

Office of the Auditor General

Performance Audit Report

Office of Educator Excellence

Michigan Department of Education

March 2021

The auditor general shall conduct post audits of financial transactions and accounts of the state and of all branches, departments, offices, boards, commissions, agencies, authorities and institutions of the state established by this constitution or by law, and performance post audits thereof.

The auditor general may make investigations pertinent to the conduct of audits.

Article IV, Section 53 of the Michigan Constitution



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Office of the Auditor General

Report Summary

Performance Audit

Office of Educator Excellence (OEE)

Michigan Department of Education (MDE)

Report Number:
313-0140-18

Released:
March 2021

MDE established OEE to support the educational achievement of all Michigan youth by ensuring that educators complete quality preparation and professional development programs that meet standards required by State law and the State Board of Education. OEE is responsible for issuing certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits to Michigan's educators in compliance with State law and the *Michigan Administrative Code*. State law also sets forth requirements for school districts to adopt and implement a performance evaluation system for all teachers and school administrators, and OEE is responsible for implementing the legislation. During school year 2017-18, approximately 102,000 teachers and 12,000 school administrators worked in Michigan schools. OEE's appropriations totaled \$5.7 million and \$5.6 million for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, respectively, and OEE had 42 employees as of September 30, 2019.

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective #1: To assess the effectiveness of OEE's efforts to ensure that certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits are only issued to educators who comply with State requirements.			Moderately effective
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
Nearly 40% of sampled teachers could not provide support for the education-related professional learning hours they had claimed for their teaching certificate renewals (Finding #1).	X		Agrees

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective #2: To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required district provided professional development and mentoring for teachers.			Not sufficient
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
Less than half of sampled school districts could support that they provided teachers with all required professional development, and many could not support that required mentors were assigned to new teachers and long-term substitute teachers (Finding #2).	X		Agrees

Audit Objective			Conclusion
Objective #3: To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required evaluations for teachers and school administrators.			Sufficient, with exceptions
Findings Related to This Audit Objective	Material Condition	Reportable Condition	Agency Preliminary Response
Among other deficiencies, school districts were unable to demonstrate that the required classroom observations were performed for over 20% of the annual teacher performance evaluations reviewed, and over 35% of the evaluations lacked specific performance goals for the evaluated teacher (<u>Finding #3</u>).	X		Agrees

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Auditor General

March 23, 2021

Dr. Michael F. Rice
Chair, ex officio, State Board of Education
Superintendent of Public Instruction
Michigan Department of Education
John A. Hannah Building
Lansing, Michigan

Dear Dr. Rice:

This is our performance audit report on the Office of Educator Excellence, Michigan Department of Education.

We organize our findings and observations by audit objective. Your agency provided preliminary responses to the recommendations at the end of our fieldwork. The *Michigan Compiled Laws* and administrative procedures require an audited agency to develop a plan to comply with the recommendations and to submit it to the State Budget Office upon completion of an audit. Within 30 days of receipt, the Office of Internal Audit Services, State Budget Office, is required to review the plan and either accept the plan as final or contact the agency to take additional steps to finalize the plan.

We appreciate the courtesy and cooperation extended to us during this audit.

Sincerely,

Doug Ringler
Auditor General

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OFFICE OF EDUCATOR EXCELLENCE

	<u>Page</u>
Report Summary	1
Report Letter	3
 Audit Objectives, Conclusions, Findings, and Observations	
Efforts to Issue Educator Certificates, Licenses, Authorizations, and Permits	8
Findings:	
1. Process needed to verify that educators have met ERPL requirements for certificate and license renewals.	10
Oversight of DPPD and Mentoring for Teachers	12
Findings:	
2. Process needed to ensure school districts provide teachers with required professional development and mentoring.	14
Oversight of Evaluations for Teachers and School Administrators	17
Findings:	
3. Improvement needed to ensure school districts' performance evaluation systems meet requirements.	19
 Supplemental Information	
Exhibit #1 - Types of Educator Credentials, Description, and Number Issued For October 1, 2015 Through June 30, 2018	22
Exhibit #2 - Statewide Teacher Evaluation Ratings School Year 2017-18	23
Exhibit #3 - Teacher Evaluation Ratings for 20 Selected School Districts School Year 2017-18	24
Exhibit #4 - Educator Survey Results	25
Agency Description	35
Audit Scope, Methodology, and Other Information	36
Glossary of Abbreviations and Terms	44

AUDIT OBJECTIVES, CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS, AND OBSERVATIONS

EFFORTS TO ISSUE EDUCATOR CERTIFICATES, LICENSES, AUTHORIZATIONS, AND PERMITS

BACKGROUND

The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) has identified educators* as the most important resource in Michigan's education system, citing research that supports that teachers are the most important in-school factor in student outcomes. Accordingly, MDE has established the Office of Educator Excellence (OEE) to support the educational achievement of all Michigan youth by ensuring that educators complete quality preparation and professional development programs that meet standards established by State law and the State Board of Education.

MDE's OEE is responsible for issuing credentials* such as certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits to Michigan educators in compliance with State law and the *Michigan Administrative Code* (see Exhibit #1). Educators must submit initial and renewal applications to OEE using the Web-based Michigan Online Educator Certification System (MOECS) and include the required documentation to support that the educator has met the specified education, experience, and/or professional learning requirements for the credential. OEE conducts various review processes to verify that educators applying for credentials have met all applicable State requirements and issues educators' credentials electronically in MOECS.

OEE issued approximately 157,760 initial, renewed, and extended licenses, certificates, authorizations, and permits to Michigan educators for the period October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018 (see Exhibit #1).

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

To assess the effectiveness* of OEE's efforts to ensure that certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits are only issued to educators who comply with State requirements.

CONCLUSION

Moderately effective.

FACTORS IMPACTING CONCLUSION

- OEE ensured that:
 - 97% of the educators reviewed met State law and *Michigan Administrative Code* requirements for their initial Michigan credential including certificates, licenses, and authorizations.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

- All educators reviewed that progressed to the next level certificate met State law and/or *Michigan Administrative Code* requirements for certificate progression.
 - 95% of substitute teachers reviewed holding daily substitute teaching permits met the requirements to hold the permit.
- Material condition* related to OEE's verification of education-related professional learning* (ERPL) requirements for educator certificate and license renewals (Finding #1).

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

FINDING #1

Process needed to verify that educators have met ERPL requirements for certificate and license renewals.

Educators are required to complete 150 hours of ERPL during each 5-year renewal period and maintain support for all hours claimed.

Almost 40% of sampled teachers could not provide documentation to support ERPL hours claimed for their certificate renewal.

OEE needs to implement a verification process to ensure that educators have met the State's ERPL requirements for certificate and license renewals. ERPL is intended to improve an educator's practice with a focus on improving student achievement, yet nearly 40% of sampled educators could not provide documentation to support the ERPL hours claimed for their certificate and/or license renewals.

To renew a certificate or license, the *Michigan Administrative Code* requires that educators complete 150 total hours of ERPL during each 5-year renewal period, which may be achieved through any combination of college credit hours, district provided professional development* (DPPD) hours, or State continuing education clock hours* (SCECH). When applying for a renewal, educators are required to record in MOECS the ERPL course names and hours claimed to meet the ERPL requirement for the renewal and are responsible for maintaining documentation to support all hours claimed.

We randomly and judgmentally selected a sample of 114 teachers and school administrators from 19 school districts and requested that the selected educators provide documentation to support the ERPL hours claimed for their certificate renewal. We noted:

- 45 (39%) educators, of which 44 were teachers, did not provide documentation to support all ERPL hours claimed for their certificate renewal; this included:
 - 33 teachers that did not provide documentation to support the DPPD hours that they had claimed for their certificate renewal.
 - 26 provided no documentation to support any of the DPPD hours claimed for their certificate renewal. These teachers claimed DPPD hours averaging 152 hours and ranging from 72 hours to 236 hours.
 - 7 provided only partial documentation that was insufficient to support the total DPPD hours claimed for their certificate renewal. These teachers claimed DPPD hours averaging 178 hours and ranging from 145 hours to 208 hours.
 - 9 teachers that did not provide transcripts to support the total college credit hours claimed on their certificate renewal. Seven provided no transcripts, while two provided transcripts supporting only a portion of the total college credit hours claimed.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

- 2 teachers and 1 school administrator that did not provide support for the total DPPD hours and the college credit hours that they had claimed on their certificate renewal.

According to MDE's strategic plan, the role of an educator is a learning role that is constantly developed and improved over time with experience and professional learning opportunities. Consequently, implementing an ERPL verification process would help ensure that Michigan's educators are consistently meeting State certification and/or licensing requirements and help MDE promote ongoing improvement in Michigan's education system.

MDE informed us that it did not have a process in place to verify ERPL hours for certificate and license renewals because of limited staffing resources, and it focused its limited resources on reviewing other documentation for educators seeking standard certificate renewals and progressions.

We consider this finding to be a material condition because of the significant error rate and the risk that teachers are certificated without meeting State requirements. Also, we reached this conclusion because of the emphasis that MDE places on continuing professional development within its key strategies and goals for enhancing Michigan's educational workforce and the corresponding potential impact on the State's education system.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that OEE implement a process to verify that educators have met the State's ERPL requirements for certificate and license renewals.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

MDE provided us with the following response:

MDE agrees with the finding during the audit period. New procedures have been put into place that will help ensure educators have met the ERPL hours claimed for certificate and license and renewal.

OVERSIGHT OF DPPD AND MENTORING FOR TEACHERS

BACKGROUND

Professional development and mentoring for teachers are important components of Michigan's education system to help ensure and promote ongoing improvements.

State law and the *Michigan Administrative Code* mandate that:

- MDE, by authority of the State Board of Education, require each local school board, public school academy* (PSA) board, and intermediate school district board and the officers of each of those boards to observe the laws related to schools.
- School districts provide professional development and mentoring activities for teachers, including new teachers*, as applicable.

OEE provides guidance to school districts regarding State law and *Michigan Administrative Code* requirements related to DPPD and mentoring for teachers.

State law requires school districts to offer five days of DPPD annually for all teachers and provide an additional 15 days of professional development for new teachers during their first three years of teaching. School districts may offer DPPD courses directly or support the teacher in pursuing professional development by providing a substitute teacher, paying conference or workshop expenses or registration fees, or providing time off for attendance at professional development activities. Examples of DPPD course offerings include new technology, classroom management, and public safety training. For the selected school districts that we reviewed, DPPD hours accounted for approximately 46% of the total ERPL hours claimed by educators to renew their most recent professional certificate and/or license.

State law also requires that school districts assign one or more mentors to each new teacher. The mentor(s) may be a master teacher, college professor, or retired master teacher. MDE supports mentorship as an effective approach to ensuring new teachers will be successful in their classrooms, stay in the profession longer, and focus more on student learning. MDE's Consolidated State Plan Under the Every Student Succeeds Act indicates that the early years of teaching are critical to both effectiveness and persistence in the educator profession, as new teachers deal with many unfamiliar issues, such as curriculum, instruction, classroom management, school culture, school operations, and parent relations. MDE has also indicated that these challenges lead to nationally, on average, over 40% of new teachers departing the profession within the first five years.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

During school year 2017-18, approximately 102,000 teachers, including 4,900 first year teachers, were working in Michigan schools.

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required DPPD and mentoring for teachers.

CONCLUSION

Not sufficient.

**FACTORS
IMPACTING
CONCLUSION**

- Material condition related to ensuring that school districts provide teachers with required professional development and mentoring (Finding #2).
- MDE provided guidance to school districts regarding compliance with DPPD and mentoring requirements.

FINDING #2

Process needed to ensure school districts provide teachers with required professional development and mentoring.

Less than half of sampled school districts could support that teachers were provided with all required professional development.

OEE did not have a process in place to help ensure that school districts provided teachers with required professional development and mentoring. Consequently, OEE could not ensure that school districts complied with State law requirements for DPPD and mentoring that are intended to promote ongoing improvements in professional practice and job effectiveness.

State law and the *Michigan Administrative Code* establish requirements for school districts to provide teachers, including new teachers, and long-term substitute teachers with professional development and/or mentoring. Professional development is also a key component of MDE's strategic plan for achieving its mission to support learning and learners and adhering to its guiding principles that all students have access to high-quality instruction and educators have the training needed to educate students.

We reviewed documentation of professional development and/or mentor-related activities for 20 selected school districts for school years 2016-17 and 2017-18 and noted:

- a. 12 of the 20 sampled school districts were unable to provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the school district had provided all teachers with at least 5 days of required professional development. We selected a sample of 92 professional development courses and noted that the sampled school districts could not provide documentation to support the content of 25 (27%) of the courses and/or an attendance record for 23 (25%) of the courses.

State law requires that school districts provide at least 5 days of professional development each school year. The *Michigan Administrative Code* allows teachers to use applicable DPPD toward renewing their teaching certificates. For the selected school districts that we reviewed, we noted that DPPD hours accounted for approximately 46% of the total ERPL hours claimed by educators to renew their most recent professional certificate and/or license.

- b. 5 of the 16 sampled school districts that had new teachers were unable to provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the school district had provided new teachers with the additional professional development required within the teacher's first 3 years of teaching for 8 (17%) of the 47 new teachers reviewed.

State law requires that, in addition to the 5 days of professional development each school year, school districts provide new teachers at least 15 days of professional development during their first 3 years of employment in classroom teaching, including classroom management and instructional delivery.

- c. 6 of 16 school districts and 11 of 12 school districts were unable to provide sufficient documentation to show that new teachers and long-term substitute teachers, respectively, were assigned a required mentor(s). We reviewed 47 new teachers and a sample of 16 long-term substitute teachers and requested that the school districts provide us with evidence that they assigned a mentor(s) to these individuals. School districts provided us with documentation such as mentor listings, tracking sheets, internal memorandums, and e-mail communications. We noted:

- (1) For 16 (34%) of 47 new teachers reviewed, school districts did not maintain documentation to support that a mentor(s) was assigned during the first 3 years of classroom teaching.

Many sampled school districts could not support that required mentors were assigned to new teachers and long-term substitute teachers.

State law requires that school districts assign one or more master teachers, or college professors or retired master teachers, who shall act as a mentor(s) to the new teacher.

- (2) For 15 (94%) of 16 long-term substitute teachers reviewed, school districts did not maintain documentation to support that a mentor(s) was assigned to the long-term substitute teacher.

The *Michigan Administrative Code* requires that school districts assign a mentor to long-term substitute teachers.

OEE indicated that it suspended its audits of DPPD records after school year 2013-14 because the audits noted low error rates. In addition, OEE informed us that it did not perform monitoring of school districts' assignment of required mentors because of limited staffing resources.

We consider this finding to be a material condition because of the:

- Significant error rates noted, demonstrating a pervasiveness across school districts reviewed.
- Importance of professional development and mentoring activities in promoting ongoing improvements in Michigan's education system, including supporting and retaining new teachers.
- High reliance on DPPD for teaching certificate renewals.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that OEE put in place a process to help ensure that school districts consistently provide teachers with required professional development and mentoring.

**AGENCY
PRELIMINARY
RESPONSE**

MDE provided us with the following response:

MDE agrees with the finding during the audit period. New procedures have been put into place that allow MDE to review professional learning offered by districts to ensure educators are offered the required professional learning annually. MDE will also strengthen internal procedures to ensure that school districts provide new teachers with required mentoring and induction. Research indicates that strong mentoring programs are one of the most effective tools to increase educator effectiveness and retention and MDE has strongly urged districts to actively utilize these programs for many years. Districts should adopt programs with rigorous standards and expectations, select high quality mentors based on specific criteria, pay mentors for additional service, and provide release time, as appropriate for mentors and mentees to engage in observation, coaching and other learning. An additional option is to amend the law to provide funding for teacher mentoring and to penalize districts that failed to provide the mentoring given the added funding.

OVERSIGHT OF EVALUATIONS FOR TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

BACKGROUND

State law requires school districts to adopt and implement a rigorous, transparent, and fair performance evaluation system for all teachers and school administrators and provides specific requirements for the evaluation systems. MDE's strategic plan reinforced legislation with its vision that all educators received quality feedback to support continuous improvement at all levels of the education system, and MDE asserted that educator evaluations were implicitly linked to MDE's goal to develop, support, and sustain a high-quality, prepared, and collaborative education workforce.

State law mandates:

- That MDE, by authority of the State Board of Education, require each local school board, PSA board, and each intermediate school district board and the officers of each of those boards to observe the laws related to schools.
- That MDE maintain a list of approved teacher and school administrator evaluation tools that includes at least 4 teacher evaluation tools and 2 school administrator evaluation models.
- That school districts adopt and implement a rigorous, transparent, and fair performance evaluation system for all teachers and school administrators to inform decisions regarding promotion, retention, and development; granting tenure or full certification, or both; and removal of ineffective teachers and school administrators. School districts are also required by statute to provide training to teachers, school administrators, evaluators, and observers regarding the district's performance evaluation tool(s) and measures and to post certain evaluation-related information on the school district public Web site.
- The specific requirements for educator evaluations, including, but not limited to, requiring that evaluations:
 - Rate each teacher and school administrator as highly effective, effective, minimally effective, or ineffective.
 - Are performed annually for all teachers and school administrators or biennially for teachers and school administrators with 3 consecutive annual highly effective ratings.
 - Include classroom observation of teachers.

- Base 25% of teachers' and school administrators' performance evaluations on student growth and assessment data. Beginning in school year 2019-20, this amount increased to 40%.

OEE provides support to Michigan school districts and educators by offering workshops, publishing OEE-developed guidance documents, and providing other resource materials regarding teacher and school administrator evaluation systems.

For school year 2017-18, there were approximately 102,000 teachers, including 4,900 first year teachers, and 12,000 school administrators working in Michigan schools; 98% of teachers Statewide were rated as effective or highly effective (see Exhibit #2).

AUDIT OBJECTIVE

To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required evaluations for teachers and school administrators.

CONCLUSION

Sufficient, with exceptions.

FACTORS IMPACTING CONCLUSION

- 95% of school districts reviewed utilized an MDE-approved evaluation tool(s) or other evaluation tool(s) that included all components required under State law.
- School districts maintained documentation of completed annual evaluations for 94% of teachers and school administrators reviewed.
- OEE maintained a list of approved evaluation and observation tools and published guidance for school districts regarding implementation of Michigan's educator evaluation legislation.
- Material condition related to the need for a process to help ensure that teachers and school administrators are evaluated as required by State law (Finding #3).

FINDING #3

Improvement needed to ensure school districts' performance evaluation systems for teachers and school administrators meet requirements.

OEE needs to implement a process to ensure that school districts have performance evaluation systems in place for teachers and school administrators that meet requirements. Doing so would help MDE ensure that educators receive quality feedback that helps advance its goals to improve Michigan's education system and school districts comply with State law.

State law requires school districts to adopt and implement an evaluation system for all teachers and school administrators and delineates specific requirements. Correspondingly, MDE's strategic plan placed value on these systems and stated that all educators would receive quality feedback to support continuous improvement at all levels of the education system.

We reviewed applicable performance evaluation documentation for a sample of 394 annual teacher evaluations and 38 annual school administrator evaluations from 20 sampled school districts to determine compliance with State law requirements. Although we noted that school districts maintained documentation of completed evaluations for 94% of teachers and school administrators reviewed, we also noted that:

- a. School districts' completed performance evaluations for teachers and school administrators did not always include all required evaluation components. Our review disclosed:

- (1) 13 of the 20 sampled school districts were unable to provide documentation to demonstrate that the evaluator performed the required classroom observations for 76 (21%) of the 364 applicable completed teacher evaluations that we reviewed. Classroom observations of teachers account for 75% of teachers' evaluation ratings and are a useful tool to provide feedback on teachers' classroom performance.

School districts were unable to provide documentation to demonstrate that required classroom observations were performed for 21% of completed teacher evaluations reviewed.

State law mandates that school evaluation systems include classroom observations of teachers. Unless a teacher has received a rating of effective or highly effective on his or her two most recent annual year-end evaluations, there shall be at least two classroom observations of the teacher each school year.

- (2) 11 of the 20 sampled school districts were unable to provide documentation to demonstrate that evaluations were based on required student growth and assessment data for 67 (17%) of the 396 applicable completed teacher and school administrator evaluations that we reviewed.

State law requires that a school district's performance evaluation system for teachers and school administrators include at least an annual

year-end evaluation, of which 25% shall be based on student growth and assessment data.

- (3) 17 of the 20 sampled school districts were unable to provide sufficient documentation to demonstrate that the evaluator, in consultation with the teacher, developed specific performance goals for 132 (36%) of the 364 applicable completed teacher evaluations that we reviewed.

State law requires that the school administrator or his or her designee conducting the evaluation develops, in consultation with the teacher, specific performance goals that will assist the teacher in improving his or her performance for the upcoming school year.

School districts were unable to demonstrate that specific performance goals were developed in 36% of teacher evaluations that we reviewed.

- (4) 4 of the 11 sampled school districts with first year teachers were unable to provide documentation to demonstrate that a midyear progress report was provided to teachers within their first year of teaching for 4 (24%) of the 17 applicable teachers that we reviewed.

State law requires that a school district's performance evaluation system include a midyear progress report for a teacher who is in the first year of his or her probationary period as a supplemental tool to assist a teacher to improve.

- b. School districts did not always provide the required training to teachers, school administrators, evaluators, and observers regarding the performance evaluation system.

We noted that 2 (10%) of the 20 school districts could not provide documentation to support that required training was provided. Neither school district could support that it provided required training to teachers and school administrators, and one also could not support that it provided required training to evaluators and observers.

State law requires that school districts provide training to teachers on the school districts' performance evaluation tool(s) and how each tool is used; to school administrators on the measures used by the school district and how each of the measures is used; and to all evaluators and observers by an individual who has expertise in the evaluation tool(s) used by the school district.

MDE informed us that it did not have a process in place to help ensure that school districts had implemented required performance evaluation systems because resource levels only allowed for the provision of technical assistance and support related to performance evaluations.

We consider this finding to be a material condition because of the:

- Significant error rate, especially related to performance of required classroom observations of teachers which accounts for 75% of a teacher's evaluation rating.
- Importance of quality feedback in improving Michigan's education system.
- Lack of MDE's support for mandated performance evaluation system requirements contained in the current State law, as noted in MDE's agency preliminary response.

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that OEE implement a process to help ensure that school districts consistently implement required performance evaluation systems for teachers and school administrators.

AGENCY PRELIMINARY RESPONSE

MDE provided us with the following response:

MDE agrees with this finding pertaining to the educator evaluation law and will strengthen internal procedures to ensure that school districts implement required performance evaluation systems in accordance with law.

MDE does not support the language in the current law and will be working toward a repeal or, at a minimum, a reduction of the requirements contained in the law.

SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

UNAUDITED
Exhibit #1

OFFICE OF EDUCATOR EXCELLENCE Michigan Department of Education

Types of Educator Credentials, Description, and Number Issued
For October 1, 2015 Through June 30, 2018

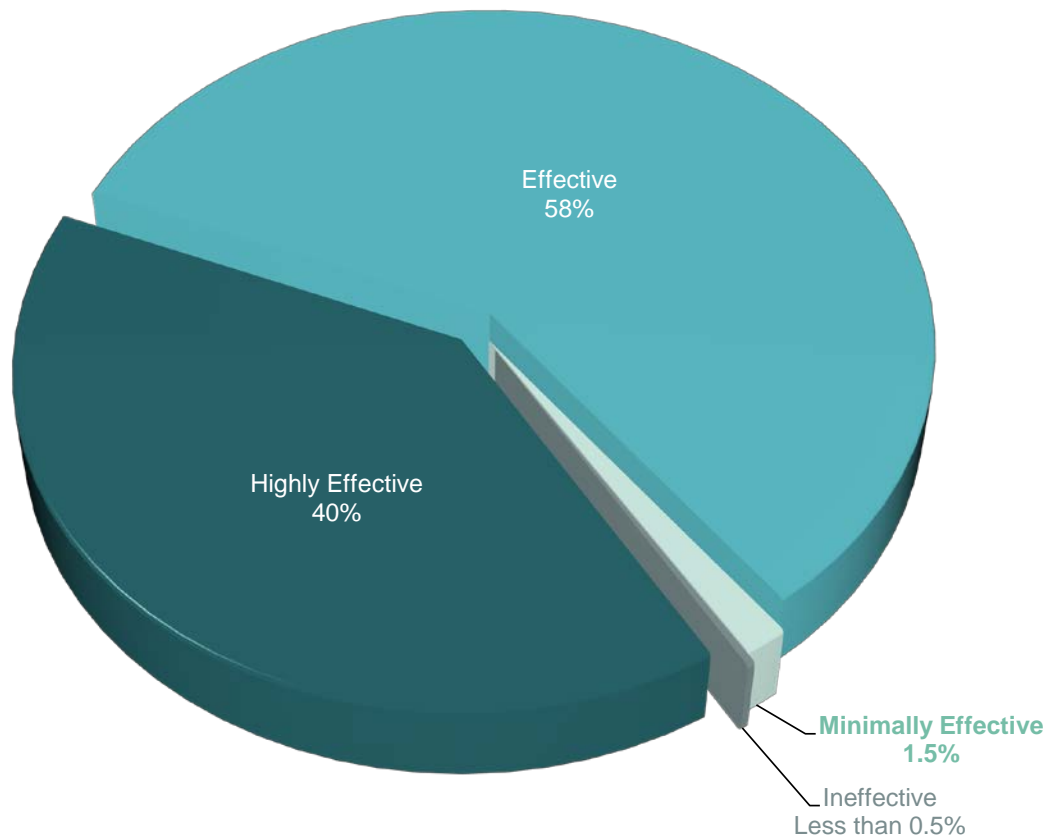
Credential Title and Description	Approximate Number Issued For 33-Month Period**
<u>Standard Teaching Certificate and Standard Career and Technical Experience (CTE) Certificate</u> Issued upon successful completion of an approved teacher preparation program and passage of all appropriate licensure assessments. An assessment of basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics was eliminated by Public Act 233 of 2018, effective September 25, 2018. May be renewed for a 5-year period.	18,570 (12%)
<u>Professional Teaching Certificate and Professional CTE Certificate</u> Teachers may progress from a Standard Certificate to a Professional Certificate upon completion of 3 years of successful teaching, meeting professional learning requirements, as well as an accumulation of effective or highly effective teacher evaluation ratings. May be renewed for a 5-year period.	53,250 (34%)
<u>School Administrator Certificate</u> Individuals must possess a master's degree or higher from a regionally accredited college or university and complete an approved school administrator preparation program. Required for superintendents, school principals, assistant principals, and other administrators. May be renewed for a 5-year period.	7,240 (5%)
<u>Daily Substitute Teacher Permit</u> Individuals are required to have successfully completed at least 90 semester hours from accredited two- or four-year colleges or universities. Limited to a single teaching assignment of no more than 90 days.	69,430 (44%)
<u>Full-Year Basic Substitute Teacher Permit</u> Individuals must have successfully completed at least 90 semester hours from accredited two- or four-year colleges or universities. If assignment is in a core subject area, the individual must have a corresponding major on his or her transcript or passing scores on the approved discipline area test. Issued for one school year. Maximum of 3 renewals allow the individual to teach in 4 school years in the same assigned areas.	2,370 (1%)
<u>Other Credentials</u> School counselor licenses, school psychologist certificates, extended daily substitute teacher permits, temporary and preliminary authorizations, and other permits and authorizations with various requirements.	6,900 (4%)
Total credentials issued	157,760

**Includes initials, renewals, and extensions.

Source: The OAG prepared this exhibit using data obtained from MOECS.

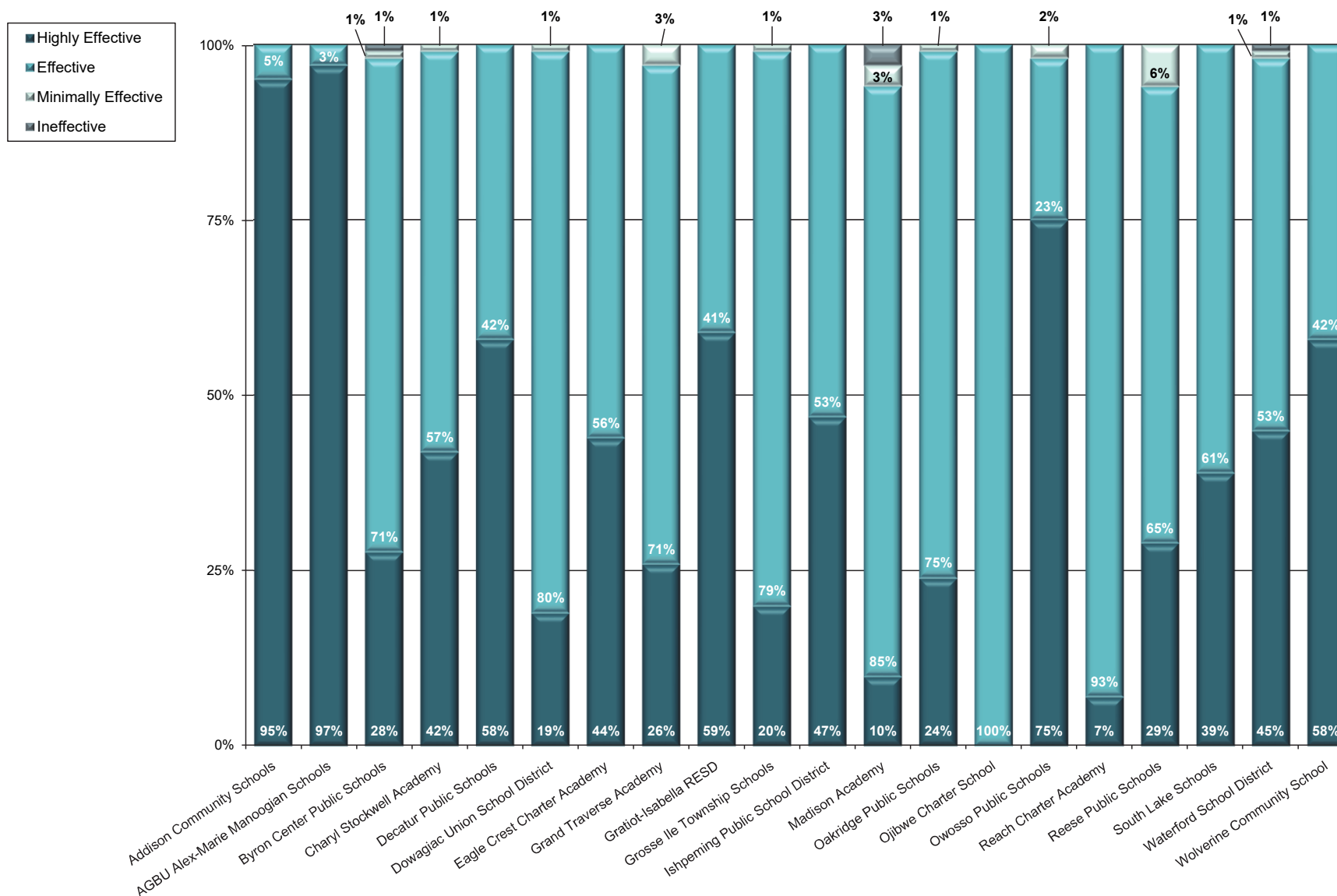
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Statewide Teacher Evaluation Ratings
School Year 2017-18



Source: The OAG prepared this exhibit using data obtained from mischooldata.org.

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Michigan Department of Education
Teacher Evaluation Ratings for 20 Selected School Districts
School Year 2017-18



Source: The OAG prepared this exhibit using data obtained from mischooldata.org.

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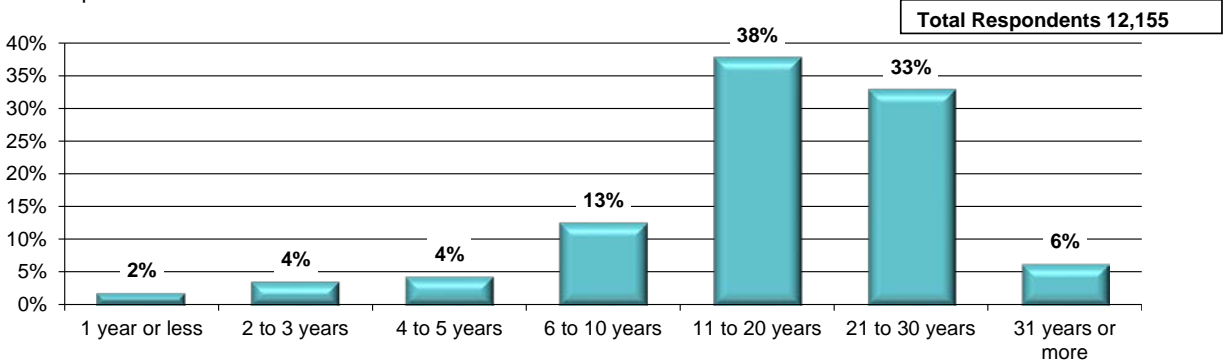
Educator Survey Results

INFORMATIONAL QUESTIONS

1. Please select the county you worked in as of June 30, 2018.

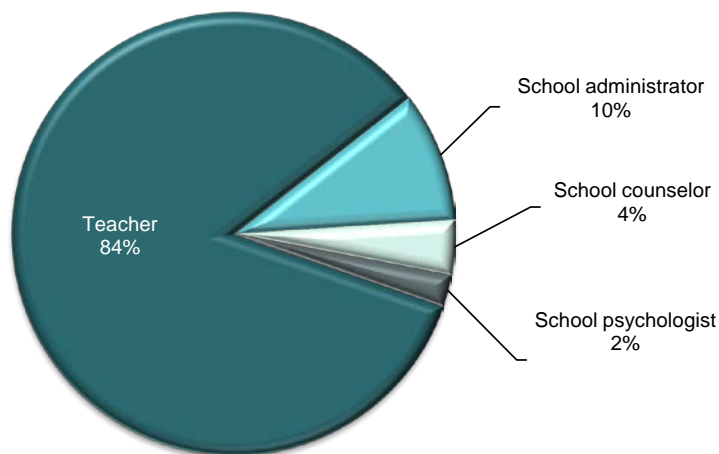
County	Total	County	Total	County	Total
Alcona	4 (0%)	Gratiot	84 (1%)	Missaukee	27 (0%)
Alger	13 (0%)	Hillsdale	66 (1%)	Monroe	141 (1%)
Allegan	167 (1%)	Houghton	63 (1%)	Montcalm	98 (1%)
Alpena	42 (0%)	Huron	53 (0%)	Montmorency	13 (0%)
Antrim	30 (0%)	Ingham	360 (3%)	Muskegon	255 (2%)
Arenac	19 (0%)	Ionia	102 (1%)	Newaygo	62 (1%)
Baraga	10 (0%)	Iosco	40 (0%)	Oakland	1,426 (12%)
Barry	64 (1%)	Iron	11 (0%)	Oceana	24 (0%)
Bay	123 (1%)	Isabella	77 (1%)	Ogemaw	29 (0%)
Benzie	18 (0%)	Jackson	199 (2%)	Ontonagon	8 (0%)
Berrien	218 (2%)	Kalamazoo	278 (2%)	Osceola	26 (0%)
Branch	75 (1%)	Kalkaska	18 (0%)	Oscoda	8 (0%)
Calhoun	203 (2%)	Kent	903 (7%)	Otsego	23 (0%)
Cass	56 (0%)	Keweenaw	1 (0%)	Ottawa	433 (4%)
Charlevoix	38 (0%)	Lake	6 (0%)	Presque Isle	9 (0%)
Cheboygan	34 (0%)	Lapeer	103 (1%)	Roscommon	22 (0%)
Chippewa	74 (1%)	Leelanau	17 (0%)	Saginaw	299 (2%)
Clare	31 (0%)	Lenawee	140 (1%)	St. Clair	199 (2%)
Clinton	98 (1%)	Livingston	215 (2%)	St. Joseph	71 (1%)
Crawford	19 (0%)	Luce	9 (0%)	Sanilac	55 (1%)
Delta	48 (0%)	Mackinac	15 (0%)	Schoolcraft	6 (0%)
Dickinson	14 (0%)	Macomb	901 (7%)	Shiawassee	98 (1%)
Eaton	139 (1%)	Manistee	39 (0%)	Tuscola	96 (1%)
Emmet	46 (0%)	Marquette	81 (1%)	Van Buren	150 (1%)
Genesee	446 (4%)	Mason	44 (0%)	Washtenaw	447 (4%)
Gladwin	24 (0%)	Mecosta	55 (1%)	Wayne	1,795 (15%)
Gogebic	24 (0%)	Menominee	29 (0%)	Wexford	72 (1%)
Grand Traverse	131 (1%)	Midland	113 (1%)	I would prefer not to answer	165 (1%)
				Total Respondents	<u>12,287</u>

2. How many years of experience do you have as a teacher, administrator, counselor, psychologist, or any combination of these positions?



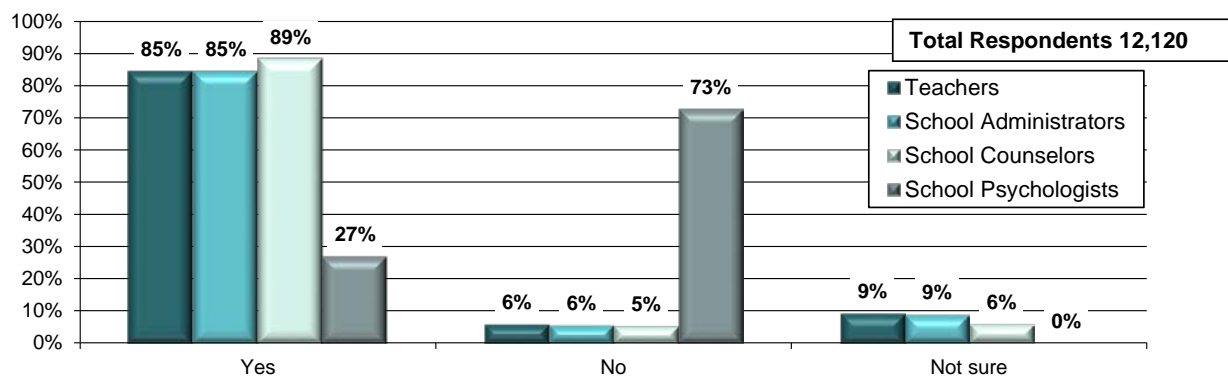
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3. As of June 30, 2018, my primary position required certification/licensure as a:

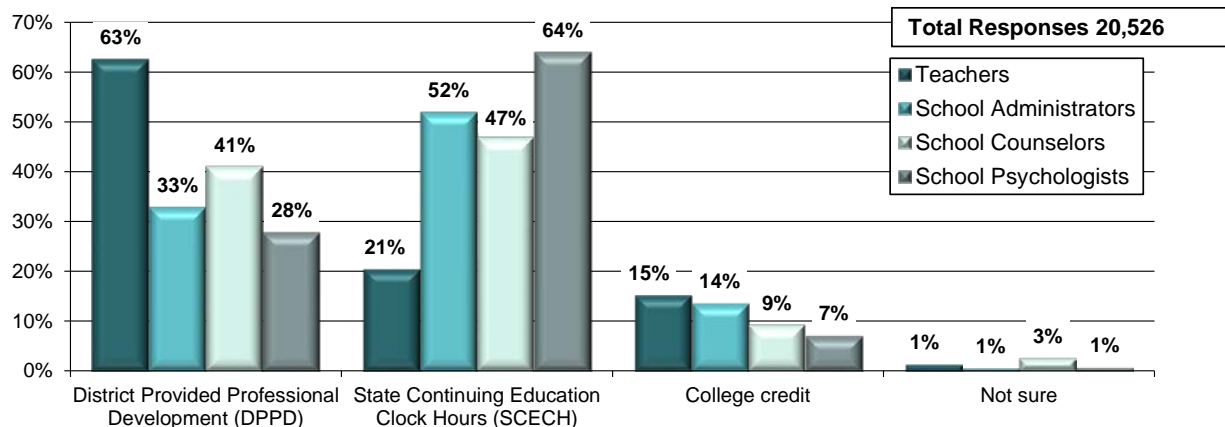


QUESTIONS FOR ALL EDUCATORS

4. Do you plan to renew your certificate?

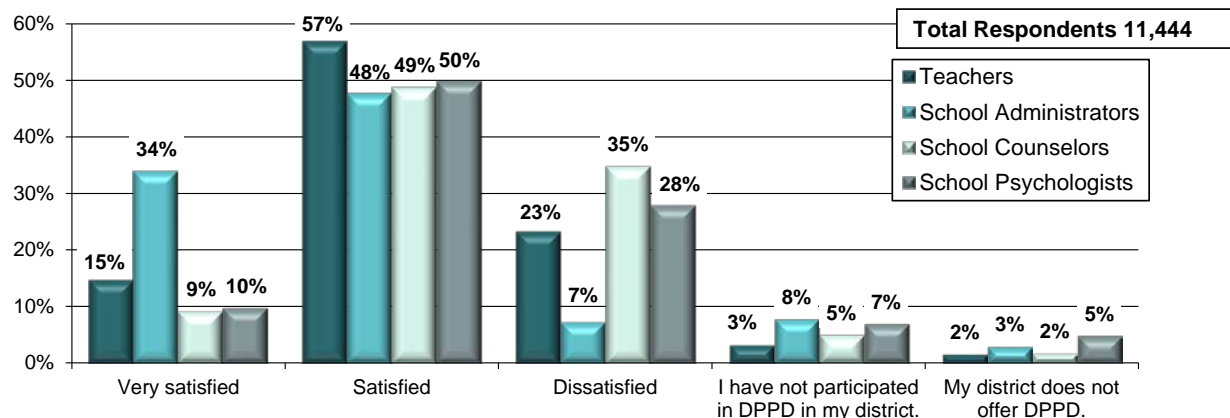


5. For your next certificate renewal, please estimate the percentage of professional development hours that you plan to achieve through the sources listed below (your entries must total 100%).

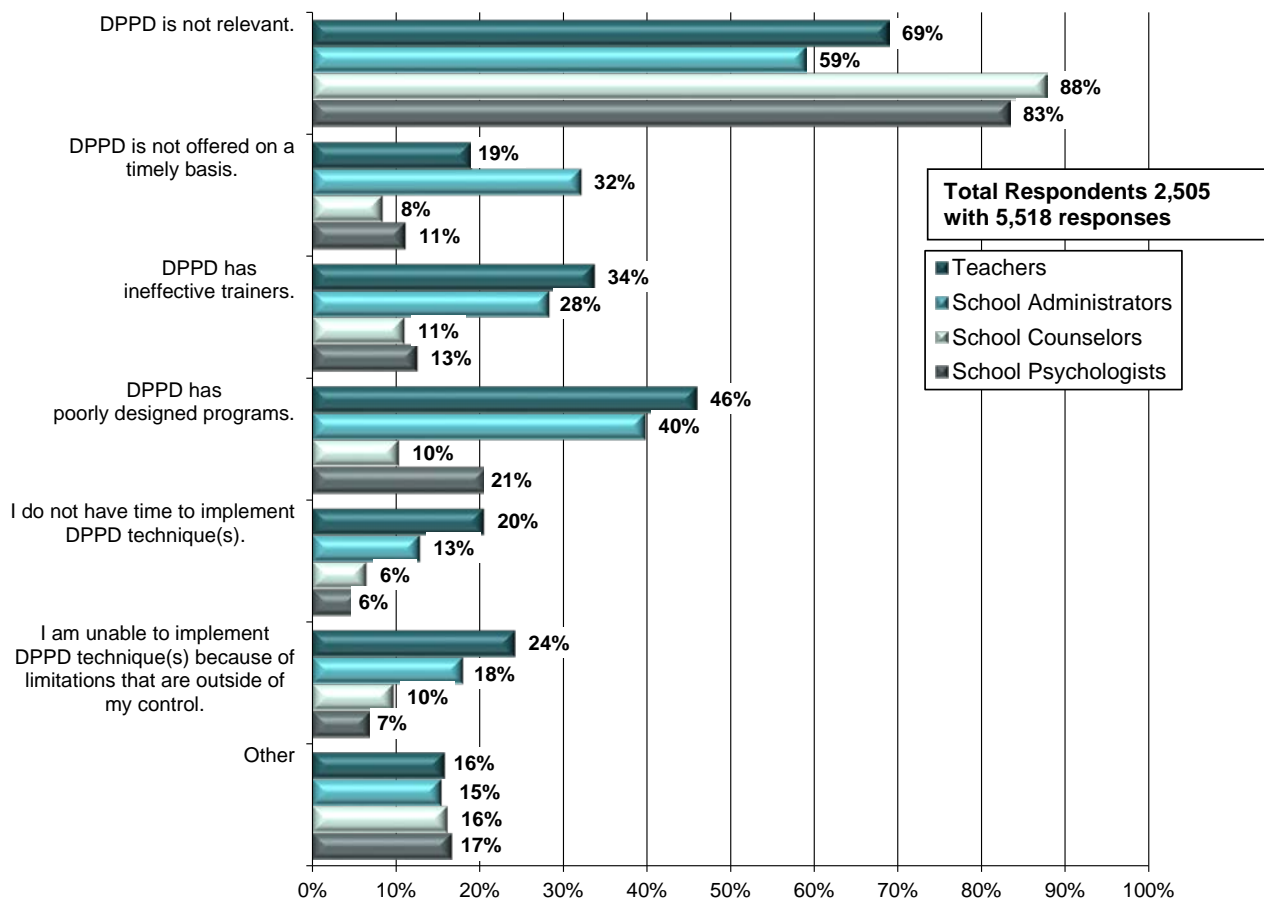


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6. In general, how do you rate the DPPD offered by your district in improving your professional skills and knowledge?

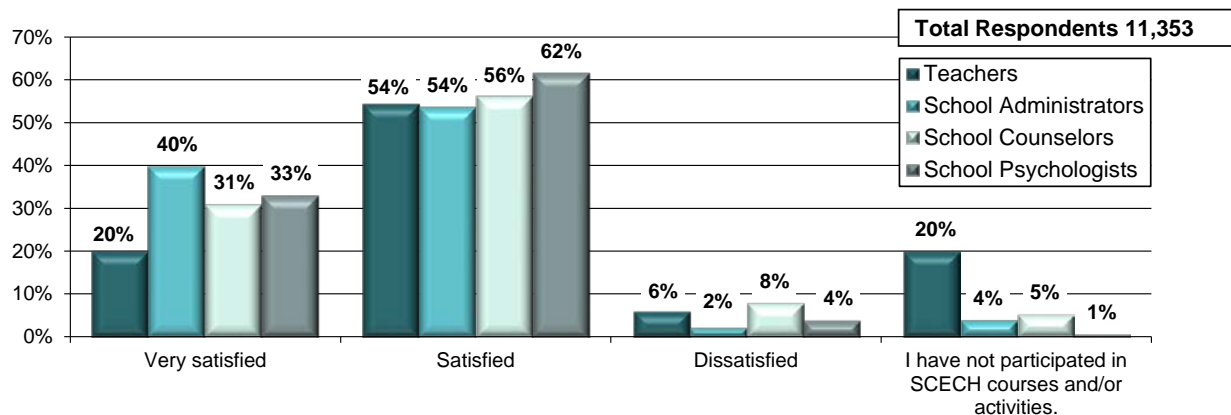


7. Why are you dissatisfied with the DPPD offered by your district? Select all that apply.

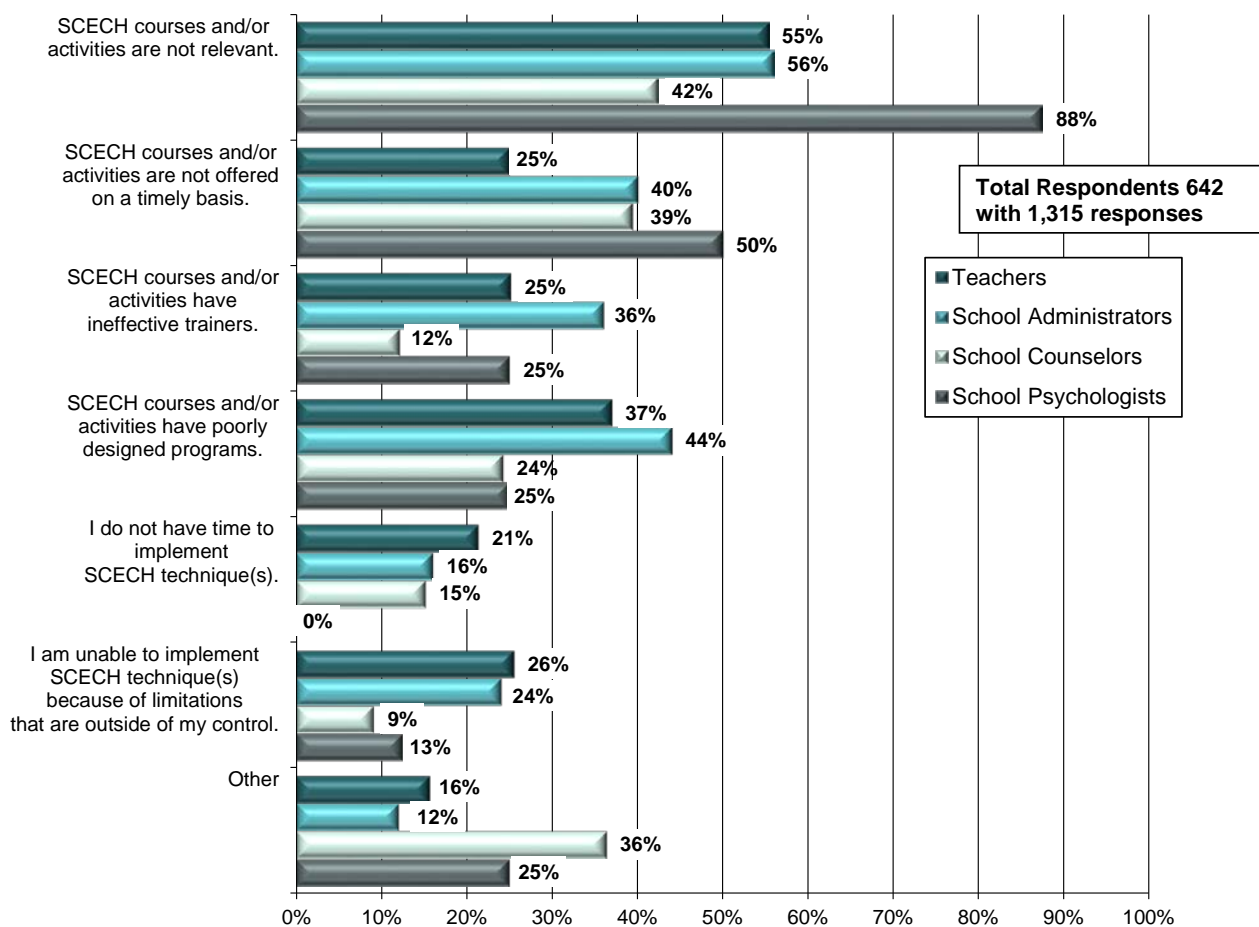


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8. In general, how do you rate SCECH courses and/or activities in improving your professional skills and knowledge?

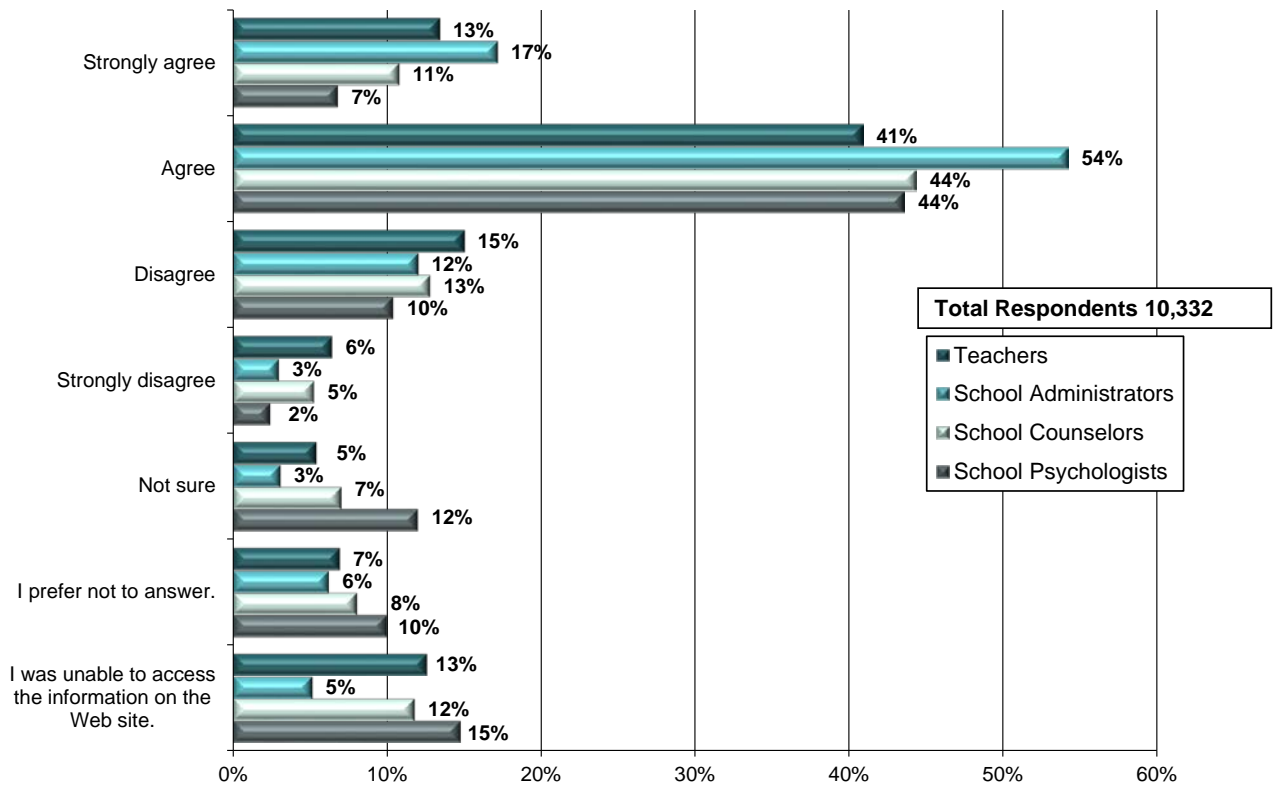


9. Why are you dissatisfied with SCECH courses and/or activities? Select all that apply.



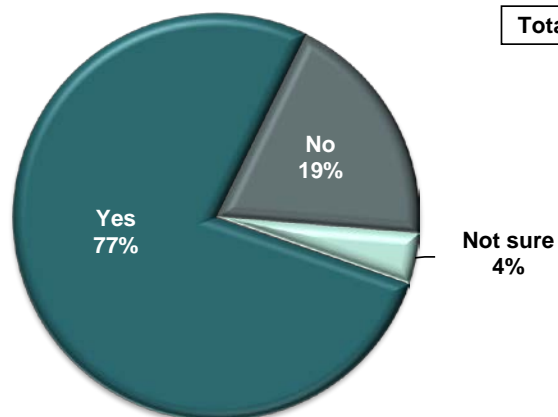
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10. In my opinion, my school's teacher effectiveness ratings accurately represent overall teacher effectiveness in my school.



TEACHER QUESTIONS

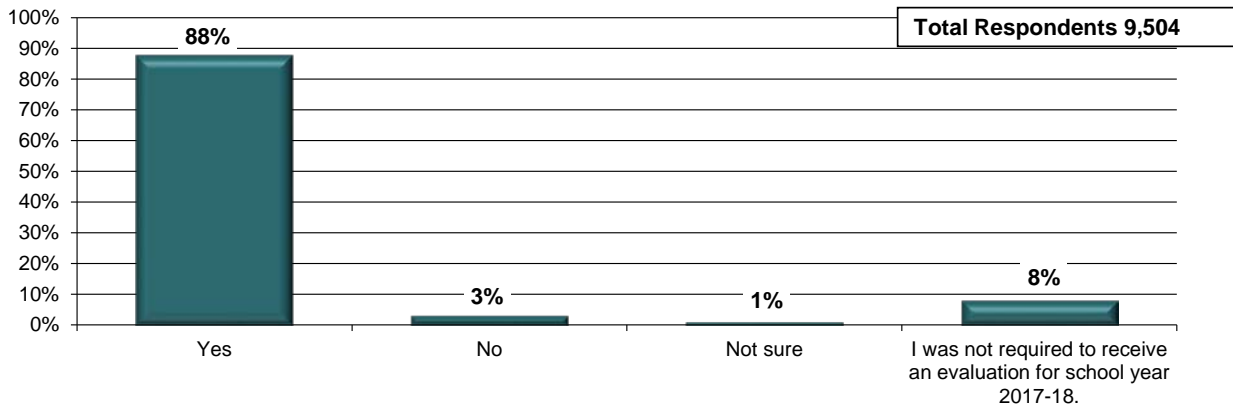
11. If you are a new teacher with a Michigan standard teaching certificate, did your district assign you a mentor teacher for your first 3 teaching years?



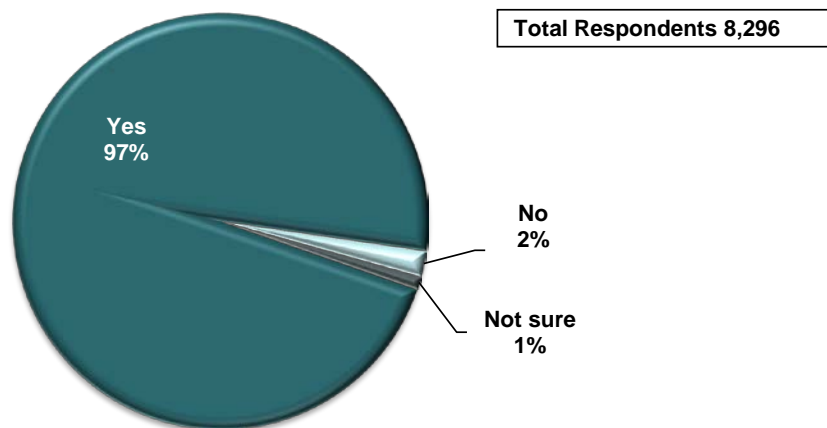
Total Respondents 2,019

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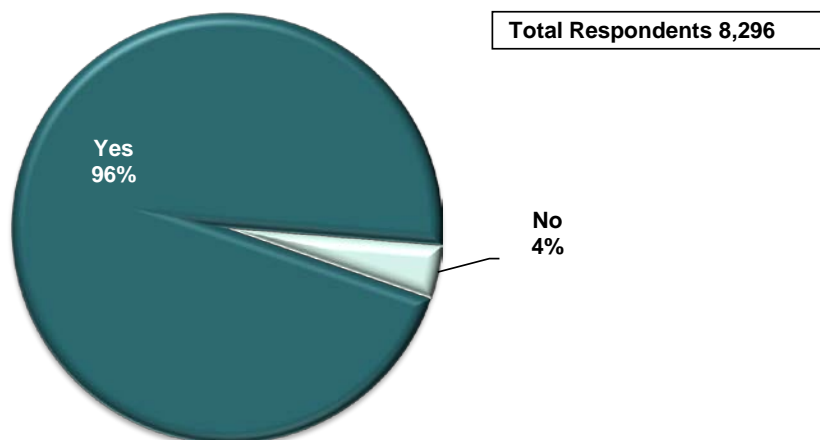
12. Did you receive a teacher performance evaluation for school year 2017-18?



13. Did your evaluator observe you at least once in your classroom during the evaluation period?

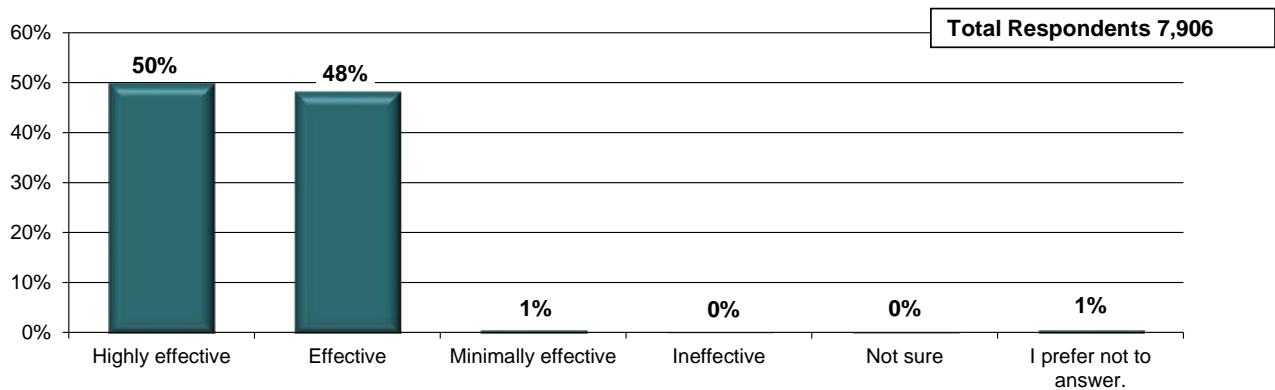


14. Were you notified of your teacher effectiveness rating (i.e., highly effective, effective, minimally effective, or ineffective) after the performance evaluation was completed?

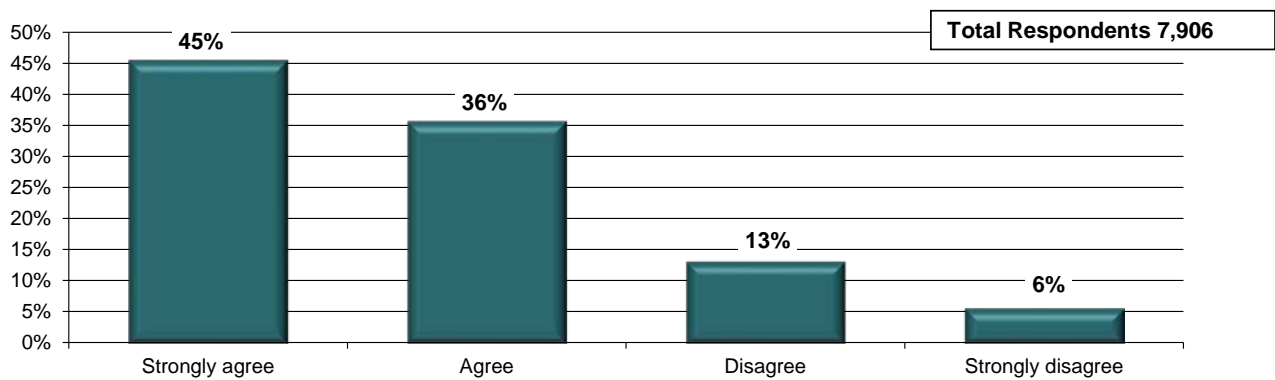


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15. What was your teacher effectiveness rating?

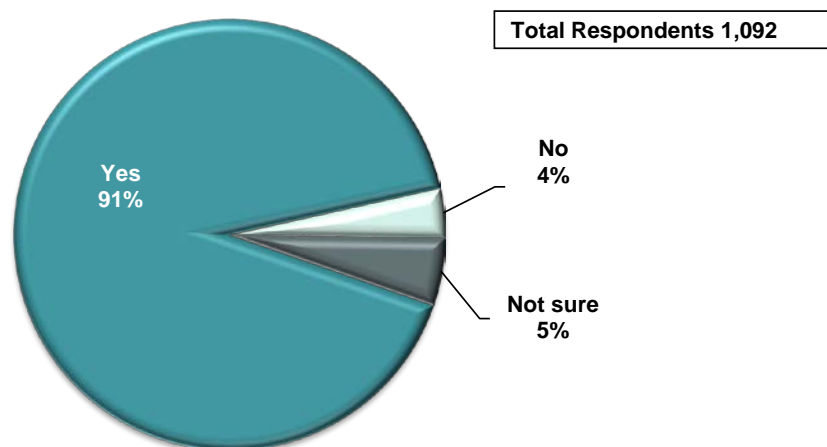


16. I believe that my teacher effectiveness rating represented my actual effectiveness.



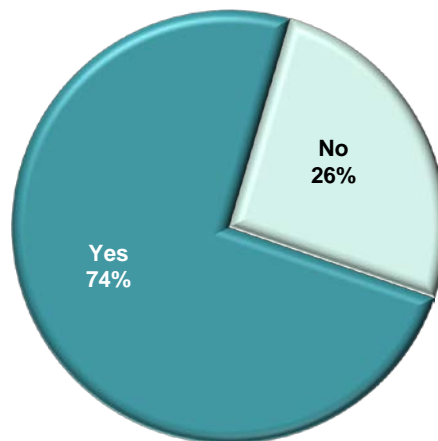
SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONS

17. Does your district assign mentor teachers to new teachers with a Michigan standard teaching certificate within their first 3 years?



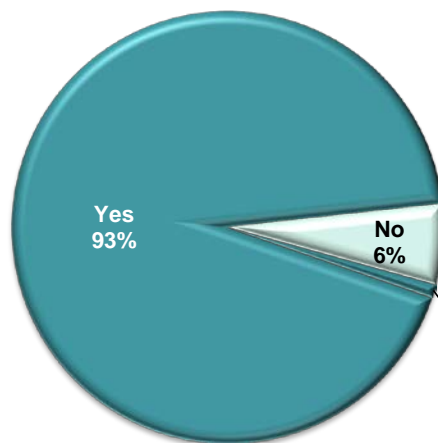
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18. Are you an evaluator and/or observer who is responsible for completing annual teacher performance evaluations?



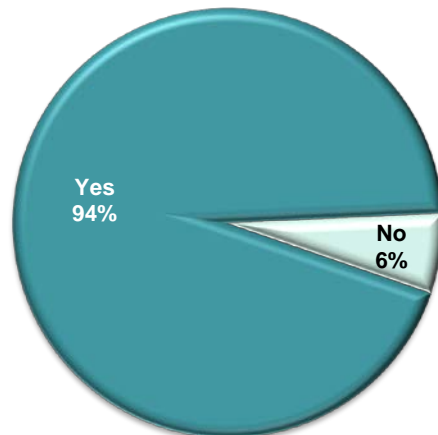
Total Respondents 1,092

19. As an evaluator and/or observer who is responsible for completing annual teacher performance evaluations, did you receive training on how to use the adopted observation tool(s)?



Total Respondents 810

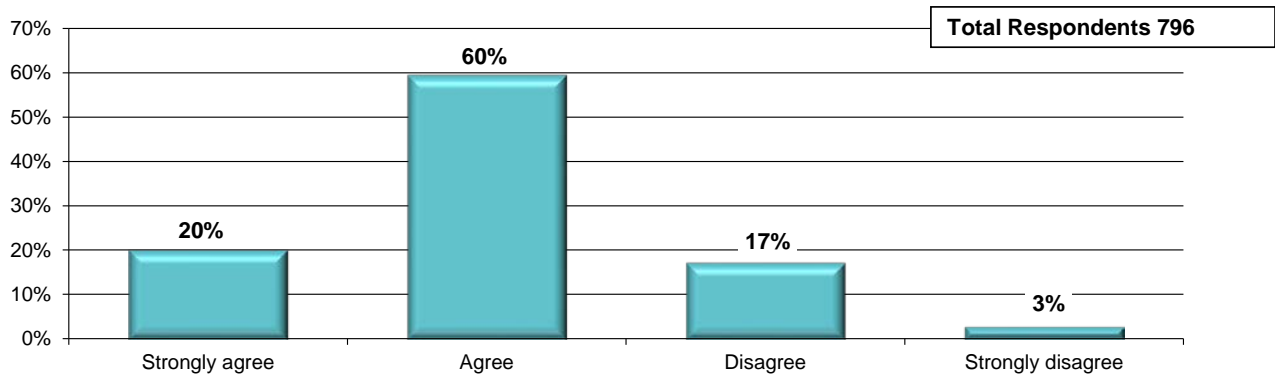
20. Did the adopted observation tool(s) training provide you with sufficient understanding and knowledge to complete performance evaluations?



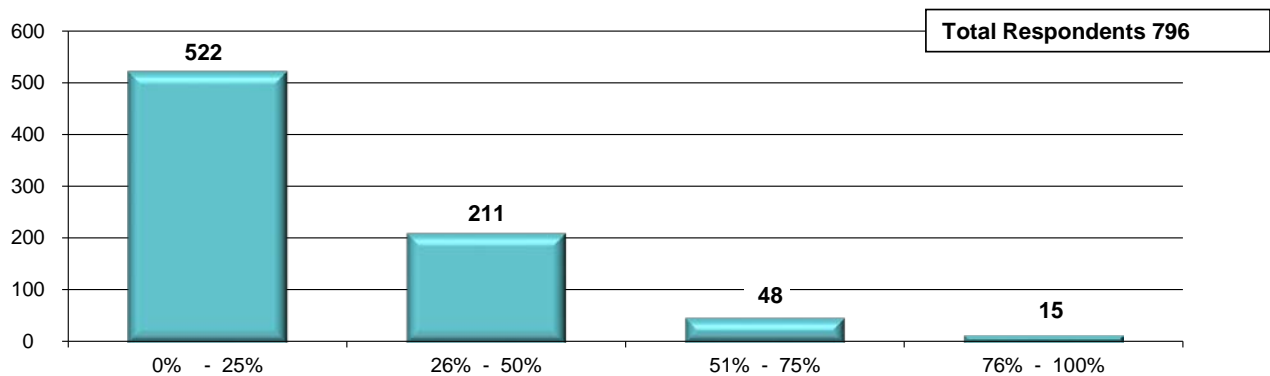
Total Respondents 738

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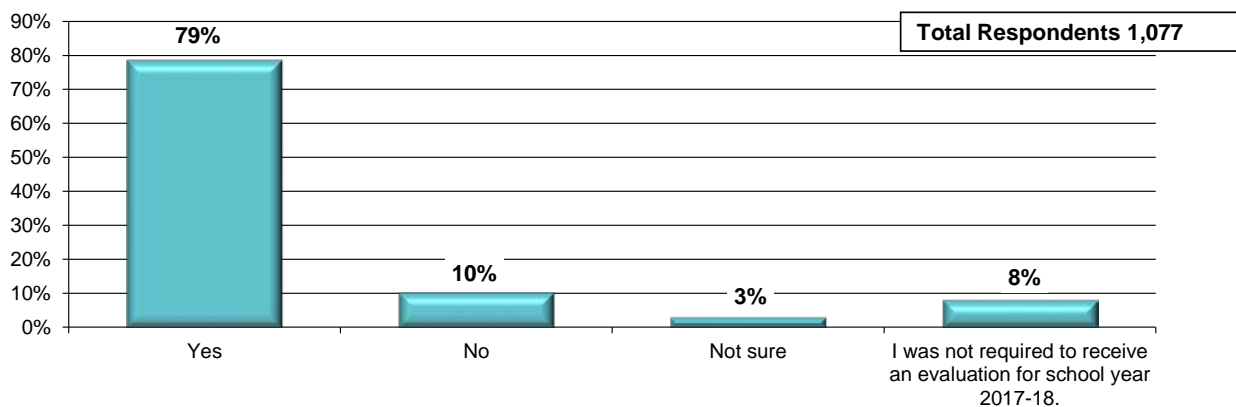
21. In my opinion, the adopted observation tool(s) used at my school accurately measures teacher effectiveness.



22. Approximately what percentage of time each week do you spend engaged in teacher evaluation-related activities (observations, feedback, gathering assessment information, related meetings, etc.)? Please enter a percentage:

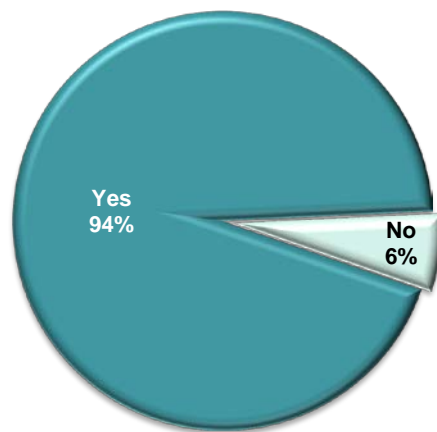


23. Did you receive a school administrator performance evaluation for school year 2017-18?



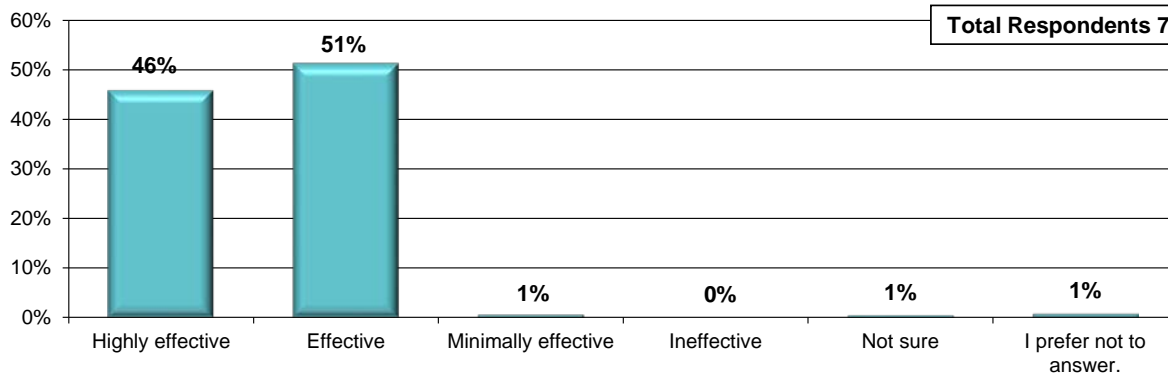
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24. Were you notified of your school administrator effectiveness rating (i.e., highly effective, effective, minimally effective, or ineffective) after the performance evaluation was completed?



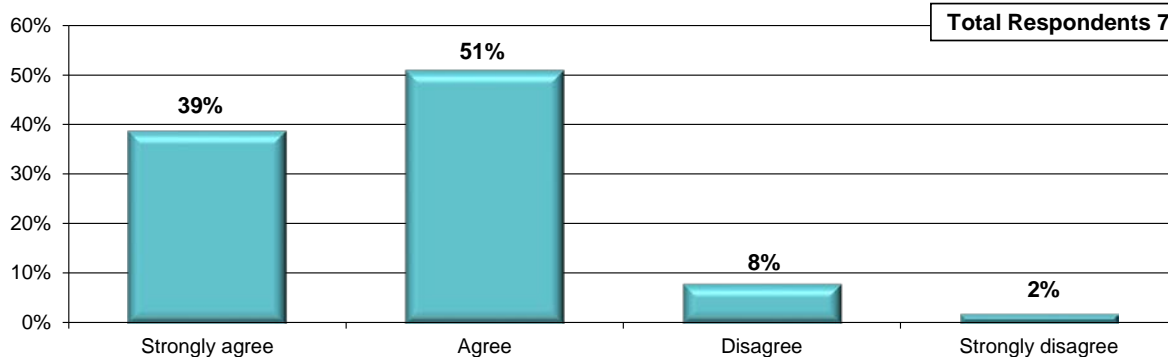
Total Respondents 848

25. What was your school administrator effectiveness rating?



Total Respondents 797

26. I believe that my school administrator effectiveness rating represented my actual effectiveness.



Total Respondents 797

Source: This OAG created this exhibit to summarize responses received in our survey of educators.

AGENCY DESCRIPTION

OEE supports the educational achievement of Michigan's kindergarten through 12th grade students by ensuring that all educators complete quality educator preparation and professional development programs that meet standards established by the Michigan Legislature and the State Board of Education. OEE also provides general guidance to Michigan teachers and school administrators about State law content and how the law interfaces with the efforts of OEE and MDE to improve State educator evaluations Statewide. In addition, OEE is responsible for creating, implementing, and administering programs to develop and maintain Michigan's educator workforce.

In December 2017, MDE restructured its operations and dissolved the Office of Professional Preparation Services and created OEE. OEE consists of five units including the Educator Preparation; Professional Certification; Placement, Growth, and Retention; Recruitment and Recognition; and Data and Accountability Units.

OEE's appropriations totaled \$5,679,600 and \$5,569,700 for fiscal years 2018 and 2019, respectively. As of September 30, 2019, OEE had 42 employees.

AUDIT SCOPE, METHODOLOGY, AND OTHER INFORMATION

AUDIT SCOPE

To examine the records and processes related to OEE's operations, activities, and compliance with selected State laws. We conducted this performance audit* in accordance with generally accepted government auditing standards. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives.

PERIOD

Our audit procedures, which included a preliminary survey, audit fieldwork, report preparation, analysis of agency responses, and quality assurance, generally covered October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, which included school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18.

METHODOLOGY

We conducted a preliminary survey of OEE to obtain an understanding of applicable statutory requirements and OEE processes and establish our audit objectives and methodology. During our preliminary survey, we:

- Interviewed MDE OEE management and staff to obtain an understanding of OEE's operations.
- Reviewed applicable laws, administrative rules, MDE's strategic plan in place during the audit period, MDE guidance documents, and legislative reports.
- Analyzed available data for school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 related to reported professional development, teacher and school administrator evaluation ratings, and educator credentials.
- Reviewed all Michigan Educator Preparation Institution* (EPI) Performance Score Reports for 2016 and 2017 to assess OEE's use of EPI performance scores for identification of teacher preparation programs that may not have performed at a satisfactory level and/or required corrective action plans or closure.
- Visited four judgmentally selected school districts to obtain an understanding of the availability and contents of school district records related to professional development, mentoring, teacher and school administrator evaluations, and teacher class assignments and to identify potential risk for review,

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

including risks related to teachers holding proper certification, endorsements*, and/or permits.

- Surveyed 117,584 educators and examined the responses from the 12,287 received, including, but not limited to, responses related to certificate and license renewals, satisfaction with DPPD offerings, assignment of mentors for new teachers, and opinions on the accuracy of annual effectiveness ratings (see Exhibit #4).

OBJECTIVE #1

To assess the effectiveness of OEE's efforts to ensure that certificates, licenses, authorizations, and permits are only issued to educators who comply with State requirements.

To accomplish this objective, we:

- Conducted interviews with OEE management and staff to gain an understanding of their processes and oversight related to certifications, licensures, authorizations, and permits.
- Judgmentally and randomly sampled and reviewed 36 initial educator certificates and applicable endorsements, licenses, and authorizations from the population of 16,643 initial educator certificates, licenses, and authorizations issued by OEE during the period October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018 to verify that the sampled educator met State law and *Michigan Administrative Code* requirements, such as education, examination, and/or work experience, prior to certificate, license, or authorization issuance.
- Judgmentally and randomly sampled and reviewed 26 certificated educators that progressed to the next level certificate during the period October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, from the population of 11,067, to verify that the educator met State law and/or *Michigan Administrative Code* requirements prior to progression, such as successful teaching experience, education, and ERPL requirements.
- Randomly and judgmentally selected a sample of 20 school districts from the Statewide population of approximately 900 school districts. We conducted an on-site examination of records at each selected school district and performed the following procedures:
 - For educator certification renewals issued by MDE from October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018, we:
 - Randomly and judgmentally sampled 115 certification renewals from the population of

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

1,129 certification renewals issued to educators employed at 19 of the selected school districts. We requested that the 114 educators associated with the 115 sampled certification renewals provide documentation to support the DPPD hours and/or college credit hours claimed on their renewal to verify that the educator met ERPL requirements for certificate renewals in compliance with the *Michigan Administrative Code*.

- Randomly and judgmentally sampled 114 educators from the population of 1,062 educators associated with 19 of the selected school districts. From the 114 sampled educators, we identified 46 educators associated with 15 of the selected school districts that claimed on their renewal a total of 198 SCECH courses occurring during the audit period. We randomly sampled and reviewed 24 of 156 of the judgmentally selected SCECH courses and:

- Determined whether the 122 sponsor coordinators and assistant coordinators associated with the applicable sampled SCECH sponsors* had approved MOECS user agreements.
- Requested SCECH course information from the SCECH sponsors and used MOECS to verify that the 24 sampled SCECH courses provided relevant content, included attendance numbers, and had evaluations completed when educators claimed SCECH hours at certification or license renewals.

- Randomly sampled 42 individuals from the population of 261 individuals identified as substitute teaching on May 18, 2018 in 19 of the selected school districts to validate that the sampled individuals held a daily substitute teacher permit, obtained 90 semester hours of college credit as required by State law, and did not exceed 90 consecutive calendar days for a teaching assignment as required by the *Michigan Administrative Code*.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

- Randomly and judgmentally sampled 17 long-term substitute teacher permits* pertaining to 16 teachers from the population of 48 long-term substitute teacher permits from 14 of the selected school districts during school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 to validate that the selected individuals met permit requirements in accordance with State law and *Michigan Administrative Code* related to education, expertise for assigned core subject areas*, and mentorship.
- Randomly selected 380 students from the population of approximately 139,500 students who were enrolled at 19 of the selected school districts during school years 2016-17 or 2017-18 and identified 862 teachers from our review of the selected students' class schedules. We reviewed MOECS for each of the 862 teachers to verify that the teachers held a valid teaching certificate or permit and appropriate endorsements, as applicable, for the classes that they taught.

Our random samples were selected to eliminate any bias and enable us to project the results to the population. We selected other samples judgmentally and, therefore, could not project those results to the respective populations.

OBJECTIVE #2

To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required DPPD and mentoring for teachers.

To accomplish this objective, we:

- Conducted interviews with OEE management and staff to obtain an understanding of OEE's oversight of school district's compliance with DPPD, new teacher professional development, and mentoring requirements.
- Reviewed the State Board of Education-approved *Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program Standards* document that was disseminated to Michigan school districts and educators and intended to guide choices and shape the design of teacher induction and mentoring programs.
- Reviewed MDE guidance documents published on its Web site that provided information to educators pertaining to DPPD, such as acceptable documentation, eligible ERPL activities, and instructions for entering DPPD information into MOECS.
- Randomly and judgmentally selected a sample of 20 school districts from the Statewide population of

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

approximately 900 school districts. We conducted an on-site examination of each selected school district's records and performed the following procedures:

- Evaluated compliance with professional development requirements for 92 selected DPPD courses, including:
 - 84 courses randomly and/or judgmentally selected from the population of 1,351 courses provided during school years 2016-17 and 2017-18 by 19 of the selected school districts. For these selected courses, we reviewed course content and attendance documentation, such as course agendas and/or materials, presentation slides, sign-in sheets, and teacher registration forms to evaluate compliance with professional development requirements for teachers.
 - 8 courses randomly selected from the population of 62 courses offered through traditional SCECH programs for the period October 1, 2015 through June 30, 2018 by the 1 remaining selected school district.
- Examined documentation for all 47 new teachers identified as completing their first 3 years of employment during school year 2016-17 or 2017-18 from the 16 applicable selected school districts to evaluate compliance with new teacher professional development and mentoring requirements.
- Randomly and judgmentally sampled 17 long-term substitute teacher permits pertaining to 16 teachers from the population of 48 long-term substitute teacher permits from 14 of the selected school districts during school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 to determine whether long-term substitute teachers were assigned mentors.

Our random samples were selected to eliminate any bias and enable us to project the results to the population. We selected other samples judgmentally and, therefore, could not project those results to the respective populations.

OBJECTIVE #3

To assess the sufficiency of OEE's oversight of required evaluations for teachers and school administrators.

To accomplish this objective, we:

- Conducted interviews with OEE management and staff to gain an understanding of OEE's efforts to provide oversight of school districts' teacher and school administrator evaluation systems.
- Reviewed MDE's list of approved teacher and school administrator evaluation tools.
- Reviewed a research project that was commissioned by MDE and performed by a contractor to provide recommendations to MDE for educator evaluation implementation.
- Randomly and judgmentally selected a sample of 20 school districts from the Statewide population of approximately 900 school districts and conducted an on-site examination of records at each selected school district and performed the following procedures:
 - Verified whether each selected school district utilized either an MDE-approved evaluation tool(s) or another evaluation tool(s) that included all components required under State law.
 - Verified whether each selected school district provided training to teachers, school administrators, evaluators, and observers regarding the school districts' performance evaluation system as required by State law.
 - Randomly and judgmentally sampled and reviewed 394 of 5,548 annual teacher evaluations and 38 of 466 annual school administrator evaluations reported in the State's Registry of Educational Personnel by the selected school districts for school years 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 to determine whether the school district maintained documentation to support that:
 - The required annual performance evaluations were completed for the selected teachers and school administrators.
 - Evaluators performed classroom observations that included a review of the teacher's lesson plan, the state curriculum being used, and a review of pupil engagement.
 - Student growth and assessment data accounted for 25% of each completed teacher and school administrator evaluation.

- Completed teacher evaluations were based primarily on the teacher's performance as measured by the evaluation tool developed or adopted by the school district.
 - Evaluators and teachers developed specific performance goals.
 - Midyear progress reports were completed for teachers within their first year of teaching and included written improvement plans, as applicable.
 - The completed evaluation was signed by the teacher or school administrator being evaluated.
- Verified that school districts' public Web sites included teacher and school administrator evaluation information for 24 school districts that were randomly selected from the Statewide population of approximately 900 school districts.

Our random samples were selected to eliminate any bias and enable us to project the results to the population. We selected other samples judgmentally and, therefore, could not project those results to the respective populations.

CONCLUSIONS

We base our conclusions on our audit efforts and any resulting material conditions or reportable conditions*.

When selecting activities or programs for audit, we direct our efforts based on risk and opportunities to improve State government operations. Consequently, we prepare our performance audit reports on an exception basis.

AGENCY RESPONSES

Our audit report contains 3 findings and 3 corresponding recommendations. MDE's preliminary response indicates that it agrees with all of the recommendations.

The agency preliminary response that follows each recommendation in our report was taken from the agency's written comments and oral discussion at the end of our fieldwork. Section 18.1462 of the *Michigan Compiled Laws* and the State of Michigan Financial Management Guide (Part VII, Chapter 4, Section 100) require an audited agency to develop a plan to comply with the recommendations and to submit it to the State Budget Office upon completion of an audit. Within 30 days of receipt, the Office of Internal Audit Services, State Budget Office, is required to review the plan and either accept the plan as final or contact the agency to take additional steps to finalize the plan.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

**PRIOR AUDIT
FOLLOW-UP**

Following is the status of the reported findings from our March 2011 performance audit of the Office of Professional Preparation Services, Michigan Department of Education (313-0140-10), and from our October 2015 follow-up report on prior audit recommendations (313-0140-10F):

Prior Audit Project Number	Prior Audit Finding Number	Topic Area	Current Status	Current Finding Number
313-0140-10	1	Monitoring School District Provided Professional Development	Rewritten*	2
313-0140-10	1	Validating Professional Development Data	Not in scope of this audit.	
313-0140-10	2	Review of Continuing Education Credits	Rewritten	1
313-0140-10	3	Teaching Certificates	Not in scope of this audit.	
313-0140-10	4	Compliance With Federal and State Purchasing Procedures	Not in scope of this audit.	
313-0140-10	4	Classification of Intermediate School Districts as Subrecipients	Not in scope of this audit.	
313-0140-10	5	Procedures for School District Reviews	Not applicable.	
313-0140-10	6	Late Special Permit Applications	Not applicable.	
313-0140-10F	1	Improved Documentation of Professional Development Audits	Not applicable.	

**SUPPLEMENTAL
INFORMATION**

Our audit report includes supplemental information presented as Exhibits #1 through #4. Our audit was not directed toward expressing a conclusion on this information.

* See glossary at end of report for definition.

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

core subject areas	Includes art, civics and government, economics, English, foreign languages, geography, history, language arts, mathematics, music, reading, and sciences.
credentials	For purposes of this report, includes licenses, certificates, authorizations, subject and grade endorsements, and/or permits issued by OEE to Michigan educators.
district provided professional development (DPPD)	Professional development offered in compliance with State law and/or that the school district has supported the teacher either by providing a substitute teacher, paying conference or workshop expenses or registration fees, or providing released time for attendance at professional development activities.
education-related professional learning (ERPL)	An educational opportunity intended to improve an educator's practice and capacity to perform the work within the profession of education and is categorized as one or more of three categories: district provided professional development hours; State continuing education clock hours; and college semester credit hours being the equivalent of 25 ERPL hours.
educator	Any teacher, school administrator, school psychologist, or school guidance counselor who holds a valid Michigan certificate or license.
Educator Preparation Institution (EPI)	An institution of higher learning that offers a structured program that prepares individuals in the field of teaching.
effectiveness	Success in achieving mission and goals.
endorsement	A discipline area that a teacher is authorized to teach at specific grade levels based on completion of an appropriate program and passing the appropriate state teacher discipline area examination.
long-term substitute teacher permits	The appropriate permit, authorization, or approval to employ an individual or teacher who does not hold the valid and appropriate endorsement or certificate. MDE issues 4 types of long-term substitute teacher permits: extension of the daily substitute teacher permit, full-year basic substitute teacher permit, full-year shortage substitute teacher permit, and an expert substitute teacher permit.

material condition	A matter that, in the auditor's judgment, is more severe than a reportable condition and could impair the ability of management to operate a program in an effective and efficient manner and/or could adversely affect the judgment of an interested person concerning the effectiveness and efficiency of the program. Our assessment of materiality is in relation to the respective audit objective.
MDE	Michigan Department of Education.
MOECS	Michigan Online Educator Certification System.
new teacher	A teacher in the first 3 years of employment in classroom teaching.
OEE	Office of Educator Excellence.
performance audit	An audit that provides findings or conclusions based on an evaluation of sufficient, appropriate evidence against criteria. Performance audits provide objective analysis to assist management and those charged with governance and oversight in using the information to improve program performance and operations, reduce costs, facilitate decision-making by parties with responsibility to oversee or initiate corrective action, and contribute to public accountability.
public school academy (PSA)	A State-supported public school under the State Constitution, operating under a contract issued by a public authorizing body and is also commonly referred to as a charter school.
reportable condition	A matter that, in the auditor's judgment, is less severe than a material condition and falls within any of the following categories: an opportunity for improvement within the context of the audit objectives; a deficiency in internal control that is significant within the context of the audit objectives; all instances of fraud; illegal acts unless they are inconsequential within the context of the audit objectives; significant violations of provisions of contracts or grant agreements; and significant abuse that has occurred or is likely to have occurred.
rewritten	The recurrence of similar conditions reported in a prior audit in combination with current conditions that warrant the prior audit recommendation to be revised for the circumstances.
SCECH sponsor	Provides professional development activities that may be used to renew or progress educator certificates. Sponsors are MDE-approved and must submit proposed SCECH programming to OEE for approval and assign a coordinator. Coordinators are

responsible for the sponsor's program SCECH records and MOECS access.

State continuing education
clock hours (SCECH)

Professional development activities offered by OEE-approved SCECH sponsors that may be used to renew or progress educator certificates and licenses.



Report Fraud/Waste/Abuse

Online: audgen.michigan.gov/report-fraud

Hotline: (517) 334-8070