

1999 Beginning Teacher Survey: Final Report

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## Beginning Teacher Survey-1999: Has Anything Changed From 1998?

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 1999 Beginning Teacher Survey was designed to provide data to assess the attainment of PSC objective that 1999 “first-year teachers in Georgia will be better prepared to enter the classroom and be rated so by themselves and by their principals.” It was thus designed to provide information on the continued readiness of Beginning Teachers hired to teach in Georgia public school systems.

Two questionnaires used in 1998 Survey were modified and made available to all Beginning Teachers and their principals on the World Wide Web. Teachers and principals who opted for or did not have access to the World Wide Web completed paper versions of the questionnaires. All Beginning Teachers whose corresponding Principal Survey was completed served as participants. Altogether, 1040 Beginning Teachers and 457 principals participated in the survey.

Various statistical techniques were used to summarize participants’ responses and to determine whether there were any differences between 1998 and 1999 responses. It was found, as in 1998, that Beginning Teachers rated themselves (93.4%) and are rated by their principals (92.6%) as ready for the classroom. Secondly, there is a high and positive association between Beginning Teachers’ and their principals’ perception of teacher readiness. Thirdly, Beginning Teachers and principals reported highest level of non readiness in Mathematics (9.1% and 15.2%, respectively) in 1999 which is reminiscent of 1998 findings. However, both teachers and principals reported increased readiness among Science teachers, 97.1% and 88.2%, respectively, up from 87.4% and 84.1%, in 1998. The difference between 1998 and 1999 teachers’ self-ratings was the only significant difference among the 1998 and 1999 comparisons. Fourthly, Beginning

Teachers and their principals disagreed in 1999 as in 1998 on the proportions of teachers certified in the Middle Grades that they considered not ready for the classroom. Specifically, principals perceive more Middle Grades Beginning Teachers as not ready than did the teachers themselves. Reasons for this mismatch in perceptions need to be investigated more thoroughly, as this may be a function of a mismatch in expected roles of Middle Grades teachers.

Beginning Teachers also indicated, as in 1998 Survey, that the three top content areas in which they would like additional preparation were Reading, Learning Disabilities and Behavioral Disorders. Reading ranked third in 1998 and first in 1999. In terms of skill areas in which Beginning Teachers would like additional preparation or in which principals perceive teachers to be most deficient, Managing Student Behavior and Classroom Management and Organization remain at the top of the list.

It is hoped that the results of the survey will be used by Teacher Preparation and Induction programs to help new teachers ease into their professional roles in school systems.

## Method

### Participants

One thousand and forty (1040) Beginning Teachers who had complete data constituted the participants in this survey. The data collection method affected the number of participants for the current survey. The number of participants declined from 4187 in 1988 to 1040 participants in 1999.

### Material and Procedure

Data were collected differently in 1999. Whereas in 1998, paper questionnaires were used exclusively, in 1999, most of the data were obtained via the electronic medium. To allow for schools whose computer systems were not up and running, both electronic and paper questionnaires were available. Letters were sent directly to principals informing them of the address on the web where the questionnaire was located. The letter also asked principals, who preferred paper questionnaire or did not have access to the Web, to complete and return to PSC a cut-out request form on which they provided the school name, address and the number of Beginning Teachers in the school. The principals and teachers who completed the questionnaire on the Web followed the following procedure: The teacher completes and submits his/her form first. Then, his or her name pops up in the Administrator Survey. The principal or whatever administrator is assigned, pulls up and completes a questionnaire per teacher whose name is showing on the administrator's list. This had the advantage of minimizing the number of mismatched questionnaires by eliminating the issue of principal questionnaires that did not have a corresponding teacher survey. It was still possible, though, to have teacher questionnaires that were not matched to any principals' questionnaires.

Some of the schools who have access to the Web still had difficulties accessing the questionnaire. Such principals and teachers called in to the PSC for help. These participants responded to the questionnaire orally over the phone while a PSC staff member entered the data on the Web. This has the propensity to introduce bias in the data, the effect of which will be examined later.

### Results and Discussion

Data from the 1040 beginning teachers and 457 principals (or their designates, henceforth referred to as “principals”) who participated in the survey were analyzed. Given that a major rationale for 1999 Beginning Teacher Survey is to compare results with those obtained in 1998, the results will be presented in a way to facilitate that comparison wherever possible. Thus, Table 1 shows the 1998 and 1999 distribution of the Beginning Teachers according to colleges where they received most of their teacher preparation.

As Table 1 shows the proportion of beginning teachers from the colleges remained fairly similar with a few exceptions. For example the proportion from Clark Atlanta, Georgia College and State University, and Kennesaw declined considerably. On the other hand, the proportions from Georgia Southwestern, Piedmont College and Valdosta State University increased appreciably. There were no Beginning Teachers in 1999 in the survey from Emory University, Morehouse College, Spelman College and Wesleyan College. The correlation of proportions of Beginning Teachers from the colleges in 1998 and 1999 is  $r=0.91$ ,  $n=35$ , which is significant at .05 level.

Table 1.  
Distribution of Beginning Teachers in 1998 & 1999 Surveys By College of Preparation

COLLEGE	1998		1999	
	Number	%	Number	%
Agnes Scott College	11	0.3	5	0.5
Albany State University	48	1.1	22	2.1
Armstrong Atlantic State U.	104	2.5	32	3.1
Augusta State University	93	2.2	24	2.3
Berry College	67	1.6	12	1.2
Brenau University	107	2.6	31	3.0
Brewton-Parker College	47	1.1	14	1.3
Clark Atlanta University	63	1.5	5	.5
Clayton College & State U	31	0.7	4	.4
Columbus State University	91	2.2	19	1.8
Covenant College	3	0.1	2	.2
Emmanuel College	13	0.3	3	.3
Emory University	18	0.4	---	---
Fort Valley State University	71	1.7	25	2.4
Georgia College & State U	194	4.6	22	2.1
Georgia Southern University	222	5.3	66	6.3
Georgia Southwestern State U	81	1.9	48	4.6
Georgia State University	274	6.5	57	5.5
Kennesaw State University	177	4.2	15	1.4
LaGrange College	20	0.5	5	.5
Mercer University	209	5.0	44	4.2
Morehouse College	9	0.2		
Morris Brown College	19	0.5	2	0.2
North Georgia College & State U.	119	2.8	39	3.8
Oglethorpe University	15	0.4	2	0.2
Paine College	38	0.9	4	0.4
Piedmont College	36	0.9	32	3.1
Shorter College	44	1.1	8	0.8
Spelman College	16	0.4	---	---
State University of West Georgia	363	8.7	81	7.8
Thomas College	13	0.3	4	0.4
Toccoa Falls College	4	0.1	2	0.2
University of Georgia	386	9.2	108	10.4
Valdosta State University	206	4.9	70	6.7
Wesleyan College	10	0.2	---	---
Andrew College			1	0.1
Atlanta Christian College			5	0.5
Savannah State University			1	0.1
No Response	24	0.6	7	0.7
Out of State	941	22.5	166	16.0
Total	4187	100.0	1040	100.0

Table 2 shows fields in which 1998 and 1999 Beginning Teachers were certified. Like in Table 1, the proportions of Beginning Teachers certified in various fields did not change very much between 1998 and 1999 except for Early Childhood and Middle Grades. Thus, changes in

Table 2. Certification Areas of Beginning Teachers

Areas	1998		1999	
	Number	%	Number	%
Agriculture	15	0.4	3	0.3
Art Education	50	1.2	15	1.4
Audiology	2	0.0	0	
Behavioral Disorders	63	1.5	13	1.3
Business Education	58	1.4	15	1.4
Chinese	2	0.0	0	
Dance	2	0.0	0	
Drama	8	0.2	2	0.2
Early Childhood	1514	36.2	450	43.3
Ed Leadership	4	0.1	2	0.2
English	203	4.8	41	3.9
French	23	0.5	5	0.5
General Counseling	20	0.5	1	0.1
German	12	0.3	4	0.4
Health and Physical Education	164	3.9	29	2.8
Health Education	11	0.3	5	0.5
Interrelated Special Education	107	2.6	18	1.7
Latin	1	0.0	0	
Learning Disabilities	56	1.3	11	1.1
Marketing Education	7	0.2	1	0.1
Mathematics	140	3.3	33	3.2
Media Specialist	7	0.2	2	0.2
Mental Retardation	180	4.3	48	4.6
Middle Grades	777	18.6	142	13.7
Music	96	2.3	29	2.8
Orthopedically Impaired	2	0.0	2	0.2
Reading Specialist	7	0.2	0	
Russian	1	0.0	0	
School Social Worker	3	0.3	1	0.1
School Psychologist	6	0.1	0	
Science (Broad Field)	151	3.6	34	3.3
Social Science (Broad Field)	206	4.9	37	3.6
Spanish	70	1.7	16	1.5
Speech and Lang. Pathology	54	1.3	8	0.8
Speech Education	2	0.0	6	0.6
Technology	21	0.5	9	0.9
Visually Impaired	4	0.1	1	0.1
Blank	58	1.4	19	1.8
Other Areas	79	2.2	38	3.7
Total	4187	100.0	1040	100.0



data collection technique do not appear to have affected the profile of participants very much. The rest of the result section will show the findings from the analyses of participants' responses. Teachers and principals' responses on the rating scale will be presented first. This will be followed by restricted responses to the open-ended questions.

### Teachers' and Principals' Responses on the Rating Scale

Beginning Teachers' level of readiness for the classroom was elicited using two 26-item questionnaires, completed by Beginning Teachers and their principals, respectively. Perceived readiness of the teacher was rated on a 4-point scale where 1 represents strong disagreement with the statement, 2 disagreement, 3 agreement and 4 strong agreement. One item on each questionnaire provided an overall rating of Beginning Teachers' readiness for the classroom within the first 9 weeks of the school year. A summary and the average score of teachers and principals' ratings are presented in Table 3.

Teachers and principals' responses show similar patterns except on items T23 (P3) and T5 (P21). In addition, the 1999 pattern of responses and the mean ratings for multiple choice items, have an uncanny resemblance to the values from 1998. See Table 3.

Table 3. Teachers' and Principals' Responses to Multiple-Choice Questions

Questionnaire Item	Rating (N=1040)					
	Item No.	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Item Average Rating
I was able to effectively manage student Behavior in my classroom	T 1	8	94	572	350	3.23
	P25	21	110	598	276	3.12
I was knowledgeable about state and Federal regulations concerning instructing students with special needs	T 2	37	233	594	159	2.86
	P24	13	184	667	139	2.93
I was not sure how to plan units of instruction	T3	438	447	106	35	1.74
	P23	329	542	104	27	1.83
I could accommodate the instructional Needs of most of my students	T 4	6	47	679	289	3.23
	P22	8	61	705	227	3.15
I used standardized test results (e.g., Iowa tests of Basic Skills) to adjust instruction to meet the needs of the learner*	T 5	145	378	359	99	2.42
	P21	21	232	559	120	2.83
I was able to establish a professional, supportive relationship with the other teachers at my school	T 6	3	24	319	682	3.63
	P20	6	36	498	462	3.41
I was able to create a productive environment in my classroom	T 7	4	15	512	495	3.46
	P 19	8	54	544	386	3.32
I completed administrative duties, paperwork, and my classroom instruction with ease	T 8	22	167	582	256	3.04
	P18	12	66	613	302	3.21
I used resources available to me to help me do a better job of teaching my students	T 9	4	24	583	417	3.37
	P17	4	47	595	330	3.28
I was able to effectively organize my classroom environment for instruction	T 10	6	43	580	395	3.33
	P 16	8	54	521	283	3.25
I knew my legal responsibilities as a teacher (e.g., documenting discipline problems, absentees, etc.)	T 11	9	125	555	338	3.19
	P 15	7	117	685	219	3.09
The atmosphere in my classroom was positive	T 12	3	19	484	521	3.48
	P 14	8	45	487	487	3.41
I could make decisions related to covering instructional content in the time allocated	T 13	3	73	647	301	3.22
	P 13	5	64	741	215	3.14
My teaching was based primarily on the textbook and teacher's guide	T 14	147	360	432	78	2.43
	P 12	115	438	408	63	2.41
I was able to use a variety of classroom assessment strategies to monitor and adjust my instruction	T 15	3	104	686	227	3.11
	P 11	0	106	681	227	3.12
I was not able to communicate effectively with parents	T 16	402	486	103	29	1.76
	P 10	365	485	112	60	1.87
I was successful in motivating students to achieve at high levels	T 17	4	116	724	178	3.05
	P 9	10	96	642	276	3.16

**Table 3 Contd. Teachers' and Principals' Responses to Multiple-Choice Questions**

Questionnaire Item	Rating					
I was able to integrate technology, including the internet, computers, and available software, in my instruction (or could have if available)	T 18	55	196	533	238	2.93
	P 8	15	122	661	220	3.07
I was not sure how to combine homework, quizzes, projects, etc., into a grade that reflected student performance	T 19	312	519	157	18	1.88
	P 7	338	505	117	55	1.89
I knew the content for the subject area (s) I was assigned to teach	T 20	8	57	508	452	3.37
	P 6	9	32	540	435	3.38
I managed my time effectively	T 21	8	116	635	266	3.13
	P 5	11	77	596	344	3.24
I was able to solve most classroom management & instructional problems encountered during my teaching day	T 22	4	46	646	330	3.27
	P 4	17	91	648	272	3.14
I was overwhelmed with the wide range of instructional levels and student needs in my classroom*	T 23	97	426	345	154	2.54
	P 3	202	497	241	87	2.21
I had successful strategies for handling special learning situations (e.g., special needs, gifted, nonreader)	T 24	16	246	646	112	2.84
	P 2	13	142	605	264	3.09
I was able to group my students effectively for instruction	T 25	14	125	682	196	3.04
	P 1	7	65	611	343	3.26
Overall I was ready for the classroom as a beginning teacher	T 26	8	60	629	329	3.25
	P 26	14	57	565	368	3.28

\* These items show different patterns of response for teachers and principals

T = Questions from Teacher Questionnaire

P = Questions from Principal Questionnaire

Teachers and principals' responses in items T5 and T23 also showed similar variance from other items as in 1998. (See 1998 data in Appendix Table 1). Specifically, principals rated teachers higher in using standardized test results to adjust instruction than teachers rated themselves. Also, principals did not think beginning teachers were as overwhelmed by the wide range of instructional levels and students' needs as teachers felt. It is suspected that principals compare Beginning Teachers in a given cohort with other cohorts at similar stages in their careers. This comparison may tend to minimize, in principals' views, what may appear to be of crisis proportions to a Beginning Teacher. Overall, 93.4% of Beginning Teachers and 92.6% of the principals agree (61.3%; 56.3%, respectively) or agree strongly (32.07%; 36.7%, respectively) that the Beginning Teachers were ready for the classroom during the first nine weeks of their career. The mean score for Item 26 is 3.25, based on Beginning Teachers' responses and 3.28 for principals. The corresponding means for 1998 were 3.27 and 3.27, respectively. The 1999 figures are not statistically different from those of 1998,  $t = -0.036$  and  $0.016$ , respectively,  $p > 0.05$ .

Thus, the PSC objective which states that there would be some improvement in readiness from 1998 to 1999 was not attained. Actually, the objective merely stated that "first year teachers will be better prepared..." It is in the specification of result measures that comparison dates were included. The rationale for expecting a measurable improvement between 1998 and 1999 was not clear. If the improvement is expected as a response to 1998 survey findings, it is not surprising that whatever changes the colleges made in response to the feedback have not made it through the program. If the improvements were expected in response to long-term structural or program changes that have had enough time to manifest themselves, then the changes have not yielded the expected effects that they designed to achieve.

A Chi Square test showed a significant association between teachers' and principals' perception of beginning teachers' readiness for the classroom. Based on Table 5, the Chi Square is 63.02,  $p < 0.05$ . Thus, for 1998 and 1999, teachers' and principals' agreed that Beginning Teachers arrive at their schools ready for the classroom.

**Table 5 . Principals' and Beginning Teachers' Ratings on Teachers' Overall Readiness for the Classroom\***

**PRINCIPALS' RATINGS**

<b>T</b>	<b>R</b>		<b>1*</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>606</b>
<b>H</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>320</b>
<b>E</b>	<b>G</b>						
<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>557</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>991</b>

\* - Based on 991 teachers who had complete data on items T26 and P26

- **1=Strongly Disagree**
- **2=Disagree**
- **3=Agree**
- **4.=Strongly Agree**

**Chi Square =63.017,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 9$**

**Items responded to are:**

Teachers: "Overall, I was ready for the classroom as a beginning teacher"

Principals: "Overall, was ready for the classroom as a beginning teacher"

Table 6 shows teachers and principals' responses presented in a dichotomous format. This is important because discussions on teachers' readiness are usually couched in the form: ready or not ready, rather than to what extent they are ready. Table 6 shows a significant and positive relationship between teachers' and principals' perception of teachers' readiness for the classroom,  $\chi^2 = 29.85$ ,  $df = 1$ ,  $p < 0.05$ . Teachers and principals agree that 88.0% of the teachers are ready while 1.6% are not ready, but they disagree on 10.4% of the teachers.

**Table 6. A Cross-tabulation of Teachers' and Principals' Ratings on Overall Readiness of Teachers Collapsed into a Two-Point Scale\***

		Principals' Responses (On P26)		Total
		Not Ready	Ready	
Teachers' Responses (On T26)	Not Ready	16 (1.6%)	49 (4.9%)	65 (6.6%)
	Ready	54 (5.4%)	872 (88.0%)	926 (93.4%)
Total		70 (7.1%)	921 (92.9%)	991

\* - Based on 991 teachers who had complete data on items T26 and P26

Chi Square = 29.85,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 1$

Overall, 6.3% of the teachers reported that they did not feel ready for the classroom, while the principals rated 6.8% of the teachers not ready, as shown in Table 7. With regard to 1999 and 1998 comparisons, principals rated 89.7% of the teachers ready in 1999 compared to 88.7% in 1998, while 92.1% of the teachers rated themselves as ready in 1999 compared to 93.2% in 1998. Using a  $z$ -test for proportions, there were no significant differences in the proportions of Beginning teachers who were rated ready for the classroom between 1998 and 1999 either by teachers themselves ( $z=1.246$ ,  $p > .05$ ) or by their principals ( $z = 0.918$ ,  $p > .05$ ).

**Table 7 . A Cross-Tabulation of Principals' and Beginning Teachers' Ratings on Teachers' Overall Readiness for the Classroom Collapsed Into Two-Point Scale\***

		Principals' Responses (On P26)			Total
		No response	Not Ready	Ready	
Teachers' Responses (On T26)	No Response	1	1	12	14
	Not Ready	3	16 (1.5%)	49 (4.7%)	68 (6.3%)
	Ready	32	54 (5.2%)	872 (83.8%)	958 (92.1%)
Total		36	71 (6.8%)	933 (89.7%)	1040

\* - Based on 1040 teachers who rated themselves and were rated by their principals  
**Chi Square = 33.11,  $p < 0.05$ ,  $df = 4$**

Teachers' and principals' ratings were also examined in terms of the areas in which the Beginning Teachers were certified. Tables 8 and 9 show similar perceptions between teachers and principals of teachers' readiness in Early Childhood and English but differ in opinion in Mathematics, Middle Grades, Science, Social Studies, and Special Education. Principals

considered as many as 15.2% of the teachers certified in Mathematics not ready for the classroom compared to only 9.1% rated as such by Beginning Teachers themselves. Similarly, principals did not think that 12.7% of teachers certified in Middle Grades were ready compared to as little as 3.5% by teachers. On the other hand, teachers indicated greater readiness for teachers certified in Science (97.1%) and Social Studies (94.6%) than principals perceived (88.2%, and 83.8%, respectively). Finally, while 10.9% of teachers certified in Special Education felt they were not ready for the classroom, principals found only 5.9% of them not ready.

**Table 8. Self-Rating on Readiness for the Classroom by Beginning Teachers**  
According to Certification Areas

Certification Area	Readiness Rating			
	1998 Survey		1999 Survey	
	Not Ready	Ready	Not Ready	Ready
Early Childhood	4.2%	95.2%	5.1%	92.9%
English	6.9%	91.6%	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>97.6%</b>
Mathematics	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>86.4%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>87.9%</b>
Middle Grades	3.6%	95.4%	3.5%	95.8%
Science	<b>11.9%</b>	<b>87.4%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>97.1%</b>
Social Studies	6.3%	92.7%	5.4%	94.6%
Special Education	6.8%	91.5%	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>88.1%</b>
Others	5.8%	91.0%	10.9%	88.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.5%</b>	<b>93.2%</b>	<b>6.5%</b>	<b>92.1</b>

More Beginning Teachers in the 1999 than in 1998 Survey rated themselves ready in English (97.6% & 91.6%, respectively) and Science (97.1% & 87.4%, respectively). Only the difference in rating in Science (9.7%) was significant at .05 level ( $z = 1.646$ , one-tailed test). Principals and teachers differed in the direction or amount of change in readiness between 1998



and 1999 in the following areas: Middle Grades, Special Education, Social Studies, Early Childhood and Mathematics, but only the difference in the Middle Grades was significant,  $z=3.34$ ,  $p < .05$  . Overall, a slightly higher percentage of principals (89.7%) and slightly lower percentage of teachers (92.1%) rated Beginning Teachers ready in 1999 than in 1998, (88.7% & 93.2%.) See Tables 8 and 9.

**Table 9. Principals' Perception of Beginning Teachers' Readiness for the Classroom According to Certification Areas**

Certification Area	Readiness Rating*			
	1998 Survey*		1999 Survey**	
	Not Ready	Ready	Not Ready	Ready
Early Childhood	4.8%	91.1%	5.6%	91.8%
English	6.4%	89.7%	<b>2.4%</b>	<b>95.1%</b>
Mathematics	<b>10.7%</b>	<b>84.3%</b>	<b>15.2%</b>	<b>81.8%</b>
Middle Grades	8.1%	89.3%	12.7%	83.8%
Science	<b>9.9%</b>	<b>84.1%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>88.2%</b>
Social Studies	5.8%	88.8%	5.4%	83.8%
Special Education	8.2%	87.2%	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>93.1%</b>
Others	8.2%	85.4%	6.9%	89.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.9%</b>	<b>88.7%</b>	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>89.7%</b>

\* Based on N=4173 Beginning Teachers

\*\*Based on N=1040 Beginning Teachers.

Percentages may not add up to 100% because percentages for non-responses have not been included.

### Teachers' and Principals' Responses to the Restricted-Response Questions

Beginning Teachers and their principals were also asked to respond to three restricted-response questions. They were restricted to the extent that respondents had a list of responses from which to select and if no option was appropriate, space was provided where they could construct their own responses. The first question was: "What did you get in your teacher preparation that you most needed, i.e., in which area were you well prepared?" The response format for 1999 Survey elicited only skills, unlike in 1998 when either skill areas or subject areas could be listed. In 1998, no subject matter area was listed by more than 1% of the respondents. Table 10 shows the skill areas that were mentioned by more than 1% of the teachers in 1998 and the top 7 areas listed in 1999. Greater percentages of teachers in 1999 listed skill areas that they most needed and got from their teacher preparation. The highest mention was Field Experiences,

**Table 10. What Did You Get In Your Teacher Preparation That You Needed Most?**

Skill Areas	1999		1998	
	%	Rank	%	
<b>Field Experience</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>1</b>	1.7	Planning Units of Instruction
<b>Planning Units of Instruction</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>2</b>	1.5	Classroom Management
<b>Classroom Management</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>3</b>	1.2	Field Experience
Understanding Content of Subject Matter Taught	7.9	4		
Creating a Productive Learning Environment	5.7	5		
Managing Student Behavior	3.6	6		
Creating a Positive Atmosphere	3.5	7		
<b>Well-Rounded Preparation</b>	<b>14.3</b>			

followed by Classroom Management, Understanding Content to be taught, etc. Despite the variability in magnitude of mention, it is note-worthy that the top three skills were the same for both years.

There are two possible explanations for the higher percentages in 1999 than in 1998. One is that more Beginning Teachers simply felt equipped with skills in these areas than in 1998. A second explanation is that the response mode in 1999 was more focused and restrictive than in 1998. Whereas in 1998 teachers and principals were free to list either subject areas or skill areas, in 1999 they were restricted to choose from a list of skills provided.

Table 11 shows that principals agree with their Beginning Teachers (see Table 10.) that the latter were well prepared in such areas as Planning Units of Instruction, Understanding Content to be taught, Classroom Management and Organization, Creating a Productive Learning Environment, Creating a Positive Atmosphere, etc.

**Table 11. In What Areas Was This Teacher Most Prepared? – Principals’ Responses**

Skill Areas	1998		1999	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
Understanding Content of Subject Taught			17.7	1
Creating a Productive Learning Environment			13.7	2
Creating a positive Atmosphere			5.3	3
Accommodating Students Needs in the Classroom			4.8	4
Classroom Management & Organization	1.5	2	3.9	5
Organizing Classroom Environment			3.9	6
Creating a Positive Atmosphere			3.5	7
Planning Units of Instruction	1.7	1	3.8	8
Accommodating Wide Range of Instructional Needs			3.4	9
Field Experiences	1.2	3		
Well-Rounded Preparation	91.6		12.6	

The differences in importance ascribed to each area, by principals and teachers, as reflected in the ranks is obvious and noteworthy. For example, while principals mention teachers’ understanding of content most frequently (17.7%, in Table 11), teachers report that what they needed most were Field experiences (14.6%), Planning Units of Instruction (9.1%), Classroom Management and Organization (8.4%), as shown in Table 10. Understanding Content ranked fourth among the teachers. For them what was more critical were skills that would enable teach that content.

Question 3 elicited content and skill areas in which Beginning Teachers felt that they needed additional preparation. Teachers' responses with respect to content and skill areas are portrayed in Tables 12 and 13, respectively. With regard to content, Reading (9.8%) was the most frequently mentioned followed by Learning Disabilities (6.3%) and Behavior Disorders (5.4%). (Note: Special Education would be the most frequently mentioned if Learning Disabilities, Behavioral Disorders, and Interrelated Special Education are combined for a total of 14.6%).

Table 12.

**Content Areas in Which Beginning Teachers Say They Need Additional Preparation**

Content Area Requested*	1998		1999	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
Reading	3.9	3	9.8	1
Learning Disabilities	4.0	2	6.3	2
Behavioral Disorder	5.1	1	5.4	3
Writing			3.2	4
Interrelated Special Ed.	1.7	6	2.9	5
Technology Education	2.2	5	2.7	6
Broad Field Science	2.4	4	2.3	7
Mathematics			2.2	8
Spanish			1.3	9
Art Education			1.0	10
Early Childhood Education			1.0	10
Geography			1.0	10
English	1.6	7		
Social Studies	1.1	8		
No Response	66.9		49.1	
Total Number of Respondents	4173		1040	

\* Content areas listed by at least 1% of the respondents

Item Responded to:

...List any content area(s) in which you need additional preparation. Choose from list on back cover.

As suggested for Question 1, higher percentages of teachers requesting additional preparation in specific content areas, may be explained by either more wide-spread need or the

more focused and prescriptive response format used in 1999. It should also be observed that with the exception of Writing, the top six areas listed by teachers in which they think that they needed additional preparation are the same in both 1998 and 1999. Also, a large proportion of the Beginning Teachers in 1998 (66.9%) and in 1999 (49.1%) did not list any areas of need.

Table 13 shows the skill areas in which Beginning Teachers say they need additional preparation. Though the skill areas are common, the percentages for 1999 are very small compared to 1998. The top four areas in 1999 are Managing Student Behavior, Need More Training in Teaching reading, Classroom Management and Organization, and Fulfilling Administrative Duties.

Table 13. What You Need In Your Teacher Preparation That You Did Not Get (Which Areas Need to Be Added?)

SKILLS	1998		1999	
	%	Rank	%	Rank
Managing Student Behavior	5.9	2	1.3	1
Need More Training in Teaching Reading	2.8	6	1.2	2
Classroom Management & Organization	7.6	1	1.1	3
Fulfilling Administrative Duties	4.0	5	1.1	3
Well-Rounded Preparation			88.1	
Total			100.0	

This may be interpreted to mean that 1999 cohort was so well prepared that they do not need any thing or it may be due to the question and the response formats. The question (Question 3) merely asked “What did you need in your teacher preparation that you did not get, i.e., which area(s) need to be added?” This does not specify skill areas nor does it provide the restrictive answer format that guided respondents to choose from the list of skills provided. The question is followed by two items with better specified response formats that require respondents to select what should be added to their preparation either in the form of a grade level or a content area.

This discrepancy makes it difficult to make direct comparisons between skill areas requested in 1998 and 1999 surveys.

The low percentages, notwithstanding, areas in which principals thought their Beginning Teachers were least prepared, shown in Table 14, match quite well with areas that teachers said they needed but did not get (Table 13). Specifically, the top three areas in which teachers feel that they were not well prepared are also in the top five areas in which principals felt their teachers were least prepared. These are Managing Student Behavior, Need More Training in Teaching Reading, and Classroom Management and Organization. Also, principals seem to pick out some of the same areas of weakness in preparation in both 1998 and 1999 as shown in Table 14.

**Table 14. In which Areas Was This Teacher Least Prepared? – Principals’ Responses**

<b>Skill Areas</b>	<b>1999</b>		<b>1998</b>	<b>Skill Areas</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>Rank</b>	<b>%</b>	
<b>Integrating Technology Into Instruction</b>	7.3	1	9.9	<b>Classroom Management &amp; Organization</b>
<b>Managing Student Behavior</b>	5.7	2	7.2	<b>Managing Student Behavior</b>
Accommodating Wide Range of Instructional Needs	5.6	3	3.6	Fulfilling Administrative Duties e.g Paper Work
Need More Training In Teaching Reading	5.0	4	3.6	Accommodating Students’ Needs In The Classroom
<b>Classroom Management &amp; Organization</b>	4.5	5	3.0	<b>Integrating Technology Into Instruction</b>
Solving Problems In Classroom Management & Instruction	3.9	6	2.6	Communicating With Parents
Using Successful Strategies for Special Learning Situations	3.3	7	2.4	Understanding Legal Responsibilities of a Teacher
Use of Standardized Test Results to Adjust Instruction	3.3	7		
Strategies for Motivating Students	3.0	9		

When asked in what ways the preparation of their Beginning Teachers could be enhanced, principals listed Integrating Technology into Instruction, Managing Student Behavior,

Accommodating Wide Range of Instructional Needs and Need More Training in Teaching Reading, shown in Table 15, as the top four areas. This is not surprising because these four areas match skill areas in Table 14 where principals consider their teachers least prepared. These also match three top skill areas that Beginning Teachers listed as areas of deficiency in their preparation.

**Table 15. In What Ways Could This Teacher's Preparation For The Classroom Have Been Enhanced?**

Skill Areas	1999	
	Number	%
Integrating Technology Into Instruction	76	7.3
Managing Student Behavior	59	5.7
Accommodating Wide Range of Instructional Needs	58	5.6
Need More Training in Teaching Reading	52	5.2
Classroom Management & Organization	47	4.5
Solving Problems in Classroom Management & Instruction	41	3.9
Strategies for Special Learning Situations	34	3.3
Use of Standardized Test Results to Adjust Instruction	34	3.3



Table 16 shows certification areas of Beginning Teachers and the content areas in which they reported that they needed additional preparation. A large group of responding teachers (49.1%) did not request any additional preparation. Table 16 complements Table 12 in that while the latter shows which content areas are being requested, the former indicates who is making the requests. About 55% of Beginning Teachers certified in Early Childhood reported that they could benefit from additional preparation in some content area. A single content areas of need most frequently mentioned was Reading followed by Learning Disabilities, Behavior Disorders, Writing, etc. Similarly, large percentages of Beginning Teachers certified in the following areas also report that they could use additional preparation in some areas: Special Education (68.5%), Middle Grades (59.2%), Science (41.2%), Social Studies (37.8%), English (36.6%), and Mathematics (36.4%). Special Education (15.2%) and Reading (9.8%) remain the most frequently requested content areas in 1999 Survey as was the case in 1998.

Table 16. Content Areas of Need By Certification Groupings

Content Areas Needed	Certification Areas								
	Early Childhood	English	Math	Middle Grades	Science	Social Studies	Special Education	Other Areas	Total
<b>None</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>511</b>
Algebra	4		1	1	1	1		1	9
Art Education	6			2			2		10
Behavior Disorders	<b>28</b>	1	1	4	1	1	<b>11</b>	9	56
Drama	5	1							6
Early Childhood	3	1		3			3		10
Economics	1			1		3		1	6
English	1	1		1		1	2	3	9
Geography	2		1	3		4			10
Greek				1			1	3	5
Interrelated Special Ed	<b>11</b>	1		6			8	4	30
Learning Disabilities	<b>32</b>	3	1	<b>11</b>	1		5	<b>13</b>	66
Mathematics	8		2	5	1		5	2	23
<b>Reading</b>	<b>52</b>	3	2	<b>15</b>	2	2	<b>13</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>102</b>
Science	<b>16</b>			2	1	1	1	3	24
Social Studies	1			4	1		1		7
Spanish	7	1	1	2	1			2	14
Technology	<b>17</b>			3			1	7	28
Writing	<b>22</b>	1		7			1	2	33
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>421</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>959</b>
Others	29	2	3	13	5	1	9	19	81
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>211</b>	<b>1040</b>
<b>All Special Ed Combined*</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>159</b>

- **Special Education includes Audiology, Behavior Disorders, Interrelated Special Education, Learning Disabilities, Mental Retardation, Orthopedically and Visually Impaired**

Table 17 shows the distribution by Certification areas of Beginning Teacher who rated themselves or were rated by the principals as not ready for the classroom. Beginning Teachers certified in Middle Grades disagreed with their principals, as they did in 1998 with regard to the proportion of teachers who were not ready for the classroom. Specifically, fewer Middle Grades Beginning Teachers than in principals' view, think they are not ready for the classroom. This mismatch in perception might be due to a pervasive difference in role expectations and thus, need to be investigated thoroughly.

The opposite is true in 1999 in the Special Education group where principals rated only 6 Beginning Teachers not ready for the classroom while almost twice as many teachers (11) rated themselves not ready for the classroom. That helps explain why in Table 16 so many Beginning Teachers certified in Various Special Education areas indicated that they needed additional preparation in Special Education areas, among others.

Table 17. Certification Areas of Teachers Who did Not Consider Themselves Ready for the Classroom Or Were Rated Not Ready By Their Principals

Certification Areas	1998				1999			
	Rated By Teachers		Rated By Principals		Rated By Teachers		Rated By Principals	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Early Childhood	64	27.9	72	25.0	23	33.8	25	35.2
English	14	6.1	13	4.5	1	1.5	1	1.4
Mathematics	19	8.3	15	5.2	3	4.4	5	7.0
<b>Middle Grades</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>12.2</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7.4</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>25.4</b>
Science	18	7.9	15	5.2	1	1.5	1	1.4
Social Studies	13	5.7	12	4.2	2	2.9	2	2.8
Special Education	28	12.2	34	11.8	<b>11</b>	<b>16.2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.5</b>
Others	45	19.7	64	22.2	22	32.3	13	18.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Finally, there were no significant differences in proportions of Beginning Teachers prepared in Georgia and Out-of State colleges who were ready or not ready for the classroom.

See Table 18. It is reassuring that the selection criteria allow only well-prepared Beginning Teachers to be selected for Georgia schools irrespective of where they were prepared.

**Table 18. Readiness of Beginning Teachers Prepared in Georgia and Out of State**

Where Prepared	By Teachers		By Principals	
	% Ready	% Not Ready	% Ready	% Not Ready
Prepared in Georgia	93.8	6.2	93.4	6.6
Out of State	91.0	9.0	91.4	8.6
	$\chi^2 = 1.786^*$		$\chi^2 = 0.857^*$	

\* Non-Significant

### Summary and Conclusion

In summary, the pattern of responses on the 1999 Survey and the findings are similar to those of 1998. Specifically, a large percentage of Beginning Teachers (92.1%) in Fiscal year 1999 felt and were rated ready for the classroom by their principals (89.7%). Beginning Teachers mean self-rating on readiness was 3.25 on a 4-point scale and their principals' average rating of the same was 3.28. The corresponding figures for 1998 were 3.27 and 3.27! The 1999 means were not significantly different from those of 1998.

Among the Certification groups, in 1998, Beginning Teachers certified in Mathematics and Science reported the highest proportion of non-readiness. In 1999, the proportion of Beginning Teachers certified in Science who rated themselves or were rated not ready by principals declined drastically to 2.9% from 11.9% and 9.9% in 1998. The proportion for Mathematics remained high at 9.9% as per teachers' rating and 15.2% according to principals' ratings. (The corresponding figures for Mathematics 1998 were 13.6% and 10.7%, respectively.) Beginning Teachers certified in Special Education also reported a high proportion of non-readiness (10.9%). Beginning Teachers certified in Middle Grades and their principals disagreed on how ready the teachers were for the classroom, with more teachers than principals thinking they were ready.

Beginning Teachers and principals were consistent, between 1998 and 1999 surveys, in their perception of areas of deficiency in teachers' preparation. For instance, Beginning Teachers' listed exactly the same top three areas in 1998 and 1999, in a different order, as the ones in which they needed additional preparation – Reading (9.8%), Learning Disabilities (6.3%) and Behavioral Disorders (5.4%). The principals, as in 1998, listed Integrating Technology into Instruction (7.3%), Managing Student Behavior (5.7%) and Classroom Management and

Organization (4.5%) among the top five areas in which teachers are least prepared. In 1998, the main area of concern to principals was Classroom Organization. In 1999, the main concern was Integrating Technology into Instruction. Managing Student Behavior remained the second most frequently mentioned concern.

With regard to the background of Beginning Teachers who reported they would like additional preparation in some areas, 49.1% do not think they need anything. For those who did, it appears that the Early Childhood generated more than its fair share of requests, especially in Reading, Special Education areas, Science, Technology and Writing. Similarly, more than representative proportion of Middle Grades Beginning Teachers account for requests in Interrelated Special Education, Learning Disabilities, Reading , Social Studies and Writing.

So, did the proportion of Beginning Teachers who rate themselves and are rated ready for the classroom increase from 1998 to 1999? Not really.

## Appendix

Appendix Table 1.

**1998 Survey Summary: Teachers' and Principals' Responses to Multiple-Choice Questions**

Questionnaire Item	Rating (N=4187)					
	Item No.	Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	Item Average Rating
I was able to effectively manage student behavior in my classroom	T 1	53	340	2348	1394	3.23
	P 25	94	438	2375	1072	3.11
I was knowledgeable about state and federal regulations concerning instructing students with special needs	T 2	142	885	2443	666	2.88
	P 24	42	784	2629	420	2.89
I was not sure how to plan units of instruction	T 3	1861	1724	445	114	1.71
	P 23	1289	2126	494	67	1.83
I could accommodate the instructional needs of most of my students	T 4	40	176	2670	1254	3.24
	P 22	21	228	2907	819	3.14
I used standardized test results (e.g., Iowa tests of Basic Skills) to adjust instruction to meet the needs of the learner *	T 5	673	1440	1485	334	2.38
	P 21	82	857	2355	362	2.82
I was able to establish a professional, supportive relationship with the other teachers at my school	T 6	11	71	1294	2787	3.65
	P 20	18	115	2102	1755	3.40
I was able to create a productive environment in my classroom	T 7	8	96	2002	2049	3.47
	P 19	25	210	2290	1449	3.30
I completed administrative duties, paperwork, and my classroom instruction with ease	T 8	92	804	2317	936	2.99
	P 18	27	350	2449	1157	3.19
I used resources available to me to help me do a better job of teaching my students	T 9	4	136	2288	1731	3.38
	P 17	12	148	2629	1195	3.26
I was able to effectively organize my classroom environment for instruction	T 10	32	215	2283	1610	3.32
	P 16	19	245	2452	1271	3.25
I knew my legal responsibilities as a teacher (e.g., documenting discipline problems, absentees, etc.)	T 11	42	482	2354	1280	3.17
	P 15	39	452	2747	771	3.06
The atmosphere in my classroom was positive	T 12	8	95	1923	2129	3.49
	P 14	34	188	1963	1843	3.39
I could make decisions related to covering instructional content in the time allocated	T 13	25	235	2577	1286	3.24
	P 13	11	183	3082	741	3.13
My teaching was based primarily on the textbook and teacher's guide	T 14	583	1429	1783	314	2.44
	P 12	478	1597	1713	202	2.41

**Appendix Table 1. Contd. Teachers' and Principals' Responses to Multiple-Choice****Questions**

Questionnaire Item	Item No.	Rating				Item Average Rating
		Strongly Disagree 1	Disagree 2	Agree 3	Strongly Agree 4	
I was able to use a variety of classroom assessment strategies to monitor and adjust my instruction	T15	26	372	2796	947	3.13
	P11	31	414	2746	819	3.09
I was not able to communicate effectively with parents	T16	1661	1963	381	138	1.76
	P10	1337	1863	620	201	1.92
I was successful in motivating students to achieve at high levels	T 17	37	473	2923	706	3.04
	P 9	28	409	2588	979	3.13
I was able to integrate technology, including the internet, computers, and available software, in my instruction (or could have if available)	T 18	274	884	2149	821	2.85
	P 8	56	594	2553	710	3.00
I was not sure how to combine homework, quizzes, projects, etc., into a grade that reflected student performance	T 19	1301	2098	558	91	1.86
	P 7	1014	2789	122	14	1.78
I knew the content for the subject area(s) I was assigned to teach	T 20	34	245	1969	1893	3.38
	P 6	14	119	2199	1686	3.38
I managed my time effectively	T 21	28	424	2605	1091	3.15
	P 5	32	332	2394	1268	3.22
I was able to solve most classroom management & instructional problems encountered during my teaching day	T 22	25	180	2581	1367	3.27
	P 4	65	399	2471	1090	3.14
I was overwhelmed with the wide range of instructional levels and student needs in my classroom *	T 23	413	1888	1287	565	2.48
	P 3	784	2002	1002	239	2.17
I had successful strategies for handling special learning situations (e.g., special needs, gifted, nonreader) *	T 24	78	998	2627	429	2.82
	P 2	46	520	2441	994	3.10
I was able to group my students effectively for instruction	T 25	41	462	2894	724	3.04
	P 1	28	225	2555	1201	3.23
Overall I was ready for the classroom as a beginning teacher	T 26	24	205	2547	1357	3.27
	P 26	43	245	2306	1406	3.27

\* These items show considerable differences of opinion between teachers and principals



T = Questions from Teacher Questionnaire

P = Questions from Principal Questionnaire

Appendix Table 2.

**Self-Rating on Readiness for the Classroom by Beginning Teachers According to Certification Areas**

Certification Area	Readiness Rating			Total
	Not Specified	Not Ready	Ready	
Early Childhood	9 2.0%	23 5.1%	418 92.9%	450 100%
English		1 2.4%	<b>40</b> <b>97.6%</b>	41 100%
Mathematics	1 3.0%	<b>3</b> <b>9.1%</b>	29 87.9%	33 100%
Middle Grades	1 0.7%	5 3.5%	<b>136</b> <b>95.8%</b>	142 100%
Science		1 2.9%	<b>33</b> <b>97.1%</b>	34 100%
Social Studies		2 5.4%	35 <b>94.6%</b>	37 100%
Special Education	1 1.0%	<b>11</b> <b>10.9%</b>	89 88.1%	101 100%
Others	2 1.0%	22 10.9%	178 88.1%	202 100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>958</b>	<b>1040</b>

Appendix Table 3.

**Principals' Perception of Beginning Teachers' Readiness for the Classroom According to Certification Areas**

Certification Area	Readiness rating			Total
	Not Specified	Not Ready	Ready	
Early Childhood	12 2.7%	25 5.6%	413 91.8%	450 100%
English	1 2.4%	1 2.4%	39 95.1%	41 100%
Mathematics	1 2.4%	<b>5</b> <b>15.2%</b>	27 81.8%	33 100%
Middle Grades	5 3.5%	<b>18</b> <b>12.7%</b>	119 83.8%	142 100%
Science	3 8.8%	1 2.9%	30 88.2%	34 100%
Social Studies	4 10.8%	2 5.4%	31 83.8%	37 100%
Special Education	1 0.99%	<b>6</b> <b>5.9%</b>	94 93.1%	101 100%
Others	35 3.7%	65 6.9%	839 89.4%	939 100%
<b>Total</b>	<b>36</b> <b>3.5%</b>	<b>71</b> <b>6.8%</b>	<b>933</b> <b>89.7</b>	<b>1040</b> <b>100%</b>

