FIRST CLASS PRE-K TEACHER SURVEY REPORT

2019

UAB School of Public Health

I.   Sample

Respondents

The survey was distributed in electronic format First Class Pre-K teachers (lead and auxiliary) in spring 2019. Of the total distribution (2,226), 1,736 teachers completed or partially completed the survey, for a response rate of 80%.

Total audience (email or direct link)	2,352
Emails bounced	- 111
Duplicates	- 15
Total Distribution	2,226
Completed Responses	1,781
Response Rate	80%

Responses were categorized according to Pre-K regions through respondent identification of program location selected from the color-coded map and legend below. The largest number of responses came from Region 2 of the state.

Region	Number of Counties in Region	Number of Responses	Percent of Total Responses
1	7	212	13.8
2	4	225	14.7
3	14	186	12.1
4	3	171	11.2
5	11	182	11.9
6	8	185	12.1
7	7	204	13.3
8	13	166	10.8

Region 1
Region 2
Region 3
Region 4
Region 5
Region 6
Region 7
Region 8

First Class Pre K Regional Map

Role in the Classroom:

	Number	Percent
I am the lead teacher in my classroom	854	55.6
I am an auxiliary teacher in my classroom	681	44.4

Number of Years in Teaching Overall:

	Number	Percent
Less than 1 year	153	9.9
1-5 years	533	34.7
6-10 years	254	16.5
More than 10 years	598	38.9

Number of Years Working with Children age Birth to 5:

	Number	Percent
Less than 1	70	4.6
1- 5 years	491	32.0
6-10 years	373	24.3
More than 10 years	600	39.1

Educational Certifications:

	Number	Percent
Early Childhood Education	1013	44.6
Early Childhood Special Education	43	1.9
Elementary Education	483	21.3
Special Education	41	1.8
Child Development Associate (CDA)	268	11.8
None	91	4.0
Other	331	14.6

*"Other" included various Associate's and Bachelor's degrees, early childhood coursework hours, school counseling

- **Over half of respondents were lead teachers (55.6%).**
- **Teachers were primarily newer teachers with 1-5 years teaching overall (34.7%) or experienced teachers with more than 10 years in the classroom (38.9%).**
- **Teachers had extensive experience in working with children ages birth to 5, with nearly 40% of respondents stating they had more than 10 years of experience with this population.**

Interest in Furthering Education:

	Strongly disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither agree nor disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly agree % (n)
I am ***interested in going back to school*** to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.	10.0 (151)	10.2 (155)	22.1 (336)	20.8 (316)	36.8 (559)
It would cost too much to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.	7.1 (107)	11.1 (168)	33.2 (501)	25.7 (388)	22.9 (345)
I don't have enough spare time to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.	14.2 (214)	24.0 (361)	37.0 (557)	17.8 (267)	7.0 (105)
I don't know where to go to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.	28.6 (430)	36.4 (546)	26.8 (403)	6.4 (96)	1.8 (27)
It is not worth the time and effort to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification - the salary increase would be too small.	31.0 (466)	29.4 (441)	27.5 (413)	7.9 (118)	4.3 (64)
I am not supported by my principal and colleagues to further my education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.	42.6 (639)	29.2 (439)	22.3 (335)	3.5 (52)	2.4 (36)

- **More than half of teachers agreed or strongly agreed (57.6%) that they were interested in going back to school to further their education in the early childhood field or to get a certification.**
- **The most commonly reported barrier to going back to school to further education or get a certification was that it would cost too much.**

II.   Results

A.   Communication with Coach

Method of communication with coach (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Face-to-face meetings	1701	38.0
Phone calls/video conferencing	500	11.2
Email	1517	33.9
Text	757	16.9

- **The most commonly-reported methods of communication with coach were face-to-face meetings and email.**

Primary method of contact with coach:

	Number	Percent
Face-to-face meetings	540	31.9
Phone calls/video conferencing	20	1.2
Email	1065	62.9
Text	68	4.0

- **Teachers identified email and face-to-face meetings as their primary methods of contact with coaches.**

Frequency of communication with coach (on average, by method):

	1-2 times a year % (n)	Once a quarter % (n)	Once a month % (n)	Every other week % (n)	Every week % (n)	Other* % (n)
Face-to-face meetings/In Person	0.6 (10)	7.4 (125)	85.7 (1444)	2.3 (39)	0.4 (6)	3.6 (60)
Phone calls/video conference	11.6 (57)	12.0 (59)	34.1 (167)	15.1 (74)	5.9 (29)	21.2 (104)
Email	0.9 (13)	1.1 (17)	21.4 (319)	33.0 (493)	36.5 (544)	7.1 (106)
Text	6.7 (50)	10.2 (76)	33.9 (252)	22.2 (165)	12.0 (89)	15.2 (112)

"Other" included "as-needed" and "as requested."

- **Face-to-face meetings with coaches typically occurred monthly.**

B. Coach Observation of Teaching

Frequency of coach observing teaching:

	Number	Percent
More than once a week	9	0.5
Once a week	42	2.5
Twice a month	75	4.4
Once a month	1304	77.2
Once a quarter	151	8.9
1-2 times a year	61	3.6
Never	10	0.6
Other*	37	2.2

"Other" included "varies," "as-needed," and "as requested."

Average time spent by coach observing teaching:

	Number	Percent
Less than 30 minutes	86	5.1
30-60 minutes	596	35.3
More than 60 minutes	1004	59.5

Average time spent with coach to discuss observations:

	Number	Percent
Less than 30 minutes	621	36.9
30-60 minutes	961	57.1
More than 60 minutes	102	6.1

- **The majority of teachers reported coaches observed their teaching one time per month.**
- **Teachers reported coaches typically observed their teaching for more than 60 minutes and spent an average of 30-60 minutes discussing the observation.**

C. Content of Coaching, Supports, Strategies, Characteristics, and Relationship

Focus of coaching (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Language/literacy practices	727	11.6
Math teaching practices	526	8.4
Social-emotional teaching practices	1120	17.9
Approaches to learning	1041	16.6
Classroom organization	592	9.5
Playing/interacting with children	639	10.2
Working with diverse populations	288	4.6
Challenging behavior	1154	18.4
Other (please specify)	173	2.8

"Other" included CLASS dimensions, TS GOLD, science, small groups, Conscious Discipline, curriculum, transition to Kindergarten, miscellaneous other topics, and "as needed."

- **The most commonly-reported focus areas of coaching were challenging behavior and social-emotional teaching practices, followed closely by approaches to learning.**

Supports provided by coach (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Role playing the teaching practice with you	502	10.7
Modeling the teaching practice in the classroom/with children	898	19.2
Providing information about the practice through videos or readings	1424	30.4
Providing/making materials such as a visual schedule or picture cards	1059	22.6
Providing help in the classroom	804	17.2

- **The most commonly reported coaching support was the provision of information about teaching practices through videos or readings.**

Received additional training (beyond coaching; e.g., workshop) related to teaching practices:

	Number	Percent
Yes	1429	85.4
No	244	14.6

- **The majority of teachers reported receiving additional training on teaching practices above and beyond coaching.**

Respondents were asked about their level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly Disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither Agree nor Disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly Agree % (n)
Coaching is an effective way of supporting my use of evidence-based teaching practices.	9.3 (155)	1.3 (22)	8.1 (135)	43.6 (727)	37.7 (630)
In general, my relationship with my coach is positive.	1.2 (20)	0.4 (6)	2.3 (38)	22.4 (369)	73.7 (1212)
In general, my coaching partnership is positive.	1.2 (20)	0.2 (4)	2.8 (45)	23.0 (377)	72.7 (1190)

- **More than 80% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that coaching was an effective way to support their use of evidence-based teaching practices.**
- **Teachers overwhelmingly reported their relationship and partnership with their coach was positive.**

Frequency that Coach Displays Selected Characteristics:

	Never % (n)	Rarely % (n)	Sometimes % (n)	Often % (n)	Always % (n)
Knowledge of adult learning principles	1.2 (20)	1.8 (30)	11.5 (189)	31.7 (519)	53.7 (880)
Knowledge of coaching practices	0.5 (8)	1.2 (20)	7.8 (128)	29.4 (479)	61.1 (996)
Competency in early childhood teaching practices	0.2 (4)	0.9 (15)	6.1 (100)	25.2 (413)	67.6 (1110)
Classroom experience	0.2 (4)	1.8 (30)	6.6 (108)	24.4 (400)	66.9 (1094)
Listening skills	0.3 (5)	1.1 (18)	5.8 (94)	23.7 (387)	69.1 (1127)
Observation and data collection skills	0.4 (7)	1.2 (20)	6.2 (102)	26.6 (435)	65.5 (1071)
Interpersonal skills	0.4 (7)	1.3 (22)	7.5 (123)	26.0 (425)	64.7 (1059)
Accountability	0.5 (8)	1.0 (17)	4.4 (72)	22.9 (376)	71.2 (1168)

- **Teachers reported coaches consistently displayed a wide variety of characteristics that contributed to a positive coaching experience and supported the use of evidence-based teaching practices in First Class Pre-K classrooms.**

D. *Coaching and Action Plans*

Teacher and coach develop written action plans to guide coaching:

	Number	Percent
Yes	1331	81.3
No	306	18.7

Method for developing actions plans:

	Number	Percent
Coach provided plan	141	10.6
Developed plan together as a team	1129	84.8
Teacher developed plan provided to coach	62	4.7

Level of teacher input in the development of the action plan:

	Number	Percent
No input	11	0.8
Very little input	19	1.4
Some input	427	32.1
A great deal of input	873	65.6

- **The majority of teachers and coaches developed written action plans together as a team with a great deal of input from the teacher.**

Elements included in action plan (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
A goal for using teaching practice(s)	1209	31.7
Step-by-step procedures for accomplishing the goal	827	21.7
Timeline	769	20.2

	Number	Percent
Resources needed	1009	26.5

- **More than 30% of action plans included a goal for using specific teaching practices.**

Follow-up actions after development of an action plan (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Coach observation of teaching practices in the plan	928	32.3
You and your coach discuss the implementation of the plan	1146	39.8
You and your coach revisit and/or revise the plan	802	27.9

- **Significant follow-up occurred related to action plans, primarily discussion of implementation and observation of teaching practices included in the plan.**

Usefulness of action plans in supporting the use of teaching practices:

	Number	Percent
Not useful	9	0.7
Somewhat useful	160	12.1
Useful	617	46.8
Very useful	533	40.4

- **More than 87% of teachers found action plans to be useful or very useful in supporting their use of evidence-based teaching practices in their classrooms.**

Frequency of coach support for reflection and provision of feedback:

	1-2 times a year % (n)	Once a quarter % (n)	Once a month % (n)	Twice a month % (n)	Once a week or more % (n)
How often does your coach support you to reflect on your use of teaching practices?	5.0 (80)	11.9 (192)	71.2 (1144)	9.5 (153)	2.4 (38)
How often does your coach provide feedback on your instructional strategies?	5.3 (85)	12.6 (202)	70.6 (1135)	9.1 (147)	2.4 (39)

- **The majority of teachers reported their coach provided monthly support for reflection on use of teaching practices and feedback on instructional strategies.**

E. Coaching and Feedback

Format of feedback from coach (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Written/hard copy	523	15.2
Email	1523	44.3
Verbal	1286	37.4
Data representation	107	3.1

- **Coaching feedback was typically provided by email or verbally.**

Focus of feedback provided by coach (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Identifying things done well in using the teaching practice(s)	1422	29.4
Identifying ways to improve my use of the teaching practice(s)	1355	28.0
Supporting individual children/challenging behavior	1156	23.9
The effects of my teaching on the children	911	18.8

- **The focus of coaching feedback was primarily identifying strengths and opportunities to improve teaching practices.**

Frequency coach uses data from the observation when providing feedback (e.g., how often teacher used specific strategy):

	Number	Percent
Never	40	2.5
Rarely	70	4.4
Sometimes	390	24.4
Often	701	43.8
Always	400	25.0

- **Nearly 70% of teachers reported their coach often or always used data from observations when providing feedback, demonstrating a strong use of data to support improvement.**

F. Coaching and Problem-Solving

Coach supports teacher in solving problems in the classroom (e.g., challenging behavior of individual children, difficulty planning new teaching practices):

	Number	Percent
Yes	1566	97.5
No	40	2.5

Method coach uses to support teacher in solving problems (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Provides suggestions	1475	37.6
Has collaborative discussions	1210	30.8
Provides support materials	1239	31.6

- **Nearly all teachers reported coaches supporting them in solving classroom problems, primarily by providing suggestions.**

G. *Strategies and Supports in the Coaching Process*

Respondents were provided a space to share their thoughts on the most and least useful strategies and supports provided through the First Class Pre-K coaching process. The following consistent themes emerged from the text comments:

Most useful strategies or supports

Modeling of and hands-on experience in applying developmentally appropriate practices in the classroom

Behavioral strategies and supports for children with behavioral or social-emotional challenges (Conscious Discipline, planning with coach, support from coach)

Relationship with coach which provides ongoing communication for honest/positive feedback and support of coach to assist with planning, small groups, behavioral issues, and lesson planning (encouragement, phone calls, face-to-face meetings, email, feedback, mentoring, brainstorming/idea generation)

Materials and resources for the classroom

How to best optimize use of Teaching Strategies GOLD and other documentation of child's growth

Less useful strategies or supports

Work load of professional development and documentation for First Class (ASQ, myTeachstone, Strengthening Families modules, Teaching Strategies GOLD checkpoints)

Conscious Discipline as a behavioral support strategy

Teacher: Coach relationship- Some perception of negative relationships due to focus on areas needing improvement vs. building on strengths

Resources shared via email that are not modeled or explained

Length of visits and amount of communications from coaches – sometimes overwhelming or perceived as too much/burdensome

H. *Additional supports for using evidence-based practices*

Respondents were provided a space to share their thoughts on additional supports that would assist them in using evidence-based practices in the classroom. The following consistent themes emerged from the text comments:

Modeling by coaches, more hands-on practice and increased opportunities to observe evidence-based practices (including the use of Teaching Strategies GOLD)

Visiting other First Class Pre-K/OSR classrooms (intentional networking and collaboration with other First Class teachers)

Professional development on challenging behaviors, children with special needs, and family involvement

More workshops and small groups on evidence-based practices

Materials and resources for the classroom to support evidence-based practices

Relevant, recent research articles on evidence-based practices from early childhood education leaders like the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)

I. *Satisfaction with Services provided by the Office of School Readiness (OSR)*

Respondents were asked about their level of satisfaction with the following OSR services:

	Very dissatisfied % (n)	Dissatisfied % (n)	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied % (n)	Satisfied % (n)	Very satisfied % (n)
Professional development	0.4 (6)	1.4 (22)	5.4 (87)	44.6 (713)	48.3 (772)
Coaching	0.4 (7)	1.2 (19)	4.3 (69)	33.6 (535)	60.5 (964)
Monitoring	0.4 (7)	0.8 (13)	6.1 (97)	35.9 (574)	56.8 (909)
Administrative assistance	0.8 (12)	1.3 (20)	12.0 (191)	39.8 (635)	46.3 (739)

- **Teachers were overwhelmingly satisfied or very satisfied with services provided by OSR.**

J. *Suggested changes to services provided by OSR*

Respondents were provided a space to share suggestions for changes to services provided by OSR. The following consistent themes emerged from the text comments:

Coaching improvements in communication and style regarding assessments, visits, and establishing rapport (coach and monitor reports to directors and teachers)

Identify opportunities for improvements in communication with Pre-K directors to assist with their knowledge of First Class/OSR requirements

Sharing all communications with teachers, auxiliary teachers, and directors alike

Conference timing, location, and size – move to time outside of winter holiday break

Improvements in My Teach Stone, Creative Curriculum, and Teaching Strategies GOLD due to work loads, time efficiencies, and real-life applications

More support for teachers with children with challenging behaviors

Equity and continuity in coaching within regions/across sites

Better understanding of First Class/OSR requirements and changes made from year to year

Incentives for mentor sites and opportunities to visit other OSR-funded First Class Pre-K sites

Professional development based on experience of teachers (hands-on opportunities, science, behavioral)

Better access to funding for classroom and increased funding for materials and requirements, auxiliary teachers, and high cost items (ex. shade for play area)

Regional conferences/professional development and networking opportunities to learn from others

Interest in learning more about the mission and vision of First Class Pre K and Department of Early Childhood Education.

K.   Impact of First Class Pre-K and OSR Supports

Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with the following statements:

	Strongly disagree % (n)	Disagree % (n)	Neither agree nor disagree % (n)	Agree % (n)	Strongly agree % (n)
The Pre-K services we provide with support from OSR impact the quality of <u>other Pre-K classrooms</u> in our facility.	1.0 (16)	0.6 (10)	13.5 (214)	35.9 (571)	49.0 (780)
The Pre-K services we provide with support from OSR benefit <u>our local community</u>.	0.6 (10)	0.2 (3)	4.3 (68)	35.0 (559)	59.9 (957)

Respondents were provided space to provide additional information regarding the impact of support from OSR on other Pre-K programs in a facility and the local community. The following common themes emerged:

Community would not have access to quality Pre-K if First Class Pre-K was unavailable, especially in rural locations
Pre-K provides opportunities for social-emotional and academic growth in preparation for Kindergarten
There is a need for community engagement opportunities to share the benefits of First Class Pre-K

Teachers were asked to rate any positive changes they had observed in their personal skills during their time employed as a First Class Pre-K teacher:

Personal Skills	No growth % (n)	Slight growth % (n)	Moderate growth % (n)	Significant growth % (n)	No need for improvement % (n)
Classroom management	0.3 (5)	2.7 (43)	19.5 (310)	72.3 (1151)	5.2 (83)
Teacher/child interactions	0.2 (3)	2.0 (32)	15.5 (247)	74.8 (1189)	7.5 (119)
Teacher/parent interactions	0.9 (14)	4.1 (65)	21.4 (339)	64.6 (1024)	9.0 (142)
Lead/auxiliary teacher interactions	0.8 (12)	3.9 (62)	15.8 (251)	65.9 (1048)	13.7 (218)
Intentional instructional planning	0.5 (8)	4.3 (68)	21.9 (349)	67.4 (1072)	5.8 (93)
Knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice	0.1 (1)	3.5 (55)	17.2 (273)	72.8 (1157)	6.5 (104)
Instructional approaches for special populations	3.8 (60)	14.4 (229)	27.0 (429)	48.4 (768)	6.4 (101)

- **Teachers reported positive changes across all personal skills, but especially in teacher/child interactions, knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice, and classroom management.**

L. Help Me Grow Alabama and First Class Pre-K

Referral to Help Me Grow Alabama based on ASQ-3 Developmental Screener:

	Number	Percent
Yes	636	40.1
No	949	59.9

- **Nearly 60% of teachers did not discuss referral to Help Me Grow Alabama with parents after the ASQ-3 Developmental Screener was completed for their child.**

Reasons for not discussing referrals to Help Me Grow Alabama (could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Children screened within typical expectations	541	46.9
Children already receiving or already referred for IEP services or testing	431	37.3
Other* (please specify)	182	15.8

Other includes discussion between lead teacher and parents (respondent was auxiliary teacher), being a new teacher in the classroom, and lack of training to initiate these discussions.

- **The "other" reasons reported for not discussing Help Me Grow Alabama referrals with families following screening are an area for further exploration and perhaps training to support teacher knowledge and comfort in engaging in these discussions.**

Number of parents for whom teacher suggested referral to Help Me Grow Alabama:

	Number	Percent
1	146	23.4
2	108	17.3
3	74	11.8
4	31	5.0
5	15	2.4
6 or more	67	10.7
I don't know/I'm not sure	184	29.4

Number of parents for whom referral to Help Me Grow Alabama was suggested who agreed to receive more information, referral, or support:

	Number	Percent
1	134	21.7
2	61	9.9
3	42	6.8
4	13	2.1
5	5	0.8
6 or more	27	4.4

	Number	Percent
I don't know/I'm not sure	336	54.4

Reasons for why parents did not agree to receive more information, referral, or support related to Help Me Grow Alabama (Could check all that apply):

	Number	Percent
Not applicable, all parents agreed to receive	123	19.0
Children already receiving or already referred for IEP services or testing	103	15.9
Other* (please specify)	47	7.3
I don't know/I'm not sure	374	57.8

Other includes parents perceiving their child doesn't have a need for services and stigma associated with developmental delays.

- **The "other" reasons and "I don't know/"I'm not sure" responses reported for teacher perception of why parents did not agree to additional engagement with Help Me Grow Alabama may indicate a need for additional parent/family engagement and awareness opportunities to support increased knowledge of age-appropriate child developmental expectations, developmental delay, and Help Me Grow Alabama.**

M. *Additional resources to support high quality Pre-K services*

Respondents were provided a space to share suggestions for additional resources OSR could offer to support teachers in providing high quality Pre-K services to children in their communities. The following consistent themes emerged from the text comments:

Funding for more classrooms, books/CDs, classroom libraries, personnel, playgrounds, outdoor learning/field trips, curriculum, replacement materials for centers and older classrooms, technology/iPads, Smartboards, professional development, and pay parity
Professional development and mentoring for dealing with children with social-emotional issues, working in teams in classrooms, science, developmentally appropriate practices, relationships with families, use of technology, Teaching Strategies GOLD, Creative Curriculum, and autism
Materials, trainings, hands-on and informational sessions for parents about First Class Pre-K (what the program is and its expectations), parenting skills, school readiness, etc.
Providing opportunities for community and schools to better understand what First Class Pre-K is and the importance of developmentally appropriate practices
Collaboration and networking among First Class Pre-K classrooms

N. *Benefits of First Class Pre-K for teachers, children, the facility, and the local community*

Respondents were provided a space to share their thoughts on the benefits of First Class Pre-K for children, the facility, and the local community. The following consistent themes emerged from the text comments:

Increased number of four-year-olds who are ready to learn and develop the needed skills to successfully transition to Kindergarten (Kindergarten readiness skills overall)
Improved social-emotional, cognitive, and problem solving skills for children who participate in First Class Pre-K

Resources and supports provided by First Class Pre-K to teachers and classrooms

Better understanding of high quality early childhood environments and developmentally appropriate practice in classroom (teacher-child interactions, vocabulary-building, play)

Improved access to high quality early childhood education for children who would not normally have access due to high cost/lack of affordability

Better parent and teacher understanding of the value of play in learning