

Impact on P-12 Learning and Development

AY 2022-2023

The Kansas Department of Education (KSDE) does not share any student or teacher data with EPPs. In order to meet CAEP Standard 4, Kansas State University-College of Education (KSU-COE) is in the process of conducting a longitudinal case study in which we will sample from all of our programs. This report reflects year two of this study, and it serves as an addendum to last year's report <https://coe.ksu.edu/about/accreditation/documents/KSU-Impact-AY-19-20.pdf>. The study's methodology and research timeline may be viewed in the initial report.

The data gathered from this research meets CAEP 4.1, which was the basis for the original case study design and rationale: **“demonstrate the impact of our completers on P-12 student learning and development, classroom instruction, and schools, and to better gauge the satisfaction of our completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation” (CAEP 4.1).**

In addition, data gathered also reflects the updated benchmarks set forth for CAEP Standard 4. Completers: **effectively contribute to P-12 student-learning growth AND B. apply in P-12 classrooms the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions the preparation experiences were designed to achieve. In addition, the provider includes a rationale for the evidence provided. AND [completers] apply in P-12 classrooms the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions that the preparation experiences were designed to achieve. In addition, the provider includes a rationale for the data elements provided.**

Participants: All participants selected for this case study are completers in their first or second year of teaching, who are also recent graduates from one of KSU-COE's teacher licensure programs. Refer to Table 1 for participant demographics:

Table 1.

Academic Year 2019-2020	Academic Year 2020-2021	Academic Year 2021-2022	Academic Year 2022-2023
Cohort 1 begins: Cohort 1 (N=25; n=23) 10 UG Elem (Traditional) 3 MAT Elem 1 English 4 Social Studies 1 Math 1 Ag 2 Modern Language (Spanish) 1 Speech/Theatre	Follow-up with Cohort 1; Cohort 2 begins: Cohort 1 (N=23; n=20) 8 UG Elem (Traditional)* 3 MAT Elem 1 English 4 Social Studies 1 Math 2 Ag 1 Modern Language (Spanish) 1 Speech/Theatre Cohort 2 (N=25; n=23)* 2 UG Elem (Traditional) 3 UG Elem (Distance) 6 MAT Elem 1 MAT English 2 Social Studies 2 Math 1 Ag 1 Music 1 Biology 1 Chemistry 1 FCS 1 Early Childhood 1 Journalism	Follow-up with Cohorts 1 & 2; Cohort 3 begins Cohort 1 (N=20; n=4) 1 UG Elem (Traditional)* 1 MAT Elem 1 Math 1 Modern Language (Spanish) Cohort 2 (N=23; n=13) 2 Music 2 UG Elem (Distance) 4 MAT Elem 2 UG Elem (Traditional) 1 Math 1 Chemistry 1 FCS Cohort 3 (N=25) 4 UG Elem (Traditional) 3 UG Elem (Distance) 5 MAT Elem 2 English 1 Ag 1 Music 2 Modern Language (French and German) 1 Art (TELRN) 1 Earth Science 1 Physics 1 Physical Education 1 Business (TELRN)	Follow-up with Cohorts 2 & 3; Cohort 4 begins: Cohort 2 (N=13; n=1) 1 UG Elem (Traditional) Cohort 3 (N=25; n=7) 1 UG Elem (Traditional) 2 MAT Elem 1 MAT Foreign Language 1 Earth Science 1 English 1 Music Cohort 4 (N=25; n=20) 6 UG Elem (Traditional) 3 UG Elem (Distance) 1 English 1 Ag 1 Modern Language (French) 2 Social Studies 2 Physical Education 4 Math

**data changed from previous report to reflect actual participants*

Research Questions: In year 4, researchers asked participants questions based on whether this was their first year of participating in the study (Cohort 4) or if they were returning (Cohorts 2 and 3).

Cohort 2 participants are in their last year of the study. We asked participants more in-depth questions pertaining to their impact on diverse learners. These were the questions that we posted to Cohort 2 participants, who responded in written reflections:

- Regarding the development of your students, how do you ensure student growth happens while still honoring the fact that student needs vary greatly across cultural, cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical domains?
- Regarding your students' learning, how have you been able to use your own understanding of your students' individual differences and/or your understanding of their diverse cultures and communities to create an inclusive learning environment where every student is able to meet high standards?
- Regarding the learning environment of your classroom, in which ways have you been able to create an environment that supports individual and collaborative learning, and that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation with the diverse body of students you teach?
- Regarding your planning for instruction, how have you been able to use your own knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills, and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context to plan instruction that supports your diverse group of students in meeting the rigorous learning goals you set for them?
- Regarding your instructional strategies, how have you been able to use your own understanding of various instructional strategies, as well as your understanding of the diverse cultures and abilities represented in your classroom, to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways?
- Regarding your professional learning and ethical practice, how have you been able to engage in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate your practice, particularly the effects of your choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapt your practice(s) to meet the needs of each of the diverse learners in your classroom?

These were the questions posted to returning participants in Cohort 3:

- Thinking back to your first year of teaching, now that you are almost through your second year, has your definition of student academic success changed or shifted?
- Reflecting back to your first year of teaching, what challenges have persisted, or are there new ones to report?
- What would be an/some example(s) from this year you can share with us that you feel demonstrate your impact on student learning growth?
- As a second-year teacher, reflecting back now on your experience within the College of Education, what would you want those people who make curricular decisions within the College of Education to know?

In separate focus groups, Cohort 4 participants were asked to identify and reflect upon the following questions:

- How do you identify student academic success?
- What challenges do you face in helping students achieve academic success?
- What measures do you take to address said challenges?
- Describe three documents/artifacts that would demonstrate your impact on student-learning growth.

Findings:

While their experiences as early-career completers are varied, three significant themes emerged that embody how participants framed their impact on student academic success and growth: motivation and engagement, professional support systems, and professional connections to families and communities.

Rationale for data provided: The data presented in this addendum offers a rich, albeit broad, overview of our participants adapted their perspectives and instructional practice to meet their students' needs and attend to their academic success, accordingly.

Motivation and Engagement A common theme emerged among all the interviews with Cohorts 3 and 4, as well as the survey responses from Cohort 2: the need to differentiate and change instructional practices to keep students motivated and engaged. Indeed, an area of struggle was in engaging students, as several participants cited that some of their students seemed to lack motivation to do work, or to engage in the learning happening in the classroom. Completers noted the strategies that they implement to keep students engaged, including Kagan cooperating learning strategies, discussions, active learning, and authentic assessments. They also shared the struggles they've faced, including addressing student defiance, apathy, and disruptive behaviors. For some of the completers, student behaviors, and their impact on student engagement and motivation, is a byproduct of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Below are three examples of how our completers addressed issues of motivation and engagement among their students:

As a new teacher this has been the area of growth that I have needed in a big way. I am asking other teachers what to do in a given situation, much less now than when I started. One thing that I strive to do is to make sure that my students are as active and engaged as possible during the day. During a lesson for the day we are moving and going. It helps my students to stay focused.

— Recent Completer, Elementary Education Cohort 2

I think it [is a] lack of desire, that lack of motivation that they have. ...From what I've heard from teachers ...this is not normal. A lot of what we're seeing and the way the behaviors we're seeing, I think it goes back to when they were all, you know, isolated for so long, without social interaction. They relied solely on technology for interaction, social interaction. So now we come and are attempting to intermix again. And we are still unable to adequately socially interact, you know, because they missed that.

-- Recent Completer, Secondary Education Cohort 3

One of the biggest challenges ...was the apathy of some students. ...That has been like my biggest struggle, because I also am a person that takes everything personally. And I'm working on getting a lot better about it. But if there's a kid that doesn't like my class, does not want to be there, doesn't do anything the whole time, towards the beginning of the year, I was having a hard time not seeing that as a reflection of my teaching.

— Recent Completer, Secondary Education Cohort 4

For completers in Cohort 3 and Cohort 4, specifically, participants were candid about how struggles with student behaviors, motivation and engagement affected their perceptions of their effectiveness as teachers. This is significant, because it provides our EPP with insights into how we can not only address these concerns in the curriculum for pre-service candidates, but also create induction enrichment that may support our completers as they begin their careers.

Professional Support Systems The professional relationships that completers build through informal induction serve as socialization processes, by which they come to understand their roles, and internalize “the core values and norms” of their schools (Pogodzinski, 2012, p. 984). This reality was echoed in the responses of our completers, who shared the role that their colleagues played in shaping their practice. Below are three excerpts from our completers that illustrate how their collegial relationships informed their practice, which in turn, lead to better academic outcomes for their students:

Communication across grade levels and with all teachers interacting with my students is the first component of ensuring students are in a position to meet the standards set for their learning. Taking time to touch base with special education service providers on a weekly and monthly basis ensures we are all providing logical supports for specific student needs and maintaining consistency in their learning routines. It also allows us to adjust plans if we are not seeing adequate growth.

— Recent Completer, Elementary Education Cohort 2

For me, last year, the biggest challenge was classroom management, because most of my students were only like four or five years younger than me, or they were a lot younger than me and there were a lot of them; we would have I mean, for example, this year, we have 176/7 graders in band and one hour every day. So, classroom management was a very big issue for me last year, but this year, I've kind of got it under control, with the help of learning from my co-teachers and copying what they do and kind of developing my skills in that.

— Recent Completer, Secondary Education Cohort 3

My district offers many opportunities for professional learning. We have a strong emphasis on our mentoring program and teacher leadership positions as well as on our professional learning committees and authentic intellectual work groups. All of these opportunities help me to grow as a teacher through working with my colleagues and mentors to improve my own teaching practices to meet the needs of ALL learners.

— Recent Completer, Elementary Education Cohort 2

In defining their impact on student learning and academic success, completers reflected on their practice in context to their colleagues and professional learning communities. For those completers with strong collegial connections, their ability to reflect on pedagogy, assessment, etc. was strengthened by their professional relationships.

Professional Connections to Families and Community

Completers also reflected on the nature of building relationships with families and their communities, and how that informs their ability to impact student learning. Below are three excerpts that illuminate the nuanced nature of completers' relationships with the families and communities of their students.

... if you tell a kid who wants to leave high school and go work, (because he sees how much money his family's making on the farm, and he wants to be with them):...you have your whole life to work, why get out of high school now, their immediate response is: I hate that. ...But if I can show them the benefits of being in this building for four years and the development and growth, then all of a sudden it's not such a mad dash across the stage their diploma.

— Recent Completer Secondary Education, Cohort 4

But this year, my biggest struggle is not actually with the students. It's with their parents or guardians or caregivers. It's really hard for them to understand how much their student enjoys actually being in school and really enjoys being in the moment, ... but then when they go home, they don't really receive a lot of that support.

— Recent Completer Secondary Education, Cohort 3

I also spend time the second week of school calling each of my students' families to have a conversation about their child's goals, strengths, and other information they feel is relevant for me to know as their child's teacher. This helps me understand where the child is coming from when they enter the classroom both emotionally and academically. Then I am more prepared to adapt my instruction and my interactions to meet their needs. I maintain this conversation with parents throughout the year by sending positive emails and making follow up phone calls to check in on student progress at home as needed. Developing student-student relationships is the other key facet of ensuring student growth.

— Recent Completer Secondary Education, Cohort 2

These excerpts demonstrate the often-complicated dynamics that our completers face, as they try to balance the academic needs of their students, and family and community connections. For some completers, relationships with families and communities posed challenges, as at times they perceived a rift between the academic goals of the school and community/familial needs and priorities. For others, learning and embracing the families and communities of their students was central to their pedagogical grounding.

Completer Satisfaction In order to **better gauge the satisfaction of our completers with the relevance and effectiveness of their preparation**, researchers ended the focus groups by asking participants about what they felt were the strengths and areas of growth for the programs. These areas often correlated with what they perceived to be their level of preparedness in the classroom. While not uniformly true for all participants, in year 4 of this study, they shared notable strengths of their preparedness stepping into their first years of teaching: field-based experiences, dedicated faculty, and relevant coursework. Likewise, while not uniformly our completers expressed a need for more instruction on student behavior and classroom management, as well as more explicit instruction on how to effectively use proprietary, district-selected curriculum. This feedback offers a basis for further improving upon our programs to better prepare our completers.

References

- Pogodzinski, B. (2012). Socialization of Novice Teachers. *Journal of School Leadership*, 22(5), 982–1023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268461202200507>