



A Closer Look at Classroom Management

Undergraduate Secondary Programs

KEY FINDINGS: Two in five (44 percent) of the 536 teacher preparation programs examined give feedback to their student teachers on all or nearly all key areas of classroom management. Programs are most likely to provide feedback on student teachers' ability to establish standards of behavior and maximize the amount of class time in which students are focused on learning, and least likely to provide feedback on student teachers' use of meaningful praise to encourage positive behavior.

Why teacher prep programs should teach key classroom management skills

New teachers and their principals consistently report that classroom management is one of their greatest challenges. Given that students learn best in an orderly, well-run classroom, teacher candidates should be trained in a coherent management approach focusing on the five areas that receive strong support from research.¹ These areas are:

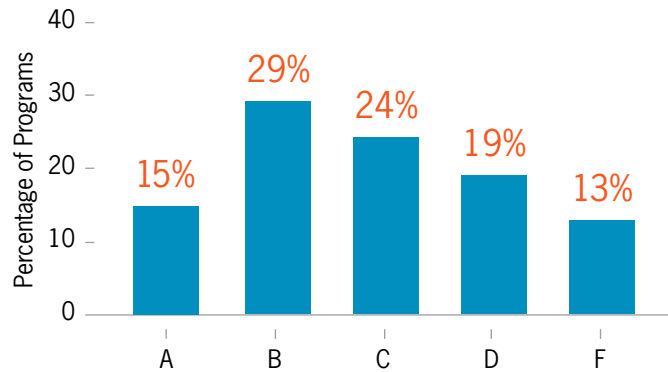
- Establishing and maintaining standards of behavior;
- Maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning;
- Using meaningful praise and other forms of positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate behavior;
- Using unobtrusive means to prevent and manage minimally disruptive behavior; and,
- Addressing more serious misbehavior.

Our evaluation examines the feedback that student teachers receive from their supervisors and cooperating teachers on their use of classroom management techniques. Programs signal which skills they consider most essential through the indicators included on the observation and evaluation forms used by program supervisors and cooperating teachers to provide feedback to student teachers. In addition, since student teaching is the last chance for future teachers to polish their skills before taking responsibility for their own classrooms, it is a critical time for programs to provide feedback to their teacher candidates on how they can improve. Programs that earn an "A" provide feedback to their student teachers on all of the five essential areas of classroom management.

1 For more on the research underpinning this analysis, see our Classroom Management [report](#) and our [Standard Book for the Classroom Management Standard](#).

How many programs provide feedback to aspiring teachers on the most important classroom management skills?

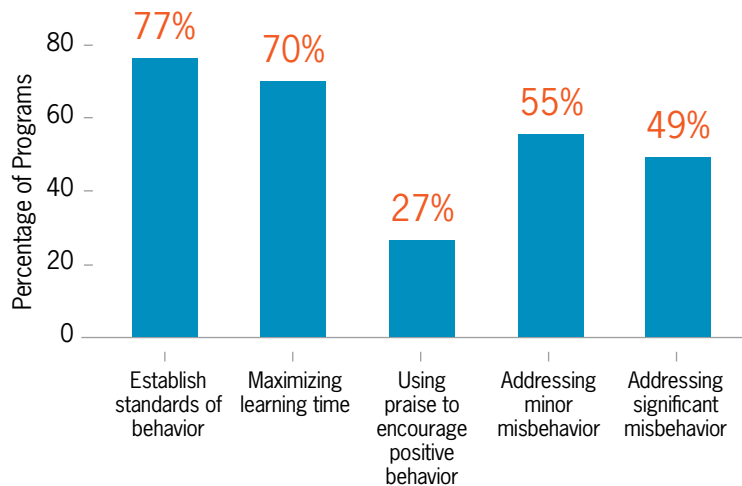
(N=536 undergraduate secondary programs)



Two in five programs (44 percent) earn an “A” or “B,” meaning that they provide feedback on all or nearly all of the key areas of classroom management.

A closer look at classroom management

On which skills do teacher prep programs provide feedback?²



Most programs provide student teachers with feedback on their ability to establish standards of behavior and maximize learning time. However, only about a quarter address student teachers’ use of praise and other reinforcement to encourage positive behavior, even though praise has been shown by research to be a powerful tool that, when used correctly, can instill in students the motivation to improve their own behavior.

2 Maximizing learning time is the only area in which our evaluation is divided among separate skills: 1) maintaining student engagement, and managing 2) time, 3) materials, and 4) the physical classroom environment. Programs are included in the graph if their student teachers receive feedback on at least three of the four skills.

Comparison with other categories of programs and with previous years

The findings discussed here are nearly identical to those we [reported](#) for undergraduate elementary programs in the fall of 2016. The similarity is unsurprising because many institutions use the same, or extremely similar, observation and evaluation forms to give feedback to their elementary and secondary teacher candidates.

The overall grade distribution for this standard is virtually unchanged since the *2014 Teacher Prep Review*. However, examining the 295 undergraduate secondary programs that were evaluated in both the *2014 Teacher Prep Review* and the current edition of *Teacher Prep Review* shows slight improvement in the feedback that programs provide student teachers on their classroom management skills: Forty percent of these programs earned an “A” or “B” in 2014, while 49 percent now receive those grades. A small amount of improvement in each area of classroom management can be seen when comparing findings for these programs in 2014 and 2016. Most notably, the percentage of programs providing feedback on addressing significant misbehavior increased by nine percentage points.

Most of this change can be explained by a single action: In 2016 Massachusetts implemented a new version of its mandatory, statewide teacher performance assessment, which offered feedback on many more of the key areas of classroom management than the previous version. Most programs in the state of Massachusetts now earn a B instead of a D or F. However, the improvement in the area of addressing significant misbehavior is a nationwide pattern, and is not explained by the changes implemented in Massachusetts.

Methodology in brief

We examine the observation and evaluation forms that supervisors and cooperating teachers use to give feedback to student teachers on their performance in the classroom. We read each form in full to determine if it requires the user to give feedback in any of the five key areas of classroom management.

To learn more about how we evaluate programs’ feedback on classroom management techniques, including how individual indicators are satisfied, please see the methodology section of our [Standard Book](#) for the Classroom Management standard. For examples of model [materials](#) related to this standard, please see the “What You Can Do on Classroom Management” section on the “Standards & Methods” page.

Understanding program grades for Classroom Management

Note: One area of our analysis, maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, is divided into four subskills (maintaining student engagement, and managing time, materials, and the physical environment).

- A** Program provides feedback to student teachers on all five key areas of classroom management. One or two of the four subskills related to maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning may be omitted.
- B** There are multiple ways to earn a B. The most common is:
 - Program provides feedback to student teachers in four of the five key areas of classroom management.
- C** There are multiple ways to earn a C. The most common are:
 - Program provides feedback to student teachers in three of the five key areas of classroom management. If one of the three areas is maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, feedback in this area may not address all four subskills.
 - Program provides feedback to student teachers in two of the five key areas of classroom management. If one of these two areas is maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, feedback in this area must address all four subskills.

- D** There are multiple ways to earn a D. The most common are:
 - Program provides feedback to student teachers in one of the five key areas of classroom management. If the area of maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning is the area in which feedback is provided, the feedback must address all four subskills.
 - Program provides feedback to student teachers in two of the five key areas of classroom management. One of the two areas is maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, and feedback for this area does not address all four subskills.
- F** Program does not provide feedback to student teachers on any of the five key areas of classroom management, with the possible exception of feedback on up to three of the four subskills in the area of maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning.



National Council on Teacher Quality

1120 G Street, NW, Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20005
Tel: 202 393-0020 Fax: 202 393-0095
Web: www.nctq.org