

Evaluation of the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program—Year 2

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Executive Summary

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) launched the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program in fall 2020 to support beginning teachers entering the profession under the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic, which exacerbated the challenge of a long-term statewide teacher shortage. In the first year, program implementation began at the end of January 2021. While that initial implementation period was relatively short, participants reported value for their practices and increased efficacy. ISBE renewed the program based in part on the promise of those results, providing an opportunity for full-year implementation in 2021–22.

In Year 2, the Illinois Education Association (IEA) and Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), in partnership with the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), continued to lead program recruitment and implementation across the state.

Digital Promise, a non-profit education organization working at the intersection of practice, research, and innovation, continued as the independent research and evaluation partner to understand how program implementation deepened or changed in Year 2.

This report presents our findings on program implementation—the nature of coaching and mentoring, and their challenges and successes—and results for coach, mentor, teacher, and clinician outcomes. We also suggest implications for IEA, IFT, and CTU to inform statewide program recruitment and scale beyond 2021–22.

Program Description in Year 2

Year 2 brought a few significant changes to the program. First, IEA, IFT, and CTU extended the program to second-year teachers. The COVID-19 interrupted the first year of teaching for these teachers, and 2021–22 would be the first year teaching in person full-time for many. While these teachers may have developed lesson planning skills and become familiar with curriculum, they had inconsistent opportunities to hone classroom management skills, especially for in-person teaching.

Second, IEA, IFT, and CTU also opened the program to educators in clinical professions (e.g., social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, psychologists, speech therapists). Like teachers, clinicians are matched with a virtual coach and where possible, a mentor, in the same specialty. The clinician may be the only person in the building with that specialization, and may serve multiple buildings. Each clinical profession has its own professional standards that require specific supports to apply to educational settings. Clinicians also may interact with many school staff and parents and so, similar to new teachers, may require supports to acculturate to the school and/or district.

Third, TeachForward updated or added some features on the virtual coaching platform to improve educators' experiences. For example, to make it easier for collaboration, TeachForward added features to allow users to share resources in a learning group, tag and annotate resources, and chat. To make the

resources on the platform more user-friendly, TeachForward added closed captioning to the videos, for example.

Evaluation Approach

The 2021–22 evaluation focuses on key questions about whether the program was implemented as intended and factors that facilitated or constrained implementation; participants' satisfaction with program supports (e.g., coaching and mentoring activities, trainings); and participants' outcomes. We employed both qualitative and quantitative methods, collecting data from participants in all stakeholder groups (i.e., beginning teachers, beginning clinicians, virtual coaches, mentors, district administrators, and union leaders), including:

- Pre- and post-implementation surveys of participating teachers, clinicians, virtual coaches, and mentors
- A brief “snapshot” survey of participating teachers, clinicians, virtual coaches, and mentors midway through the year
- Interviews with participating teachers, clinicians, virtual coaches, mentors, union leaders, and district administrators

We continued to meet with IEA, IFT, and CTU program leaders biweekly to learn about recruiting and ongoing support; discuss and make sense of data after each round of data collection; and stay informed about program refinement in anticipation for Year 3 of program implementation.

Note that because of the small number of clinician respondents to the post-implementation survey, we have consolidated those results in Appendix B and recommend interpreting them with caution.

Findings about Implementation

Program recruitment in Year 2. ISBE approved the program for continuation in June 2021. District recruitment was ongoing throughout spring and summer 2021, and as early as August 2021, districts began program implementation. Because of IEA's and IFT's continued recruitment efforts in the fall, they largely achieved statewide program implementation in 43 districts (Exhibit ES-1). Administrators from participating districts and unions indicated the desire for supports for their teachers and clinicians as strong motivation for joining or continuing the program.

Exhibit ES-1. Recruited Program Participants in 2021–22

	Participants
Districts	43
Schools	354
Beginning teachers	625
Beginning clinicians	125
Virtual coaches	303
Mentors	305

Note: Participants recruited as of April 29, 2022.

Source: Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program rosters, 2022.

Virtual coaches entered the program with varied backgrounds. About half (48%) of surveyed teacher coaches were returning coaches in 2021–22. Slightly more than 80 percent of teacher coaches were classroom teachers. Thirty-seven percent of teacher coaches had no prior coaching experience while 26 percent had 1–2 years, 16 percent had 3–5 years, and 21 percent had more than 5 years of coaching experience.

Half of surveyed clinician coaches were social workers while the other half was comprised of counselors, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, psychologists/ therapists, and nurses. Two-thirds of clinician coaches had previously served as a mentor, either informally or formally through a program.

Surveyed teacher and clinician coaches cited the desire to give back to the profession, enjoyment working with novice teachers and clinicians, and the desire to take on leadership responsibilities as primary reasons for participating in the program.

Similar to virtual coaches, mentors came with varying levels of experience in Pre-K–12 education.

About 22 percent of surveyed teacher mentors were returning to the program in 2021–22. A majority of teacher mentors were classroom teachers (90%) and about two-thirds (64%) served in a mentor role through a program prior to the 2021–22 school year.

About 39 percent of surveyed clinician mentors were classroom teachers working with clinicians in the program. Social workers made up a quarter (27%) of surveyed clinician mentors. About 61 percent of clinician mentors had previously served in a mentor capacity.

Both teacher and clinician mentors described the enjoyment of working with novice educators and the desire to give back to the profession as primary reasons for participating in the program.

Virtual coaches and mentors found program supports and training to be beneficial. A majority of virtual coaches (89%) and mentors (85%) reported that the program orientation, offered by IEA, IFT, and CTU, was moderately or very useful. Virtual coaches and mentors continued to find IEA, IFT, and CTU forums beneficial for collaboration and connection.

Virtual coaches and mentors generally thought their caseload for the program was appropriate. Most surveyed virtual coaches and mentors supported 2–4 teachers or clinicians. Virtual coaches reported that they had enough time for coaching (66% of teacher coaches and 88% of clinician coaches); however, a notable 34 percent of teacher coaches and 13 percent of clinician coaches indicated that they needed more time for coaching.

From the perspective of mentors, a majority did not think that their responsibilities outside of the program prevented them from finding enough time to support their mentees, and shared that the time they had with their mentees was sufficient to meet their needs. However, a sizable 23–36 percent of mentors thought their outside responsibilities impeded finding time to work with their mentees, and 10–21 percent reported that the time spent was not enough.

Generally, virtual coaches and mentors felt well-matched with their assigned educators, and vice versa. However, about 21 percent of clinician mentors disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were matched well with their clinicians, potentially reflecting the group of clinician mentors who were classroom teachers and might not be able to help with profession-specific questions or concerns.

For a majority of surveyed teachers, meetings with their virtual coach and mentor were both relatively frequent and helpful. About 60 percent of teachers met one-on-one with their virtual coach at least weekly. Teachers reported that the time spent with their virtual coach was helpful and enough to meet their needs. Teachers met with their mentor frequently through informal channels: 60 percent had impromptu meetings or conversations, and 55 percent used informal channels of communication (such as text messaging and email) with their mentor at least weekly. Ninety-three percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their mentor was responsive when they had time-sensitive questions or issues.

Consistent with 2020–21, beginning teachers reached out to both their virtual coach and mentor for instructional and some school-based supports in Year 2. Large proportions of surveyed teachers drew on both coach and mentor expertise across a range of topics integral to their instruction, such as reflecting on their teaching practice (64%), discussing instructional concerns (57%), and identifying materials and/or techniques appropriate for their teaching assignment (56%). Teachers also turned to both virtual coaches and mentors for school-based supports, such as building relationships with students (61%), engaging with other teachers (50%), and interacting with families (47%).

Across the board, virtual coaches and mentors reported very few challenges related to fulfilling their respective roles. However, some coaches and mentors, particularly clinician mentors, reported challenges with knowing how to determine activities to work on with their assigned educators. While resources, such as the Danielson Group training modules, on the TeachForward platform were moderately or very useful to 77 percent of virtual coaches and 63 percent of mentors, they were not

always applicable. TeachForward resources were also not created for clinician roles. As a result, virtual coaches and mentors drew on their own resources and experiences to support their teachers and clinicians, and would like additional training and resources.

Additionally, some virtual coaches, especially teacher coaches, questioned how to align their supports with existing school and/or district supports so that the teacher does not feel overwhelmed by the available supports.

Overall, virtual coaches and mentors found value in participating in the program. Working with beginning teachers and clinicians enabled coaches and mentors to reflect on their own practice, stay current with school and district policies and professional guidelines, and innovate. Participating in the program also provided opportunities for them to interact and collaborate with educators outside of their school and/or district.

Findings about Teacher Outcomes

Coaching and mentoring supports addressed beginning teachers' priorities. At the end of the 2021–22 school year, teachers expressed that the supports (from either their virtual coach or mentor) addressed their priority goals of building their skills and knowledge, and growing in their professional practice to a moderate or great extent. Teachers reported that the program gave them access to veteran teachers who could share their knowledge and experience (92%). Teachers also reported that supports also addressed their priorities in gaining classroom management skills (87%), understanding how to assess student mastery of learning objectives (81%), and differentiating instruction (88%), to a moderate or great extent.

Additionally, at least 80 percent of teachers reported that program supports were quite or very helpful across a number of instructional areas: reflecting on their teaching practice; discussing instructional concerns and problems; adapting instruction to meet students' diverse needs; identifying instructional materials and/or techniques appropriate for their teaching assignment; and using assessment data to monitor students' progress and modify instruction.

Teachers also overwhelmingly found program supports quite or very helpful in building relationships with students (91%); engaging with families and other teachers (89% and 91%, respectively); understanding school culture and policies better (88%); and building relationships with school leaders, teachers union and other school personnel (86%).

Beginning teacher efficacy increased through participating in coaching and mentoring. Beginning teachers reported higher average efficacy ratings in meeting student needs (difference in pre- to post-implementation means on efficacy scale¹ = 0.208, $p = 0.010$) and engaging students (difference in pre- to post-implementation means on efficacy scale = 0.362, $p = 0.001$).

¹ Beginning teacher efficacy ratings on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not at all equipped, 2 = A little equipped, 3 = Quite equipped, 4 = Very equipped, 5 = Extremely equipped

More than 70 percent of teachers attributed their professional growth as a teacher in the 2021–22 school year to working with their virtual coach and mentor, to a moderate or great extent.

Beginning teachers saw their teachers’ union as a source of support after participating in the program.

More than 80 percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that participating in the program made them feel like their union cared about their professional growth, and they could turn to their union for support. About half (52%) of beginning teachers considered taking on a leadership role in their union one day.

High percentages of beginning teachers reported their intention to stay in the profession. Nearly 52 percent of teachers reported that they “definitely” would be, and a further 39 percent reported they “probably” would be in the classroom five years from now. Of teachers who were not definitely sure about being a classroom teacher five years from now, 36 percent reported that they would probably or definitely be in K–12 education in some other capacity.

Findings about Outcomes for Virtual Coaches and Mentors who Supported Beginning Teachers

Teacher coaches overwhelmingly rated themselves as effective in supporting beginning teachers in Year 2 (93%). At least 83 percent of teacher coaches said they had all they needed from the program and did not need additional training to support beginning teachers effectively.

Efficacy ratings for teacher coaches and mentors did not statistically significantly improve. Teacher coaches and mentors reported consistently high ratings of their efficacy to support teachers develop a wide range of instructional and organizational skills in teaching, and their mean ratings did not statistically differ after participating in the program.

Findings about Outcomes for Virtual Coaches and Mentors who Supported Beginning Clinicians

All clinician coaches rated themselves as moderately or very effective in coaching. A majority also reported that they had all they needed from the program (94%) and did not need more training (87%) to support beginning clinicians; however, 13 percent needed additional training to fulfill their role.

Clinician coaches and mentors did not see statistically significant improvement in efficacy ratings. Similar to their teacher coach counterparts, clinician coaches rated themselves relatively high on their efficacy in working with clinicians at the beginning of Year 2, and those ratings did not differ much at the end of the year. Clinician mentors' efficacy and interpersonal skills ratings also did not differ from pre- to post-implementation.

Implications

Several valuable lessons emerged from Year 2 implementation, which can refine the program and prepare it for scale statewide in 2022–23.

IEA, IFT, and CTU can refine the core program by:

- Better matching virtual coaches with teachers, especially for subject areas where grade-level match is also important, and where exact matches are not possible, provide trainings and/or resources to supplement coaches' knowledge and experience
- Providing more guidance on and clearer expectations for virtual coaches and mentors in determining specific activities to engage in with teachers and clinicians
- Setting an expectation that virtual coaches belong to a community of practice, and offering a framework and process for how coaches can share their coaching materials

They can also support clinicians, new to the program in Year 2, by:

- Examining existing resources on TeachForward and refining them or adding new resources for clinician roles
- Providing professional learning for clinician coaches and mentors by shaping forum topics, trainings, and/or resources, for example

As the program continues to scale and recruit new districts, IEA, IFT, and CTU can consider:

- Providing guidance for virtual coaches on how to work with teachers who already have many local supports. Perhaps, the program can also prioritize recruiting districts with less local support, and for districts with strong local supports, provide guidance on how district or school leaders might integrate local supports with virtual coach supports so that the new teachers can benefit from both supports.
- Differentiating supports for teachers, especially as they enter their second or third year of teaching in fall 2022, and will have different instructional needs and priorities that require different levels and types of support
- Assessing which program processes can be less individualized when bringing on board new participants to free up capacity for supporting virtual coaches, mentors, teachers, and clinicians

Implementing the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program in the second year, with the addition of clinicians and second-year teachers, was a tremendous undertaking by IEA, IFT, and CTU. The value that stakeholders found in the program supports and resources indicates the continued need and demand for the program. The consistent findings across implementation in spring 2021 and in the 2021–22 school year on beginning teachers' increased efficacy in instruction and commitment to

remain the profession adds to the promise of this union-led program as a strategy to strengthen the teaching profession.

Introduction

The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) launched the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program in fall 2020 to support beginning teachers entering the profession under the extenuating circumstances of the pandemic, which exacerbated the challenge of a long-term statewide teacher shortage. Program implementation began at the end of January 2021 for the first wave of participants. While that initial implementation period was relatively short, participants reported value for their practices and increased efficacy. ISBE renewed the program based in part on the promise of those results, providing an opportunity for full-year implementation in 2021–22 (Year 2).

The Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program, led by the Illinois Education Association (IEA) and Illinois Federation of Teachers (IFT), in partnership with the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU), aims to provide early career teachers in the state with wraparound professional support in their first few years of teaching.

The program matches teachers with a virtual coach who provides instructional support via one-on-one and/or small group virtual coaching, and with a mentor whose role is to facilitate their integration into the school building. In addition, the program offers a virtual coaching platform, developed and managed by TeachForward, with a comprehensive library of resources on a wide range of instructional topics aligned with the Danielson Framework for Teaching Clusters.²

Year 2 brought a few significant changes to the program. First, IEA, IFT, and CTU extended the program to second-year teachers. Given that these teachers had their first year of full-time teaching interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and many spent the majority of their first year teaching virtually or in a hybrid setting, 2021–22 would be the first year teaching in person full-time for many. While these teachers may have developed lesson planning skills and become familiar with curriculum, they had inconsistent opportunities to hone classroom management skills, and managing classroom routines and behaviors in person would be very different from doing so online.

Second, IEA, IFT, and CTU advocated for the extension of the program to educators in clinical professions (e.g., social workers, nurses, occupational therapists, physical therapists, psychologists, speech therapists, and audiology specialists), and added clinicians to the program in Year 2. Like teachers, clinicians who are in the first two years of their profession are matched with a virtual coach and where possible, a mentor, in the same specialty. The clinician may be a “singleton”—the only person in the building with that specialization, and may serve multiple buildings. Each of the clinical professions has its own professional standards, and the professions also need specific supports to apply those professional standards to educational settings. Clinicians also may interact with many school staff and parents and so, similar to new teachers, may require supports to acculturate to the school and/or district.

² The six Danielson Framework for Teaching Clusters are: clarity & accuracy, learning environment, classroom management, intellectual engagement, successful learning, and professionalism.

Third, in response to participant feedback, TeachForward updated or added some features on the platform to improve educators' experiences. For example, to make it easier for virtual coaches and their teachers or clinicians to collaborate, TeachForward added features that allow users to share resources in a learning group, tag and annotate resources, and chat. To make the resources on the platform more user-friendly, TeachForward added closed captioning to the videos, for example.

Digital Promise continued as the evaluation partner, working consistently with IEA, IFT, and CTU program leaders to understand how program implementation deepened or changed in Year 2, especially with the addition of clinicians and second-year teachers, and improvements to the TeachForward coaching platform.

This report presents our findings on program implementation—the nature of coaching and mentoring, and their challenges and successes—and results for coach, mentor, teacher, and clinician outcomes. The report ends with suggested implications for IEA, IFT, and CTU as they continue to recruit and scale their program statewide.

Evaluation Overview

The 2021–22 evaluation builds on findings from the inaugural year of the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor program. Key lessons emerged from the relatively short implementation period during the middle of the pandemic, in spring 2021, which helped inform programming for the second year. The evaluation continued to address implementation and outcomes questions using qualitative and quantitative methods and incorporated clinicians, whom the program served for the first time.

Evaluation Questions

In 2021–22, our evaluation addressed the following questions:

Implementation

1. To what extent was the program implemented as intended?
2. What factors affect implementation, and why?
3. To what extent do beginning teachers and clinicians³ find the program supports valuable?
4. To what extent do virtual coaches and mentors⁴ find the program valuable for coaching and mentoring, respectively?

³ Beginning teachers and clinicians included those in the first or second year of their profession.

⁴ For the purposes of this report, we refer to virtual coaches and mentors by the group of educators (i.e., teachers, clinicians) whom they support. Virtual coaches who support teachers are “teacher coaches” and coaches who support clinicians are “clinician coaches.” Mentors who support new teachers are “teacher mentors” and mentors who support clinicians are “clinician mentors.”

Outcomes

1. To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help develop beginning teachers' professional practice? What role do virtual coaches play?
2. To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help beginning teachers feel supported and oriented to the school culture and community? What role do mentors play?
3. To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help develop beginning clinicians' professional practice? What role do their virtual coaches and/or mentors play?
4. To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program contribute to beginning teachers' and clinicians' intention to stay in the profession?
5. To what extent do virtual coaches' and mentors' skills improve as a result of participating in the program?

Data Sources

We employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to include diverse stakeholder voices at different levels of the education system in answering the evaluation questions (Exhibit 1). We gathered data throughout the school year and provided timely feedback to IEA, IFT, and CTU leaders to inform their continuous improvement of program supports, services, and communications to the participants.

Exhibit 1. Data Sources, Samples, and Purposes in 2021–22

Data Source	Samples	Timeframe	Primary Purposes
Pre-implementation survey	All virtual coaches, mentors, beginning teachers, beginning clinicians	Late September–October 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for participating • Efficacy in skills and knowledge for respective roles
Post-implementation survey	All virtual coaches, mentors, beginning teachers, beginning clinicians	Mid-April–early May 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficacy in skills and knowledge for respective roles • Successes and challenges in implementation • Types and value of coaching and mentoring activities • Value of key program supports • Intention to stay in the profession
Midyear snapshot survey	All virtual coaches, mentors, beginning teachers, beginning clinicians	February 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types and frequency of coaching and mentoring activities • Satisfaction with coaching, mentoring, and other program supports
Interviews	Sample of district administrators and local union leaders	November–mid-December 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasons for program participation/continuation • Successes and challenges in planning and implementation • Feedback for program refinement
Interviews	Sample of virtual coaches, mentors, beginning teachers, beginning clinicians	November–mid-December 2021 (with virtual coaches and mentors) March–mid-April 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature of coaching and mentoring • Successes and challenges in implementation • Impact on skills and knowledge in respective roles • Feedback for program refinement

See Appendix A for more details on our methods, including sample sizes and response rates for the data sources. Note that due to the small number of clinician respondents to the post-implementation survey, we recommend interpreting those results with caution and have consolidated them in Appendix B.

Findings about Implementation

This section highlights implementation of the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program in Year 2, beginning with program recruitment and participation, followed by program supports and resources for virtual coaches and mentors, and the nature and frequency of coaching and mentoring activities. In cases where findings differ for teacher coaches and mentors, and clinician coaches and mentors, we report the findings separately.

Recruitment and Participation

Program recruitment in Year 2. The Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) approved the program for continuation in June 2021. District recruitment was ongoing throughout spring and summer 2021, in anticipation of in-person implementation in the fall even though uncertainty under the COVID-19 pandemic continued. IEA and IFT found districts ready to commit to the program, and as early as August 2021, districts began rolling out the program. Because of IEA’s and IFT’s continued recruitment efforts in the fall, they largely achieved statewide program implementation in 43 districts.

The 43 districts identified 305 mentors across 354 schools; IEA, IFT, and CTU interviewed and hired 303 virtual coaches to support 625 beginning teachers and 125 beginning clinicians.

Exhibit 2 presents the number of participants IEA, IFT, and CTU recruited by late April 2022. To analyze outcomes for program participants, we only included participants who began by January 1, 2022 in our evaluation. In other words, the results reported in the following sections include only participants who were able to implement the program for almost a full year, consistent with IEA’s and IFT’s intended supports.

Exhibit 2. Recruited Program Participants in 2021–22

	Participants
Districts	43
Schools	354
Beginning teachers	625
Beginning clinicians	125
Virtual coaches	303
Mentors	305

Note: Participants recruited as of April 29, 2022.

Source: Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program rosters, 2022.

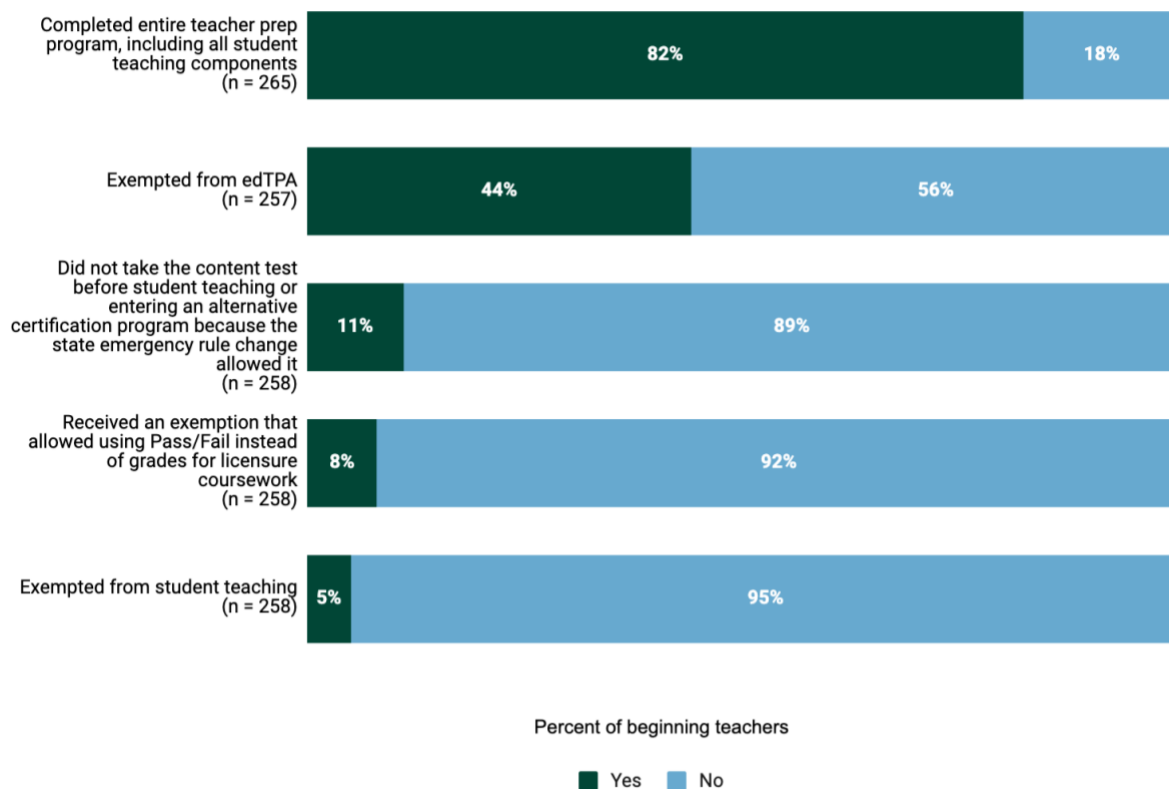
Districts and local unions wanted continued supports for teachers and new supports for clinicians. The second year of implementation continued supports for beginning teachers and grew to support beginning clinicians. District administrators and union leaders shared that many reasons for continuing the program lay in the support teachers need while they adjust to the policies and processes in an in-person setting, especially as many had experienced their first year of teaching completely virtually or in a hybrid setting. While many districts offer multiple sources of support for novice teachers, fewer such opportunities exist for beginning clinicians, as they may often be the only ones with that content expertise in their building. As such, districts and unions saw the program as an opportunity to connect clinicians with others in the same field or specialty for support and new perspectives. District administrators and union leaders also indicated that several educators entered Pre-K–12 education from non-educational settings and would need additional guidance. In addition to support for incoming staff, districts and unions shared that this program presented an opportunity to compensate and recognize mentors who had already been fulfilling a similar role voluntarily.

Appropriately, the resources and supports provided by the program were chosen specifically with beginning teachers (in their first two years of their profession) as intended beneficiaries. More than two-thirds of participating teachers (69%) were teaching full-time for the first time during the 2021–22 school year. Participating teachers primarily taught a self-contained class (30%) or English language arts (29%), and primarily taught elementary grades (kindergarten through grade 5, 58%). About 31 percent of participating teachers entered their second year of teaching in 2021–22.⁵

Nearly a third of beginning teachers entered the profession after serving as long-term substitute teachers (31%) or working in another field (27%). Nearly half of them reported being exempted from edTPA, the performance-based assessment for beginning teachers (46%). Despite the tumult of the past two and a half years, a substantial portion of teachers entered the profession through traditional routes: 82 percent completed their entire teacher preparation program, including student teaching (Exhibit 3); only 3 percent are currently enrolled in an alternative certification program.

⁵ Most participating teachers were new to the program, with only 18 percent participating last year.

Exhibit 3. Teacher Preparation Completions and Exemptions



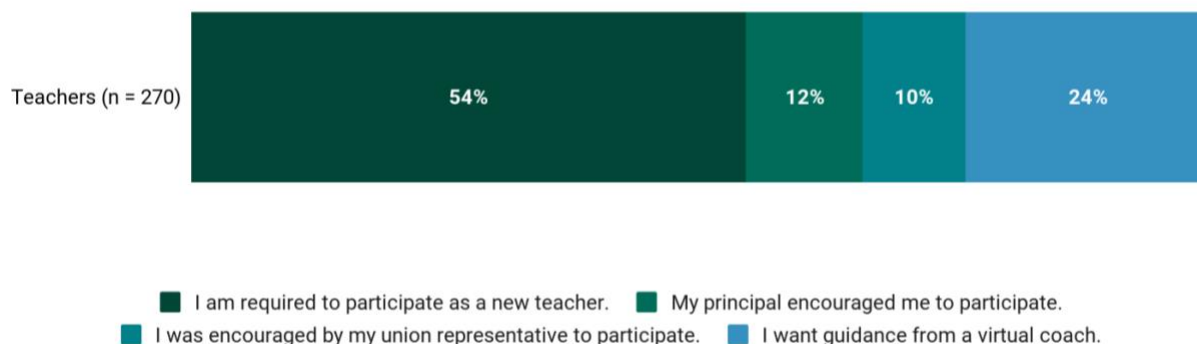
Note: Due to rounding, some totals may be over 100 percent.

Source: Teacher pre-implementation survey, October 2021.

When asked about their primary motivation for participating in the program, half (54%) of teachers reported that they were required to participate. While some remaining teachers reported that encouragement from either a school administrator (12%) or union representative (10%) was their primary motivator, about twice as many were attracted by the prospect of guidance from a virtual coach (24%) (Exhibit 4).

In interviews, teachers provided more information about what made the program an attractive option. A number of teachers shared that they had either completely lost out on clinical hours due to pandemic-related disruptions, or conducted their student teaching in a virtual setting. Moving into in-person teaching felt daunting, and these teachers welcomed the additional support network provided by the program. Additionally, teachers expressed appreciation for the two-pronged model of support, explaining that while someone within their building could provide assistance around school- and district-specific policies, someone outside the district could provide the non-evaluative perspective of an outsider.

Exhibit 4. Primary Reasons for Participation among Novice Teachers



Source: Teacher pre-implementation surveys, October 2021.

Virtual coaches entered the program with varied backgrounds. About half (48%) of surveyed teacher coaches returned to the program while the other half were new in 2021–22. Slightly more than 80 percent of teacher coaches were classroom teachers, a great proportion of whom taught self-contained classes (all core subjects) in the elementary grades. The most common single subject taught by coaches was English language arts (ELA). Similar to the first year of the program, teacher coaches ranged in formal coaching experience: 37 percent had no prior coaching experience while 26 percent had 1–2 years, 16 percent had 3–5 years, and 21 percent had more than 5 years of coaching experience.

Half of surveyed clinician coaches were social workers while a smaller proportion of clinician coaches were counselors (12%), occupational therapists (12%), speech-language pathologists (12%), psychologists/therapists (9%), and nurses (3%). Two-thirds of these coaches came into the program having served as a mentor, either informally or formally through a program, while the other third had not.

Both surveyed teacher and clinician coaches reported the desire to give back to the profession, enjoyment working with novice teachers and clinicians, and the desire to take on leadership responsibilities as primary reasons for participating in the program. In interviews, virtual coaches shared their motivation to “pay it forward” to the profession by providing beginning teachers and clinicians with the type of support that had been invaluable to them in their first years, or providing the support they wished had been provided to them in their early years in education. As this coach explained,

I very much enjoy being a coach for new teachers. It is a great feeling to make their first-year experience easier. I can remember how hard my first year teaching was; I wish a support like this would have been in place for me! It is also enjoyable to see them grow as teachers and gain confidence in their craft.

Similar to virtual coaches, mentors came with varying levels of experience in Pre-K–12 education.

Slightly more than three-quarters of surveyed teacher mentors were new to the program in 2021–22 while 22 percent were returning mentors. Similar to their teacher coach counterparts, teacher mentors were also classroom teachers (90%), a majority of whom also taught self-contained classes. The most common single subjects taught by teacher mentors were ELA and special education. Slightly less than two-thirds (64%) served in a mentor role whether informally or formally through a program prior to the 2021–22 school year. While not a prerequisite for becoming a mentor in the program, about 19 percent had 1–2 years, 10 percent had 3–5 years, and 16 percent had more than 5 years of formal instructional coaching experience. More than half of teacher mentors joined the program with no coaching experience.

About 39 percent of surveyed clinician mentors were classroom teachers working with clinicians in the program. IEA and IFT used the same building mentors for clinicians, if possible, because like teachers, clinicians still needed to learn about the school community and culture, work with parents, communicate with school administrators and other school personnel, for example, and mentors, who were also classroom teachers, would be well-positioned to support with that. Slightly more than a quarter (27%) of clinician mentors were social workers, while 6 percent were speech-language pathologists, 6 percent were counselors, 3 percent were psychologists/therapists, and 18 percent served in an “other” role (e.g., librarian, media specialist, physical therapist). Similar to teacher mentors, about 61 percent of clinician mentors had served in a mentor capacity prior to 2021–22.

Both teacher and clinician mentors described enjoyment with working with novice educators and the desire to give back to the profession as primary reasons for participating in the program. As one clinician mentor expressed: *“I think this is an extremely important service we are providing our new teachers/clinicians. Education is hard and there is a lot to know. Having the support of a mentor can make a world of difference in those first few years.”* Mentors saw the program as a way to provide resources and a support system to novice educators as they settle into their roles.

Program Supports and Resources for Virtual Coaches and Mentors

Virtual coaches and mentors found program supports and training to be beneficial. In Year 2, IEA, IFT, and CTU program leaders made adaptations in supports and training in response to feedback provided by participants in the first year of program implementation. For example, they found that participants lacked clarity around their roles and had difficulty accessing the TeachForward platform. To address these challenges, the program team provided orientations during which they clarified the roles and responsibilities of each participant type and helped educators create profiles within the TeachForward platform. A majority of virtual coaches (89%) and mentors (85%) reported that the program orientation was moderately or very useful. In the first year, coaches also reported some difficulty establishing contact with their assigned teachers and mentors. In Year 2, the program team facilitated the first introductions between virtual coaches, their assigned teachers or clinicians, and mentors. They also provided a slide deck that coaches could use during their first meeting with assigned teachers or clinicians to clarify the scope of their work.

In the first year of implementation, coaches and mentors shared their appreciation of role-specific forums. In response, the program leaders not only continued these optional forums, but also increased their frequency. Virtual coaches and mentors continued to find these forums beneficial for collaboration and connection: A majority of virtual coaches (87%) and mentors (80%), surveyed in the snapshot, found the meetings offered by IEA, IFT, and CTU to be moderately or very useful. In interviews, virtual coaches and mentors shared that they appreciated synchronous events hosted by their unions because they provided a sense of community; a place to share their experiences and feel seen; opportunities to hear multiple perspectives and gain insights; and a place to meet other coaches or mentors with whom they would not otherwise have had the chance to connect. Coaches especially could feel isolated in their role since they were virtual and the live events helped combat that.

Beyond large-groups forums, some participants suggested that more small group discussion, particularly in breakout rooms organized by grade band or content area, could help facilitate more meaningful and authentic conversations while also providing a space to share concrete ideas on how to collaborate with their assigned teachers or clinicians.

Virtual coaches and mentors generally thought their caseload for the program was appropriate. Most surveyed teacher coaches supported 2–4 teachers—19 percent reported working with two teachers, 37 percent with three teachers, and 25 percent with four teachers each, while a small proportion (12%) supported 5–7 teachers. Clinician coaches also supported 2–4 clinicians: 19 percent worked with two clinicians, 44 percent with three clinicians, and 19 percent with four clinicians each. Mentors supported about the same number of educators as virtual coaches. Specifically, surveyed teacher mentors and clinician mentors supported between 2–4 teachers and clinicians, respectively.

In interviews and open-ended survey responses, some mentors and virtual coaches shared that once their caseload of teachers and/or clinicians grew beyond three or four people, it became challenging to provide the same quality of individualized support that would be possible if they were working with fewer novice educators. In the words of one mentor: *“I had five mentees (three teachers and two guidance counselors). This was way too many, especially in the varying roles that they had, to mentor with efficacy and genuine intent.”* Similarly, a virtual coach shared: *“Juggling four people is a challenge. I don't feel that I do a thorough enough job when I'm trying to deal with so many. It's also hard to coordinate meeting times/dates with so many different districts and schedules.”* In some cases, mentors and virtual coaches with larger caseloads moved away from providing individual support and began offering group sessions.

Even with their caseload for the program on top of their school and/or district responsibilities, virtual coaches reported that they had enough time for coaching (66% of teacher coaches and 88% of clinician coaches); however, a notable 34 percent of teacher coaches and 13 percent of clinician coaches indicated that they needed more time for coaching. From the perspective of mentors, a majority (77% of teacher mentors and 64% of clinician mentors) did not think that their responsibilities outside of the program prevented them from finding enough time to support their mentees. Most mentors (90% teacher mentors and 79% clinician mentors) also agreed or strongly agreed that the time they had was sufficient to meet the needs of their mentees. However, a sizable 23–36 percent of mentors thought

their outside responsibilities impeded finding time to work with their mentees, and 10–21 percent reported that the time spent was not enough.

All stakeholder groups felt well-matched with their assigned educators. Similar to the first year, IEA, IFT, and CTU matched teachers and virtual coaches based on teaching assignment (e.g., subject matter, grade level, and/or special programs), and, where possible, on racial/ethnic affinity and region. Clinicians and virtual coaches were matched on their profession and specialty (e.g., social work, nursing, speech-language pathology). By contrast, matching mentors to teachers and, where applicable, to clinicians, was left to the local district administrators and union leaders. In some districts, such as Chicago Public Schools, clinicians were not assigned mentors because clinicians were usually the only individuals in their specialty in the school building, so matches of a clinician to a mentor in the same role was not possible. In some districts, clinician mentors were actually classroom teachers, assigned to support clinicians, as mentioned above.

With earlier notice that the program would begin in fall 2021, districts had more lead time in 2021–22 to consider criteria for the mentoring role and open the role to a larger pool of veteran teachers. In some cases, district administrators and union leaders collaborated to interview and select mentors, while in other cases school administrators took the lead. Overall, districts and local unions were able to put processes in place to make the timeline for hiring and assigning mentors more efficient and therefore could be more selective in hiring.

Generally, large majorities of all stakeholder groups felt well-matched with their assigned educators (Exhibits 5 and 6). However, about 21 percent of clinician mentors disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were matched well with their clinicians—this might reflect the 39 percent of clinician mentors who were classroom teachers and might not be able to help with profession-specific questions or concerns.

Exhibit 5. Virtual Coach and Mentor Perceptions of the Match Between Them and Their Assigned Teacher or Clinician



Percent agreed/strongly agreed that their teacher or clinician was a good match for them

Source: Teacher Coach, Clinician Coach, Teacher Mentor, and Clinician Mentor post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

Exhibit 6. Novice Teachers' Perceptions of the Match Between Them and Their Virtual Coach



Percent of beginning teachers who agreed/strongly agreed they were matched well with virtual coach on (n = 117)

Source: Teacher post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

However, because of variation in teaching assignments, professions, and other factors, exact matches may not be realistic. In interviews and open-ended survey responses, we heard from beginning teachers and clinicians about the importance of matching with a virtual coach based on grade level. For instance, a novice high school counselor was matched with a middle school counselor as their virtual coach. The novice counselor got along well with their coach, but shared that they would have preferred to have been matched with “a high school counselor who could help guide [them] with [their] senior students.” Likewise, we heard from virtual coaches about the challenge of working with teachers across grade bands. For example, one high school teacher we interviewed did not feel equipped to coach the elementary school teachers whom they were assigned, even if both taught special education classes.

Nature of Coaching and Mentoring

The start of the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Mentor Program during fall 2021 (compared with a later winter start the prior year) provided virtual coaches and mentors with more time to build rapport with their novice teachers and clinicians, and to better understand the contexts in which novice teachers and clinicians work. Ninety-three percent of teacher coaches and 100 percent of clinician coaches reported in the survey that establishing rapport with their teachers and clinicians, respectively, was slightly or not at all challenging. Virtual coaches (89% of teacher coaches and 100% of clinician coaches) also indicated that understanding the context of the schools or districts within which their teachers and clinicians were working was slightly or not at all challenging.

Interviewed coaches and mentors shared that it was more difficult to create a beneficial relationship when their teachers or clinicians were onboarded further into the school year. One virtual coach explained that they and the teachers whom they started the year with have “established a pretty honest rapport.” However, the coach found that:

[T]he ones [new teachers] added more recently have been trickier. Something about being with someone from the start of the year [creates more of a bond]. Unfortunately, the district decided to come on late. From the start, in the trenches, when it's way harder [in the classroom], I could establish relationships. They need you when they are brand new, you are like a lifeline.

In cases where participants join later in the year, virtual coaches and mentors may benefit from strategies or protocols to establish rapport and spur their collaboration with their assigned educators.

For the majority of surveyed teachers, meetings with their virtual coach were both relatively frequent and helpful. Following a recommendation from IEA, IFT, and CTU, around 60 percent of teachers adhered to a weekly meeting schedule with their virtual coach, with lower proportions also using informal channels (e.g., text message, social media, email) or impromptu meetings. These individual interactions were supplemented with occasional group meetings, with just under half of teachers (46%) reporting engagement in group collaborations at least 1–2 times a month.

Teachers reported that these meetings with their virtual coach were helpful. Nearly all teachers (97%) agreed or strongly agreed that the amount of time they had with their virtual coach was enough to meet their needs. Group sessions were similarly well-received, with 91 percent of teachers agreeing that group collaborations were valuable to their professional practice. The group sessions provided unique opportunities for sharing and reflection, as 98 percent of teachers agreed that they were able to talk about their professional practice or concerns without fear in these group settings.

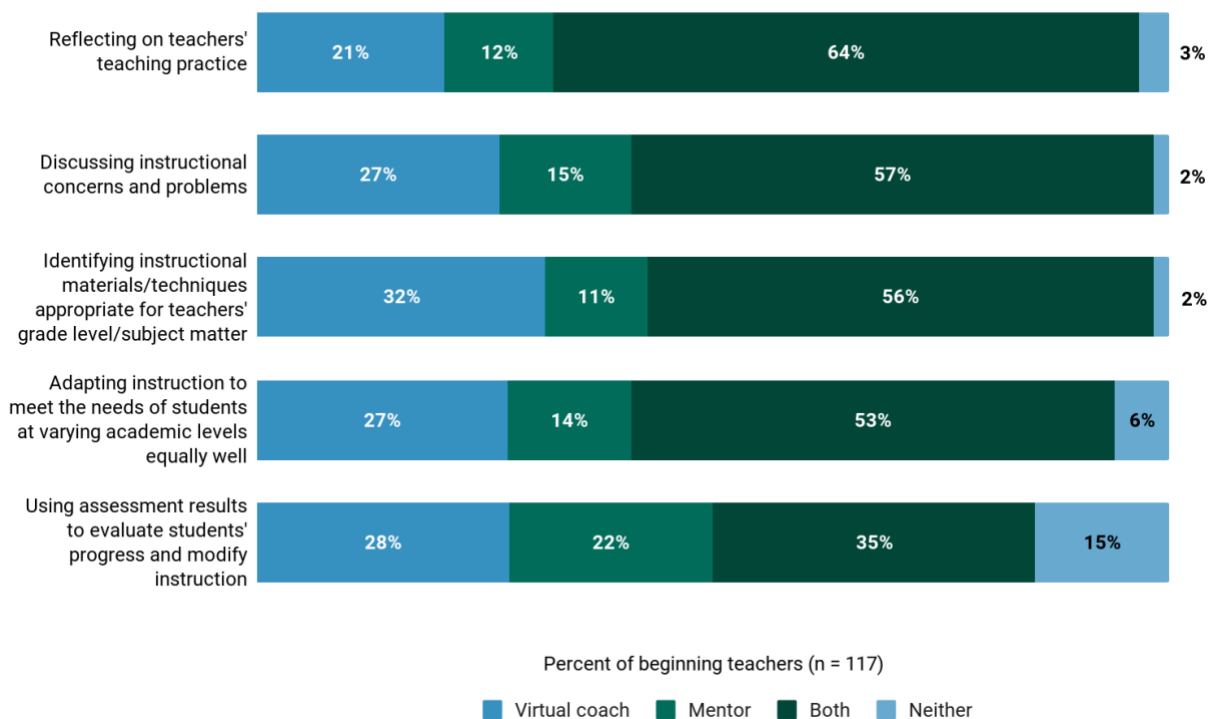
Interviews and surveys revealed that virtual coaches appreciated the flexibility and autonomy provided by the program, and felt empowered to structure their support for teachers and clinicians in the way that worked best for their specific needs, schedules, and bandwidth. As one coach put it, “there's no one formula for what I should be doing” and there is no “micromanaging.” While most virtual coaches reported meeting weekly with their assigned educators, some met biweekly or monthly, and others scheduled meetings only as needed to accommodate educator needs and schedules. The format these meetings took also varied widely. Some coaches held one-on-one synchronous meetings while others, especially those with much larger caseloads, preferred meeting with their entire group of beginning educators. For example, one virtual coach who supported five teachers shared that they designed their weekly group meetings to begin with icebreakers and social activities that built a sense of community among the teachers. Other coaches found that asynchronous check-ins over email, text messages, or social media allowed for more just-in-time support and eliminated the need to overcome scheduling challenges. One teacher described the benefit of this asynchronous approach: *“[I appreciate] just being able to reach out and ask a question. I can type out an email right after something happens. From the response back, I’ll have an idea what to do the next day before it starts.”*

Beginning teachers met with mentors frequently through informal channels. Teacher-mentor interactions, while similarly helpful compared to teacher-coach interactions, often took a different form. Since mentors worked within the same district (and generally in the same building) as their beginning teachers, mentors had more opportunities than coaches for collaboration through informal or spontaneous channels of communication. Sixty percent of teachers used impromptu meetings or conversations with their mentor at least weekly. Similarly, 55 percent of teachers reported using informal channels of communication (such as text messaging and email) with their mentors at least weekly. These forms of communication seemed to be especially suited for requesting the time-sensitive supports that mentors were well-positioned to provide. Ninety-two percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that their mentor was responsive when they had time-sensitive questions or issues.

Like virtual coaches, mentors appreciated the ability to shape their mentoring based on teacher needs. Informal and impromptu meetings were more common forms of collaboration between mentors and their assigned educators, as physical proximity and school culture created spaces for more frequent interactions to help new educators resolve immediate concerns. In cases where a mentor worked with a subject area and grade level aligned with that of their beginning teacher, they often already had a relationship with one another outside of the program, and therefore had more opportunities to interact and collaborate. For example, one mentor who supported more than half a dozen teachers shared that they provided very little individualized support to elective teachers (e.g., physical education) compared to the beginning English teachers in their department.

Consistent with 2020–21, beginning teachers reached out to both their virtual coach and mentor for instructional supports in Year 2. Rather than leaning more heavily on either their virtual coach or mentor, large proportions of surveyed teachers drew on both sources of expertise on a variety of topics integral to their instruction, such as reflecting on their teaching practice (64%), discussing instructional concerns (57%), identifying materials and/or techniques appropriate for their teaching assignment (56%), adapting instruction to meet varying student needs (53%), and using assessment results to evaluate student progress and modify instruction (Exhibit 7).

Exhibit 7. Instructional Supports Novice Teachers Received from Virtual Coach and/or Mentor



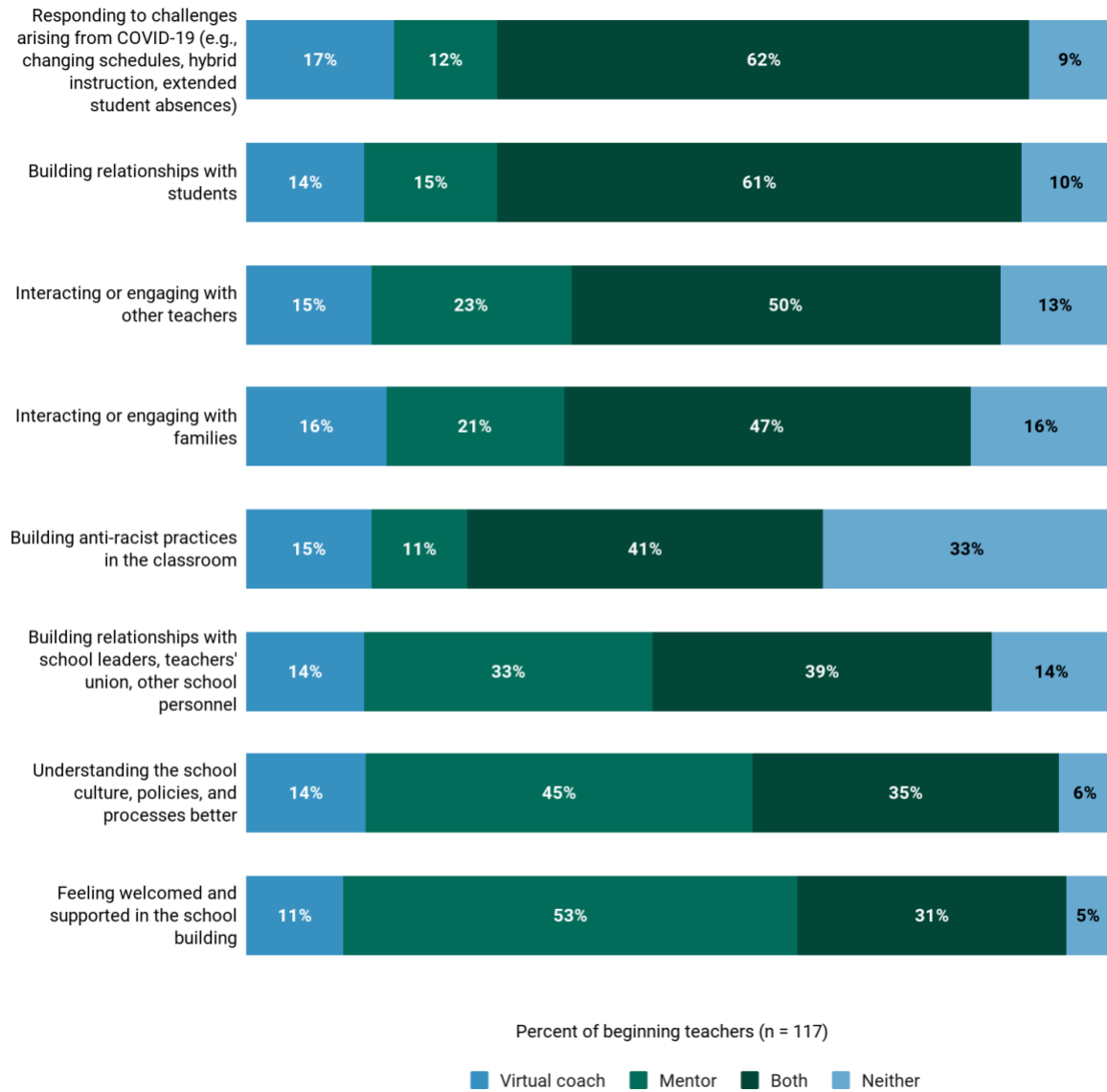
Source: Teacher post-implementation survey, May 2022.

As with instructional supports, beginning teachers continued to turn to both virtual coaches and mentors for certain school-based supports. Because of mentors' proximity to schools and districts and contextual knowledge of local policies, procedures, and norms, it is not surprising that few teachers sought only their virtual coaches for school-related supports (Exhibit 8). Notably, 39–62 percent of teachers requested supports from both their virtual coach and mentor around responding to challenges arising from COVID-19 (62%), building relationships with students (61%), engaging with other teachers (50%), engaging with families (47%), building anti-racist practices in the classroom (41%), and building relationships with school administrators, teachers' union, and other school staff (39%).

Additionally, interviews revealed that the mentors who shared content areas or grade-level bands with their assigned teachers provided more than school-based supports. As one mentor described, *"It's hard for me to separate it. I know I'm in 'building mentor' capacity, but by default, [I] approach it with a holistic lens. [I] always try to take a look at 'how I would approach the situation?' and think about another teacher approaching it."* In addition to helping new faculty acclimate to the school, these mentors were able to provide content support, were more accessible throughout the day for guidance, and better understood the context in which the new educators were teaching.

The mentor role continued to be more distinctive in helping educators integrate into the school community. Teachers tended to lean more heavily on their mentors when dealing with issues that are strictly school-based, such as understanding their school culture, policies, and processes better and feeling welcomed and supported in their school building (45% and 53% reported receiving help from only their mentor in these categories).

Exhibit 8. School Community and Culture Supports Novice Teachers Received from Virtual Coach and/or Mentor



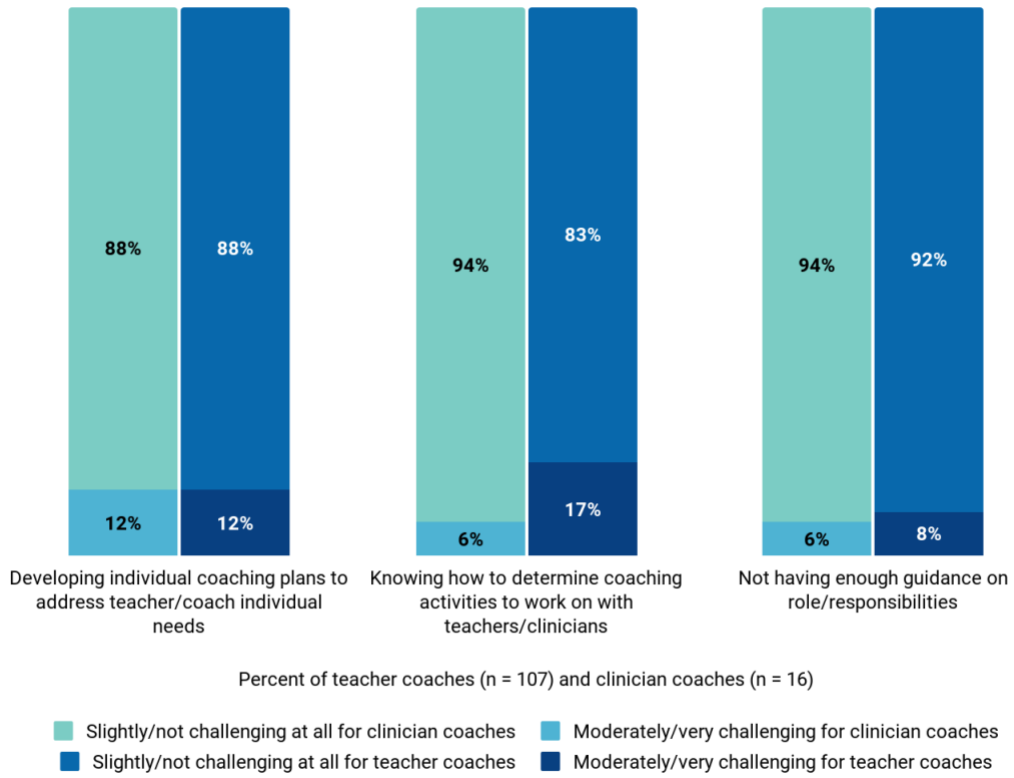
Source: Teacher post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Given the open-ended nature of coaching and mentoring, virtual coaches and mentors used individual teacher needs to determine what to focus on for coaching and mentoring, respectively. For example, virtual coaches and mentors shared in the interviews that they would commonly provide space for teachers to share successes and surface challenges at the beginning of their meetings, which then guided the direction of their collaboration.

Mentors and virtual coaches shared that their supports for beginning teachers were most often focused on managing time and tasks, settling into their roles, responding to specific events in the classroom (especially around student behavior), dealing with COVID-19-related challenges, and helping teachers simply “keep their heads above water” and counteract burnout. It is not surprising that beginning teachers tended to request support in these foundational areas, since their clinical hours and student-teaching experiences generally took place in a virtual learning environment. Novice teachers were focused on “surviving each day,” and needed foundational support in these areas before they could collaborate around content and pedagogy with their mentors and coaches.

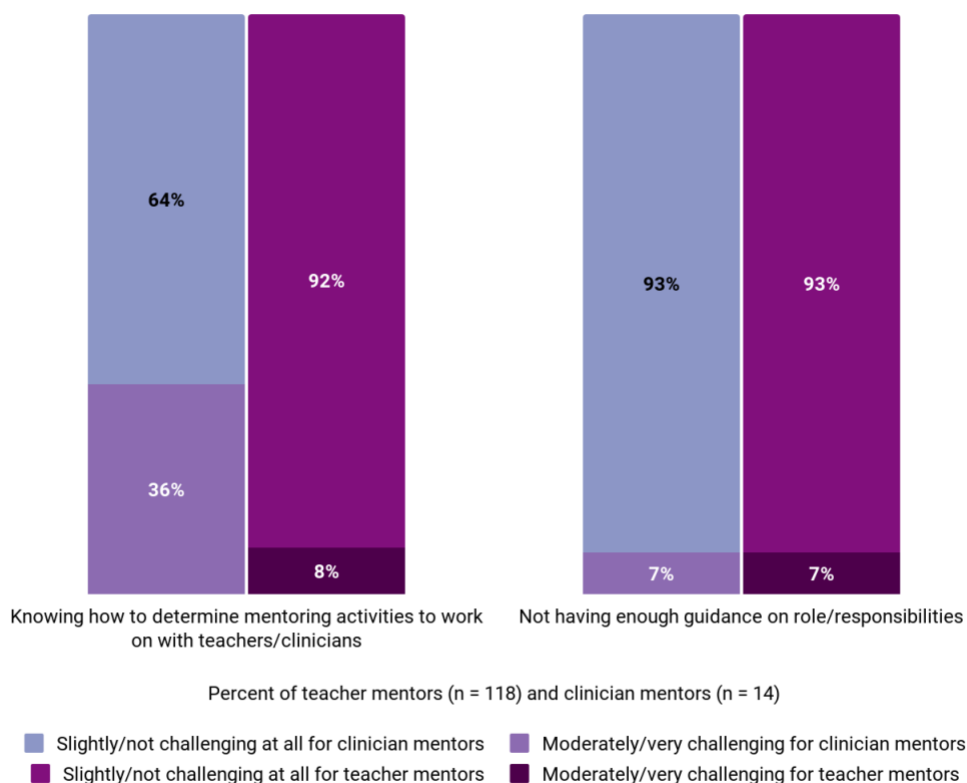
Across the board, virtual coaches and mentors reported very few challenges related to fulfilling their respective roles (Exhibits 9 and 10). The only exception is a higher percentage of clinician mentors than teacher mentors who reported that knowing how to determine mentoring activities to work on with their mentees was moderately or very challenging (8 percent of teacher mentors and 36 percent of clinician mentors) (Exhibit 10), and thus could use more clarification and guidance.

Exhibit 9. Coaching Challenges for Teacher and Clinician Coaches



Source: Teacher Coach and Clinician Coach post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

Exhibit 10. Mentoring Challenges for Teacher and Clinician Mentors



Source: Teacher Mentor and Clinician Mentor post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

Virtual coach and mentor interviews suggested the need for some guidance and structure for coaching and mentoring interactions. Beginning teachers and clinicians did not always know what to bring up or ask about, and at times some coaches and mentors did not have a topic or activity to turn to when a teacher or clinician did not have a specific challenge or question to explore at a meeting. Without a clear idea of what to collaborate on together, the new teacher or clinician and their coach could lose momentum and opportunities to deepen their interactions.

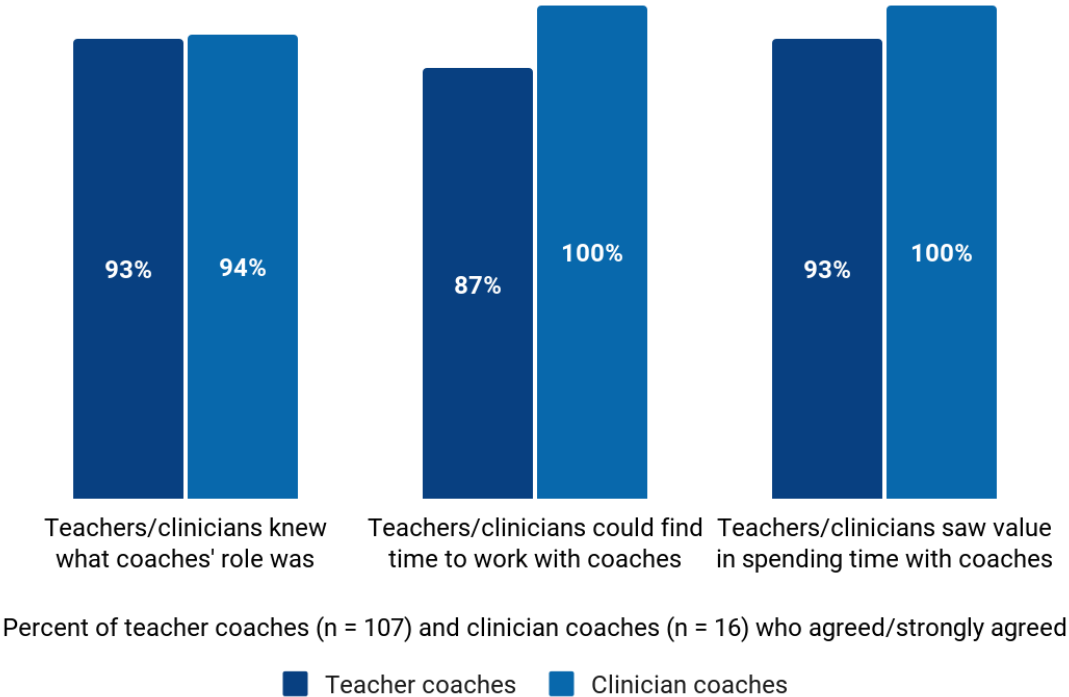
Furthermore, virtual coaches and mentors would like more guidance on how and when to introduce topics to teachers or clinicians, especially if topics may be difficult to discuss (e.g., race/antiracism). Virtual coaches and mentors also asked for more concrete suggestions of types of activities they could or should engage in with their beginning teachers or clinicians, and resources around structuring their collaborations to build trusting relationships. One coach suggested,

Sample plans would be helpful. It would be helpful to have a repository of practical resources available, like a coaching plan template, tips on how to facilitate conversations, easy goals to start with, engagement strategies by grade level (especially if we are asked to support those who aren't in our grade band).

Virtual coaches and mentors wanted practical resources and strategies that they could start with, given their varying levels of coaching and mentoring experience prior to joining the program. They also wanted assurance that their supports were not just helpful but also aligned with the program goals and priorities. Additionally, coaches and mentors requested clearer guidelines on minimum expectations, especially around frequency and durations of interactions with teachers or clinicians. Those guidelines would clarify what tasks must be met so that full stipends are earned, and make it clear the degree to which coaches and mentors could modify their supports.

Overall, virtual coaches shared that their assigned educators had a good understanding of their respective roles, could find time to work with them, and saw value in spending time with them as coaches on top of their other obligations (Exhibit 11). Additionally, coaches (75% of teacher coaches and 81% of clinician coaches) generally reported that encouraging their assigned educators to actively work with them was only slightly or not at all challenging, although a notable 19–25 percent of coaches saw this as a challenge.

Exhibit 11. Virtual Coaches’ Experience Working with Novice Teachers and Clinicians

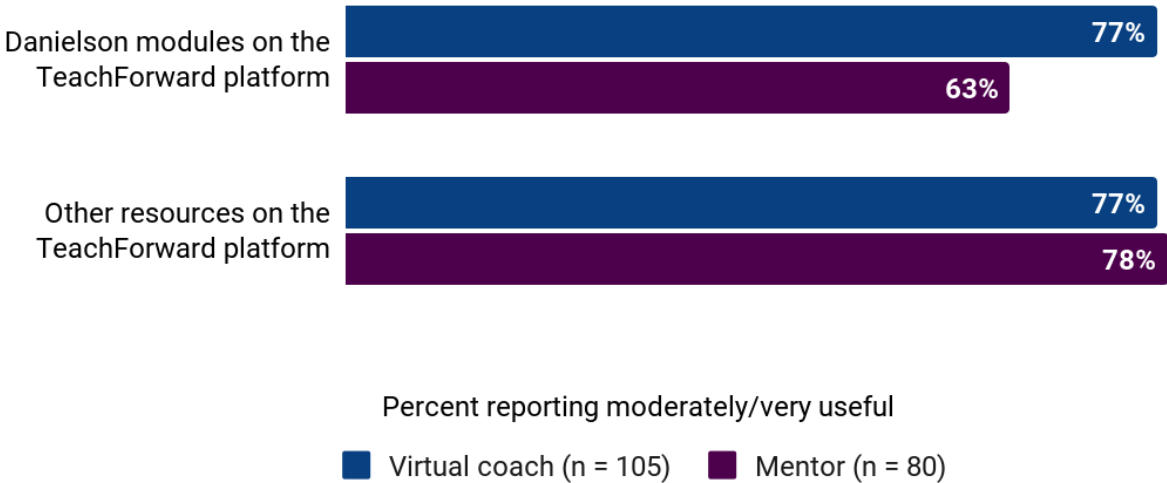


Source: Teacher Coach and Clinician Coach post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

Some virtual coaches, especially teacher coaches, questioned how to align their supports with existing school and/or district supports that their assigned educators received. Beginning teachers in the program had a wide range of support available to them within their buildings. In some cases, a beginning teacher had almost no support besides their virtual coach and mentor, while in other cases, a beginning teacher was paired with a virtual coach and mentor through this program, in addition to being part of a district cohort for beginning teachers, collaborating with an instructional coach within their building, and meeting with a department mentor. Where local support was especially abundant and strong, some beginning teachers struggled to find time to meet with multiple points of support, especially the virtual coach, each week. As one virtual coach explained, *“I think that the in-building person is doing a lot of what I would do for someone who didn’t have a strong support system... Their in-building person is helping them with curriculum and behavior management... I think our roles overlap a lot.”* In these cases, virtual coaches questioned the value their role added, and had concerns about how to best align their support with district- and school-level support.

Virtual coaches and mentors saw value in the resources available on TeachForward but used other materials to facilitate coaching and mentoring, respectively. Virtual coaches and mentors new to the program in 2021–22 were required to complete three asynchronous Danielson Group training modules (on building relationships and sense of belonging, developing cultural competence, and engaging families) on the TeachForward platform as part of their professional learning. About 77 percent of virtual coaches and 63 percent of mentors reported that the Danielson Group training modules were moderately or very useful for their work (Exhibit 12). Virtual coaches and mentors also had access to other resources on the TeachForward platform (e.g., effective-practice videos and articles aligned with the six Danielson clusters), which three-quarters of coaches and mentors found to be moderately or very useful.

Exhibit 12. Usefulness of TeachForward Resources for Coaching and Mentoring

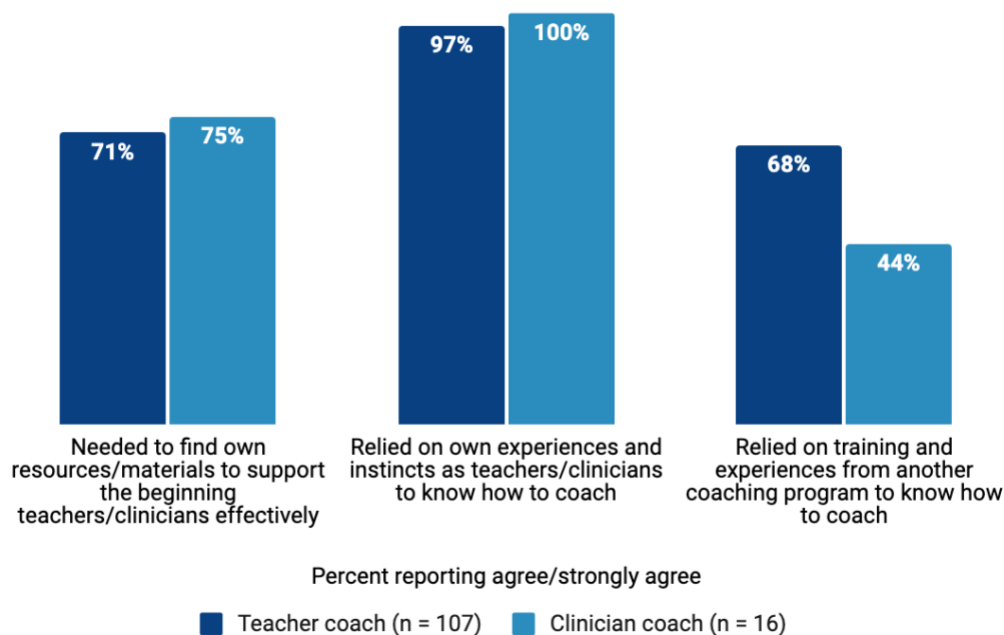


Note: We administered one coach snapshot to all virtual coaches and one mentor snapshot to all mentors regardless of who they served (i.e., teachers, clinicians).

Source: Virtual Coach and Mentor snapshot surveys, February 2022.

Interviewed virtual coaches and mentors found the training resources, including Danielson modules, to be “more theoretical than applicable” and subject-matter agnostic, so although the resources may have contained useful information, coaches and mentors did not tend to use them in their actual coaching and mentoring practice. When supporting individual teacher challenges such as, “*what do you do when you’ve got a class of seventh-grade kids in math who are at a fourth- or fifth-grade math level because we’ve been in a pandemic for two years,*” coaches and mentors looked outside of the platform. About three-quarters of virtual coaches reported that they needed to find resources and materials on their own to support their teachers or clinicians effectively (Exhibit 13). Almost all of the virtual coaches relied on their own experiences and instincts as teachers and clinicians to know how to coach; a smaller percentage (68% of teacher coaches and 44% of clinician coaches) relied on their training and experience from another coaching program to coach effectively.

Exhibit 13. Virtual Coaches’ Needs in Supporting Novice Teachers and Clinicians



Source: Teacher Coach and Clinician Coach post-implementation surveys, May 2022.

Rather than drawing from the TeachForward platform, coaches and mentors we spoke with drew resources from their own networks, experiences, and research to support their teachers or clinicians. In general, coaches wanted to avoid “assigning homework” or “extra tasks” to their teachers and clinicians, and therefore wanted to find the most digestible and approachable content to share (e.g., a podcast, lesson developed by the coaches themselves). For example, one coach used Padlet to create collaborative virtual bulletin boards that their coached teachers could reference for resources aligned with common challenges around areas such as classroom management and student data. Over the course of the year, the coach added links to websites, articles, podcasts, and strategies to the boards,

and also encouraged their teachers to contribute resources that they had found useful so that they could learn from one another. The coach felt that this solved their problem of needing a resource hub and kept them from “reinventing the wheel next year.”

Because TeachForward did not specifically include resources for clinicians, virtual coaches and mentors supporting clinicians did not draw from the platform. All surveyed clinician coaches relied on their own experiences and instincts as clinicians to know how to coach, and 4 in 10 clinician coaches relied on their training and experience from another program to coach effectively. One clinician coach explained, *“I feel like the resources on there are geared more towards classroom teachers. So, in terms of the resources and things that I provide or kind of help the social workers that I coach, I look those up on my own.”*

Similar to 2020–21, virtual coaches and mentors reported finding the organization of TeachForward materials to be overwhelming, and had trouble keeping track of the relevant resources. More than one coach mentioned that if the platform were better curated, they would be more likely to refer to it regularly.

Overall, virtual coaches and mentors found value in participating in the program and connecting with the incoming generation of educators. One coach shared,

I have grown professionally from working with my new teachers. I love my career and to share the love with the new teachers makes me appreciate it even more. I would have LOVED to have had someone to help me, in my younger days, put the teaching world into perspective so that I didn't spend the whole first year worrying constantly.

Some virtual coaches and mentors also shared in interviews and open-ended survey responses that guiding new teachers and clinicians gave them a space to reflect on their own practice, stay up-to-date with school and district policies and professional guidelines, and innovate alongside their teachers or clinicians. In the words of one virtual coach: *“I was able to not only give another perspective on things, but also receive another perspective from others. I learned just as much as my mentees did!”* We also heard from coaches and mentors that participating in the program enabled them to interact and collaborate with educators they would otherwise not have had the opportunity to, whether it be in online forums or within their own district. And if given the opportunity, a vast majority (more than 90% of teacher coaches, clinician coaches, and clinician mentors, and 84% of teacher mentors) would like to serve in their roles again in 2022–23.

Findings about Outcomes

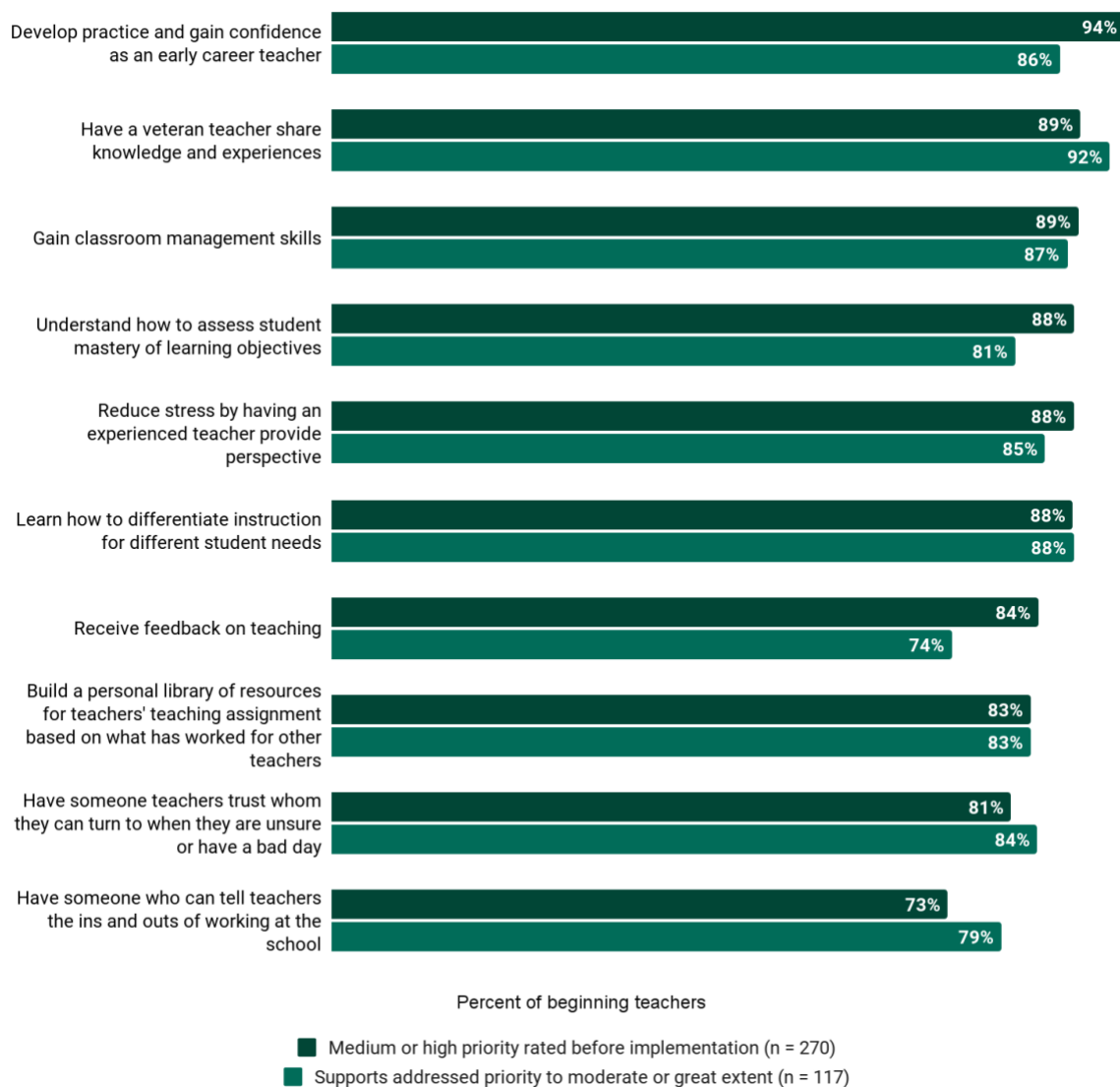
The Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program aims to improve beginning teachers' and clinicians' professional practice, integration into their school and/or district community, and intention to stay in their respective professions. We summarize key findings on teacher outcomes, and the role virtual coaches and mentors played in achieving them. (Refer to Appendix B for a summary of clinician outcomes.) We then discuss improvement in virtual coach and mentor skills, starting with virtual coaches and mentors who support teachers, followed by virtual coaches and mentors who support clinicians.

Beginning Teacher Outcomes

Coaching and mentoring supports addressed beginning teachers' priorities. At the beginning of the 2021–22 school year, novice teachers indicated priority goals that they hoped the program would address. A vast majority of teachers rated building their skills and knowledge, and growing in their professional practice as medium or high priorities.

At the end of the year, when asked about the extent to which supports (from either their virtual coach or mentor) addressed those priorities, teachers were largely positive. First, teachers expressed appreciation about the companionship and camaraderie offered by their virtual coach and mentor. Teachers felt that the program gave them access to veteran teachers who could share their knowledge and experience, as well as someone whom they could turn to when they were unsure or had a bad day (92% and 84%, respectively, reporting that program supports addressed these priorities to a moderate or great extent). Teachers also reported that supports also addressed priorities concerning fundamental teaching practices, such as gaining classroom management skills (87%), understanding how to assess student mastery of learning objectives (81%), and differentiating instruction (88%), to a moderate or great extent. Other priorities moderately or greatly addressed through the program were related to getting established and gaining momentum as teachers, including reducing stress by having an experienced teacher provide perspective (84%), and having someone who can share the ins and outs of working at their school (79%) (Exhibit 14).

Exhibit 14. Extent to Which Coaching and Mentoring Supports Addressed Novice Teacher Priorities



Source: Teacher pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

Beginning teachers found instructional supports received from their virtual coach and/or mentor helpful for their practice. At least 80 percent of teachers reported that program supports received were quite or very helpful in: reflecting on their teaching practice; discussing instructional concerns and problems; adapting instruction to meet the needs of students at varying academic levels; identifying grade- and/or subject-appropriate instructional materials and/or techniques; and using assessment data to progress-monitor and modify instruction (Exhibit 15). These results are unsurprising, considering these areas are foundational in teaching yet sometimes challenging to master. As mentioned in the section on coaching and mentoring activities above, these are no doubt the types of topics that comprised the backbone of a great many coaching and mentoring interactions in Year 2.

Exhibit 15. Extent to Which Novice Teachers Reported Supports Were Helpful to Their Professional Practice



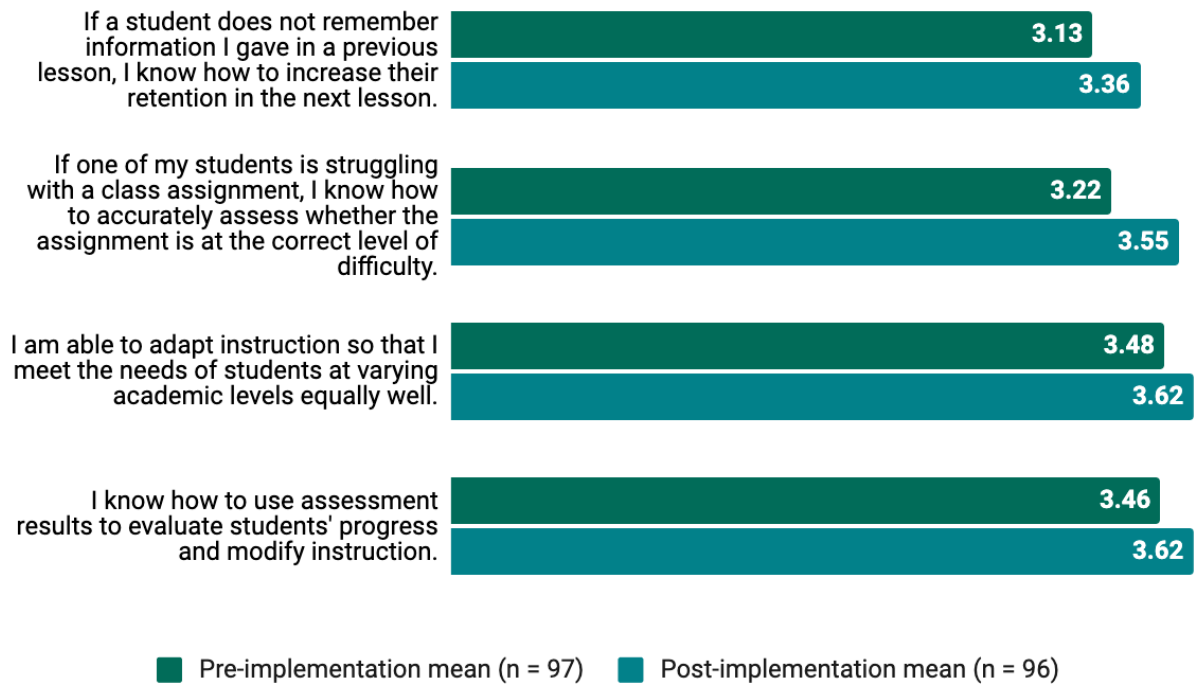
Percent of beginning teachers receiving support reporting it was quite or very helpful (n = 117)

Source: Teacher post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Our data suggests statistically significant increases in beginning teachers' efficacy ratings. Compared to their self-ratings at the beginning of the 2021–22 school year, participating teachers reported higher average efficacy ratings in meeting student needs (difference in pre- to post-implementation means on efficacy scale⁶ = 0.208, $p = 0.010$) and engaging students (difference in pre- to post-implementation means on efficacy scale = 0.362, $p = 0.001$). Exhibits 16 and 17 show teachers' ratings along each dimension in each of these two scales.

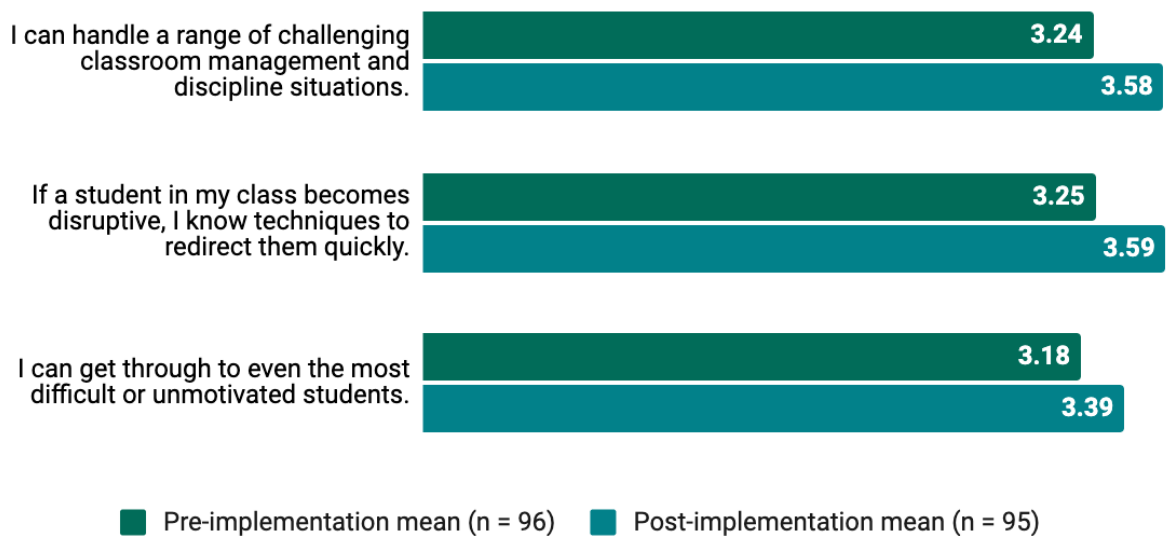
⁶ Beginning teacher efficacy ratings on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not at all equipped, 2 = A little equipped, 3 = Quite equipped, 4 = Very equipped, 5 = Extremely equipped

Exhibit 16. Novice Teachers' Mean Efficacy Ratings for Meeting Student Needs, Pre- to Post-Implementation



Source: Teacher pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

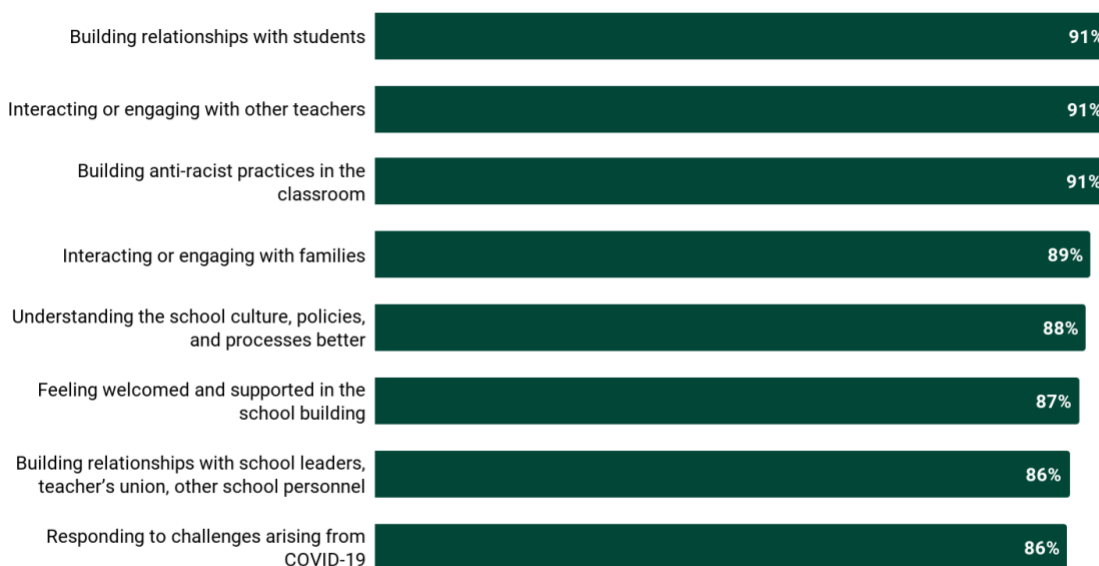
Exhibit 17. Novice Teachers' Mean Efficacy Ratings for Engaging Students, Pre- to Post-Implementation



Source: Teacher pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

Beginning teachers found coaching and mentoring activities useful for facilitating their integration into the school environment. While building foundational teaching skills is undeniably vital to developing a beginning teacher’s practice, acclimation to their school environment is also crucial for beginning teachers. Accordingly, teachers overwhelmingly found many coaching and mentoring supports around orientation to their school community quite or very helpful (Exhibit 18). For example, the vast majority of teachers found program supports to build relationships with students (91%); engage with families and other teachers (89% and 91%, respectively); understand school culture and policies better (88%); and build relationships with school leaders, teachers’ union and other school personnel (86%) to be quite or very helpful.

Exhibit 18. Extent to Which Novice Teachers Reported Supports Were Helpful in Orienting Them to the School Culture and Community



Percent of beginning teachers receiving support reporting it was quite or very helpful (n = 117)

Source: Teacher post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Teachers attributed their professional growth over the course of the 2021–22 school year to their virtual coach and mentor. Specifically, more than 70 percent of teachers reported their professional growth as a teacher was moderately or greatly due to working with their virtual coach (72%) and their mentor (71%), a proportion that speaks highly of virtual coaches’ and mentors’ efforts in supporting beginning teachers.

Beginning teachers saw their teachers' union as a source of support after participating in the program.

The three teachers' unions, IEA, IFT, and CTU, are advocates for the teaching profession, offering professional learning to their members. The Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program is a major union-led and managed initiative providing a great service to its educators. We wanted to understand if and how participation in the program might have shaped union members' attitudes toward their respective unions or influenced non-union members to consider joining, if at all. Eighty-four percent of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that participating in the program made them feel like their union cared about their professional growth, and 83 percent agreed or strongly agreed that they could turn to their union for support. About half (52%) of beginning teachers considered one day taking on a leadership role in their union. While the majority of participating teachers (90%) were union members, a small minority were not affiliated with an Illinois teachers' union. Of these non-union-member teachers, 33 percent reported that they would “probably” or “definitely” join a union after participating in the program.

High percentages of beginning teachers reported their intention to stay in the profession. Perhaps now more than ever, increasing teacher retention is a crucial goal to any early-career teacher support program. In Year 2, half (52%) of teachers reported that they “definitely” would be, and a further 39 percent reported they “probably” would be classroom teachers five years from now, compared with 70 percent of teachers who reported in the first year that they would “definitely” and 21 percent who said they would “probably” be. Furthermore, for teachers who were not definitely sure about being in the classroom in five years,⁷ 36 percent believed they would “probably” or “definitely” be in K–12 education in some other capacity. While these findings reflect teacher intention only, they remain much higher than traditional estimates of teacher attrition (Ingersoll et al., 2018).⁸

⁷ Teachers who did not respond “definitely” to the question “How likely do you think you will be a classroom teacher 5 years from now?”

⁸ Ingersoll, R., Merrill, E., Stuckey, D., & Collins, G. (2018). Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force—Updated October 2018. CPRE Research Reports. https://repository.upenn.edu/cpre_researchreports/108/

Spotlight on a Clinician Coach’s Relationship with Novice Clinicians

Stephanie (pseudonym), a virtual coach for five social workers, modeled their coaching after their own experiences working with mentors in the past, stating:

I try to be whatever [my social workers] need at that moment. I start off our session by asking what a success was for that week and we talk about that. Then we talk about any challenges for that week, and from that question they might bring up a specific student that they're working with, or family need, and that can guide our conversation. [We] brainstorm some ideas that they could try or brainstorm some resources that they might use.

Since Stephanie found that the TeachForward platform is aimed more towards the needs of classroom teachers than clinicians, they drew from their own personal library, networks, and research to select resources to share with their clinicians. For novice social workers serving the same grade bands and working in similar communities as Stephanie, this was an easier process. However, Stephanie needed to spend additional time preparing for their meetings and identifying appropriate resources for social workers whose district contexts they were unfamiliar with and those who served different grade bands than they did.

One of Stephanie's clinicians, Michelle (pseudonym) worked in the same school district as Stephanie. While Michelle had access to a number of other professional supports within their district, they looked forward to being assigned a virtual coach since they did not have many opportunities to collaborate with other social workers. The clinician also saw this program as an opportunity to gain knowledge and perspective from individuals outside of their own school setting. Michelle appreciated the specialized resources Stephanie provided, as well as their emphasis on self-care to prevent burnout. Michelle shared that the program’s forums often felt geared towards classroom teachers, and were therefore less relevant to their needs, compared to the support of their virtual coach.

Michelle described their interactions with their virtual coach, Stephanie, as varying. Although they had weekly scheduled one-on-one meetings, they kept in contact via text message throughout the week and Stephanie sometimes held group meetings for Michelle and the other clinicians to meet. With the guidance and resources provided by Stephanie, Michelle explained that they were able to implement social-emotional learning activities that improved student outcomes and classroom practices.

Outcomes for Virtual Coaches and Mentors who Supported Beginning Teachers

Teacher coaches saw themselves as effective in supporting beginning teachers. A great majority reported that they had all they needed from the Illinois Virtual Instructional Coach and Building Mentor Program (88%) and did not need more training (83%) to support beginning teachers effectively. Overall, most teacher coaches (93%) rated themselves as moderately or very effective in supporting their teachers in Year 2; a small minority of teacher coaches (12%) reported that they were not as effective as anticipated because of the general circumstances in the pandemic.

Efficacy ratings for teacher coaches did not statistically significantly improve. At the start of the school year, teacher coaches reported a relatively high sense of efficacy: 67 percent to 93 percent rated themselves as being very or extremely prepared to support teachers develop a wide range of instructional and organizational skills in teaching. With such high preparedness levels at pre-implementation, the slightly higher proportions of teacher coaches reporting being more prepared on these skills after implementation were not statistically significant. (Exhibit C-1 in Appendix C presents teacher coaches' preparedness ratings on efficacy, pre- and post-implementation.)

Similar to the 2020–21 year, teacher coaches also reported high levels of preparedness in interpersonal skills (85% to 99% rating themselves as very or extremely comfortable on the pre-implementation survey) in Year 2, and these ratings did not differ from pre- to post-implementation. (See Exhibit C-2 in Appendix C for teacher coaches' ratings of their interpersonal skills, pre- and post-implementation.)

Efficacy ratings for teacher mentors also did not statistically significantly improve from pre- to post-implementation. Because of teacher mentors' proximity to beginning teachers, we learned that teachers approached them for supports around school culture as well as instruction and planning, as seen in Exhibit 5 above. Therefore, we surveyed teacher mentors about their efficacy in supporting beginning teachers build instructional and organizational skills in teaching, similar to what we asked the teacher coaches.

Similar to teacher coaches, teacher mentors rated themselves relatively high in their instructional support efficacy in pre-implementation, and those ratings did not differ in post-implementation. Teacher mentors' initial ratings on their interpersonal skills were also high and did not differ at the end of the 2021–22 school year. (See Exhibits C-3 and C-4 in Appendix C for teacher mentors' preparedness ratings on efficacy and interpersonal skills, pre- and post-implementation.)

Outcomes for Virtual Coaches and Mentors who Supported Beginning Clinicians

All surveyed clinician coaches rated themselves as moderately or very effective in coaching even in the midst of the pandemic. They also overwhelmingly reported that they had all they needed from the program (94%) and did not need more training to support beginning clinicians (87%); however, 13 percent needed more training to fulfill their role.

Clinician coaches did not see statistically significant improvement in efficacy and interpersonal skills ratings. To measure clinician coaches' outcomes, we surveyed them across a range of coaching knowledge, skills, and dispositions from pre- to post-implementation. Similar to their teacher coach counterparts, clinician coaches rated themselves relatively high on their efficacy (79% to 97% reporting very or extremely prepared) and interpersonal skills (82% to 97% reporting very or extremely comfortable) in working with clinicians in the pre-implementation survey, and those ratings did not differ much in post-implementation. However, it is important to note that the sample size for clinician coaches was small. (Exhibits C-5 and C-6 in Appendix C illustrate clinician coaches' preparedness and comfort, pre- and post-implementation.)

Clinician mentor efficacy and interpersonal skills ratings also did not statistically significantly improve. Along the same range of efficacy skills, clinician mentors' ratings did not differ from pre- to post-implementation. Their interpersonal skills ratings also did not change from pre- to post-implementation. It is also important to note that the sample size for clinician coaches was small. (See Exhibits C-7 and C-8 in Appendix C for clinician mentors' ratings in preparedness and interpersonal skills.)

Implications

With the first full year of program implementation, where teachers and clinicians were able to start working with their virtual coaches and/or mentors close to the beginning of the school year, the IEA, IFT, and CTU leaders grew the program nearly seven-fold in new practitioners served and reached districts all across Illinois. Although IEA, IFT, and CTU recruited continuously for new districts from fall 2020 through 2021–22, they were simultaneously able to refine the program. Looking ahead, we offer in this section implications in three main categories—refining the core program, serving clinicians, and continuing to scale—drawing on the evaluation findings in this report.

Refining the Core Program: Matching and Coaching/Mentoring Activities

- A majority of virtual coaches and mentors reported that they were matched well with their teachers and clinicians. Teachers and clinicians also shared that they were well-matched with their virtual coach and mentor across a number of dimensions: grade level, subject area, race/ethnicity, and/or other affinity groups. However, opportunities remain to better match virtual coaches with teachers, especially for subject areas where grade-level match is also important. We heard in interviews that for subject areas like special education, grade-level match is equally important because strategies that work for the elementary school level may not apply to the secondary level. Where exact matches are not possible, virtual coaches would like trainings and/or resources to supplement their knowledge and experience in working with their assigned educators.
- Virtual coaches and mentors greatly appreciated the resources shared at the forums, which they said provided more clarity about their roles. However, some virtual coaches and mentors alike requested more guidance on and clearer expectations for determining specific activities they should engage in with their teachers and clinicians. Some coaches shared that a menu of topics to discuss at different times of the school year along with activity suggestions would provide a useful starting point for coaching. For many coaches, the forums were important learning opportunities where they built connections and shared ideas, and they would value IEA, IFT, and CTU offering them again in 2022–23.
- As discussed, virtual coaches relied on their own experiences and instincts as practitioners and had to find resources and materials on their own to coach effectively. Coaches found or created different coaching materials for their own use. To facilitate sharing and potentially address coaches' requests for coaching resources, IEA, IFT, and CTU could offer a framework for the kinds of coaching resources coaches could share and a process for sharing that values the coaches' expertise and respects their ownership over the materials they develop. IEA, IFT, and CTU could also consider setting the expectation that virtual coaches belong to a community in which they can learn together and share resources with each other.
- Although 2021–22 was the first full year of implementation, the district recruiting period was ongoing and many districts could not confirm the numbers of new teachers, their teaching

assignments, or their buildings until late in the summer or even into the school year. Therefore, new teachers and clinicians did not have the opportunity to work with their respective coaches and mentors at the crucial start of the year. Many of the delays were not in the union leaders' control; however, wherever possible, streamlining routines to maximize the chances that new teachers and clinicians can work with their coaches and mentors at the start of the year is worth problem-solving with participating districts.

Serving Clinicians

- With the addition of clinicians to the program Year 2, we heard that the instructional resources on the TeachForward platform are not relevant to the different clinician specialties. As a result, coaches had to find resources and materials on their own to use with their clinicians. Examining existing resources on TeachForward and refining them or adding new resources specific for clinician roles will be necessary if the clinicians remain a significant proportion of participants. Indeed, it is increasingly clear in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, that greater proportions of young people are suffering from mental health issues and they will require support services more than ever. It is heartening to hear that IEA and IFT have started thinking about and even budgeted resource development for clinicians into their program planning for the summer.
- Because coaching for clinicians was a new concept and clinicians covered seven different professions, no one knew what to expect specifically in doing so. IEA, IFT, and CTU program leaders had not defined tailored supports for clinician roles per se, beyond matching them with coaches from the same profession. With one year of implementation, we know more about new clinicians and their needs, and program leaders might consider shaping forum topics, trainings, and/or resources for clinician coaches and mentors.

Continuing to Scale

- Beginning teachers, compared with beginning clinicians, turned to both virtual coaches and mentors for help on a wide range of topics, including instruction. In schools where local supports are available and strong, virtual coaches reported that their teachers were less active and willing to engage in coaching. These coaches questioned their value add and could benefit from guidance on how to best utilize their role to support beginning teachers. As the program continues to scale and recruit new districts, the unions might prioritize districts with less local support and for districts with strong local supports, provide guidance to district or school leaders on how they might integrate local supports with virtual coach supports so that the new teacher does not feel inundated by the supports and experiences the supports as coherent and mutually reinforcing.
- Looking to fall 2022 when first- and second-year teachers enter their second and third year of teaching respectively, they will have different instructional needs and priorities. For example, as teachers have a better handle on classroom management, their focus may shift to honing their pedagogy, requiring a different type of support from their virtual coach. Just as we see the

importance of differentiating instruction for students, we also recognize the importance of differentiating supports for teachers based on where they are with their knowledge and skills of teaching. It is important for IEA, IFT, and CTU to work in partnership with virtual coaches to identify supports for all teachers as well as individual teachers based on years in the classroom and evolving needs. An additional consideration as the program scales and needs to recruit more virtual coaches may be to refine the expectations around how frequently virtual coaches and beginning teachers meet, with much more frequent supports in the first year and increasingly less frequent meetings in the latter half of the second year and in the third year.

- Program processes continue to be very hands-on for IEA, IFT, and CTU. This high degree of attention to each district, coach, mentor, and teacher has driven the successful expansion in 2021–22. Nonetheless, achieving further coverage statewide at this level of intensity may be unduly taxing. Union leaders may need to experiment with where they can individualize less without losing effectiveness and prioritize where individual attention is essential to bringing new participants onboard.

These implications and suggestions for refinement in no way undermine the tremendous undertaking and achievement of serving 750 new teachers and clinicians in 43 districts across the state in the program’s first full year. Rather, they highlight the inherent challenges of starting up any new program at scale and in particular the difficulties posed by the pandemic context. The consistent findings across implementation in spring 2021 and in the 2021–22 school year on new teachers’ increased efficacy in instruction and commitment to remain in the profession adds to the promise of this union-led program as a strategy to strengthen the teaching profession and provide every student with a prepared, well-supported, and caring teacher.

Appendices

Appendix A. Methods

To answer our evaluation questions in Year 2, we employed a mixed methods design similar to the one used in 2020–21. We collected both qualitative and quantitative data at different points of the school year, analyzed each data source separately, and then compared the results to substantiate the themes that emerged from the findings. We collected the quantitative data using surveys at pre-implementation, midyear, and post-implementation, all of which provided a program-wide overview of implementation (e.g., frequency and value of coaching and mentoring activities) and key outcome measures. We built on the quantitative data by including interviews with the different stakeholder groups. The qualitative data complemented the quantitative data to produce a richer and more comprehensive understanding of program implementation. Exhibit A-1 presents the data collection activities and participants by evaluation question.

Exhibit A-1. Evaluation Questions, Data Sources, and Respondents

	Pre-implementation survey	Post-implementation survey	Midyear snapshot survey	Interviews
Respondents	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	District, local union, beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor
<i>Implementation</i>				
To what extent was the program implemented as intended?		X	X	X
What factors affect implementation, and why?		X		X
To what extent do beginning teachers and clinicians find the program supports valuable?		X	X	X
To what extent do virtual coaches and mentors find the program valuable for coaching and mentoring, respectively?		X	X	X

	Pre-implementation survey	Post-implementation survey	Midyear snapshot survey	Interviews
Respondents	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	Beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor	District, local union, beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, mentor
<i>Outcomes</i>				
To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help develop beginning teachers' professional practice? What role do virtual coaches play?	X	X		X
To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help beginning teachers feel supported and oriented to the school culture and community? What role do mentors play?		X		X
To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program help develop beginning clinicians' professional practice? What role do their virtual coaches and/or mentors play?	X	X		X
To what extent does participation in the coaching and mentoring program contribute to beginning teachers' and clinicians' intention to stay in the profession?		X		X
To what extent do virtual coaches' and mentors' skills improve as a result of participating in the program?	X	X		X

Surveys and Snapshots

Data collection. From the end of September through October 2021, we administered the pre-implementation survey, programmed in Qualtrics and then assigned as an activity on the TeachForward platform, to all participating beginning teachers, beginning clinicians, virtual coaches, and mentors in the program. The pre-implementation survey was intended to measure educators' efficacy in specific skills and knowledge, and identify their priorities and/or reasons for joining the program.

We know that clinician roles are fundamentally different from teacher roles (e.g., in the knowledge and skills required, what they focus on and how they work with students). As such, we understand that coaching and mentoring with clinicians would be different from that with teachers, so we developed and administered separate surveys for clinician coaches and teacher coaches. We also created separate surveys for clinician mentors and teacher mentors.

In early February 2022, we administered a brief survey to the same stakeholder groups to take a “snapshot” of the types and frequency of coaching and mentoring activities, and satisfaction with coaching, mentoring, and other program resources.

We administered the post-implementation survey from mid-April to early May 2022 to measure:

- Teacher, clinician, virtual coach, and mentor efficacy in the skills and knowledge associated with their respective roles,
- Stakeholders' intention to stay in their role and profession,
- Types and value of coaching and mentoring activities,
- Successes and challenges in implementation, and
- Value of key program supports

Because of ongoing recruitment throughout the year and thus the rolling start of the program, we included only participants who joined the program by January 1, 2022 in the analysis. The implementation period would have been too short to detect any outcomes for participants who joined after January 1, 2022. Exhibit A-2 presents the number of respondents and response rate for each survey by stakeholder group.

Exhibit A-2. Survey Samples and Response Rates

Survey	New teacher ^a	New clinician ^a	Virtual coach ^b	Mentor ^c
Pre-implementation	272 (52%)	53 (85%)	204 (79%)	232 (90%)
Post-implementation	119 (23%)	12 (19%)	123 (48%)	130 (51%)
Pre- and post-implementation	96 (18%)	6 (10%)	113 (44%)	125 (49%)
Midyear snapshot ^d	79 (19%)	17 (24%)	107 (39%)	80 (36%)

^aNote: To calculate response rates, we used cumulative year-end roster data (reflecting all teachers and clinicians who joined by January 1, 2022).

^bNote: Virtual coach responses include both teacher coach and clinician coach responses. To calculate response rates, we used the number of virtual coach participants that IEA, IFT, and CTU reported to ISBE at the end of December 2021 ($n = 258$).

^cNote: Mentor responses include both teacher mentor and clinician mentor responses. To calculate response rates, we used the number of mentor participants that IEA, IFT, and CTU reported to ISBE at the end of December 2021 ($n = 257$).

^dNote: The midyear snapshot was administered to all participants, including those who joined the program after January 2022. To calculate the response rates, we used roster data, which we collected in early February when we administered the snapshot survey.

Data analysis. We used the R statistical software package to conduct our analyses of the survey data. For each survey item, we conducted descriptive analyses (i.e., frequencies and means as appropriate). Similar to 2020–21, we conducted factor analysis to create relevant efficacy scales. For the teacher pre- and post-implementation surveys, we created two teacher efficacy scales: (1) meeting student needs, and (2) engaging students. We conducted factor analysis to examine the properties of 12 survey items on efficacy to ensure that combining them in conceptually relevant scales is reliable. Based on the factor analysis, we created two variables using a weighted average approach, keeping the variables in the same response scale as the original survey items to ease interpretation. Both scale variables were highly reliable with alphas of at least 0.83 (Exhibit A-3).

We utilized the same process for the clinician, virtual coach (teacher coach and clinician coach), and mentor (teacher mentor and clinician mentor) surveys (Exhibit A-3). For the clinician surveys, we also created two scales to capture efficacy in meeting student needs and in communicating and working with others. For the virtual coach surveys, we created two scales, capturing efficacy and interpersonal skills comfort, for teacher coaches and clinician coaches. We also created two scales for each group of mentors—teacher mentors and clinician mentors—to represent efficacy and interpersonal skills comfort.

To understand changes from pre- to post-implementation, we conducted paired *t*-tests to compare the efficacy and/or interpersonal skills scales for each stakeholder group. Exhibit A-4 presents the means of

the efficacy and interpersonal skills comfort ratings at pre- and post-implementation, as well as the mean differences from pre- to post-implementation.

In addition, because of the lower response rates that we had hoped for in the surveys, we analyzed potential missing data bias for beginning teacher, beginning clinician, virtual coach, and mentor respondents. For each role, we compared participants who responded to both pre- and post-implementation surveys with those who responded only to the pre-implementation survey on the pre-implementation and/or interpersonal skills measures (Exhibit A-5). Our findings suggest that for most stakeholder groups, those who responded to both the pre- and post-implementation surveys did not differ from those who responded only to the pre-implementation survey on the pre-implementation measures. For clinician mentors, we found that those who responded to both pre- and post-implementation surveys had slightly lower means for efficacy and interpersonal skills (at pre-implementation) compared with those who responded only to the pre-implementation survey. However, the number of respondents is small, so we recommend interpreting the results with caution.

Furthermore, we looked at beginning teacher post-implementation survey data and compared teachers who responded to the survey (“respondents”) with those who did not (“non-respondents”) on a number of measures: (1) pre-implementation efficacy in meeting student needs, (2) pre-implementation efficacy in engaging students, (3) grade-level taught (elementary, secondary), (4) race/ethnicity (White, non-White), and (5) year as a full-time teacher (first year, second year) (Exhibit A-6). Our findings indicate that post-implementation survey respondents did not differ from the non-respondents on the pre-implementation efficacy measures of meeting student needs and engaging students. Additionally, there is no statistically significant relationship between post-implementation survey completion and grade level taught, and between post-implementation survey completion and year as a full-time teacher. There is a statistically significant relationship between post-implementation survey completion and race/ethnicity ($p < 0.000$). White teachers were more likely than non-White teachers to respond to the post-implementation survey, although this is not a surprising finding given that there are more White teachers participating in the program overall.

Exhibit A-3: Survey Scales

Scales	Items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher coach)	<p>How prepared are you to support new teachers in developing each of the following skills? <i>[Not prepared at all=1, A little prepared=2, Quite prepared=3, Very prepared=4, Extremely prepared=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teach effectively b. Handle a range of challenging classroom management and discipline situations c. Redirect students quickly if they become disruptive in class d. Develop the pedagogical knowledge & cultural competence to facilitate learning for students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds e. Address the needs of students with IEPs and 504 plans f. Engage the most difficult or unmotivated students g. Accurately assess whether an assignment is at the correct level of difficulty h. Adapt instruction so that they can meet the needs of students at varying academic levels equally well i. Build an understanding of trauma j. Identify trauma-responsive and social-emotional learning strategies to implement k. Integrate online resources into instruction l. Use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify instruction 	0.91
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher coach)	<p>How comfortable do you feel... <i>[Not comfortable at all=1, A little comfortable=2, Quite comfortable=3, Very comfortable=4, Extremely comfortable=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building rapport online with someone I don't know b. Identifying useful problems of practice that I can collaborate on with new teachers c. Providing feedback to teachers about equitable practices in the classroom d. Observing teachers teaching and providing meaningful formative feedback e. Encouraging others when they are discouraged f. Providing constructive feedback to a colleague g. Identifying differentiated supports to meet the needs of a mentee 	0.90

Scales	Items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher mentor)	<p>How prepared are you to support new teachers in developing each of the following skills? <i>[Not prepared at all=1, A little prepared=2, Quite prepared=3, Very prepared=4, Extremely prepared=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Teach effectively b. Handle a range of challenging classroom management and discipline situations c. Redirect students quickly if they become disruptive in class d. Develop the pedagogical knowledge & cultural competence to facilitate learning for students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds e. Address the needs of students with IEPs and 504 plans f. Engage the most difficult or unmotivated students g. Accurately assess whether an assignment is at the correct level of difficulty h. Adapt instruction so that they can meet the needs of students at varying academic levels equally well i. Build an understanding of trauma j. Identify trauma-responsive and social-emotional learning strategies to implement k. Integrate online resources into instruction l. Use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify instruction 	0.93
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher mentor)	<p>How comfortable do you feel... <i>[Not comfortable at all=1, A little comfortable=2, Quite comfortable=3, Very comfortable=4, Extremely comfortable=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building rapport with someone I don't know b. Identifying useful problems of practice that I can collaborate on with new teachers c. Providing feedback to teachers about equitable practices in the classroom d. Encouraging others when they are discouraged e. Providing constructive feedback to a colleague f. Identifying differentiated supports to meet the needs of a mentee g. Explaining how things "really work" at my school to a new staff member h. Supporting a new staff member in managing administrator demands i. Supporting a new staff member in understanding how to communicate with parents j. Explaining how to engage with the community and access community resources k. Explaining school policy to new staff members 	0.95

Scales	Items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Teacher efficacy in meeting student needs	<p>To what extent do you feel equipped in the following aspects of teaching? <i>[Not equipped at all=1, A little equipped=2, Quite equipped=3, Very equipped=4, Extremely equipped=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. If a student does not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I know how to increase their retention in the next lesson. b. If one of my students is struggling with a class assignment, I know how to accurately assess whether the assignment is at the correct level of difficulty. c. I am able to adapt instruction so that I meet the needs of students at varying academic levels equally well. d. I know how to use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify instruction. 	0.89
Teacher efficacy in engaging students	<p>To what extent do you feel equipped in the following aspects of teaching? <i>[Not equipped at all=1, A little equipped=2, Quite equipped=3, Very equipped=4, Extremely equipped=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I can handle a range of challenging classroom management and discipline situations. b. If a student in my class becomes disruptive, I know techniques to redirect them quickly. c. I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated students. 	0.83
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician coach)	<p>How prepared are you to support new clinicians in developing each of the following skills? <i>[Not prepared at all=1, A little prepared=2, Quite prepared=3, Very prepared=4, Extremely prepared=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop the knowledge and cultural competence to address the needs of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds b. Address the needs of students with IEPs and 504 plans c. Engage the most difficult or unmotivated students d. Adapt their supports so that they can meet the varying needs of students e. Build an understanding of trauma f. Identify trauma-responsive and social-emotional learning strategies to implement g. Communicate and work with classroom teachers h. Use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify their supports i. Meet the standards of the beginning clinicians' specific profession 	0.83
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician coach)	<p>How comfortable do you feel... <i>[Not comfortable at all=1, A little comfortable=2, Quite comfortable=3, Very comfortable=4, Extremely comfortable=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building rapport online with someone I don't know b. Identifying useful problems of practice that I can collaborate on with new clinicians c. Providing feedback to clinicians about equitable practices d. Encouraging others when they are discouraged e. Providing constructive feedback to a colleague f. Identifying differentiated supports to meet the needs of a mentee 	0.89

Scales	Items	Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician mentor)	<p>How prepared are you to support new clinicians in developing each of the following skills? <i>[Not prepared at all=1, A little prepared=2, Quite prepared=3, Very prepared=4, Extremely prepared=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Develop the knowledge and cultural competence to address the needs of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds b. Address the needs of students with IEPs or 504 plans c. Engage the most difficult or unmotivated students d. Adapt their supports so that they can meet the varying needs of students e. Build an understanding of trauma f. Identify trauma-responsive and social-emotional learning strategies to implement g. Use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify their supports h. Communicate and work with classroom teachers 	0.90
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician mentor)	<p>How comfortable do you feel... <i>[Not comfortable at all=1, A little comfortable=2, Quite comfortable=3, Very comfortable=4, Extremely comfortable=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Building rapport with someone I don't know b. Identifying useful problems of practice that I can collaborate on with new clinicians c. Providing feedback to clinicians about equitable practices in the classroom d. Encouraging others when they are discouraged e. Providing constructive feedback to a colleague f. Identifying differentiated supports to meet the needs of a mentee g. Explaining how things "really work" at my school/district to a new staff member h. Supporting a new staff member in managing school/district administrator demands i. Supporting a new staff member with communicating with parents j. Explaining to clinicians how to engage with the community and access community resources k. Explaining school/district policy to new staff members 	0.89
Clinician efficacy in meeting student needs	<p>To what extent do you feel equipped in the following aspects? <i>[Not equipped at all=1, A little equipped=2, Quite equipped=3, Very equipped=4, Extremely equipped=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I have the knowledge and skills to address the needs of students with IEPs or 504 plans. b. I am able to adapt my supports to meet the varying needs of students. c. I know how to use assessment results to evaluate students' progress and modify my supports. 	0.81
Clinician efficacy in communicating and working with others	<p>To what extent do you feel equipped in the following aspects? <i>[Not equipped at all=1, A little equipped=2, Quite equipped=3, Very equipped=4, Extremely equipped=5]</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. I have the knowledge and skills to communicate and work effectively with teachers to address the needs of students. b. I have the knowledge and skills to communicate and work effectively with families to address the needs of students. 	0.91

Exhibit A-4. Mean Differences in Efficacy and Interpersonal Skills Comfort Ratings from Pre- to Post-Implementation

Scales	Pre-implementation			Post-implementation			Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher coach)	100	4.27	0.50	96	4.27	0.57	-0.013	-0.275	0.784
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher coach)	99	4.41	0.52	99	4.32	0.61	-0.087	-1.688	0.095
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher mentor)	107	4.05	0.58	102	4.05	0.57	0.004	0.092	0.927
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher mentor)	109	4.26	0.59	102	4.31	0.53	0.056	1.373	0.173
Teacher efficacy in meeting student needs	97	3.31	0.74	96	3.53	0.78	0.208	2.633	0.010
Teacher efficacy in engaging students	96	3.18	0.72	95	3.52	0.81	0.362	4.540	0.001
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician coach)	13	4.32	0.43	13	4.21	0.55	-0.111	-0.757	0.464
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician coach)	13	4.35	0.45	13	4.45	0.66	0.103	0.643	0.533
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician mentor)	16	3.66	0.59	11	3.45	1.13	-0.250	-0.715	0.491
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician mentor)	16	4.03	0.55	10	4.24	0.88	0.045	0.351	0.734
Clinician efficacy in meeting student needs	5	3.73	1.12	6	3.5	0.35	-0.200	-0.535	0.621
Clinician efficacy in communicating and working with others	5	3.7	0.97	6	3.58	0.66	-0.200	-0.590	0.587

Exhibit A-5. Missing Data Bias Analysis (Comparing Respondents with Only Pre-implementation Survey and Respondents with Both Pre- and Post-Implementation Survey, along Pre-implementation Efficacy Scales)

Pre-implementation scales	Respondents with pre- survey response only			Respondents with pre- and post-survey response			Mean difference	t	p
	n	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD			
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher coach)	69	4.21	0.57	100	4.27	0.50	0.060	-0.708	0.480
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher coach)	71	4.40	0.56	99	4.41	0.52	0.012	-0.142	0.887
Instructional support efficacy (for teacher mentor)	90	3.96	0.66	108	4.05	0.57	0.092	-1.033	0.303
Interpersonal skills comfort (for teacher mentor)	89	4.14	0.69	110	4.26	0.59	0.120	-1.304	0.194
Teacher efficacy in meeting student needs	172	3.33	0.83	97	3.31	0.74	-0.013	0.128	0.898
Teacher efficacy in engaging students	172	3.25	0.81	96	3.18	0.72	-0.068	0.701	0.484
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician coach)	20	4.26	0.50	13	4.32	0.43	0.055	-0.340	0.737
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician coach)	20	4.55	0.57	13	4.35	0.45	-0.204	1.141	0.263
Efficacy in supporting clinicians (for clinician mentor)	18	4.35	0.58	16	3.66	0.59	-0.690	3.408	0.002
Interpersonal skills comfort (for clinician mentor)	18	4.46	0.48	16	4.03	0.55	-0.426	2.375	0.024
Clinician efficacy in meeting student needs	47	3.58	0.76	5	3.73	1.12	0.152	-0.297	0.780
Clinician efficacy in communicating and working with others	48	3.73	0.87	5	3.70	0.97	-0.029	0.064	0.951

Exhibit A-6. Missing Data Bias Analysis for Novice Teachers

Pre-implementation scales	Post-implementation survey respondents		Post-implementation survey non-respondents		Mean difference	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>n</i>	Mean	<i>n</i>	Mean			
Teacher efficacy in meeting student needs	92	3.38	146	3.29	0.080	-0.762	0.447
Teacher efficacy in engaging students	92	3.15	146	3.24	-0.092	0.879	0.380
Background characteristics	<i>n</i>	Percent	<i>n</i>	Percent	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Elementary	64	60%	216	58%	0.167	1	0.682
Secondary	43	40%	159	42%			
White	94	87%	227	58%	31.543	1	<0.000
Non-white	14	13%	116	42%			
1st-year teacher	60	66%	98	69%	0.171	1	0.679
2nd-year teacher	31	34%	45	31%			

Note: We gathered data on novice teacher grade level taught, race/ethnicity, and years of experience from union rosters, pre-implementation survey, and TeachForward platform profiles.

Interviews

Data collection. We conducted two rounds of interviews. First, from November 3, 2021 to January 10, 2022, we targeted a purposive sample of district administrators and local union leaders from ten districts. In creating our sample, we included both returning and new districts, and a range of locales (rural versus urban) and regions. We were able to schedule interviews and speak with nine district administrators and nine local union leaders. During this first round of interviews, we also sampled a group of twelve mentors and fourteen virtual coaches who represented both new participants and those in their second year, those who supported teachers and those who supported clinicians, and a range of locales and regions. We were able to schedule interviews and speak with five mentors and eight virtual coaches. Of the eight virtual coaches we interviewed, two supported clinicians while six supported teachers.

The second round of interviews occurred from March 1 to April 15, 2022 with a purposive sample of beginning teachers and clinicians, virtual coaches, and mentors. We began by sampling virtual coaches and mentors who represented a range of characteristics with regard to number of years participating in the program, types of teachers and/or clinicians supported, and, with regard to mentors, a range of locales and regions. From there, we recruited matched pairs (and in cases where the virtual coach and mentor support the same teacher(s) or clinician(s), triads) by sampling the particular teachers and clinicians whom those sampled virtual coaches and mentors supported, with the intention of gaining a better understanding of individual experiences and the coach-teacher-mentor or coach-clinician-mentor social unit. Since most virtual coaches and mentors supported multiple teachers/clinicians, this approach allowed us to oversample teacher and clinician respondents. Given the demands on educators across the board in the 2021–22 year, we predicted that new professionals would be the least likely to volunteer their time for a research interview. We were able to schedule interviews and speak with six mentors (of whom all six supported teachers, although one mentor was a clinician), nine virtual coaches (of whom seven supported teachers and two supported clinicians), eight novice teachers, and one novice clinician. With our sampling strategy, our interviews provided deeper insights into two coach-teacher relationships, one mentor-coach relationship, and the relationship of one mentor with two teachers. Exhibit A-7 shows the number of interview respondents by stakeholder groups.

Exhibit A-7. Interview Respondents

Stakeholder group	Sampled	Participated
Virtual coaches	14 (winter) 20 (spring)	8 (winter) 9 (spring)
Mentors	12 (winter) 26 (spring)	5 (winter) 6 (spring)
Novice teachers	89	8
Novice clinicians	22	1
District administrators	10	9
Local union leaders	10	8

The interviewed virtual coaches, mentors, and teachers ranged in subjects taught and grade levels. Virtual coaches and mentors differed in years of coaching experience, some being novice and some more experienced in coaching and mentoring.

The interviews were semi-structured, individual, and virtual around the following main thematic areas: the value of coaching for new teachers/clinicians, the local contexts surrounding new teacher/clinician supports and learning, facilitating and constraining factors in coaching, ongoing needs, and suggestions for program improvement.

Open-ended survey questions also provided qualitative data. We asked all respondents (teachers, clinicians, virtual coaches, and mentors) if there was anything else they wanted to share about their experience with the program. In addition, we asked mentors and coaches open-ended questions on: Whether their new clinicians/teachers were good matches for them, challenges they encountered, additional supports they and their new clinicians/teachers needed, whether it is important to have coaching and mentoring split into role for two different people, and whether they would like to participate in the program next year and why.

Data analysis. We captured audio recordings and notes for each interview, and conducted thematic analysis using a structured debriefing form for each role after data collection. Our team read and re-read interview transcripts; summarized key points as codes that describe the content; systematically clustered codes into themes in an iterative process that tied back to the evaluation questions. We triangulated the interview data across stakeholder groups to further confirm or disconfirm emergent

themes. The multiple stakeholder perspectives provided a rich understanding of implementation successes and challenges, and allowed us to validate the strength of the themes across the groups.

For survey open-ended questions, after familiarizing ourselves with the data, we conducted iterative thematic analysis of responses to each question, similar to the process described for interviews.

Appendix B. Novice Clinician Implementation and Outcomes Data

Due to the small number of responses from clinicians in the post-implementation survey, we summarized clinician implementation and outcomes results in this appendix. We recommend interpreting the results with caution because of the small number of clinician respondents.

Beginning Clinician Participation

Professions or specialties of surveyed clinicians varied, but social workers comprised the largest group of respondents. Most beginning clinicians were relatively new to their profession as well as Pre-K–12 education. Around three-quarters of surveyed clinicians had between zero and two years of experience in their profession (77%) and in Pre-K–12 education (75%). Among the range of program-supported clinical professions, social workers made up half (57%) of the respondents, followed by speech-language pathologists, counselors, and psychologists/therapists (19%, 13%, and 9%, respectively) (Exhibit B-1).

Exhibit B-1. Specialties of Surveyed Clinicians

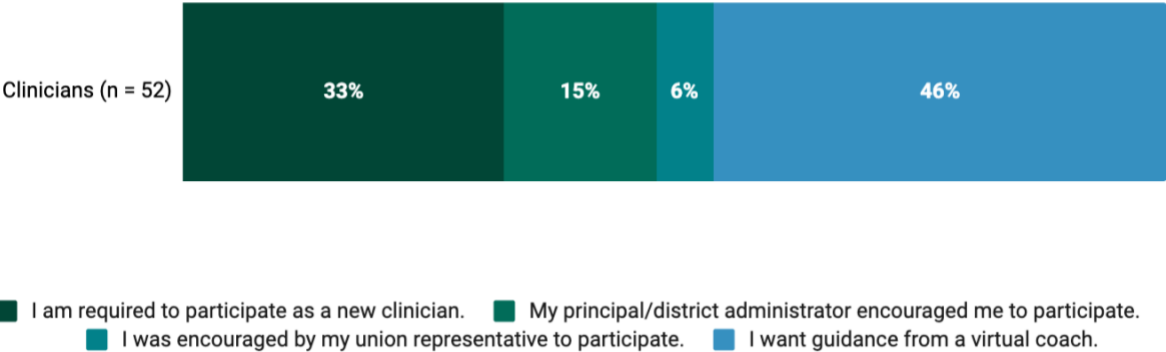


Note: The figure above represents only the roles of the 53 clinicians who completed the pre-implementation survey. For instance, although the figure above does not show any participating nurses, it is possible that the program supported nurses who did not complete the pre-implementation survey.

Source: Clinician pre-implementation survey, October 2021.

Clinician coaches reported different motivations for participating in the program. However, a notable half (46%) of surveyed clinicians reported support from a virtual coach as their primary reason for joining the program (Exhibit B-2).

Exhibit B-2. Primary Reasons for Participation among Novice Clinicians



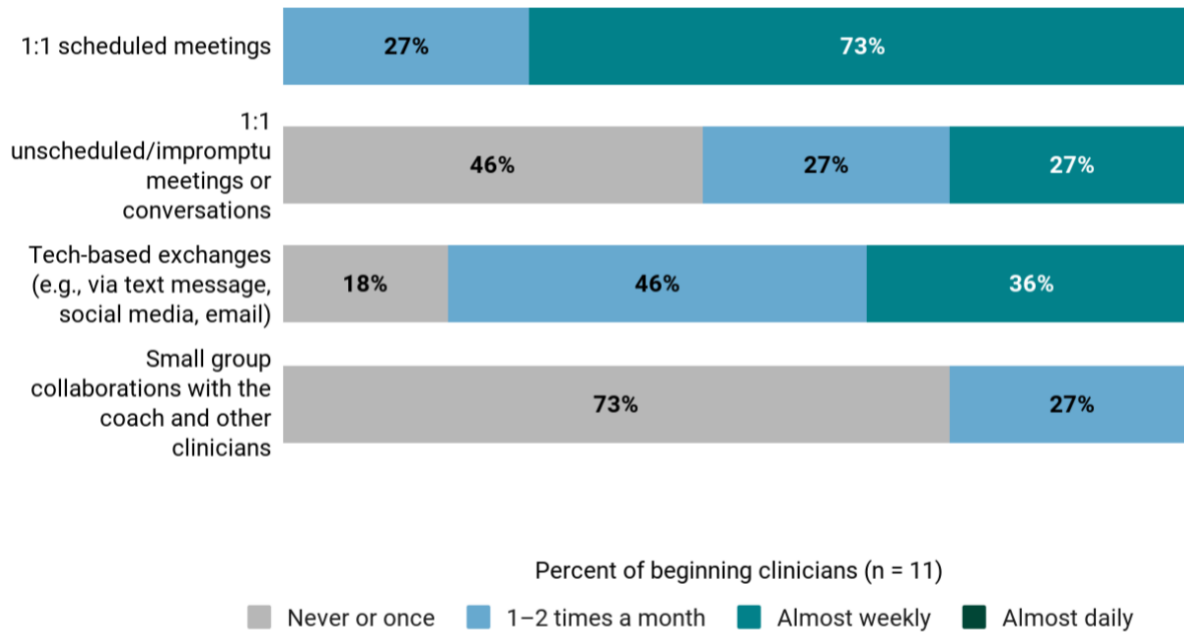
Source: Clinician pre-implementation survey, October 2021.

Novice clinicians reported being well-matched with their virtual coach. Specifically, clinicians said they were matched well with their coach in terms of specialty (100%) and race/ethnicity and/or affinity group(s) (91%).

Coaching and Mentoring Supports for Beginning Clinicians

Clinicians met with their virtual coaches relatively frequently and found such meetings to be helpful. Around 70 percent of clinicians met one-on-one weekly with their virtual coach, with lower proportions also using informal channels (e.g., text message, social media, email) or impromptu meetings. These individual interactions were supplemented with occasional group meetings, with over quarter of clinicians (27%) reporting engagement in group collaborations 1–2 times a month (Exhibit B-3). Nearly all clinicians (95%) agreed or strongly agreed that the amount of time they had with their virtual coach was enough to meet their needs.

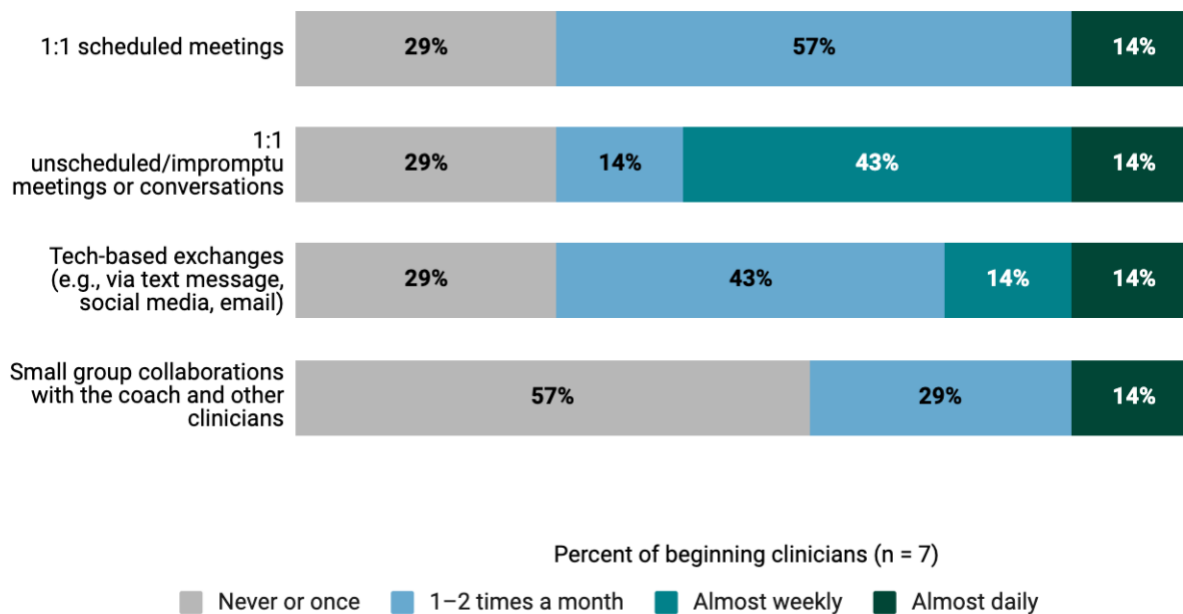
Exhibit B-3. Frequency of Interactions Between Novice Clinicians and Virtual Coaches



Source: Clinician post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Clinicians met with their mentor frequently through impromptu meetings or informal channels of communications. Half of clinicians used impromptu meetings or conversations with their mentor at least weekly, and 28 percent of clinicians used informal channels of communication with their mentor at least weekly (Exhibit B-4). Eighty-six percent of clinicians agreed or strongly agreed that their mentor was responsive when they had time-sensitive questions or issues.

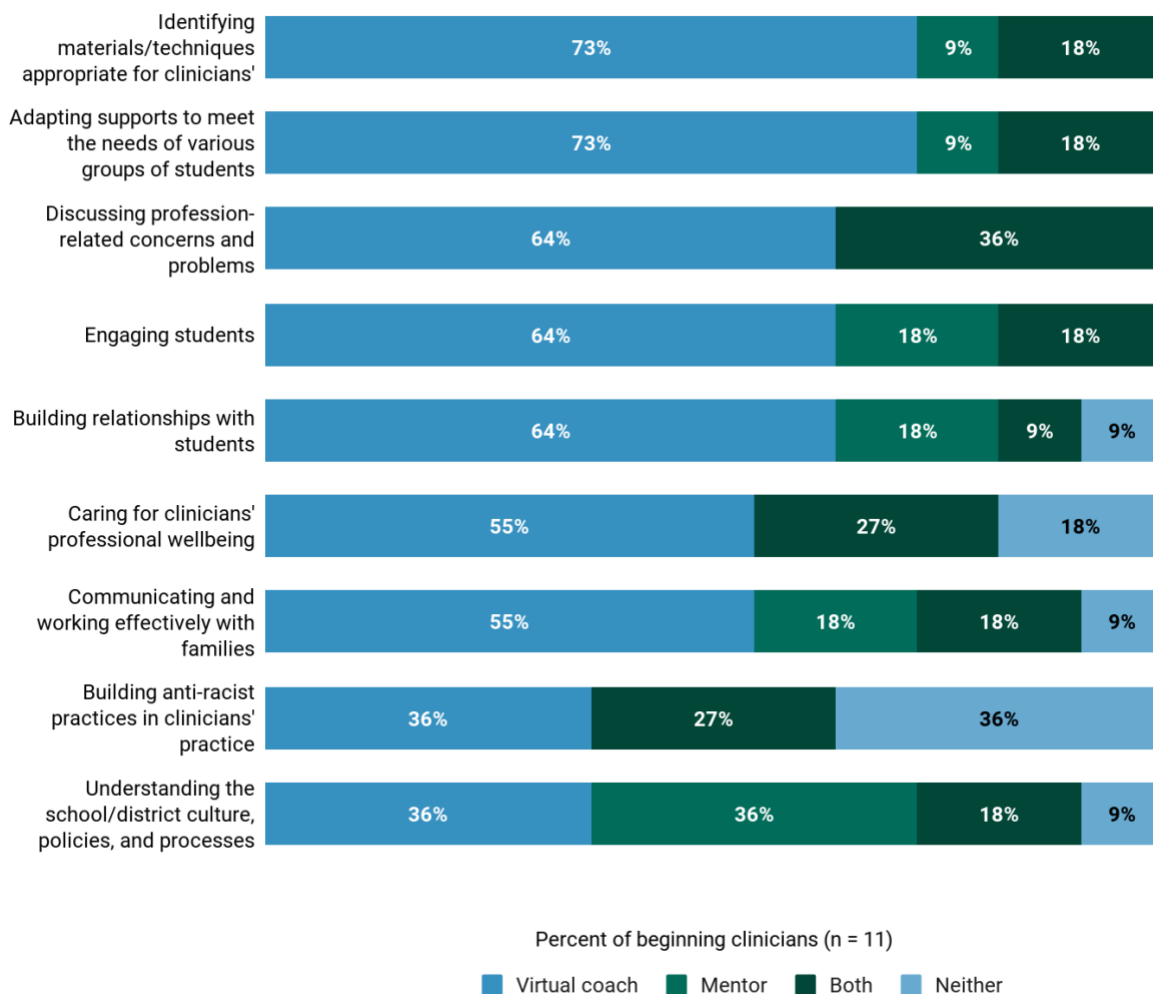
Exhibit B-4. Frequency of Interactions Between Novice Clinicians and Mentors



Source: Clinician post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Large proportions of beginning clinicians reached out to only their virtual coach compared to clinicians who reached out to only their mentor or both coach and mentor for supports. From half to three-quarters of clinicians reported turning to only their virtual coach for supports on identifying profession-appropriate materials and/or techniques (73%), adapting supports to meet student needs (73%), discussing profession-related concerns and problems (64%), building relationships with students (64%), engaging students (64%), communicating and working effectively with families (55%), and caring for their professional wellbeing (55%) (Exhibit B-5).

Exhibit B-5. Supports Novice Clinicians Received from Virtual Coach and/or Mentor



Note: Due to rounding, some totals may be under 100 percent. Also, the sample size is small, so please interpret with caution.

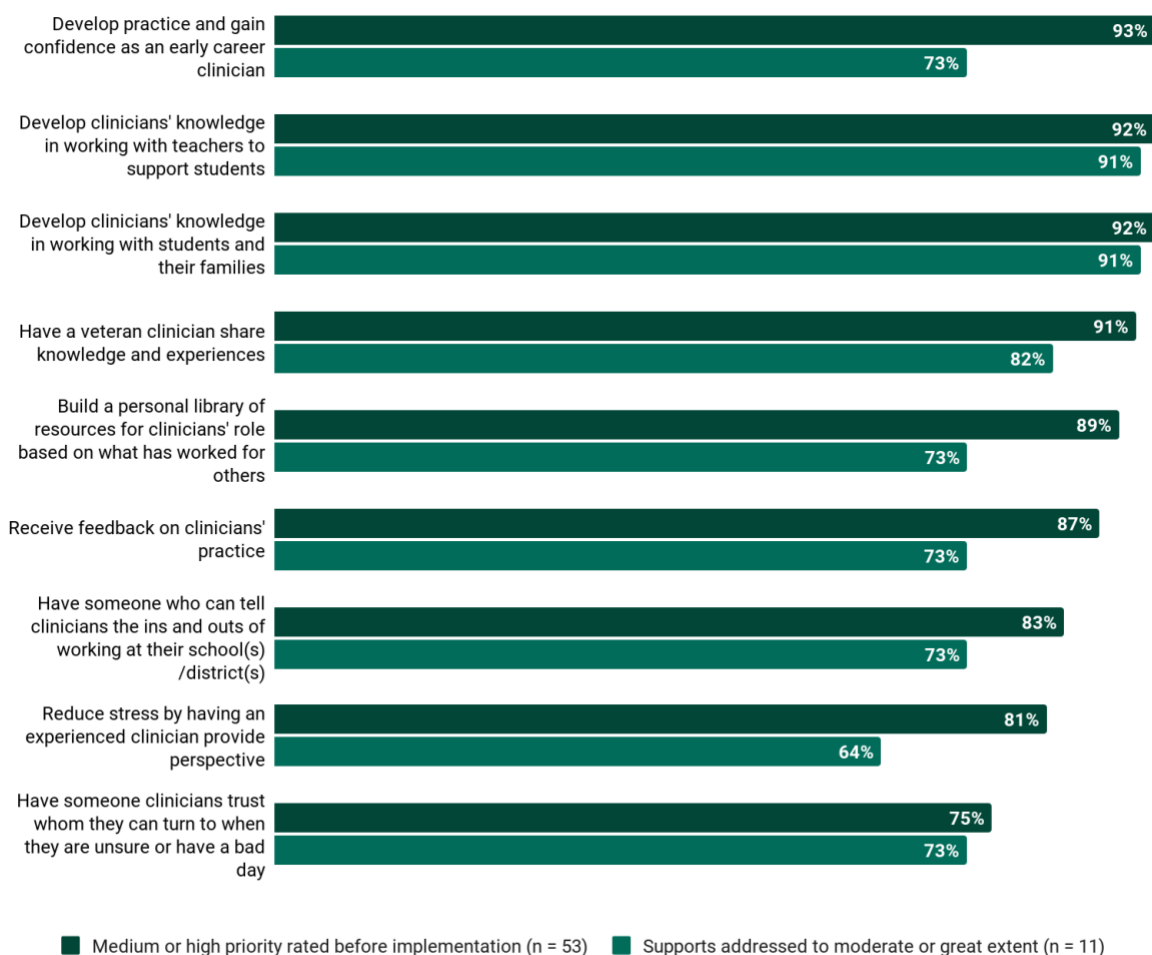
Source: Clinician post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Beginning Clinician Outcomes

Beginning clinicians shared that program supports addressed their priorities. Like their teacher counterparts, beginning clinicians shared similar priorities for what they hoped to gain from participating in the program: Having a veteran clinician share knowledge and experiences (91%) and building a personal library of resources for their role (83%) were among the highest priorities clinicians rated at the beginning of the program, and felt had been addressed to a great or moderate extent at the end of the year. Clinicians also placed great priority on developing their connections with others, which were also effectively addressed. Ninety-two percent of clinicians reported that the support they received helped develop their knowledge in working with students and their families, and with teachers to support students, to a moderate or great extent (Exhibit B-6). Given the sometimes isolating effect of

often being the only person at their school in their given profession, it appears that clinicians prioritized connecting with those around them and sought related support from their virtual coach and/or mentor.

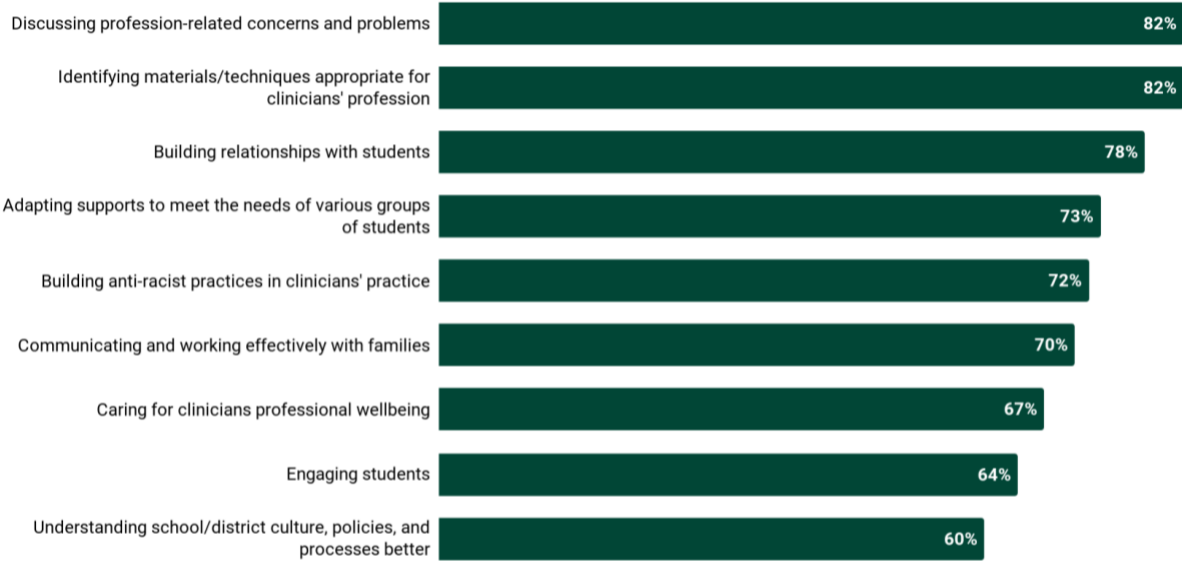
Exhibit B-6. Extent to Which Coaching and Mentoring Supports Addressed Novice Clinician Priorities



Source: Clinician pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

Similar to beginning teachers, clinicians found coaching and mentoring supports helpful for their professional practice. Eighty-two percent of clinicians found discussing profession-related concerns and problems and identifying profession-appropriate materials and/or techniques to be very or quite helpful, followed by building relationships with students (78%) and adapting supports to meet the needs of various groups of students (73%) (Exhibit B-7). These problems of practice reflected the daily challenges that beginning clinicians likely encountered and subsequently reached out to a mentor or virtual coach for help with.

Exhibit B-7. Extent to Which Novice Clinicians Reported Supports Were Helpful to their Professional Practice

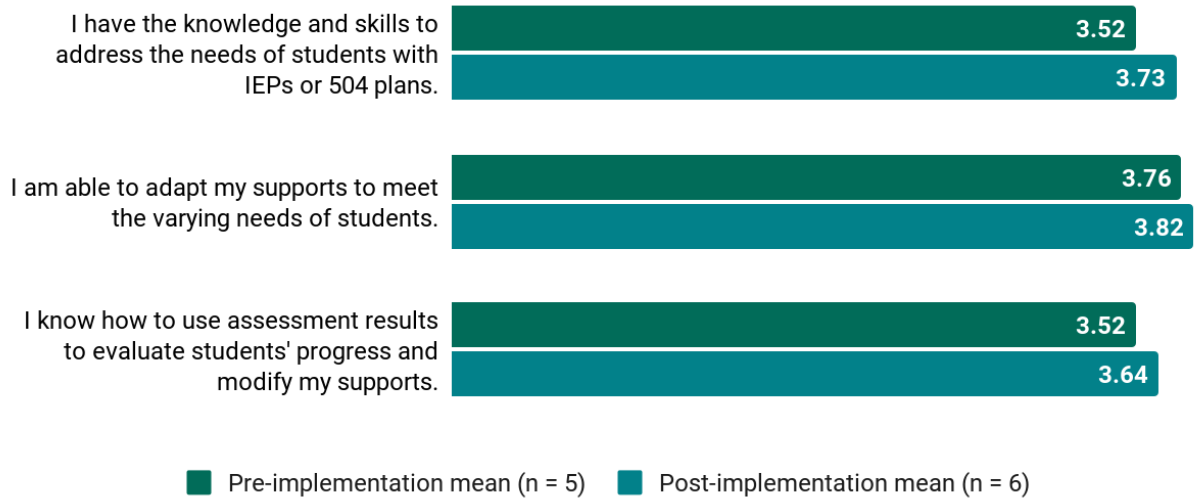


Percent of beginning clinicians receiving support reporting it was quite or very helpful (n = 11)

Source: Clinician post-implementation survey, May 2022.

Unlike their teacher peers, beginning clinicians did not report statistically significant improvements in key aspects of their practice (i.e., efficacy in meeting student needs and working with others) over the course of the year (Exhibits B-8 and B-9). However, clinicians thought they grew professionally and attributed that growth to the support they received from their virtual coach (55%) and mentor (57%) to a moderate or great extent. These figures are remarkable considering the limited resources available to clinicians during this pilot year of clinician participation. As materials and support specific to clinicians get added to the program in 2022–23, beginning clinicians will potentially be able to realize more of this coaching and mentoring program’s value.

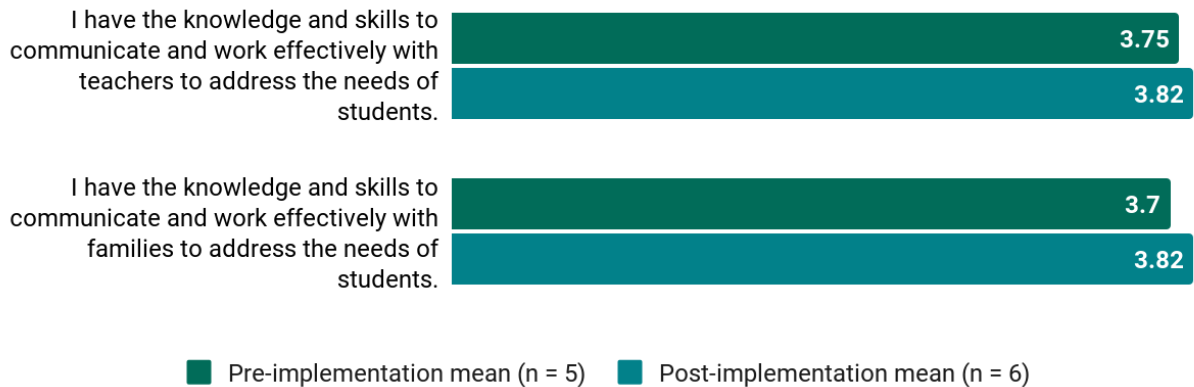
Exhibit B-8. Novice Clinicians' Efficacy in Meeting Student Needs, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: The number of responses for clinicians is small; interpret the data with caution.

Source: Clinician pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

Exhibit B-9. Novice Clinicians' Efficacy in Working with Others, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: The number of responses for clinicians is small; interpret the data with caution.

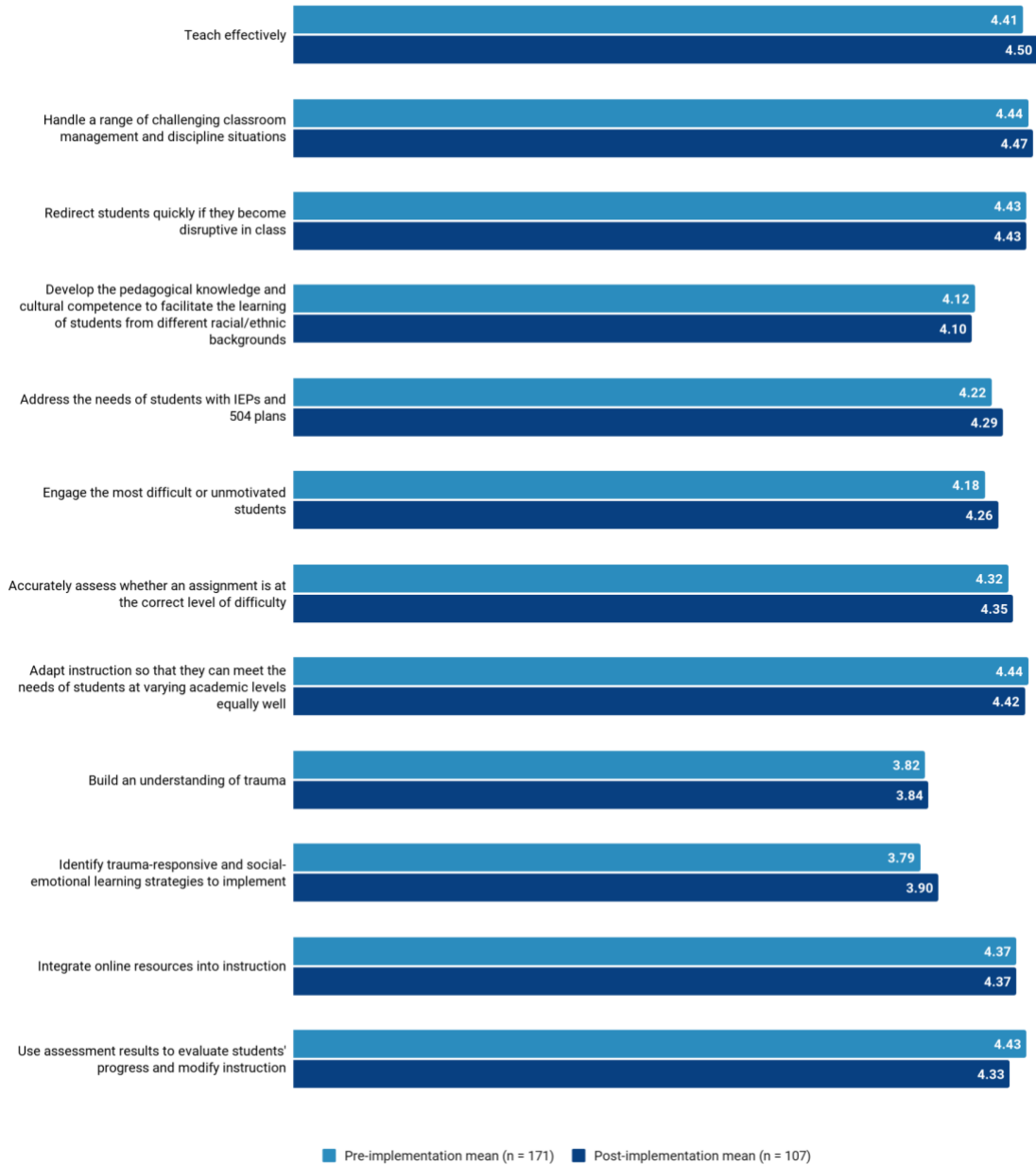
Source: Clinician pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

A majority of beginning clinicians had more positive perceptions of their union after program participation. Eighty-nine percent of clinicians who were union members agreed or strongly agreed that they were proud to be members of their teachers' union. Seventy-eight percent of clinicians felt their union cared about their professional growth, and they could turn to their union for support. Another 78 percent reported that participating in the program made them consider taking on a leadership role in the union one day.

At the end of 2021–22, a large proportion of participating clinicians reported an intention to continue in their current role at their school or district. Nearly half of clinicians (46%) reported they would “definitely” and 18 percent reported they would “probably” still be in their current role five years from now. Among the 54 percent who did not respond that they would definitely be in their current role, 33 percent thought they would probably or definitely be working in K–12 education in another capacity.

Appendix C. Additional Outcomes Data

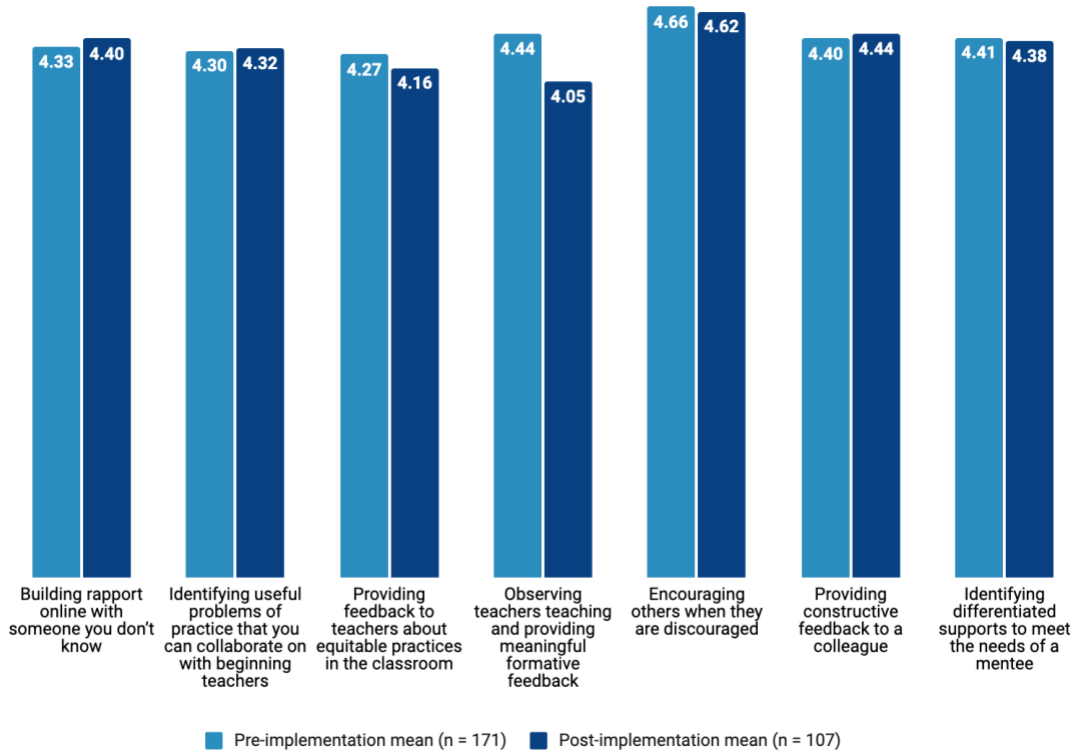
Exhibit C-1. Instructional Support Efficacy, Teacher Coach, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Efficacy items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not prepared at all; 2 = A little prepared; 3 = Quite prepared; 4 = Very prepared; 5 = Extremely prepared

Source: Teacher Coach pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

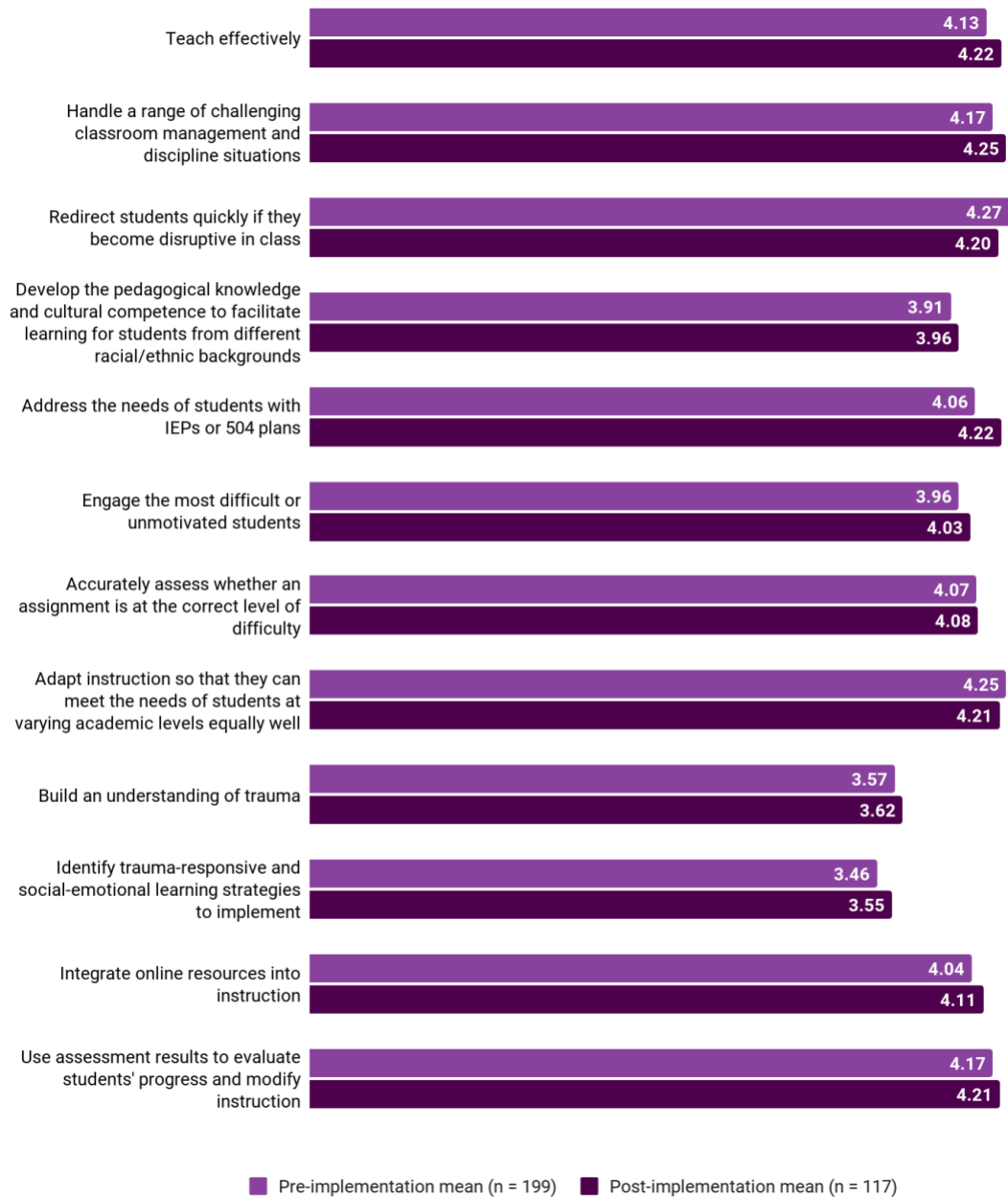
Exhibit C-2. Interpersonal Skills Comfort, Teacher Coach, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Interpersonal skills comfort items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not comfortable at all; 2 = A little comfortable; 3 = Quite comfortable; 4 = Very comfortable; 5 = Extremely comfortable

Source: Teacher Coach pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

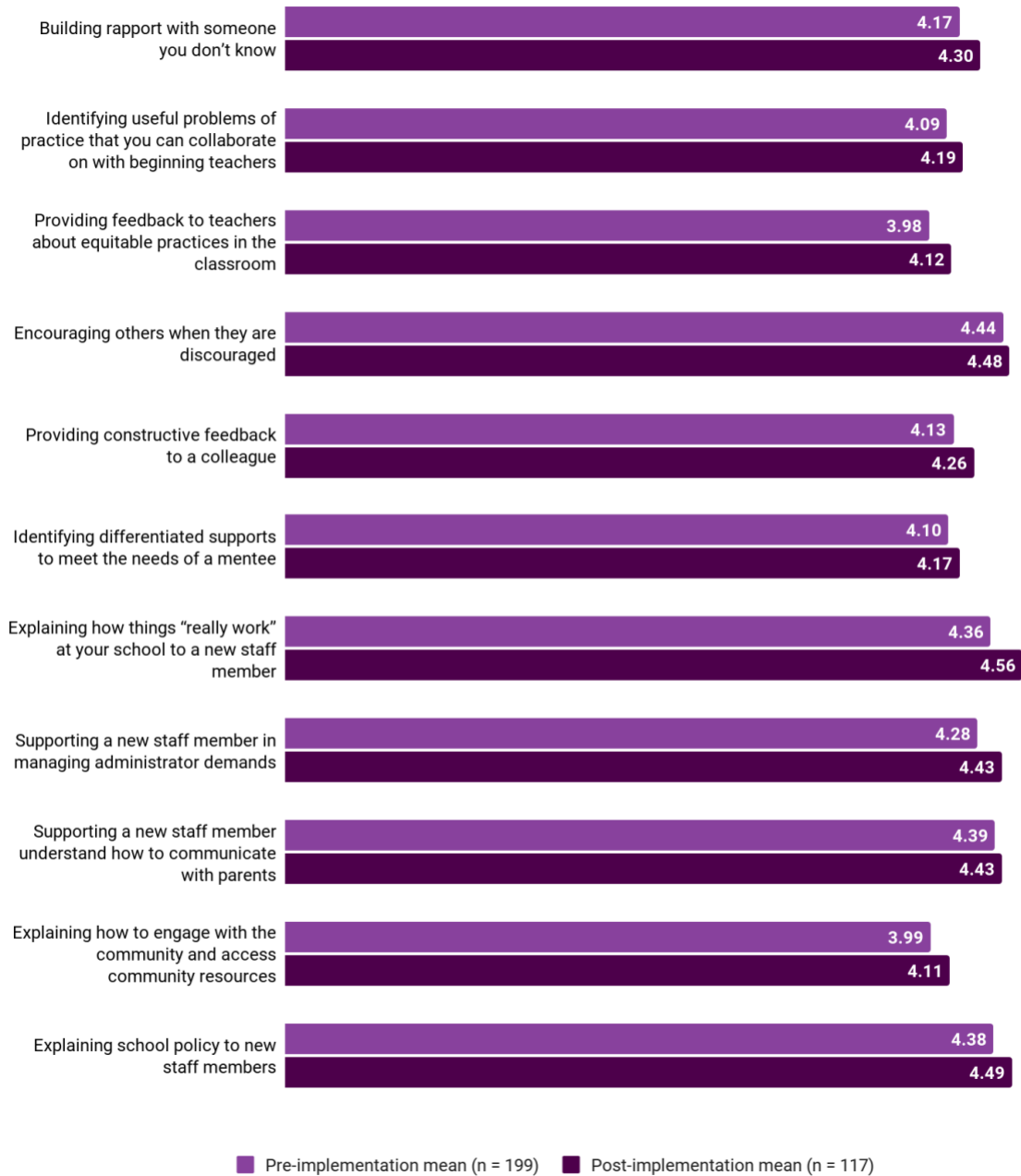
Exhibit C-3. Instructional Support Efficacy, Teacher Mentor, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Efficacy items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not prepared at all; 2 = A little prepared; 3 = Quite prepared; 4 = Very prepared; 5 = Extremely prepared

Source: Teacher Mentor pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

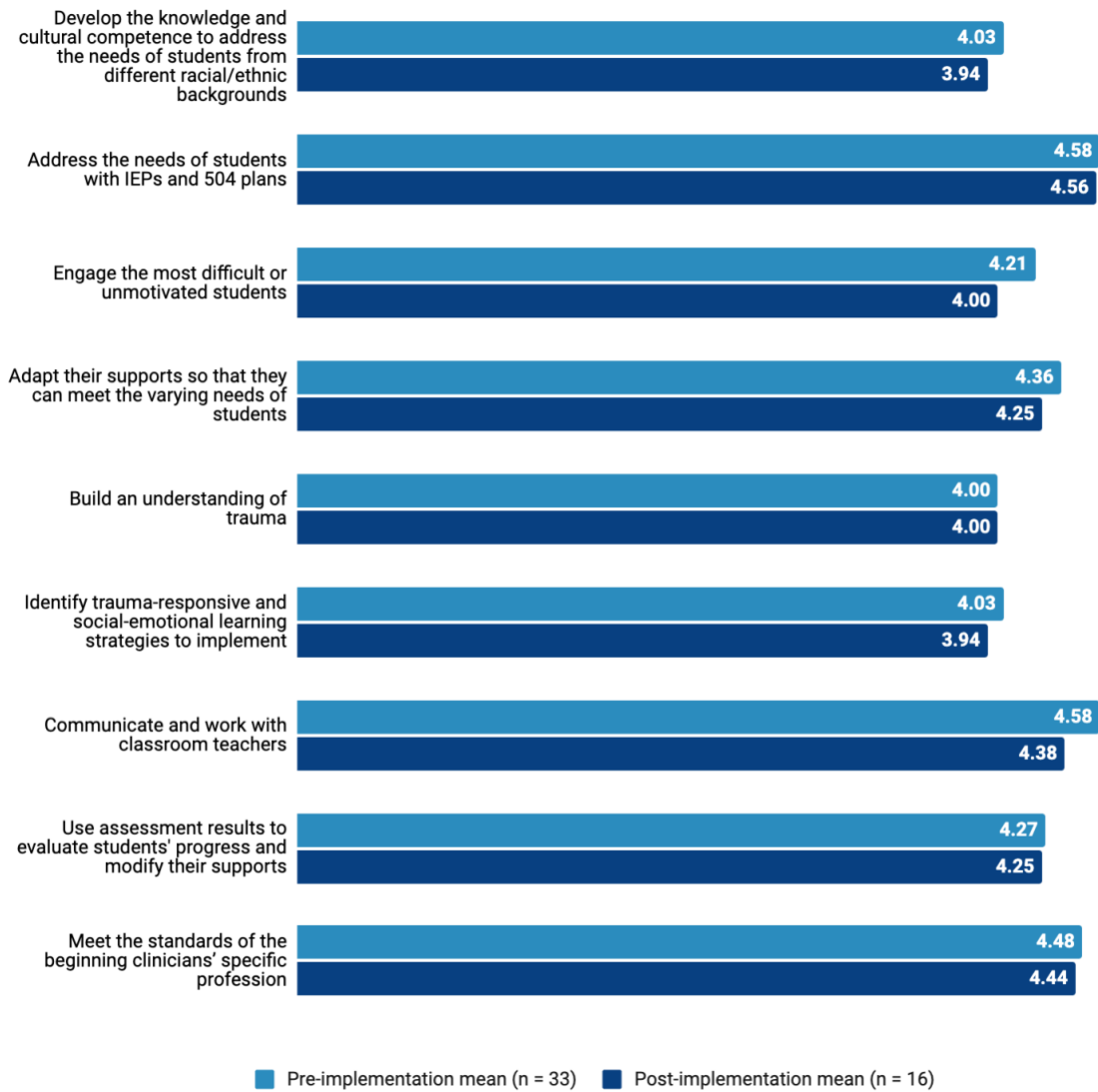
Exhibit C-4. Interpersonal Skills Comfort, Teacher Mentor, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Interpersonal skills comfort items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not comfortable at all; 2 = A little comfortable; 3 = Quite comfortable; 4 = Very comfortable; 5 = Extremely comfortable

Source: Teacher Mentor pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

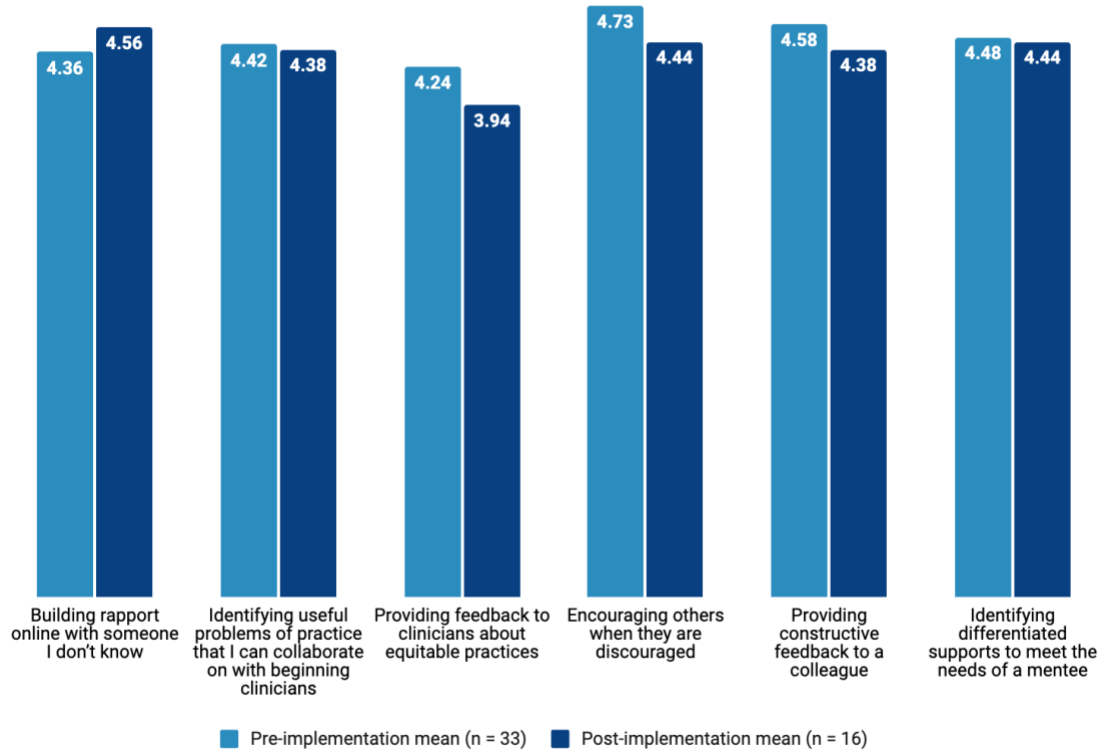
Exhibit C-5. Efficacy (in Supporting Clinicians), Clinician Coach, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Efficacy items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not prepared at all; 2 = A little prepared; 3 = Quite prepared; 4 = Very prepared; 5 = Extremely prepared

Source: Clinician Coach pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

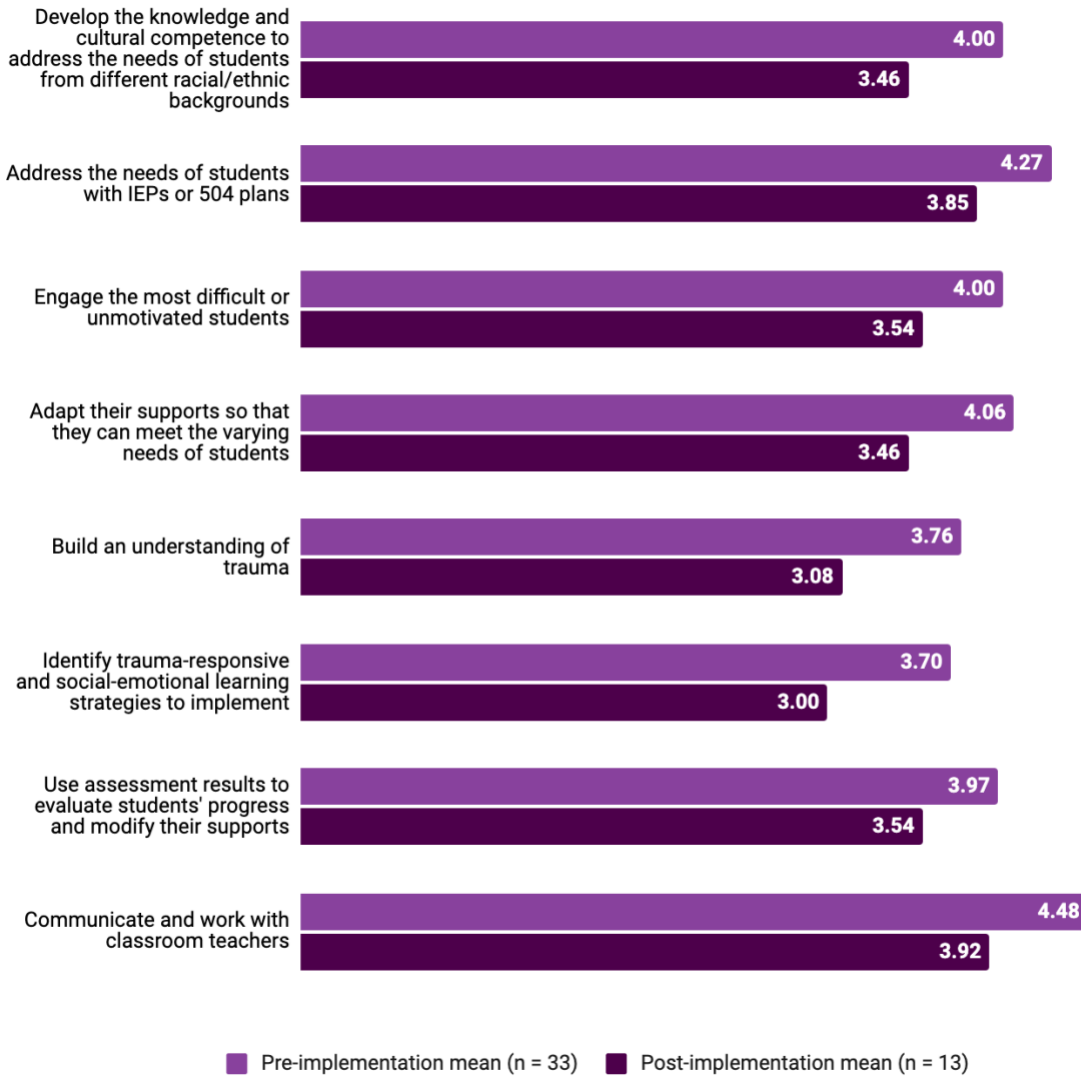
Exhibit C-6. Interpersonal Skills Comfort, Clinician Coach, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Interpersonal skills comfort items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not comfortable at all; 2 = A little comfortable; 3 = Quite comfortable; 4 = Very comfortable; 5 = Extremely comfortable

Source: Clinician Coach pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

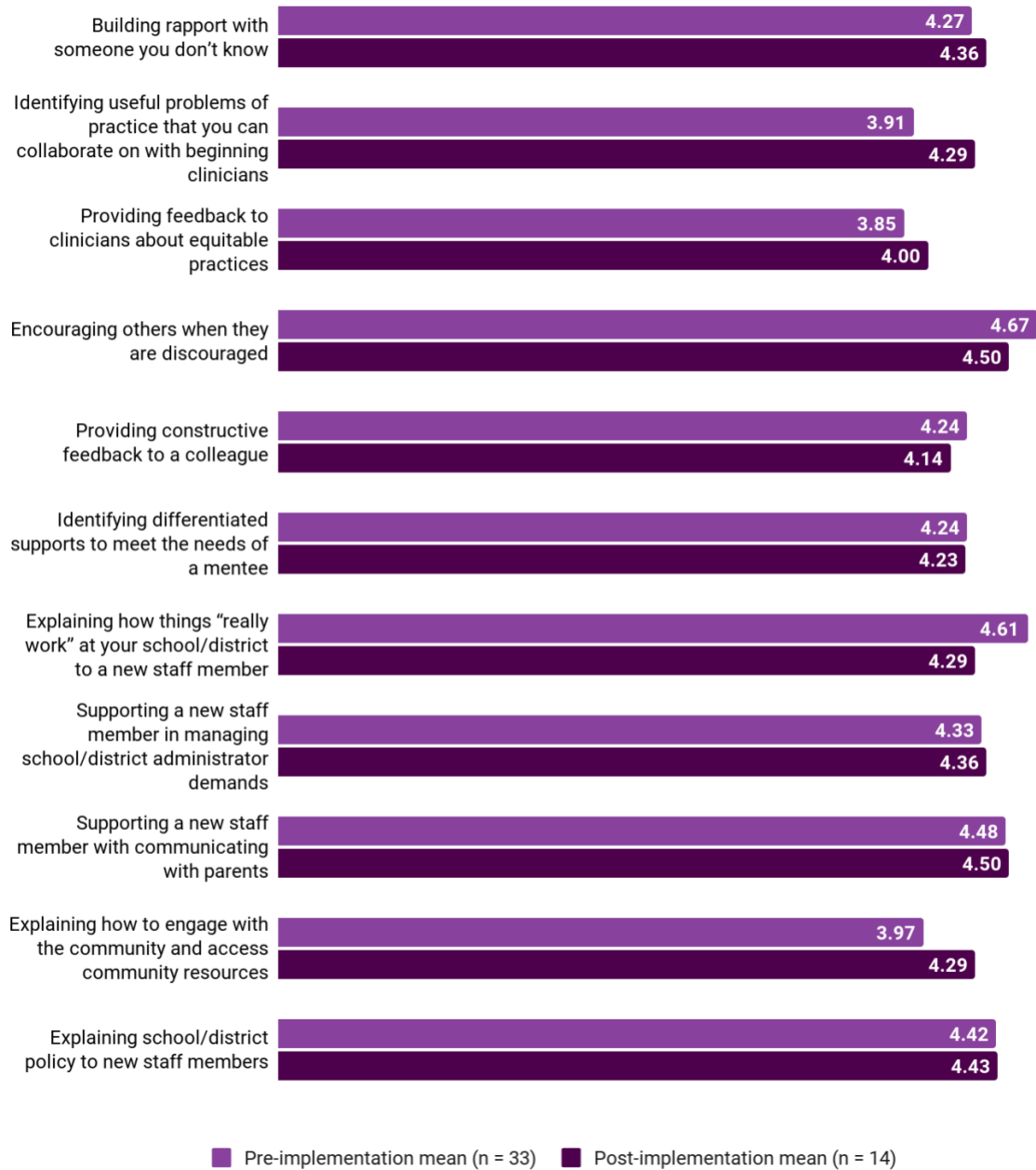
Exhibit C-7. Efficacy (in Supporting Clinicians), Clinician Mentor, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Efficacy items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not prepared at all; 2 = A little prepared; 3 = Quite prepared; 4 = Very prepared; 5 = Extremely prepared

Source: Clinician Mentor pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.

Exhibit C-8. Interpersonal Skills Comfort, Clinician Mentor, Pre- and Post-Implementation Means



Note: Interpersonal skills comfort items on 5-point scale, where 1 = Not comfortable at all; 2 = A little comfortable; 3 = Quite comfortable; 4 = Very comfortable; 5 = Extremely comfortable

Source: Clinician Mentor pre- and post-implementation surveys, October 2021 and May 2022.