learning environments, assessment practices, professional collaboration, and ethical professional practice. The high mean scores across all indicators aligned with WVPTS, InTASC, and CAEP standards provide evidence that the teacher education programs are effectively preparing candidates to enter the profession with the competencies necessary to support P–12 student learning and success.

Table 1: Completers' Perceived Effectiveness

Questions on Completers' Perceived Effectiveness (n=14)	Mean	Highly Effective (5)	Effective (4)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Ineffective (1)
You obtained a deep knowledge of the content and its inter-relatedness within and across the disciplines and can move beyond basic content competency to ensure student mastery of skills necessary for success in life and work (WVPTS 1A: Core Content; InTASC 4 & 8; CAEP R1, R2, & R3).	4.36	6 (43%)	7 (50%)	1 (7%)	0	0
You obtained a deep knowledge of the art and science of teaching in his/ her specific content and can facilitate experiences that advance creativity, innovation and problem solving (WVPTS 1B: Pedagogy; InTASC 4 & 8; CAEP R1; R2; R3).	4.50	8 (57%)	5 (36%)	1 (7%)	0	0
You learned to use a standards-based approach to instruction aligned with the state and local curriculum and learned to set instructional goals and objectives that describe what students will learn. (WVPTS 1C: Setting Goals and Objectives for Learning; InTASC 7; CAEP R1).	4.43	8 (57%)	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	0	0
You learned to design instruction that engages students in meaningful instructional activities that supports the WV Content Standards and Objectives and that result in intentional student learning. (WVPTS 1D: Designing Instruction; InTASC 5; CAEP R1).	4.91	11 (92%)	1 (8%)	0	0	0
You learned to use a balanced approach to ensure both assessment of learning and assessment for learning to provide both teacher and students information to guide future learning. (WVPTS 1E: Student Assessment; InTASC 6; CAEP R1, R4,R5).	4.43	8 (57%)	4 (29%)	2 (14%)	0	0
You understand that the unique characteristics of the learner are evidenced in the design of learning activities that are developmentally appropriate and differentiated to engage all students in the learning process. (WVPTS 2A: Understanding Intellectual/ Cognitive, Social, and Emotional Development; InTASC 1& 2; CAEP R1 & R3).	4.45	8 (62%)	4 (31%)	1 (7%)	0	0
You demonstrate respect for students by having high expectations, providing management frameworks that clearly define roles and procedures, using	4.92	12 (92%)	1 (8%)	0	0	0

Questions on Completers' Perceived Effectiveness (n=14)	Mean	Highly Effective (5)	Effective (4)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Ineffective (1)
respectful language, communicating interest in students as individuals and encouraging student collaboration. (WVPTS2B: Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport; InTASC 3; CAEP R1 & R3).						
You establish a culture in the learning environment that is focused on learning and that reflects the importance of the work undertaken by both students and the teacher. (WVPTS 2C:Establishing a Culture for Learning; InTASC 5; CAEP R1 & R3).	4.77	11 (84%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	0	0
You ensure that rules and procedures are in place for a smoothly functioning learning environment evidenced by the efficient use of time and resources. (WVPTS2D: Implementing Classroom Procedures; InTASC 3; CAEP R1).	4.77	10 (77%)	3 (23%)	0	0	0
You collaborate with students to establish norms of behavior for the learning environment that ensures focus on learning (WVPTS 2E: Managing Student Behaviors; InTASC 3; CAEP R1).	4.69	9 (69%)	4 (31%)	0	0	0
You ensure that the physical and virtual learning environment is safe and that there is maximum flexibility in the use of physical space in a physical learning environment. (WVPTS 2F: Organizing the Learning Environment; InTASC 3; CAEP R1).	4.58	9 (76%)	1 (8%)	2 (16%)	0	0
You practice quality-questioning techniques and engage students in discussion. (WVPTS 3D: Student Engagement; InTASC 5 & 7; CAEP R1, R4, & R5).	4.42	7 (64%)	4 (36%)	0	1 (8%)	0
You deliver instructions to motivate and engage students in a deep understanding of the content. (WVPTS 3D: Student Engagement; InTASC 5, 7, & 8; CAEP R1, R3, R4 & R5).	4.42	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)	0	0
You use both classroom formative and summative assessment as a balanced approach to instructional decision-making. (WVPTS 3E: Use of Assessments in Instruction; InTASC 6; CAEP R1, R4, & R5).	4.75	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	0	0	0
You adjust instruction based on the needs of the students and in response to "teachable moments". (WVPTS 3F: Flexibility and Responsiveness; InTASC 2; CAEP R1, R4; & R5).	4.67	9 (75%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)	0	0
You engage in professional learning to critically examine his/ her professional practice and to engage in a continuous cycle of self- improvement focused on how to learn, teach, and work in a global, digital society. (WVPTS 4A: Professional Learning; InTASC 9; CAEP R1, R2, R4, & R5).	4.75	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	0	0	0

Questions on Completers' Perceived Effectiveness (n=14)	Mean	Highly Effective (5)	Effective (4)	Neutral (3)	Somewhat Effective (2)	Ineffective (1)
You engage in continuous, critical examination of his/her teaching practice and make adjustments based on data. (WVPTS 4C: Reflection on Practice; InTASC 9; CAEP R1, R2,R4; & R5).	4.58	8 (67%)	3 (25%)	1 (8%)	0	0
You participate in activities and model behaviors that build and sustain a learner-centered culture. (WVPTS 5C: Learner-Centered Culture; InTASC 10; CAEP R1, R2, R4; & R5).	4.75	9 (75%)	3 (25%)	0	0	0
You work collaboratively with the principal and colleagues to develop and sustain student support systems that enable learning. (WVPTS 5D: Student Support Systems; InTASC 10; CAEP R1, R2, R4; & R5).	4.50	9 (75%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	1 (8%)	0
You model the ethical standards expected for the profession in the learning environment and in the community. (WVPTS 5I: Ethical Standards; InTASC 10; CAEP R1, R2, R4; & R5).	4.67	9 (75%)	2 (17%)	1 (8%)	0	0