

Needs Assessment (Fall 2020) Report



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About The Telescope Network

The BPS/BTU Telescope Network connects BPS educators to resources, opportunities, and each other in order to improve student learning. First we find out what educators want and need to learn next in order to best serve the needs of their students. Then we seek out and magnify the bright spots: successful teachers, effective practices, and models of teacher-driven professional learning. More info about the Telescope Network can be found at bostonpublicschools.org/telescope.

Fall 2020 Needs Assessment Survey

Starting on October 20, 2020, we sent out this [survey](#) to educators across Boston Public Schools. By November 20, we received over 350 survey responses. Responses represent 100 different schools. The survey was shared via email through BPS and BTU announcements. We also reached out to our network of over 1600 BPS educators who have previously participated in Telescope Network events or surveys. We gave out a similar survey in March 2020 (201 responses) and June 2020 (204 responses).

Survey Questions

- What do you need to learn right now for your students?
 - What do you need to learn right now for yourself?
 - What's a question/challenge/problem of practice that you'd like to address together with colleagues?
 - TECHNOLOGY NEEDS: What apps or other technology would you like to learn about this year?
 - OTHER NEEDS: What questions do you have about hybrid learning and/or synchronous learning?
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Overall Trends

3 Big Themes in Overall Responses:

1. **Effective Practices:** How do we effectively teach remotely and in person and ensure we are meeting the needs of all students? How do we engage kids in innovative classes where learning and not gizmos are the focus?
2. **Student Engagement:** How do we engage students in collaborative learning online, make meaningful small group work structured for success, and create beneficial learning relationships?
3. **Self-Care/Sustainability:** How do we build in sustaining practices and self-care so that we don't burn out this year?

Overall Responses By Topic



Additional Findings

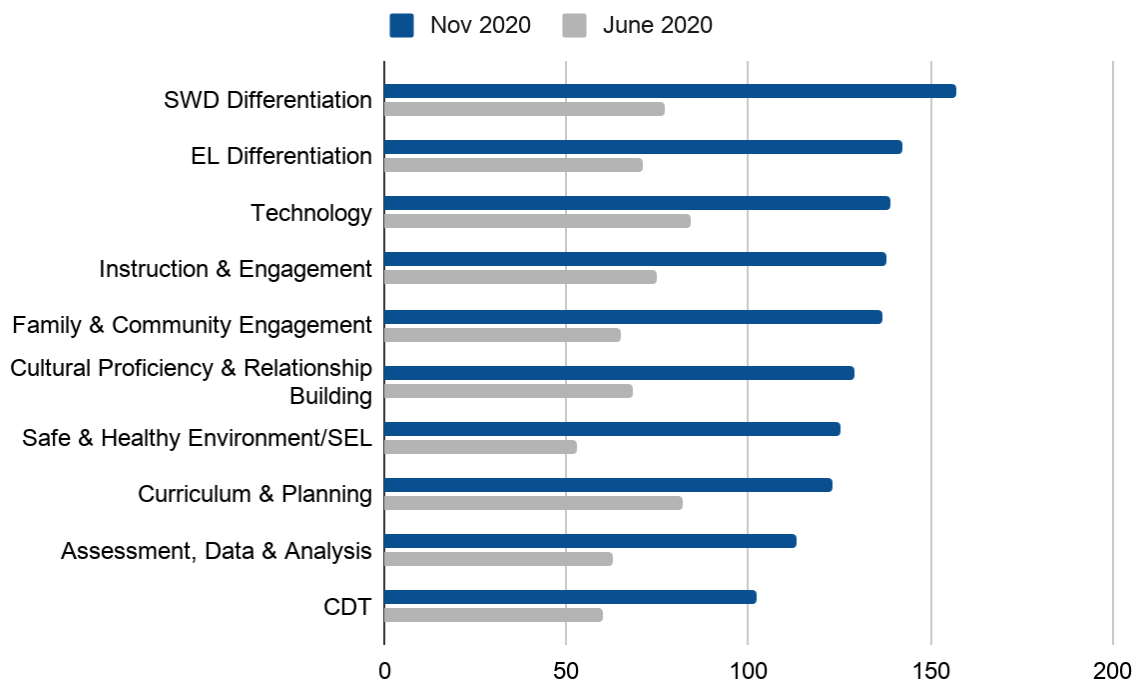
Other key themes from the responses:

- **Assessment/ Feedback:** How do we set up a grading system that is manageable for both teacher and students, helps give students true feedback on their progress, and helps keep students motivated and focused on the learning rather than the grade?
- **Balance:** How do we balance quickly checking student progress, giving meaningful and timely feedback, AND providing rich authentic instruction simultaneously?
- **Routines:** How can we support students in creating routines at home to organize themselves and their learning at home all while being remote?
- **Meeting Diverse Needs:** How can we ensure that instruction is properly differentiated for ELs and SWDs?
- **Differentiation:** How do we support students who are really struggling while at the same time challenging students who need and want to be more challenged?
- **Antiracism:** How can we plan curriculum, units and lessons to be antiracist, culturally relevant, and help students explore their own identities, think critically, and take action for social justice, while also involving families?

Our needs have evolved since June

We asked educators “What kind of PD topics would you like to be invited to?” In June, the most popular responses were technology and planning. Now, educators are most concerned with how to meet diverse needs during remote/hybrid learning. The two most popular topics on our Oct/Nov survey were “Meeting Diverse Needs for English Learners” and “Meeting Diverse Needs for Students with Disabilities.”

What PD topics do we want to be invited to?



Since March, our technology needs have evolved. In the early stages of the COVID closure, educators were focused on learning about Google tools and Zoom. Now our technology needs are more diverse.

In March, we found that only 45% of survey respondents (90 out of 201 responses) could identify a “bright spot” colleague who they might turn to for advice or effective practices. In Oct/Nov 2020, only 37% of respondents (129 out of 344 responses) could identify a “bright spot” or a “humble expert” colleague.

- are demonstrating effective or promising practice (Think broadly: pedagogical, SEL, CLSP, family engagement etc.).
- are less focused on “the what” (the tech tools, the curricula, “do what I do”, etc.), and more interested in the “why” and “how” (putting the tools and practices together in context to support students, families and colleagues).
- are reflective, able to share with others the thinking behind the practice
- represent the diversity of our students and city

BIPOC educator needs align with overall responses

BIPOC Educator Response Coding

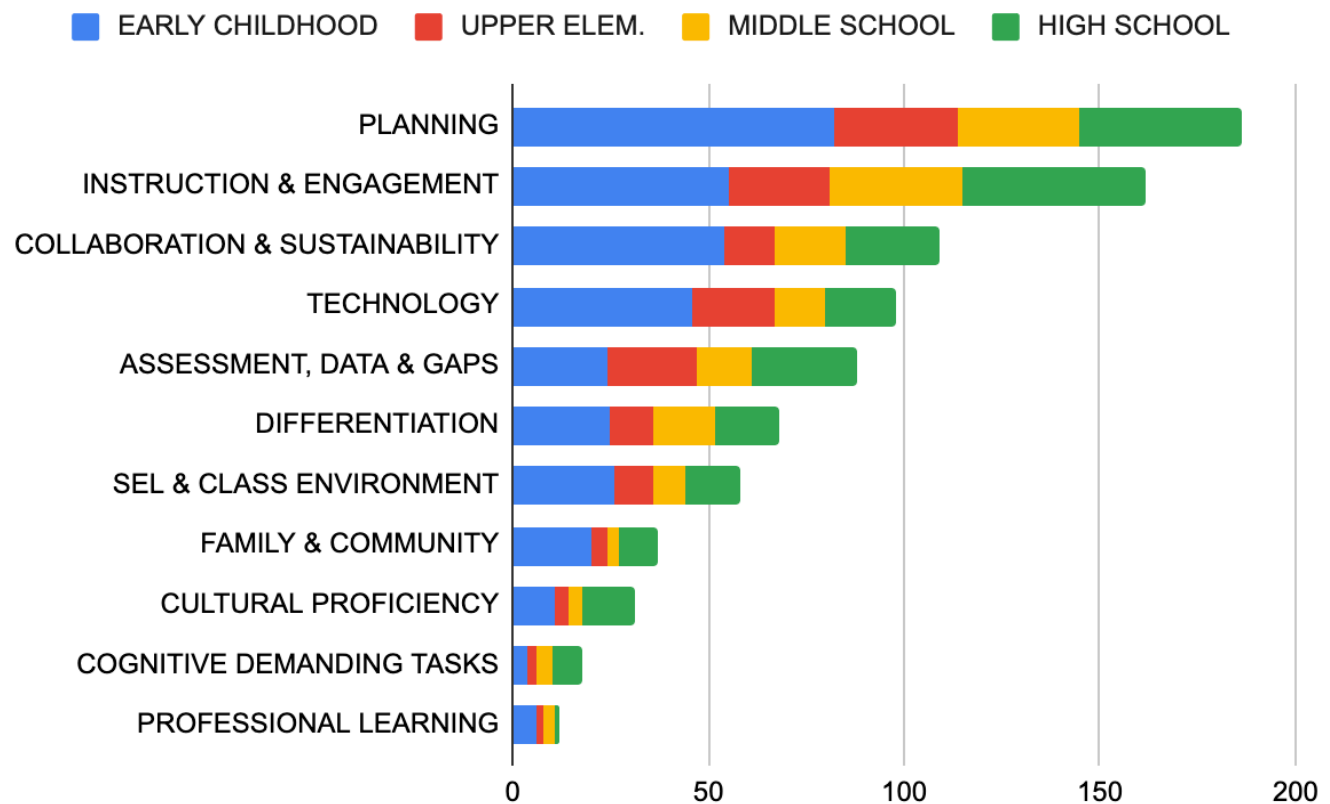


Grade Level Trends

Our needs are different by grade level

- Early Childhood educators (K0-2) are most concerned about planning, instruction/engagement, and collaboration.
- Upper Elementary educators (3-5) are most concerned about planning, instruction/engagement, and assessment.
- Middle School educators (6-8) are most concerned about instruction/engagement, planning, and differentiation.
- High School educators (9-12) are most concerned about instruction/engagement, planning, and assessment.

Overall Responses By Topic & Grade Level



Early Childhood educators (K0-2) are most concerned about planning. Instruction/engagement, and collaboration.

Effective Practice	Percentage of Teachers
→ Effective Practices	~72%
→ Plan for Remote/Hybrid	~68%
→ Student Engagement	~46%
→ Technology	~46%
→ Sustainability	~39%
→ Lesson Planning	~36%
→ Self-Care	~35%
→ Family Engagement	~22%
→ Virtual Assessments	~18%
→ Student Motivation	~15%
→ Differentiating Instruction	~15%
→ Differentiation SpEd	~15%
→ Social-Emotional Learning	~15%

Student Motivation

Fac. Sustainability

Student Engagement

Fac. Collaboration

Virtual Organization

TIS Relationships

Internal Goals

S-S Relationships

Student Discourse

SpEd

EC

PC

High Expectations

SEL Health & Safety

CCSP/Antiracism

Hybrid Planning

Fam. Communication

Tech Diff. Instruction

Fam. Engagement

Gaps in Learning

Attendance

District Assessments

Off Screen Learning

Lesson Planning

Fac. Self-Care

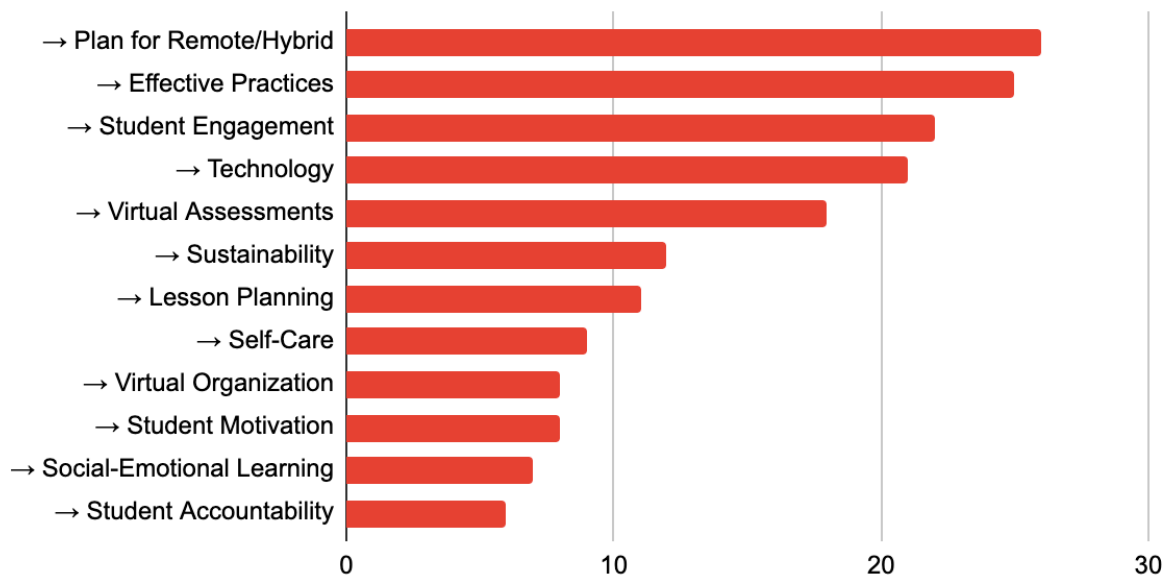
Virtual Assessments

Fam. Resources

Upper Elementary Responses (3/4/5)

Upper Elementary educators (3-5) are most concerned about planning, instruction/engagement, and assessment.

Which topics appeared most often for upper elementary educators?



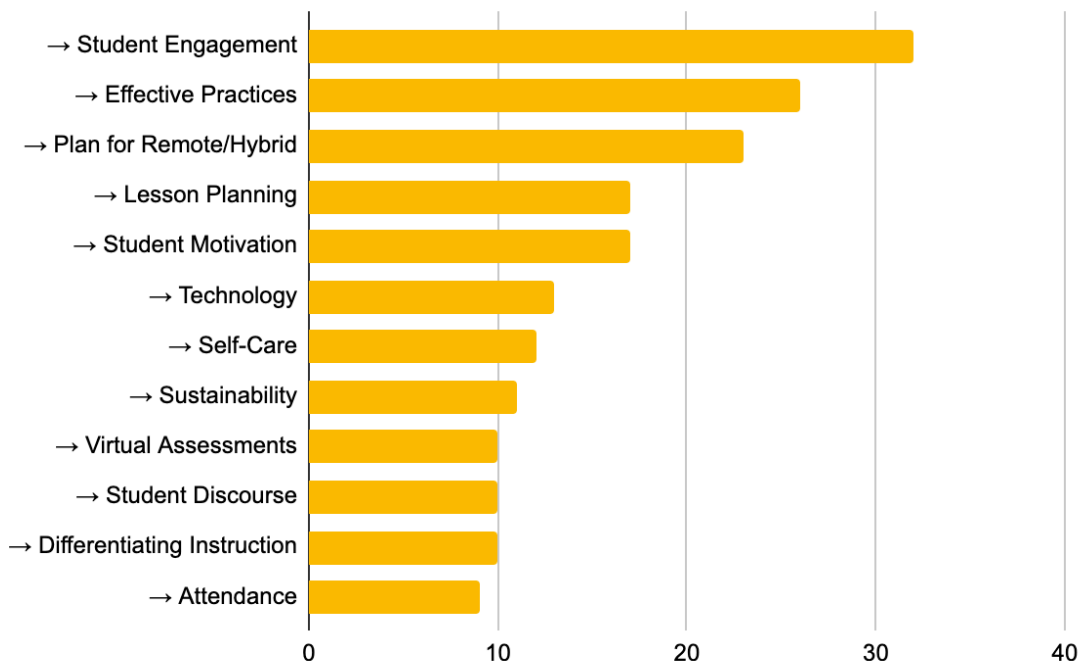
Wordle: Keywords from upper elementary educator responses



Middle School Responses (6/7/8)

Middle School educators (6-8) are most concerned about instruction/engagement, planning, and differentiation.

Which topics appeared most often for middle school educators?



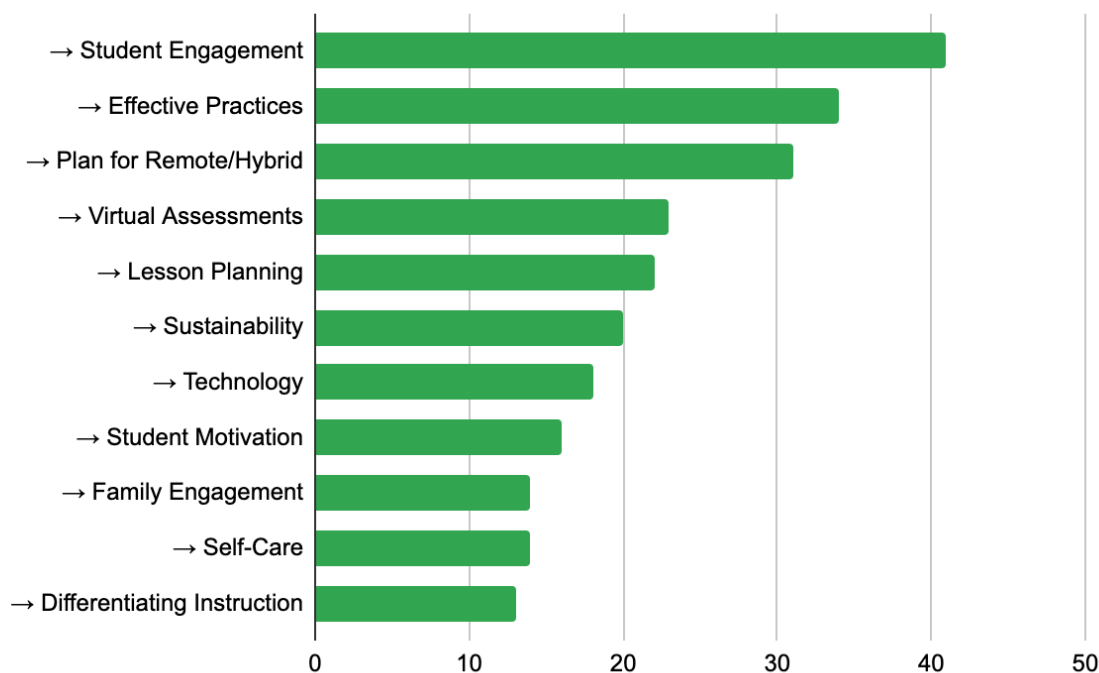
Wordle: Keywords from middle school educator responses



High School Responses (9/10/11/12)

High School educators (9-12) are most concerned about instruction/engagement, planning, and assessment.

Which topics appeared most often for high school educators?



Wordle: Keywords from high school educator responses



Next Steps

This data suggests four main priorities...

1. We need examples of effective remote learning and hybrid practices (mentioned in 50% of survey responses)
2. We want to engage our students more effectively in remote learning. (mentioned by 44% of survey responses)
3. We want to build in sustaining practices and self-care so that we don't burn out this year. (mentioned by 27% of survey responses)
4. Our learning and technology needs are becoming increasingly more specialized by role and grade-level.

Coming Soon

Telescope Network: Virtual Professional Learning Communities (tinyurl.com/telescopeVPLC)



Now more than ever, BPS educators want a space to connect and share with each other. The BTU/BPS Telescope Network is collaborating with the Academics Department to start virtual professional learning communities (VPLCs) specific to your content and grade level. This virtual PLC is a space to connect with same-role colleagues from across Boston Public Schools, meet educators who are facing similar challenges, and share resources, ideas, questions, and dilemmas. Find your group at tinyurl.com/telescopeVPLC. More info on [our website](#).

Telescope Network: Learning Sites

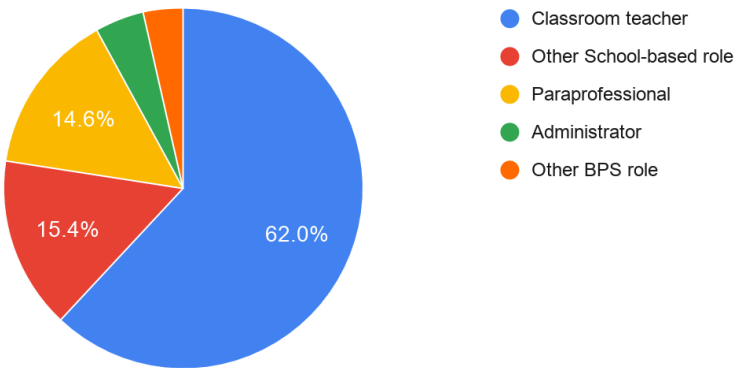
We hear you! You want to see effective remote and hybrid learning practices in action! Our Learning Sites offer professional learning that is embedded in the classroom connected to your contextualized needs addressed with BPS colleagues across the district. Keep checking our website for updates on future Learning Sites.

Report Compiled by Alison Mosher and Mark Lonergan (BPS/BTU Telescope Networkers).
Contact us at telescope@bostonpublicschools.org.

Appendix: Survey Demographics

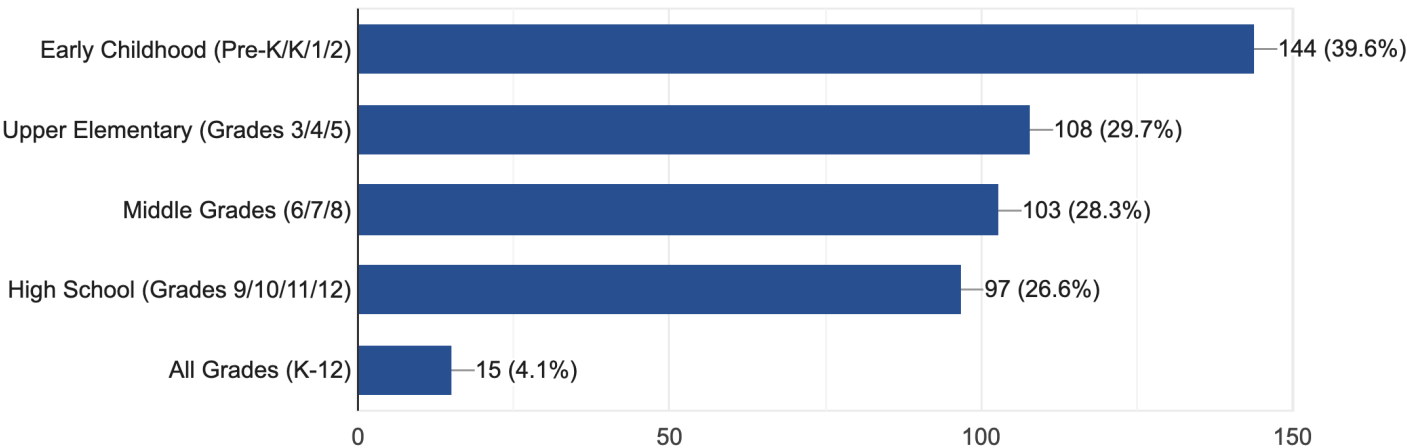
Role: Most common responses were classroom teacher (225), other school-based role (56), paraprofessional (53), and administrator (13).

Other roles included: ESL Teacher, Instructional Coach, Teacher leader, Librarian, Librarian Specialist, Science teacher, Registrar, Movement Specialist, Strand Specialist, Technology Coordinator, CFC, Bus monitor, Dance Specialist, Grade Level Coordinator, ASL interpreter, Physical therapist, Boatbuilding Teacher/Para, Related Service Provider/Occupational Therapist, Student Adviser, ABA Specialist, Music Specialist, Tech Coordinator, Art specialist, Resource room teacher, Nurse, SPC status



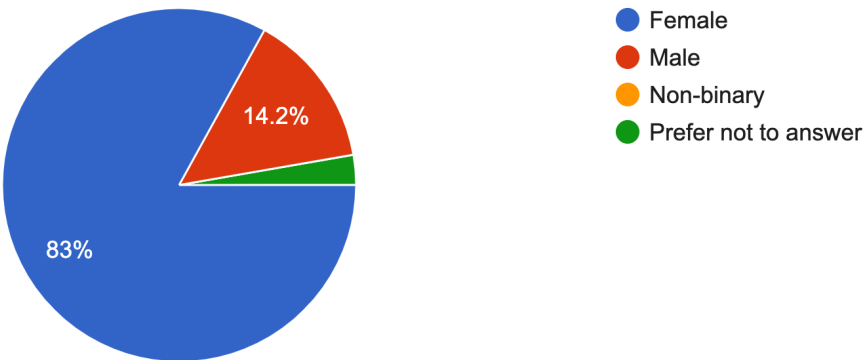
Grade Level(s)

364 responses



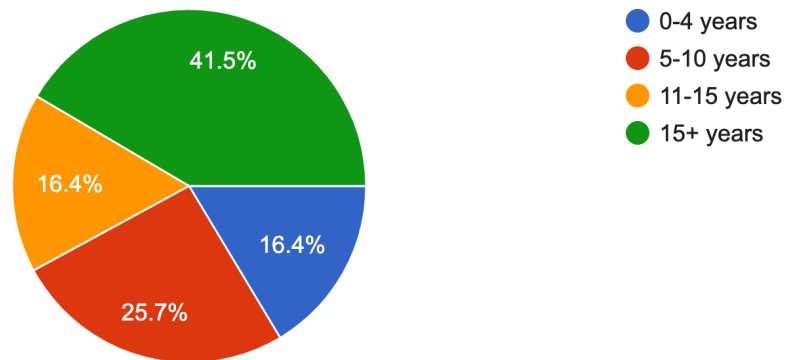
Gender Identity

365 responses



Years of Teaching Experience

366 responses



Race/Ethnicity (Check all that apply)

361 responses

