

EMPLOYER PERCEPTIONS

CAEP Standards 4.3, 5.1, 5.5

This artifact documents employer perceptions gathered through a survey and focus group session.

To meet Council of Postsecondary Education and Murray State University assessment requirements, the university has distributed an annual survey to completer's employers. The response rate has been so minimal, however, that the EPP has been unable to use data for program improvement. Therefore, the EPP conducted its own survey fall 2015.

The provider used the *District Placement Map* to identify school districts who employed the majority of its program completers. An interdepartmental team, Dr. Jacqueline Hansen (Director of Assessment), Dr. Meagan Musselman (Coordinator of the MA Teacher Leader program), Dr. Dusty Reed (Assistant Professor), and Dr. Yuejin Xu (Associate Professor) designed a survey instrument to capture employers' perceptions of the quality of graduates' preparedness to teach P-12 students. Dr. Marty Dunham, a psychometric expert, established the content validity of the instrument. The dean's office disseminated this survey instrument to superintendents in school districts who employed the highest number of program completers. Superintendents' perceptions reflected their overall view of Murray State University completers' preparedness, not individual completer's proficiency.

School principals and district superintendents who serve in the provider's service region received an opportunity to respond to an EPP-created employer survey to give their overall impression of the provider's preparation of MSU program completers. This EPP-created survey sought administrators' perception of completers' educational efficacy. Respondents considered all the MSU program completers in their school. They rated completers using a 4-point Likert scale with (1) Low to (5) High/Exceptional. Data were gathered for the 2012 and 2013 academic years. A recent employer survey requested information on employees hired in 2014-2015. The *Employer Survey Table* documents the means of employers' satisfaction of the completers' preparedness in the eight targeted areas as well as overall satisfaction.

Employer Survey Table

	2012 (n = 27) Mean (SD)	2013 (n = 8) Mean (SD)	2014-2015 (n= 20) Mean (SD)
Content Knowledge	4.27 (0.53)	4.25 (0.71)	3.90 (0.55)
Effective Teaching Strategies	3.77 (0.76)	4.25 (0.46)	3.65 (0.75)
Professional Practice	3.69 (0.79)	4.25 (0.46)	3.70 (0.86)
Teach All Students	3.73 (0.78)	4.25 0.71)	3.95 (0.83)
Learning Environment	4.23 (0.91)	4.63 (0.52)	4.05 (0.76)
Diverse Students	3.65 (1.06)	4.38 (0.74)	3.80 (0.95)
Instructional Technology	4.35 (0.69)	4.63 (0.74)	4.15 (0.67)
Teacher Leadership	3.85 (0.78)	4.25 (0.71)	3.80 (0.77)
Overall Satisfaction	3.96 (0.72)	4.38 (0.52)	3.70 (0.73)

To gain additional insight into employers’ satisfaction of completers’ preparedness, faculty conducted a focus group session with seven employers spring 2016. Participants are current public school district administrators and graduate students in ADM 759 *Instructional Planning in Education*, a course in the EPP’s doctoral program. Focus group discussion topics included the number of MSU completers employed in each school, completers’ roles and responsibilities, completers’ pedagogical proficiency, and overall satisfaction of completers’ preparedness. The focus group was conducted via *Skype* and recorded. A transcription of the dialogue appears below.

Transcribed by Jessica
Mar 2, 2016

Dr. A: How many of your current employees are graduates from Murray State?

Interviewee 1: I have 12.

Interviewee 2: I know of 1.

Dr. A: Anyone else?

Interviewee 3: I would estimate about 10.

Interviewee4: I’ve got 30.

Dr. A: Casey, how many do you have out in Ballard County?

Interviewee 5: Oh uh I wouldn’t know that. We have a couple 100 employees so I would say of the certified staff 85-90% have some sort of degree from Murray State. So, I don’t know 100.

Dr. A: Would it fair to say that the majority of educators in Western Kentucky are Murray graduates?

Interviewee 1: yes

Dr. A.: What's the range of assigned responsibilities in K12 that these folks have?

Interviewee 6: Can you repeat that one more time please? Well in my school I rep about 30 and I mean they are all teachers. I have some support staff, but I mean about 90% are teachers.

Interviewee 5: I'd say everything from support staff all the way up to the super intendent in Ballard County.

Interviewee 7: I only have one and she is family resources.

Dr. A: We need to get more of your people into Murray, Scott.

Interviewee 2: Well they sent the email back. That's just, I guess She's saying that she was from Murray. I mean there's 18 of them. I didn't ask my afterschool directors, but most of them only have high school diplomas.

Dr. A: Scott, what we may do since Davis County is really short in MSU graduates, your grade in the class will depend on whether or not you can recruit a 100 students for us. (laughing)

Interviewee 2: (laughing) Thanks for that directive I'll work on it. That can be my community engagement project. (laughing)

Dr. A: Comment on the performance of these folks and their assigned responsibilities.

Good, bad, indifferent, stellar?

Interviewee 1: The ones that I had were primarily teachers as well and just thinking about the 12. The majority of those 12, they are my rock star teachers.

Interviewee 5: In our district, just because we have some many of them I would say they is a pretty broad range of performance because what you described in Brooke's school and our middle school leader in me did where everybody all went to school. I was one of two people that was associated with that building who did not have a degree from Murray. So, because you got so many I think the performance is all over the place there, but I think they do as good a job as anyone preparing.

Interviewee 6: I mean my teachers are some rock stars as well, and I mean they are all from Murray State, so I'm just very pleased. Even our regional campus really produces some really great teachers and then of course main campus.

Interviewee 2: My one respondent from Murray State she's considered the leader of all of the Friskies. She is looked upon the leader of the group. She works at Davis County high school which is our largest school in the district by the way.

Dr. A: Are you satisfied with the preparation of you MSU graduates with their assigned responsibilities?

Interviewee 1: With my experience with the ones that I have I would say definitely.

Interviewee 3: I agree.

Interviewee 6: Me as well.

Interviewee 2: Yes.

Dr. A: Let me turn that question just a little bit. Of course we have undergraduate preparation for teaching and then our graduate preparation for administer positions. Of the people you work with and know that are Murray graduates, in the graduate programs in principal ship, counseling, superintendent program. What is your impression of our graduates in those areas?

Interviewee 6: Both of the Aps (assistant principals) came from Murray State or graduated from Murray State. I've been very pleased. Obviously I'm getting my degrees there as well. I didn't do my undergrad at Murray State, but I'm very pleased with my graduate work. I definitely think they are being well prepared.

Interviewee 5: I would guess a higher percentage of our Administrators are Murray graduates than they percentage of teachers. Because once you are employed in western Kentucky most people go to MSU to do that Rank 1 and Rank 2 stuff. So I think our administrators are well prepared. I think that all of the administrators in our district all of them have gone to Murray.