

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire was to gather feedback from principals and superintendents on the performance of Arkansas State University's recent graduates of the teacher education program. Recent graduates are defined as beginning teachers who have worked in the respective school district for a maximum of three years. Data gathered in the report is one of many sources used to document the quality of programs to prepare teacher candidates, determine application of professional knowledge, dispositions, and skills—aligned with InTASC and TESS standards—associated with teacher effectiveness in classrooms. This data informs program revision initiatives to suit the needs of Arkansas schools.

Method

Participants

Participants in the employers' questionnaire were chosen from a convenience sample of principals and superintendents from schools who participate in Arkansas State University's teacher internship placement program. Invitations to complete the questionnaire were sent to forty-one superintendents (41) and three-hundred and fifteen principals (315). Of the forty-one superintendents (41), fourteen (14) completed the survey resulting in a return rate of thirty-four percent (34%). Of the three-hundred and fifteen principals (315), sixty-one (61) completed the survey resulting in a return of nineteen percent (19%). Of the combined three-hundred and fifty-six (356) participants, seventy-five (75) completed the questionnaire resulting in an overall twenty-four percent (24%) return rate. Participants were not required to complete every question; therefore, missing data is possible in completed surveys.

Survey

The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was built using Qualtrics Survey Software and distributed digitally during the months of October and November 2018. In addition to demographic questions, the questionnaire is divided into three sections: rating of recent graduates' demonstration of knowledge, skills, and dispositions relative to the four program outcomes and ten InTASC standards, recent graduates' demonstrated performance relative to school professional responsibilities, and the overall employer impression of recent graduates of the teacher education program. The questions in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions section were tested by Dr. Wayne Wilkinson and were found to be valid and reliable (see Appendix B).

Procedure

A distribution list for principals and superintendents in the sample was constructed using email addresses obtained from the Arkansas Department of Education website. The questionnaire was initially distributed October 17, 2018, with follow up emails sent October 24 and 31, 2018. The survey ended November 5, 2018. Two different distribution lists were used. One specifically targeted principals, while the other targeted superintendents.

Results

Demographics

School Type and Level. Of the seventy-five respondents, 100% were from public schools, with 42.67% (n=32) indicating they were elementary school principals, 21.33% (n=16) indicating they were middle school principals, and 21.33% (n=16) indicating they were high school principals. 14.67% (n=11) indicated they were superintendents, although fourteen on the superintendent distribution list completed the survey.

School Setting. Table 1 is provided to describe the number and percentage of respondents by urban, suburban, and rural school settings. The greatest number of respondents were from a rural setting (66.22%, n=49), followed by an urban (17.57%, n=13) and suburban (16.22%, n=12) setting.

Table 1: Respondents by School Setting

Programs	Total Respondents	Percentage
Urban	13	17.57%
Suburban	12	16.22%
Rural	49	66.22%
Grand Total of Respondents	74	100.00%

School Enrollment. Of the sixty-one responding principals, 52.46% (n=32) indicated school enrollment was between 101-500 students, 45.9% (n=28) was between 501-1000 students, and 1.64% (n=1) was more than 1000 students. No principal indicated fewer than 100 students.

High Needs Districts. For the purposes of this survey, a “high needs school district” is defined as one in which the poverty rate is 20% or greater and at least one math or science teacher is teaching out of field. Of the respondents, 77.33% (n=55) indicated their district met the definition of high needs.

Teachers in the Building. Of the sixty-one responding principals, 57.38% (n=35) indicated 26-50 teachers in the building, 19.67% (n=12) indicated fewer than 25 teachers in the building, 19.67% (n=12) indicated 51-75 teachers in the building, and 3.28% (n=2) indicated more than 75 teachers in the building.

Beginning Teachers. Of the sixty-one responding principals, 83.61% (n=51) indicated fewer than 5 beginning teachers, 14.75% (n=9) indicated 6-10 beginning teachers, and 1.64% (n=1) indicated 11-15 beginning teachers. No responding principals indicated more than 15 beginning teachers.

Licensure Levels. Of the sixty-one responding principals, 52.46% (n=32) indicated the majority of teachers in the building hold K-6 licensure, 29.51% (n=18) indicated the majority of teachers in the building hold 7-12 licensure, 18.03% (n=11) indicated the majority of teachers in the building hold 5-9 licensure. No principal indicated the majority of teachers holding a K-12 license.

Beginning Teachers' Licensure Levels. Of the sixty-one responding principals, 52.46% (n=32) indicated the majority of beginning teachers hold a K-6 license, 27.87% (n=17) hold a 7-12 license, 18.03% (n=11) hold a 5-9 license, and 1.64% (n=1) hold a K-12 license.

District Enrollment. Of all respondents, 52.00% (n=39) indicated a district enrollment of more than 2000 students, 21.33% (n=16) indicated a district enrollment of 751-1500, 16.00% (n=12) indicated a district enrollment of fewer than 750, and 10.67% (n=8) indicated a district enrollment of 1501-2000.

Teachers in the District. Of all respondents, 46.67% (n=35) indicated more than 200 teachers in their district, 20.00% (n=15) indicated 126-200 teachers in their district, 17.33% (n=13) indicated fewer than 75 teachers in their district, 16.00% (n=12) indicated 76-125 teachers in their district.

Beginning Teachers in the District. Of all respondents, 37.33% (n=28) indicated fewer than 10 beginning teachers in the district, 25.33% (n=19) indicated more than 25 beginning

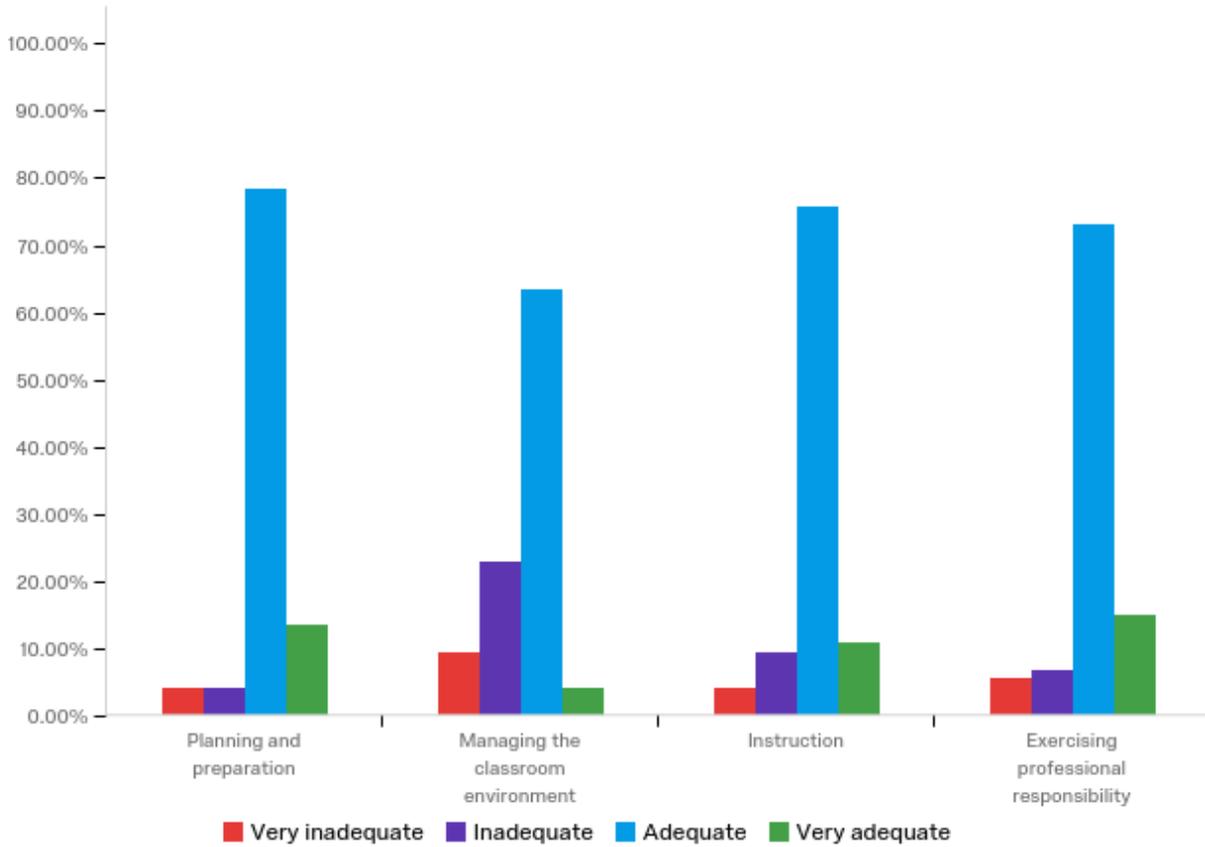
teachers, 24.00% (n=18) indicated 11-15 beginning teachers, and 13.33% indicated 16-25 beginning teachers in the district.

Program Learning Outcomes

Figure 1 indicates the performance of beginning teachers relative to the EPP four learning outcomes based on the work of Charlotte Danielson using the Teacher Excellence and Support System (TESS): planning and preparation, managing the classroom environment, instruction, and exercising professional responsibility. TESS is aligned with the ten InTASC standards. Participants responded to the statements “Recent graduates demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions in: Planning and preparation, Managing the classroom environment, Instruction, and Exercising professional responsibility”. Administrators were able to choose “Very inadequate”, “Inadequate”, “Adequate”, or “Very adequate” as rating scale options for each statement.

Using the R Statistical Software Package, a Chi-Square Test of Independence was conducted to determine if there was a significant departure between responses on the perception of performance questions. To meet assumptions, “Very Inadequate” and “Inadequate” were combined into a single “Inadequate” category, while “Adequate” and “Very adequate” were combined into a single “Adequate” category. The results indicate there is a statistically significant difference in how administrators responded to each question, $\chi^2(3) = 18.86, N = 74, p < .001$. Moreover, Table 2 lists the standardized residuals from the Chi-Square test. Administrators’ responses were significantly more negative on “Managing the classroom environment” than other questions, with a standardized residual of 4.24 highly exceeding the critical value of 1.96. Administrators’ responses were significantly more positive on “Planning and preparation”, with a standardized residual of 2.26.

Figure 1: Results of TESS related questions



Question	Very inadequate		Inadequate		Adequate		Very adequate	
Planning and preparation	4.05%	3	4.05%	3	78.38%	58	13.51%	10
Managing the classroom environment	9.46%	7	22.97%	17	63.51%	47	4.05%	3
Instruction	4.05%	3	9.46%	7	75.68%	56	10.81%	8
Exercising professional responsibility	5.41%	4	6.79%	5	72.97%	54	14.86%	11

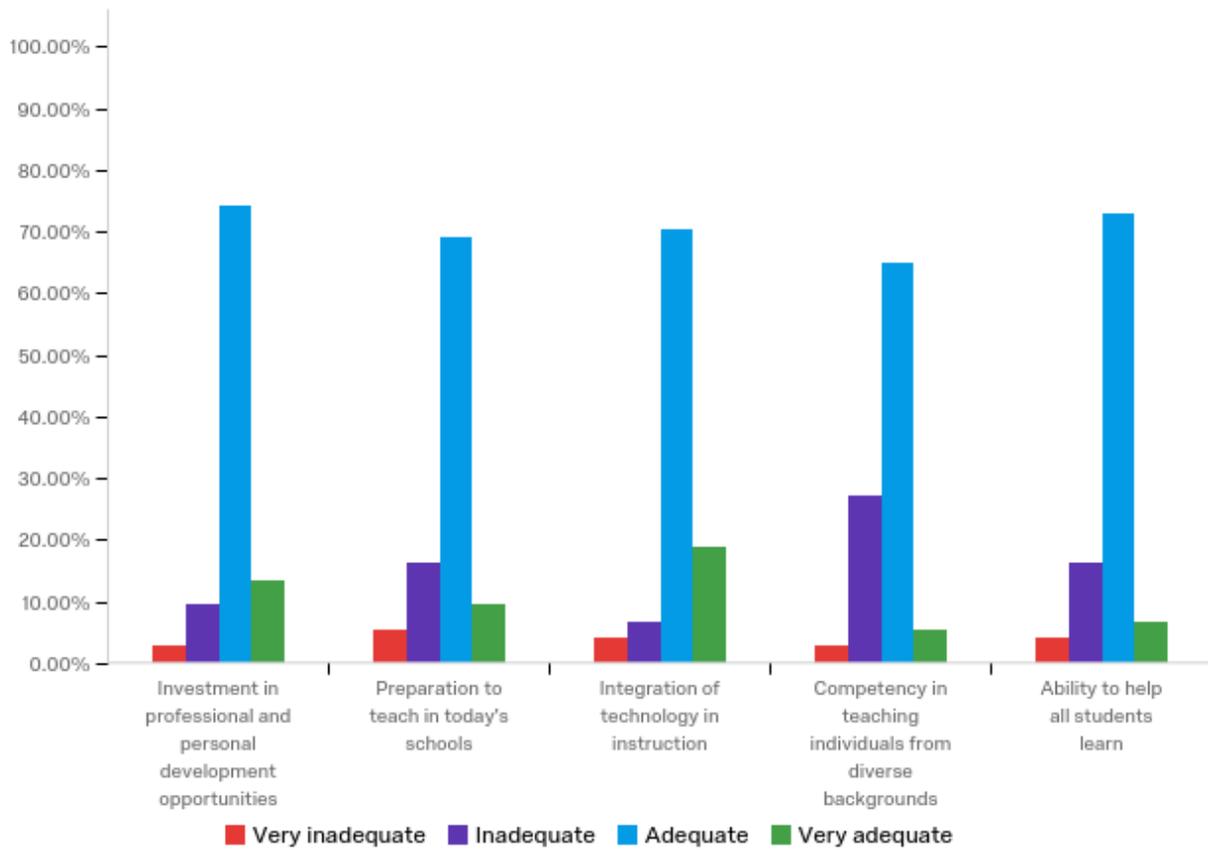
Table 2: Contingency Table of Chi-Square Standardized Residuals

	Inadequate	Adequate
Planning and preparation	-2.26	2.26
Managing the classroom environment	4.24	-4.24
Instruction	-0.81	0.81
Exercising professional responsibility	-1.17	1.17

School Professional Responsibilities

Figure 2 shows A-State beginning teachers' abilities regarding five school professional responsibilities. Of seventy-four respondents, 87.83% of recent graduates had an "Adequate" or "Very adequate" investment in professional and personal development opportunities, 78.38% of respondents indicated graduates were adequately or very adequately prepared to teach in today's schools, 89.19% of respondents indicated graduates were adequately or very adequately able to integrate technology in instruction, 70.27% responded graduates had adequate or very adequate competency in teaching individuals from diverse backgrounds, and 79.73% responded graduates were adequate or very adequate in the ability to help all students learn.

Figure 2: School Professional Responsibilities



Question	Very inadequate		Inadequate		Adequate		Very adequate	
	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count
Investment in professional and personal development opportunities	2.70%	2	9.46%	7	74.32%	55	13.51%	10
Preparation to teach in today's schools	5.41%	4	16.22%	12	68.92%	51	9.46%	7
Integration of technology in instruction	4.05%	3	6.76%	5	70.27%	52	18.92%	14
Competency in teaching individuals from diverse backgrounds	2.70%	2	27.03%	20	64.86%	48	5.41%	4
Ability to help all students learn	4.05%	3	16.22%	12	72.97%	54	6.76%	5

Overall Impression/Hiring of Graduates

Figure 3 indicates the results of two general areas: overall impression of A-State recent graduates regarding their performance as beginning teachers and the likelihood of employers’ interest in hiring future program graduates. Of seventy-four respondents, 78.38% (n=58) indicated the overall impression of recent program graduates were “Adequate”, 10.81% (n=8) indicated an overall impression of “Very Adequate”, 6.76% (n=5) indicated an overall impression of “Inadequate”, and 4.05% (n=3) indicated an overall impression of “Very Inadequate”.

Figure 3: Impression of Recent Graduates

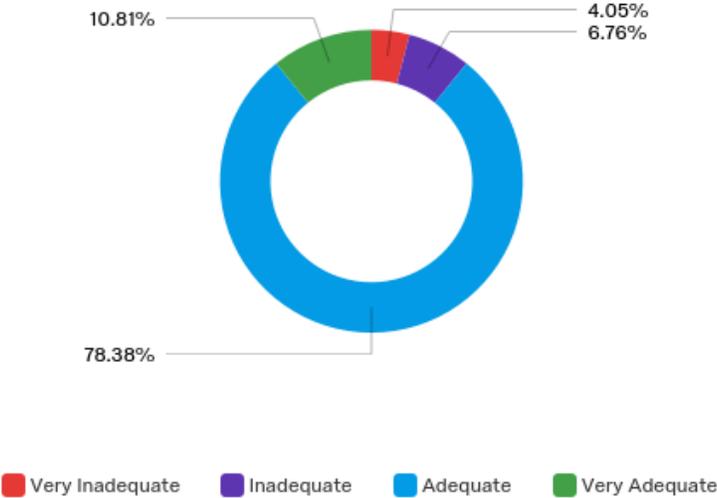
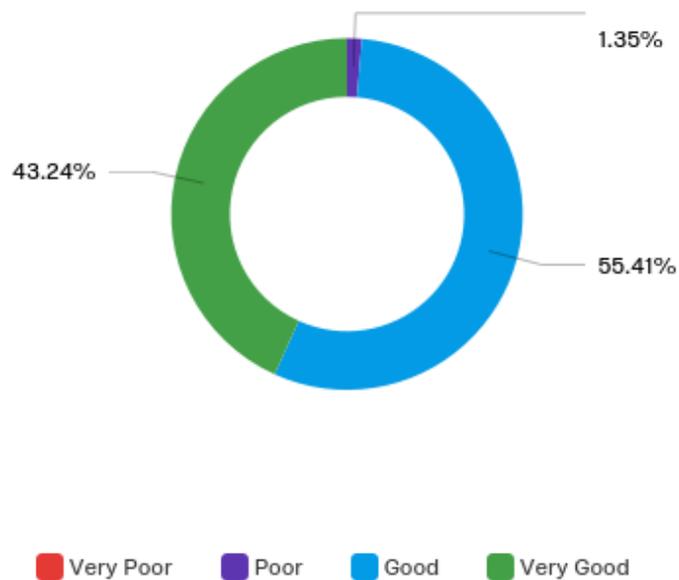


Figure 4 indicates the likelihood of the employers' interest in hiring future program graduates. Of seventy-four respondents, 98.65% (n=73) indicated the likelihood of hiring future graduates as "Good" or "Very Good". Only 1.35% (n=1) indicated the likelihood of hiring future graduates as "Poor". None indicated the likelihood as "Very Poor".

Figure 4: Employers' Interest in Hiring Future Graduates



Dissemination of the Data

Three departments (Teacher Education; Educational Leadership, Curriculum, and Special Education; and Health, Physical Education, and Sport Sciences) received an employers' questionnaire report. The results were disseminated to the department chairs and program coordinators to be used as one source of data to share with faculty for reflection and discussion regarding program actions to be taken. The report was also sent to the Initial Programs Assessment Committee (IPAC) for review and analysis.

Appendix

A

Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates

Start of Block: Demographics

Q1 Your opinion is very valuable to us! As you complete this survey, only reflect on your overall satisfaction of recent graduates from the A-State College of Education and Behavioral Science Educator Preparation Provider (EPP) who are beginning teachers (three or fewer years of teaching).

Q2 School Type:

- Public (1)
 - Private (2)
-

Q3 Setting:

- Urban (1)
 - Suburban (2)
 - Rural (3)
-

Q19 Is your school district considered "high needs"? (Poverty rate is 20% or greater and at least one math or science teacher is teaching out of field?)

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Q4 School Level

- Elementary (1)
 - Middle (2)
 - High (3)
 - District (4)
-

Q5 School Enrollment:

- Fewer than 100 (1)
 - 101-500 (2)
 - 501-1000 (3)
 - More than 1000 (4)
-

Q6 Number of Teachers in Building

- Fewer than 25 (1)
 - 26-50 (2)
 - 51-75 (3)
 - More than 75 (4)
-

Q7 Majority of **all** teachers in building hold this level of licensure

- K-6 (1)
 - 5-9 (2)
 - 7-12 (3)
 - K-12 (4)
-

Q8 Number of Beginning Teachers

- Fewer than 5 (1)
 - 6-10 (2)
 - 11-15 (3)
 - More than 15 (4)
-

Q9 Majority of **beginning** teachers hold this level of licensure

- K-6 (1)
 - 5-9 (2)
 - 7-12 (3)
 - K-12 (4)
-

Q10 District Enrollment

- Fewer than 750 (1)
 - 751-1500 (2)
 - 1501-1999 (3)
 - More than 2000 (4)
-

Q18 Number of Teachers in District

- Fewer than 75 (1)
 - 76-125 (2)
 - 126-200 (3)
 - More than 200 (4)
-

Q11 Number of Beginning Teachers in District

- Fewer than 10 (1)
- 11-15 (2)
- 16-25 (3)
- More than 25 (4)

End of Block: Demographics

Start of Block: Recent Graduates

Q14 As a current employer of graduates from the A-State College of Education and Behavioral Science Education Preparation Program, please rate your overall satisfaction of our recent

graduates who are beginning teachers (3 or fewer years of teaching) in each of the following areas:

Q12 Recent graduates demonstrate knowledge, skills, and dispositions in:

	Very inadequate (1)	Inadequate (2)	Adequate (3)	Very adequate (4)
Planning and preparation (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Managing the classroom environment (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instruction (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Exercising professional responsibility (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q13 Recent graduates demonstrate

	Very inadequate (1)	Inadequate (2)	Adequate (3)	Very adequate (4)
Investment in professional and personal development opportunities (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Preparation to teach in today's schools (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Integration of technology in instruction (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competency in teaching individuals from diverse backgrounds (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ability to help all students learn (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

End of Block: Recent Graduates

Start of Block: Overall Impression

Q15 Overall impression of recent graduates of the A-State College of Education and Behavioral Science Educator Preparation Program:

Q16 My overall impression of recent graduates of the program:

- Very Inadequate (1)
- Inadequate (2)
- Adequate (3)
- Very Adequate (4)

Q17 Likelihood this school will have interest in hiring future program graduates

- Very Poor (1)
- Poor (2)
- Good (3)
- Very Good (4)

End of Block: Overall Impression

Appendix B

Validity & Reliability of the Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates

Dr. Wayne Wilkinson, Assistant Professor of Psychology

A sample of 21 superintendents and principals from Craighead County completed a survey to obtain a quantification of the content validity for the four key items from the Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates. For each of the four items, the respondents were asked to complete a series of questions asking how well each item served as a valid indicator of the relevant TESS and InTASC Standards. These responses were made on a response scale ranging from 0 (*Not at all Valid*) to 3 (*Extremely Valid*) with verbal anchors provided on each interval of the response scale.

For each of the four items from the Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates, a composite variable of content validity judgments was created by averaging the relevant validity perceptions items (ranging from 3 to 7 items). The results are summarized in the table below.

Variable	Reliability	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	<i>K</i> ² (<i>p</i>)	<i>t</i> (20)
Item 1 Validity (6 items)	.92	2.17 (0.54)	0.71 (.70)	5.74
Item 2 Validity (3 items)	.88	2.27 (0.58)	3.06 (.22)	6.05
Item 3 Validity (7 items)	.96	2.17 (0.62)	2.07 (.36)	4.94
Item 4 Validity (3 items)	.86	2.24 (0.45)	3.53 (.17)	7.53

Note. The *K*² test for omnibus univariate normality is distributed as a chi-square distribution with two degrees of freedom. The one-sample *t*-tests compared the observed mean with the scale midpoint (1.5) and each test was statistically significant at *p* < .001 (with 20 degrees of freedom).

As shown above, the items used to create the four composite variables showed an acceptable level of internal consistency (assessed through Cronbach's alpha), indicating that the measures of validity perceptions were reliable. In addition, a series of D'Agostino and Pearson *K*² tests for omnibus univariate normality showed that the composite variables were normally distributed and suitable for parametric inferential procedures (see below).

Examination of the observed means (≥ 2.17) indicated that the sample perceived the Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates questions to be valid indicators of the corresponding TESS and InTASC Standards. Assuming that content validity judgements are normally distributed in the population, a series of one-sample *t*-tests were conducted to test whether the observed means were significantly higher than the response scale midpoint (1.5; which would represent "average" validity perceptions). As shown above, each of these tests were statistically significant at *p* < .001, indicating that the sample's content validity perceptions were significantly higher than "average".

Collectively, these results suggest that the sample of superintendents and principals considered the four items from the Survey of Employer Satisfaction with A-State Graduates to be highly valid measures of TESS and InTASC Standards.