

British Columbia New Teacher Survey 2021/22
British Columbia Teachers' Council
Vancouver, BC



FULL REPORT RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS JUNE 2023

REPORT PREPARED BY RALF ST. CLAIR, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA,
AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The British Columbia New Teacher Survey 2021/22 was conducted by the British Columbia Teachers' Council with support from several branches of the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care and the Association of British Columbia Deans of Education (ABCDE). The data were collected by online survey in late 2021 and early 2022. The primary purpose of the survey was to increase understanding of the experience of new teachers during the transition through teacher education programs (TEPs) and into the early years of work as a professional educator.

RESPONDENTS

The invitation to participate was emailed to all 9,800 teachers who graduated from BC TEPs and were certified to teach from 2015 to 2021. Just over 1,300 responded to the survey, though specific questions had varying numbers, with around 600 responses for some later questions. The demographics of the respondents fit well with the teaching workforce in the province, with 73% female, 83.3% self-identifying as having some degree of White ethnic identity and 6% self-identifying as having a disability or diverse abilities.

DATA

A substantial amount of data was collected through the survey, covering professional priorities, working conditions and specific information on the pathway to becoming a professional educator. Four phases were considered: TEP coursework, field experience, the first year of teaching and professional development. There are quantitative data for each aspect of the survey, most often generated through sliders by which respondents could indicate agreement or disagreement with statements. There are also qualitative data for most aspects, generated through invitations to respondents to contribute in open text fields. These attracted over 100,000 words of comments, which proved extremely helpful in contextualising the scale responses from the sliders.

ANALYSIS

Quantitative data was analysed using IBM SPSS Statistics, providing overall measures as well as specific information by gender, level of qualification, ethnicity, and disability status. Qualitative data was read and every comment was coded to create clusters with shared meaning. These clusters were brought alongside the quantitative data to produce findings for each section of analysis. These findings were then collated to produce overall findings and generate recommendations. As with similar research projects, the recommendations are a good faith effort to suggest ways in which the BC education system can respond responsibly to the findings.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The survey was driven by a small set of research questions.

- **What role do the Professional Standards for BC Educators¹ play in shaping teacher preparation and the transition to employment?**

Professional Standards are well known by recent graduates of BC TEPs and appeared to work well as a way to understand the transition into the work of a professional educator. There is evidence that Professional Standards are helping to increase new teachers' readiness to work with Indigenous learners and communities as well as to advance reconciliation.

- **How is the experience of being a new teacher in BC?**

The experience of being a new teacher is sufficiently negative to support the conclusion that recruitment and retention issues will not be addressed without improving the transition experience. This finding cuts across all categories of respondents.

- **Are certain phases of teacher transition more strongly linked to the Professional Standards?**

New teachers view coursework as making the least valuable contribution to their engagement with the professional standards and generally view the first year of teaching as making the most. The value of coursework is seen as limited by the majority of respondents due to gaps and inappropriate focus.

- **How do different genders, levels and ethnicities of teachers experience these links?**

In terms of gender and level of qualification, male secondary teachers tend to be least satisfied with coursework. First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers give lower scores to coursework and field experience, but the highest scores for the first year of teaching and professional development. Teachers with disabilities and diverse abilities experience coursework as less useful.

¹ www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/standards-for-educators/standards-case-studies

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the detailed analysis contained in the full report, the following recommendations are offered. In each case the heading reflects a summary of findings across the report and recommendations address that summary. It is important to note the survey was not designed to be evaluative of education partners, and these recommendations are presented as suggestions in good faith.

1| Working conditions are seen as unsupportive and frustrating

This was the strongest set of findings across the survey, and respondents offered clear examples and suggestions to address the situation.

Recommendation 1: Practical steps to reduce teacher workload are identified and implemented.

Recommendation 2: Increased attention is given to ensuring necessary student supports are available.

Recommendation 3: Mental health supports are made more available to teachers.

2| TEP coursework is not seen as fit for purpose

Coursework received little support from respondents and attracted a range of thoughtful suggestions to strengthen it.

Recommendation 4: TEPs consider their approach to teaching reading, assessment, and classroom management and investigate ways to strengthen it.

Recommendation 5: TEPs continue to develop more integrated ways to teach theory and practical competencies.

Recommendation 6: TEPs consider strengthening preparation for the practical aspects of working within schools such as obtaining curricular resources and materials.

3| TEP experience varies by gender and level of qualification

Male teacher candidates, especially those studying for secondary education, consistently gave lower responses than other groups.

Recommendation 7: Further investigation of the reasons teacher preparation is experienced as less supportive by certain groups of teacher candidates would be valuable.

4| Quality of teaching in TEPs is seen as inconsistent

New teachers, when asked to reflect on coursework, commonly expressed concerns about the way they were themselves taught in TEPs.

Recommendation 8: TEPs explore ways to support consistency between teaching philosophy and teaching practice.

Recommendation 9: TEPs explore ways to implement more stringent quality assurance practices.

5| Recognising and responding to Indigenous presence is seen as challenging

Teaching around Indigenous education, history, communities, and learners was seen as an “add-on” within TEPs and then new teachers were seen as experts when they moved into schools despite feeling unprepared to do good work in this area.

Recommendation 10: TEPs consider how Indigenous presence can be authentically integrated into programs so it is less frequently seen as an extra.

Recommendation 11: Established teachers may benefit from substantial, targeted support on Indigenous presence.

6| New teachers see field experiences as in need of re-structuring

Field experiences were seen as a make-or-break experience, but one which relies on the luck of the draw in terms of mentor teacher and host school. There were strong suggestions for ways to develop a more consistent experience.

Recommendation 12: The role of mentor teacher would benefit from being professionalised, with clear expectations, quality assurance and benefits.

Recommendation 13: TEPs consider restructuring programs to provide more field experience in deliberately varied contexts.

Recommendation 14: The concerns of teacher candidates about paying tuition to provide free labour and field experiences are acknowledged and addressed.

7| Entering employment is seen as stressful and not well supported

The first years of teaching are seen as thankless, unsatisfying, and exhausting. Respondents were able to provide concrete suggestions to improve this transition.

Recommendation 15: TEPs consider strengthening preparation around safety and socio-emotional aspects of teaching, which has high priority for new teachers.

Recommendation 16: Pragmatic supports for new teachers, such as materials and resources to equip a classroom, are provided.

Recommendation 17: Expectations for new teachers are clear, both in terms of curriculum and time demands beyond the classroom.

Recommendation 18: Orientation, both for contract teachers and Teachers Teaching On Call (TTOCs), is strengthened.

Recommendation 19: The multiple challenges faced by TTOCs are recognised and addressed by districts and schools.

8| First year teachers need access to mentoring and supportive administrators

This comment was sufficiently common and consistent for it to constitute a stand-alone cluster of recommendations.

Recommendation 20: A strong and supportive mentorship program is available to every new teacher.

Recommendation 21: School administrators recognise the needs of new teachers and find ways to provide opportunities to support their development.

9| Professional development is not seen as effective

Professional development is seen as a lost opportunity for new teachers, with no apparent rationale for what is offered and little support from school or district administration.

Recommendation 22: There would be a great deal to gain from a coherent and systematic approach to teacher professional development in BC, including protected time and resources.

Recommendation 23: The professional development system finds ways to recognise and value peer education and self-directed learning.

10| Access to Pro-D is seen as a challenge

Gaining access to professional development, especially important given the perceived gaps in TEPs, is seen as potentially difficult and expensive.

Recommendation 24: Cost of Pro-D is capped or subsidized more systematically, and the particular cost pressures for rural teachers addressed.

Recommendation 25: TTOCs have access to professional development as part of employment conditions.

11| Further research with rural teachers is needed

This survey was not able to fully explore differences between new urban and new rural teachers. Experience suggests these differences will be significant and it is important to understand them.

Recommendation 26: Education partners consider a means of reaching out to new teachers in rural settings to identify their specific concerns.

12| Further research with teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities is needed

The findings regarding teachers with disabilities and diverse abilities are at a broad level, and it is important to look more carefully at the experience of this group of educators.

Recommendation 27: TEPs engage with teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities to understand their experience and address issues arising.

13| Further understanding of the experience of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers is necessary

The lower utility of coursework and field experience for First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers, followed by the higher utility of the first year of teaching and professional development is an important and interesting phenomenon and calls for further understanding. This seems likely to be a product of less appropriate coursework and field experience along with positive professional entry.

Recommendation 28: TEPs explore their programs in conjunction with Indigenous representatives to understand more fully how they can better meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teacher candidates.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To learn more about the survey, including details of the respondents and their comments, data, methods and the findings, please see the full report at www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/organizational-structure/ministries-organizations/boards-commissions-tribunals/bctc.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this report, involving analysis of a very substantial data set and the development of concrete recommendations to help shape transition into teaching for the new teachers of the future, involved a significant group of people. Each of them played an important role.

The New Teacher Survey Working Group of the British Columbia Teachers' Council, including members Shelley Balfour, Jatinder Bir, Jo-Anne Chrona, Michelle LaBounty and Jim Iker, kept the project on the rails and moving forward. Each brought expertise and energy to a somewhat daunting piece of work!

The Professional Excellence Unit at the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care were actively engaged with the project and provided valuable support.

The Education Analytics Office at the BC Ministry of Education and Child Care provided enormous support with the mechanics and logistics of delivering a very large survey to 9,800 people. The work would not have been possible without that support.

Specific mention goes to Edward Kroc of the University of British Columbia and Dijana Gres of the Ministry of Education and Child Care for assistance with key aspects of analysis.

Professor Philippa Cordingley of the Centre for the Use of Research and Evidence in Education (CUREE) generously shared ideas and survey questions from her previous work on teacher professional identity and helped shape this work.

Finally, a huge debt is owed to the new teachers who took the time to answer a huge survey during a global pandemic, one of the most stressful periods in the history of education in BC and in their professional lives. This report was intended to reflect their views as respectfully and responsibly as possible. Hopefully, they can find their voices represented here.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	8
CONTENTS	9
1 ABOUT THIS SURVEY	12
A. FORMAT OF QUANTITATIVE COMPONENTS	12
B. SEGMENTATION	13
C. OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES	15
D. FINDINGS CARRIED FORWARD	16
E. DATA IN THE APPENDIX	16
2 RESPONDENTS	17
A. RESPONSE RATE	17
B. GENDER	17
C. AGE	18
D. ETHNIC IDENTITY	19
E. DISABILITY AND DIVERSE ABILITY	19
F. LEVEL OF QUALIFICATION	19
G. YEAR OF GRADUATION	20
H. TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM	22
I. EMPLOYMENT	22
J. YEAR OF CERTIFICATION AND EMPLOYMENT	23
K. TYPE OF SCHOOL	24
L. LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT	25
M. CHAPTER SUMMARY	26
3 NEW TEACHERS' PRIORITIES	27
A. RANKING PRIORITIES	27
B. COMMENTS ON THE GOALS OF TEACHING	28
C. CHAPTER SUMMARY	38

4 	NEW TEACHERS' VIEWS OF WORKING CONDITIONS	39
	A. SCALE RESPONSES ON WORKING CONDITIONS	39
	B. SCORE DISTRIBUTIONS	40
	C. GENDER AND WORKING CONDITIONS	47
	D. QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND WORKING CONDITIONS	48
	E. ETHNICITY AND WORKING CONDITIONS	49
	F. DIVERSE ABILITIES AND WORKING CONDITIONS	50
	G. COMMENTS ON WORKING CONDITIONS	50
	H. CHAPTER SUMMARY	61
5 	THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR BC EDUCATORS	62
	A. FAMILIARITY WITH THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR BC EDUCATORS	62
	B. CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE OF THE STANDARDS	63
	C. UNDERSTANDING INDIGENOUS LEARNERS AND COMMUNITY	65
	D. CHAPTER SUMMARY	67
6 	TEP COURSEWORK	68
	A. SCALE RESPONSES REGARDING COURSEWORK	68
	B. GENDER AND COURSE EXPERIENCE	69
	C. QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND COURSEWORK	71
	D. ETHNICITY AND COURSEWORK	73
	E. DIVERSE ABILITIES AND COURSEWORK	74
	F. COMMENTS ON COURSEWORK	75
	G. CHAPTER SUMMARY	84
7 	TEP FIELD EXPERIENCES	85
	A. SCALE RESPONSES REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE	85
	B. GENDER AND FIELD EXPERIENCE	86
	C. QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND FIELD EXPERIENCE	89
	D. ETHNICITY AND FIELD EXPERIENCE	91
	E. DIVERSE ABILITIES AND FIELD EXPERIENCES	91
	F. COMMENTS ON FIELD EXPERIENCE	91
	G. CHAPTER SUMMARY	99

8 	FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	100
	A. SCALE RESPONSES REGARDING FIELD EXPERIENCE	100
	B. GENDER AND FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	101
	C. QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	104
	D. ETHNICITY AND FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	105
	E. DIVERSE ABILITIES AND THE FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	106
	F. COMMENTS ON THE FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING	106
	G. CHAPTER SUMMARY	114
9 	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	115
	A. SCALE RESPONSES REGARDING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	116
	B. GENDER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	117
	C. QUALIFICATION LEVEL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	119
	D. ETHNICITY AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	120
	E. DIVERSE ABILITIES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	120
	F. COMMENTS ON PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	121
	G. CHAPTER SUMMARY	128
10 	FINAL COMMENTS ON THE TRANSITION TO PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR	129
	A. THEMED COMMENTS	129
	B. CHAPTER SUMMARY	139
11 	CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	140
	A. ADDRESSING THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS	140
	B. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	142
	C. CHAPTER SUMMARY	149
	APPENDIX DATA TABLES	150

1 | ABOUT THE SURVEY

The fundamental question driving this project is “what role do the Professional Standards for BC Educators² play in shaping teacher preparation and the transition to employment?” There are four sub-questions:

- How is the experience of being a new teacher in BC?
- Are certain phases of teacher transition more strongly linked to the Professional Standards?
- How do different genders, levels and ethnicities of teachers experience these links?
- What recommendations—for programs, employers, and other stakeholders—emerge from this analysis?

In addressing these questions, information was also gathered regarding the general experience of being a new teacher in British Columbia, mainly around teaching priorities and the working conditions of teachers. These questions will be re-introduced after presentation of the data, in the chapter titled “Conclusions and Recommendations.” The current chapter sets out how the data were analysed in order to reach the conclusions and recommendations.

Please note that the statistical significance of results is indicated using asterisks throughout this report using the statistical convention of asterisks:

No asterisk: The result is not statistically significant.

* $p \leq 0.05$

** $p \leq 0.01$

*** $p \leq 0.001$

For most social science applications, a probability of error less than or equal to 0.05 is considered the standard for significance, so for most purposes readers can take results marked by any number of asterisks as statistically significant.

A. Format of quantitative components

There was a significant number of quantitative questions. They covered the following areas:

- Teaching priorities
- Working conditions
- Familiarity with the Professional Standards for BC Educators
- Teacher education program (TEP) coursework
- TEP field experience
- The first year of teaching
- Professional development

²www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/standards-for-educators/standards-case-studies

For the first group, respondents had to rank the priorities from 1 to 6. For the other groups, the questions provided a scale from 0-100 and a slider. The slider started in the central (“50”) position and could be moved with a finger or a mouse to indicate the extent to which the respondent agreed with the prompt. An individual’s score on a single question could be “74” for example. If the respondent skipped a question they could not leave the page, so there was no question of multiple spurious scores of 50 due to missed questions. The responses to these prompts are called “scale responses.”

The last four groups of questions were based around the BC educator Professional Standards. For example, prompt 42 read “Coursework helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.” This is based on the following Professional Standard for BC Educators:

5| Educators implement effective planning, instruction, assessment and reporting practices to create respectful, inclusive environments for student learning and development.

The survey approaches the transition from teacher candidate to professional educator as a four-phase process, generally in line with the timing of the preparation programs. It asked first about coursework, then field experience, followed by the first year of teaching and professional development. The responses differed significantly according to phase, though some consistent themes could be identified.

The need to address nine Standards in reasonable detail across four phases of teacher preparation and transition resulted in a substantial survey. The impact of the length is discussed in the following chapter. Whilst potentially daunting, the detailed nature of the survey yielded significant and detailed information.

B. Segmentation

Segmentation refers to dividing the data up by respondent characteristic to understand different people’s experience. One of the most common segmentation strategies is to compare answers by self-identified gender of the respondent. In this survey, there were three main segmentations to explore:

1. Self-identified gender
2. Level of qualification (elementary vs. secondary)
3. Self-identified ethnicity

While these analyses can be very valuable it is important to be aware of the limitations. One important concern is the size of the segments. It makes no sense to compare a segment of 900 people with a segment of six people. The problem is how to be sure oranges are being compared with oranges. The 900 respondents could provide a good estimate of the segment as a whole, while the 6 people could easily be clustered at one end or another. The only way to increase confidence about the sample being a good representation of the population is through more respondents.

Gender and qualification level

In segmentation, it is always possible for the sub-groups to cut across each other and interfere. Overall, 72.7% of respondents self-identified as female and were almost evenly divided between those who completed elementary programs and those who completed secondary programs. Table 1.1 shows the distribution of respondents by self-described gender and level of program (elementary, middle, or secondary). It demonstrates two segmentation issues.

Table 1.1: Level of study by self-identified gender

(Numbers will not add to 100% due to rounding)

Gender	Elementary		Middle		Secondary		Total
Female	435	80.3%	.1	33.3%	335	61.4%	771
X	11	2.0%	0	0	12	2.2%	23
Male	96	17.7%	2	66.7%	199	36.4%	297
Total	542	100%	3	546	546	100%	1091

First of all, there are several cells with very few respondents, especially noticeable in the Gender X row. There are not enough respondents here to provide for valid analysis. Similarly, only three people in middle school programs provided their gender when answering the survey, so their data cannot be used in segmentation (though, of course, it can be used in the broader analysis).

There is also an association between gender and level of program. The categories large enough to be used in analysis are Female/Male and Elementary/Secondary. There is quite a difference in the distribution of these genders in program levels, however, with 80.3% of elementary teachers female and 61.4% of secondary teachers female. Another way to look at this is that almost 2/3 of female respondents are primary qualified, while about 2/3 of male respondents are secondary qualified. This imbalance in gender may tend to affect results calculated by level of qualification. For example, if female teachers tend to like the colour green and male teachers tend to like purple then it might look like elementary teachers prefer green just because of the huge majority of female teachers at that level.

For each of the analyses presented in the following chapters an extra level of analysis is provided to help deal with cross-interference. For example, a certain question may show different results for male and female teachers. In order to understand the effects of qualification level, female and male elementary teachers will then be compared with each other and then female and male secondary teachers. In a number of the analyses the results show a gender difference that is driven by one level of teachers, often male secondary teachers giving different scale responses from female secondary teachers and all elementary teachers. This sounds complicated, but hopefully the text in the reporting chapters will help to clarify the approach.

Ethnicity

Differences of experience for people of different ethnicities was recognised as a critical social issue at the time this survey was conducted. Comparing experiences by ethnic identity, therefore, was a crucial step in understanding the dynamics of life for new teachers. It proved challenging to balance precision and sufficient numbers of respondents. People had to be able to select freely among multiple identities in order to represent themselves and their communities accurately. This led, however, to very fragmented data.

To consolidate the data multiple responses were allocated to each category the person selected. For example, somebody who indicated they were Chinese and White would have their answers counted in both groups. This led to four groups with at least 5% of respondents included. In the analysis responses from members of each of these groups was compared with the overall mean to identify statistically significant differences.

In the ethnicity analysis the following groups are considered:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- South Asian
- Chinese
- White
- Overall mean

Around 10% of respondents identified with groups which were not represented by enough data to be included in the comparative analysis. However, their scale responses were still included at every stage of analysis.

Disability and diverse abilities

Respondents were asked if they identify as having a disability or diverse abilities. Around 6% indicated this was the case. They were not asked for any details regarding their abilities and this group of teachers could have a wide range of abilities. Nonetheless it is interesting to note that their experience was consistent enough to create some statistically significant differences from other new teachers, as will be discussed in each chapter in turn.

C. Open-ended responses

Each section of the survey included opportunities for respondents to tell us more about the issues raised. This resulted in well over 1,000 comments. In order to capture the meaning of the comments without overwhelming readers the responses have been presented clustered by theme. Of course, this is not always the tidiest process, but every effort has been made to represent the broadest range of views. Respondents can be assured that every single comment was read and considered in the development of this report.

Many of the responses are difficult to read, as they present the profession of teaching as a challenging and stressful environment. This reflects the comments accurately. In some sections the respondents who wrote comments gave lower scale responses, meaning these teachers group were more negative about the connection between the phases of teacher preparation and the Professional Standards. The survey responses therefore provide important insights into the group of new teachers who may be at most risk of burn-out and leaving the profession, and should be taken as serious indicators of the challenges of new teachers.

D. Findings carried forward

At the end of most chapters there is a short list of findings carried forward. These are the findings from that chapter to be brought together and addressed in the conclusion and implications in Chapter 11. They are numbered by chapter to allow easy links from the findings back to the appropriate chapter.

E. Data in the appendix

The full results of analysis are not included in each chapter. However, the tables containing the data appear in the appendix at the end of the report.

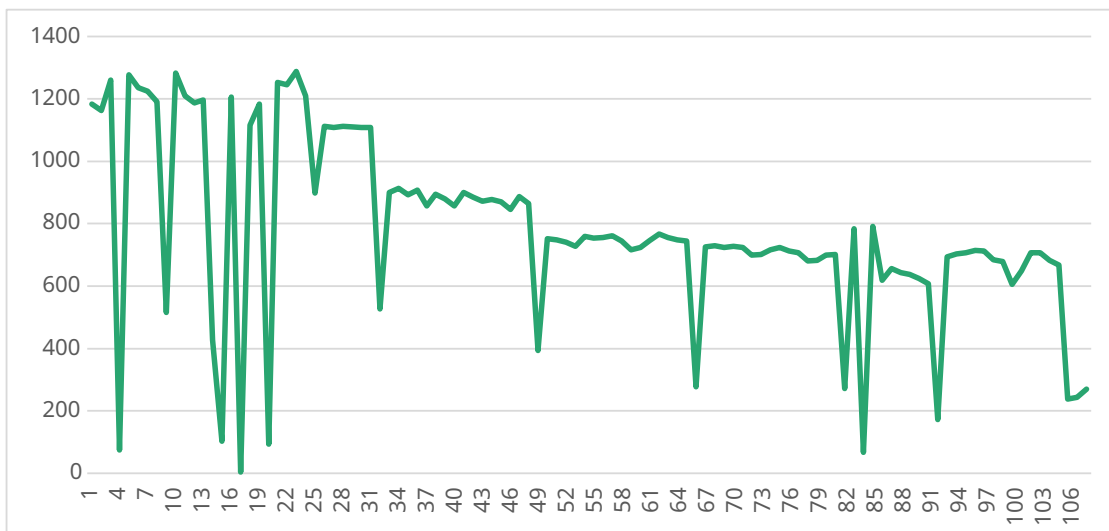
2 | RESPONDENTS

Not everybody invited to respond to a survey will be able to do so, therefore it is critical to understand as much as possible about the people who do respond in order to understand how much they differ from the rest of the people invited. In this case, the aim was to invite all the people who have graduated from British Columbia teacher education programs (TEPs) and gained certification as teachers over the last five years (2015-2021). The total number in this category—and invited to respond to the survey—was 9,800.

A. Response rate

The total number of responses was 1,311, or just over 13%. Not all respondents answered all the questions. The lowest number of respondents for any one scale question (excluding open-ended questions) is approximately 600. Response numbers (“n”) are provided for each item or range of items in this report. These response numbers are relatively low for a survey of a closed profession, which could have been caused by external factors such as the effect of Covid or internal factors such as survey design. There is no way to know, but in either case it is wise to maintain a degree of caution about generalising too broadly from these responses.

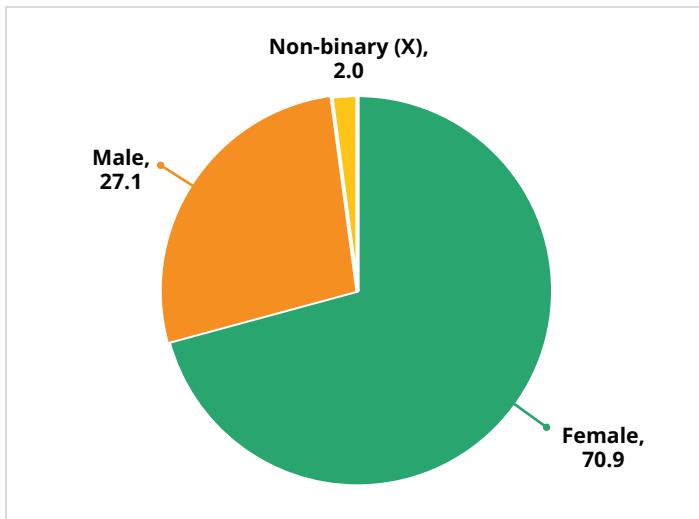
Figure 2.1: Response numbers by question



B. Gender

Respondents self-declared their gender as female 70.9% of the time, with 2.0% selecting a non-binary option.

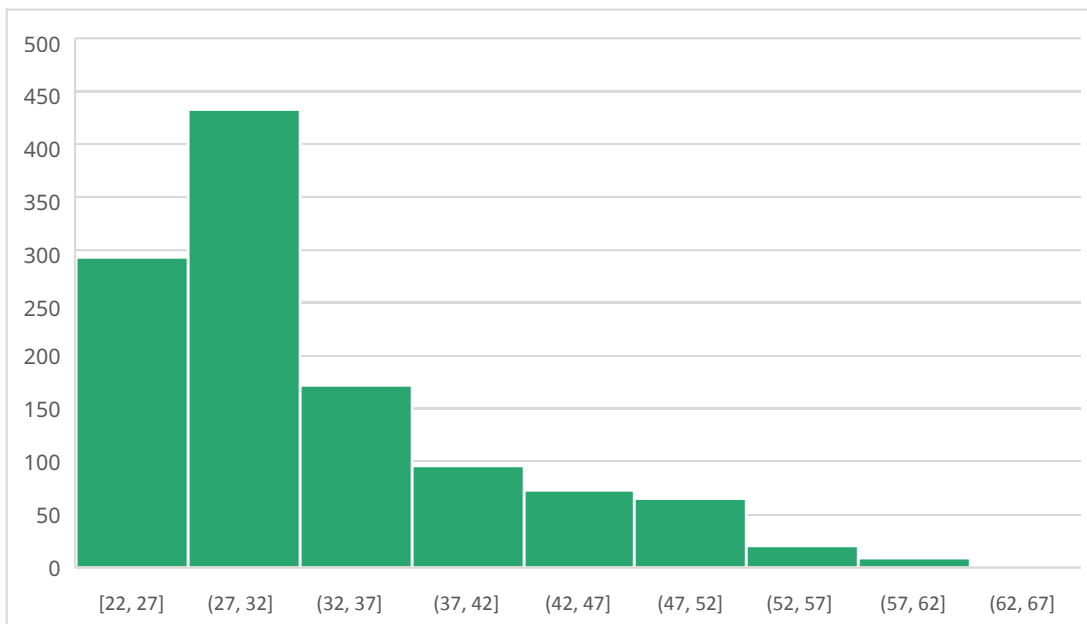
Figure 2.2: Self-declared gender of respondents (%) (n=1184)



C. Age

The age of respondents was towards the younger end of the scale, as might be expected of new entrants to a profession. Just over 62% were 32 or younger. For the third of respondents in their thirties or older, it seems unlikely that their entry to the teaching profession followed on from high school and a first degree.

Figure 2.3: Age of respondents (n=1163)



D. Ethnic identity

Ethnicity is a complex aspect of identity and following current practice the survey provided a considerable range of options for respondents, including multiple selections. The analytical approach to ethnicity is described in Chapter 1. Overall there were 1,343 responses, with 137 responses falling into groupings too small to permit robust analysis.

Table 2.1: Self-identified ethnicity of respondents

	N	%
First Nations, Métis and Inuit	61	5.1
South Asian	65	5.4
Chinese	78	6.5
White	1002	83.1
Other categories of response	137	

The breakdown of respondents by self-identified ethnicity strongly resembles the population profile of the province, giving little reason to believe certain groups chose not to engage with the survey. It is significant to note the presence of First Nations, Métis and Inuit respondents as it allows their experience to be specifically represented.

E. Disability and diverse ability

Each respondent was asked if they identified as a person with a disability or diverse ability. Just over 6% responded positively to this question. This group were compared to the other new teachers in each analysis. However, because the group were not further differentiated the key takeaway here is the need for more in-depth research on the experience of these teachers.

Table 2.2: Self-identification as a person with a disability or diverse ability

Yes	79	6.2
No	1198	93.8
n = 1277		100%

F. Level of qualification

Data allows analysis of the level of schooling in which respondents have been prepared to teach. Respondents were relatively evenly split between elementary and secondary programs, with an additional 5 graduates from the only current middle years program in the province (Table 2.3).

Table 2.3: Respondents' program type

Elementary	594	49.92
Secondary	591	49.66
Middle	5	0.42
n = 1190		100%

In later analyses the responses of secondary and elementary graduates will be compared. However, British Columbia has a system of differentiated qualifications leading to an undifferentiated field (that is, a teacher can be employed at any grade irrespective of nominal qualification). Qualification at one level may or may not be reflected in actual employment.

In this survey, 53 secondary graduates reported working in elementary grades and 23 elementary graduates were working in secondary grades. There were also 51 people working in grades spanning traditional elementary and secondary levels. Around a third of the cross-grade respondents identified themselves as specialist teachers, for example teaching music or working with diverse learners across a system. Another group were working on call and had the opportunity to work with a number of grades. There was another group who were not specialist or on call but who simply worked with different grade levels. The responses suggest around 10% of these new teachers were working outside and across traditional grade divisions. Since the main focus of this study is pre-practice, analyses were completed on the basis of program level.

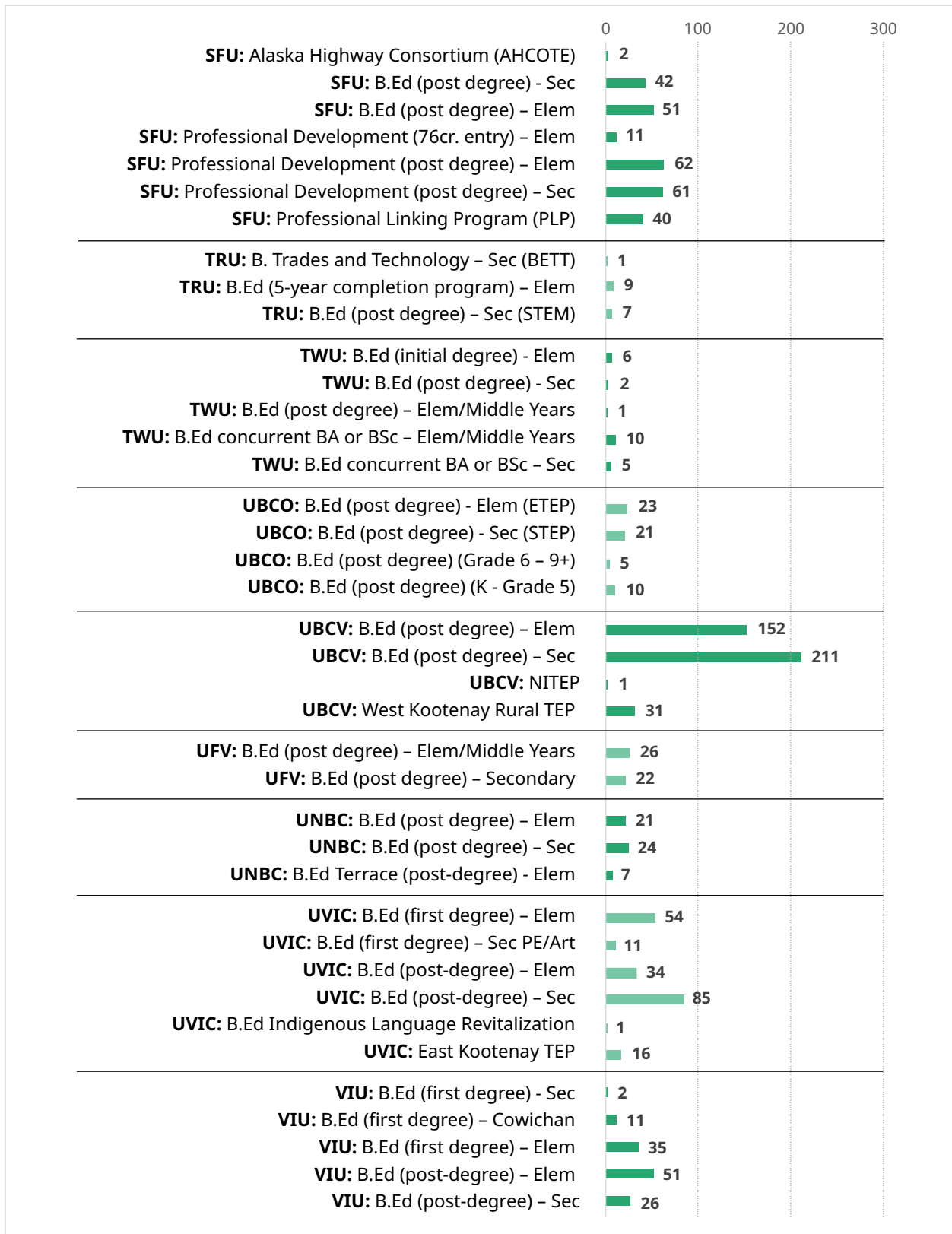
G. Year of graduation

The year respondents completed a TEP was weighted in favour of more recent graduates. This report will examine overall results by year cohort to establish whether there were significant changes by year, especially as the last cohort was affected by the global pandemic of 2022-2023.

Table 2.4: Respondents year of graduation

Freq	%	
2015	179	14.5
2016	147	11.9
2017	175	14.1
2018	193	15.6
2019	249	20.1
2020	293	23.7
n = 1238		100%

Figure 2.4: Program Completed by Respondents (n=1190)



H. Teacher Education Program

Survey respondents came from each of the nine BC TEPs, as shown in Table 2.5. It is not the intention of this analysis to evaluate or compare programs but it is worth noting that the low numbers of responses from some programs would have made it challenging if that had been the intention. It was possible to drill into this data a little more deeply to identify the specific program pathways respondents followed, as shown in Figure 2.4. The numbers here are even lower, introducing more validity threats into any attempt to summarize by pathway.

Table 2.5: Institutions from which respondents graduated

Simon Fraser University	269
Thompson Rivers University	17
Trinity Western University	24
UBC Okanagan	59
UBC Vancouver	395
University of the Fraser Valley	48
University of Northern BC	52
University of Victoria	201
Vancouver Island University	125
n = 1190	

Respondents were asked if they currently reside in British Columbia and the results were strongly positive (Table 2.6). These responses add validity to the insights the survey provides regarding the teaching profession in the province.

Table 2.6: Responses when asked if current resident of British Columbia

	Freq	%
No	35	2.7
Yes	1253	97.3
n = 1288		100

I. Employment

The respondents also indicated that they were overwhelmingly employed as teachers (Table 2.7).

Table 2.7: Responses when asked if currently employed as a teacher

	Freq	%
No	69	5.4
Yes	1214	94.6
n = 1283		100

However, it cannot be assumed every respondent is on a full-time contract. As shown in Table 2.8 only 73% mention having a full-time contract. Around one in seven are working on call. It is unknown whether this represents a preference or lack of full-time contracts.

Table 2.8: Employment status of respondents

	Freq	%
FT Contract	836	70.8
FT Contract; PT Contract	3	0.3
PT Contract	71	6.0
TTOC/Teacher on Call	178	15.1
TTOC/Teacher on Call; FT Contract	22	1.9
TTOC/Teacher on Call; PT Contract	70	5.9
	n = 1180	100%

One important way to understand these statistics more fully is to consider whether time since certification makes a difference to employment status. Table 2.9 shows that the effect is strong. Among those certified in 2015 almost 86% have a full-time contract and only 3.2% are working on call. For those certified in 2021 only 37% had full-time contracts at the time of the survey and more than a third were working on call. The intermediate years reinforce the pattern—over time an increasing number of teachers accept a full-time contract.

J. Year of certification and employment

Table 2.9: Employment status of respondents by year of certification

Certification Year	FT Contract	TTOC
2015	85.9	3.2
2016	84.6	6.9
2017	81.4	9.6
2018	76.0	9.8
2019	73.2	13.8
2020	54.7	27.8
2021	37.0	35.2

Respondents were asked when they received their teaching certificate and when they first worked as a certified teacher. Table 2.10 shows the number of years between certification and employment. For these respondents, the overwhelming picture is of certification followed very quickly by employment. The picture may be even more positive than suggested here since some programs finish towards the end of the calendar year. Some of the one-year gaps will arise from people gaining certification in December and starting work in January.

Table 2.10: Years between certification and employment

Years	Freq	%
0	1097	87.6
1	131	10.5
2	19	1.5
3	2	0.16
4	3	0.24
n =		1252

K. Type of school

The majority of respondents are currently employed in public schools, as shown in Table 2.11. Given these numbers, with 92% in one type of school, this analysis will not be able to look at the responses of those not employed in public school settings.

Table 2.11: Type of school respondents work in

	Freq	%
Alternate Programs	10	0.8
BC Offshore school	2	0.2
Continuing Education Program	1	0.1
Independent Distributed Learning school	3	0.2
Independent First Nations school	4	0.3
Independent school	68	5.6
Long-term Provincial Resource Program	1	0.1
Non-Independent First Nations school	1	0.1
Other	4	0.3
Public Distributed Learning school	3	0.2
Public school	1108	92.0
n =		1205
		100.0

Respondents were asked to specify the roles they were employed in. In Table 2.12 there are more responses (1,241) than respondents (1,184) because people could select more than one response. There is a range of positions identified, including significant numbers of specialist teachers and around 2% involved in school administration.

Table 2.12: Position held by respondents

	Freq	%
Classroom Teacher	982	82.9
Department Head	21	1.8
Distributed Learning Teacher	27	2.3
Specialist Teacher	141	11.9
Adult Education Teacher	7	0.6
Principal/Head of School	2	0.2
Other	61	5.2
Total responses	1241	104.8

n = 1184

Data were also collected on the location of respondents' employment (Table 2.13). Once more people could select more than one school district, if applicable, so the number of responses (1,143) is greater than the number of respondents (1,116). In this case about 2% of respondents are working in more than one school district. In the table any school district with fewer than 20 respondents was coded into the "other" category to avoid any possibility of identifying respondents. Almost one in six respondents is employed by the Vancouver School Board, while other districts had either zero or very low numbers of respondents. There are 60 districts in BC and 18 are listed here as having 20 or more respondents. This means the average number of respondents across the others is 5.4 (237/44).

L. Location of employment

Respondents were employed by a good range of school districts across the province. The numbers broadly reflect the teaching workforce in each district.

Table 2.13: School districts employing respondents

	Freq	%
05 Southeast Kootenay	22	2.0
08 Kootenay Lake	21	1.9
23 Central Okanagan	21	1.9
33 Chilliwack	20	1.8
35 Langley	135	12.1
36 Surrey	142	12.7
37 Delta	24	2.2
38 Richmond	36	3.2
39 Vancouver	181	16.2
41 Burnaby	26	2.3
43 Coquitlam	24	2.2
57 Prince George	47	4.2
61 Greater Victoria	61	5.5
62 Sooke	27	2.4
63 Saanich	39	3.5
68 Nanaimo-Ladysmith	31	2.8
79 Cowichan Valley	24	2.2
93 Conseil scolaire francophone	25	2.2
Other	237	21.2
Total	1143	102.4

n = 1116

M. Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an overview of respondents. It is unfortunate that the response rate was not higher, and that there was such a significant drop-off in response rates as the survey continued. However, the analyses in the balance of this report are tailored to the response rates and the results retain a high level of validity.

Many of the findings in the following chapters can be expanded a little by consideration of the qualitative data as teachers explain their experiences. Due to the response patterns, however, there remain a number of areas where more focused research with new teachers could be extremely valuable. For example, more work would be helpful regarding the experience of new teachers in rural settings and new teachers who self-identify as having a disability. These voices are not captured well in a general survey but are important to represent. This leads to two findings to carry forward:

- 2.1 The need for a better understanding of new rural teachers' experience**
- 2.2 The need for a better understanding of the experience of teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities**

3 | NEW TEACHERS' PRIORITIES

This chapter addresses the teaching priorities of new educators in British Columbia. The aim was to understand how these teachers thought about the goals of their job and, by extension, what they would consider as successful teaching. Research suggests this is a key aspect of being a teacher and building an identity as an educator. Responses proved to be insightful.

A. Ranking priorities

Respondents were asked to rank the following statements regarding the priorities of their teaching practice. This question was derived from previous work on teacher identity³ and should allow comparison between teachers in British Columbia and other parts of the world. The statements were presented in this order:

- Communicating subject knowledge
- Ensuring student success in formal examinations
- Promoting student enjoyment and interest in education
- Inspiring students to follow their interests
- Preparing students for the next stage of education or employment
- Educating students to be good citizens

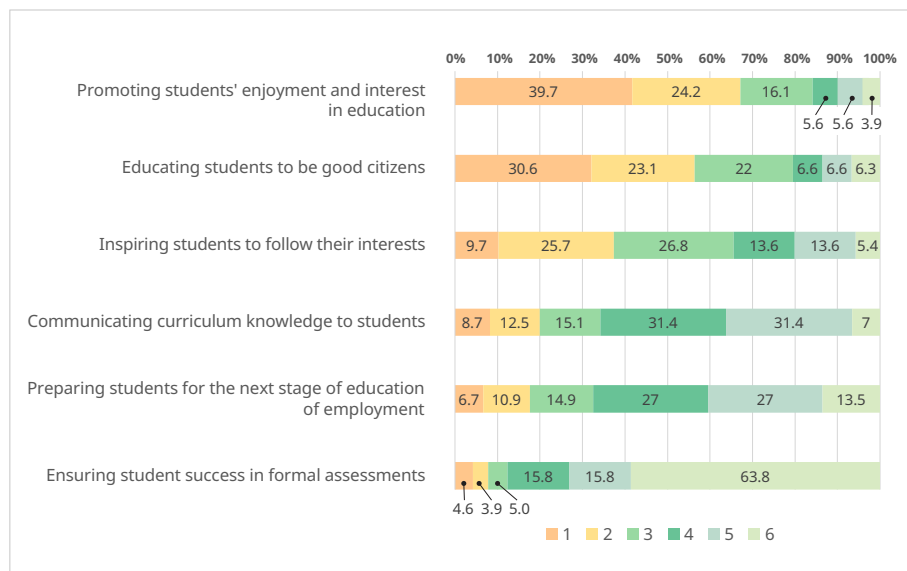
The results of this exercise are shown in Figure 3.1. In the Figure, responses are ordered from the most frequent first choice to the least popular first choice. The first choice of 70.3% of respondents was either “promoting student enjoyment and interest in education” or “educating students to be good citizens.” These two were the second choice of 47.3% of respondents, implying that a significant number of respondents prioritised these as their first and second choices.

At the other end of the scale, 63.8% of respondents gave “ensuring student success in formal examinations” as their lowest priority. This is about five times as many respondents as gave lowest priority to any other option.

³Cordingley, P., B. Crisp, P. Johns, T. Perry, C. Campbell, M. Bell and M. Bradbury (2019). Constructing Teachers' Professional Identities. Brussels, Belgium, Education International. <https://www.ei-ie.org/file/274>

While respondents were not always happy with the forced choice provided by this question (see open-ended responses below for more detail) the question did produce a strong and consistent message about the priorities respondents hold in their professional lives as teachers.

Figure 3.1: Teaching priorities of respondents (n= 1108-1115)



B. Comments on the goals of teaching

There were 528 comments provided in the free-entry text box for the priority-setting exercise. These included some expressions of frustration at the way the exercise was set up and the items included. Since these items were incorporated from an international study of emerging teacher identity the current survey designers had few options regarding the wording used for each of the prompts. This may go some way to explaining the feeling of respondents that the exercise was less relevant than it could have been.

“ FYI: The above rating is challenging because we can have goals with the same priority. All of these are between 4-6 for me. ”

“ I want the best for my students. There is no reason that the goals above need to be ranked as they are mostly equally important to student wellbeing. ”

One set of comments pointed out that not only was ranking unhelpful, the six different aspects had to be approached together to make any sense.

“ I’m not sure that the ranking system above is actually effective. I feel like my main goals for teaching are to: 1. Create meaningful, professional, safe, and trusting relationships with students 2. Help students learn how to be active and good citizens 3. Work with passions and learn to pivot for different students needs 4. Teach skills that will benefit students in life and in their future. Honestly, there are so many things that are important.. I’m just not sure they need to be ranked. ”

“ Ranking these things is very difficult as many are interlinked and overlapping, and several are equally important to me, as they are for many people I know. For example, communicating curriculum knowledge and inspiring students to follow their interests are both deeply important and intertwined. ”

A few comments appeared to reflect dissatisfaction with teaching and with teachers' working conditions.

“ My goals are to make a pay cheque - this is a job, please stop gaslighting teachers into this belief that teaching is anything more than a job - my goals in life are not a reflection of my job. BUT I guess one goal would be to work somewhere that values health and safety though, which is clearly not the case when I consider my own employers during this pandemic. ”

Another subtlety was the difference between the goals of teachers, administration and the institution.

“ Although my personal goals for my students are the same as the school's, the order of priority of those goals is very different. ”

The majority of comments went well beyond the six priorities provided and provided helpful insights into the values of these new teachers. These comments fall into six broad areas.

Social priorities

Many respondents stated their priorities were more social justice oriented than those included as options. This could include the way students were treated in the school system, particularly around inclusive education. Funding and resources was often identified as a key issue.

“ Continue to fight for equitable funding in schools to better support students. ”

“ Healthy, strong learners require a healthy, strong, and adequately funded Education system. Education exists in society and thus we need to ensure that it meets their needs with regards to social inequities. Students cannot get a proper start in their careers or in their learning if they are not receiving specialized support from learning support teachers, integration support teachers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Child and Youth Care Workers, Indigenous Education Support staff, Education Assistants, Librarians, Janitors and Counselors. ”

“ That special needs children deserve an inclusive education. That the core competencies are essential as well as student interest and enjoyment. Relationships are crucial or students will not learn. ”

Broader issues were commonly mentioned, including preparing students to understand and contribute to social change.

“ I hope to decolonize education and challenge the system, as it is very very broken and underfunded. Frankly, it is sad and I’m not sure I’ll stay in the education system due to gaslighting and unfair compensation for work done. ”

“ Decolonization, FPPL, Black/ Indigenous Futurism, LGBTQ2+ pride, sustainability & climate change, Feminism & how all of these intersect within ourselves and out in the world. Also I love teaching Tech!!!! ”

“ Anti Racist education and lense to teaching; incorporating Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing into the curriculum for students to understand and appreciate Indigenous culture and traditions to society. Sexual orientation and Gender identity into my practice as well. ”

“ Mostly to ensure to students are learning social justice values at every age and subject I teach. ”

“ I want students to be prepared and open to change societal norms that are not working for modern day citizens. They need to be adaptable and open to change as we face issues related to climate change and all that comes with that. ”

One area attracting a lot of interest—and not mentioned in the six priorities provided—was decolonizing the education system and bringing in the views of Indigenous people and communities.

“ Decolonizing my educational practice to better serve my Indigenous and Non-Indigenous learners. ”

“ Ensure that my diverse students see themselves represented and that those in the dominant culture might have some understanding of what it is like to not be represented. To lift Indigenous voices and perspectives. ”

“ Decolonizing learning, assessment, and the education system. ”

The conclusion drawn from these comments is that social justice and societal concerns should be included in any list of priorities for teachers in BC.

Socio-emotional learning

Another area attracting a lot of comments was socio-emotional learning. Where mentioned this was sometimes linked to the recent pandemic, based on the observation that the measures taken to protect the health of those in the school could make it harder for students to learn socio-emotional aspects of their development.

“ Teaching Social-Emotional Learning to students is critical in this time, especially with Covid and the extended pressures and anxieties that students, families, and teachers currently face. Teaching resilience and how to cope and adapt to a changing world seems relevant as well. I also feel that we should be teaching students how to manage money, invest their money, and how to plan for large purchases such as a car, and a house. Without economic and financial literacy the newer generations will have no hope to have a satisfied, happy life. ”

“ In our current teaching environment, my highest priority and challenge is ensuring students SEL needs are met. High anxiety is a huge concern. My first priority is to make my students feel safe, accepted and comfortable so that they are ready to learn in my classroom. ”

Respondents talked of consciously changing their goals as educators to reflect the experiences and situations of the students.

“ My goals tend to shift and change depending on the groups I’m teaching and what I’m noticing about their needs. For example, the group I’m currently teaching has been greatly impacted by the pandemic and struggle with a basic understanding of how to behave in a community and how to treat each other. They are also behind in basic skills development. I spend a lot of my time with them talking to them about their work habits and what I’m noticing about their treatment of others and their environment. Secondly, I am focusing instruction on the basic skills they need to move forward next year. ”

The importance of this area of learning and development was expressed in a clear and articulate way by a number of respondents.

“ My pedagogical standpoint is that education needs to expand to social-emotional learning that is rooted in relationship and the lived curriculum. Focus on the core competencies and experiential learning opportunities will allow students to grow to a place where they will step into the world confidently with the ability to self-advocate, think critically, and navigate the challenges of adulthood. ”

“ Promoting overall wellbeing..... social skills, stress management, emotional regulation, physical literacy. These children need serious help to [become] functioning adults. ”

Social-emotional learning was understood in slightly different ways by different respondents. One approach was conceptualized around the creation of student well-being.

“ The mental health of many students is fragile. Balancing well-being and responsibilities is an important aspect of becoming independent that we discuss and work on. ”

“ Teaching, especially during these times, should focus first and foremost on students’ social-emotional well-being. When students feel safe and confident, they are motivated and interested and engage better with content in the classroom. I aim to create a safe, comfortable and engaging classroom environment where students feel they can succeed irrespective of their challenges and abilities. ”

Another perspective put more emphasis on social-emotional learning as the soft skills making it easier to work and collaborate with others.

“ Teaching students the skills, attitudes and behaviours that will make them successful outside the classroom is most important. Perseverance work ethic and attitude towards challenges and “failure” are very important. ”

Some of those who acknowledged the importance of social-emotional learning felt themselves ill-equipped to lead learning in this area.

“ Teaching seems to have very little to do with teaching. It is definitely not what I thought I was going to be. The majority of my job is behaviour management. Once I finish my Masters Thesis... I will begin to pursue professional development in educational psychology as I am finding it more and more difficult to “teach” students and parents as I am lacking the foundational professional development needed to address common issues we face in the classroom every day. In addition, I will pursue professional counselling for myself. If I do not do this I will quit teaching. ”

Social-emotional learning is clearly being taken very seriously by teachers in British Columbia, though not without some cost.

Safety

The next priority area emerging from the data would fit under social-emotional learning if it were not so strongly emphasised by respondents. There were many comments specifically placing safety at the heart of current teaching practice and as a fundamental concern before learning could be effective.

“ Firstly, I set up a classroom that can be a safe and loving place. Social Emotional is huge for me at the start of and throughout the year, because I do believe student’s best learn when they are regulated, feel safe, and feel loved. ”

“ I hope students feel safe in my room first and foremost, kids don’t learn when they aren’t safe. I also want students to have a deep understanding on the skills and knowledge from the curriculum. I’m always trying to promote learning through engaging activities. ”

Safety was seen as something especially important in the current context.

“ I believe that students need to be seen and heard in the school setting. Given the current climate it has become more and more important for students to feel safe in order to learn. This requires a great deal of trust building between staff and students way before learning can begin. It is crucial for us to take interest in what students believe is valuable in their learning process and to work from there. ”

Many comments connected safety to specific opportunities and outcomes that would in turn support learning.

“ My hope is for students to feel safe enough in my class to take risks with learning, friendships and trying new things. I also strive for self awareness and leadership. ”

“ In the music classroom, my primary goal is to foster a supportive, safe environment where all students know they are welcomed and that they are valuable members of our community. The music room needs to be a safe, trusted place in order for any great work and learning to happen. It’s a big part in student retention in the program year after year, as well as a key factor in a student’s ability to process the information with which we work. ”

“ Teaching is a profession in which one can create a sense of safety for students. Young adults deserve a place to belong and an enriching place where they can explore their identities and know that they are valued. Young adults need support and navigational tools to best understand themselves in order to encounter the world. ”

Closely related to safety, and mentioned by respondents in conjunction with it, was the importance of building relationships with and between students.

“ Relationship is at the heart of my teaching goals. My goal is to engage my students with interesting and stimulating lessons while cultivating connections with each one of them. My goal is also for my classroom to be an enjoyable space for my students to be in, where they feel challenged with the coursework but also supported to be successful. ”

The emphasis on safety among write-in responses captures a critical aspect of the current situation in education. After two years of difficult times dealing with Covid it has emerged as a major concern. More than this, it is understood as representing social and emotional safety for students demonstrating many forms of diversity in classrooms and beyond.

Confident, critical and self-directed learners

This category captures a range of goals and priorities that the provided list does not, primarily around development of the student as an autonomous and effective learner. This developmental approach was often linked to care and support for individual learners.

“ My main goal as a teacher is to let students know that they matter, they are important, and that their goals are worth following. Although I am currently teaching in the elementary school system I want to be teaching in Secondary (as I trained for) because teenagers are in a particularly vulnerable time as they transform from children to adults. I want to work with them throughout their high school career to think about who they are and what they want in life. I want them to know that life is worth living, even though many students feel the opposite. I care about my students first and foremost. ”

Development of autonomy and self-direction ran through many of these comments, sometimes explicitly and otherwise implicitly.

“ The previous list does not really articulate my perspective. My primary goal as an educator is to help students acquire skills and competencies they can use in their lives. This will enable them to follow their interests, develop their gifts, and in so doing, hopefully live authentic lives that are aligned with their values and are of service to others. This conversation happens within curriculum, but is led by student perspectives. I hope they find their ‘thing’ and develop the confidence to use it. ”

“ My goals will always be flexible to adapt to the goals students have made for themselves. If a student’s biggest goal is success on a formal assessment, my goal will be to do what I can to help them. ”

The importance of passion was also mentioned a number of times in this group of responses.

“ The essence of teaching, I find, is to have students who grow to become passionate adults that feel like they have control over their destiny, in respect to understanding their place in the world, the circumstances which they have no control over, and being able to set smart goals for their own future. ”

The ability of students to advocate for themselves, with the support of their families, within the education system received considerable attention.

“ Support students and families in the education process. Create strong relationships, and encourage self- advocacy, advocacy by parents for their children. Create meaningful, in- place learning experiences that students can connect to and relate to. ”

There was also a critical edge to some of the comments, with a suggestion that students need to be able to go beyond the knowledge they were given to assess the deeper value of information.

“ Teaching students to understand that knowledge is power. School is not just a babysitting prison as they see it. ”

“ Question, think and search for truth and answers. Make ethical choices ”

“ I believe critical thinking is the most important core competency and also the most important thing we can teach kids. Everything else flows from the ability to think critically. ”

The responses collected under this theme really emphasise the development of independence and insight on the part of the students. There is an overlap with social-emotional development, as autonomous learning requires a reasonable degree of confidence and security. It seems unrealistic to prioritise one over the other.

Preparation for the future

While “preparing students for the next stage of education or employment” was not strongly supported as a priority among the forced choices listed above, similar ideas were certainly identified in the open-ended responses. These were often expressed in terms of skills, ranging from very concrete and specific examples to broader and more open conceptions.

“ Giving them solid instruction in reading skills. ”

“ Developing curricular competencies. ”

“ My goal is for students to have the skills and the passion for life-long learning. ”

Preparing students to engage with their career and life possibilities came through loud and strong in the comments about preparation for the future.

“ My essential goal as educator is to continue to improve students’ motivation and engagement in order to succeed in their future endeavors. ”

“ I hope to help students find their passion and maybe future career through different programs and coops I want to run. ”

Some responses were strikingly strategic and reflected a thoughtful approach to supporting future student success.

“As a PHE teacher my philosophy is to provide enough variety within my class to provide all students the opportunity to find something they enjoy, with the goal of each student knowing how they can be lifelong participants in physical activity.”

“As a CDF and Careers 12 teacher I take the responsibility of preparing students to be successful in the adult or ‘real’ world very seriously. Many students are very anxious about transitioning to trades or university programs and one of the reasons I am in this role is to assist them in that transition successfully.”

“I try to link education to the “real world”, and to provide purpose to activities. I want students be fully aware of how they may use their knowledge and skills for current and future success outside of the school institution. For example- I enjoy cross-curricular activities.”

Across the majority of these comments there was a combination of taking student futures seriously and seeing them as broader than the phrasing of the initial prompt suggested. One comment addressed this directly:

“The goal of education is to prepare students for life; not for further education or work.”

These contributions reflect not so much an additional priority but a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the one offered in the stimuli.

Improving practice

The final goal respondents felt was missing was improving either individual or school practice. Some of the comments reflected the survival needs of teachers:

“My goal is to get support in my classroom. Because I don’t have any students with an IEP, I don’t get EA support. Who do you think gets the ball rolling for them getting IEP’s?! This year alone I have a student with selective mutism, two with ADHD, one with Tourette’s and ADHD, and 4 students who have never attended kindergarten before grade 1. Don’t forget there are more social and emotional needs in many of [students]. A lot of anxiety and pressure for me alone to carry by myself in having all students be successful and reaching their full potential.”

Other comments were more concerned with providing the best possible education to students in the class.

“ I want to continue being reflective in my teaching pedagogy to ensure I am being responsive to the students in my class. ”

“ As a new teacher, I still need to learn how to teach and create a program that I am proud of. ”

“ I want to be able to communicate student learning to families more naturally and organically. I want to be able to peruse the curriculum and know I am implementing it the best way possible in my classroom. ”

Several comments concerned the specific challenges faced by TTOCs in the BC system.

“ My goals are focused on what I can accomplish as a TTOC who is generally in individual classrooms only for short periods of time. When it comes to potentially becoming a full-time teacher, my initial goals are entirely practical: I need course plans, unit plans, lessons and activities. I need procedures for classroom management, community-building, and for equitable assessment. ”

When it came to improving school practice, the suggestions underlined the complexity of the context within which teachers work.

“ Collaboration: to celebrate our differences and specialties (and similarities). The world is in a very “Us vs. Them” mindset because a lot of the ways that we communicate are not very flexible. Working with others forces us to be flexible, but we also need to be able to know how to do it. Effective Group assessment is fair assessment of the whole and of the individual and peer assessment. Collaboration of professionals require effective communication, listening, and sharing. (take some, leave some, give some, etc) and also making building good work relationships, expectations and boundaries. ”

“ I am currently working as a Resource Teacher/Special Ed teacher. I would love to help work towards having more inclusive schools that are flexible to all students’ needs (Physically, emotionally, and academically). ”

Summarizing comments

Summarizing across all six areas of commentary, it appears this exercise did encourage many thoughtful reflections on the priorities and goals of teaching. The strongest messages included the mutually dependant nature of teaching goals, the importance of social-emotional learning and safety, and the importance – and challenge—of systemic change.

To a large extent these comments reflect the aspirations of the provincial education system, but they also reflect the challenges. There is a balance in the comments between what the respondents hope for and what they see the challenges as being. This is a theme that will continue to be important throughout this analysis.

C. Chapter summary

Even though the initial prompts were from international sources this proved to be a fruitful section of the survey. It is interesting to note the extent to which soft skills such as collaboration out-ranked the more traditional goals of teaching, and to acknowledge the extent to which this fits with the teaching philosophy promoted in BC for several decades. The priorities of new teachers demonstrate their responsiveness too, and their interest in, a transformed vision of education in our province. These new teachers have a complex and inclusive view of what successful teaching looks like, which is an enormous asset to the young learners in the province.

There is one substantial finding to be carried forward from this chapter:

3.1 New teachers' focus on safety and socio-emotional aspects of teaching

4 | NEW TEACHERS' VIEWS OF WORKING CONDITIONS

The survey contained a series of questions concerning working conditions for educators in British Columbia. In reviewing the responses it is helpful to bear in mind that the respondents are new to the profession. Those who have been employed as teachers for the longest time (seven years) are barely a quarter of the way through what might be considered as a typical career. The respondents represent the teaching workforce over the next 25 years or so.

A. Scale responses on working conditions

Table 4.1 shows the mean responses on a scale of 0-100 for agreement with 13 statements on working conditions. The statements are derived from international work on teacher identity and working conditions⁴ and proved highly salient in the provincial context. The mean levels of agreement vary considerably from statement to statement, suggesting respondents were providing considered responses.

The most positive responses concern the level of autonomy of teachers, with relatively strong support for statements 10 and 11 regarding control over activities and advancement. Respondents do appear to believe they can shape their careers on a daily and longer-term level. Another positive response concerns the degree to which unions help teacher voices to be heard (in British Columbia there is one labour union representing teachers, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, or BCTF).

There are a range of statements with a mean around the middle of the range. One notable example is statement 12, regarding the valuing of education in British Columbia. Included in this group are general statements about working conditions and respect for educators in the province.

There are three statements with mean levels of agreement below 40. These are statements 3, 5 and 9 on work-life balance, salary levels and contribution to system-level decisions. While inequitable pay is not an uncommon concern across professions, there may be specific reason for concern when combined with other difficult aspects of teacher working conditions.

⁴ Cordingley, P., B. Crisp, P. Johns, T. Perry, C. Campbell, M. Bell and M. Bradbury (2019). Constructing Teachers' Professional Identities. Brussels, Belgium, Education International. <https://www.ei-ie.org/file/274>

Table 4.1: Mean responses and number of respondents for 13 statements on educator working conditions in British Columbia (n= 667-715)

	Mean
1 Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions	47.3
2 Educators in British Columbia are respected	43.7
3 Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance	34.3
4 Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession	81.3
5 The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator	30.5
6 There are opportunities for me to progress in my career as a teacher to levels where I receive higher rates of pay	57.2
7 Teaching unions are important in allowing teachers to express their views	75.5
8 Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership which I would not otherwise have had	48.8
9 Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC education system	39.7
10 I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator	74.3
11 I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator	77.0
12 Education is valued in British Columbia	53.4
13 Parents/guardians in my community engage with the education of their children	55.3

The responses to the statements are valuable and insightful in themselves, but the most useful data will come when new teachers are asked the same questions again in the next iteration of the survey. It is hard to know what influence external factors (Covid, pay bargaining, etc.) have on one set of responses, but having repeated measures allows for relative values to be assessed and progress over time to be recognised.

B. Score distributions

In the following pages the responses to the 13 statements will be considered in more detail to identify aspects of the responses that may be masked by a simple mean. There are two general points to bear in mind. The first is the response rate for these questions, which equates to about 5% of all new teachers during the period the survey covered. This makes definitive statements difficult but is sufficient for the indications to be taken seriously. The second point is the frequency of 0 responses, which reaches 20% for statement 5. These 0 responses are not default or missing responses. Respondents chose to indicate they disagreed as strongly as possible with the statements.

For the first statement, regarding BC educators having good working conditions (Figure 4.1), responses were spread out throughout the range. Over 8% responded with 0, and there were slightly higher frequencies of responses a little below or above the neutral point of 50. Overall people tend to feel one way or another about this statement, with slightly more disagreeing than agreeing.

Figure 4.1: Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions(% selecting each response 0-100)

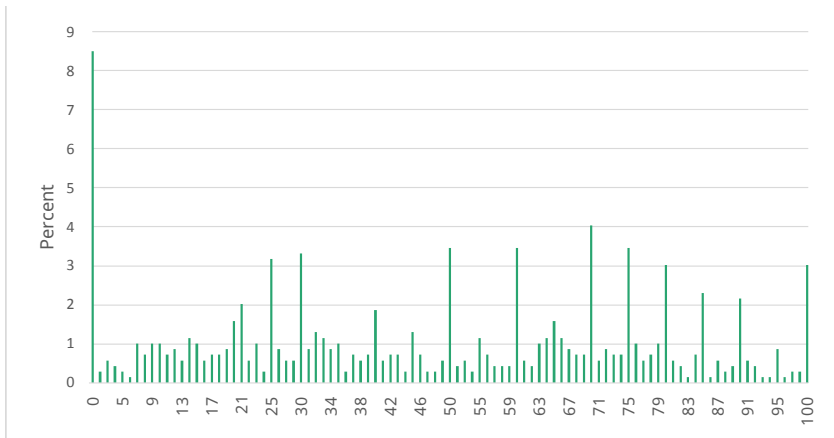
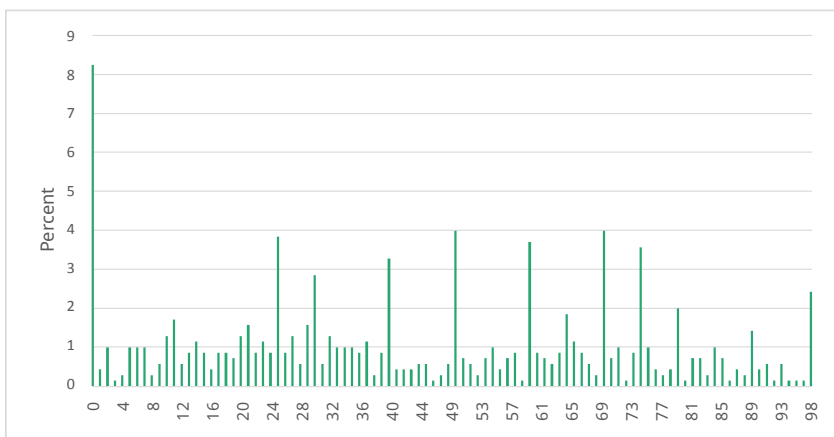


Figure 4.2 shows a similar response pattern for the statement on educators being respected in BC. This time the mean is a little lower (43.7) indicating a moderate tendency to disagree with the statement.

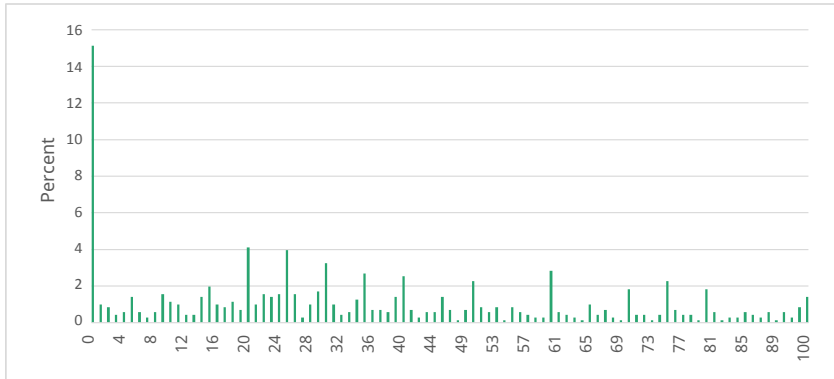
Figure 4.2: Educators in British Columbia are respected (% selecting each response 0-100)



Concerns with work-life balance are demonstrated in Figure 4.3. In this case 15% of respondents disagreed as strongly as possible with the statement and the mean response was 34.3. Established teachers often suggest the first one or two years are the hardest in terms of workload and things become more manageable after that. The data supports this insight, with responses to this statement correlating with year of first employment as a teacher ($R = 0.680$, $p < 0.01$, 2-tailed). In other words,

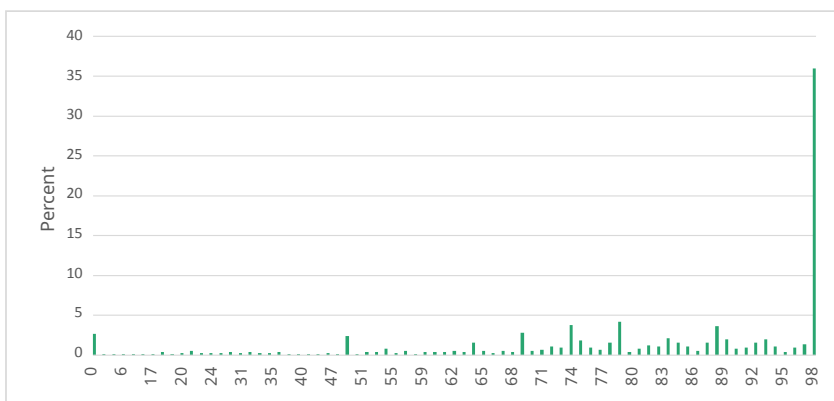
respondents are more likely to perceive a problem with work-life balance the newer they are as teachers. This does not diminish the significance of this result in any way but does help to focus its meaning.

Figure 4.3: Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance (% selecting each response 0-100)



Respondents were clear rates of pay were important for the status of the profession (Figure 4.4). This was the most strongly supported statement, with a mean score of 81.3 and over a third of respondents expressing the strongest possible agreement of 100. It would be possible to explore this relationship further in future research. Based on current data it is not clear whether this is understood as a direct relationship, with higher paid professionals having more status, or an indirect relationship, with higher pay leading to better retention of highly skilled educators.

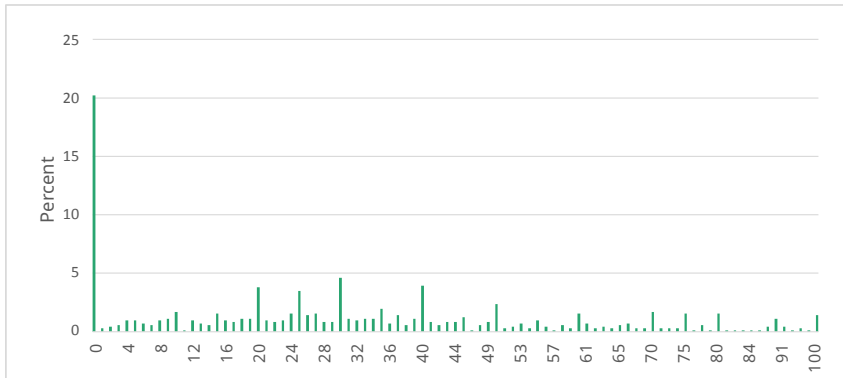
Figure 4.4: Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession (% selecting each response 0-100)



Respondents were clear that their salary was not appropriate for the amount of work they do (Figure 4.5). The mean agreement level was 30.5, the lowest of any statement, and 20% of respondents expressed 0 agreement with the statement. When combined with the previous responses (Figures 4.2 and 4.3) there is some indication that low pay is associated with lack of respect for professional

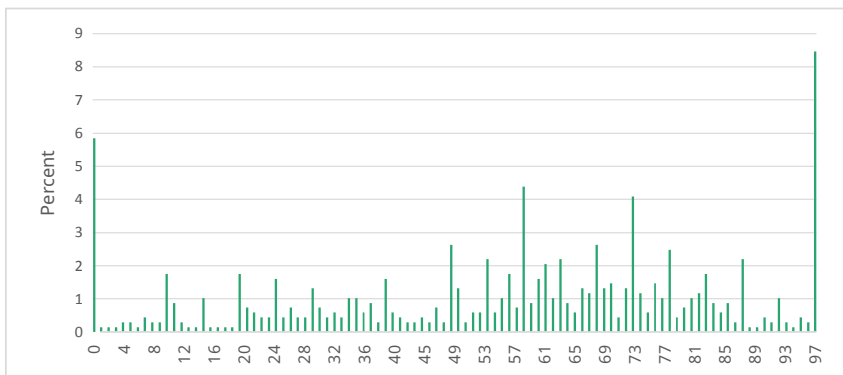
educators. In this case, regression analysis shows a weak positive relationship between year of first employment as a certified educator and level of satisfaction with pay ($R = 0.14$, $p < 0.01$, 2-tailed). In other words, this suggests a slight tendency for people to become less satisfied with salary over time, though care must be taken not to over-state the strength of this relationship.

Figure 4.5: Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance (% selecting each response 0-100)



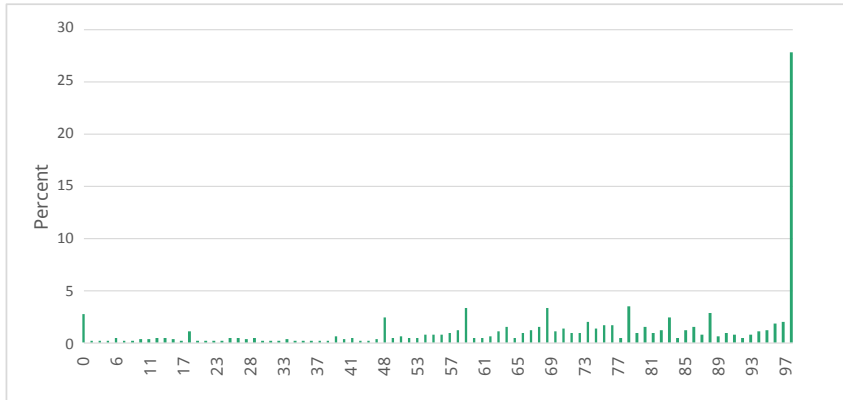
One way to address low rates of pay is to seek better paid opportunities, perhaps by taking on administrative responsibilities. The responses to the statement on opportunities for career progression had a mean of 57.3. Figure 4.6 shows the distribution of responses, with almost 9% completely agreeing with the statement and almost 6% completely disagreeing.

Figure 4.6: There are opportunities for me to progress in my career as a teacher to levels where I receive higher rates of pay (% selecting each response 0-100)



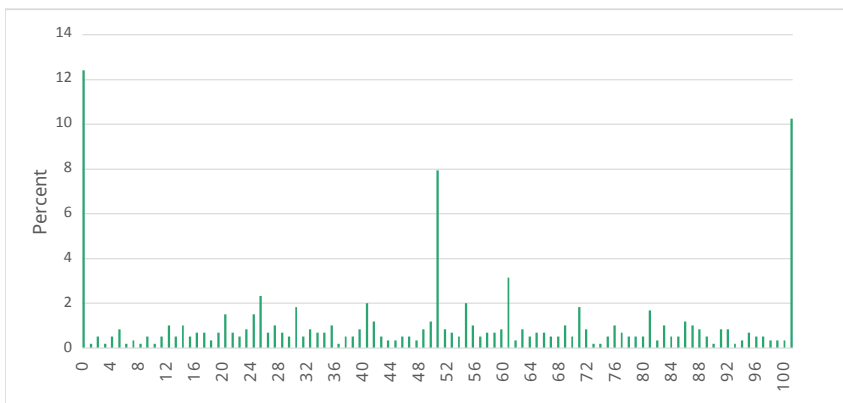
The situation regarding control of the profession by educators is more complex. Respondents were almost united in their support for the idea that teaching unions are important in allowing teachers to express their views (Figure 4.7). This underlines the importance of the BC Teachers' Federation's advocacy work on behalf of members and the profession.

Figure 4.7: Teaching unions are important in allowing teachers to express their views (% selecting each response 0-100)



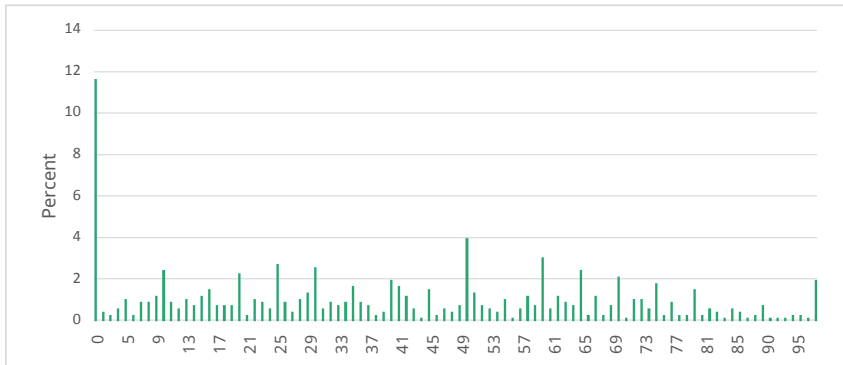
Views were much more divided when it came to the perspectives of respondents on opportunities for leadership through the BCTF (Figure 4.8). Here the mean response was just under 50% and the responses included 10% who responded with "100" and 12% who responded with "0." This suggests respondents' experiences with their local unions have been quite different, though this research cannot tell us anything about the reasons for those differences.

Figure 4.8: Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership which I would not otherwise have had (% selecting each response 0-100)



Despite the level of agreement about the extent to which the union helps teachers' views to become known, the overall perspective on the ability of teachers to influence the BC system is less positive. When asked how much they agreed with the statement that educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about the BC education system the mean response was 39.7. Figure 4.9 shows the full spread of responses, including almost 12% who indicated they disagreed as strongly as possible with the statement. Overall, respondents indicated it was challenging to influence BC education at the system level.

Figure 4.9: Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC education system (% selecting each response 0-100)



In contrast, respondents indicated they believed they had a high level of professional autonomy regarding the issues that matter to them as educators (Figure 4.10) with a mean response of 74.3. There appear to be two pieces of information emerging from this result. The first is the extent to which respondents viewed the issues mattering to them as educators as separate from system-level decisions. The second is the high level of control respondents perceive regarding their own classroom practices.

Figure 4.10: I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator (% selecting each response 0-100)

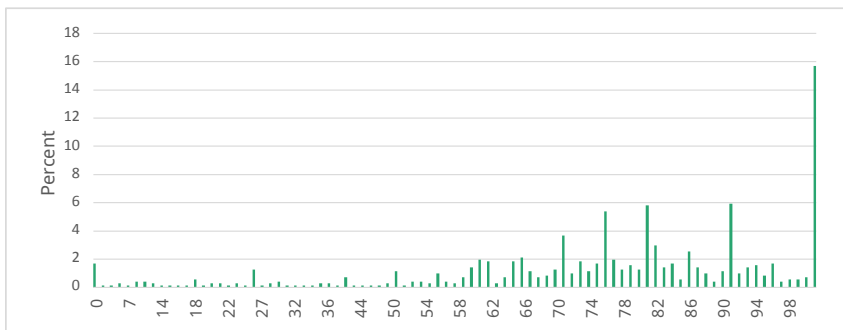
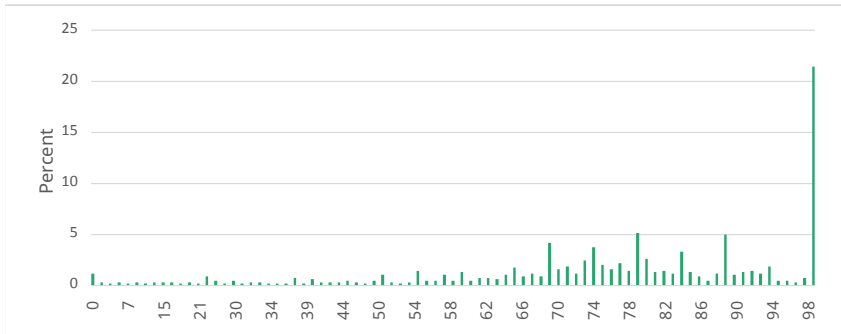


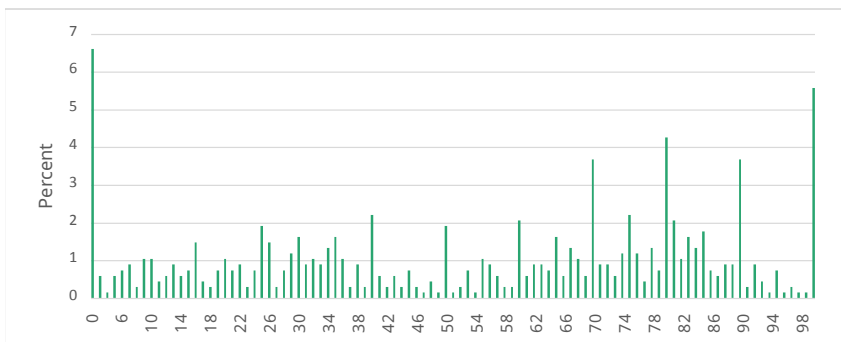
Figure 4.11 shows responses to the question of creating pathways to advancement as an educator. These results suggest respondents see career progress as being primarily in their own hands.

Figure 4.11: I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator (% selecting each response 0-100)



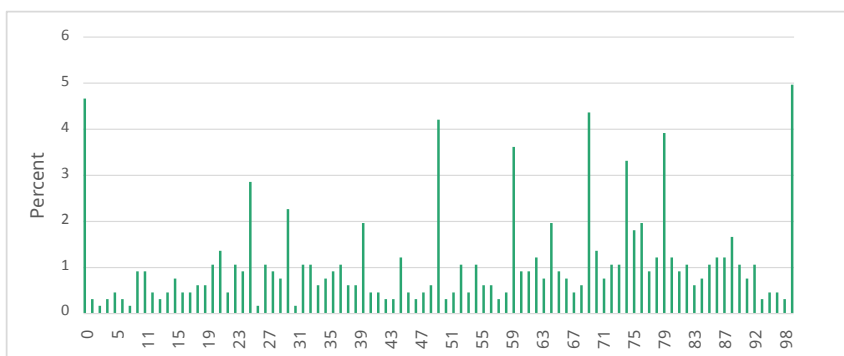
The last two questions broaden out from teacher careers to examine the context a little more. When asked how much they agreed education is valued in British Columbia the mean answer was 53.4. This conceals the variety of responses, however, as demonstrated in Figure 4.12. It is clear from the figure that responses tend to be above 50, but a very considerable number of respondents indicate education is not as highly valued in BC as it could be.

Figure 4.12: Education is valued in British Columbia (% selecting each response 0-100)



The final figure (4.13) in this set shows responses regarding the engagement of parents and guardians with the education of their children. Once again the mean response is on the positive side of the scale (55.3), but there is a wide range of experience and perspectives.

Figure 4.13: Parents/guardians in my community engage with the education of their children (% selecting each response 0-100)



Looking over the responses to this set of questions as a whole there is a good level of consistency. Respondents have strong perceptions in three areas: work-life balance, salary, and opportunities to influence the system as a whole. In each of these aspects of the profession, for these respondents, the situation appears open to improvement.

C. Gender and working conditions

When it comes to working conditions four out of 13 statements show significant differences by gender in an initial analysis. This includes one of the few examples of male teachers allocating a higher score than female teachers, in this case on the topic of work-life balance.

Table 4.2: Scale responses regarding working conditions by gender (n = 568-668)

	F	M	Diff
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	33.4	38.3	-4.9*
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	59.5	52.2	7.3**
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	76.9	71.4	5.5*
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.8	73.0	5.8**

When examining the differences among teachers with elementary qualifications (Table 4.3) there is only one statement showing a significant difference. There is a high level of consistency among male and female elementary teachers.

Table 4.3: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed an elementary qualification (n = 289)

	F	M	Diff
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	61.9	52.9	9*

There are two statements with significantly different scores among secondary teachers. Notably one of them concerns work-life balance, with male teachers giving a higher score.

Table 4.4: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed an secondary qualification (n = 317, 321)

	F	M	Diff
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	30.7	37.6	-6.8*
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.4	71.8	6.6*

These results show female educators as having a slightly more positive view of working conditions than male educators. It should be noted that work-life balance stands out from the pattern, with male secondary teachers the most positive about this factor.

D. Qualification level and working conditions

When it comes to qualification level there is only one statement with a significant difference. Respondents with an elementary degree agree more strongly with the statement on engagement of parents and guardians.

Table 4.5: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences by qualification level (n = 613-675)

	E	S	Diff
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	58.3	53.2	5.0*

There is one statement with a significant difference between female respondents working in elementary and secondary schools, and that is work-life balance. Elementary qualified students give a higher score to the possibility of attaining a good balance of the two elements.

Table 4.6: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences between female elementary and secondary respondents (n = 449)

	E	S	Diff
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	35.9	30.7	5.2*

There are no significant differences in the scores of elementary and secondary qualified male teachers.

The story these figures tells is of consistency across the scores given to working conditions. The strongest difference centres around the possibility of good work-life balance, with male teachers tending to give this a higher score than female teachers. Given that there are no significant differences between male elementary and secondary teachers the difference appears to come from female secondary teachers giving a lower score to this aspect of working conditions than their colleagues.

While it is challenging to identify patterns specific to each set of questions, there are some clear trends that emerge overall. The first is the tendency for female respondents to give higher scores, though the existing data does not explain why this would be the case. There are a range of speculations, but these should be resisted in the absence of further data. It is possible to interpret the scores to mean that female teacher candidates are simply more satisfied with their working conditions, but without a way to rule out alternative explanations great caution must be exercised. The second tendency is for teachers with elementary qualifications to give higher scores. This is analytically separable from the tendency of female teachers to give higher scores (as shown throughout this chapter). However these scores are broken down and split up, however, the key message must be the dissatisfaction of teachers irrespective of gender or qualification level.

E. Ethnicity and working conditions

Ratings given to working conditions remain strongly consistent across self-identified ethnic groups, but there are five statements showing statistically significant variations (Table 4.7).

Table 4.7: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences by self-identified ethnicity

	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	36.3	53.7*	43.5	39.3	41.5
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	70.1	86.8**	65**	74.6	75.9
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator	79.0	85.7	68.8*	77.1	78.5
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	49.2	63.8*	58.3	52.9	55.1
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	56.8	61.4*	58.3	54.4	57.1
Overall mean	54.6	60.2	53.8	56.8	58.3

In the case of Statement 101, teachers with South Asian identities gave slightly higher scores for the ability to contribute to decision-making. Professional autonomy received higher scores from teachers with South Asian identity and lower scores from those with Chinese identity. Teachers with Chinese identities gave lower scores to the idea of creating their own pathways to advancement. Responses to Statement 104 shows teachers with South Asian identity agree more strongly with the idea that education is valued in the province and that parents and guardians are engaged in education.

The meaning of these differences is difficult to discern, but the bigger story, of consistency in responses across the new teacher workforce remains strong.

F. Diverse abilities and working conditions

Respondents self-identifying as having disabilities and diverse abilities only differed to a statistically significant degree on one statement regarding working conditions (Table 4.8).

Table 4.8: Scale responses regarding working conditions showing statistically significant differences by disability and diverse ability status (n= Y 46, N 653)

	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	35.2	44.2	-9.0*

In general these respondents found conditions as challenging or supportive as other groups but found it considerably harder to feel respect. While this is only one element of many making up working conditions it is hard to deny the importance and centrality of this aspect of professional educators' working lives.

G. Comments on working conditions

Respondents provided 237 write-in comments on working conditions. The scores of respondents providing these comments scores were significantly below those of other respondents in 11 of 13 scale responses. The overall tone of these comments was not just negative, but deeply discouraged. The first category emerging from the collated comments contains insights into the job teachers do and the extent to which it is understood.

Understanding the job

There were many comments covering the whole scope of work as a teacher. These have been compiled into this first category as they convey the broad experience of being a teacher. Many of the comments under this heading demonstrated a level of frustration or anger, and the respondents could be strongly articulate in explaining their views.

“ The conditions are deplorable and frankly, embarrassing. We have almost no prep time, we don't make a livable wage, we have no support from the admin/district, and the community doesn't respect our work. I'm a young, passionate, and amazing teacher who is involved in all aspects of the school and adored by my students - but BC will lose me to Ontario in a few years because they make WAY more money and have MORE prep time (they teach 6 of 8 blocks instead of 7 of 8). THIS NEEDS TO BE FIXED! ”

“ A lot of the time we're treated like customer service reps by parents and willfully ignored by admin. We are not treated like professionals nor is our input asked for or included in big decisions that impact how we teach kids, how we can reach them, and help them succeed. It's frustrating ”

Many responses used effective metaphors:

“ Being an educator in BC is extremely difficult. Not only are we fighting the typical lack of motivation, knowledge, and overly self righteous students but we are also fighting a Public Image of being selfish and greedy and only in it for the money. Teaching in BC is like standing in the middle of a ring of fire and having someone fly over pass you one bucket of water and then fly away. But I wouldn't want to do anything else. ”

Despondency and exhaustion could come through the comments very strongly:

“ My union does not represent nor respect my opinions. My pay does not honor my work as educator, especially in the Mainland. I need a new school building as mine is falling apart, it is not well insulated, plumbing is clogged all the time, and our available space is shrinking every year. I want to advance as an educator but I lack time and energy. ”

In some comments there was acknowledgement of how much conditions would vary from school district to school district, which could be seen as a worrying phenomenon in itself.

“ Every school community is different there are areas that feel I am important and are respectful and others that do not share these views. There are rules in place that allow me to have autonomy and rules that prevent me from having autonomy. ”

The overall tone of these comments concerning the experience of being a teacher was almost uniformly negative. There were two or three more positive descriptions, but they were often embedded among other concerns.

Lack of respect and support

Respondents were clear that one of the reasons for conditions being so challenging was the lack of respect given to educators (as differentiated from education) in the province.

“ BC's educators are not valued by many. Especially not the government and the school district. We have awful working conditions, we have no help in classroom. ”

“ Educators work hard on the front-line for the best of all children and youth, yet do not get the respect and pay commensurate to our duties. A lot of programs and opportunities are built on the back of volunteer labour that educators provide their professional/ educational communities. They give a lot, and it is time that these communities give back to them. ”

Some comments defined working conditions as abusive, and saw this as leading to eroded respect:

“ There are no boundaries around the abuse we face, both verbally and mentally, from parents and school communities. No boundaries and no consequences, thus many feel disrespected. ”

Several respondents provided concrete descriptions of the parts of the job they found challenging and inspiring.

“ I have had two or three preps in 2022. Both our printers are out of toner and we don't know when they'll be replaced. I love my students but this job is a disaster. If I didn't feel distinctly called to do this job and grateful to be able to have a salary so I can pay off my student debt, I would have quit. There is no respect. New teachers have to pay so much to build a class but are paid the least. It's hard. I'm discouraged. The best part is the kids. The worst is the conditions and lack of support. ”

Some comments highlight the erosion of commitment inevitably arising from continuing lack of recognition at various levels.

“ I love my job but there are many aspects that are problematic. I for one do not appreciate the lack of value and respect we have in BC society. People consistently see teachers as having it easy and having summers off. I firmly believe that we do 12 months of work in 10 months. I also feel that we need to professionalize our profession more. We need to be seen more as professionals and able to do our jobs. How would we do this moving forward is tough to say, but when I see the state of some people in my profession I feel embarrassed as to the lack of effort and standards they put in. ”

One particular issue is the perception of lack of support by the government (most likely the provincial government) for educators and their work. It places educators in the position of having to advocate for their profession.

“ I have been lucky to feel supported by my community and the union. However, I feel the government has very little respect or interest in the profession. ”

“ It feels like there is minimal support and respect from the government and the ministry of education. It feels like if we didn't advocate for ourselves, our system would be completely gutted. We have to be the guardians of the education system and protect it from funding cuts and erosion in the quality of education for BC students ”

Despite these challenges, some educators feel they are in the right place.

“ I am respected in my school. Parents are heavily involved. Colleagues are an awesome resource. I have autonomy to do what I need/want to within my classroom. The only unfortunate thing is we are not paid as well as the public sector, but I think I have better working conditions. I’ll take the trade. ”

It is reasonable to infer a common feeling of lack of professional respect from this category of comments, which may have corrosive effects in a number of domains.

Health concerns

One area where lack of professional respect and support might show up is in the health of teachers. Among the comments on working conditions there were a number of striking references to burnout and mental health issues.

“ I’m part of a BCTF well teacher group and the conversations with other attendees in that group, as well as with teachers in my school, is heartbreaking.....everyone is burned out, everyone needs more balance, everyone feels that their students have needs that are not being met by schools, which weighs on the teachers...higher compensation is needed, and also increased budgets in general for ELL support, for counselling for students (!!!!!), for learning services (our school could double the LS teachers and it still would feel like not enough). If education is our future we need more funding. ”

“ I’ve only been in teaching for a year, but I have seen that morale is low at several schools I’ve been to. It has been a very hard two years. Teachers are tired, they don’t feel safe, and they don’t feel like the province is listening to them as a profession (especially with safety issues -- masking, air ventilation, accurate and timely contact-tracing). I hope morale will improve as the pandemic calms down. I have been excited to become a teacher for a long time, but honestly, it has been a hard time to start in this profession. Increasing prep time would help my mental health. ”

“ It is very clear that we are not highly valued. Covid-19 has also been a large indicator of that. We only get \$100 a YEAR for mental health. That doesn’t even cover one counselling session. That is absurd... It’s exhausting and most of the time feels like we are fighting against a system that doesn’t even want to help. ”

“ The amount of burnout in this profession is alarming and I am concerned for the future of my career. The workload is obviously not sustainable and needs to be addressed by decreasing class sizes, not promoting “self care”. ”

One common concern was whether it was possible to do the job to a high standard and not suffer negative health impacts. The following comment demonstrates the level of anguish exhibited by a good number of respondents to the survey:

“ You can only have a good work/life balance if you’re willing to be not an ideal teacher and that’s pretty sad. Conditions are MONSTROUS & wouldn’t be okay in any other working environment. The amount of ABUSE we are subjected to every day with ZERO support from admin would make me leave RIGHT NOW if I wasn’t drowning in student loan debt. I HATE THIS JOB because of the level of disrespect and abuse alone. Makes it hard to care and commit. Unions have done NOTHING! Covid has made it all 100 times worse! UNSAFE!! ”

Concerns about health and sustainability make up a good proportion of the comments and while Covid may have amplified the concerns, there is an underlying level of ongoing stress and despair among respondents.

Impact of Covid

The impact of Covid on perceptions of working conditions was recognised by respondents.

“ I think this is a difficult time to ask these questions of teachers. The pressure and immense changes that we are facing currently is outstanding. Right now especially is it important to understand that teachers are burning out. I have applied for a 1 year personal leave after 7 years of teaching because I am just worn out. I want to still love what I do, but the working conditions are making it an ever-increasing challenge. We really do not have a lot of autonomy in our classes anymore. There is a HUGE lack of discipline and boundaries set by administrators for students. ”

Comments around this topic could take on a very strong form:

“ This pandemic has proven that teachers are not respected or cared for members of the community. The union has been a joke, and the districts have done everything they can to show how evil they truly are. This year has made me seriously re-consider this profession and this is an echoed sentiment amongst many teachers I know. We are paid pathetic wages to provide childcare so mom and dad can go to work and that was really highlighted the last few years. Until our gov values humans more than dollars, I don’t expect my profession to be one where I feel protected, valued, or respected. ”

Having professional educators describing their working situation in such strong language is a cause for concern. In a survey such as this, there is no way of knowing how widely these sentiments are shared, but scale responses on working conditions do not contradict the sense many teachers are feeling especially exhausted, angry and unsupported.

Resources

A large number of comments regarding resources focused on supports for students and their learning.

“ Education has been greatly affected by the leadership of this province, and has frequently been neglected. The needs of children are high, and teachers are being asked to work with what they have. It is difficult to prepare all students for their life after formal schooling due to the lack of funds, resources, and time teachers are given. Given additional funds to students with different needs and emphasizing the need for parents to be involved in their child’s education would greatly relieve some of the burden teachers have in trying to educate all their students equitably. ”

This category of comment also featured some strong responses reflecting frustration:

“ I love being ridiculed by parents, demeaned by administration, and told I’m not doing enough by Pro-D presenters. It’s not defeating at all to work in schools that are full of asbestos with tech from the mid-2000s that are literally falling apart. We are constantly asked to do more with less. I like that had to leave the lower mainland because I wasn’t paid enough to survive there. My current district doesn’t even have enough books for class sets because we can’t replace them as our budgets are too small. If we as a society say we care, why do our schools look the way they do? ”

Resources are seen as inadequate even at the level of basic materials and supports for learning:

“ Educators provide almost all of their classroom materials and resources besides chairs, desks and powerpoint, especially in primary. This contributes in part to the poor salary in my opinion as a portion of it always goes to getting books the class likes, games, teaching resources etc. I spent at least few thousand dollars in my first full-time position creating a classroom that was welcoming and functional for students as atmosphere is everything when trying to manage a class of littles. ”

“ Look no further than the lack of school lunches. Other regions and countries value education enough to provide every student with a full belly. The curriculum and approaches may not align with the latest research, but what good are methods that are not funded sufficiently? In a school with a less refined model and full bellies, I see greater respect for education. ”

This can be particularly difficult when teaching new areas to cover for teacher shortages:

“ More prep time and better curriculum resources are needed, especially for early career educators and educators who suddenly find themselves teaching a subject area outside their expertise. ”

The situation regarding students who need more support was noted by respondents:

“ I think that the court ruling that allowed many students with special needs to be put into a mainstream classroom with no extra assistance is a disservice to educators and students alike. ”

“ Students with designations need that constant EA support. To make classes share EAs is a slap in the face of the child, teacher and parents. It’s almost a joke. BC talks about inclusion but NOT ONE large school bus in the entire province is accessible. Students with disabilities are paraded around the schools like token students with less than half the access of ‘typical’ students. Playgrounds. EA support during recess, lunch, after school clubs, extra-curricular activities, it’s a shame. Drive by a school and see the wheelchair kids sitting alone outside the school while classmates run ... ”

The lack of resources drives some teachers to consider leaving education to find work in an alternative sector.

“ I am one teacher amongst many who has considered leaving the profession due to how little support and funding we have access to in order to effectively teach the mandated curriculum in an engaging and equitable way. From my perspective, the public education system feels like it’s in crisis due to the endless demands teachers are burdened with without the respect and salary they deserve, and without the amenities and learning resources students deserve to access. ”

Lack of resourcing, even to the level required by policy and practice, is a significant sore point and disincentive for teachers in British Columbia.

Workload and pay

The new teachers covered by the survey found the pay levels difficult to live with. Many commented on the cost of living in BC and pointed out the extra hours they were required to work prevented them to get a second job to deal with salary shortfalls and financial crunches.

“ I work 10-12 hour days each week; I do not get paid enough but I’m expected to do all the work to the standard of 10-12 hour days. ”

For many respondents the under-resourcing of learning was seen to encompass the low salary levels provided to teachers.

“ I have been offered several higher paying jobs outside of education since becoming a teacher. These would pay between 50% and 100% my salary. I like teaching and my spouse’s income supports us, so we do not need me to have a higher pay. But teaching in BC is poorly supported and not valued. My school struggles to meet student needs. I work with a majority of Indigenous students and low-income families. The system in BC is unfair to these students. ”

“ Pay is low, work hours are long. As a new teacher do not expect to have any work life balance as you are building your lesson and unit plan inventory. Some administration is wonderful and supportive and others are atrocious. The working conditions are not all the same and vary from school to school and district to district. Pay teachers more. More funding for special education etc. Again, resources and support will vary entirely between schools and districts. I had never had a smart board in district [x] but there is one in every classroom I have been in in [y]. ”

There is a recognition that teaching is not an easy job, but requires a high level of skills and preparation:

“ Teacher shortage cannot be addressed while we continue to be overworked and underpaid relative to our qualifications, and the number of steps on the salary grid and low pay at the lower levels is insulting to our education and experience that we enter the profession with - this is NOT an entry level job, nor is it a job that anyone could do. ”

With the majority of survey respondents being at the start of their careers establishing homes was very much on their minds:

“ Most new teachers I know need a second job to survive living in this province with rent being the way it is. Home ownership is completely impossible on our salaries. We deserve better. ”

Concerns such as these could often lead to people considering changing profession or, at least, changing where they were employed. This does not bode well for teacher employment in the larger cities in the province.

“ I am strongly considering leaving the profession. I am completely overworked, under-resourced, and not adequately compensated for the work I do (i.e. expected to cover the jobs of other educators as well as my own - when positions are not filled or people go on leaves/have accommodations - and not paid more for it, even though it is double the work). I try to ask for clear roles and responsibilities but people refuse to answer my questions. The Resource Teacher caseload and job is inconsistent and inequitable across my school district (no C.A. language re: caseload). My union local is unhelpful. ”

“ I live and teach in [a larger city in BC]. I work pretty much every evening and weekend. I am deeply concerned about my ability to continue to live here due to the cost of housing. Because I live in one of the most expensive cities in Canada (and the world), it doesn't make much sense to me that BC teachers are paid so poorly compared to the rest of the country. I love my job, and I really care about my students. But I do wonder if I will have to move away in order to keep doing it. ”

One respondent had a very clear view of the issue:

“ I don’t want more money. I want smaller classes. ”

The salary grid and seniority system mentioned in an earlier comment was referred to by a number of respondents. It is a source of some concern for these newer teachers.

“ I am not convinced the seniority process for teachers provides the best service to students in BC. ”

“ “Pathway to advancement as an educator” is also based on seniority for job postings in some districts and less on the qualifications for the position - this makes it hard to advance or get ground work for career for new teachers. ”

“ Given in most other careers professionals do not have to wait 10 years to make their full wage, I would strongly disagree that teachers are respected in British Columbia. The tiered step system for pay is archaic and as a new teacher I was shocked at how little my wage is as a Category 5, two-degree achieved teacher. Entering the profession at this stage, it is difficult to face that low-wage relative to the cost of living in this province. ”

“ Rate of pay is frankly embarrassing considering the rest of the country and cost of living. I love my job, but that is how I feel. Seniority is both good and bad. For a young eager and hardworking teacher, if there are no jobs due to seniority, you’ve a TTOC period. Yet if you are older and experienced, your seniority protects you. It’s both good and bad. ”

There was occasional support for the idea of merit-based pay:

“ Pay is based solely on years of experience and there is no component that is merit based. This means the best and the worst are equally rewarded in terms of pay. ”

Rates of pay are clearly a strong concern for survey respondents, but usually they are part of a broader perception of a badly resourced sector. Teachers appear to see themselves as just one of the most important resources the education system does not have the ability to pay for.

British Columbia Teachers’ Federation

The teachers’ union in British Columbia attracted a small number of comments. The most common perception appeared to be that the BCTF does not sufficiently challenge the employers regarding salaries, support and working conditions.

“ BCTF has (literally) laughed in my face when health and safety issues are brought up. They are completely non-representative and behave more like upper management than a labour union. Our participation in education policymaking is never beyond

setting “roadmaps” for the district or other absolutely meaningless trite, instead of setting expectations for funding, class sizes, resources, material, school design, curricular content, or so on. Overall, teachers in British Columbia are not treated like the professionals we are supposed to be. We are left completely on our own. ”

One comment reflected a deliberate decision to step away from union activities because of less than satisfactory experiences.

“ I have worked in other jurisdictions (in two other G7 countries) where teaching conditions are much worse, so I feel privileged to teach here. I have not had success when needing advocacy by my union, and have also felt shot down at times by union representatives when I make suggestions for alternative procedures. As a result I often stay away from union functions as they distract me from what I love about my work. ”

The seniority system came up again in the context of moving between districts and the challenges that could create.

“ The union makes me trapped. I left the district I started in, so I could be closer to family and have lost all seniority. I am not judged on my merits as an educator I’m judged on how long I’ve been in a job. I am currently a TOC, working another job, and I have no faith I will ever work full time as a teacher again. The unfortunate part is I see tired burned-out educators, who frankly do a poor job, but unless they die or retire I will never be able to have a position with benefits and stability again. ”

One interesting perspective addresses the difference between union realities in urban and rural settings.

“ The union is wonderful and extremely supportive. The problem is when you live in a small town and have to face the same people each day. Being remote, you don’t always have the right people employed. And I left my job because of it. Not that I wasn’t supported by the union but because I wasn’t supported each day at work. ”

The Covid pandemic was mentioned as a key juncture where the union was seen to have acted less strongly than could have been hoped for:

“ I think that teaching is completely undervalued in BC and this has been highlighted by the pandemic. I feel so utterly disappointed by our union and lack of action with the onset of the pandemic to raise the opinion of teachers and our pay. Teachers should be able to afford to live in BC. There is no way I will ever be able to buy a house in the lower mainland on a teachers’ salary. I am also so horrified by the unions’ lack of job action. If we are not going to engage in job action when there is a global pandemic...when would we?? This is our health. ”

While the comments on the BCTF were relatively infrequent within the data, they do seem to indicate areas of further research and reflection by the union regarding how they provide a good environment for new teachers.

Support for new teachers

Several respondents commented on particular aspects of the working conditions more relevant to new teachers, starting with the sheer expense of establishing oneself as a professional educator.

“ Early career teachers have the most expenses to pay off, the most expenses needed to put into building a strong classroom, and the lowest pay. ”

Work-life balance can be seen as simply unobtainable when starting out:

“ I feel like there is little work-life balance for the first 5 years of the profession as you are recreating the same job as thousands of other people from scratch for no reason. My colleagues indicate that this carries on for the rest of your career until maybe the 10-15 year mark. I feel there is no reward for going above and beyond and involving yourself in extra curriculums juts opens yourself up to liabilities. ”

Some were simply hanging on, in the hope it would get easier.

“ It is a really tough job, takes a lot of energy and a lot of one’s personal time. I do not feel that I have an efficient work-flow yet of planning, instruction and assessment. I have heard that the first 5 years are the hardest and I hope to be able to make it through my first five years to see if it gets any easier. ”

The appreciation that the first few years of teaching were the hardest ran through many of the comments in several other sections. While it is easy to dismiss this appreciation as being common to many professions, it would not be wise. This both explains and compounds the issue of teacher retention and the high number of people turning to other professions after a very few years in the classroom.

Summarizing comments

It seems likely that few of these comments will be very surprising to those who are teachers or who have spent time supporting the profession. This does not mean they can be dismissed. They provide an explanation for why the lowest scoring working conditions were scored so lowly, and provide a clear direction of travel for improved experience and retention of new teachers.

H. Chapter summary

This chapter has looked at a number of overall aspects of the experience of being an educator in BC. There are several highlights. The first is the extent to which respondents have a relatively clear-cut set of priorities for their work. The second is the degree to which they align with the philosophy of the BC school system as represented in the new curriculum of 2016-2018.

The matter of working conditions must also be acknowledged. Generally scores here are not strong at all. While there may be some unique external influence on respondents' perceptions over the last few years (for example, the influence of Covid on people's work-life balance) these results tell a consistent, coherent story backed up by the written comments. If these comments represent the wider workforce—and there is no reason to assume they do not—there would be significant reason for concern about the morale and sustainability of that workforce.

Findings carried forward from this chapter are:

- 4.1 The difficulty of achieving work-life balance**
- 4.2 The workload vs. pay equation**
- 4.3 Resources in the schools**
- 4.4 Supports for new teachers are inadequate**

5 | THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS FOR BC EDUCATORS

One of the key interest areas for the BC Teachers' Council in conducting this survey was to understand more about the way new entrants to the profession learned about the Professional Standards and how to meet them. The Standards express a set of expectations for teacher work and their general professionalism, and it is important to recognize that they also have a disciplinary function. When a teacher finds themselves facing discipline it is due to an alleged breach of the professional standards. Clearly it is important for people entering the profession to understand and engage with the standards.

The approach in this survey is to consider teacher preparation in four phases reflecting the entry pathway to the profession:

- Teacher Education Program (TEP) coursework
- TEP field experiences
- The first year of work as a certified teacher
- Professional development

The question format for the following chapters is very similar. Respondents were asked to rate from 0-100 how much they agreed with a set of statements regarding these four phases. The statements were developed by the New Teacher Survey Working Group of the British Columbia Teachers' Council to reflect the Professional Standards. The wording of the statements varies between coursework, field experience, and first year of teaching, and their order also changes from section to section. The questions are shown in the order and format in which they were asked, with original numbering. Statement 74 (on student growth and development) was the 74th scale response in the survey, and will always be shown in full in the following chapters.

Respondents were also asked if there was anything they wished to add to the responses on the 0-100 scales, and several hundred did so. Following the scale responses for each phase is a brief description and analysis of the open-ended responses. These responses do a good job of providing detail and context for the scale responses.

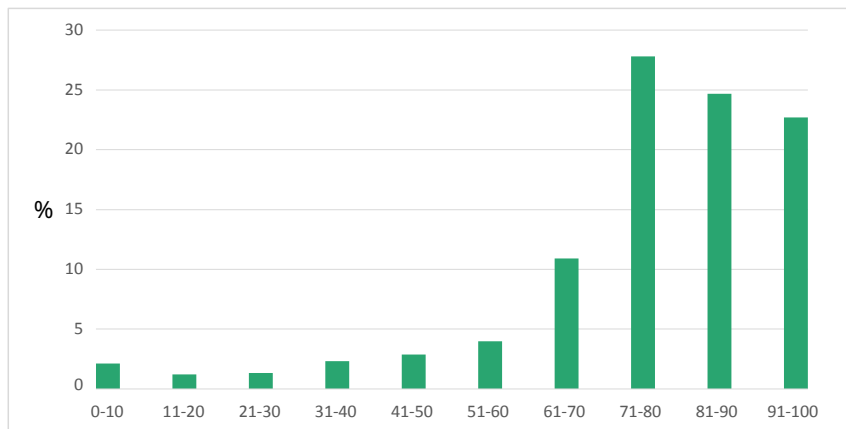
A. Familiarity with the Professional Standards for BC Educators

The teaching profession in British Columbia features a set of standards which educators are expected to meet⁵. As the British Columbia Teachers' Council works alongside many other constituencies to establish and publish these Standards it was seen as important to discover how well-known they are

⁵ https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/kindergarten-to-grade-12/teach/teacher-regulation/standards-for-educators/edu_standards.pdf

among educators. The results of the question “how familiar are you with the BC Educator Standards” is shown in Figure 5.1. There is evidence of good familiarity with the Standards among respondents who answered this question.

Figure 5.1: Scale responses on familiarity with BC Educator Professional Standards, percentages per decile (n=899)



Based on Table 5.1, it seems possible that the level of familiarity might vary with the length of time since graduation. A correlation (Pearson, 2-tailed) shows more recent graduates indicated a higher degree of familiarity with the Professional Standards. The length of time for which a person has been certified relates significantly to their self-assessed familiarity with the Standards ($R = -.575, p < 0.001$). Nonetheless, even the lowest score (72.4) still indicates a good level of knowledge of the Professional Standards

Table 5.1: Familiarity with Professional Standards by year of graduation.

Year	Mean	n
2015	72.47	116
2016	73.84	103
2017	78.62	117
2018	75.53	137
2019	80.76	178
2020	78.68	219
n =		872

B. Contributions to knowledge of the standards

In this section the data is arranged differently from any other part of the report. The questions used in the survey can be imagined as a simple matrix, with the four phases on one side and the nine standards on the other. For most of this report, the main focus is the four phases, asking questions like “how does field experience contribute to the ability to maintain the set of standards?”

In this section, the emphasis is upon the nine standards. The responses to the questions on each of the nine standards have been pulled out of three phases (not Pro-D) and compiled to show which phase(s) contributed to each standard. For example, in standard one (next page) the mean score from coursework questions referring to this standard is 73.0, from field experience questions it is 76.6 and from the first year of teaching 81.6. This allows readers to understand which part of teacher preparation is seen as contributing most to awareness and attainment of each standard.

Table 5.2: Compiled levels of agreement by phase with statements clustered by Professional Standard (CW=coursework, FE=field experience, FY=first year of teaching)

Standard	CW	FE	FY
1. Educators value the success of all students. Educators care for students and act in their best interests.	73.0	76.6	81.6
2. Educators act ethically and maintain the integrity, reputation and credibility of the profession.	81.5	78.7	84.5
3. Educators understand and apply knowledge of student growth and development.	64.4	80.9	76.7
4. Educators value the involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	53.2	70.8	77.7
5. Educators implement effective planning, instruction, assessment and reporting practices to create respectful, inclusive environments for student learning and development.	58.4	78.0	83.1
6. Educators demonstrate a broad knowledge base and an understanding of areas they teach.	51.0	74.3	74.1
7. Educators engage in professional learning.	71.3	76.8	72.3
8. Educators contribute to the profession.	61.9	76.5	78.7
9. Educators respect and value the history of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada and the impact of the past on the present and the future. Educators contribute towards truth, reconciliation and healing.	72.4	61.8	72.8

For the first Professional Standard, caring for students and valuing their success, all three phases are quite close, though the first year of teaching receives a mean score 8.6 points above coursework (81.6 vs. 73). For the second Standard, acting ethically, the first year of teaching receives the highest level of agreement again, though this time coursework is a close second. In the case of Standard 3, understanding of student growth and development, there is a significant difference between field experience (80.9) and courses (64.4), with the first year of teaching in the middle.

Standard 4, valuing the involvement of families, has the mean score for coursework 17 points below field experience and 24 below the first year of teaching. For planning, instruction and assessment (Standard 5) the first year of teaching is almost 25 points above coursework, with field experience in the middle. Field experience and the first year of teaching are tied on 74.3 and 74.1 respectively in the case of Standard 6, the broad knowledge of the area educators teach, both of them 23 points ahead of coursework.

For Standard 7, professional learning, both coursework and the first year of teaching are a few points behind field experience. For educators contributing to the field (Standard 8), respondents saw courses as 15 point less supportive than field experience of the first year of teaching. In Standard 9, respecting the history and knowledge of First Nations, Inuit and Métis, field experience was 11 points below the first year of teaching and nearly as far below courses.

There are trends within the data. Courses are given the lowest scores in 7 out of 9 Standards and are never the highest. The first year of teaching is scored most highly in 6 out of 9 cases, with field experience getting the highest score in the other three. These results appear to underscore the nature of teaching as a craft, passed down from practitioner to practitioner. The results showing peer mentors as the most influential source of professional development and learning seem to lend credence to this result. The positive aspect of this perspective is the richness of the resources available to new teachers. The less positive aspect is the difficulty this model may pose for new ideas from the TEPs to flow into the profession.

C. Understanding Indigenous learners and community

One major concern of the BC school system over the last few years has been doing a better job supporting Indigenous learners and communities. Table 5.3 shows scores respondents gave to statements concerning this area of work organised by the year in which they completed their TEP. The final column is the change between the 2015 cohort and the 2020 cohort (all are statistically significant).

Across the table there is clearly some fluctuation between years. However, the overall story is significant improvement as the years have passed across all of these statements. This can be seen as a strong endorsement of the work being done by the BC education system, and a powerful motivation to continue these efforts.

Table 5.3: Scale responses on questions regarding Indigenous aspects of education by year (n = 663-881)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Change 2015 to 2020
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	68.3	73.6	72.5	75.5	77.7	77.0	8.7**
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	69.3	67.9	72.3	75.9	77.9	78.2	8.9**
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	62.4	64.4	67.6	71.3	73.6	75.3	13.0***
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	52.2	52.5	62.3	59.8	68.4	64.4	12.2**
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	54.4	55.2	61.3	61.8	66.9	66.1	11.7**
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	52.5	58.0	67.8	66.8	72.1	70.1	17.5***
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	62.5	65.3	73.9	72.7	75.6	75.2	12.7***
78. My first year of teaching provided respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their opportunities for me to demonstrate languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	67.5	67.3	72.0	73.7	77.2	74.4	6.9**
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	64.4	67.6	72.2	74.2	76.1	76.3	11.9**

D. Chapter summary

This chapter set out to examine some over-arching questions about the Professional Standards for BC Educators. The first was simply to get a sense of respondents' familiarity with the Standards, and the reported level of awareness was substantial. Levels of familiarity were slightly lower the longer the person had been graduated, which might represent a concern given the degree to which the Standards are designed to function as guidelines for teacher conduct in British Columbia.

Looking across all the data to come in the next few chapters, the indications are significant. The lowest scale responses are given to courses in seven out of nine Standards, meaning that respondents found coursework least useful to build their familiarity with them. The highest scoring areas are the first year of teaching, predominantly, with field experience second ranked. As mentioned above, this tends to strengthen the traditional perspective of teaching as a craft that is learned through practice.

There is evidence that things are changing over time, however. The growing awareness of Indigenous presence and the knowledge and practices to support it is heartening. To see statistically significant change in only five years is a substantial recognition of the efforts BC education partners have been doing to reform this aspect of our provincial system.

The findings carried forward from this chapter are:

- 5.1 The lower perceived contribution of coursework to engaging with Professional Standards**
- 5.2 The level of support for Professional Standards related to Indigenous presence within TEPs and the transition to employment is increasing**

6 | TEP COURSEWORK

This chapter considers the specific information gathered on coursework across all BC TEPs. As is the case in the next three chapters, discussion begins with the overall scale responses regarding coursework. Data is then broken down by gender, level or qualification, ethnicity and disability status. Finally open-ended comments are reported, organized by theme. The chapter summary contains findings carried forward to the conclusion and implications.

A. Scale responses regarding coursework

The quantitative results for coursework are shown in Figure 6.1. Mean scores range from 52.3 to 83.4, so all mean scores are on the positive side of the neutral point. However, seven scores out of 16 are between 50 and 66 (half and two-thirds of the scale) suggesting endorsement is not as strong as it could be for these factors. The type of factor covered by these seven responses are primarily practical aspects of teaching, such as evaluation and subject area knowledge.

Four responses came out at support levels of more than 75, and they addressed aspects such as needing to treat students equitably, valuing diversity, and acting ethically. The other five responses were between 66 and 75, addressing issues such as developing a personal educational philosophy. Three of these factors concerned recognising the importance of First Nations, Inuit and Métis knowledges and peoples, as well as the process of Reconciliation. Coursework is clearly addressing this area of work though the results could be stronger. It is important to bear in mind that a good proportion of respondents would have completed fieldwork before the Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Changes over time in these specific results are discussed in Section C of Chapter 5.

Overall, an initial conclusion is that coursework is doing what it is intended to do by supporting teacher candidates to engage with a number of the deeper aspects of the teaching profession. Inevitably, one of the consequences is less focus on practical and procedural aspects.

Figure 6.1: Mean scale responses to statements regarding coursework contribution to meeting BC Professional Standards (n = 846-914)



B. Gender and course experience

This section looks in more detail at the relationship between self-defined gender and scores given to course elements. The first table (Table 6.1) shows the overall results for female and male respondents across both elementary and secondary programs.

Table 6.1: Scale responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant differences by self-identified F/M gender (n = 786-844)

	Gender		
	F	M	Diff
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	83.9	80.5	3.4*
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	76.1	72.2	3.9*
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	83.5	77.3	6.2***
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	55.8	48.5	7.4***
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	53.4	47.9	5.5*
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	75.2	70.9	4.2*
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	71.2	63.9	7.3***
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	64.0	57.9	6.1*
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	77.6	68.0	9.5***
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	72.4	65.9	6.7*

Table 6.2 shows the scores on courses given by respondents self-identifying as female (F) and male (M) where there is a statistically significant difference. The right-hand column shows differences in the scores⁶. It is notable that in 10 out of 16 instances females rate courses more highly than males, with a difference of almost 10 points in the case of a question on First Nations, Métis and Inuit languages and cultures. Where different, the scores always show female teachers rating coursework more highly. The reasons for this difference are explored in the qualitative data.

Due to the possibility of gender and qualification level having overlapping influences, the same data was re-analyzed for just elementary graduates and then just secondary graduates to find out if the same gender differences show up. Only one response showed a significant difference between male and female teachers completing elementary programs, as shown in Table 6.2.

⁶ As is standard in reporting statistical results, * p ≤0.05, ** p ≤0.1, ***≤0.01

Table 6.2: Scale response regarding coursework showing statistically significant difference in responses between female and male respondents who completed an elementary qualification (n = 377)

	F	M	Diff
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	84.9	79.4	5.5*

Table 6.3 shows the statistically significant differences among those who completed a secondary qualification. This shows female scores being higher for about half of the statements on coursework. Since higher scores indicate stronger agreement with positive statements, female secondary candidates saw coursework contributing more to their knowledge of the Professional Standards than male secondary candidates. Overall, it appears that gender-based differences in the assessment of courses are arising primarily from the lower scores given by male secondary teachers.

Table 6.3: Scale responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant differences in responses between female and male respondents who completed a secondary qualification (n = 387-405)

	F	M	Diff
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	73.4	67.2	6.2*
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	82.6	76.3	6.3**
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	52.6	44	8.6**
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	62.9	56.5	6.4*
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	54.5	47.7	6.8*
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	76.4	69.5	6.9**
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	77	66.4	10.6***

C. Qualification level and coursework

The next table (Table 6.4) shows significant response differences between people who completed an elementary level qualification and those completing a secondary qualification. There are nine significant differences, again all running in the same direction. People who went through elementary programs rate the courses more highly than those completing secondary programs. There is no obvious pattern to the scores (for example, secondary candidates believing their preparation on technical matters was weaker) but there are areas secondary programs may want to note, such as professional learning, mentoring, and working with Indigenous knowledge.

Table 6.4: Scale responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant differences by program level (n = 799-857)

	Level		
	E	S	Diff
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	75.6	72.2	3.4*
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	84.4	80.9	3.5*
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	83.6	80.1	3.4*
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	57.8	49.5	8.3***
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	64.7	60.3	4.4*
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	72.9	65.4	7.5***
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	66.2	58.2	8.0***
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	77.4	72.7	4.6*
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	73.7	68.0	5.8**

Examining qualification level for each gender shows different patterns for male and female teachers once more. There are two areas on which the scores of female respondents differed, as shown in Table 6.5.

Table 6.5: Scale responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant difference in responses between female elementary and secondary respondents (n = 535 and 534)

	E	S	Diff
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	59.5	52.6	6.9**
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	66.6	61	5.6*

Table 6.6: Score responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant differences between male elementary and secondary respondents (n = 208-225)

	E	S	Diff
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	84.2	78.6	5.6*
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	56.9	44.0	12.9***
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	65.6	56.5	9.1**
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	74.1	59.0	15.1***
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	65.2	54.9	10.3*
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	74.2	62.7	11.6**

Male respondents had six factors with a statistically significant difference by teaching level. In every case, graduates of elementary programs gave higher scores.

In summary, program level only significantly affected the ratings given by female teachers on two statements, while male secondary teachers gave lower scores than male elementary teachers on five aspects of coursework. Differences in scores are being largely driven by the lower assessments of male secondary teachers.

The responses to question 40 (understanding the value of family involvement) provide a way to illustrate this. For female elementary teachers the mean score is 59.5, while for male elementary teachers it is 56.9. Female secondary teachers score a mean of 52.6, while male secondary teachers give a score of 44.0. Male secondary teachers see coursework as less supportive of Professional Standards than the other groups.

D. Ethnicity and coursework

Table 6.7 shows significant differences between groups based on self-identified ethnicity and the overall mean scores (shown as “all”). The full table is included in the appendix (Table A.19). In most cases the significant differences are when one group has a markedly higher score (such as question 42, where Chinese respondents gave a score 14 points higher than the mean). There are several important points to note in this data, however. The first is the lower score given by First Nations, Inuit and Métis respondents to question 34 on treating all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect. The second is the higher score given by White students to question 47, about respecting and valuing First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada. This may point to an important difference in perception between the two cultural groups.

Table 6.7: Scale responses regarding coursework showing statistically significant score differences by ethnicity

	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	75.6*	86.0	82.2	83.2	83.4
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	71.5	76.5	70.9	72*	72.2
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	70.1	77.9	74.8	75.3*	75.7
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	58.8	62.2	66.8	63.3*	63.9
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	74.8	83.8	78.0	82.1*	82.6
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	69.7	61.3	74.4	61.6*	63.6
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	54.7	58.3	69.7***	53.8	55.7
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	44.0	52.5	64.5**	50.7	52.3
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	75.2	78.5	79.8*	73.1	74.8
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	64.8	74.8	72.3	75.9***	75.6
Overall mean	64.8	70.2	71.3	65.4	68.7

At the bottom of the table are the mean scores by ethnic group, provided as a summary and sense-check. These summarize the lowest scores on coursework as coming from White and First Nations, Métis and Inuit respondents.

E. Diverse abilities and coursework

The difference in scale responses regarding coursework between those who self-identified as having disabilities and diverse abilities and those who did not are striking (Table 6.8). There were statistically significant differences on the scores given to 11 out of 16 statements, and in every case the lower score was from people self-identifying as having disabilities and diverse abilities. Six of these differences were ten points or more, a substantial difference on a 100-point scale (See Table A.8 for full results).

The conclusion following from these results, even though the numbers of respondents with disabilities and diverse abilities is small, is that TEP courses are not serving the needs of this group as well as teacher candidates who do not belong to this group. For an equity-centred profession this represents an issue in need of exploration.

Table 6.8: Scale responses regarding courses showing statistically significant differences by self-identified disability and diverse ability status (n= Y 51-59, N 789-845)

	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	64.6	74.2	9.6**
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	71.3	83.0	11.7***
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	60.9	71.5	10.6**
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	54.8	62.9	8.1*
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	71.9	82.0	10.1***
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	53.1	65.0	11.9**
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	52.8	63.0	10.2*
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	45.4	55.0	9.6*
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	39.1	51.2	12.1**
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	66.1	74.1	8.0*
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of, supporting mentoring and encouraging other educators.	52.7	62.3	9.6*

F. Comments on coursework

Respondents were asked if they had any other comments on the coursework they experienced. The 393 respondents who responded to the open-ended question gave significantly lower scores ($p < 0.001$) on the 15 scaled questions than those who did not respond to the open-ended question. In other words, those answering the open-ended question tended to see the coursework as less supportive of Professional Standards. There are different ways to interpret this relationship. One would be to treat the comments cautiously, assuming that they are written by people who are unhappy with their experience. Another approach, and potentially a more useful one for teacher education, is to

interpret these comments as pointing directly at issues that could repay attention from the programs. They highlight the reasons for people to see coursework as less valuable.

The comments can be brought together into seven broad categories. It is important to recognise there were comments acknowledging the value of coursework, but this analysis tries to capture the tone of the majority of contributions, which tended to be far more strongly focused on areas for improvement. It is also worth noting the extent to which comments in each area were mutually supportive, pointing in similar directions.

Relevance and fit of courses

There were many comments about the extent to which courses prepared students for the job of educator. The overall message was a perceived lack of fit between the content and format of courses and the expectations placed on teachers. The following three topics can be considered as elaborations and details of the same concern, but it is useful to begin by getting an overall flavour of the comments. This is one of the more critical, but by no means extreme, comments:

“ About 60% of it was an utter waste of time. It was far too academic in focus instead of hands on, which is problematic for a Teacher Ed program... What else? Four-hour lectures with no breaks. Homophobic, racist, sexist and transphobic student teachers who went on to pass and go into schools. The practicums were good though. ”

Most comments were more measured, but still pointed at the gap between teacher education programs and the experience of being a teacher:

“ Courses don't do much in terms of preparing you for how to deal with students in the real world. Also, much of the coursework is based on research that holds true for high-achieving and highly motivated students, but do not take into account the fact that the majority [of] students are not quite as self-motivated or enthusiastic ”

It was relatively common for comments to be strongly negative about the coursework, often with specific concerns:

“ I did not feel my 11 months of coursework were used to its utmost potential, and it was still too expensive. Too many powerpoints from retired teachers about broad brushstroke ideas on teaching approaches without enough tangible examples of how to successfully plan your way through a school year (assessment, record-keeping, designations and IEPs, the list goes on). The coursework felt simply like a formal routine for the most part, while the practicum provided the only real education on what the teaching profession is like. ”

This experience could lead to new teachers feeling underprepared for the challenges of working in schools, and as if the expectations far exceeded what was possible.

“ I feel as if many of the courses did not help me to see what “real world teaching” actually consists of. There is no truth within the courses. I remember being told that it is possible to reach every single student no matter the circumstances and that is simply not true; ask any educator. I also was not formally taught how to plan day plans and the importance of work / life balance. We were taught to focus on multiple page lesson plans for each lesson and that we are to stay at the school from “this long to this long” to appear to be the best teachers. Courses need to bring in real life sit[uations]. ”

“ Little transferability to the day to day reality of classroom teaching. Not enough focus on classroom management and on the systems at play in public education e.g. IEPS, Reporting, Parent Teacher Interviews, Phonic Programs, etc. ”

Other comments reflected the need to view programs as a starting point and develop skills from there.

“ I left with a list of areas I wanted to develop and I’ve been able to develop most of the skills I wanted to. It’s hard to understand until you are actually in the classroom. ”

A tension running through the comments was the extent to which TEPs can fully prepare people to work as teachers. If the expectation was full preparation people tended to be disappointed. If it was seen as an initial step, there was often a less critical view.

Several comments had suggestions for improving coursework, such as:

“ I wonder how much can be accomplished by a teaching education program that is not embedded within a school. I believe that my teacher training served as a starting point, but most of my professional growth has been over my first five years of actual teaching. I think that teacher education programs would be improved if more work was embedded in schools, that way new teachers are better able to connect theory (not exactly a passion for most) with educational practice. ”

These reflections, coming from professional educators, raise significant questions about the TEP coursework.

Specific components missing from coursework

By far the most common comment was the lack of concrete teaching skills in the TEP curriculum, especially in relation to literacy.

“ I am a primary teacher and we were not taught how students learn to read. Single biggest failure is that-it affects everything else I do and has been my single biggest area of learning. ”

“ Courses did not help prepare me to actually teach what students need to know to be powerful and fully literate in their lives. Courses should focus more on how to teach reading, writing, and mathematics. ”

“ As an intermediate teacher I was taught literacy instruction only for the purpose of comprehension. This wasn't problematic until I had my own class where the bulk of students weren't reading at grade level and I needed to know how to teach students to read. This highlighted how ill equipped I was to teach in a diverse classroom, especially highlighting the need for me to be able to teach ELLs even in classrooms where the bulk of students can read. ”

“ I can't understand how I made it through all my coursework and was never taught how to teach reading and writing. This is a common problem among many new teachers I collaborate with. I feel I was left to my own devices to figure out by trial and error how to teach these foundational subjects. How did this happen?? ”

Assessment was also highlighted as an area where more could be done.

“ Assessment courses should be subject specific and reflect the current assessment practices within the school system. More courses on social-emotional skills for teachers and for students. ”

“ Despite learning so much about assessment and teaching methods, I don't believe enough time was spent on assessment in my teachable of English. In the actual classroom, it's hard to plan assessments that accurately reflect learning and don't take hours upon hours to grade. ”

Classroom management also emerged as an area where new teachers believed they needed more specific skills instruction.

“ [Courses] did not provide strategies for classroom management, or a thorough understanding of supports available to ELL and LST student. ”

“ How to manage a crowd, what to do in particular situations where you're responsible for a class. ”

“ I am not sure I felt fully prepared in entering the schools. It would have been beneficial to have more in the area of classroom management, differentiating with varied learners, assessment, scope and sequencing of content, planning for a year, reporting, and how to prepare for start up of the school year as a new teacher. ”

“ I did not participate in any classes that taught classroom management skills. I felt very unprepared in this regard when I began working. ”

“ It [coursework] lacked classroom management. Educational Psychology is babble/waste of time. ”

There were other areas mentioned (including year planning, brain science, producing critical thinkers), but reading, assessment and classroom management received the bulk of the comments. The central message was that these new teachers did not believe they had been sufficiently prepared for these three aspects of practice.

Alignment of teaching methods

There was an underlying critique of the extent to which the TEPs' teaching methods reflected what the candidates were being told was good practice. There were a number of comments addressing this mismatch more explicitly, including:

“A lot of education instructors tell us what “best practice” when it comes to teaching but do not teach us in these ways.”

“Our program did not model the expected teaching practices. Professors struggled to answer our questions about professionalism and consistently told us to use our “common sense”. My practicum taught me more in 2 weeks than my education program taught me in 16 months. I wish we had started with an observation at the beginning of the program.”

“The program ultimately fell short of “walking the walk” even though it absolutely “talked the talk.” Courses on First Nations Principles of Learning were short and felt as if they were added as an afterthought. Seminars on inclusivity in education were followed promptly by lectures on being professional and “not rocking the boat.” The faculty were largely positive, helpful, and knowledgeable, but every interaction with the administration of the program (as well as any asynchronous learning) was absolutely abysmal.”

“With a handful of exceptions, instructors were unprepared to teach about the new curriculum, one arrived late to every class, and a few others had poor facilitation and organization skills. I was highly disappointed in much of the teaching, especially given the fact that the program was an education program.”

It is fair to say that many of the comments on coursework reflected the disjuncture between the conflicting values of being a higher education student and those of being a “professional-in-waiting.”

The question of theory

In many of the comments theory was juxtaposed with practice, and typically theory was seen as less useful or desirable. In some cases, this led to strong concerns about the ideological content of TEPs:

“Teacher education is heavily focused on adherence to the ideological motives of the instructors and the program, particularly political views on First Nations and DEI doctrines. Even if one agrees with the views, it is repugnant that new teachers are expected to align with political views. Many student teachers remain silent, not engaging in discussion and growth, when faced with rather vile ideologies because they fear the potential loss of

future employment or accusations of racism for simply discussing an issue. There is little focus on the actual practice of teaching in teacher education. ”

More commonly, however, theory was seen as valuable but over-represented within course work.

“ Teacher education courses do not prepare their students for the practical realities of teaching. They deal in theory and philosophy. These are laudable, but the focus is too heavy in these areas. If we are to have a lower attrition rate and less burnout, the programs need to change. ”

“ Coursework is based on theory. Does not prepare you on how to set up a classroom, a year plan, day plan, what the roles are of support staff, details about School Based Team, IST, LST. Does not provide info on what undiagnosed special needs and diagnosed special needs looks like in a classroom and how to support those students. Practicums do not provide enough time to learn any of that. The focus is on making detailed lesson plans and being assessed on them. ”

The lack of specific skills preparation was linked to an over-emphasis on theory within the program coursework:

“ I felt that while the philosophies were sound and based in current educational theory, there were many seriously lacking areas. Learning how to assess for different ages in both literacy and numeracy were notably absent; while I understand the desire to leave this to practicum parts of the courses, this assumes that you will teach within the grade levels of your practicum, which is obviously unlikely. I think that sound, practical information about - for example - HOW to teach students how to read, and HOW to assess their progress, is essential. In my program, at least, it was absent. ”

These, and related, comments raise questions about the extent to which educational theory is being taught in a contextualised and authentic manner within TEPs.

Preparation for professional practice

Comments about feeling unprepared for the professional work of teaching were common. In some cases this was about simple survival in the profession.

“ Expectations around lesson planning during the practicum and in courses devoted to the subject (format, content density, etc.) are disconnected from authentic teaching practices in the province. They do not acknowledge the reality of how teachers manage their workload. This leads to burnout. Most of the BEd... was outstanding. It could have served us very well to discuss the crucial role of the union (and less about parents or the TRB). ”

“ The MOST useful experience was a 2-hour seminar on conflict management. Teaching has a lot of conflict within it, far more than I could have ever expected, and that seminar was useful. I wish I had had classes on conflict and how to talk with parents and what to do when you need help and nobody cares. ”

Other comments were more about specific practical competencies:

“ Courses did not teach us essentials such as setting up the district google drive account and did not bring to light various kinds of absences we have available as per contract when you need to be away from work. The courses did not prepare us to know how little or no support we get as TTOCs and new teachers. Courses did not bring to light the discrepancy in the teachers’ pay in various provinces. ”

“ It did not really cover the relationship between union and employer, contracts, etc. It should. ”

“ Courses did not teach me about BC professional teaching standards. ”

This theme ran through most of the coursework comments. There appears to be a very common feeling of being thrown in at the deep end with little understanding of how a teacher actually works in BC schools.

Lack of uniformity between instructors

Even within the same program, respondents acknowledged how significant the instructor was to their experience. Less effective teaching is seen as coming from tenured professors in some cases and from sessional (part-time) instructors in others.

“ It was very patchy. the program does not take student evaluations into consideration when hiring instructors. I explicitly told my program leads that an instructor made me feel unsafe in class and nothing was done. [They] came back the next year. ”

“ It is sporadic at best, with many tenured professors providing middling to dismal education and the best experiential and academic learning coming from sessional and practicing teachers. ”

“ Certain courses were fantastic, as were certain educators and classmates. ”

“ Overall, I do not think teacher education programs have their instructors effectively examine their own biases. I also believe that introductory courses in Indigenous studies, critical race theory and basic psychology should be required for entry into teaching programs. ”

It was not uncommon for comments on teaching standards to loop back to questions of theoretical/practical balance:

“ Many of the instructors had never been K-12 educators or were far removed from it. They weren’t practical in their teaching and also did not always practice what they preached. The courses were far too theoretical and extremely limited in practical, day-to-day skills in the classroom. ”

There were also strong suggestions about how this situation could be improved:

“ [University’s] program is seriously lacking in practical experiences and practical knowledge, and it’s monumentally out of date - to the point where the information I use now to inform my practice as a teacher was 95% from my few practical experiences. There are perhaps 4-5 courses in the entire degree whose knowledge I reference often. They should be providing professors who have been teachers for longer than 10 years, and there should be oversight on what they teach by a committee of currently practicing educators. ”

There were also many comments on the inspirational and high-quality teaching many teacher candidates experienced, but it has to be acknowledged that among these respondents experience of teaching in the TEP was mixed.

Indigenous presence

The term Indigenous Presence is a term intended to cover all aspects of the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the education system: Indigenous students, Indigenous knowledge, Indigenous ways of knowing and learning, relationship with communities, and the work of Reconciliation. This aspect of coursework attracted the most mixed comments. While generally comments identified a need for the TEPs to do a better job, there was also recognition of the work being done and a hope it can be expanded.

“ Only had one Indigenous course. Wasn’t nearly enough! ”

“ The Indigenous Education summer institute was optional in my program. It should be required. It is the reason I could answer toward the “Strongly Agree” side on at least half of the questions above. ”

“ My program included a summer institute focused on Indigenous Education. We dove deep into Canada’s history from an indigenous perspective, and developed understanding of the underlying violence and bias against First Nations inherent in our education system. We simultaneously participated in cultural events and conversation with First Nations communities in order to better understand indigenous perspectives challenges. Courses were structured in a way that honoured First Nations values and culture, as examples of how we can decolonize our own assumptions about what learning looks like. ”

The experience of others was positive but also reflected the challenges inherent to this work and the need for more time and support.

“ I was in the Indigenous Education stream, but I still felt there was little time spent on planning curriculum with Indigenous focus, and it was extremely challenging to begin planning lessons with any local Indigenous specificity. One course on Indigenous education simply can't make up for a whole school career where Indigenous peoples are left out and negated. I am hopeful that the public school requirement for a course in Indigenous studies may help for future BC-educated teachers. ”

Other respondents found the courses focused on Indigenous Presence less than satisfactory and wondered if the courses were there simply to fulfil a mandate.

“ The coursework I had to do did nothing to promote any kind of authentic Indigenous work. Everything I know/learned is based off personal experience. The university taught it in a way of “oh we have to teach this” and slapped something together to embarrassingly and very poorly tick the box. ”

A small number of respondents had a strongly negative experience in the courses focused on Indigenous Presence and some felt their own understanding had been set back by the courses:

“ The Indigenous content/coursework was very hostile and set my own journey of reconciliation back a couple of years worth. Indigenous content/reconciliation should happen in a open friendly atmosphere that invites questioning and discussion. Which was not how mine went. ”

Another concern brought up by respondents was the balance between learning about Indigenous Presence and learning about the other aspects of effective professional teaching.

“ I learned a lot about Indigenous people in Canada, which was interesting but not practical. I learned almost nothing about students with disabilities, special needs and behavioral challenges. I taught many more students in the latter group and perhaps one indigenous student. I learned very little during my practicum about managing students and was constantly reviewed on this aspect. ”

Overall, the vast majority of responses were supportive and appreciative of this area of work and can be seen to reflect a significant re-alignment of Canadian education and society.

G. Chapter summary

The results concerning coursework suggest there may be some utility in examining how this phase of teacher preparation could potentially contribute more to the development of Professional Standards.

The findings carried forward are:

- 6.1 Male secondary teacher candidates experience coursework as less supportive of the Professional Standards**
- 6.2 Teacher candidates who self-identify as having a disability or diverse abilities experience coursework as less supportive of the Professional Standards**
- 6.3 New teachers perceive coursework as less relevant to teaching practice than it could be**
- 6.4 New teachers identify a concrete skills gap in coursework (literacy, assessment and classroom management)**
- 6.5 Teaching methods in coursework do not always align with current pedagogy**
- 6.6 Theory dominates coursework rather than being balanced with, and integrated into, practices**
- 6.7 The teaching quality within coursework is not always consistent**
- 6.8 Coursework does not fully prepare new teachers for transition into the workplace**
- 6.9 The effectiveness of courses around Indigenous presence, and the balance between these topics and others, could be stronger**

7 | TEP FIELD EXPERIENCES

This chapter begins by laying out scale responses regarding field experience before breaking them down by gender, qualification level, ethnicity and disability status. This is followed by a section containing open-ended comments from respondents and a brief summary of key findings.

A. Scale responses regarding field experience

The results for field experiences are shown in Figure 7.1. The range of responses here is 61.4 to 85, suggesting slightly stronger agreement with these statements than with those regarding coursework. Only three of the responses are between 50 and 66, but it is striking that these three are the factors concerning First Nations, Inuit and Métis knowledges and peoples as well as the process of Reconciliation. This aspect of the Professional Standards is less supported by field experiences than other aspects.

Eight of the 16 responses had support levels of more than 75. Ethics remained a strong factor, but the pragmatic aspects of teaching are rated more highly here than in coursework. The three strongest responses concern the need to treat all learners equitably, the importance of diversity and valuing the success of all students. The next strongest group of responses concern planning and instruction, student growth and development, and a personal philosophy of education.

The initial impression of field experience is an opportunity to put learning into practice in a way that complements coursework. The scores suggest field experience is a positive and useful aspect of their preparation for many teacher candidates.

Figure 7.1: Mean scale responses regarding field experience contribution to meeting BC Professional Standards (n = 717-756)



B. Gender and field experience

As shown in Table 7.1, female teachers gave statistically significant higher scores for field experience than male teachers in 13 out of 16 questions. This is a notable result, suggesting female teacher candidates see field experience as more beneficial in many dimensions.

Table 7.1: Scale responses regarding field experiences showing statistically significant differences by gender (n = 665-708)

	F	M	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	80.8	73.4	7.3***
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	75.1	68.4	6.7**
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	64.1	55.9	8.2***
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	64.6	57.5	7.2**
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.0	77.6	4.4*
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	73.7	65.0	8.7***
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	84.8	76.9	8.0***
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	87.0	80.0	7.0***
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	85.4	77.4	8.0***
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	67.8	62.4	5.4*
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.3	68.2	5.0*
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	84.0	79.4	4.6*
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	76.1	71.0	5.1*

Looking more closely at the data, there is only one statistically significant score difference among elementary teachers based on gender (Table 7.2).

Table 7.2: Scale responses on field experience showing statistically significant difference in responses between female and male respondents who completed an elementary qualification (n = 322)

	F	M	Diff
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	87.7	81.9	5.8**

However, Table 7.3 shows there are 11 aspects of field experience where female secondary teachers gave a statistically significantly higher rating than male secondary teachers. Gender differences appear more marked among respondents who completed a secondary qualification.

Table 7.3: Scale responses regarding field experiences showing statistically significant differences between female and male secondary respondents (n = 325-346)

	F	M	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	77.7	70.4	7.3*
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	71.3	64.7	6.6*
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	59.9	52	7.9*
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	61.4	53.4	8.0*
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	70	60.4	9.6**
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	81.8	74.2	7.6**
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	86	77.9	8.1**
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	84.3	75.4	8.9***
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.8	65.7	8.1**
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	84.6	78.7	5.9*
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	76.8	70.2	6.6*

C. Qualification level and field experience

Turning to differences in field experience ratings by qualification level, Table 7.4 shows nine factors on which ratings differ and they are all in favour of elementary programs. Once again this has to be separated out by gender to understand the details of the differences.

Table 7.4: Scale responses regarding field experiences showing statistically significant differences by program level (n = 681-720)

	E	S	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	83.0	75.2	7.7***
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	77.0	69.3	7.8***
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	66.7	57.2	9.5***
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	67.3	58.8	8.5***
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.3	79.6	3.1
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	75.9	66.7	9.2***
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	86.3	79.4	6.9***
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	87.6	83.2	4.4**
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	86.2	81.3	4.9**
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	69.9	63.7	6.2**

Table 7.5 shows differences among female respondents by level of qualification. There are six factors showing a difference between female elementary and secondary teachers, all in favour of elementary graduates.

Table 7.5: Scale responses regarding field experiences showing statistically significant differences between female elementary and secondary respondents (n = 459-489)

	E	S	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	84.2	77.7	6.5***
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	78.6	71.3	7.3***
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	67.8	59.9	7.9**
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	68.3	61.4	6.9*
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	77.4	70	7.4***
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	87.7	81.8	5.9***

There are five factors showing a difference between levels of qualification in the case of male teachers. The two groups of difference overlap to a large extent, suggesting some commonality of experience between female and male teachers regarding their field experience.

While the results are less clear cut than those for courses, we can discern higher scores for elementary teachers than secondary teachers, with a slightly bigger drop for male respondents than female respondents. For example, question 51 drops 7.3 points between female elementary and secondary teachers (Table 7.5) and 11.3 points for their male equivalents (Table 7.6). Taken with the results in section B on gender, this suggests field experiences are viewed most positively by female elementary-qualified teachers and least positively by male secondary-qualified teachers.

Table 7.6: Scale responses on field experiences showing statistically significant differences between male elementary and secondary respondents (n = 171-185)

	E	S	Diff
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	76.1	64.7	11.3*
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	66.8	52	14.8**
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	68.6	53.4	15.2**
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	74.8	60.4	14.4**
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	70.8	60.1	10.7*

D. Ethnicity and field experience

The scale responses showed no statistically significant differences by self-identified ethnicity (see Table A.20). The lowest mean response was provided by First Nations, Métis and Inuit respondents, but in the light of not reaching statistical significance, this must be interpreted with great care.

E. Diverse abilities and field experiences

There were no statistically significant differences between the responses of people who identified as having disabilities and diverse abilities and those who did not (See Table A.11).

F. Comments on field experience

There were 277 written comments regarding field experience. Those who commented gave significantly lower scores on 14 of the 16 scale questions on fieldwork, but the statistical significance of the differences was at a lower threshold ($p < 0.05$ rather than $p < 0.001$). This means the group who provided written responses gave lower scores than those who didn't, but the difference was not as pronounced as it was with coursework.

The language used in different programs to refer to field experience, practicum and community field experience varies quite a lot, as do the names for the different roles involved in the process. In order to be consistent, as well as to avoid identifying programs, this phase will be referred to as field experience. The teacher who accepts the candidate into their classroom will be called the mentor teacher, and the university employee who is responsible for managing and assessing the process will be called the faculty associate. In every case three people are involved in a specific fieldwork experience—the candidate, the mentor teacher and the faculty associate.

Importance of fieldwork

There was widespread and profound support for the importance and contribution of fieldwork to the preparation of new teachers. These are only a few examples from dozens of similar comments:

“ Field experiences were the most beneficial part of the education program ”

“ Experience is the best teacher. However, experience and theory go hand in hand. It helped solidify the knowledge I gained in class. ”

“ Field experience is an incredibly important aspect of learning how to be a teacher. Until you are running the classroom, you do not have the understanding of how many different tasks and different people you are responsible for on a day to day basis Teacher training for me was the start of learning how to manage my time far more effectively, so that I could ultimately be an effective teacher. ”

“ Field experiences are ABSOLUTELY the reason I felt even somewhat prepared for my teaching career. Without them I’m not sure I would have felt comfortable or confident in my teaching abilities. ”

Given the overall positive tone of comments regarding field experiences, it is perhaps not surprising that there were calls for more field experience as part of the programs. These concerned not only more time but also more variety in field experience settings.

“ The whole degree should be essentially a long practicum. Far more beneficial than listening to theorists talk about a space they have never taught in at the university. ”

“ Field experience is invaluable. I wish there was more of it my program. ”

“ I appreciated my time during practicum and I learned a lot from my sponsor teachers. However more time in the classroom would of been beneficial along with being placed in a variety of schools that support learners and families from a variety of backgrounds and socio economic status. ”

“ I needed more of them, and I needed to work outside of my discipline to prepare me for the realities of working in education. My practicum was far and away the most valuable part of my education. ”

“ I think we should have been given the opportunity to observe teachers in September, so we could see how they start up the year. ”

Comments mentioned concerns about the fit between field experiences and the roles candidates took on when they entered schools as professionals.

“As a Social Studies/Geography teacher, my practicum was completely different that what my first few years of teaching have been so far. I have so far taught math, science and learning assistance, with only one or two blocks of Social Studies. While the field experience helps you learn to “teach”, I am not teaching the classes that I specifically trained to teach.”

A relatively small number of comments challenged the value of field experience at all.

“... practicums were the worst experience of my life. It involved me jumping through every hoop imaginable while I smile and nod. I did not learn anything except why not to trust certain people to help you. I am not a sour person, I did learn everything on this list, just not from my practicums.”

“I would not consider my field experience time to be a “great” experience - I took issue with some of the practices happening in my placement school / classroom culture. Lack of support from admin and burnt out teaching staff left a negative impression on certain aspects of the profession.”

“My field experience was horrific... I almost left the program. I was also put in positions that should not have happened. There was a lot of information given on the course work itself, but not much else. My most value came from other teachers in the same school who were very helpful and who mentored me.”

The comments as a whole indicate that field experience is a vital and positive component for many teacher candidates. Consideration could be given to extending and deepening field experience, but it is also true that there is a need to address the less positive experience of some teacher candidates. Often coming at the end of a program, and necessary for qualification, a negative field experience may have a disproportionate impact upon teacher candidates.

The importance of mentor teachers and faculty associates

Comments highlighted how important these two roles are to the success of teacher candidates.

“Field experience was 100% more useful than course work was. A good match with the sponsor teacher is crucial.”

“Field experience was highly valuable with one specific supervisor, not necessarily the other.”

“I am absolutely grateful for my mentors while on practicum. I feel fortunate that I was able to have such a good rapport with my School Associates and Faculty Associates, and that they were willing to give me very honest and constructive feedback. I know that some of my classmates were less fortunate than I. I think by sheer luck of the draw, that I ended up with who I ended up with, is what allowed me to find success as an educator.”

If the fit with mentor teacher or faculty associate was not strong, candidates have to find other ways to get support in the program.

“ Benefits from the field experience I had were offered by the students I taught. Mentor teachers I worked with provided some tools for learning; however, others did not. Most of the experience I gained was student provided. I believe for effective... learning teacher candidates should have more field experience, as this is the environment in which most learning happens. ”

Comments also highlighted significant concerns about practices of mentor teachers and faculty advisors, including the lack of protection and support for teacher candidates faced with a more difficult relationship.

“ During my field experiences both faculty associates I had said to put aside my struggling mental health and to push through, even despite being on the edge of mental collapse. On nights where I had no more than 2 hours of sleep I would let my faculty associate know and would then be bullied, verbally harassed, as they pushed me to tears individually and in front of my mentor teachers and then they would offer no support. ”

“ I felt very unsupported by two of my practicum instructors; they were very hands off and didn't give me useful feedback. They were good teachers, but wanted me to adopt their teaching style, which wasn't authentic to me. It was extremely discouraging. ”

“ There is no protection against the racist and biased teachers who sponsor you. You either cater to their bias to pass, or you stand by your morals and fail. The issue isn't how we train teachers, it is the zero follow up to ensure those trained teachers actually walk the talk you taught them. You get in and realize teachers don't plan, they don't do lessons, they don't use various assessment methods and they all think professional development days are a joke. ”

Suggestions to help address the situation included workshops for mentor teachers as well as a more rigorous process for selection of mentor teachers.

“ Experiences vary widely based on mentor teachers the teacher candidates are placed with. I would strongly encourage a retreat/workshop for potential mentor teachers to ensure that they have a strong understanding of their roles. Even within my own school, my experience was vastly different from the other teacher candidate at my school. ”

“ From the experience of my own and my peers: mentor teachers allow their personal feelings to influence assessment of student teachers, which I believe is not reflective of a professional community. Personal disagreements should be discussed with the student

teacher and not make their first appearance in their progress report. It is also inevitable that student teachers will ask their mentor teachers about their [own] teaching practices. Teachers who may get defensive over this should not be a mentor teacher if it will affect their assessment. It's unprofessional. ”

“ I think mentor teachers should be screened for anti-racism beliefs and practices ”

“ Mentor teachers need to go through interviews from the university in order to teach practicum teachers. Worn out teachers who are ready to retire should not be mentoring practicum students. ”

“ Please make sure that the mentor teachers really want to have a student teacher. It completely changes the experience of the student teacher. ”

The comments strongly emphasise the importance of the relationship among the three people involved in the field experience. The suggestions for improvement generally seem sensible in terms of selection and preparation of mentor teachers.

Skills development

Comments reflected on the possibility of skills development during field experience. This set of comments indicated that development of teaching skills might be limited in field experiences.

“ A lot more time and guidance in planning and assessment would have been appreciated. ”

“ Field experience was incredibly valuable but at times felt like jumping through hoops of reflection instead of truly focusing on observing/trying out different instructional strategies that would help to solidify teaching practice. I would appreciate more opportunity to observe master teachers and to have access to proven unit/lessons plans starting out so that as a new teacher more time is spent discovering personal teaching styles - what feels authentic and works for you. ”

“ Mostly focused on how/what you are teaching and dealing with classroom conflicts if they arise. Not a lot of time for anything else. ”

One aspect of these observations was the impression gained by teacher candidates regarding the extent to which working teachers actually apply the formal skills the teacher candidates were being taught.

“ My understanding of effective planning and instruction was not strengthened very much in the field because most teachers make very rough plans and do not devote a lot of time making full lesson plans. ”

During the field experience skills growth could be limited despite many opportunities to engage with the day-to-day authentic tasks of teaching was deepened.

Indigenous presence

The students who commented on working with Indigenous students, communities and knowledges were strongly supportive of the importance of these ideas to effective teacher practice. Generally, however, they did not see field experience as a way to gain these commitments if they weren't already in place.

“ I already had a high level of respect and understanding of Indigenous students and the diversity of the school community. My field experience allowed me to practice and refine how I interact with these groups. ”

“ All student-teachers should have a field experience where they are able to connect with Land and the Indigenous peoples' territory they are on as this is a fundamental component of Indigenous Education. ”

“ I was placed at an inner city school with most of my students Indigenous. My mentor teacher was helpful in leading me towards my personal goal to decolonize my classroom as she was doing the work herself. She showed me the importance of trauma-based practice and love and understanding in the classroom before academics. ”

One concern was the extent to which field experience could equip teacher candidates to act on what they were learning about Indigenous presence.

“ The field experience is incredibly valuable, as it made all of the theory relevant and tangible. However, I don't feel as though the field experience did anything to further my understanding, respect, etc. of Indigenous peoples. All it did was highlight how inequitable the system is for those students and many other oppressed groups of students. ”

There were limited comments on this topic from Indigenous teacher candidates, but the following were helpful:

“ Being an Indigenous person I didn't not feel myself represented within the classroom. Once my faculty advisor and teacher mentors found out I was Indigenous there was an expectation that I teach all the Indigenous content. And because of the power imbalance I could not say anything. I learned more in my 1st year of teaching than I ever did in my practicum ”

“ As an Indigenous person I found that the [university]PLP program was able to come to our community to allow me and others access to a university teaching program we otherwise would not have been able to access. I felt that the practicum was too short

especially for those with no other school or classroom experience. Having a mentor or apprenticeship model would allow a new teacher to build their skill level. Also, I was shocked classroom management was an elective and not mandatory. ”

These two comments align well with other insights in terms of a need for strong, thoughtful and supportive mentoring for new teachers.

Paid field experience

The final theme emerging from the comments was the need for teacher candidates to be paid during field experience. One of the models referred to is the medical model, where there is a long term paid internship as part of the qualifying process.

“ It should be paid. Expecting teacher candidates to work long arduous days for free is ridiculous. Particularly when my program cost 10,000 dollars. ”

“ It would be better to create a paid internship for field experiences - students who need to earn money to survive outside of their practicum divide their focus and get less out of the experience as a result. It would also be better to set up a one year paid residency similar to the medical profession on the pathway to full certification. This would improve the transition to full practice and the development of more sophisticated skills, especially related to inclusion support and effective planning, pedagogy and assessment. ”

“ I also think so sort of compensation for teachers in practicum is important. They're the full time educator in a class for 10 weeks. Pay them something! Doctors and lawyers get pay to be working students. ”

This is a controversial suggestion that, if implemented, would significantly change the nature of teacher education. It would be illuminating to see how much support this idea would attract across other stakeholders in the teacher preparation field.

Impact of Covid

A number of comments recognised the effects of two years of pandemic conditions on field experiences. They highlight the impact of Covid on the level of preparation of new teachers.

“ Most of my field experience was challenging, and because the end part happened at the beginning of Covid, I was forced to do a different kind of field experience--online. Sadly I missed out on my Lesson Plans I had been developing because schools were closed. Thankfully I was able to put those lesson plans to use upon graduation as a TTOC. ”

“ I did my long practicum during early Covid stages of lockdown and re-open. I didn't have a lot of experience in these times with planning and assessment, as we were transitioning between different modes of teaching so rapidly. It was hard to start a teaching job given this setback. ”

“ I think my personal experience is highly skewed as my long practicum was supposed to start right as the pandemic hit (March 2020). I barely got any field experience except for weekly visits to my practicum school. ”

However, other comments focused on the opportunities opened up by this challenging set of circumstances.

“ My long practicum was during the beginning of the pandemic, so all my original lesson plans were thrown out as we moved into remote learning after spring break 2020. It was then that I learned how little students (gr. 10-11) knew about how to use technology for education, versus social media. It inspired me to begin a post-graduate certificate in Technology and... This is a program that should be taught at all universities, give the realities I have faced as a new classroom teacher during these uncertain times. ”

There is little doubt that Covid had a significant impact on teacher preparation, but the comments by respondents were not as negative as could be expected and it did not seem to be an overwhelming concern. This suggests that the ameliorative measures put into place went some way to address the challenges of such a difficult time.

Summary of comments

As this survey was among certified teachers who must have successfully completed their field experience the comments for improvement should carry credibility and weight. It would be important and insightful to find out the perspective of those who were not able to complete field experiences —and programs—successfully.

G. Chapter summary

There is strong recognition of the importance of field experiences and the relationships within them, leading to a series of suggestions and perspectives that really support a form of professionalization of field experiences.

The findings to carry forward are:

- 7.1 Male secondary teacher candidates are less positive about field experiences**
- 7.2 The value of field experience implies it may be beneficial to extend it**
- 7.3 Greater variety in field experience would be an asset given the unpredictability of initial and subsequent teaching assignments**
- 7.4 It would be helpful to have more deliberate selection and preparation of mentor teachers**
- 7.5 Stronger support for Indigenous presence would be helpful in field experience**
- 7.6 New teachers see field experience as unpaid labour**

8 | FIRST YEAR OF TEACHING

The first year of teaching is a critical time for many new educators. This is reflected in both the scale scores and in the nature of the comments, many of which talk about “survival.”

A. Scale responses regarding field experience

The support for statements regarding the first year of teaching’s potential to help develop professional standards is stronger than for either coursework or field experiences. Some caution must be applied to these results since the first year of teaching will be more recent than the other two aspects of entry to the profession, though there is some face validity to the idea of the strongest preparation for a profession is practice of that profession.

The lowest score in this category of responses is 72 and the highest is 87.5. There are no responses in the 50-66 category and ten out of 15 are above 75. Three of the lowest refer to working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners. The other two concern application of subject knowledge and professional development.

The highest scores concern the need to treat learners equitably, valuing diversity, and acting ethically as a teacher. The consistency with which these value-based aspects of education attracted the highest levels of agreement from respondents is striking. It is important to bear in mind that respondents were not asked to evaluate what teacher preparation should be doing, but to report on their direct personal experience. Analysis of the responses to open-ended questions will provide more insight on this issue.

Figure 8.1: Scale responses regarding the first year of teaching's contribution to meeting BC Professional Standards (n = 680-725)



B. Gender and first year of teaching

Analysis shows 11 out of 15 statements regarding the first year of teaching received higher scores from female teachers than male teachers (Table 8.1).

Table 8.1: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents (n = 633-680)

	F	M	Diff
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	84.9	80.6	4.4*
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	89.4	83.8	5.6***
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	88.2	81.6	6.6***
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	74.6	65.0	9.6***
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	80.2	72.0	8.2***
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	79.9	72.4	7.5**
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	85.5	81.9	3.7*
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	76.1	64.6	11.5***
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	75.6	65.4	10.2***
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	80.7	75.0	5.7*
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	74.6	66.7	7.8**

Six of these differences show up when male and female elementary program completers are compared (Table 8.2).

Table 8.2: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed an elementary qualification (n = 287-312)

	F	M	Diff
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	89.6	83.7	6.0**
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	88.6	83.2	5.4*
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	77.8	67	10.8**
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	79.8	69.5	10.3**
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	82.5	71	11.6**
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	76.7	66.6	10.1*

Five of these score differences show up when teachers who completed secondary qualifications are considered (Table 8.3). Four of the elements overlap between the two groups. The gender differences seem relatively consistent across elementary and secondary qualification levels.

Table 8.3: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed a secondary qualification (n = 312-334)

	F	M	Diff
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	89.5	84.5	5*
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	87.8	81.5	6.4**
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	79.5	73.3	6.2*
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	78.2	70	8.3*
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	71.1	63.5	7.6*
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	71.5	63	8.5*

It appears that new male teachers find the first year of teaching less useful for engaging with the Professional Standards than new female teachers.

C. Qualification level and first year of teaching

There are six statements out of 15 where the level of qualification makes a significant difference to the score given to the statements on the first year of teaching. The differences with the highest statistical significance are 72, 78 and 79, which are concerned with acknowledging Indigenous presence in society and schools. Respondents completing elementary programs gave higher scores across these six statements.

Table 8.4: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant differences by qualification level (665-691)

	E	S	Diff
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	77.1	71.4	5.7**
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	75.9	68.4	7.5***
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	80.4	75.3	5.1*
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	86.6	83.0	3.5*
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	78.1	67.9	10.1***
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	78.0	68.2	9.7***

As seen in Table 8.5, female teachers gave different scores depending on program level on four statements, with the first year of teaching for people with elementary qualifications being given higher scores.

There were no statistically significant differences between males in elementary programs and males in secondary programs. The differences are being generated based on the difference in scores given by female respondents.

Table 8.5: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant difference in responses between female elementary and secondary respondents (n = 433-471)

	E	S	Diff
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	77.7	71.3	6.4**
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	77.8	70.5	7.2**
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	79.8	71.1	8.7***
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	79.1	71.5	7.7**

Summarizing across the data on the first year of teaching, it seems reasonable to state that females, irrespective of the level of program they completed, rate their experience more highly than males in terms of contribution to development of Professional Standards. In addition, female elementary teachers score their first year higher than female secondary teachers.

D. Ethnicity and first year of teaching

There were four statements with statistically significant differences, as shown in Table 8.6. In each case, respondents who identified as First Nations, Metis and Inuit gave much higher scores to these four statements. The topics of the statements concerns multiple worldviews, reconciliation and First Nations, Metis and Inuit learners. The mean across all the statements on first year experience is 5 points higher for First Nations, Metis and Inuit respondents (see Table A.21). However, more research is critical to understand the experience of these new educators more deeply.

Table 8.6: Scale responses on first year of teaching showing statistically significant differences by self-identified ethnicity

	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	92.5*	86.6	81.4	84.0	85.2
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	83.5*	73.9	67.5	72.5	73.5
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	92.3***	87.0	77.4	78.8	79.6
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	85.2*	74.8	70.5	73.5	74.3

E. Diverse abilities and the first year of teaching

There were no statistically significant differences between the responses of people who identified as having disabilities and diverse abilities and those who did not (see Table A.14).

F. Comments on the first year of teaching

There were 271 respondents who chose to provide comments on their experience of the first year of teaching. These 271 respondents gave significantly lower scores on 10 out of 15 the scale questions listed above, so they were somewhat less positive about their experience than the majority of respondents. However, the distinction is less acute than for either coursework or field experience.

A fair number of the comments reflected the experience of people who had not completed their first year of teaching in British Columbia. There was also comments about this range of questions not fitting the first year experience very well, a point that will be expanded in the following sections. There are six themes cutting across the comments.

Survival

The largest category of comments by far concerned the perception that the first year of teaching is entirely about survival. This specific word was used time and again in the comments.

“ First year of teaching just felt like survival! ”

“ Again, my first year was about survival, trying to figure out the hiring system and advantages of taking a small contract over continuing to TOC. I TOC'd for my first year and it was a lot of learning how to adapt to different schools, classes, staff, etc. ”

“ First year was an unsupported hell. ”

“ I am still in my first year of teaching and it is challenging. I want to do all the things listed above, but I am mostly just trying to survive because we are inadequately prepared to be teachers, yet still expected to be able to teach and prepare students for the next grade. We are also lacking resources, and the curriculum is quite vague and not super helpful in providing guidance or direction for teaching. Professional learning opportunities in [this] district are really good, and far more helpful than [the program] was at improving my practice, but it is a lot and often overwhelming. ”

“ It was awful. ”

For some respondents even survival proved to be elusive, as the mis-match between expectations and what was possible hit home.

“ I burnt out. I worked at an inner city school that was lacking in much needed resources. Stretched very thin. Did special ed and prep. Lots of teachers left the school on “stress leave”, this was pre-Covid. Learned from an amazing team of resource teachers and great staff, but huge lack of resources and district support meant many kids needs not being met in SPED. Very disheartening as I used to work as an EA and hoped to help more. A “do more with less” attitude from district and no consultation to see what we needed. Made me choose a part time contract when applying so I would not burn out. ”

“ I felt extremely unprepared and thus burnt out in my first year. Nearly nothing I learnt in my B.Ed. could be applied to the actual day-to-day teaching. I knew nothing about classroom management. I knew the importance of respecting and appreciating diverse learners and backgrounds and home lives, but learnt nothing about navigating a classroom where all these lives intersect and interact. They talked about supporting individual students, but no one said anything about how dynamics can radically change behaviors. I ended up frantically putting out fires for the majority of the year. ”

Given this context it is remarkable (and laudable) that one thing some respondents took away from the first year was the importance of helping others.

“ My first full year of teaching was incredibly difficult. As a result of that experience I go out of my way to support and encourage new teachers in my school and department. ”

The other categories of comments in this section are partly elaborations on the challenges of the first year of teaching, but there are also significant suggestions for ways the situation can be improved in the interests of learning, teacher health and retention.

Specific challenges

Respondents identified a number of specific challenges they had to face at the beginning of their teaching career. The new BC Curriculum (developed and introduced over the last ten years) is extremely open and flexible for teachers and learners, but this can prove challenging to new teachers:

“ My first year of teaching has been about surviving the workload. I haven’t had time to put into practice everything that I learned on my practicum and in the BEd program. I have found the BC Curriculum severely lacking in supports for new teachers. There are minimal sample lessons, unit plans or even year plans for a new teacher to access. It makes me feel that I have to come up with everything myself and it has been very challenging. ”

This lack of structure could contribute to the complexity and challenge of the job in significant ways.

“ The first year is a baptism of fire. Since you are taking the dog’s breakfast of jobs you could find yourself with three learning curves - a prep, resource and a day or two of classroom teaching - which is incredibly challenging as a first-year teacher. There is little support and it is unreasonable to expect a new teacher to build their resources, learn three jobs plus effectively plan for diverse students and reconciliation. Unrealistic. ”

Some of the touchstones of good practice, such as support from colleagues and parents, could prove to be less available than would be hoped, leading to strong feelings of frustration.

“ Being told verbatim during a staff meeting that we are all “dumb white people” (direct quote) was not a positive experience. Parental involvement proved to be disastrous as they are not professionally trained in teaching. You don’t get uninformed opinions suggested to any other profession, ours should not be the same. If they want to be part of formal education, they can get a teaching degree and respect the professionals enlisted to serve as educators. We aren’t just mediators or daycare workers. ”

There were a number of concerns about the school context of the first year of teaching:

“ Lots of bad practices in the school I taught in. Lot of stress and anger directed at the kids, senior teachers pushed their way of thinking on new teachers... ”

The importance of the location of the first job was underlined by a comment from a respondent who changed school during the year:

“ For my first 6 months I was in an amazing school with the most supportive staff. I loved every moment. Then I switched schools and Covid hit and teaching stopped being fun. ”

Having to teach in areas they were unprepared for was mentioned by a number of respondents.

“ New teachers often don’t have the opportunity to teach in the areas they are passionate about and trained in enough. ”

The lack of fit between teacher preparation programs and the professional role of the teacher was mentioned by several respondents.

“ Now that I am in a classroom position for the first time, I feel unprepared for much of the practical parts of teaching. ”

One worrying thread among the comments was the unreality of expectations regarding professional development in the first years of teaching. Those who had full-time contracts found it difficult to find the time and those who were TTOCs had no resource or paid time for professional development.

“ The reason I disagree that the first year supported engagement in professional learning was that, while yes, I did learn and grow, there was very little additional time provided for that growth. It was left to me to find the time in my personal life and take it away from my duties as a parent. This is not how other professions I’ve worked in would define ‘support’. ”

Teachers belonging to racialized communities face specific challenges in their first year of practice.

“ New teachers, especially, racialized ones are subjected to have their professionalism and autonomy questioned by senior teachers who already have their privileges protected by other teachers and administrators. Administrators also give us a hard time by dismissing and neglecting information from us. There is not much support, they think we have to endure and “pay the systemic dues they paid”. We never teach in our areas and we get the most challenging students. ”

New teachers could also find themselves in complex situations regarding Indigenous education, where they were regarded as experts by established teachers even while they were still working out how to do good work in this regard.

“ I had Indigenous students in my practica and in my first year of teaching, but it would have been handy for me to know how I could involve their traditions and practices without being tokenistic or appropriative. As an example, one co-worker told me that a good unit for teaching Indigenous curriculum content in Pre-Calculus 10 was to look at parabolic curves in dreamcatchers woven by the Miq'maq, but none of my Indigenous students were of Miq'maq ancestry, and I wasn't sure that quadratic paraboloids were what the creators of those dreamcatchers had in mind. It felt exploitative. ”

Many of these specific challenges of the first year of teaching have been present for decades in the profession and it is hard to imagine they do not contribute to new teachers leaving the field.

Supports

Respondents identified what would have been helpful to them in the form of support. The greatest number of comments, and some of the strongest, promoted the idea of enhanced mentoring for new teachers.

“ I was very fortunate to have my own full-time classroom in a school where staff supported one another. Several of my friends who graduated from the same program did not have that, and of those over half are not teachers today as a result. The program did not set us up for success, whereas the school environment I was in did. Schools themselves need to have a better mentoring program for new teachers to prevent burnout and to ensure that they succeed. ”

“ Teacher mentors are crucial to the first few years of teaching. I would not have been remotely as successful in my first year without the kindness and mentorship of other teachers. First year teachers are thrown into areas that they have no experience in. This is common. As is having 8 to 10 different courses to teach in the same year. Teacher burnout is huge. Those teachers who mentor the incoming teachers are saints and should be rewarded. And the new mentorship program is a godsend! ”

“ My first year was so hard! I was not prepared for the reality of the classroom. I think every first year teacher should be enrolled in a mentorship program so they have lots of support in their first year. I didn't even have the ability to practice or implement all of the good stuff I learned in my university program or practicums, because I was essentially thrown into the deep end without a good idea of how to effectively run a classroom on my own. I strongly feel there needs to be a bridge between graduation and your first contract (perhaps optional, but still an option). ”

This was an area in which the support and action of the school administration was seen as vital. Several respondents acknowledged the structures set up within the school and the district.

“ I worked in a district position with built in professional development and support once a month. I would recommend that for any first year teacher. It was perfect. ”

“ Had phenomenal VP who said “you need to experience 1st year and survive. Don't worry about extracurricular clubs, focus on teaching”. Strong staff around me who shared resources and set me up for success. Used very little of the knowledge “shared” in my un classes - because they didn't teach skills, we sat in lectures and talked about theory - but was able to use previous work experience skills and talents and had a fabulous, fun, encouraging first year. Best things: extra time to plan, LA teacher who helped do reading assessments etc., admin who gave time for Pro D, + teacher mentors. ”

“ Having had an amazing and supportive administrator was pivotal to my feeling confident in my first-year teaching. Connections are super important with both admin and fellow teachers. ”

One comment made a plea for a specific accommodation for first-year teachers.

“ 1st year teachers should be paid 100% but only teach 0.8 FTE, with the other 0.2 being daily prep or conferencing with a mentor teacher as is done in other Commonwealth countries. The first year, like practicum, is sink or swim. The system needs to fund the ability of first year teachers to swim, especially in a teacher shortage. ”

The predominant message was that mentoring would be the key element in making the first-year experience more positive. Administrators in schools and districts are seen as the most important people to help in making this happen and ensuring the first year of professional life is more sustainable.

The TTOC experience

Many of the respondents spent at least the first year of their teaching career as TTOCs, and found that the skills picked up in TEPs did not fully prepare them for this more fragmented experience.

“ My first year of teaching was mostly as a TTOC so I barely utilized any of my learned skills from practicum, particularly around planning and assessment. Once I picked up my first job share (still within my first year of teaching), I focused on classroom management and worked to learn the new curriculum that was introduced. It should be noted that [my program] and practicum centered around the old curriculum and PLOs before competencies came into place. ”

“ I was a TTOC for two years, so it’s hard to implement many of the things I was taught in terms of planning and assessment. ”

TTOCing was not always seen as a bad experience by any means, as it could be an opportunity to try working in different settings and apply different techniques.

“ My first year was full of adventures, going to multiple schools and trying to figure out the expectations. Many school staff and administrators were too busy to help me get my bearings and there was a lot of trial and error on my part. I learned many dos and don’ts on my own and when I found a good mentor at a school, I asked a million questions at every opportunity. As a TTOC, we were never encouraged to participate in professional development days. We don’t get paid for the day & we don’t have sponsor schools to pay for the courses, often having to pay from our own pocket to participate. ”

The lack of professional development for TTOCs was picked up in other comments:

“ Much of my first year was spent TTOCing and it’s unfortunate that TTOCs don’t get paid for Pro-D ... ”

Overall the comments on the TTOC experience gave a mixed picture that could be better or worse depending on the attitude and autonomy of the teacher involved. The following comment sums it up well:

“ TTOCing can be very isolating and unrewarding, but it provides a wealth of practical experience in classrooms that’s extremely valuable. Often didn’t feel supported by my District as an on-call educator, though. Onboarding process was very weak, and no mentorship opportunities were available for TTOCs (only contract teachers). Processes regarding sub lists, jobs, etc. were poorly explained and I felt I was given the run-around by HR. ”

One thing many respondents agreed upon was the necessity of developing classroom management skills quickly and effectively as part of working as a TTOC.

“ Mostly a TTOC, so not a lot of opportunities... TTOCing is babysitting - you learn classroom management (or not) and nothing else. ”

Overall working as a TTOC in the first years of a career seems like a mixed bag. It lacks security and Pro-D, but allows new teachers to build classroom skills without so much time put into the development of continuing programming.

The effects of Covid

There were more comments on Covid in this section of the survey than in any other. The overarching feeling was a lack of continuity and stability during the first year, but some concerns about the safety of the schools in the face of a pandemic were raised.

“ Covid-19 affects many of these answers. ”

“ My first year of teaching began in January 2020, so it was a very abnormal year as the pandemic was declared in March. I had to be extremely flexible and adaptable, and have had to deal with a lot more stress than the average first year teacher. As we are still experiencing the pandemic, I have not yet experienced a “normal” school year as a certified teacher. ”

“ I have been subbing intermittently, in part because of the Omicron variant and my lack of faith in the school systems to prevent spread. Subbing can be challenging; subbing during the pandemic has been very challenging. I find it hard to answer any of these questions. Just dealing with basics of attendance, student behaviour, and the stress of other teachers and administrators is a lot. ”

Of particular concern was the lack of connection in and with the school community as a result of the necessary health measures.

“ Due to the Covid-19 Mandates constantly changing my 1 1/2 years in the public system have been a roller coaster. Parents are still not encouraged to be in the school and conferences were over the phone. I have met less than a handful of parents face to face making genuine connection and discussion of their child's learning difficult. Pro D has all been online making it much less valuable and limiting connections to other educators. ”

While Covid has been extremely difficult for many educators, it is reasonable to see the effects as having been disproportionate for new educators working their way into the profession.

Learning from the first year

The final category of comments concerns what these new educators learned during their first year of practice. In some cases this comes down to hard skills they wished they could have learned during their TEP.

“ While it is incredibly fast paced and I don't think I have the time to explore and apply everything I am learning, I do feel like I am building a stronger practice every day. I honestly just wish I would've been better prepared by my university. It's great that I knew a lot about

diversity...but does it matter that I respect diversity that much when I can't run a guided reading group or score a reading assessment because I've never seen one before? ”

Others have found it easier to maintain a continuity of commitment and values through the start of their career.

“ I entered the profession with respect and understanding of diversity. My experience as a teacher has allowed me to practice working with and accommodating these individuals. ”

“ I have been able to experience ages K-7 as a TOC. The excellent planning by teachers is inspiring and I have gained a great deal of knowledge of the realities of teaching in the field. I am actively learning about assessment through Pro D to understand this area better. ”

There was strong recognition of how far they had come as educators during the first year of practice.

“ I spent a month as a TOC before taking over a Blended Gr. 3-4 class from Nov to June. The amount of learning during that time, which included a first-year evaluation, teaching online at the elementary level which I was not trained for, and then having the class composition change in January 2021, was monumental. I regularly put in 12 or more hours a day of work. But I sure learned a lot! My field experiences took away all my passion for teaching and made me second guess everything I did. Being the teacher was a much better learning experience than my field experience. ”

Though many steps could be taken to make things easier for the new teacher entering the system, at the same time it was recognised as a highly valuable experience.

“ Learning by doing is the best teacher. Having your own classroom and systems in place will inform your practice. ”

Summarizing comments

It is not easy to pull together all of the comments on the first year of teaching, not least because people's experiences vary so much. A supportive school community makes a huge difference. Mentoring and direct curriculum support are identified as important structures to put into place. Currently, despite acknowledging the learning that occurs, the tone of the comments is that the first year is harder than it always needs to be.

G. Chapter summary

The comments regarding the first year of teaching, as well as the dynamics of the scores, are different from those regarding coursework and fieldwork. This is the time of initial professional engagement with teaching, calling for rapid development of a range of skills and knowledge. New teachers' experience during this period is likely to have significant effects on their decision to stay in the teaching profession and what their role should be. The insights regarding the first year showed a high degree of consistency.

The findings carried forward are:

- 8.1 New female teachers, particularly in elementary programs, view their first year of teaching as more helpful for engagement with professional standards than new male teachers**
- 8.2 New First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers gave higher scores to the first year of teaching than other groups**
- 8.3 The dominant sense of the first year of teaching being about survival in a context missing the supports for good practice**
- 8.4 The lack of framework offered by the New Curriculum and the need for substantial amounts of preparation**
- 8.5 Weakness of orientation to school districts and lack of preparation for pragmatic employee tasks**
- 8.6 The importance of mentoring to the first-year experience**
- 8.7 The importance of supportive administrators to the first-year experience**
- 8.8 Lack of orientation for TTOCs**
- 8.9 The sense of having to “catch up” with teaching skills**

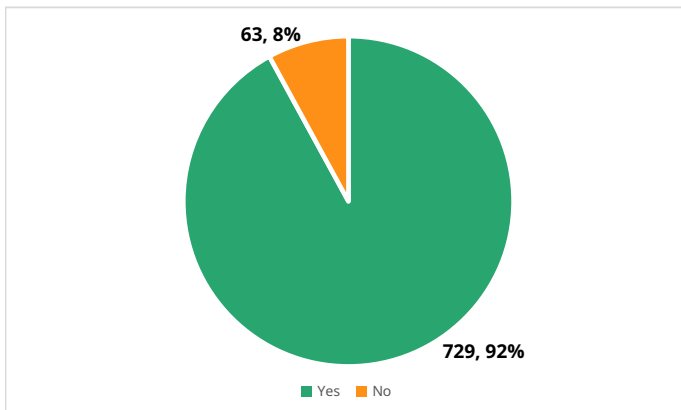
9 | PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is not realistic to assume new educators will learn everything they need from their TEP and on-the-job experience. Professional development fills a vital role in supporting new teachers' growth in competency and skills as front line professionals.

The first response presented here is simply how many respondents have been involved in professional development and learning since they received their certificate. As shown in Figure 9.1, 92% of respondents stated they had.

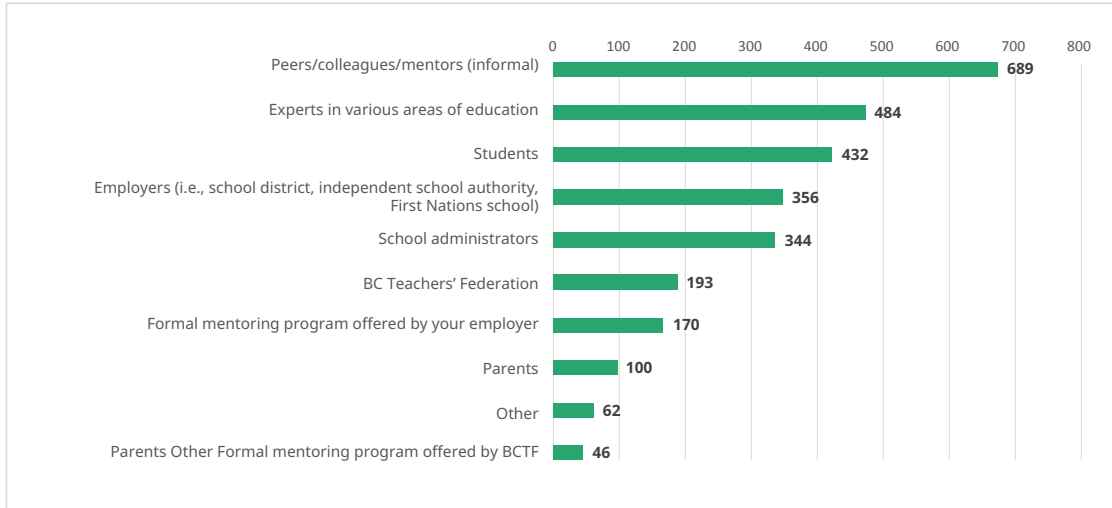
Respondents were asked to identify who had contributed to their professional development and learning, with multiple responses permitted. The total number of responses was 2876 for 784 respondents, meaning that on average each respondent identified 3.7 sources of professional development. The distribution of responses is shown below (Figure 9.2).

Figure 9.1: Number and proportion of respondents stating they had been involved in Pro-D and learning (n=792).



If the numbers of responses are compared to the number of respondents it is clear almost everybody identified peers, colleagues, and informal mentors as a source of growth (87.9%). Experts also have a strong presence, and it would be potentially useful to gain more detail on this response, such as who is viewed as an expert and how the information was exchanged. Students were identified as a source of learning by well over half the respondents. Employers and administrators came in a little below 50% (45.4% and 43.9% respectively). The BC Teachers' Federation broadly was mentioned by around a quarter of respondents (24.6%). Formal mentoring programs, whether offered by employers or the BC Teachers' Federation, were not identified as having highly significant professional development impact by these respondents.

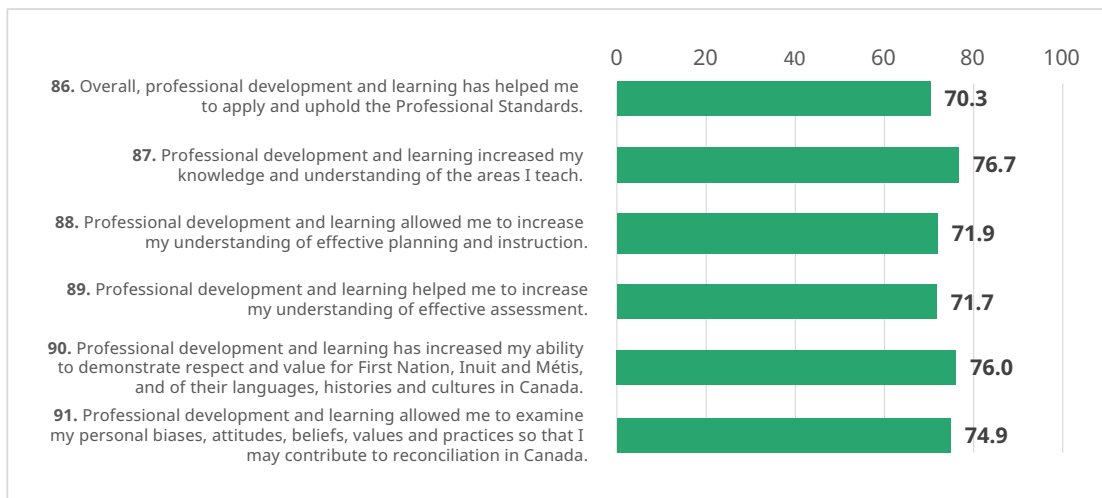
Figure 9.2: Number of respondents identifying each source as contributing to their professional development and learning



A. Scale responses regarding professional development

As Figure 9.3 shows, respondents were asked to assess the specific contributions of professional development in various areas related to the Professional Standards. The support for particular outcomes (for example, knowledge of the area I teach) was higher than for a broader statement about the value of professional development and learning.

Figure 9.3: Mean responses indicating degree of agreement with statements (0-100, n=607-619)



B. Gender and professional development

The results for professional development are remarkably strong and clear—female teachers give substantially more positive scores across the board. Each of these differences is at the highest level of statistical significance (Table 9.1).

Looking to see whether these gender differences are replicated at both elementary and secondary level, there are four significant differences by gender at elementary level (Table 9.2). All six show up as significant at secondary level (Table 9.3). The trend for female teachers to give higher scores to professional development is consistent across the respondents.

Table 9.1: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents (n = 569-614)

	F	M	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	71.1	60.7	10.4***
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	78.2	66.2	12.0***
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	73.0	61.1	12.0***
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	72.1	63.0	9.1***
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	78.4	65.5	12.9***
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada	77.0	64.4	12.5***

Table 9.2: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed an elementary qualification (n = 258-285)

	F	M	Diff
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	84.4	76.1	8.4**
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	78.2	69.8	8.3*
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	80.7	69.4	11.3**
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	79.8	67.3	12.5***

Table 9.3: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences between female and male respondents who completed a secondary qualification (n = 277-295)

	F	M	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	66.0	55.8	10.2**
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	71.9	60.9	11**
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	67.1	57.0	10.1**
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	68.9	59.9	9.0**
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	76.5	64.0	12.5***
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada	74.3	63.0	11.2***

The extent to which female respondents view professional development as contributing more to their engagement with the Professional Standards than male respondents is clear.

C. Qualification level and professional development

As with professional development and gender, the differences in scores assigned by qualification level are consistent and strong. All six scores have differences in favour of elementary qualified teachers at the highest level of significance (Table 9.4).

Table 9.4: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences by qualification level (n = 574-619)

	E	S	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	75.4	62.6	12.7***
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	83.1	68.0	15.0***
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	76.8	64.3	12.5***
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	74.7	66.3	8.4***
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	78.4	71.5	6.9***
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada	77.0	70.1	6.9**

Considering only female respondents, there are five statements showing significant differences by program level (Table 9.5). Male respondents provided statistically significantly different scores for four of the statements (Table 9.6). While this might suggest a slightly stronger influence from female respondents in the difference between program levels, in effect the indications all run in the same direction: elementary teachers give higher scores to professional development than secondary teachers.

Overall the same pattern as other phases of teacher transition asserts itself in professional development, but even more strongly. In this case program level may be a slightly stronger factor than gender, but it seems reasonable to conclude that female elementary teachers tend to give the highest scores and male secondary teachers the lowest.

Table 9.5: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences in responses between female elementary and secondary respondents (n = 390-422)

	E	S	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	75.9	66.0	9.9***
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	84.4	71.9	12.6***
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	78.2	67.1	11.1***
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	75.6	69.0	6.6**
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada	79.8	74.3	5.5*

Table 9.6: Scale responses on professional development showing statistically significant differences in responses between male elementary and secondary respondents (n = 148-158)

	E	S	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	71.4	55.8	15.6**
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	76.1	60.9	15.2**
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	69.8	57.0	12.9*
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	70.4	60.0	10.5*

D. Ethnicity and professional development

There were no statistically significant differences in scale responses by self-identified ethnicity. It is notable, however, that First Nations, Métis and Inuit educators once again gave the highest mean scores on all six of the statements (see Table A.22). In some cases the difference was 6 points. Once again, this would repay further investigation.

E. Diverse abilities and professional development

There were no statistically significant differences between the responses of people who identified as having disabilities and diverse abilities and those who did not (see Table A.18).

F. Comments on Professional Development

The survey attracted 172 comments on professional development, which helped to deepen and clarify the scale responses. The people who provided a write-in response gave significantly lower scale responses on five out of six questions so it is possible to be relatively confident that these comments reflect the perspectives of the more critical respondents.

As with other comments sections in this report the comments were all read and organized by theme. In this case, six coherent themes emerged from the data.

One very clear point is that teachers value professional development and see it as essential to the functioning and evolution of the entire education system.

“ If you want a system that evolves and grows then professional development is very important. Sometimes I have gone to courses that were useless for me and sometimes I have gone to courses that were amazing, but to me that’s part of the journey of finding what professional development will work for me. A one size fits all approach is economical, but weak in creating a robust system that provides value for the wide variety of learners our school system has to work with. ”

“ Professional development is so important and energizing/inspiring! ”

The first issue making it hard to create this robust system is simply the time available for professional development within teachers’ workloads.

Promoting and protecting professional development

A number of comments concerned the extent to which professional development could be displaced by other activities. One reason for this situation is lack of time and energy.

“ I love professional development, but as a new teacher, I struggle to find the time for it. ”

“ Much of my professional development has been focused with reconciliation in mind, which I value greatly in my teaching experience. That said, I rarely have enough time or energy (even with Professional Development Days) to focus on professional development, as my job is so exhausting that I have difficulty giving my attention specifically to increasing my own education. This is ultimately damaging to my effectiveness as an educator over the long term, but I don’t see a good solution to this issue that is within fiscal responsibility. ”

“ I wish we still had PLC [professional learning communities] or time set aside for professional discourse and co-planning with peers. ”

“ Teachers need more time for planning and professional developing. ”

There were also situations where administrators were not supportive of professional development time.

“ My department head last year did not believe she needed pro-d and expected me to complete admin tasks during pro-d activities at school instead of actually learning. ”

The theme of time and work pressures acting as a barrier to professional development ran through the other themes on this topic.

Alternative pathways

Professional development does not always have to take the form of formal events on specified days in the school year. One mechanism attracting support in the comments is mentoring.

“ Mentorship programs should be available to all new teachers! As a new teacher I was unaware of any mentorship programs offered with my board or the BCTF. Please reach out to new teachers for these possibilities! ”

“ Ongoing professional development is important to maintaining work life balance. It can be overwhelming to work toward a better practice alone. I need the support of other educators through leading workshops, supporting one another, and sharing knowledge. ”

There was a range of other comments that tended to address two other ways to build skills. The first was peer-learning and collaboration, though there was recognition this can be as difficult as more formal workshops to find time for.

“ The most valuable form of professional development has been the time I have spent meeting and collaborating with colleagues. I have gained so much from opportunities to co-plan for instruction, co-teach, anchor mark, reflect on and refine assessment practices, and support one another on our journeys towards reconciliation and social justice. I am grateful to have colleagues who see the value in these collaborative processes. Moving forward, I would like to see more time built into the school day to support collaboration. ”

“ Most of the professional development that I feel has impacted my teaching is from peer teachers, the environment which I work in, and a lot of self-study. The conversations I have with other educators is what is invaluable to practically applying my knowledge into my practice. ”

“ Some of the best pro-D I have received was through the IB program (IBTrove) - excellent training for assessment and approaches to teaching. I think it would be terrific for teacher morale if our administrations invited us to share our own “best practice” ideas with each other so that we developed a climate of celebration and mutual administration within our schools, rather than positioning expertise as “coming at us from elsewhere.” I have much to learn from my colleagues but rarely get the time to have a sustained discussion about it. ”

The second area commonly addressed was self-directed learning.

“ I partake in ALOT of personal professional development: done outside of official Pro-D sessions, done in my own time, over the summer, etc.... In general, I think official and formal Pro-D has been much less effective and useful for my professional growth than my self-directed development. ”

“ Most Pro D I've done has been self-directed as district offerings are weak, surface level, and impractical. ”

“ I am finding I need to buy I lot of stuff on Teachers Pay Teachers to fill in the gaps --- even getting professional development funds to apply to things like that would benefit me more than some of the workshops I have participated in. ”

As reflected in a later theme, this first teacher was not alone in their skepticism regarding the value of formal, district-sponsored professional development.

Strengthening skills

In the coursework section of this report there were a number of comments regarding the limited focus on pragmatic skills in teacher education programs. This topic shows up again here, as teachers report on the ways they use professional development to strengthen classroom skills. Generally, professional development leading to enhanced teaching practice was highly valued by respondents to this section of the survey.

“ Despite a good education program, I have felt the need to take additional courses in learning disabilities and literacy, teaching reading, etc. ”

“ I had to learn it on my own because teacher education did not teach me how to actually teach reading, writing, and mathematics. ”

“ I did a 5+ in Inclusive Education and think everyone should have to take this just to effectively handle the nature of students in today's classrooms. Plus, there is not a lot of support so the onus is really on you. I am also pursuing more development in reading as this is an area which is super important - I have 7 emerging readers in my gr 3 class and yet I have felt totally inadequate to teach. This is one area that elementary teacher programs need to provide more exposure to. I was totally unequipped to teach reading to kids who struggle with reading. ”

For some respondents it was only when they were some way into their career that they could find the time to study issues of interest in depth.

“ The more support that we can provide early career teachers through pro d (during school hours, not during their personal time), the deeper and earlier teachers can go in doing the work. I’m grateful being in my fifth year now because I have more time and energy to dig deeper into questions like biases, what it means to be an ally, etc. ”

The comments included specific references to desired topics, such as this comment on French language.

“ There is a MAJOR need for opportunities for intermediate teachers to learn French - not methodology and lesson planning, but the language itself. ”

The tone of the comments under this theme reflected a perception that teachers who could identify their areas of interest and pursue them could find support, but waiting for a district to offer what was needed was unlikely to be successful.

“ When you are intentional about the professional development and learning you seek out, it can be very powerful. How many people are thoughtful and intentional? How many take the professional development opportunities that seem “easy”? ”

Again, self-directed learning seems important.

Concerns about formal professional development workshops

There were a lot of comments about the applicability and relevance of formal professional development offerings. Some comments were quite direct.

“ Professional development is also a joke. The presentations are surface level at best and we are never given time to actually reflect on or apply the minor things we learn. For example, I took on the role of SOGI rep and took a professional seminar on the topic to EXPAND my understanding. Instead, I learned there is such a thing as lesbians (shock, awe, amazement!). This was not helpful. I needed assistance supporting students questioning their sexuality, dealing with biased, and implementing a program at an elementary level when you get parent push-back. ”

This comment reflects a considerable gap between what was needed and what was available to this teacher. Part of the issue could be lack of clear expectations about the purposes of professional development.

“ There is a very wide spread in what is acceptable for Pro-D between schools. Some schools are using them as collaboration days while others require conferences or guest speakers ”

There were also concerns about the applicability of professional development learning, explicitly reminiscent of comments on coursework.

“ Professional development is generally delivered in the ways that are not pedagogically effective. Generally, they are, just as in our teacher training, theoretical and philosophical with no immediate applicability in the classroom and no time to be able to make it applicable ourselves. ”

This lack of applicability could be even more obvious, such as when topic areas or grade levels went completely unaddressed. There were several comments about lack of support for specialist areas, though math for elementary teachers was also highlighted as a priority. In the following case there were few professional development opportunities dealing with the appropriate level of student.

“ Professional development, at least in my district and in my area of teaching (special ed), is strictly elementary based. There are very few, if any, professional development opportunities that support secondary-specific areas. ”

There was a strong sense that the best people to be designing professional development for classroom teachers are classroom teachers.

“ Teachers should be more engaged in creating PD for their colleagues. ”

Overall, the respondents who commented were significantly critical of existing professional development opportunities.

Diversity and inclusion

One aspect of professional development in British Columbia deals with diversity and inclusion, including acknowledging and respecting Indigenous presence. Some respondents found this highly supportive.

“ There have been a lot of Indigenous topics covered at Pro-D and it’s been really helpful. ”

“ We really need to continue to engage professional development around anti-racism, respect for diversity, and integrating Indigenous culture and learning into our classrooms. This kind of professional development needs to be specific, rather than surface level. ”

Those finding it less useful tended to do so for different reasons. In some cases, an existing high level of familiarity with the issues made the professional development superfluous. Linked to this were concerns that even very strong knowledge of these issues was not necessarily recognised or rewarded by the system.

“As an older Indigenous woman, I find that I struggle to find opportunities in my district. I find they do not value my diverse abilities and I am often passed over for leadership roles despite my continued education and professional development. I have continued right into my Indigenous [degree] and am currently studying in the first ever Indigenous [specialism] Program to better serve my community and the learners I serve. Opportunities to use my skills to... assist and mentor others to come is important.”

There was some discomfort around the approach to professional development.

“As a “mixed” heritage/ethnicity, I often struggle with the settler/colonist vs. indigenous binary that is currently being promoted through Pro-D. I am the descendent of both heritages. Indigenous cultures tend to define nouns through verbs (one is what one is doing) and to give a static label of “settler” to those who are not actively colonizing is counterproductive and unnecessarily divisive. I don’t need “so sorry” allies.”

The other concern with inclusion and diversity is the potential for the topic to dominate professional development.

“I have found it challenging to find readily offered PD that offers instructional improvement. There is a large focus on social justice/moral improvements, but I crave professional development on how to improve my instruction.”

“Why are most of the questions centred around equity, diversity, First Nations, and reconciliation? Are those what you consider the main focuses of education, my learning to become a teacher, and my job requirements? The focus of my teaching is on helping produce critical thinkers, who can read, write, and express themselves fully and logically, and be prepared for post-secondary education and/or gaining employment.”

“In one year I had 3 blanket ceremonies and zero professional development on teaching students how to read. There needs to be balanced.”

“Inclusion is important to address in professional development. Recently, it’s seemed like the only topic, which I can understand, but when I need practical teaching strategies on other matters as well, I am often left wanting. Given how the task of reconciliation involves such massive societal changes, I often leave professional development sessions feeling defeated rather than inspired.”

“The focus on unconscious racism left me unsure of how to change my practice of teaching.”

The impression from reading comments in this theme is that the education system has not yet identified the most effective approach to professional development around this critical area.

Access

Issues around access to professional development were very strong among TTOCs, who were either left out of district professional development or felt as if they were effectively excluded. This can lead to a pause in the professional development of educators in this situation.

“ I choose to be a TTOC. TTOC’s should be offered paid professional days the same as contract teachers are. ”

“ It is difficult for TTOCs to get involved in professional development as the nature of the work is different every day, often you aren’t teaching your subject area and likely you haven’t been able to work from the resources you have developed. It, in some ways, is a kind of limbo in the sense that your professional practice doesn’t seem to move forward in some ways. ”

“ It would be nice for TTOCs to have more communication from the district about professional development opportunities. I hear about more opportunities and collaborative events now that I am in a term position in a school. ”

Even for teachers working on contract, the expense of, or distance to, an event can make participation complex.

“ It can be expensive. We attend pro D and get great ideas to implement our learning into our classrooms but then often need to pay for the materials or take extra amounts of time, outside our working hours, to prepare them. ”

“ I feel confused of where to go and what to attend. The workshops or conferences I am interested in are expensive. ”

There was strong agreement around the importance of school and district administrators in setting and maintaining a climate for effective and accessible professional development.

“ To me the culture of the school and administrators who are willing to support opportunities are huge. Things like release time, or suggesting mentorship with another educator who is an expert in an area is so special. Not all administration does this. I so appreciate when it happens. ”

Summarizing comments on professional development

Professional development is viewed, it seems, as a mixed bag. There are many commentators who are satisfied with their Pro-D, often people who have been self-directed in terms of finding and securing support for their learning as educators. Others feel let down by the professional development available to them. If the aim is to address skills areas unaddressed during teacher education programs it can be hard to find concrete learning opportunities.

At the moment, comments suggest, inclusion and diversity topics are often addressed at a high level, without specific suggestions for changes to classroom practice and without direct recognition of expertise by schools.

Professional development can be seen as one of the more significant areas of future development in the BC educational system and there is much to hope for in terms of developing a robust and supportive approach.

G. Chapter summary

Currently, many of the respondents view professional development as a missed opportunity, one with the potential to transform the educational system and the working lives of teachers.

The findings carried forward are:

- 9.1 **Female teachers qualified as elementary teachers give more positive scores to professional development**
- 9.2 **There is a lack of promotion and protection of Pro-D time**
- 9.3 **Peer mentoring and self-directed learning are valuable sources of professional development that are often overlooked**
- 9.4 **Pro-D is being used as a way to strengthen the teaching skills under-emphasised in programs**
- 9.5 **The quality of workshops is highly variable**
- 9.6 **There is a need for balance between critical equity issues and other pressing topics in professional development**
- 9.7 **Access to Pro-D for TTOCs can be difficult or impossible**
- 9.8 **Pro-D can be expensive and resources not always easily available**

10 | FINAL COMMENTS ON THE TRANSITION TO PROFESSIONAL EDUCATOR

At the end of the survey there was an invitation for respondents to tell us anything else they thought we should know about their experience as new teachers. This invitation generated 244 comments at a total length of 20,000 words. Some of the comments were similar to those in previous sections, but there were also some important new perspectives. To help organise the text for the reader, the comments are presented in eight themes. As with other comment sections, the respondents have been allowed to talk for themselves as much as possible, with only light editing.

A. Themed comments

Comments engaging with multiple topics

There were a number of long comments dealing with multiple topics. While the details contained in the comments are frequently discussed in another area (for example, mentoring) it is useful to provide examples of a few of these contributions to provide a sense of the frustration these teachers are experiencing.

“1. CREATE TEACHER MENTOR PROGRAMS. First year teachers should not have to reach out and find these opportunities. They are busy enough trying to figure everything else out. People should be approaching them, checking on them, helping them - NOT principals who haven't even completed their Master's program peering over their shoulder. Sending emails out about available online meetings is just spam and not helpful. There needs to be time carved into the year plan for this. 2. DISTRICTS SHOULD HAVE TO EXPLAIN ALL ASPECTS OF LEAVE, SICK DAYS, TYPES OF EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES CLEARLY IN THE HIRING PROCESS. I instead got to watch a 20 minute video about asbestos. That was it. 3. Districts should not be allowed to hire principal's who have not had at LEAST 10 years classroom teaching experience. And if you had teaching experience in elementary, that does not make you a high school principal candidate. 4. Districts should hold parents and students more accountable. The amount of disrespect I am told to put up with and the number of students I am told I have to pass even when they can't do grade level work is crazy. Kids refuse to do the work and the parents call me and say I'm not making it interesting enough. How can (first year) teachers be expected to compete with TikTok and the dopamine rushes of video games? All of these contributed to my going on stress leave in my 3rd year of teaching and I am ready to quit. Teaching in BC is a nightmare!”

Another example focuses more on working conditions in the schools:

“ I feel my time was often wasted in the Teacher Ed Program despite it being an accelerated program. The learning curve, long days, and work-life imbalance a teacher experiences in the first MANY years of their career seems to be a given. Its role in society is paramount and yet the salaries, the working conditions and the unserved needs on students in schools does not tell Teachers that they are valued or respected. Of course, it continues to be women occupying these underpaid and overworked roles. School staff in my experience continue to be primarily white. Given the diversity of BC’s students, we must see more diversity in BC’s teachers. People should not have to feel like they are bending over backwards for the sake of educating the next generation. The Teaching profession needs to become more competitive if it is to continue attracting a strong workforce, because other jobs that are easier and better paid are often tempting to the burned-out teacher. ”

Some teachers find the “new” curriculum, with its open structure and over-arching goals rather than a detailed program, hard to work with. Other comments referred to the proficiency-based grading scale and the difficulty of using it to motivate students to push for success.

“ Please develop a guiding program for any teacher who wants to get support for connecting the new curriculum to their pedagogy and content. The new curriculum was created to support students in new ways, but there has been a lack of support for teachers to connect with the material in ways that are guided. ”

Several comments expressed concern about the union and unintended consequences of the standardised approach to employment and conditions.

“ BC must update their current system of union-employer relationships. Unions must be thought of in new ways and a transformation must happen within unions to gird the foundation on which good teaching practice can continue and thrive. Protections and benefits for teachers must be upheld while outdated functions of the union such as seniority ranking and job assurance for poor quality educators must be resolved. These issues stifle creativity and innovation and protect teachers who are dangerous for students physically/emotionally and/or educationally. ”

“ The way that seniority works instead of simply hiring the best teacher for the job is ridiculous. Unqualified teachers are being put into positions they are frankly bad at, while qualified teachers are missing out on opportunities because of a technicality. It should be about who is truly best for the job. Principals should be able to hire who they want! ”

A further respondent provided an articulate overview of what they see life in the classroom becoming:

“ Thank you for this opportunity. It is not my intention to confound your survey. I appreciate your efforts and intentions. This survey would have been appropriate two years ago. But in our current climate of change, and what I hope is a long overdue growing of consciousness, we have much larger issues to contend with as new teachers. We stand before a generation of students that face a future of decreasing options, decreasing sustainability, increasing fear-based agendas, increased social constructs geared towards division, but masked as inclusion...a plethora of unaddressed issues that are very real to them. Our students see what we do not see. The goal of supporting their dreams is increasingly difficult. Their general physical and mental health is suffering. We need to answer to that, and resolve the incongruencies. “We need more trees for carbon: carbon is bad”. “Reach for your future: future blocked by pay-wall”. “Be free to be yourself: limit your speech”. “Have an inquiring mind: don’t ask questions.” “Be inclusive of everyone; but don’t include those who advocate for bodily autonomy.” At the same time I respect and admire what is being accomplished despite these challenges. Programs of individualized support, programs for excellence, theatre and band class, automotive and trade classrooms, sports, dual-credit courses, etc. I love that we are trying our very best, but a bullseye on the wrong target should not be our goal. Bless you for your resiliency! ”

There was not enough common ground across these comments to claim a common theme, but what they do share is a sense of frustration with the BC school system and what appear to respondents to be systemic barriers to improving practice. Summarizing across the survey as a whole, there is a sense of a mismatch between what teacher candidates believed they were being prepared for and the reality of work in schools.

Resources

One concrete area of mismatch concerns resources. This breaks down into two broad areas. The first is general resources of the sorts used—and consumed—in the classroom. This might include reading and math programs as well as books and so forth. This long and thoughtful comment addresses supports such as peer-support as well.

“ RESOURCES: I believe that new teachers need access to resources. Some school boards offer new teachers resources as soon as they start.... and some do not. We should not be having to spend hours every single night researching resources to plan for our lessons. A math program should be provided for EVERY teacher as an option for them to follow or not. I felt like I was drowning in my first few years of teaching because I was spending so much time looking for free resources online for math and literacy and I was not given a single program to follow. Meanwhile, some Schools or school boards purchase math or literacy programs. This should be accessible to all new teachers too. We can’t afford to buy our own books and resources! MENTORSHIP: New teachers need more access to mentorship programs. Learning from fellow educators helps so much. New teachers have

so many questions and need other teachers that are willing to help them! :) FUNDING: New classroom teachers should be given more funding for resources. I started in a class where the teacher had left for a position at a different school and she took EVERYTHING with her. The class was EMPTY. How are we expected to begin teaching without any books, manipulatives, toys, resources??? There should be a access to a new teacher fund!!! We can't keep paying out of our own pockets. ”

Even if the resources are available, it can be a real challenge to find the time to understand their best use.

“ There are NOT enough resources for teachers - I spend SO much time finding my own things and paying out of pocket for activities and resources. And, if we get the resources or links to them... we have NO time to actually learn about them and plan them into our teaching. ”

The other broad category of resources concerns groups of students who need more specific support. This support can take the form of tangible materials, of person-power, or of opportunities to meet and get to know others and have shared experiences.

“ I am ashamed by the lack of support teachers get for designation students and are required to teach k-whatever grade they are in; and have to share EAs. I think it's disgraceful that schools promote they are inclusive but do not have accessible- large buses so students can ride together to/from events. (Basically, these students are encouraged to have their parents bring them to/from events). If you have ever gone on a field trip, laughing and sharing stories with your classmates on the way is as important as the trip itself. Also- I want to know why there are no regional teams/opportunities for extra curricular sports. (I get it, some schools have limited number of 'extra-needs' students; but the students can still practice and then should have access to "play days" where they go and meet others like themselves in a region. ”

Respondents commenting on resources were clear that they had insufficient resources to do the best job they were capable of.

Teacher pay

Teacher pay—especially for new entrants to the profession—came up many times in the comments. There were often concrete examples of how the pay levels restrict living conditions.

“ The salary of teachers is provincial yet [the difference in] the cost of living throughout the province is vast. My husband and I are both teachers and can hardly afford the rent in our city never mind the idea of buying a house. I understand that salaries don't change given the current housing market but it does make me wonder how "professional" we are when we are struggling with the cost of living. It's also challenging getting a second job

which is what I did last year. It left me with little energy for my class. I love teaching and I love my students but I can't stay in the profession and have a family in my city which leaves me wondering if BC does value education. I don't know if this was made clear to me throughout my education program. I think it's important to give student teachers what they are working towards realistically. ”

“ I love teaching, but overall I feel that we as teachers are undervalued - we teach because we love it, but we burn out because of the rate of pay for the time and effort required to do a good job of teaching (especially with the diversity of learning needs in our classes). ”

The issue of pay was also seen as bearing on the diversity of the profession, since significant family resources are necessary to make the profession viable.

“ The current pay grid is woefully out of date. Most teachers enter the profession with ~\$50 000 student debt and/or 5 to ten years later than earlier generations of teachers. That combined with inflation and ridiculous housing prices has made it that teaching is barely a viable avenue for social mobility if your family couldn't afford to pay for your university. This impacts indigenous and POC potential teachers more and makes it harder for these groups to enter and survive the early years. ”

Pay and workload were two sides of the same coin, with many respondents suggesting these two aspects of teaching were simply enormously out of balance.

Mentoring

As in other comments, there was very strong support for mentoring for new teachers as a way to address a number of the challenges.

“ Pairing new teachers with a mentor would be nice. Allowing more opportunities for TTOCs to have paid professional days would help keep everyone engaged and up to date on current standards. More specialization for ProD days would also help. The secondary school experience is very different from the elementary one. Teachers need more course-specific modeling for the class. Don't tell me what I should do, show me an example of someone's success and HOW they are doing it. Subject areas need more support from other teachers who are experienced in that area. Some positive press for teachers and what we do would also help. ”

“ The informal mentorship of colleagues is essential. I think we need to make some changes to the way schools are structured (and funded) so that mentorship is supported. ”

This was particularly striking given the existence of mentoring programs. The strength of support for mentoring and the perceived shortfalls of current approaches make a very strong case for this area to be re-visited by districts, schools and the BCTF.

Workload and wellness

Given the comments by each phase of teacher transition, it is to be expected that many of the responses addressed teacher workload. In this set of comments there was also a tendency to reflect on the implications of the workload for the wellness of educators. The comments below reflect a much larger set of responses with a similar topic and tone. There were several reflecting skepticism towards the survey itself.

“ These surveys are meaningless if they aren’t taken seriously - and they obviously never are. They seem to just be a way to make teachers ‘feel heard’. The shame I hope district level employees feel is deafening. The reason I chose to pursue a career in education is because I love working with kids and feel like I can make a genuine difference in a fellow human’s life - but since the pandemic has hit, it has become evident that that is not what we are employed to do. Instead, we are basically day care workers who are forced into constant ‘change’ by some virtue signaller like x (x is fine, but [their] ideas are wildly simple and never account for the realities of a classroom). I believe that many young teachers like myself - the ones who still live in basement suites or coach houses and live paycheque to pay cheque because our wages don’t come close to reflecting the cost of living and we don’t have the luxury that generations before us had - will be moving on to a different career paths that respect us, because right now, being a teacher is a thankless, abusive, unsafe, underpaid, and fruitless career. There’s no support anywhere, ever, so our experience has been reduced to being the punching bag of every pissed-off parent who’s done with the pandemic, while subsequently asking us to raise their children. I really do hope that those in charge understand how much they have let down their employees and begin to grow a spine and support us in our work. ”

“ I’ve only been teaching for a few years but I can already feel the burn out due to a lack of support and Covid challenges. More supports need to be given to new teachers as well as protections. ”

“ Teachers are overworked, tired, underpaid, and the current housing situation makes it so that I know I will leave the province once I get enough experience to ensure I can get hired in another province where I can AT LEAST buy an apartment with my salary. Not a single [specialism] friend of mine wants to do their career here for that reason. Things need to change. ”

Teacher mental health was a recurring theme in comments:

“ There are limited mental health supports for beginning teachers. With a high burnout and attrition rate for beginning teachers, it is surprising that not more is being done. Education programs should have more of a focus on mental health and improving the emotional skills of pre-service teachers. ”

*“ This job has destroyed my mental health. Admin and districts don’t care and are actively hostile on top of actively hostile students and parents. Add the extra stressors of Covid and *ZERO* safety and having to chase after the same students all day about masks is crippling! I come from extreme trauma and this job under Covid is 6 hours of trauma triggers as I am forced daily into an UNSAFE work environment. There is ZERO support or even basic understanding about the mental health damage some of us are living with - ONLY the students are EVER considered, never the adults. ”*

These comments are perhaps among the most direct, coming from people who are feeling the effects of working conditions the most strongly. This is no reason to take them any less seriously as indicators of the conditions faced by professional educators within our schools.

TTOC

Working as a Teacher Teaching on Call (TTOC) is a common pathway for new teachers to gain experience and networks to assist them with finding a contract job. In the last few years there have been some indications that new teachers may choose to remain as TTOCs rather than look for full-time work due to the flexibility offered. This is borne out in some of the survey responses.

“ I choose to be a TTOC because of the flexibility in work/life balance as well as the decrease of stress. I see many teachers choosing this option as well because the demands for teachers are so high. ”

However, one of the challenges of work as a TTOC is lack of professional development and other supports contract teachers can expect. It can be hard to feel as if one is on a positive learning curve.

“ It’s difficult to continue learning and developing as a TTOC unless I have a semester-long contract. Without the need to plan for classes, assess/track student progress, or connect with school staff, I feel that I don’t learn much of anything day-to-day. I feel that if I were to suddenly have classes in my care, I would not be any more prepared than when I was a student teacher. ”

Working as a TTOC can have other challenges as well, and can require a different set of skills than contract teaching. TTOCs can feel unprepared for this.

“ There was no preparation in University for what most young teachers really go through-- Teaching on Call. There should be some kind of course to help prepare young teachers for what that job is like. ”

There were comments expressing the frustration of people who wanted to transition into full-time teaching but were not clear about what that path would look like. One respondent made a strong point that TTOCing represented a very unsatisfactory introduction to professional employment as it did not provide opportunities to learn the most necessary skills for a new teacher.

““ While I do pretty well as a TTOC and am reasonably competent, I still don’t know how I will ever transition into full time teaching. I am sometimes told that everyone’s first couple of full-time years are rough, but that we all figure it out eventually. Frankly, I don’t consider that to be good enough, and the idea that a “profession” would require its members to flail about like this is pathetic. I feel dramatically underequipped in terms of planning, assessment, community-building, and classroom management, and TTOCing is too short-term to develop these skills and see them take effect over time. Teacher training was very oriented around professional mindset and jumping the hurdles of the program, but was very ineffective overall. The curriculum had might as well read “Google It”, for all the begging, borrowing, and stealing of resources and ideas we have to do. I’m considering leaving the profession already. ””

Comments regarding TTOCing were mixed overall. For some new teachers it was a desirable way to work due to flexibility and lower levels of stress than a classroom teacher. For others it was a de-skilling and frustrating experience.

New teachers

There were many comments specifically about being a new teacher, and they were both positive and negative. One key issue identified in the comments was the transition period, which was generally portrayed as difficult.

““ I was surprised at how little transition support is available when you take on new responsibilities in education. You really need to ask for any help you need, and otherwise it feels as though the institutions don’t have the capacity to provide support. Maybe this has to do with the pandemic, but I get the sense everyone is working to their max capacity, which doesn’t leave space for offering help to each other unless something is going wrong. ””

There were more positive comments from respondents as well.

““ I absolutely love teaching and am happy to be in the profession. ””

““ I have had a positive experience during my transition period. It has allowed me to explore what I would like to teach closer to the end of my career and what I would like to teach in the time between. I believe as much as specialization is important exploring how to teach other subjects and grades is also as important to grow and develop as a teacher. ””

These are especially heartening to read given the predominance of the less positive comments. One respondent referred directly to the Professional Standards in a comment that is interesting given the high level of knowledge of the Standards indicated by respondents to this survey.

“ New teachers in the profession should be mentored NOT punished or subject to length investigation for breaching professional standards by their employers or TRB. This is because they don't know what the professional standards are. They are more likely to be in trouble compare to their colleagues who have been in the profession for more than 5 years. This is simply the reason most of them leave the profession early. ”

Some of the respondents who had been teaching for a while were moving through the transitional period and starting to feel like competent professionals.

“ I'm finally beginning to feel like an experienced teacher, not just a beginner teacher flailing for a footing. I'm in my first full-time continuing contract as of last fall, so time will tell how well my prep this year is helpful next year... But generally speaking, I feel that I am resourced, confident, and aware. I know what I need to be doing and how to get it done. Now I'm just working on improvement and keeping it manageable. And seeing where there are loose ends that I can weave back into my practice. ”

There was a concrete suggestion of a simple way to help new teachers with the transition, in addition to mentoring and resource support:

“ I know this may be unconventional, but I think that first- and second-years teachers should get extra prep. I think all of us would benefit from more prep time, but especially in the early years. I don't know any beginning teachers who are able to get a significant chunk of their prep work done during their prep time. It took me about five years to actually keep most of my work in contract hours. Giving beginning teachers extra prep would help them achieve more work-life balance and could increase teacher retention. ”

The comments contained in this theme make a case for more attention to be given to the transition into professional work for new teachers. While some respondents found it straightforward (which is not the same as easy!) for many these experiences were make or break for their career.

Preparation

Comments in this section recapitulated some of the concerns raised in the chapter on coursework, but it's worth indicating how common these concerns were. This is a typical comment:

“ I felt inadequately prepared for most of the work I was required to do in my first year teaching. Almost nothing was explained to me and I had to take time from my own life to figure out how to do things, or wait until someone noticed I didn't know something and mentioned it. If I knew to ask, people were always willing to help, but I was constantly

in a position of not knowing the things I didn't know. Because I wasn't hired until late September I was given no orientation and just had to figure things out on my own. And there is no down time from teaching, so I was burned out extremely quickly. ”

The transition period can be challenging, as discussed above. Comments suggested TEPs did not help to prepare teacher candidates for this period.

“ I felt like my program did not prepare me for teaching my own class. I felt thrown in the deep end with no support and can understand why so many teachers quit after a few years. There needs to be a better integration period from finishing a teaching course to having your own classroom. There needs to be better working conditions and support to keep people in the profession. ”

Positive comments about the programs often came with specific suggestions for adding to, or enriching, them.

“ I felt that my education prepared me well for teaching, but as I said previously, a course in practical classroom management would've been really helpful. ”

The following comment represents a summary of many other responses within this section.

“ I love teaching, I love my subjects (English and Socials), and I care so much about my students. I want to be effective in the classroom and I'm not afraid to work hard to do it. I do feel strongly that my education did not adequately prepare me for the reality of teaching. The practicum was really what I carried forward. I believe Teacher Education programmes can support new teachers better, and I think that formal mentorship helps. ”

It seems that TEPs are helpful in some aspects of the transition to professional educator but less helpful in other ways.

Summarizing comments

Respondents providing a lot of material regarding their experience as new teachers and much of it made for difficult reading. Moving from TEP to classroom is a deeply challenging and stressful transition for very many new teachers, one which must inevitably play out in retention rates and teacher wellness. Yet it is impossible to conceive of a TEP being able to prepare candidates for every eventuality they will face in their early career. While programs have work to do, the responses here suggest employers and the BCTF also have responsibility to make being a new teacher a period of growth and security rather than the difficult time it represents for many entrants to the profession.

B. Chapter summary

This chapter provides a thematic selection of the overall comments regarding the experience of new teachers in British Columbia. Seven findings will be carried forward:

- 10.1 The sense of frustration with the BC education system (including BCTF)**
- 10.2 Inadequate resources for student supports**
- 10.3 Inadequacy of teacher pay**
- 10.4 The need for mentoring for new teachers**
- 10.5 Increased challenge of teacher wellness**
- 10.6 The range of difficulties facing TTOCs**
- 10.7 The challenge of negotiating the transition into the role of professional educator**

11 | CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the findings to address the research questions and provide some initial recommendations in response to the information arising from the survey. The first point of note is the sheer volume of information this survey generated. This report has been careful to stick closely to the data provided by respondents and yet there is a huge number of insights. The central issue for analysis has not been what to say but rather what to omit in the service of a reasonably parsimonious account.

One issue important to address before delving too deeply into the details is the response rate. At its highest it is around 13%; at its lowest it is slightly below 5%. This might cause readers of the report to have some concern about response bias, or the extent to which the results were shaped simply by who chose to answer the survey. There are two rejoinders to this concern. The first is that, prima facie, there is no reason to see this group as unrepresentative of new teachers in the province of British Columbia. The distributions of geographical location, ethnicity, gender level of qualification and so on do not differ in any substantial way from the new teacher workforce as a whole. The second point is that one has to work with the data one has when it comes to survey research. The question of how the data could be different cannot be answered, so researchers have to work on good faith with the data they have. The current analysis is based on the judgement that the data possesses a good level of validity.

A. Addressing the research questions

This section returns to the research questions introduced at the beginning of this report.

- **What role do the Professional Standards for BC Educators⁷ play in shaping teacher preparation and the transition to employment?**

The first research question is a broad one. The Standards appear to play a very significant role in linking between the different stages or preparation and transition. New teachers stated they were highly familiar with the Professional Standards and they provided a strong and clear central point for discussion.

In designing the survey it might have been possible to be more nuanced with the statements provided as prompts to respondents. There were comments regarding the repetitiveness of the questions and the length of the survey (caused by asking about each Standard in each phase of preparation) was likely partly to blame for the falling response rates as the survey went on. In future versions of the survey it may be important to structure the questions differently, though this would have to be done carefully to ensure data compatibility.

⁷www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/standards-for-educators/standards-case-studies

Despite these survey-centred notes, using the Professional Standards as an organising structure worked well, and does capture the range of ways in which people experience the transition to work as a professional educator.

- **How is the experience of being a new teacher in BC?**

The data from this survey suggest being a teacher in British Columbia is not a strongly positive experience at the current time. The written responses do a good job of contextualising and expanding on the scale responses by providing details of the challenges faced by teachers on the practical, everyday level. The details will be discussed in the following section, but it would not be an unreasonable summary to say the profession appears to be unhappy.

It is important to recognise the contextual factors potentially affecting this response. Among other things, BC has come through a deeply challenging pandemic period where the safety needs of teachers were perceived to be under-emphasised and is now facing significant cost of living inflation. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to dismiss these concerns when they have been expressed so forcefully and so consistently throughout the survey data.

- **Are certain phases of teacher transition more strongly linked to the Professional Standards?**

According to the survey data it seems clear that coursework is seen as the phase of teacher preparation least well linked to implementation of the Professional Standards. Field experience is more strongly linked and the first year of teaching is the most strongly linked. In some ways this reflects the “common sense” view of teaching is a job requiring learning by doing. However, one interesting aspect of this data is the range of specific comments on TEP coursework and how it could be improved. There is an implication that the reduced value of coursework is not simply because it is coursework but because of the way it is currently imagined and delivered.

- **How do different genders, levels and ethnicities of teachers experience these links?**

There are interesting dynamics among the identity groups it was possible to consider. In terms of gender, female teacher candidates see more support for Professional Standards across the phases of teacher preparation, and this seems especially true for female elementary candidates. Conversely male secondary candidates relatively consistently see the weakest connections. This finding is strong enough to warrant careful consideration.

In terms of ethnicity the most striking finding is that First Nations, Métis and Inuit candidates see the least relevance in coursework and the most in the first year of teaching and professional development. This will be discussed below.

New teachers who self-identified as having disabilities or diverse abilities viewed coursework as less supportive of engagement with Professional Standards than other new teachers. This is discussed below.

- **What recommendations—for programs, employers, and other stakeholders—emerge from this analysis?**

The specific findings and recommendations are extensive. They are laid out systematically in the following section.

B. Findings and Recommendations

There are 13 clusters of findings and recommendations in this section. The title of each section is a summary of the area it addresses. This is followed by the specific findings (numbered so that they can be traced back to the appropriate chapter). In some cases there is a brief discussion to pull together the findings and bring some coherence to them. Each sub-section closes with recommendations based on these findings.

1 Working conditions are seen as unsupportive and frustrating

- 4.1 The difficulty of achieving work-life balance**
- 4.2 The workload vs. pay equation**
- 4.3 Resources in the schools**
- 10.1 The sense of frustration with the BC education system (including BCTF)**
- 10.2 Inadequate resources for student supports**
- 10.3 Inadequacy of teacher pay**
- 10.5 Increased challenge of teacher wellness**

New teachers see BC schools as being highly resource-limited. They are not sure where to turn for resources and feel they cannot do a good job without them. They see the workload and lack of supports as leading to significant teacher wellness challenges now and into the future.

A number of these issues are outside the scope of this report and are highlighted only for information. For example, suggesting benchmarking of teacher pay against other provinces is a reasonable suggestion, but does not rise to the level of a recommendation.

Recommendation 1: Practical steps to reduce teacher workload are identified and implemented.

Recommendation 2: Increased attention is given to ensuring necessary student supports are available.

Recommendation 3: Mental health supports are made more available to teachers.

2 TEP coursework is not seen as fit for purpose

- 5.1 The lower perceived contribution of coursework to engaging with Professional Standards
- 6.3 New teachers perceive coursework as less relevant to teaching practice than it could be
- 6.4 New teachers identify a concrete skills gap in coursework (literacy, assessment and classroom management)
- 6.6 Theory dominates coursework rather than being balanced with, and integrated into, practice
- 8.9 The sense of having to “catch up” with teaching skills during the first year of teaching
- 6.8 Coursework does not fully prepare new teachers for transition into the workplace
- 9.4 Pro-D is being used as a way to strengthen the teaching skills under-emphasised in programs

This is a very strong message from the data. The scale responses are less strong for coursework than other phases, but the significance lies in the relationships with other phases described in the open-ended questions. An example is the comments in the Pro-D section regarding using Pro-D to back-fill concrete skills that should have been learned in coursework. The three areas most consistently mentioned are teaching reading, assessment, and classroom management. If coursework is regarded as preparation for the transition into professional practice, it seems clear it is viewed as inadequate.

Recommendation 4: TEPs consider their approach to teaching reading, assessment, and classroom management and investigate ways to strengthen it.

Recommendation 5: TEPs continue to develop more integrated ways to teach theory and practical competencies.

Recommendation 6: TEPs consider strengthening preparation for the practical aspects of working within schools such as obtaining curricular resources and materials.

3 TEP experience varies by gender and level of qualification

- 6.1 Male secondary teacher candidates experience coursework as less supportive of the Professional Standards
- 7.1 Male secondary teacher candidates are less positive about field experiences
- 8.1 New female teachers, particularly in elementary programs, view their first year of teaching as more helpful for engagement with professional standards than new male teachers
- 9.1 Female teachers qualified as elementary teachers give more positive scores to professional development

Throughout all four phases of the transition to working as professional educators there is a consistent pattern of female teacher candidates, especially at elementary level, giving stronger scale responses regarding engagement with Professional Standards. The possibility that female teachers simply give higher scores can be ruled out because the same effect does not show up in working conditions.

Recommendation 7: Further investigation of the ways in which teacher preparation is more supportive of female and elementary teacher candidates would be valuable.

4 Quality of teaching in TEPs is seen as inconsistent

6.5 Teaching methods in coursework do not always align with current pedagogy

6.7 The teaching quality within coursework is not consistent

As professional educators, respondents were well-placed to provide thoughtful feedback on the teaching they received while in the programs. It can be summarized as mixed. One prominent concern was the tendency of university instructors not to apply the same teaching philosophy they were promoting to the teacher candidate; for example, delivering lessons about individualised instruction in a very formal, standardised, teacher-centric way. The second concern was the quality of instructional content, with some respondents openly asking who monitors the quality of teaching.

Recommendation 8: TEPs explore ways to support consistency between teaching philosophy and teaching practice.

Recommendation 9: TEPs explore ways to implement more stringent quality assurance practices.

5 Recognising and responding to Indigenous presence is seen as challenging

5.2 The level of support for Professional Standards related to Indigenous presence within TEPs and the transition to employment is increasing

6.9 The effectiveness of courses around Indigenous presence, and the balance between these topics and others, could be stronger

7.5 Stronger support for Indigenous presence would be helpful in field experience

It is good news that over the last five years the degree to which Professional Standards related to Indigenous presence are supported in all phases of teacher preparation has increased. This may have led to two unintended consequences. The first is a concern that the time devoted to Indigenous presence is out of balance with that devoted to other aspects of the teaching profession, such as assessment and learners who need extra support. The second is a common perception of teacher candidates as the experts on Indigenous education during field experience, which may lead to candidates being put in inappropriate positions.

Recommendation 10: TEPs consider how Indigenous presence can be authentically integrated into programs so it is less frequently seen as an extra.

Recommendation 11: Established teachers may benefit from substantial, targeted support on Indigenous presence.

6 New teachers see field experiences as in need of re-structuring

7.2 The value of field experience implies it may be beneficial to extend it

7.3 Greater variety in field experience would be an asset given the unpredictability of initial and subsequent teaching assignments

7.4 It would be helpful to have more deliberate selection and preparation of mentor teachers

7.6 New teachers see field experience as unpaid labour

Field experience is a contradictory experience for teacher candidates. It is intended as an opportunity to observe and learn the practical aspects of teaching, and it is valuable for that. Yet they are being asked to do more than this and can feel as if they are providing unpaid labour to the education system. Not surprisingly, being asked to pay tuition in order to do this can rankle.

Recommendation 12: The role of mentor teacher would benefit from being professionalised, with clear expectations, quality assurance and benefits

Recommendation 13: TEPs consider restructuring programs to provide more field experience in deliberately varied contexts

Recommendation 14: The concerns of teacher candidates about paying tuition to provide free labour and field experiences are acknowledged and addressed.

7 Entering employment is seen as stressful and not well supported

3.1 New teachers' focus on safety and socio-emotional aspects of teaching

4.4 Supports for new teachers are inadequate

8.3 The dominant sense of the first year of teaching being about survival in a context missing the supports for good practice

8.4 The lack of framework offered by the New Curriculum and the need for substantial amounts of preparation

8.5 Weakness of orientation to school districts and lack of preparation for pragmatic employee tasks

8.8 Lack of orientation for TTOCs

10.6 The range of difficulties facing TTOCs

10.7 The challenge of negotiating the transition into the role of professional educator

Entering the teaching profession is difficult. As several comments pointed out, it does not have to be so difficult. There were many contributions around this topic. TTOCs are included here because teaching on call is such a common pathway for new teachers to gain contract employment.

Recommendation 15: TEPs should consider strengthening preparation around safety and socio-emotional aspects of teaching, which has high priority for new teachers.

Recommendation 16: Pragmatic supports for new teachers, such as materials and resources to equip a classroom, are provided.

Recommendation 17: Expectations for new teachers are clear, both in terms of curriculum and time demands beyond the classroom.

Recommendation 18: Orientation, both for contract teachers and TTOCs, is strengthened.

Recommendation 19: The multiple challenges faced by TTOCs are recognised and addressed by districts and schools.

8 First year teachers need access to mentoring and supportive administrators

8.6 The importance of mentoring to the first-year experience

8.7 The importance of supportive administrators to the first-year experience

10.4 The need for mentoring for new teachers

The topic of mentoring was raised so many times in comments it seems appropriate to give it a subsection to itself. This was far and away the strongest expressed need for new teachers.

Recommendation 20: A strong and supportive mentorship program is available to every new teacher.

Recommendation 21: School administrators recognise the needs of new teachers and find ways to provide opportunities to support their development.

9 Professional development is not seen as effective

9.2 There is a lack of promotion and protection of Pro-D time

9.3 Peer mentoring and self-directed learning are valuable sources of professional development that are often overlooked

9.5 The quality of workshops is highly variable

9.6 There is a need for balance between critical equity issues and other pressing topics in professional development

Professional development is experienced as a type of vicious cycle. It is sometimes not taken seriously so people do not engage as they could and the quality of the experience gets worse. Among some respondents there is a feeling that specific issues tend to dominate Pro-D for a while and then be replaced by something else, but without any real connection to the needs of teachers.

Recommendation 22: There would be a great deal to gain from a coherent and systematic approach to teacher professional development in BC, including protected time and resources

Recommendation 23: The professional development system find ways to recognise and value peer education and self-directed learning.

10 Access to Pro-D is seen as a challenge

9.7 Access to Pro-D for TTOCs can be difficult or impossible

9.8 Pro-D can be expensive and resources not always easily available

Significant enough to be an issue in its own right, access to professional development attracted considerable attention. The two most significant aspects are TTOC access and, more generally, the cost and availability of sessions.

Recommendation 24: Cost of Pro-D is capped or subsidized more systematically, and the particular cost pressures for rural teachers addressed.

Recommendation 25: TTOCs have access to professional development as part of employment conditions.

11 Further research with rural teachers is needed

2.1 The need for a better understanding of new rural teachers' experience

The current survey was not designed to explore the experience of rural teachers specifically. This is an important group of teachers in our province, where so much of the landmass has a relatively low population. It would be useful and important to understand the experience of this group of educators in more depth.

Recommendation 26: Education partners consider a means of reaching out to new teachers in rural settings to identify their specific concerns.

12 Further research with teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities is needed

- 2.2 The need for a better understanding of the experience of teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities**
- 6.2 Teacher candidates who self-identify as having a disability or diverse abilities experience coursework as less supportive of the Professional Standards**

The degree to which teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities experience coursework as less supportive than others is striking. This is not only a moral concern as it represents legal exposure for the TEPs.

Recommendation 27: TEPs engage with teachers who identify as having a disability or diverse abilities in order to understand their experience and address issues arising.

13 Further understanding of the experience of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers is necessary

- 8.2 New First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers gave higher scores to the first year of teaching than other groups**

This single finding captures a complex and far-reaching dynamic. First Nations, Métis and Inuit teachers give among the lowest scale responses to coursework and field experience, but then give the highest responses to the first year of teaching and professional development. The conclusion this supports is a mis-match between the support needs of these teacher candidates and programs, followed by a positive experience once in employment. Even though the number of First Nations, Métis and Inuit respondents is relatively limited, this finding is clear.

Recommendation 28: TEPs explore their programs in conjunction with Indigenous representatives to understand more fully how they can better meet the needs of First Nations, Métis and Inuit teacher candidates.

C. Chapter summary

The aim of this chapter is to link the findings arising from the data analysis to concrete actions for the various partners involved in teacher preparation in BC to consider. Some of these recommendations could be relatively straightforward to implement, such as including TTOCs in district professional development provision. Others are clearly more complex. But they all arise directly from the data in this survey.

It is commonplace to talk of a crisis in teacher recruitment and retention. We have now reached a point where this crisis is so universal and pervasive that it can no longer be considered as a crisis. It appears to be in the nature of teacher transition for huge numbers to leave the profession in the early years of their career, often completing less time as professional educators than they spent studying for the job. This survey represents the views and voices of people at that initial, key stage of their career, where they assess what their future in teaching looks like and whether that is the future they desire.

Stabilising the teacher workforce and addressing teacher morale begins with this group and by taking their experience and ideas seriously. There is clearly work to be done.

APPENDIX: DATA TABLES

The following legend provides descriptive information for the data tables.

Term	Description
Scale responses	mean response, 0-100
Gender	
F	self-identifying as female
M	self identifying as male
Program level	
E	elementary program
S	secondary program
Disability and diverse abilities	
Y	self-identifies as a person with a disability or diverse abilities
N	does not self-identify as a person with a disability or diverse abilities
Self-identified ethnicity	
FNMI	First Nations, Métis and Inuit
SA	South Asian
CH	Chinese
WH	White
All	All respondents, including those in the four groups above

Table A.1: Mean scale responses regarding course work (n= 857-901)

Topic	Responses
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	74.8
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	83.4
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	72.2
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	75.7
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	63.9
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	82.6
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	65.6
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	54.5
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	63.6
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	55.7
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	52.3
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	74.8
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	70.2
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	63.2
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	75.6
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	71.5

Table A.2: Mean scale responses regarding field experience (n= 717-759)

Topic	Responses
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	80.0
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	74.4
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	62.9
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	63.7
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.2
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	72.2
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	83.9
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	86.3
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	84.4
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	67.6
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.2
61. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	77.9
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	83.8
63. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	74.8
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	75.7
65. Field experiences helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	82.0

Table A.3: Whole group mean scale responses regarding first year of teaching (n= 680-725)

Topic	Responses
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	75.5
68. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge of student growth and development.	78.1
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	85.2
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	88.9
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	87.6
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	73.5
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	79.6
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	79.1
75. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	84.5
76. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	76.9
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	86.0
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	74.4
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	74.3
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	80.3
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	73.8

Table A.4: Mean scale responses regarding professional development (n= 607-656)

Topic	Responses
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	70.3
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	76.7
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	71.9
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	71.7
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	76.0
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	74.9

Table A.5: Mean scale responses regarding working conditions (n= 606-715)

Topic	Responses
93. Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions.	49.0
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	45.4
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	36.0
96. Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession.	82.8
97. The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator.	32.3
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	58.9
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	77.1
100. Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership that I would not otherwise have had.	50.8
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	41.5
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	75.9
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.5
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	55.1
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	57.1

Table A.6: Scale responses regarding coursework by gender (n= 770-823)

Topic	Gender		
	F	M	Diff
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	74.9	72.0	2.9
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	83.9	80.5	3.4*
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	72.7	69.5	3.2
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	76.1	72.2	3.9*
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	63.7	61.0	2.7
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.			
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	65.0	65.4	-0.4
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	55.8	48.5	7.4***
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	63.8	59.7	4.1
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	55.8	52.0	3.7
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	53.4	47.9	5.5*
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	75.2	70.9	4.2*
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	71.2	63.9	7.3***
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	64.0	57.9	6.1*
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	77.6	68.0	9.5***
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	72.4	65.9	6.7*

Table A.7: Scale responses regarding courses by program level (n = 799-857)

Topic	Level		
	Y	N	Diff
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	75.6	72.2	3.4*
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	84.4	80.9	3.5*
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	71.7	70.4	1.3
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	75.9	74.1	1.8
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	63.6	61.9	1.7
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	83.6	80.1	3.4*
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	63.8	64.8	-0.9
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	57.8	49.5	8.3***
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	64.7	60.3	4.4*
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	55.6	53.2	2.3
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	50.6	51.7	-1.1
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	74.2	73.5	0.7
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	72.9	65.4	7.5***
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	66.2	58.2	8.0***
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	77.4	72.7	4.6*
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	73.7	68.0	5.8**

**Table A.8: Scale responses regarding courses by self-identified disability and diverse ability status
(n= Y 51-59, N 789-845)**

Topic	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	64.6	74.2	9.6**
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	71.3	83.0	11.7***
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	60.9	71.5	10.6**
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	75.3	74.3	-1.0
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	54.8	62.9	8.1*
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	71.9	82.0	10.1***
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	53.1	65.0	11.9**
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	49.9	53.3	3.4
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	52.8	63.0	10.2*
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	45.4	55.0	9.6*
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	39.1	51.2	12.1**
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	66.1	74.1	8.0*
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	69.0	69.0	0.0
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	52.7	62.3	9.6*
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	70.3	74.5	4.2
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	67.6	70.2	2.6

Table A.9: Scale responses regarding field experiences by gender (n = 665-708)

Topic	Gender		
	F	M	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	80.8	73.4	7.3***
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	75.1	68.4	6.7**
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	64.1	55.9	8.2***
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	64.6	57.5	7.2**
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.0	77.6	4.4*
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	73.7	65.0	8.7***
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	84.8	76.9	8.0***
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	87.0	80.0	7.0***
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	85.4	77.4	8.0***
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	67.8	62.4	5.4*
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.3	68.2	5.0*
61. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	78.1	74.2	3.9
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	84.0	79.4	4.6*
63. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	74.5	71.6	3.0
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	76.1	71.0	5.1*
65. Field experiences helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	81.5	78.8	2.7

Table A.10: Scale responses regarding field experiences by qualification level (n = 681-720)

Topic	Level		
	E	S	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	83.0	75.2	7.7***
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	77.0	69.3	7.8***
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	66.7	57.2	9.5***
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	67.3	58.8	8.5***
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.3	79.6	3.1
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	75.9	66.7	9.2***
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	86.3	79.4	6.9***
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	87.6	83.2	4.4**
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	86.2	81.3	4.9**
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	69.9	63.7	6.2**
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.5	70.9	2.7
61. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	78.8	74.9	3.9
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	83.1	82.3	0.8
63. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	74.1	72.7	1.5
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	75.0	74.7	0.3
65. Field experiences helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	82.4	78.9	3.5

Table A.11: Scale responses regarding field experience by self-identified disability and diverse ability status (n= Y 42-48, N 666-703)

Topic	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	73.8	79.0	-5.2
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	67.3	73.4	-6.1
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	66.1	60.9	5.2
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	64.1	62.0	2.1
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	75.7	81.2	-5.5
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	63.4	71.1	-7.7
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	77.1	82.8	-5.7
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	83.6	85.0	-1.4
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities	80.9	83.0	-2.1
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	72.5	65.4	7.1
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.2	71.5	1.7
61. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	73.3	76.6	-3.3
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	76.7	82.7	-6.0
63. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	70.4	73.6	-3.2
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	68.3	74.5	-6.2
65. Field experiences helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	77.4	80.8	-3.4

Table A.12: Scale responses regarding first year of teaching by gender (n = 633-680)

Topic	Gender		
	F	M	Diff
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	74.6	72.6	2.0
68. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge of student growth and development.	77.1	75.7	1.4
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	89.4	83.8	5.6***
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	88.2	81.6	6.6***
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	74.6	65.0	9.6***
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	80.2	72.0	8.2***
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	79.9	72.4	7.5**
75. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	85.1	78.0	7.1
76. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	76.4	72.5	3.8
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	85.5	81.9	3.7*
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	76.1	64.6	11.5***
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	75.6	65.4	10.2***
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	80.7	75.0	5.7*
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	74.6	66.7	7.8**

Table A.13: Scale responses regarding first year of teaching by qualification level (665-691)

Topic	Level		
	E	S	Diff
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	77.1	71.4	5.7**
68. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge of student growth and development.	77.4	76.5	0.9
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	85.1	82.9	2.2
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	88.2	87.2	1.0
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	87.6	85.2	2.4
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	75.9	68.4	7.5***
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	79.7	77.3	2.4
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	80.4	75.3	5.1*
75. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	85.4	80.7	4.7
76. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	76.4	74.5	2.0
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	86.6	83.0	3.5*
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	78.1	67.9	10.1***
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	78.0	68.2	9.7***
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	80.4	77.4	3.0
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	74.6	70.7	3.9

Table A.14: Scale responses regarding first year of teaching by self-identified disability and diverse ability status (n= Y 43-48, N 629-765)

Topic	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	74.6	73.9	0.7
68. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge of student growth and development.	77.1	76.6	0.5
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	85.1	83.6	1.5
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	88.8	87.4	1.4
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	87.9	86.1	1.8
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	78.2	71.4	6.8
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	77.9	78.0	-0.1
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	73.3	77.9	-4.6
75. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	79.6	83.3	-3.7
76. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	73.4	75.5	-2.1
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	82.2	84.7	-2.5
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	80.4	72.1	8.3
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	76.1	72.4	3.7
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	79.5	78.7	0.8
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	74.8	72.0	2.8

Table A.15: Responses on working conditions by gender (n = 568-668)

Topic	Gender		
	F	M	Diff
93. Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions.	47.7	49.4	-2.2
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	43.8	45.8	-2.0
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	33.4	38.3	-4.9*
96. Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession.	82.1	78.4	3.8
97. The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator.	30.7	31.3	-0.6
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	59.5	52.2	7.3**
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	76.9	71.4	5.5*
100. Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership that I would not otherwise have had.	49.5	48.5	1.0
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	41.0	37.2	3.3
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	74.9	73.7	1.2
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.8	73.0	5.8**
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	54.5	51.9	2.6
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	56.6	52.2	4.4

Table A.16: Responses on working conditions by qualification level (n = 613-675)

Topic	Level		
	E	S	Diff
93. Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions.	48.3	47.0	1.3
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	44.6	42.5	2.1
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	36.3	33.0	3.3
96. Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession.	82.0	80.7	1.4
97. The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator.	31.0	30.5	0.4
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	59.5	55.5	4.0
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	74.9	77.4	-2.6
100. Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership that I would not otherwise have had.	50.7	47.5	3.2
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	40.0	38.9	1.2
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	75.0	74.3	0.6
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.4	75.9	2.5
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	56.0	51.4	4.6
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	58.3	53.2	5.0*

Table A.17: Scale responses regarding working conditions by self-identified disability and diverse ability status (n= Y 42-46, N 560-662)

Topic	Disability		
	Y	N	Diff
93. Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions.	42.0	47.7	-5.7
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	35.2	44.2	-9.0*
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	28.7	34.7	-6.0
96. Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession.	83.0	81.1	1.9
97. The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator.	33.0	30.4	2.6
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	60.7	56.9	3.8
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	75.0	75.6	-0.6
100. Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership that I would not otherwise have had.	58.0	48.3	9.7
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	34.9	40.1	-5.2
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	70.9	74.4	-3.5
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	78.9	76.7	2.2
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	45.1	53.8	-8.7
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	55.4	55.2	0.2

**Table A.18: Scale responses regarding professional development by disability status
(n= Y 42-46, N560-662)**

Topic	Y	N	Diff
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	62.9	68.7	5.8
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	72.4	75.1	2.7
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	62.8	70.5	7.7
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	64.9	70.1	5.2
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	72.3	74.2	1.9
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada	69.9	73.1	3.2

Table A.19: Scale responses regarding courses by self-identified ethnicity

Topic	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
33. Courses reflect the need to value the success of all students.	69.3	76.3	74.6	74.1	74.8
34. Courses reflect the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	75.6*	86.0	82.2	83.2	83.4
35. Courses helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	71.5	76.5	70.9	72*	72.2
36. Courses helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	70.1	77.9	74.8	75.3*	75.7
37. Courses helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	58.8	62.2	66.8	63.3*	63.9
38. Courses explained the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	74.8	83.8	78.0	82.1*	82.6
39. Courses helped me to increase my knowledge of student growth and development.	65.8	65.6	70.2	64.2	65.6
40. Courses helped me to understand the value of involvement and support of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	55.7	60.1	54.4	53.3	54.5
41. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	69.7	61.3	74.4	61.6*	63.6
42. Courses helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	54.7	58.3	69.7***	53.8	55.7
43. Courses strengthened my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	44.0	52.5	64.5**	50.7	52.3
44. Courses helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	75.2	78.5	79.8*	73.1	74.8
45. Courses helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	71.6	71.2	70.3	68.5	70.2
46. Courses helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	63.4	63.1	63.7	62.1	63.2
47. Courses prepared me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	64.8	74.8	72.3	75.9***	75.6
48. Courses prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	62.9	74.8	74.2	71.0	71.5
Overall mean	64.8	70.2	71.3	65.4	68.7
n =	36-46	32-38	42-49	675-730	

Table A.20: Scale responses regarding field experience by self-identified ethnicity

Topic	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
50. Field experiences underlined the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	79.9	86.2	78.6	79.1	80.0
51. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of staying engaged in professional learning.	70.8	75.6	77.7	73.0	74.4
52. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	56.6	64.3	62.4	61.9	62.9
53. Field experiences prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	53.3	65.6	65.6	62.9	63.7
54. Field experiences expanded my knowledge of student growth and development.	82.8	82.9	83.2	81.0	82.2
55. Field experiences showed me the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	71.8	71.4	69.2	70.7	72.2
56. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	82.0	88.7	81.4	82.8	83.9
57. Field experiences helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	84.1	87.7	85.2	85.4	86.3
58. Field experiences helped to prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	78.0	86.7	85.7	83.4	84.4
59. Field experiences helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	62.0	70.4	67.5	66.6	67.6
60. Field experiences helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	73.3	77.5	78.4	71.8	73.2
61. Field experiences helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	75.7	68.5	82.1	77.3	77.9
62. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	81.5	80.6	83.4	82.9	83.8
63. Field experiences helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	73.1	67.9	76.2	73.8	74.8
64. Field experiences solidified my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	75.4	73.5	81.8	74.4	75.7
65. Field experiences helped me to develop and refine a personal philosophy of education, teaching and learning.	79.4	80.9	83.6	80.9	82.0
Overall mean	73.7	76.8	77.6	75.5	76.6
n =	31-36	24-28	37-41	590-624	

Table A.21: Scale responses regarding first year of teaching by self-identified ethnicity

Topic	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
67. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	78.8	70.7	72.5	74.6	75.5
68. My first year of teaching allowed me to apply my knowledge of student growth and development.	80.7	78.7	73.5	76.9	78.1
69. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to value the success of all students.	92.5*	86.6	81.4	84.0	85.2
70. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the need to treat all students equitably with acceptance, dignity and respect.	92.4	91.4	84.5	88.0	88.9
71. My first year of teaching helped prepare me to respect and value the diversity in classrooms, schools and communities.	92.2	89.5	81.7	86.7	87.6
72. My first year of teaching helped me to respect and value the diverse worldviews and perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learners.	83.5*	73.9	67.5	72.5	73.5
73. My first year of teaching helped me to understand multiple worldviews and perspectives.	92.3***	87.0	77.4	78.8	79.6
74. My first year of teaching reinforced the value of the involvement of parents, guardians, families and communities in schools.	84.1	75.6	73.3	78.4	79.1
75. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	85.0	87.8	77.3	81.9	84.5
76. My first year of teaching helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	80.0	80.5	74.1	75.2	76.9
77. My first year of teaching demonstrated the need to act ethically and maintain the integrity of the teaching profession.	89.1	82.1	85.9	84.4	86.0
78. My first year of teaching provided opportunities for me to demonstrate respect and value for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	82.6	73.0	66.0	73.6	74.4
79. My first year of teaching prepared me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	85.2*	74.8	70.5	73.5	74.3
80. My first year of teaching helped me to understand the importance of supporting, mentoring and encouraging other educators.	83.3	71.4	76.0	79.8	80.3
81. During my first year of teaching I was supported to engage in professional learning.	80.5	72.8	69.1	72.6	73.8
Overall mean	84.4-	79.7	75.4	78.7	79.8
n =	28-33	24-27	33-38	547-589	

Table A.22: Scale responses regarding professional development by self-identified ethnicity

Topic	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
86. Overall, professional development and learning has helped me to apply and uphold the Professional Standards.	76.4	68.1	68.4	68.5	70.3
87. Professional development and learning increased my knowledge and understanding of the areas I teach.	82.6	73.0	81.4	74.7	76.7
88. Professional development and learning allowed me to increase my understanding of effective planning and instruction.	73.2	66.4	75.9	70.3	71.9
89. Professional development and learning helped me to increase my understanding of effective assessment.	74.0	68.6	67.9	70.4	71.7
90. Professional development and learning has increased my ability to demonstrate respect and value for First Nation, Inuit and Métis, and of their languages, histories and cultures in Canada.	82.4	65.7	70.8	75.3	76.0
91. Professional development and learning allowed me to examine my personal biases, attitudes, beliefs, values and practices so that I may contribute to reconciliation in Canada.	77.5	65.3	70.8	74.0	74.9
Overall mean	80.5	72.4	73.2	74.7	75.9
n =	25-27	21-24	30-33	495-533	

Table A.23: Scale responses regarding working conditions by self-identified ethnicity

Topic	FNMI	SA	CH	WH	All
93. Educators in British Columbia have good working conditions.	37.4	53.8	49.8	47.7	49.0
94. Educators in British Columbia are respected.	34.2	48.3	44.0	43.9	45.4
95. Educators in British Columbia are able to have a good work-life balance.	26.0	41.2	35.7	34.4	36.0
96. Rates of pay for educators are important for the status of the profession.	80.0	82.2	78.7	81.7	82.8
97. The salary I receive is appropriate for the work I do as an educator.	28.1	29.0	32.1	31.2	32.3
98. There are opportunities for me to progress as an educator and receive higher rates of pay.	55.9	61.2	53.9	58.4	58.9
99. Teaching unions are important in allowing educators to express their views.	75.5	80.9	74.6	76.2	77.1
100. Being a member of a teaching union has given me opportunities for teacher leadership that I would not otherwise have had.	56.0	47.2	43.2	48.7	50.8
101. Educators are given opportunities to contribute to decisions about education in the BC K-12 school system.	36.3	53.7*	43.5	39.3	41.5
102. I have the professional autonomy to take ownership of the activities that matter to me as an educator.	70.1	86.8**	65**	74.6	75.9
103. I am responsible for creating my own pathway to advancement as an educator.	79.0	85.7	68.8*	77.1	78.5
104. Education is valued in British Columbia.	49.2	63.8*	58.3	52.9	55.1
105. Parents/guardians in my community are engaged in the education of their children.	56.8	61.4*	58.3	54.4	57.1
Overall mean	54.6	60.2	53.8	56.8	58.3
n =	28-33	23-28	31-36	498-573	



British Columbia New Teacher Survey 2021/22
British Columbia Teachers' Council
Vancouver, BC

FULL REPORT
RESULTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

JUNE 2023

REPORT PREPARED BY RALF ST. CLAIR, UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA,
AND FORMER MEMBER OF THE BRITISH COLUMBIA TEACHERS' COUNCIL

