

Satisfaction of Employers

Based on discussions of CAEP Standard 4 requirements and types of measures that would allow exploration of employers' satisfaction with its completers, the EPP was able to collect these data from three pilot districts and include a fourth in a pilot of individual interviews. Although these assessment processes are still in their infancy all are initial steps in laying the foundation for the enactment of a long-term systematic protocol for collecting data required for Component 4.3. In addition to targeted efforts with pilot districts, the EPP maintains a voice in discussions with the State Department of Education to explore ways to expediently track completers' employment in P-12 institutions across the state. As of spring 2019, the SC Legislature is exploring comprehensive legislation that would require state EPPs to report information on completers' place of employment, retention and promotion. Although the legislation is intended to meet accreditation standards, the outcome could very well provide state EPPs a mechanism for meeting expectations defined by CAEP Standard 4. These efforts may affect the "next steps" provided in the plan at the end of this document and in the Standard 4 narrative.

Pilot Districts

The districts used for targeted Standard 4 data collection processes are profiled in the appendix and hyperlinked for ease in considering the characteristics of the samples.

Survey Methodology

Efforts to Use Proprietary Survey

In 2015, the EPP piloted the use of a survey designed by SKYfactor – a company that aligns its measures with accreditation criteria and creates surveys of high psychometric quality – and paid for the dissemination of this proprietary measure to administrators who supervised recent program completers (Retrieved from: <https://skyfactor.com/teacher-education/>). Response rates, however, were low, for a variety of reasons. First, ascertaining the contact information for completers' supervisors was contingent upon whether the completers responded to a survey themselves (thereby providing SKYfactor with their supervisor's name/contact information). Second, although the EPP did send communications to potential completers that they would receive a survey from SKYFactor this was not possible in the case of employers. Therefore the lack of direct EPP communication hindered the connection between the email request and the university. Third, the participation rates among completers (some of who indicated they were pursuing fulltime graduate study) resulted in SKYfactor having a very small pool of supervisors to contact. This confluence of factors led to insufficient response rates.

Once the EPP examined the process, it immediately brought the situation to the attention of the members of its Unit Assessment Committee (UAC). The UAC determined it would be prudent to use a locally designed instrument for dissemination by the EPP. The committee made this determination to both increase response rates (i.e., by making it clear that the measure was sent from the EPP) and to address its other concern with the survey – its long length. In creating the locally designed survey, the Unit Assessment Committee reviewed a survey used by a peer institution designed to assess completers' professional efficacy for the purposes of accreditation and to inform programmatic improvement. To that end, the committee examined the clarity of each question on this survey, the practical utility of its queries, as well as whether some key competencies were missing from the measure, as per the Unit Standards and key elements of the Education Core Curriculum.

Specifically, these questions were then modified to ensure they: 1) were stated unambiguously; 2) each assessed one and only one competency; 3) were construct relevant; and, 4) assessed the degree to which

behaviors were actually exhibited. Again, members of the college-wide UAC – which include faculty from education (Core and program), Exercise Science, Dance, Counseling, and Institutional Research – convened to assess the wording of each query. This iterative process of refining the survey entailed disseminating the measures to each Unit Assessment Committee member by email, culling their individual responses/recommendations for change, presenting these recommendations to the committee as a whole, and deliberating as a group to determine which modifications should be made.

As for dissemination, committee members decided to send the survey to an employer and request that s/he evaluate a specific completer, as there was concern that it might be hard for administrators to know which early career teachers had graduated from Winthrop and when. In addition, members of the committee noted that evaluating completers in aggregate could “muddy the waters,” particularly if some recent graduates demonstrate strong professional competencies and some do so to a lesser degree, thereby compromising the validity of conclusions drawn from these data. Finally, the UAC noted that – given a sufficient sample size – analyses of these data could be disaggregated by program area, and triangulated with other results such as employer interview data and the results from the survey used to address Component 4.4 to examine the emergence of consistent trends. Accordingly, the UAC discontinued use of the SKYFactor survey and instead followed the protocol described above.

Locally Designed Survey, Version 1

This version was used in [District Two](#) in fall 2017; five administrators participated. EPP faculty/administrator had visited with district liaisons prior to disseminating the survey to brainstorm the most appropriate ways to ensure that the administrators who received this measure were those who had recently evaluated an EPP completer. Only one administrator per building was contacted and no administrator would have completed more than one survey. Five responses represented one-third of the district schools.

Sample Version 1

As noted, all administrators were from [District Two](#).

School Characteristics: 100% were rural with two each at the elementary and high school levels and one at the middle school level. Four of the five reported at least 50% of the student populations were eligible for “free or reduced” lunch (two of these report more than 75%).

Targeted completer: Two completers taught P-2, one 6-8, and two 9-12. One of the teachers was certified in physical education and one in biology. The others were reported to be P-6 certified.

Results Version 1—Likert Items

Each of the 5 respondents in this group had a specific initial preparation program completer in his/her school to evaluate. In all categories discussed in the following sections, administrators were asked to rate the assigned completer on *how well do new teachers of the WU EPP demonstrate the ability to perform a given task relative to other new teachers trained by other EPPs, with commensurate levels of experience*. On each task respondents rated completers on a 5-point scale ranging from *much weaker than other teachers* to *much stronger than other teachers*.

Assessment: Teachers trained by WU’s EPP are, as per these results, at least as capable as other beginning teachers in reference to assessment, and some appear to be stronger than their peers, particularly in their

ability to use and develop assessments to guide instruction. The table focuses on the three levels in which all responses were provided.

Question	Similar to other teachers	Stronger than other teachers	Much stronger than other teachers
Use assessment strategies (traditional and alternative) to diagnose student learning.	60%	40%	
Use/design assessments to guide instruction.	60%	20%	20%

Classroom Management: 40% of the teachers trained by WU’s EPP appear to be much stronger than their peers in both classroom management and establishing a positive learning environment. Areas of relative strength are highlighted in green and areas of relative weakness are highlighted in orange.

Question	Similar to other teachers	Stronger than other teachers	Much stronger than other teachers
Effectively manage the classroom.	40%	20%	40%
Establish a positive learning environment	60%		40%

Instruction: The data indicate candidates are relatively stronger or much stronger in content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and establishing engaging learning environments. However, they were more similar to other teachers in the ability to foster higher order thinking. Areas of relative strength are highlighted in green and areas of relative weakness are highlighted in orange.

Question	Similar to other teachers	Stronger than other teachers	Much stronger than other teachers
...use pedagogical techniques and strategies to foster students' critical, creative and evaluative thinking?	40.00%	60.00%	0.00%
...use teaching and learning strategies that reflect students' cultural and/or socioeconomic backgrounds?	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%
...use teaching and learning strategies that optimally accommodate student's individual learning needs?	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%
...create an engaging learning environment?	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%
...use appropriate strategies to address literacy development across the curriculum?	40.00%	40.00%	20.00%
...use appropriate technological tools to facilitate students learning?	40.00%	20.00%	40.00%
...demonstrate knowledge and conceptual understanding of the subject matter?	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%
...demonstrate pedagogical content knowledge?	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%

Professionalism: Although at 40% of the teacher evaluated on each item in the professionalism domain, engaging in ongoing improvement was the strongest category. Areas of relative strength are highlighted in green and areas of relative weakness are highlighted in orange.

Question	Similar to other teachers	Stronger than other teachers	Much stronger than other teachers
Adhere to the code of ethics and principles of professional conduct of the education profession?	40.00%	20.00%	40.00%

Engage in continuous improvement for professional role?	20.00%	40.00%	40.00%
Use effective communication techniques with students?	40.00%	20.00%	40.00%
Work effectively with education professionals, parents and/or other stakeholders?	40.00%	20.00%	40.00%

Conclusions Version 1—Likert-Scale

These results, and the reliability of these findings, must be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size. For example, one respondent chose “similar to other teachers” in every category when rating a completer; another reported “similar to other teachers” in all but four categories. One respondent only chose “stronger than other teachers” or “much stronger than other teachers” in all categories. Thus, it is possible that variance is not only due to differences among the completers, but also due to differences in the way the raters perceived/used the instrument. Nonetheless, these data can be analyzed on the aggregate with additional results used to assess the same constructs, thereby increasing the reliability of results-driven conclusions.

Locally Designed Survey, Version 2

The UAC worked to create a second iteration of the employer survey that was shorter in length, yet – in terms of face validity – sufficiently comprehensive and construct relevant. Accordingly, the second employer satisfaction survey – Likert-scale and open-ended queries – was directly linked to the EPP’s goals regarding what it is that all of its completers should know and be able to do in their professional roles. The previous survey was disseminated via Qualtrics and administrators were asked to evaluate a specific, recent completer whom they supervised and observed. Partner district-level administrators, however, were concerned about the identification of a target completer. Thus, they requested the second survey be disseminated via Qualtrics but that school-level administrators be asked to evaluate in-service teachers who recently completed WU’s initial preparation program *collectively*.

Sample Version 2

The only identifiers on the instrument targeted the employer and not the completer. Thus, 8% of respondents reported they were department heads, 63% reported they were principals, 13% reported they were supervisors and of the 17% who reported “other,” two indicated they were administrators, one said s/he was a director, one said s/he was a coordinator, and the other two did not provide additional information.

Of all the evaluators, 67% were administrators in [District One](#) and the rest (33%) were in [District Three](#). Overall, 46% lead elementary schools, 17% lead middle schools, 4% lead secondary-level schools, and 33% work among several schools with the district in which they serve in an administrative capacity. 54% reported having supervised WU completers for five years or more; the remainder have supervised between one and three years.

It is challenging to determine the overall representativeness of this sample, since EPPs in SC are not provided with information regarding where all their completers are employed. Notwithstanding, administrators from one of the two districts report that the majority of new teachers in their district are hired from WU’s EPP, suggesting the results presented are generalizable to the broader population of employers who supervise WU completers.

It is important to note that several of the issues discussed by the UAC around data collection informed the approaches used above – with positive results – yet some could not be utilized due to preferences voiced by EPP district partners. Specifically, the use of instruments developed and disseminated by the EPP increased the response rate to 37%, assuming all schools were represented and all schools employed a recent graduate. Further, both contained construct-relevant questions that, at least preliminarily yielded reliable responses; thus, shorter instruments did not seem to diminish reliability. However, as noted previously, the districts using Version 2 did not feel comfortable asking their administrators to rate one specific completer, which may have compromised the accuracy of their appraisals. In addition, since planned principal meetings were used to collect the data, one reason for a response rate less than 40% could be that administrators at the meeting were not sure (at the moment) whether they employed early career teachers from WU, and thus chose not to complete the measure. We will be exploring whether the identification of the completer affects participation rates and/or the veracity of the data collected in future validity studies conducted with additional districts.

Results Version 2—Likert Items

As noted above there are 24 respondents in this group and they were asked to consider WU completers in aggregate. In all categories discussed in the following sections, administrators were asked to indicate *how well do new teachers of the WU EPP demonstrate the ability to perform the given tasks relative to other new teachers with commensurate levels of experience trained by other EPPs*. In the summary table that follows, areas of relative strength are highlighted in green and areas of relative weakness are highlighted in orange.

Question	Among the most prepared		Better prepared than others		About as prepared as others		Among the least prepared		Unable to make a comparison		Total
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	
Teach their content field	30.43%	7	30.43%	7	21.74%	5	8.70%	2	8.70%	2	23
Manage their classroom	21.74%	5	34.78%	8	26.09%	6	8.70%	2	8.70%	2	23
Teach students with diverse backgrounds	16.67%	4	33.33%	8	29.17%	7	12.50%	3	8.33%	2	24
Use technology	26.09%	6	34.78%	8	26.09%	6	8.70%	2	4.35%	1	23
Work collaboratively with others	26.09%	6	39.13%	9	26.09%	6	4.35%	1	4.35%	1	23

When asked, *In reference to WU EPP graduates, on the whole, as compared to those from other EPPs, to what degree would you recommend that your school/organization hire graduates from this school of education in the future?* Responses are depicted in the following table.

Answer	%	Count
I would definitely recommend hiring Winthrop graduates	62.50%	15
I would generally recommend hiring Winthrop graduates	33.33%	8
I would not recommend hiring Winthrop graduates	0.00%	0
I don't have enough information to know whether to recommend hiring a Winthrop graduate or not	4.17%	1
Total	100%	24

Conclusions Version 2—Likert-Scale

Of the 24 administrators who completed a survey assessing WU completers' professional competencies, 96% would either, *definitely recommend hiring WU graduates* or would *generally recommend hiring WU graduates*. Only one respondent *did not have enough information to know whether to recommend hiring a WU graduate*

or not, and none indicated, *not recommend hiring WU graduates*. Technology use, collaboration, and content knowledge were relative strengths, while working with the diverse student body was an area for additional consideration.

Results Versions 1 and 2—Open Response Items

Although the structure of open response questions changed from [Version 1](#) to [Version 2](#), the data were aggregated (n=29) to consider themes for improvement. A complete record of responses is available in the appendix.

Seven (24%) respondents provided no specific feedback on needed improvements. The most prevalent response, pertaining to recommendations for improvement, was in reference to classroom management (referenced by 21%). Additional areas identified by at least one respondent were:

- Dealing with at-risk students (including RTI references) 17%
- Instructional Skills 14%
- Professionalism 7%
- Assessment 7%
- Content/curriculum 7%

Survey Conclusion

Likert-scale results and open response items indicate that WU completers are well prepared in general and in comparison to completers from other EPPs. Open-ended responses seem to point to the clinical nature of the program as a factor in uniquely preparing completers to assume their roles. Results indicate relative professional weaknesses in the area of classroom management and accommodating the needs of “at-risk” students. Specifically, qualitative results suggest an intersection between learning how to manage the classroom and doing so for populations with unique needs. The response, “Universities are not preparing teachers on how to adequately address the diverse social/emotional needs of today’s students,” clarifies – to some degree – what administrators are thinking about in reference to *teaching students with diverse backgrounds*. For example, one respondent stated, “It would be great for students to learn more about classroom management, ACES [Adverse Childhood Experiences] training, CPI [Crisis Prevention Institute], and the RTI [Response to Intervention] process.” The EPP followed-up on several of these specific programs with district-level contacts and is exploring each of them as possible additions. The EPP is also exploring ways to incorporate emotional resilience work for candidates, and the use of professional development offerings across the Teacher Education Program as a mechanism to explore such topics. The EPP also noted that employers may be interpreting *students with diverse backgrounds* to encompass a broader view of diversity than that currently employed by WU EPP coursework and assessments.

Although discussed more thoroughly in Component 4.4, these data align with completer surveys and conclusions from exit survey data (although exit surveys do not specifically reference completer feedback as defined by CAEP).

Validity and Reliability of Employer Survey

Presented individually and triangulated on the aggregate level are employers’ responses to queries regarding the degree to which recent WU completers, who are under their supervision, demonstrate professional competencies relative to new teachers with commensurate experience who were prepared at other EPPs. The commonality in responses across measures and among respondents are a proxy of the degree to which these

data are reliable. Having said that, the relatively small sample size is a threat to external validity (or the degree to which these data are generalizable to many different districts and grade levels), as well as the reliability of results. To address the latter, the same constructs will henceforth be assessed on an annual basis by expanding and rotating administration of the instrument in districts in which completers are employed, in order to discern the reliability and external validity of these findings.

Future Validity Studies

In the subsequent academic year (2019-2020) the EPP plans to administer both versions of the survey (in person, on paper) to a small group of administrative partners, EPP faculty, and teachers from the PN. This group will be asked to appraise which of the two surveys appear to most accurately measure the constructs of interest. Then, they will be asked to assess the degree to which the constructs to be assessed are addressed by the questions within the preferred instrument. If they find questions are missing or that queries within the instrument are not construct relevant, then modifications will be made. This process will result in only one version of the employer survey. Additional assessments of psychometric quality will be conducted on that survey alone.

Upon development of the single survey, WU assessment coordinators will ask a group of administrators to complete the instrument (on paper with the coordinators in the room). After doing so they will be asked to indicate if any of the wording within the questions was unclear, if the Likert-scaled choices were confusing or hard to interpret, and if they detected any leading queries. The EPP will also ask if respondents had difficulty understanding what each question addressed/was truly measuring and/or what their responses should have been, given the scale provided. The measure will then be altered accordingly (if applicable).

Finally, the convergent validity of the measure will be assessed by first asking administrators to rate WU EPP completers by answering the questions in the survey. Then, the administrators will be interviewed individually (thus providing one-to-one match of responses), using questions that assess the same constructs to see if their survey-based appraisals of the EPPs completers' preparedness to assume their professional roles are similar to their interview responses. If responses to the survey are discrepant with responses provided in the interviews, then specific survey questions will be modified and the convergent validity of the measure will be assessed again.

When sample sizes permit, the internal reliability of the assessment will be evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. If Cronbach's alpha is 0.7 or greater, then the EPP assessment team will conclude its internal reliability is satisfactory. Values below 0.7 suggest modifications should be made, and the EPP will make changes to ensure the instrument is internally reliable.

As state-level efforts continue to ensure systematically track completers and EPPs are more able to explore completers' retention in the field and promotion to other school-based positions, then it would be possible to assess the degree to which scores on the employer satisfaction survey are predictive of specific outcomes, such as longevity in the field. Exploring the predictive validity of this measure is something the EPP would like to assess; however, the pre-requisite (a state maintained system to track completers) for doing so are not yet available.

Interview Methodology

Eleven additional administrators who supervise and evaluate recent initial preparation program completers from both WU's EPP and other EPPs, were asked to describe – in the context of a one-on-one interview either by phone or in-person – the professional performance and corresponding levels of preparation between those

who graduated from WU’s EPP and those who graduated from other EPPs. Two faculty members, one who is the Chair of the Unit Assessment Committee and has extensive program evaluation experience and a second who was trained in educational leadership and is well versed in teacher evaluation, conducted interviews using identical protocols. Fortunately, all principals and administrators who were asked to participate in this interview did so, for a 100% participation rate.

Sample

School type	N or Number of Principals	Districts
Elementary	4	District Three
Elementary	2	District Four
Elementary	1	District One
Middle	1	District Four
High	1	District Five
High	1	District One
Other	Administrator for Teacher Induction/New Teacher Training	District One

Validity and Reliability of Employer Interview

The psychometric properties of the question/s posed during the interview are relatively straightforward, as they mirrored the examples of evidence provided by CAEP for Standard 4.

Prompt to set expectations of interview:

Can you tell me your perceptions of the degree to which the new teachers in your district, who graduated from WU’s EPP, perform in various professional capacities relative to teachers who were trained at other EPPs with commensurate levels of in-service experience? Professional capacities include classroom management, content knowledge, knowledge of instruction, the effective use of technology, knowledge of assessment, professionalism (such as the ability to positively receive constructive feedback, punctuality, collegiality), and the like.

Specifically, the questions posed included:

- In comparison to other teachers with commensurate levels of in-service experience, how prepared are teachers trained via WU’s EPP to assume their professional roles?
- What strengths do they display?
- What are their areas of relative weakness, if applicable?
- Again, if applicable, of these, which areas for improvement appear to be WU specific and which are commonly demonstrated by your beginning teachers?

Results

From the interview process employers identified both relative strengths and considerations for more development among early career completers from WU as compared to other early career teachers. A [complete listing](#) of responses is provided in the appendix.

Categories of strengths included:

- Professionalism: relationships, commitment, and willingness for growth;
- General preparation: clinical model and knowledge of profession/expectations; and

- Specific Skills: planning, content, and management.

The administrators also identified areas where completers have need for growth:

- Specific approaches: curriculum expectations, RTI, use of assessment for differentiation, and adjusting to district-specific expectations;
- Management;
- Communication with parents; and
- Professionalism: community presence and perseverance.

Interestingly some of the same themes emerged in both sets of comments indicating the degree to which exposure to classroom management techniques and aspects of professionalism impact candidates differently. In order to determine whether the themes for areas of growth are common among early career teachers or more specific to WU completers, the respondents were asked to discuss, in general, the areas of difficulty for all early career teachers. By far professionalism was the most commonly noted area for improvement. More specifically, administrators described concerns regarding new teachers' dress (i.e., too casual), etiquette/demeanor, engagement, and resiliency (ability to navigate through stressful situations). Again, these comments are not WU specific, but WU completers are included in these generalizations.

Conclusions from Employer Feedback

Consistent among responses from survey questions – Likert-scale and open queries – and interviews are the unique strengths of WU initial preparation program completers due to their extensive field experience and yearlong internship. Specifically, after triangulating results from all three data sources it is clear that WU EPP completers demonstrate high levels of competence in lesson planning, content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge. Also noted consistently was their ability to create positive, engaging learning environments for their students; engage in professional development; and build collaborative relationships with other educators and staff members. Thus, on the aggregate these principals/administrators indicated consistently high levels of satisfaction with WU completers' preparation to perform their assigned duties in P-12 classrooms.

Classroom management strategies and knowledge of reading instruction were cited as both relative strengths and weaknesses. This is likely to be, in part, a function of variance among school environments, familiarity with WU students, and grade levels in which the administrators are assuming their leadership roles. For example, the principal who noted completers strengths as classroom managers leads a high school in a high performing, relatively affluent district. This does not mean WU EPP's beginning teachers in less affluent districts are poor classroom managers; however, it is likely that context plays a role in principals' perceptions of completers' competencies. The principal who noted completers' strengths in reading instruction leads an elementary school located in close proximity to Winthrop, where many students engage in field placements and internships. Alternatively, the principal who felt WU EPP completers were somewhat less skilled at describing how to organize and orchestrate reading workshops is leading a school that opened approximately one year ago, rendering it more likely that this principal has less experience with WU completers and vice versa.

Nonetheless, emergent trends from all sources of data suggest that WU EPP completers could improve their classroom management skills, and in particular their management skills as they pertain to meeting the needs of learners from diverse backgrounds. Additionally, a relative weakness reported by employers was completer's understanding of how and when to communicate with their P-12 learners' parents. This suggests

that the incorporation into the WU program of role playing exercises and/or deliberate assessments of when to contact parents/caregivers is warranted.

The weaknesses evidenced for most beginning teachers are areas WU EPP is actively working to address. For example, feedback from this work as well as exit surveys, faculty feedback, discussion in the PN, and alumni feedback, has led to a focused effort of the UAC to explore professional development needs of our candidates. These efforts are discussed throughout the self-study as appropriate, but include training in June 2019 on coaching emotional resilience and complementary work on infusing intentional opportunities to build emotional resilience in candidates; attention to additional exploration of large-scale assessments; and an expansion of the understanding of *needs of diverse learners* to more completely encompass RTI, ACES, and mental health. In addition, the salience of presenting oneself professionally (in attire, manner, and through social media) is being inculcated in preservice teachers at WU throughout their entire undergraduate career.

Employment Milestones

Using the completer survey results from 60 recent graduates, over 33% reported having achieved professional honors. These ranged from being named “Teacher of the Year” (17% of total respondents); nominee for “Teacher of the Year” (25% of total respondents); “Teacher of the Month, of the Quarter, or Employee of Excellence” (7% of total respondents); or all of the above (“Teacher of the Year,” “Employee of Excellence,” “District Learning Management Team Leader,” and more). Despite WU’s inability to compare these outcomes to those derived by completers from other EPPs, the quantity and quality of these accolades suggest that WU initial teacher preparation program completers have been trained in ways that equip them to assume their professional roles in an exemplary manner.

In addition to honors, 25% of the respondents indicated completing graduate degrees in a variety of areas including content/level specific degrees and leadership degrees. Another 10% were actively engaged in graduate study. Finally, 20% indicated specific expansion of current qualifications through state endorsement and add-on certification processes.

Unfortunately, as noted above, it is impossible to compare these data to the accolades and professional development among beginning teachers trained at other EPPs. However, the vast number of accomplishments, as well as the employer data indicating completer strengths in the realm of engaging in professional improvement, suggest completers are growing in ways that are likely to foster their promotion and retention. To more accurately assess the percentage of completers promoted and retained, a completer tracking action plan is being explored in a variety of contexts.

First, the Dean has joined other education deans in the state to request more access to completer placement information. Although there are current processes in which EPPs can request some specific information from the state, a more standardized program specific to addressing CAEP’s accreditation standards is a regular point of discussion. Recent draft legislation also suggests that state lawmakers would like to explore data similar to that needed by EPPs to provide substantive evidence for CAEP Standard 4. Although the eventual outcomes of this legislation will likely change prior to their approval, the inclusion of preliminary versions in educational reform acts are indicative of EPPs’ interest in having the ability to more systematically assess the impact of completers on P-12 students’ growth. Given the salience of tracking EPP graduates’ retention in the field and promotion, the Unit Assessment Coordinator met with a representative from the South Carolina Department of Education and requested access to completer employment data that would only include the completer’s graduation date, current position, duration of time in that position, school name, and work-related email.

Responses to this request and other discussions at state EPP meetings show a willingness to pursue such reporting, but these efforts will likely not impact WU's data tracking measures in the immediate future.

Survey Responses Sample 1 – Open Response

In comparison to his or her professional peers, how well did the Winthrop graduate you evaluated perform in his or her teaching role?

1. She has performed extremely well as a teacher.
2. The Winthrop graduate performed very well in all four domain areas. The graduate successfully passed all induction and annual evaluations.
3. Similar to others in the position.
4. C.D. is an exceptional teacher. He works to improve his skills and others. He has a passion for building relationships with both students and colleagues.
5. This teacher does an exceptionally good job on a faculty of exceptional teachers. He has had excellent End of Course (EOC) scores in Biology I consistently from year to year.

What additional strengths did this in-service teacher exhibit?

1. Great Initiative.
2. Building relationships with students, parents and colleagues.
3. Knowledge of technology.
4. Ability to collaborate with peers, build culture and climate with students and staff.
5. He is very strong in his content knowledge and continues to be able to deliver his content effectively to students.

What additional areas for future growth do you see?

1. Experience with curriculum.
2. Classroom Response to Interventions (Tier lessons).
3. Classroom management.
4. None.

Survey Responses Sample 2 – Open Response

Responses from Sample 2 are listed by category as respondents were simply asked for recommendations for improvement.

Five respondents did not have any suggestions for improvement and instead stated the following:

- Keep pushing out good candidates.
- Continue to partner with districts in providing preservice experiences.
 - The yearlong internship is crucial also.
- Not applicable.
- I interview graduates from all over the state, and I can attest to the quality of your students from this experience.
- As we interview graduates from a variety of universities, the candidates from WU are highly prepared and they have a tremendous amount of exposure to a variety of schools and school settings. That is a valuable part of the program.

The most prevalent response, pertaining to recommendations for improvement, was in reference to classroom management:

- Teachers are faced with extremely challenging behaviors that were not as prevalent in years past. Classroom management; working with challenging students.
- Teachers need to be better prepared to come into the classroom ready to go. We all know that Classroom management is something that will come with experience, but basic classroom management should be addressed.

- Effective classroom management and discipline for high need populations.
- Focus on practical skills such as classroom management.
- Classroom Management Strategies.

Less frequently articulated were the following:

Dealing with at-risk students:

- Mental health and at-risk strategies to engage students.
- It would be great for students to learn more about classroom management, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) training, Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI), and the Response to Intervention (RTI) process.
- Universities are not preparing teachers on how to adequately address the diverse social/emotional needs of today's students.

Professionalism:

- Just like students today, first year teachers tend to lack GRIT/mental toughness. New teachers need to be taught how to balance the demands and still do the best for students. The students are our WHY, not the teachers.
- WU needs to also better prepare their students for working with other professionals and bring ideas to the table.

Instructional Skills:

- Teach students how to write lesson plans, teach reading and math.
- Focus on practical skills such as technology integration and teaching strategies.
- To teach literacy.
- Reading (guided reading, shared reading, conferencing, and writing conferences).

Assessment:

- More support on developing and analyzing assessments aligned to standards (formative and summative assessments).
- Running Records

Content/curriculum:

- Increase the rigor and help students understand the curriculum being implemented in our schools.

Example Interview Responses from each Category

WU Completer's Strengths

Professionalism:

- Ability to **collaborate with peers, build culture and climate** with students and staff.
- Strengths are: **Building relationships** with students, parents and colleagues; very good at building relationships.
- High levels of **initiative**.
- High levels of **commitment**.
- Strong **dedication**.
- Good at accepting **constructive criticism**.
- WU completers are uniquely adept at '**adjusting themselves' and accepting constructive criticism**/using it to make professional modifications.
- Very **confident**.

Preparedness/Greater Experience:

- I see a big difference between the graduates of the WU EPP and those from other EPPs – the students from WU are better prepared.
- Graduates of WU's EPP are 'quick studies' – they pick upon the way things are done in the school very easily.
- It is easy to tell difference between a first year teacher who graduated from Clemson and/or another state school in South Carolina and one who graduated from WU – WU completers seem much more experienced than first year teachers. We do not have many new teachers from other EPPs- most are from WU.
- They (WU completers) all perform well. This is because WU students in the EPP were exposed to education early on in field experience – being in the classroom starting in their freshman year either helped them clarify where they want to be or whether they want to work as a teacher in a school.
- They are more familiar than other new teachers with pedagogy – probably due to the yearlong internship.
- Their yearlong internship equips them to have great familiarity with the school/teaching, and as such, faculty think of them as junior faculty members.
- WU interns and these teachers-in-training become almost indistinguishable from the rest of the faculty. They are comfortable with the school routine and by the end of their internship, demonstrate competencies commensurate with teachers at the end of their first year of teaching.
- They have realistic perceptions of what they will encounter.
- ...WU completers are very comfortable with the teacher evaluation system, which is noteworthy given how complex teacher evaluation processes and procedures are in this state.

Various Specific Skill Sets:

- WU candidates appear to have a **good sense of child development and pedagogy**.
- **Assessment is strong; lesson planning was strong; implementation and delivery were strong; use of instructional strategies and best practices** – strong.

- The interns/new teachers from WU had stronger **content knowledge** than those who graduated from other EPPs. For example, the science teacher/graduate of WU – his students had the highest science test scores in the school.
- He is very strong in his **content knowledge** and continues to be able to deliver his content effectively to students.
- Strengths - their **content** – WU completers really knew their content.
- **Better at lesson planning.**
- Good at **pacing their lessons** and knowing what students are going to be able to do.
- Organized and effective at writing **lesson plans** - they do a nice job at breaking up the 90-minute class – doing different activities, differentiating, etc.
- WU completers know that ‘good teaching comes from good **planning**’; WU completers are skilled at planning extensively so they are well prepared to teach.
- **Good w grouping students and manage/timing** of group work versus whole class.
- Strength- **classroom management.**
- They do a good job with using proximity as a classroom **management technique** – they are discrete, they redirect students -- often with a soft pat on the shoulder, and they manage the class in a manner that is not disruptive.
- Strong in **ELA instruction** – using Fountas & Pinnell data, conducting reading instruction according to Lucy Calkins.
- WU completers are more prepared/equipped to assume their in-service roles now than they were 10 years ago, particularly in the area of **reading instruction**. Again, the year-round internships has been ‘a real plus’.
- WU completers have **high expectations for students in poverty**- they don’t focus on the deficit approach and are seeking to capitalize on students’ assets.
- Strong knowledge of **technology**.

Areas for growth/Relative weaknesses:

Curriculum:

- Could use more experience with curriculum

Response to Interventions:

- Would benefit from greater experience with **Classroom Response to Interventions (RTI)**.

Reading and Math Workshops:

- They need growth in knowing how to enact best practices in reading and math instruction on the elementary level through the establishment of reading/math workshops. They should be able to describe how they build differentiated groups; the tools they use to assess reading achievement (not just reading level); how to triangulate data from running records, MAP, STAR, common assessments;

create pedagogical experiences accordingly, etc. WU completers have talked – to some degree – abstractly about differentiation/reading workshops, but they have not rooted these descriptions in personal experiences that he (the principal) could envision them enacting/having enacted. Instead, applicants have spoken more concretely about whole group instruction/using one text for all learners.

- Need more training on how to use Fountas & Pinnell data.

Classroom management:

- Weakness- classroom management.
- Classroom management – just have a lack of experience.
- Need more training with transitions/increasing students' time on task.

Communication with Parents:

- Parental communication- they often wait too long to contact a parent and then what was a small issue with a student ends up being a call regarding a significant problem.
- They also struggle with going to the parents early instead of waiting until the end of the semester and making the bad phone call saying – by the way...
- A weakness is communicating with parents.

Enculturation:

- Understanding the BLANK district way (the expectations, way our district runs, what you have to do that is particular to that district – getting accustomed to the district)
- Dealing with administrators.

Professionalism:

- Another weakness is they need to remember they are always a teacher, even on social media.
- Completers are also often overwhelmed, despite the fact that WU has done a fabulous job preparing them.

Principals' Perceptions of Weaknesses Among all New Teachers Trained at All EPP's:

- New group of teachers have **trouble asking for help** because they see that as a weakness.
- Many of the new teachers are **not invested in the school outside of class** – they come at 7:45 and leave at 3:45. That is not how good high school teaching works – it is important to attend students' ball games, debate club events, etc.
- All new teachers **need awareness of etiquette** – appropriate dress, respectful responses, how to handle disagreements, etc.
- All new teachers- **professionalism is an issue** –dress, demeanor, how to communicate with colleagues, and an overreliance on technology (when technology does not work, teachers struggle to know what to do – they have no backup plan).
- New teachers, prepared at WU and other EPPs, **could always refine their professionalism** to some degree. In particular, some applicants have included friends, family members and non-professional

references on their applications despite having been asked to include only those who are cognizant of their teaching/professional/scholarly contributions. This is frustrating to BLANK administrator and she would like to encourage applicants to please record appropriate references when seeking employment in the district for instructional positions.

- All new graduates - **commitment to the position/maturity in terms of professionalism**-- hard to handle ambiguity-- had a first year teacher she knows faculty meetings are only once per month and she said she had a doctor's appointment and will not be there.
- Most new teachers could improve **in one area of professionalism: dress**. Their outfits are often too casual or inconsistent with what is required of them, however, many veteran teachers are also dressing somewhat unprofessionally.

District Information for All Standard 4 Data Collection Efforts

These data were collected from district websites and 2018 school report cards.

District One

Data Collection Activities

- Interviews
- Student Achievement Data
- Employer Surveys
- Completer Surveys

Characteristics

District One is a suburban district of approximately 15,000 students across 16 schools. A rapidly growing district, employing close to 2000, the district has opened new schools regularly over the past 5 years. Based on the District's most recent school report card, student performance on the SC Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics tests (grades 3 to 8) indicate that the percentages of students who scored at the *met* or *exceeding* levels were 66% and 72% respectively. Student performance on End-of-Course Exams in English 1 and Algebra 1 indicated that 81% and 87% earned a "C" or better, respectively. The average ACT composite is 22 and SAT Composite is 1143. These scores and the districts' graduation rate of 94% are higher than the state average. The student population has a lower diversity index than the state, and approximately 20% of students in this district are eligible for "free or reduced lunch."

District Two

Data Collection Activities

- Interviews
- Student Achievement Data
- Employer Surveys
- Completer Surveys

Characteristics

District Two is a rural district with approximately 5300 students and more than 800 employees. The district includes 15 schools of various sizes and types. Based on the District's most recent school report card, student performance on the SC Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics tests (grades 3 to 8) indicate that the percentages of students who scored at the *met* or *exceeding* levels were 27% and 25%, respectively. Student performance on End-of-Course Exams in English 1 and Algebra 1 indicated that 46% and 54% earned a "C" or better, respectively. The average ACT composite is 16.4 and SAT Composite is 1015. These scores are slightly lower than state averages, as is the district's graduation rate of 84%. The student population has a higher diversity index than the state, and approximately 67% of students in this district are eligible for "free or reduced lunch."

District Three

Data Collection Activities

- Interviews
- Employer Surveys
- Completer Surveys

Characteristics

District Three – which serves a medium size city – is comprised of approximately 18,000 students and more than 2,400 employees. The district includes 27 schools of various sizes and types. Based on the District's most recent school report card, student performance on the SC Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics tests (grades 3 to 8) indicate that the percentages of students who scored at the *met* or *exceeding* levels were 39% and 43% respectively. Student performance on End-of-Course Exams in English 1 and Algebra 1 indicated that 57% and 67% earned a "C" or better, respectively. Their SC Ready scores (grades 3 to 8) were slightly lower than state percentages, yet the two end-of-course percentages were slightly higher than the state. The

average ACT composite is 18.3 and SAT Composite is 1041. The district has a graduation rate of 83% which exceeds the state average. The student population has a higher diversity index than the state, and approximately 53% of students in this district are eligible for “free or reduced lunch.”

District Four

Data Collection Activities

- Interviews

Characteristics

District Four is a rural district with approximately 5250 students and more than 800 employees. The district includes 15 schools of various sizes and types. Based on the District’s most recent school report card, student performance on the SC Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics tests (grades 3 to 8) indicate that the percentages of students who scored at the *met* or *exceeding* levels were 32.5% and 46.5% respectively. Student performance on End-of-Course Exams in English 1 and Algebra 1 indicated that 54% and 61% earned a “C” or better, respectively. These testing results are very similar to state averages, yet the district has a graduation rate of 85% which exceeds the state average. The average ACT composite is 18.3 and SAT Composite is 1011. The student population has a lower diversity index than the state, and approximately 57% of students in this district are eligible for “free or reduced lunch.”

District Five

Data Collection Activities

- Interviews

Characteristics

District Five is geographically large, and regions of the district range from suburban upper class to rural low income. A smaller city is included within the district. The district has approximately 13,000 students and includes 22 schools of various sizes and types. This district is growing, especially in the regions of the county that are accessible to a large metropolitan city. Based on the District’s most recent school report card, student performance on the SC Ready English Language Arts and Mathematics tests (grades 3 to 8) indicate that the percentages of students who scored at the *met* or *exceeding* levels were 40.5% and 46.5% respectively. Student performance on End-of-Course Exams in English 1 and Algebra 1 indicated that 51% and 56% earned a “C” or better, respectively. These testing results are very similar to state averages, yet the district has a graduation rate of 83% which exceeds the state average. The average ACT composite is 17.7 and SAT Composite is 1016. The student population has a slightly lower diversity index than the state, and approximately 47% of students in this district are eligible for “free or reduced lunch.” However, to illustrate the demographic diversity in socioeconomic status, the range by school for “free or reduced lunch” is from 17% to 92% (both of which are elementary schools).