

Revised January 2014

---

# Training our future teachers:

---

# Classroom Management

**AUTHORS:**

Julie Greenberg, Hannah Putman and Kate Walsh

**OUR THANKS TO:**

Research analysts: Laura Pomerance, with assistance from Katherine Abib

Graduate fellow: Natalie Dugan

Database design, graphic design and technical support: EFA Solutions

**FUNDING FROM:**

Carnegie Corporation of New York - Gleason Family Foundation - Laura and John Arnold Foundation - Michael & Susan Dell Foundation - Searle Freedom Trust - The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation - The Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation - B&L Foundation - The Rodel Charitable Foundation of Arizona - Arthur & Toni Rembe Rock - Chamberlin Family Foundation - The Anschutz Foundation - Donnell-Kay Foundation - Rodel Foundation of Delaware - The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation - The James M. Cox Foundation - The Zeist Foundation, Inc. - J.A. and Kathryn Albertson Foundation - Finnegan Family Foundation - Lloyd A. Fry Foundation - Osa Foundation - Polk Bros Foundation - Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation - The Aaron Straus and Lillie Straus Foundation - The Abell Foundation - Morton K. and Jane Blaustein Foundation - Barr Foundation - Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation - Longfield Family Foundation - Sidney A. Swensrud Foundation - The Boston Foundation - The Harold Whitworth Pierce Charitable Trust - The Lynch Foundation - Trefler Foundation - MinnCAN: Minnesota Campaign for Achievement Now - Foundation For The Mid South - Phil Hardin Foundation - The Bower Foundation - Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation - The Bodman Foundation - William E. Simon Foundation - George Kaiser Family Foundation - Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation - The Heinz Endowments - Benwood Foundation - Hyde Family Foundations - Houston Endowment - Sid W. Richardson Foundation - The Longwood Foundation - Cleveland Foundation - Walker Foundation

**WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR:**

The comments from two members of NCTQ's Teacher Advisory Group: Freeda Pirillis and Sheryl Place

The helpful critiques from: Robert Pianta, James Cibulka, Jane Close Conoley, Barry Kaufman, Thomas Lasley, Douglas Lemov and Robert Presbie

**NCTQ BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

John L. Winn, *Chair*, Stacey Boyd, Chester E. Finn, Jr., Ira Fishman, Marti Watson Garlett, Henry L. Johnson, Thomas Lasley, Clara M. Lovett, F. Mike Miles, Barbara O'Brien, Carol G. Peck, *Vice Chair*, and Kate Walsh, *President*

**NCTQ ADVISORY BOARD:**

Sir Michael Barber, McKinley Broome, Cynthia G. Brown, David Chard, Andrew Chen, Celine Coggins, Pattie Davis, Michael Feinberg, Elie Gaines, Michael Goldstein, Eric A. Hanushek, Joseph A. Hawkins, Frederick M. Hess, E.D. Hirsch, Michael Johnston, Barry Kaufman, Joel I. Klein, Wendy Kopp, James Larson, Amy Jo Leonard, Robert H. Pasternack, Michael Podgursky, Stefanie Sanford, and Suzanne Wilson

**Note:**

This January 2014 version of the report includes minor revisions of the original December 2013 version. The only substantive revisions stem from changes to the analysis of four programs (of 122): these programs are now credited with attention to all of the Big Five on the basis of their instruction on the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports model. Relevant figures and text have been updated as necessary to reflect this new analysis.



# Executive summary

---

Every teacher wrestles with the challenge of keeping two or three dozen students in a classroom engaged. While better instruction generally results in better behaved students, the most brilliantly crafted lesson can fall on deaf ears — or, worse, be upended by disruptive behavior. A strong, veteran teacher may only occasionally have difficulty handling disengaged or poorly behaved students, but for new teachers, the strain of trying to deliver sufficiently engaging instruction and at the same time orchestrate appropriate behavior can be intense, overwhelming and ultimately defeating.

In this new report from the National Council on Teacher Quality, we investigate the extent to which America's traditional teacher preparation programs offer research-based strategies to their teacher candidates to help them better manage their classrooms from the start.

The wisdom accumulated from centuries of teaching — as well as findings from strong, recent research studies — recognizes that student learning depends on both engaging instruction and a well-managed classroom.

What is behind a well-managed classroom? First, it is critical that teachers plan and implement daily routines before any misbehavior has a chance to erupt, and second, teachers should establish the right kinds of interactions with students (e.g., praising good behavior rather than drawing attention to bad behavior with criticism) to consistently maintain a focus on instruction.

Considerable research exists on classroom management, much of it consolidated into three authoritative summaries of 150 studies conducted over the last six decades. These studies' agreement that some classroom management strategies are more likely to be effective than others helped us isolate the five most important strategies on which to train teacher candidates:

- 1. Rules:** Establish and teach classroom rules to communicate expectations for behavior.
- 2. Routines:** Build structure and establish routines to help guide students in a wide variety of situations.

New teachers  
deserve better.  
It is time for teacher  
prep programs to  
focus on classroom  
management so that  
first-year teachers  
are prepared on  
day one to head off  
potential disruption  
*before it starts.*

3. **Praise:** Reinforce positive behavior using praise and other means.
4. **Misbehavior:** Consistently impose consequences for misbehavior.
5. **Engagement:** Foster and maintain student engagement by teaching interesting lessons that include opportunities for active student participation.

These strategies are so strongly supported by research that we refer to them here as the “Big Five.” They serve as the yardstick for this study, measuring the extent to which teacher preparation programs are training teachers in research-based classroom management strategies. We also examine the integration of a handful of other strategies, although their research bases are not quite as strong.

## Everywhere but nowhere

By examining a sample of 122 teacher preparation programs in which we were able to review the full breadth of the professional sequence — including lecture schedules, teacher candidate assignments, practice opportunities, instruments used to observe and provide feedback on teaching episodes, and textbooks — we can conclude the following:

- Most programs can correctly claim to cover classroom management, with only a tiny fraction (<3 percent) in our sample ignoring instruction altogether. However, instruction and practice on classroom management strategies are often scattered throughout the curriculum, rarely receiving the connected and concentrated focus they deserve.
- Most teacher preparation programs do not draw from research when deciding which classroom management strategies are most likely to be effective and therefore taught and practiced. Especially out of favor seem to be strategies that impose consistent consequences for misbehavior, foster student engagement, and — most markedly — use praise and other means to reinforce positive behavior. Half of all programs ask candidates to develop their own “personal philosophy of classroom management,” as if this were a matter of personal preference.
- Instruction is generally divorced from practice (and vice versa) in most programs, with little evidence that what gets taught gets practiced. Only one-third of programs require the practice of classroom management skills as they are learned. This disconnect extends to the student teaching experience.
- Contrary to the claims of some teacher educators, effective training in classroom management cannot be embedded throughout teacher preparation programs. Our intensive analysis of programs in which classroom management is addressed in multiple courses reveals far too great a degree of incoherence in what teacher candidates learn and what they are expected to do in PK-12 classroom settings. Embedding training everywhere is a recipe for having effective training nowhere.

## The false promise of instructional virtuosity

There is little consensus in the field regarding what aspects of classroom management should be taught or practiced. The closest the field comes to an endorsed approach is the apparent conviction that teachers should be able to rise to a level of instructional virtuosity that eliminates the need for defined strategies to manage a classroom. Defending the lack of focused classroom management training in many teacher preparation programs, the field’s intellectual leader, Linda Darling-Hammond, argues that the teacher candidate should instead learn to “manage many kinds of learning



and teaching, through effective means of organizing and presenting information, managing discussions, organizing cooperative learning strategies, and supporting individual and group inquiry.”

Another discouraging development concerns the edTPA, a performance assessment intended as a gateway for licensure, which is now being rolled out in half the states with the strong endorsement of the field’s leadership. Although in many ways the edTPA is a commendable effort to insert greater rigor and accountability into teacher preparation, it has yet to specify explicitly what teacher candidates ought to demonstrate as classroom managers. Given how important the edTPA has already become, it is crucial that evaluation of teacher candidates’ classroom management skills be incorporated more explicitly into the edTPA’s rubrics.

The silver lining is that, according to one survey, half of teacher educators aren’t entirely sure that the approach — actually more of a non-approach — of relying solely on instructional virtuosity for classroom management works. It is also clear that some programs are paying more attention to research and to the alignment of instruction and practice: **St. Mary’s College of Maryland**, the **University of Virginia** and the **University of Washington – Seattle** are notable for aligning instruction and practice with research-based strategies.

Other than calling out programs that do well on a particular aspect of classroom management training, this report does not provide overall ratings on individual programs. Further, we could not identify a single program in the sample that did well addressing all research-based strategies, identifying classroom management as a priority, strategically determining how it should be taught and practiced, and employing feedback accordingly. Teacher preparation’s misdirection in the area of classroom management — insisting that instructional excellence alone can maintain the order necessary for learning — appears almost universally accepted by the field’s leadership, and therefore this report necessarily reaches conclusions that require attention by the field as a whole.

## Solutions

### States

Unfortunately, we hold out little hope for a regulatory solution to this issue. While the regulations of every state at least briefly mention training in classroom management, most regulations are poorly informed by the research. Regulators and legislators can and should use their influence to make clear to programs their belief that training new teachers in classroom management strategies is crucial. Unfortunately, policymakers may lack the tools to ensure that preparation programs are actually training their candidates in these strategies.

### Programs

It is up to programs to prepare their candidates in research-based classroom management strategies, beginning with the first foundational courses and continuing to their culminating experience as student teachers. Such integrated preparation runs counter to current practice in higher education, where individual faculty members are too often permitted to decide what to teach, with insufficient regard for programmatic goals. Instruction is needed that connects the dots, with seamless transitions between content delivery and practice.

Because of largely avoidable instances of student misbehavior, the first year of teaching can be a harrowing experience. New teachers and our children deserve better from America’s teacher preparation programs, and training that is carefully designed to prepare teacher candidates to be both effective instructors and effective classroom managers will help make the first year a happier and more rewarding experience for both teachers and their students.





# Table of Contents

---

Preface	page vii
1. Introduction	1
2. What the research about classroom management says	3
3. How this study was conducted	7
4. Findings	11
5. Programs that rise to the top	29
6. Recommendations	31
7. Conclusion	37

## Appendices

(available separately online at [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Future\\_Teachers\\_Classroom\\_Management\\_NCTQ\\_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Future_Teachers_Classroom_Management_NCTQ_Report))

Appendix A: Teacher preparation programs included in this study

Appendix B: Methodology

Appendix C: Inventory of research on classroom management  
in PK-12 classrooms

Appendix D: Crosswalk of classroom management models and the Big Five

Appendix E: Cross-program analyses

Appendix F: How NCTQ develops standards for the *Teacher Prep Review*

Appendix G: Sample demographics





# Preface

---

The purpose of this report is to investigate the extent to which traditional teacher preparation programs — where most new teachers get their training — deliver content and provide teacher candidates with opportunities to practice on a body of knowledge about classroom management. The examination complements rather than mirrors the analysis of classroom management conducted in the 2013 edition of NCTQ’s *Teacher Prep Review*, which will be repeated in the 2014 edition. Here we primarily address the classroom management instruction and practice that teacher candidates receive *before* student teaching, while the *Teacher Prep Review* addresses the feedback on classroom management skills that teacher candidates receive *during* student teaching.

We originally intended this study to serve as a pilot for an enhanced classroom management standard to be applied in the *Review*. (See Appendix F for our approach to developing standards.) A new standard would have considered coursework and clinical practice, as well as the feedback provided to student teachers. Unfortunately, that standard is not feasible as long as so many teacher preparation programs decline to participate in the *Teacher Prep Review* evaluation process. Absent their participation, it is simply too challenging to collect from the 1,100-plus institutions rated in the *Review* full sets of syllabi and other materials for all professional coursework.

As an added complication, there are a multitude of textbooks used to teach classroom management (more than 140 different textbooks in the small sample for this study). This overabundance of textbooks has precluded the textbook reviews that would be valuable additions to any discussion about what teachers should learn about classroom management before going into the classroom.

We are grateful to the institutions that provided the full sets of materials that made this study possible.







# 1. Introduction

---

A paradox exists in our classrooms. While many classroom management problems are probably symptoms of poor instruction, it is unlikely that improving instruction is the whole solution, or at least not the solution a teacher needs most immediately. For that reason, specific attention to classroom management itself is necessary. Conversely, even if instruction is adequate, it can be complemented, and its impact enhanced, by good classroom management.<sup>1</sup>

There is no question that dynamic instruction and a strong rapport with students are both desirable in their own right and reduce the need for overt management. However, the possibility always exists that a teacher will need to act in the moment — for example, regaining the attention of a student who is losing focus or handling an unusually chaotic return from recess.<sup>2</sup> Teachers who can plan and implement daily classroom routines and patterns of interaction that mitigate misbehavior, and also can address inevitable misbehavior, are able to teach more effectively. Furthermore, classroom climate is highly predictive of the teacher stability every school craves, particularly schools serving high-need populations. Teachers are more likely to stay in schools where they feel successful, having created functional classrooms with students who are behaving appropriately and are academically engaged.<sup>3</sup>

Some argue — particularly proponents of the nontraditional pathways through which teacher candidates enter classrooms with little preparation — that classroom management can only truly be learned through experience. No doubt, experience helps, but the capacity to achieve a well-managed classroom need not be developed only through trial and error from years of teaching experience. Fortunately, there also is a clear body of knowledge that, if taught and practiced, could help lessen the steepness of the new teacher's learning curve. This knowledge speaks to the most effective approaches to classroom organization and techniques for interaction with students, developed over centuries of teaching and confirmed by research conducted over the last half century.

Every teacher preparation program should impart this knowledge to the next generation of teachers, developing as much competence in teacher candidates

Nearly every one of the 122 teacher preparation programs included in this study provides some kind of instruction on classroom management. It is likely that the same is true for the teacher preparation programs housed in 1,450 institutions nationwide. And yet, despite classroom management's apparent pervasiveness in preparation coursework, something is not working.

In a 2013 survey, classroom management was “the top problem” identified by teachers.

as possible through instruction and practice. Doing so will create a virtuous cycle from day one in which a novice teacher’s functional classroom environment helps to build relationships with students that, in turn, produce even more functional and productive teaching and learning.

Nearly every one of the 122 teacher preparation programs included in this study provides some kind of instruction on classroom management. It is likely that the same is true for the teacher preparation programs housed in 1,450 institutions nationwide. And yet, despite classroom management’s apparent pervasiveness in preparation coursework,<sup>4</sup> something is not working. Classroom management continues to be one of the greatest challenges new teachers face. Surveys repeatedly document that novice teachers struggle in this area, and their school district supervisors concur.<sup>5</sup>

- A 1997 poll revealed that 58 percent of PK-12 teachers said that behavior that disrupted instruction occurred “most of the time or fairly often.”<sup>6</sup>
- A 2003 survey of teachers found that nearly half indicated that “quite a large number” of new teachers need a lot more training on effective ways to handle students who are discipline problems.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2012, over 40 percent of surveyed new teachers reported feeling either “not at all prepared” or “only somewhat prepared” to handle a range of classroom management or discipline situations.<sup>8</sup>
- In a 2013 survey, classroom management was “the top problem” identified by teachers.<sup>9</sup>

In this report, we delve deeper into the practices of actual programs to better understand the specifics of preparation in classroom management. Our findings will shed light on why too many new teachers, by their own account or that of their supervisors, are entering schools ill-equipped to move beyond behavioral challenges and into the heart of instruction.





## 2. What the research about classroom management says

Considerable research exists on classroom management, much of it consolidated into three authoritative summaries relevant to the PK-12 grade span: a 2008 summary by Simonsen, Fairbanks, Briesch, Myers, and Sugai; a 2011 summary by Oliver, Wehby, and Reschly; and another summary published in 2008 by the Institute of Education Sciences, *Reducing Behavior Problems in the Elementary School Classroom*. (See Appendix C for our analysis of this research.) Together these summaries examine over 150 studies conducted over six decades.

Despite the wide variation in research citations in these sources, there is congruence in their findings on essentially five strategies for classroom management. These five carry significant evidence of their effectiveness. For that reason we label them the “Big Five.”

### THE BIG FIVE

*Research-based classroom management strategies that every teacher candidate should learn and practice:*

#### 1. RULES

Teachers (or teachers and students collaboratively) should develop a limited set of positively stated expectations for behavior. These expectations should not simply be posted in the classroom; rather, they should be explicitly taught by discussion and practice and applied transparently and equitably.

#### 2. ROUTINES

Teachers should teach routines and procedures, including specific guidelines for how to act in a variety of situations (e.g., arriving in the classroom, handing in homework, working in groups). These routines should be taught at the beginning of the school year and then revisited periodically throughout the year. In turn, teachers should sustain momentum for instruction by orchestrating the management of time and materials by themselves and students, especially in transitions between activities.

#### 3. PRAISE

Teachers should reinforce positive behavior using praise and other rewards. Intangible rewards such as praise<sup>10</sup> should be specific (e.g., “Good job finding your seat quickly,” “Great work sharing your crayons,” “John, Neery, and Dominic all have their homework ready to turn in — well done”) and abundant.<sup>11</sup> Rewards also may be tangible (e.g., a

No one can learn when the learning environment is not under control, whatever that looks like for each grade and age.

– 3rd grade teacher  
Respondent to  
NCTQ survey

prize like a sticker or pencil, or a privilege like extra free time). Rewards can be used for individual or group behavior and may be phased out over time as students' behavior improves by habit.<sup>12</sup> (See the textbox below for more on praise.)

#### 4. MISBEHAVIOR

Just as every parent learns that children will not always follow rules and has in mind consequences for noncompliance, so, too, do teachers need to determine the appropriate consequences for misbehavior and apply these consequences *consistently*. Consequences generally follow different levels of severity, escalating to one-on-one conferences with the teacher, detentions, meetings with parents or guardians, and so on.

#### 5. ENGAGEMENT

This technique is closely linked to the quality of instruction. Teachers should constantly engage students in the lesson, whether through creating an interesting lesson that holds students' attention or through building in frequent opportunities for student participation. Students who are involved in the lesson generally have less inclination to act out.

#### Praise can be used effectively and appropriately

Perhaps because using praise effectively is more complicated than simply telling a student "Good job!," it is frequently neglected in teacher preparation.<sup>13</sup> Researchers have identified the Do's and Don'ts of successful use of praise and positive reinforcement:

##### Do...

- ...be specific about the behavior you are praising.<sup>14</sup>
- ...make praise contingent on the student actually doing the target behavior.<sup>15</sup>
- ...be sincere in the way you praise a student.<sup>16</sup>
- ...give praise immediately following the appropriate behavior.<sup>17</sup>
- ...consider the individual student's characteristics, such as age.<sup>18</sup>
- ...give praise frequently as a student acquires a behavior and taper off with students' mastery.<sup>19</sup>
- ...praise the process or action.<sup>20</sup>

##### Don't...

- ...praise the person or trait (e.g., "Jill is such a good girl").<sup>21</sup>
- ...use reinforcers for a task that students already want to do absent a performance target.<sup>22</sup>
- ...ignore the student's individual response to praise.<sup>23</sup>



## Secondary strategies

In addition to the Big Five, there are other strategies that do not enjoy the same level of research consensus but still have a place in any preparation program. For that reason, they should be viewed as valuable topics to address in teacher preparation after the Big Five:

- **Manage the physical classroom environment:** This technique refers to thinking strategically when setting up the classroom; for example, ensuring that the teacher can see all students at all times, considering the flow of traffic for different classroom activities, and considering how to group desks to maximize student engagement.
- **Motivate students:** This topic is distinct from engagement in that it focuses on whether students want to learn or follow the rules. While some people distinguish between internal and external motivation, and fear that a focus on rewards for good behavior may reduce students' intrinsic motivation to behave, research evidence is reassuring that this need not occur.<sup>24</sup>
- **Use the least intrusive means:** This topic refers to using subtle techniques to prevent or quickly halt budding misbehavior. These techniques include using proximity, giving a rule reminder, giving a “teacher look,” or asking off-task students substantive questions to redirect attention back to the lesson.
- **Involve parents and the school community:** Involvement can mean making phone calls home, meeting with parents or taking other actions that engage stakeholders beyond the classroom.
- **Attend to social/cultural/emotional factors that affect the classroom's social climate:** This interaction technique focuses on maintaining a positive affect in the classroom and being culturally sensitive.

### The importance of relationships

Virtually all teachers with whom we have discussed this report, including the experienced teachers who advise NCTQ (<http://www.nctq.org/about/teacherAdvisoryGroup.jsp>), believe that building relationships with students is just as essential for a functional, productive classroom as anything mentioned above, and that these relationships can preclude the need for heavy-handed classroom management. We agree. Research indicates that effective teacher-student relationships are not established by teachers taking on a “buddy” role. Rather, teachers build relationships by providing clear purpose and strong guidance—the types of purpose and guidance that are conveyed by fair rules and productive routines, as well as by clear learning goals and expectations.<sup>25</sup>





## 3. How this study was conducted

*The methodology is explained in more detail in Appendix B. See the textbox on page 10 for a primer on the nature of instructional and clinical coursework in teacher preparation.*

The study examines the degree to which 122 teacher preparation programs teach and provide opportunities to practice research-based classroom management strategies and techniques. (See Appendix A for a list of programs and Appendix G for sample demographics.) These programs are housed in 79 institutions across 33 states, and include most types of programs (undergraduate and graduate, elementary and secondary). All programs were willing (sometimes voluntarily, but generally by means of open records requests) to provide NCTQ with full sets of materials for their professional coursework, making this analysis possible.

Preparation in classroom management in both instructional and clinical coursework should theoretically be seamless, meaning that skills build upon each other and follow a natural progression. Ideally teacher candidates learn about and practice these skills in foundational coursework, practice in more challenging situations (e.g., real classrooms) in clinical coursework, and receive detailed and critical feedback in a full-scale teaching situation in student teaching. This principle of seamlessness underlies the three kinds of analyses undertaken for this study.

For the first, broadest analysis, we identified 213 courses in our sample that could conceivably address classroom management. Our analysis included: 1) **instructional coursework** where content is delivered (and in which there is often fieldwork in PK-12 classrooms), and 2) **practica closely aligned with classroom management-focused instructional coursework**. These categories of coursework are referred to in the report as “**foundational coursework**.”

### Examples of lecture topics:

- *Managing the Classroom Environment*
- *Discipline and Consequences*
- *Establishing Rules and Procedures*
- *Schedule of Reinforcement*
- *Routines and Procedures*

### Examples of common pencil-and-paper assignments:

- *Write a set of rules for a classroom*
- *Write a personal philosophy of classroom management*

### Examples of common practice assignments:

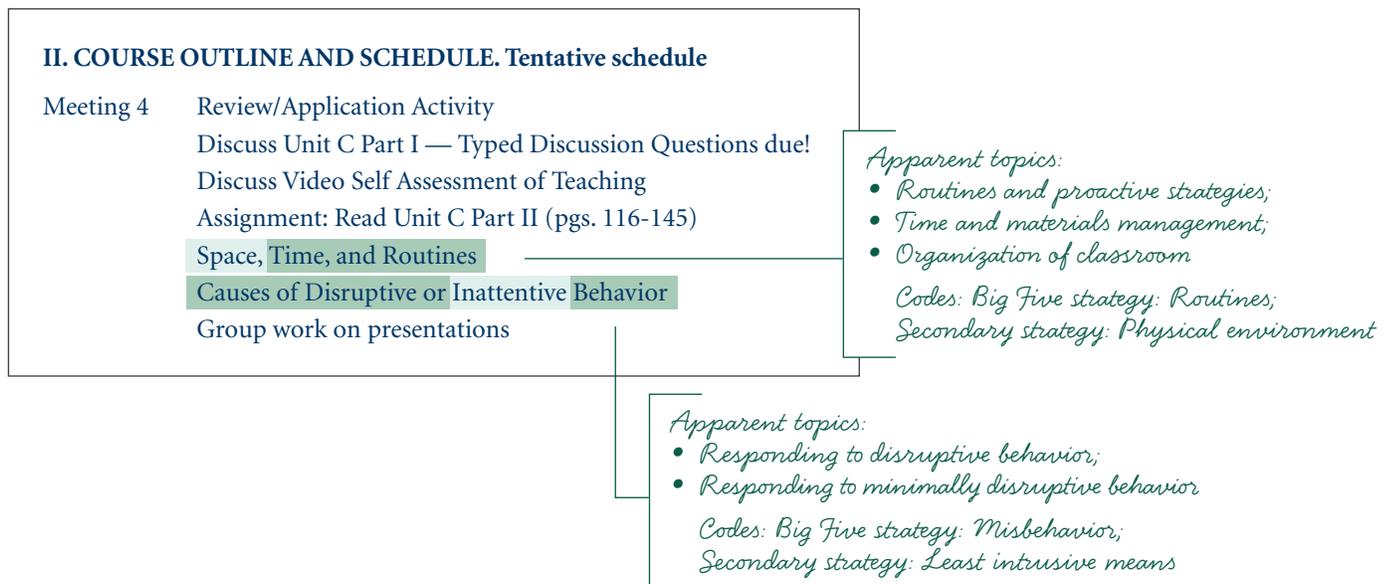
- *Videotape yourself teaching a lesson and present the video in class for discussion*
- *Teach a lesson and receive feedback from a cooperating teacher*

For all foundational courses, we examined the syllabus, pulling out lecture topics, student assignments, and required textbooks. Each lecture topic, student assignment, and textbook was then coded to distinguish which were relevant to classroom management and what precisely was being addressed.

### Example of coding a lecture description from a syllabus

For more examples of how lectures and assignments were coded, see Appendix B: Methodology

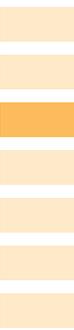
Sample lecture schedule from course entitled “Classroom Management”



Through this analysis we were able to discern how much time programs are dedicating to classroom management and which topics they are addressing, including which of the Big Five (and secondary topics as well) are being addressed, if they are addressed at all.

In the event that two different interpretations of lectures or assignments were possible, we used context clues from other parts of the syllabus or applied the most generous interpretation. For example, a reference to a lecture on “intervention strategies” might refer to instruction on responding to either or both off-task behavior using least intrusive means or disruptive behavior using consequences for misbehavior. If context clues did not help us discern which, we credited the lecture to coverage of both relevant strategies. Or, for example, it was sometimes necessary to discern if a course is teaching “student engagement,” one of the Big Five, as a means to a well-managed classroom, or if it is teaching that student engagement is a feature of a well-constructed lesson. When it was not possible to discern the difference, credit was given for covering it as a management strategy. In cases in which topics could not be discerned, the syllabus was removed from the analysis.

In a second, more focused analysis of 25 programs, we looked for classroom management instruction and practice in **general clinical coursework** designed to provide PK-12 classroom experiences that touch on a variety of professional skills. The purpose of this analysis was to determine the extent to which such coursework provides additional classroom management content and practice opportunities beyond the foundational courses treated in our first, broader analysis.



Lastly, in the third analysis, we conducted intensive “**cross-program**” analyses that traced preparation from start to finish for a sample of nine programs, effectively case studies. This analysis determines the level of coherence in training in all classroom management strategies, beginning with foundational coursework, running through clinical coursework, and culminating with the feedback on the execution of classroom management strategies in student teaching. It provides a comprehensive portrait of what teacher candidates typically experience in the way of training in this area and provides a clear sense of whether embedding such training is adequate.

Fig. 1 How we sampled coursework in three different analyses

	<b>Analysis 1:</b> Foundational coursework	<b>Analysis 2:</b> General clinical coursework	<b>Analysis 3:</b> All coursework (“Cross-program”)
<b>What is it?</b>	Instructional courses and closely aligned practica that explicitly address classroom management in whole or in part.	General clinical coursework that does not explicitly address classroom management, but is designed to provide PK-12 classroom experiences on a range of professional skills that may or may not include classroom management.*	Foundational, general clinical experience, and student teaching courses (for observation/evaluation instruments).
<b>What was evaluated?</b>	Examples of foundational courses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Classroom Organization and Management</i></li> <li>■ <i>Curriculum and Methods of Teaching in Elementary Education</i></li> </ul>	Examples of general clinical coursework: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>September Experience in the Schools</i></li> <li>■ <i>Elementary Education Capstone Seminar</i></li> <li>■ <i>Elementary Methods Practicum III</i></li> </ul>	Sequence of relevant courses from a graduate elementary program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Field Experience – Elementary Education</i></li> <li>■ <i>Instruction and Assessment</i></li> <li>■ <i>Teaching Associateship – Elementary Education</i></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <i>Student Teaching Evaluation Instrument</i></li> </ul>
<b>What did we look for?</b>	Instruction and practice in 213 courses in the 119 programs (of 122) that have foundational coursework.	Instruction and practice in 43 courses in 25 programs randomly selected from the full 122-program sample.	Instruction, practice and feedback in all courses in nine programs selected in a stratified random sample from the full 122-program sample.
<b>Why did we look here?</b>	To determine if programs lay a foundation for teacher candidates to understand and use classroom management strategies.	To determine the extent to which this increasingly common type of clinical experience adds to teacher candidate understanding and capacity to use classroom management strategies.	To provide a deeper dive that shows if what’s taught in coursework relates to what’s evaluated in student teaching. (These cross-program analyses complement a 93-program statistical analysis that provided information on coherence.)

\* Student teaching seminars were included. In keeping with the rationale for including subject-specific secondary practica in Analysis 1 (see Appendix B), subject-specific clinical experiences were included in Analysis 2.

In my undergraduate studies, it was all about developing a classroom management philosophy, but nothing about the practical routines and rules that work in the classroom and that are backed by research. I had to research and learn these on my own.

– 17-year veteran  
Respondent to  
NCTQ survey

## A primer on instructional and clinical coursework in teacher preparation

While classroom management may be a difficult topic to teach because it is hard to substitute for sustained whole-class experiences, and opportunities for those are scarce, traditional teacher preparation seems relatively well configured for the task. Traditionally, the first part of a teacher candidate's preparation is "instructional" coursework, with light doses of fieldwork in PK-12 classes. The second part is "clinical coursework," with a gradual and increasing infusion of PK-12 classroom experiences that culminate in a semester-long placement in a PK-12 classroom generally called "student teaching."

**Instructional coursework** for the most part takes place on the college campus. With the exception of some hours of associated **fieldwork** in PK-12 classrooms, this coursework is generally analogous to the coursework taken by other undergraduate or graduate students on a campus. Especially on larger campuses, most instructional courses are taught by academically specialized faculty with advanced degrees. However, former practitioners hired as adjunct faculty can also serve as instructors.

**Clinical coursework**<sup>26</sup> encompasses a broad range of coursework for which programs often take very different approaches. Clinical coursework is largely or entirely based in PK-12 classrooms. To varying degrees, clinical coursework entails some class meetings. These, in turn, have varying degrees of similarity to class meetings in instructional courses in terms of expectations for organized instruction and assignments, both for the instructors and for teacher candidates.

In most cases, the individuals who oversee teacher candidates in clinical coursework are contract employees (often former teachers or school administrators) whom we refer to as "university supervisors." These university supervisors may also serve as instructors who convene class meetings associated with clinical coursework.

The teachers in whose classrooms clinical coursework takes place go by many titles, but we refer to them as "cooperating teachers." Programs vary on how much they depend on cooperating teachers for the formal observation and evaluation of teacher candidates in their clinical coursework.



## 4. Findings

---

To answer the basic question, “Are teacher candidates provided with the knowledge and practice opportunities that will prepare them to competently manage a classroom from day one?” we turned over a lot of rocks. We did not predetermine under which rock we had to find such evidence — in effect deciding *for* programs in which course or semester they must teach classroom management — only that there needed to be evidence somewhere that programs draw upon research-based strategies.

### Finding 1: While virtually all programs have coursework that claims to teach classroom management, many actually give the subject short shrift.

Programs can correctly claim to cover classroom management, with only a tiny fraction of programs (<3 percent) in the sample ignoring it altogether.

Our analysis examined 213 courses in 122 programs where classroom management might conceivably be addressed. In almost all programs it was readily apparent which foundational courses were designed to address classroom management. The average time in candidates’ coursework spent on classroom management — defined to include anything having to do with classroom management, whether research-based or not — is the equivalent of eight class periods, or about 40 percent of a single course (with most programs requiring somewhere between 10 and 15 courses prior to student teaching).<sup>27</sup> This amount holds true regardless of type of program (elementary or secondary, undergraduate or graduate), although elementary programs spend slightly more time on classroom management than do secondary programs.



### 1. Rules:

Establish and teach rules.

### 2. Routines:

Build structure and establish routine within the classroom.

### 3. Praise:

Reinforce positive behavior using praise and other means.

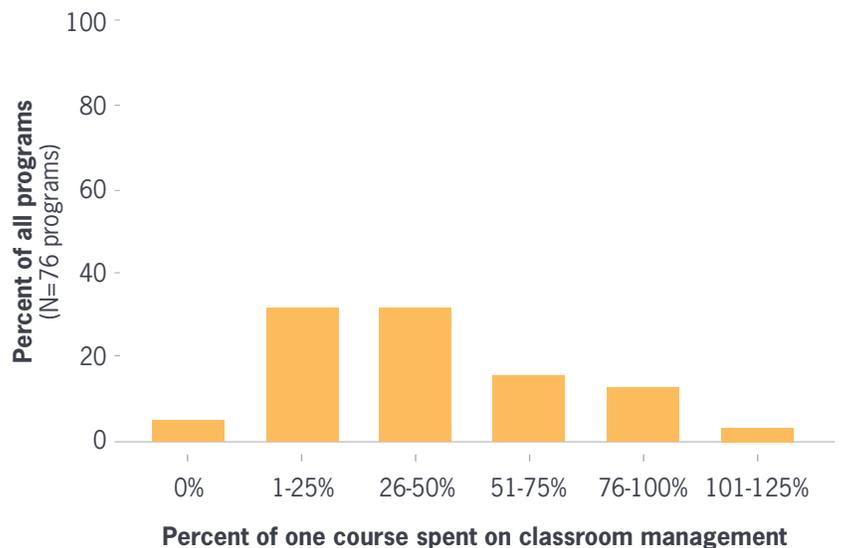
### 4. Misbehavior:

Address misbehavior.

### 5. Engagement:

Foster and maintain student engagement.

Fig. 2 What proportion of a course do teacher prep programs devote to instruction on classroom management?



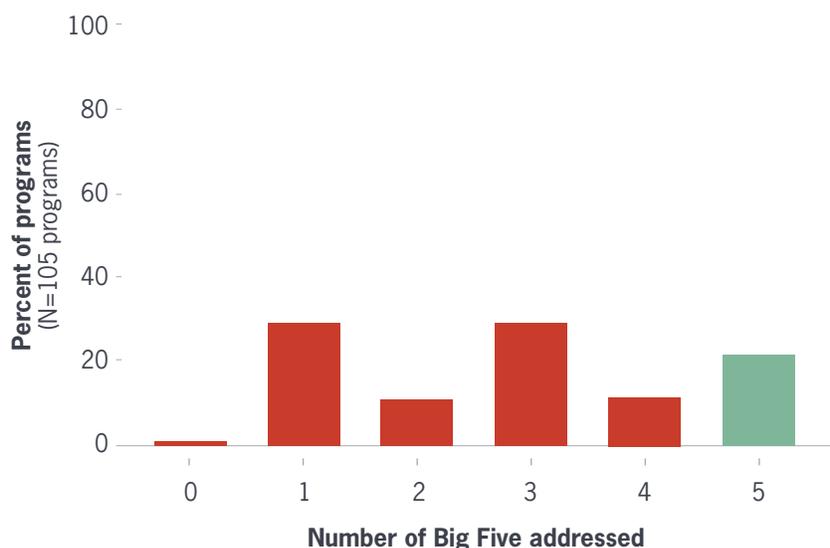
Five percent of programs devote less than a single lecture or class in foundational coursework to any classroom management strategies or topics, while 16 percent of programs devote most of a course (76% or more), or even the equivalent of more than one course.

Note: This analysis is based only on the 73 programs that identify individual topics in all classroom management-related course schedules, with the addition of the three programs that do not have any coursework on classroom management, 62 percent of the 122 programs evaluated for this report.

**Finding 2:** On average, programs expose teacher candidates to roughly half of the core content on effective classroom management techniques and approaches.

Research provides a clear consensus for the five most effective strategies teachers should know for managing a classroom. (See p. 3 for full descriptions.) In our analysis we searched for how many of these Big Five strategies were addressed in candidates' coursework.<sup>28</sup> The mean number hovered between two and three addressed in each program.<sup>29</sup> Again, as with the first finding, this pattern holds true regardless of type of program (elementary or secondary, undergraduate or graduate).

Fig. 3 How many of the Big Five strategies are addressed by teacher prep programs?

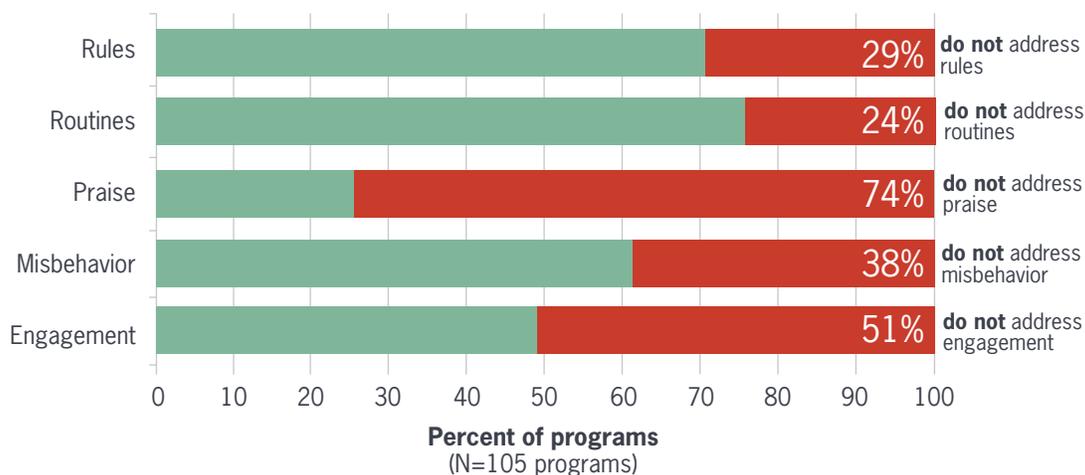


Thirty-four teacher prep programs (32 percent) address at least four of the Big Five classroom management strategies (rules, routines, praise, misbehavior and engagement) in foundational coursework. Only 22 programs (21 percent) address all five.

### Which of the Big Five are taught?

While three strategies (“rules,” routines” and “misbehavior”) are addressed by more than half of teacher preparation programs, two are seldom addressed, including “praise,” the strategy that is arguably the most strongly supported by decades of psychology research.

Fig. 4 Which of the Big Five strategies are addressed by teacher prep programs?



While the strategy of “routines” is the most commonly addressed of the Big Five, it is still neglected by foundational coursework in nearly a quarter of programs. “Praise,” which is supported by strong research, is addressed in only 26 percent of programs.

While our analysis focused primarily on the Big Five, other strategies can play a valuable role in helping teachers proactively prevent disruptions and maintain a focus on instruction. The most common of the second-tier strategies taught (see p. 5 for a full listing) is “least intrusive means” (e.g., using proximity or eye contact to prevent misbehavior),

We note that programs that are generally doing a good job covering the Big Five also are *more likely* to teach second-tier strategies.

taught by 75 programs (71 percent). Next most common is “motivation,” which 45 programs (43 percent) address.

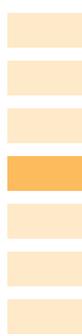
Programs that are generally doing a good job covering the Big Five also are *more likely* to teach these second-tier strategies.

In many cases, teacher candidates are introduced to the topic of classroom management through class discussion of common behavior models such as “Assertive Discipline” or “Cooperative Discipline” (not to be confused with *whole school behavior programs*). These models (see Appendix D) generally incorporate a collection of strategies. For the most part, programs do not rely solely on these models to teach the research-based strategies, with the exception of “praise.” Of the programs that address praise (again, a surprisingly small number given its evidentiary base), a third do not provide any explicit instruction or assignment apart from discussion of a behavior model in which praise is integral.

### Finding 3: Only a third of programs require teacher candidates to *practice* classroom management skills as they learn them.

For this somewhat involved analysis of foundational coursework, we explored any area that might provide evidence that programs are taking a systematic, coherent approach to developing classroom management skills in their candidates. We examined lecture schedules to determine if a classroom strategy was presented in lectures or applied in assignments required of teacher candidates. We then turned to any associated field work and looked at the full breadth of the practicum designed to align with coursework, seeking some evidence that what was being taught was then practiced by teacher candidates, whether through a simulation exercise conducted with fellow teacher candidates (found in only a few foundational courses) or before real students.

Almost all of the programs in the sample (98 percent) do require assignments of teacher candidates that are related to classroom management. (See the textbox on p. 16 for common features of assignments.) In addition, 87 percent of programs for which practice opportunities can be discerned provide practice opportunities in PK-12 classrooms. **Yet most assignments never move past paper-and-pencil exercises — such as teacher interviews or note-taking during observations of teachers — into real practice.**



Clearly programs integrating content with practice are the minority. We estimate that likely only a third, but at most 44 percent,<sup>30</sup> have assignments that can reasonably be assumed to involve actual practice of classroom management skills with feedback. In fact, by the strictest categorization — only counting assignments that explicitly state that they provide candidates the opportunity to practice with feedback on classroom management — only 12 programs (10 percent) provide such opportunities.

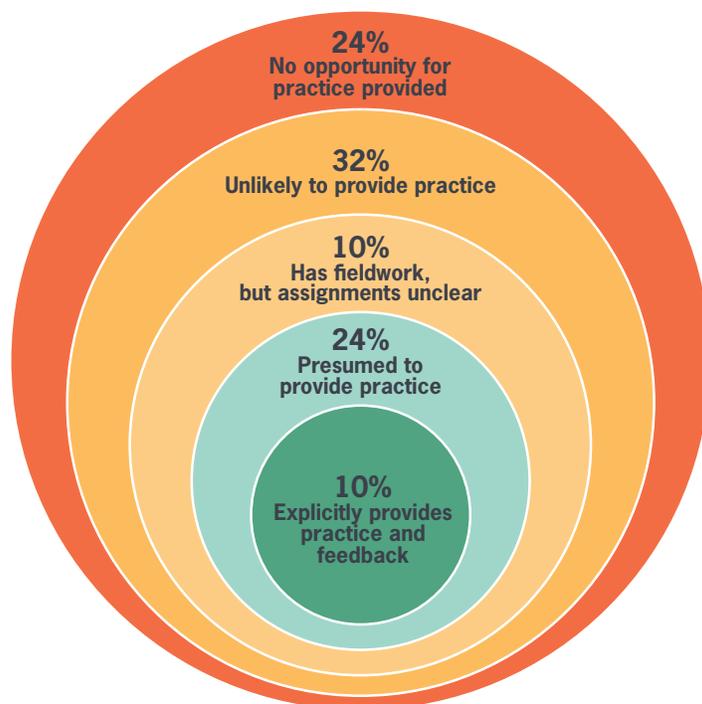
### Missed opportunities to learn from cooperating teachers and to self-evaluate

Teacher candidates are often not asked to critically evaluate their own teaching performance. An investigation of foundational classroom management coursework in 40 randomly selected programs that require candidates to spend time in PK-12 classrooms revealed that only 11 of them (28 percent) require teacher candidates to self-evaluate. Only about half of these 11 programs require an in-depth or structured analysis; the others simply ask teacher candidates to reflect on their performance (with one program’s syllabus providing too little detail to analyze).

Similarly, teacher candidates’ observations of master teachers are infrequently targeted to classroom management. Twenty-three of the forty programs (58 percent) include some observation of teachers. However, only about half of these 23 programs clearly focus at least one observation on teachers’ classroom management. Others focus only on instruction, or do not identify the relevant teacher behavior for observation in the syllabus.

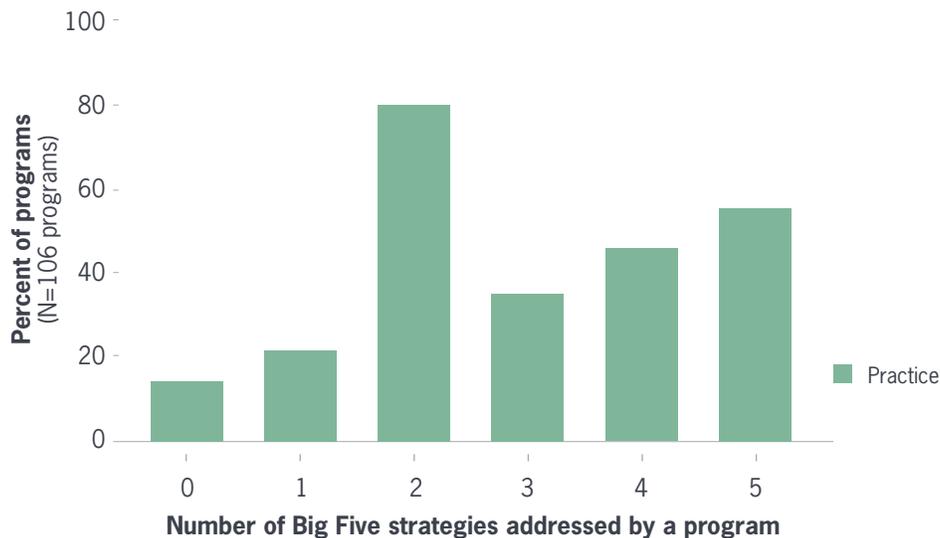
While not ubiquitous, opportunities to practice become more prevalent in programs that address the Big Five classroom management strategies.

Fig. 5 Teacher prep programs offering opportunities for practice in foundational coursework (N=118 programs)



Across 118 programs, only a third (34 percent) can be reasonably assumed to offer teacher candidates an opportunity to practice their classroom management skills and receive feedback in foundational courses. In the remaining programs, due to the nature of in-class, fieldwork or practica assignments, such practice and feedback is unlikely, or definitely does not occur.

Fig. 6 Practice in teacher prep programs relative to how many of Big Five are addressed in foundational coursework



While only twenty percent of programs that teach none or one of the Big Five classroom management strategies also offer opportunities to practice in foundational coursework, 52 percent of programs that teach four or five of the Big Five do so.

Note: The 12 programs with fieldwork or practica assignments whose type cannot be determined have been removed from this calculation.

**High-quality paper-and-pencil assignments, which require candidates to demonstrate that they have absorbed and can apply new knowledge, are rare. Following are three exceptions:**

- You will read one case study that presents one or more classroom management issues, locate and review current research articles from peer-reviewed scientific journals that address the same or similar issues and possible solutions, and write a paper in which you recommend a course of action. Case studies, a list of appropriate journals, and specific guidelines will be provided by the instructor.

— **Central Washington University** undergraduate elementary program

- Teacher candidates write an organizational plan that describes the classroom's physical environment, procedures and routines, strategies to respond to misbehavior, and other components of a management plan and reference course readings.

— **University of Virginia** graduate secondary program

- During fieldwork, this course instructs teacher candidates to observe a class with regard to a specific aspect of teaching. In the first structured observation, teacher candidates focus on the classroom environment: they draw a diagram of the classroom layout, describe what's posted on the walls, and comment on how the classroom layout affects instruction, peer interactions, and other elements of the class environment. In the second structured observation, teacher candidates track students' on-task and off-task behavior. In the third structured observation, teacher candidates focus on teacher, tracking both instructional and managerial behaviors (e.g., using praise and specifying rules).

— **University of Virginia** graduate elementary program



**Most assignments do not build on any content a course may have taught. Here are two representative examples:**

- Students will provide indications of learning through weekly online discussions on Blackboard and/or active classroom participation on the course content. You will maintain a log which will indicate your thoughts, reflections, critical review, and connections to readings and to experiences from the field.
- Students will develop (or refine) their philosophy paper on the topics of their beliefs about instructional strategies/classroom arrangement and classroom management and provide a three to five page paper.

## Finding 4: General clinical coursework delivers neither much content on classroom management, nor (ironically) well-focused practice.

Virtually every initiative to improve traditional teacher preparation endorses a greater amount of clinical coursework. Generally, the impetus to increase clinical coursework is attributed to the uneven quality of instructional coursework and the perception that it is too theoretical to be useful. However, as important as clinical practice in teacher preparation is, it appears poorly suited to deliver both consistent foundational content and oversight of practice. The inherent variability in PK-12 classroom situations in which teacher candidates find themselves — placed with different classroom teachers and typically supervised by a variety of contract employees — means that the experiences are difficult to predict and inconsistent across candidates.

We applied this analysis exclusively to the general clinical coursework (see Fig. 1) at 25 programs. **We uncovered only a few instances where classroom management was explicitly being addressed**, that is, using assigned readings with relevance to classroom management and dedicating at least one class session to a classroom management topic. One out of six of the programs (17 percent) meets that standard. Only about one-third of programs have specific classroom management assignments; the most common of these are developing a classroom management plan and completing an assignment related to the physical organization of the classroom.

Leaving aside student teaching (in which teacher candidates are in a classroom daily for a full semester), each of the general clinical courses reviewed for this particular analysis places candidates in classrooms for anywhere from 10 to 140 hours. Most of those hours are spent observing teachers. **Few courses list any specific requirements about what candidates are supposed to observe, suggesting only general observations about classroom management or none at all.** For example, “Complete a daily journal entry reflecting on the *personal impact* of the following: Observations made concerning effective classroom management.” Only one course contains an assignment with a prompt that requires discussion of specific aspects of observed student or teacher behavior: “What are the stated and unstated rules of the teachers? How are the rules applied?”

As for practice, virtually all the courses, ranging from clinical experiences that precede student teaching to student teaching seminars, include some type of small-group or whole-group instruction. This practice teaching presents an opportunity for candidates to critically examine and analyze their own performance. However, **only four of 43 courses (9 percent) in the general clinical coursework analysis require teacher candidates to do self-evaluations of their own use of classroom management strategies.**

### ○ Bright Spot on teaching use of praise

Teacher candidates at **Hunter College of The City University of New York** are asked to view a video of their own teaching and “count the number of positive as well as negative statements that you make.” Candidates are then asked if the positive statements outweigh the negative.

### ○ Bright Spot on smart uses of clinical experiences

At **Great Basin College** in Nevada, the “capstone seminar” accompanying student teaching requires multiple observations and reflections related to classroom management, each with a specific goal. At one point, teacher candidates reflect on a targeted observation of a lead teacher’s procedures and routines (to accompany reading the text *The First Days of School*). Later, teacher candidates analyze their own ability to manage their classroom, using a checklist from a text entitled *Qualities of Effective Teachers*. At another point, teacher candidates develop five rules they would use in the classroom and reflect on how they are managing students’ time effectively. And there’s considerable practice. Teacher candidates videotape themselves teaching and assess themselves on classroom management-related issues like maintaining an appropriate pace to instruction to ensure student engagement.

Teaching episodes also presumably include some feedback from a cooperating and/or a university supervisor on classroom management, as well as a range of other skills.<sup>31</sup> However, if feedback is provided in clinical experiences, it is probably provided using observation/evaluation instruments similar to those used in student teaching, and if the analysis conducted on such instruments (see p. 20) is any guide, the feedback bears little relationship to strategies covered in foundational coursework.<sup>32</sup>

## Finding 5: Few programs draw a straight line between what is learned about classroom management in coursework and what is evaluated in the culminating experience of student teaching.

Student teaching is the component of traditional teacher preparation that comes closest to the “real thing” — where candidates can take what they have learned in their program and put that into practice for extended periods — and is therefore crucially important for the consolidation of classroom management skills.

Regardless of the extent of the training of supervisors and cooperating teachers, few of them are intimately involved in the curriculum of the programs with which they become affiliated. For this reason, the observation/evaluation instruments they use to provide feedback to teacher candidates represent the best and perhaps the only opportunity for the program to communicate to all parties *the specific aspects of teacher candidate performance* it considers central, including in the area of classroom management.<sup>33</sup>

A coherent program would emphasize the same specific strategies of classroom management in coursework as in observation/evaluation instruments.

To get a better sense of how well programs connect the foundational coursework addressing classroom management to student teaching, we compared the results from this coursework study with the scores for the 93 programs in this study that were also reviewed on



our Classroom Management Standard in the 2013 edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*. Program scores on that standard are based on the nature of the feedback provided to student teachers by university supervisors.

Unfortunately, we found virtually no relationship between coursework and how student teachers are judged. Indeed, in some instances we found the opposite. Programs that dedicate lecture time to “managing misbehavior,” for example, are actually *less* likely to evaluate teacher candidates on their skills using this strategy than programs that don’t spend lecture time on the strategy. No program taught candidates about the Big Five classroom management strategies and then evaluated them on how well they implemented the strategies in student teaching.

### Bright Spots

**St. Mary’s College of Maryland’s** graduate elementary and graduate secondary programs and the **University of Washington – Seattle’s** graduate elementary program all teach three of the Big Five (rules, routines, and misbehavior) in addition to at least one of the other second-tier strategies (least intrusive means) *and* address each of these strategies in their student teaching feedback.

We also undertook an exhaustive “cross-program” analysis of nine programs to see if we could find examples of how teacher preparation threaded training in classroom management through all required courses and student teaching. Though the sample was small, the systematic coherence lacking in the 93-program analysis described above was, not surprisingly, no more apparent.

Following is a summary of what was found.

Of the nine programs included in these case studies, seven show a very inconsistent relationship between what is taught in coursework and what is evaluated in student teaching. Indeed, these programs often evaluate student teachers on their skill at using classroom management strategies that the candidates never practiced or even encountered in previous coursework.<sup>34</sup> One program achieves coherence between coursework on classroom management and feedback, but in the worst possible way: addressing classroom management in neither.

What explains the incoherence? The absence of an institutional consensus about how teacher candidates should be prepared in classroom management (which will be discussed more in this report’s conclusion), combined with a higher education tradition of deferring

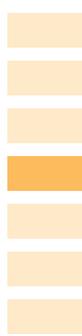
Programs appear to often evaluate student teachers on their skill at using classroom management strategies that the candidates never practiced or even encountered in previous coursework.

Fig. 16 Summary of cross-program analyses

		Classroom management strategies												Classroom management: Topic not specified
		Big Five					Secondary strategies							
		Rules	Routines	Praise	Misbehavior	Engagement	Least intrusive means	Physical environment	Motivation	Parent/Community involvement	Diversity/Cultural factors	Social/Emotional factors	Other (e.g., school management plans, student responsibility)	
<b>Program A</b>	At least 1 lecture								✓				✓	✓
	At least 1 assignment	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓		✓		✓
	Student teaching feedback		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
<b>Program B</b>	At least 1 lecture					✓			✓					✓
	At least 1 assignment				✓	✓		✓	✓					✓
	Student teaching feedback				✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	
<b>Program C</b>	At least 1 lecture	CBD	CBD	CBD	CBD	✓	CBD	CBD	✓	✓	✓	✓	CBD	✓
	At least 1 assignment					✓			✓					✓
	Student teaching feedback	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		
<b>Program D</b>	At least 1 lecture								✓					✓
	At least 1 assignment								✓					✓
	Student teaching feedback	✓									✓	✓		
<b>Program E</b>	At least 1 lecture										✓	✓		✓
	At least 1 assignment												✓	?
	Student teaching feedback	✓	✓							✓		✓		
<b>Program F</b>	At least 1 lecture	✓	✓			✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	At least 1 assignment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓						✓
	Student teaching feedback	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		
<b>Program G</b>	At least 1 lecture	✓	✓		✓						✓	✓		
	At least 1 assignment													✓
	Student teaching feedback	✓						✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
<b>Program H</b>	At least 1 lecture	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
	At least 1 assignment	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓
	Student teaching feedback	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓		
<b>Program I</b>	At least 1 lecture	No course					No course							No course
	At least 1 assignment	No course					No course							No course
	Student teaching feedback													

CBD means “could not be determined”

The classroom management topics found on the student teaching observation/evaluation instruments are generally not addressed in candidates’ earlier coursework, and vice versa. The topics on these instruments do not always connect to any lecture or assignment. Strategies that were taught in coursework often cannot be found on student teaching instruments.



to faculty prerogatives, produce a muddled form of preparation. All too often, individual instructors are allowed to decide what is important to teach and what is not, with little regard for the overall integrity of the training provided by the program, which may or may not have even articulated a picture of how its training should be constituted.

These full analyses — including a wealth of information taken from syllabi, textbooks and observation/evaluation instruments in all of a program’s courses addressing classroom management — are found in Appendix E.

## The bottom line on Findings 1 through 5

Teacher educators often make the claim that NCTQ analyses fail to discern various aspects of professional training because the training is “embedded” in preparation in a holistic manner that simply can’t be detected in reviews of coursework materials. Whatever the nature of this “embedded” training, we believe that our findings to this point, especially Finding 5, demonstrate that embedding classroom management training everywhere is a recipe for adequately covering it nowhere.

Findings 1 through 4 summarize what we found in the way of classroom management instruction and practice under the many different rocks we uncovered, and it was generally far too little. Finding 5 lines up in a row all of the rocks in a program to illustrate how classroom management instruction, practice and feedback would be experienced by individual teacher candidates.

The exhaustive cross-program analysis we performed for Finding 5 paints a clear picture of how classroom management instruction, practice and feedback is actually experienced by individual teacher candidates. What is embedded is incoherent: Most of the programs we examined evaluate teacher candidates on their skill at using classroom management strategies that the candidates have never practiced — or even encountered in previous coursework — or teach skills on which candidates are never evaluated.<sup>35</sup>

Given what we have found — and the prerogatives accorded to higher education faculty, with each instructor given leeway to teach what he or she wants — it is hard to see how embedding classroom management training can actually help teacher candidates master the skills they need to enable learning in their classrooms.

## Finding 6: The field of teacher education has not reached any sort of consensus on the “who, what, where, when or why” of classroom management preparation.

Most programs do not appear to draw from the research when deciding which classroom management strategies are most likely to be effective and therefore should be taught and practiced. Especially disfavored are research-based strategies suggesting that teachers need to frame consequences for misbehavior, foster student engagement, and — most markedly — use praise to reinforce positive behavior. Half of all programs ask candidates to develop their own “personal philosophy of classroom management,” as if this is a matter of personal preference.

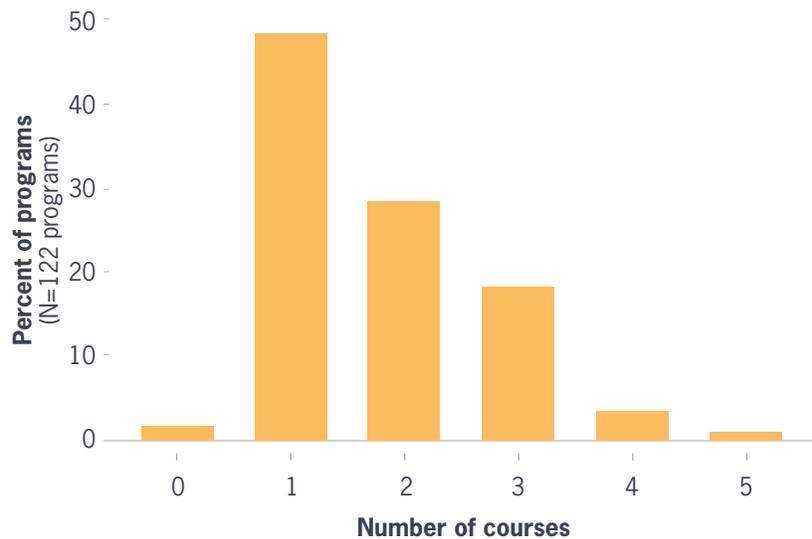
As NCTQ has found in its other studies of teacher preparation, there is no common approach the field of teacher education takes to deliver the instruction and practice teacher candidates need.

**There is no agreement on how many courses are needed.**

The number of courses in which classroom management is addressed ranges from none up to five per program. Most programs embed classroom management topics in an average of two courses, though those courses also address several other unrelated subjects.

As shown on p. 12, only 4 percent of programs dedicate the equivalent of a full course or more to classroom management alone.<sup>36</sup>

Fig. 7 In how many courses do teacher prep programs address classroom management?



*Programs are almost evenly divided in their choice to consolidate classroom management instruction in one course or distribute it across more than one course.*

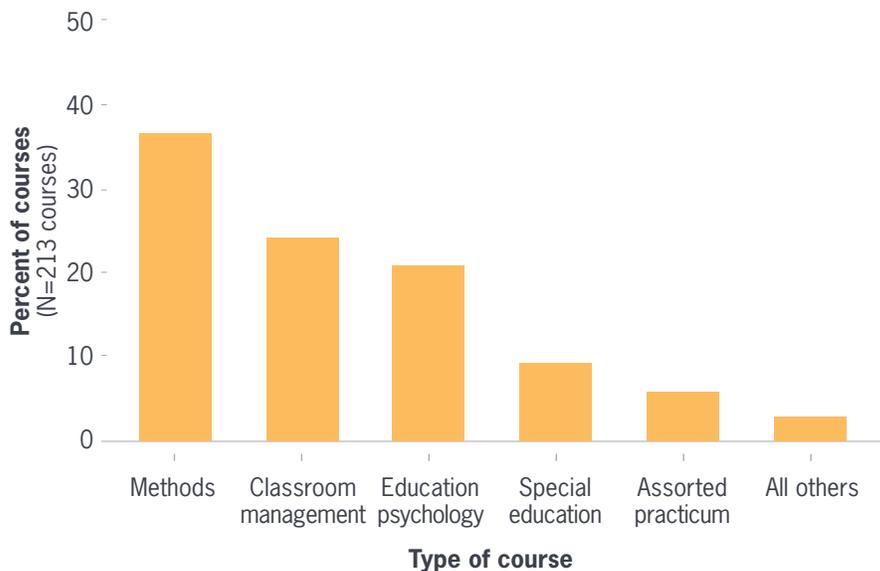
**There is also no consensus about where in the sequence of coursework classroom management should be taught.**

Most often classroom management is embedded in methods courses, but it can also be found in educational psychology courses, special education courses and, of course, in a fair number of courses appropriately titled “classroom management.”

**The absence of instruction on classroom management in special education courses is glaring.**

While the Big Five are general strategies relevant for all classrooms, the behavior issues posed by some students with special needs do demand specific treatment. Yet only 15 percent of the programs address classroom management in special education coursework taken by elementary and secondary teacher candidates.

Fig. 8 Where is classroom management taught?



*Classroom management is most commonly addressed in methods, classroom management, and educational psychology instructional coursework.*

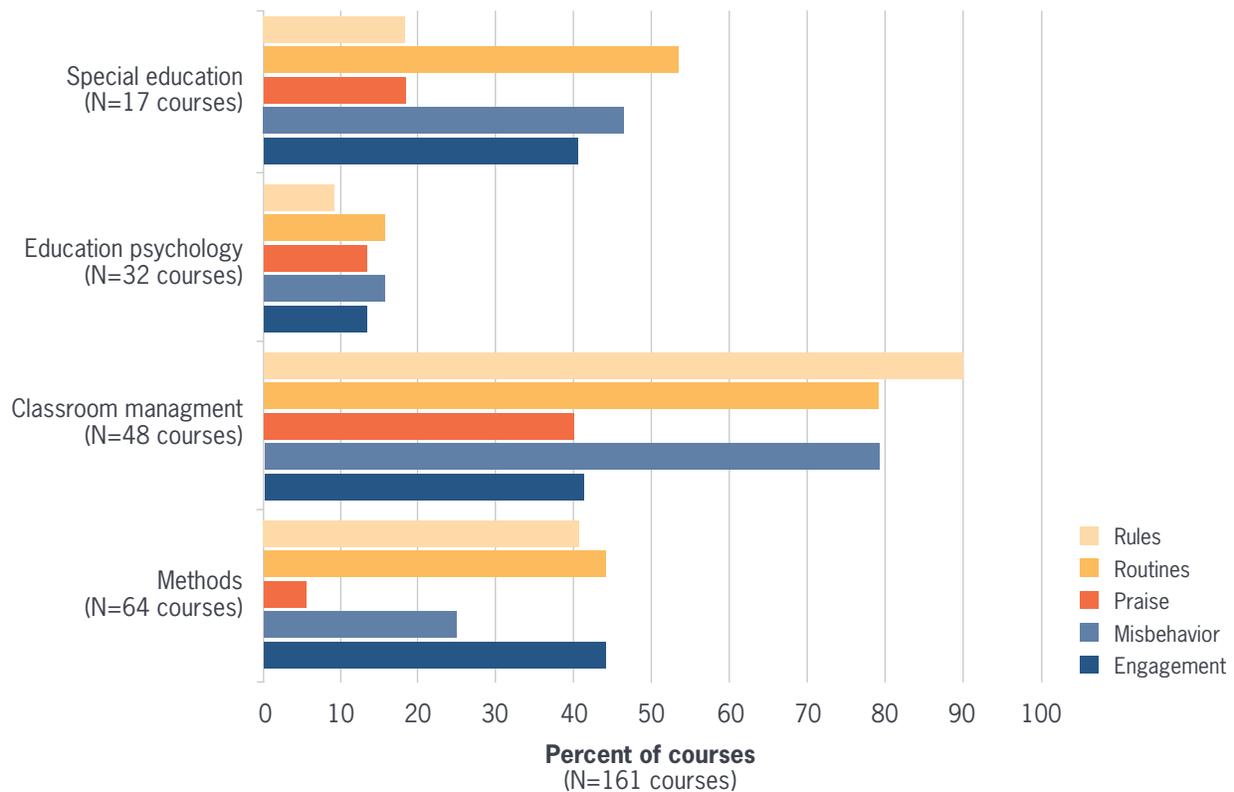
**Research does not generally inform what gets taught.**

As discussed earlier, only a third of programs address at least four of the Big Five. It is telling that the likelihood of doing so *does* rise if a program dedicates a course to classroom management. Consistently, praise is barely mentioned in any type of course, including in educational psychology courses in which one would expect it to figure prominently due to its connection to psychological theories regarding the nature of positive reinforcement as an operant principle.<sup>37</sup>

Your best lesson plan of the year won't go well if you don't have good classroom management.

– 3rd year teacher  
Respondent to NCTQ survey

Fig. 9 Which Big Five classroom management strategies are addressed by each of the course types in which classroom management instruction is commonly offered?



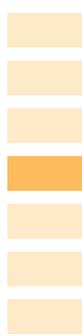
Each type of instructional course addresses a different mixture of the Big Five. Compared to any other type of course, classroom management courses consistently address more, but not all, of the Big Five strategies.

Note: Thirty-three courses that only contain ambiguous references to classroom management topics were removed from the sample.

**Textbooks used to teach classroom management content reveal the incoherence in the field.**

Most foundational courses in this study (166 courses) use at least one textbook addressing classroom management, but few courses share the same text, as 141 different texts across the programs are required. Almost all of these texts (70 percent) are only used in a single course for a single program on a campus. Only a handful of textbooks are used by four or more programs. This finding is similar to the finding on reading preparation: NCTQ’s recent review of reading courses identified 866 different reading textbooks among 692 programs, and more continue to flood the field.<sup>38</sup>

Only about half of the programs (56 percent) have a course assigning a textbook that focuses primarily on issues surrounding classroom management. Courses in the remaining programs either never assign a classroom management textbook (6 percent) or assign one that only devotes a few chapters to the topic (38 percent).<sup>39</sup>



Of the six most commonly used textbooks (used by four or more programs, see textbox to the right), five address the Big Five. Only *Beyond Discipline* by Alfie Kohn disagrees with the bulk of scientific research.

## Finding 7: State standards on teacher prep do not focus on the classroom management strategies for which research support is strongest.

The vast majority of public school teachers are recommended for certification by traditional teacher preparation programs in institutions that have been approved to offer certification by state agencies. In turn, these agencies base their approval on a program's adherence to regulations that speak explicitly to teacher preparation itself or to professional competencies for all teachers.<sup>40</sup>

While every state has regulations that have at least a glancing mention of the need for teachers to know how to manage a classroom, most states' regulations seem to be poorly informed by research. For example, the approach to classroom organization that is strongly supported by research — the need for teachers to employ a combination of both rules and routines — is mentioned in regulations of less than half of all states (19). More commonly, state regulations do address engagement (29 states), but nearly as many address motivation (24), which lacks strong research support. States are more likely to mention strategies for which the research base is not as strong — such as managing the physical classroom environment (24 states) and maintaining student motivation (24 states) — than some research-supported strategies, such as addressing misbehavior (13 states) and using praise (only two states).

### Classroom management texts most commonly used in foundational coursework

- Charles, C. M., & Senter, G. W. (2008). *Building Classroom Discipline* (six programs at six IHEs).\*
- Evertson et al. (2009). *Classroom Management for Elementary Teachers* (five programs at four IHEs).\*
- Marzano, R. J. (2003). *Classroom Management that Works: Research-based Strategies for Every Teacher* (four programs at three IHEs).\*
- Weinstein & Novodvorsky (2011). *Middle and Secondary Classroom Management* (four programs at four IHEs).

### Largely unscientific textbook:

- Kohn, A. (2006). *Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community* (five programs at four IHEs).

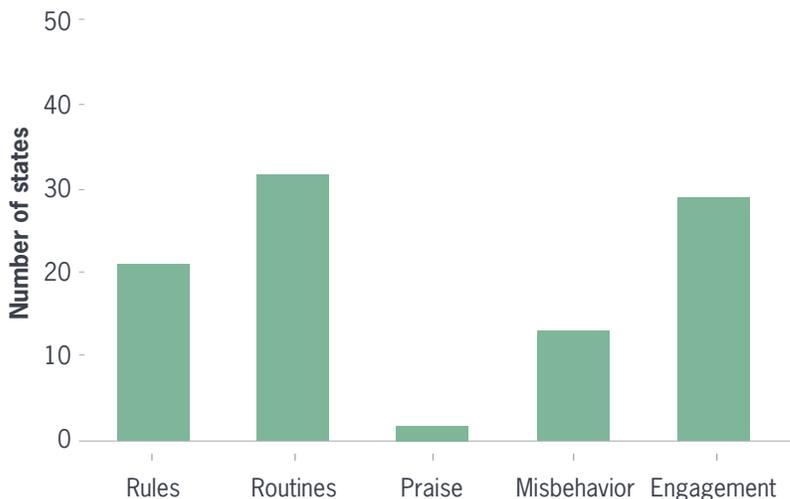
### Commonly used textbook addressing classroom management and other topics:

- Wong, H. K., & Wong, R. S. (multiple editions). *The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher*.

\* More information on these textbooks can be found in Appendix E.

Regulations in California, New Mexico, Oregon and Texas are strong and address four of the Big Five.

Fig. 10 How many states have regulations addressing the Big Five strategies?



*State regulations provide a floor for what teacher prep programs must teach. “Routines” is the only strategy addressed by a majority of states, whereas “praise” is addressed by only a few.*

Twenty-seven states and the District of Columbia rely to some extent on accreditation standards in their state approval processes. While these standards are changing as NCATE evolves into CAEP, it is notable that the accreditation standards used by NCATE until 2013 contained only a passing reference to classroom management in program standards, and then only in a program standard for elementary teacher preparation. It is a step forward that InTASC standards for the teaching profession (adopted by about half the states) have been incorporated into the new CAEP teacher preparation program accreditation standards, and that the InTASC standards include indicators on the ability of teachers to address at least three of the Big Five: building structure and routine into the classroom, establishing and teaching rules, and maintaining student engagement.<sup>41</sup>

However, CAEP and InTASC are each silent on two strategies: the use of praise and other positive reinforcement and appropriately addressing misbehavior.



## What is meant by “creating a positive learning environment”?

The phrase “creating a positive learning environment” is often found in state regulations, as well as in information on licensing examinations, and in the indicators found in instruments used to evaluate student teachers, but we can find no clear or consistent indication of what the phrase means. References to “positive learning environments” are scant in instruction and virtually nonexistent in textbooks. Teacher preparation program accreditation standards used the phrase “positive learning environments” until recently, and the current InTASC standard for the teaching profession has a set of “learning environment” standards suggesting that this phrase refers to “positive social interaction.” The new term is no clearer.

In fact, in NCTQ’s *Teacher Prep Review 2013* we suggested that observation/evaluation instruments used for student teaching placements should include language “specifically addressing the student teacher’s ability to establish a positive learning environment.” In application (see the standard’s scoring methodology for more detail),<sup>42</sup> we interpreted this to mean that the instruments should provide feedback on establishing a productive learning environment by maintaining engagement and managing time and materials. In the revised version of this standard (to be applied in *Teacher Prep Review 2014*), we use this more exact language in an indicator so that what we mean by a “positive learning environment” is absolutely clear. A separate indicator deals with positive reinforcement using praise and other means.

We suggest that the use of this general phrase provides little meaningful guidance for agencies or organizations approving or accrediting programs, to programs as they develop coursework, or — most important — to teacher candidates who might receive feedback in student teaching on whether they have created a “positive learning environment.” Just as NCTQ has abandoned it, so too should others.

Positive reinforcement was a focus of my training. It’s something that takes a lot of practice to make natural.

– 1st year teacher  
Respondent to  
NCTQ survey





## 5. Programs that rise to the top

---

Programs vary widely in how they approach classroom management. However, though no program here did well on all aspects of classroom management, some programs rose to the top. These programs appear to have identified classroom management as a priority and may be more strategic in how they address this essential part of teacher preparation.

### What did we look for to identify programs that rose to the top?

- ✓ Programs should offer adequate foundational coursework addressing the Big Five as well as other classroom management strategies, with fieldwork in this coursework providing observation and practice opportunities. In addition, programs should ensure the alignment of clinical practice before and during student teaching through use of observation/evaluation instruments that address the Big Five. These instruments should address classroom management, not just in ambiguous or general terms, but with specific language that allows the teacher candidate to make the best use of feedback. All too often these instruments have general indicators such as “Manages classroom well.” The presence or absence of a checkmark on this type of indicator provides the teacher candidate with scant information.

#### ○ Bright Spot on aligning instruction and student teaching.

In the **University of Virginia’s** graduate secondary and graduate elementary programs, every strategy strongly supported by research has at least a lecture or assignment (and often both) addressing it. Furthermore, four of the Big Five are included in the student teaching observation/evaluation instrument. While the coverage of any given strategy is sometimes spread across different courses, these programs appear to have a fairly comprehensive and coherent treatment of classroom management.

- ✓ Both aspects of classroom management preparation — instruction and practice — deserve careful institutional attention. In any case, programs should not rely on clinical practice alone to prepare teacher candidates in classroom management. These courses often lack instruction on classroom management skills, and do not always target their practice to classroom management.

○ Bright Spot on teaching the Big Five, with some assignments demonstrating understanding.

Seventeen programs address all of the Big Five in their foundational coursework, and eight of these include opportunities for practice and feedback. A standout among these programs is **Western Washington University's** undergraduate secondary program. This program has several instructional courses that incorporate classroom management, as well as associated practica courses. One course, *Secondary School Methods*, devotes more than half of its time to specific classroom management topics, including classroom norms, building student-teacher relationships, altering unproductive student behavior and establishing routines. The course also incorporates both in-class role-playing activities (e.g., role-playing interventions) and fieldwork (involving both co-teaching a lesson and filming it), which give teacher candidates opportunities to practice management strategies. An educational psychology course that includes classroom management strategies among its objectives likely reinforces this introduction to classroom management.

- ✓ It is difficult to prescribe a hard and fast number of classroom sessions and practice opportunities. Suffice it to say that those programs providing only one class session on classroom management in foundational coursework (12 percent) are doing their teacher candidates a great disservice. The following programs appear to be devoting an adequate amount of attention to classroom management preparation, even though they use different program structures.

○ Bright Spots on addressing classroom management in different course structures.

**Eastern Illinois University's** undergraduate elementary program addresses all of the Big Five in lectures, offers a pencil-and-paper assignment (designing a classroom discipline plan) and provides opportunities for practice in fieldwork contained within one instructional course.<sup>43</sup> **Minot State University's** undergraduate elementary program instead diffuses classroom management instruction across four courses — one focused on classroom management and three that incorporate this topic among others. Between lectures and assignments across the four instructional courses, teacher candidates learn about or have assignments on each of the Big Five and have fieldwork that allows for practice.<sup>44</sup> This program also requires two clinical practice courses prior to student teaching, one in elementary curriculum and instruction, and one in multicultural/disabilities.



## 6. Recommendations

---

### ➡ Develop coordinated foundational and general clinical coursework that addresses classroom management strategies with the strongest research support

Current research identifies a number of essential strategies for classroom management, including that teachers should know how to establish and teach rules, build structure and routine into the classroom, use praise to reinforce positive behavior, address misbehavior and maintain student engagement.

Program leadership needs to determine *when* instruction on these areas should occur, *when* teacher candidates will have the opportunity to practice and *how* these areas are to be evaluated during student teaching. This work cannot be left up to individual instructors who cannot see the full picture of preparation within the program.

### ➡ Use data from surveys of graduates and their employers for program improvement

New teachers and their principals consistently report that classroom management is a tremendous challenge. While we recognize that teachers will need to continue to improve their skills in many areas after entering the classroom, better classroom management preparation will mitigate some of the difficulties faced by first-year teachers. Teacher preparation programs should gather information from their graduates and their employers about the nature of the classroom management issues they are encountering. They could then use this information to determine the nature of instruction on research-based strategies that might best receive emphasis in their programs.

### ➡ Instruct with videotapes of real classrooms taught by real teachers

There is no guarantee that a full range of management situations will arise in clinical coursework (including the student teaching placement). For that reason, having teacher candidates view purposefully edited videos of teachers engaged in classroom instruction while documenting salient features of instruction seems *likely* to provide an opportunity to identify strategies in execution.<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, we found little evidence of the use of videotapes in instruction. (Videotaping of teacher candidates is often used to provide feedback on clinical coursework practice.)<sup>46</sup>

The most clear-cut case for use of videotapes was made in a syllabus for a course in a graduate secondary program (**University of Michigan – Ann Arbor**) that uses videotapes in two class meetings of a practica taken simultaneously with a “recorded teaching” course. We could not improve on the syllabus’ explanation of the value of videotaping for instruction, so we quote it here at length:

*Why is it important as a beginning teacher that you use and learn from digital records of practice? Very simply it allows a beginning teacher to examine and analyze their teaching and the teaching of others by capturing, interpreting, organizing, annotating, and storing records of practice. There are many compelling reasons to use records of practice as a critical component of teacher preparation...[T]hey allow beginning teachers to visit and revisit events and artifacts of teaching so that they not only begin to internalize the important theories and conceptions of good teaching, but also begin to visualize what these theories and conceptions actually look like in a real classroom.... Studying digital records of practice with proper guidance and strategies makes decisions, actions, choices, and teaching maneuvers more visible; and therefore, through close and careful examination of teaching, beginning teachers learn how to unpack what is otherwise difficult to see.<sup>47</sup>*

## Use of videos for instruction

The **University of Virginia**’s Curry School of Education (whose graduate elementary and secondary programs are included in the study’s sample) makes extensive and varied use of videos as one approach to prepare teacher candidates. Videos are used in methods courses (across all subjects and levels) and in courses that address classroom management. The list below is not exhaustive but provides an overview of the types of videos used by faculty:

- Excerpts of videos about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports on PBISvideos.com, including “Creating the Culture of Positive Behavior Supports.”
- Videos or DVDs available in Wong & Wong, *The First Days of School*, and Lemov, *Teach Like a Champion*.
- Consented videotapes from the university’s research projects, including the Responsive Classroom Study, M-SCAN studies and CLASS.
- “Here They Come” and “TB2” by Randy Sprick, accessed at <http://safeandcivilschools.com>
- Videos from other web-based resources (<http://teachingchannel.org>; <http://explicitinstruction.org/>; <http://www.teachertube.com/>)
- Videos from ASCD, BERG (*Powerful Teaching & Learning in Action*), Annenberg, and other organizations.

Dr. Robert Pianta, Dean of the **Curry School**, indicates that there are two key features of video analysis threaded through all the ways in which teacher candidates observe and work with video. First, analysis of videos is directed and guided by an analytic approach that ties into a larger framework of evidence-driven practices. That is, video is viewed and analyzed through a lens and language that is common across the program and its specialties and is pegged to evidence and coursework. This approach enables an integrated approach to acquiring classroom management knowledge and competence. Second, analysis of video is active and guided; that is, teacher candidates are not simply asked to “go watch video and describe what you see,” but rather watch for a specific purpose and target (aligned with the evidence framework presented in coursework).



**Kendal College's** undergraduate elementary program makes use of Virtual Field Experience™ assignments (developed by Laureate Education), which pair videos of experienced teachers with writing assignments on each segment. The video segments both show the experienced teacher in action and include an interview with the teacher about what happened in the classroom and why the teacher made specific decisions. The videos are accompanied by lesson plans, student work samples, teacher reflections and other artifacts that give the full context of the video. The company developing this resource has only five clients in the United States, but is used more widely elsewhere.<sup>48</sup>

Another institution included in the sample — the school of education at **Hunter College of The City University of New York** — also makes extensive use of videotapes in instruction. **Hunter College** has such a strong institutional commitment to the use of videotapes that it has recently compiled its own library, the largest preservice teacher preparation video library in the world. This catalogued library comprises 11,000 video clips of teaching episodes, 200 of which are tagged as addressing especially powerful examples of classroom management techniques.

According to Dr. David Steiner, Dean of **Hunter College's** School of Education, for the past six years the college has used its own highly user-friendly and sophisticated video software to record teachers in action, including a suite of analytical tools to facilitate evaluation and discussion of the teaching. In addition, since 2008 all teacher candidates have been required to video themselves during student teaching and other fieldwork and to analyze their performance with peers and faculty as they develop the competencies required for effective teaching.

Several educational organizations have licensed the college's online system and analytical tools for use in professional development.

## ➡ Make better use of classroom observations and practice

When teacher candidates observe classroom teachers' demonstrations of classroom management skills or view videotapes of their own teaching, candidates can gain a better grasp if they have to produce more than a general "reflection," and instead are required to comment on the specific strategies that were or were not employed.

## ➡ Improve both on-campus and PK-12 classroom practice

Simulations may afford the best opportunities for on-campus practice in instructional coursework. In fact, in-class simulations can be more valuable than practice in the field, especially at the beginning of training: They don't require the program to find placements for candidates who are probably not yet ready to take over a classroom even for just one teaching episode, and they allow teacher candidates to repeatedly practice isolated individual skills (like dealing with an extremely hostile and disruptive student) that would occur rarely in a good field placement. Simulations need not involve technology, although an approach to simulation that is very technologically advanced is described in the textbox here.

## Learning through classroom simulations

More than 10 years ago, **University of Central Florida** faculty began collaborating to create a virtual classroom intended to develop effective teaching skills for teacher students. Today, the product of their efforts, a teaching program called TeachLivE, has partnerships with about 20 IHEs.<sup>49</sup> The program is not designed as a replacement for teaching internships and “real” practice, but rather to supplement preparation work, functioning as a tool for developing discrete skills before entering a classroom.<sup>50</sup>

For a video on the program, see: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDzc61iW\\_Bo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PDzc61iW_Bo), and for more information on the program see the TeachLive website: <http://sreal.ucf.edu/teachlive/>

To date there is no evidence that teacher candidates trained in such simulated environments are more effective in the classroom than those that are not. If that evidence is generated by solid research, the virtual classroom could be a welcome addition to teacher training.

We note that another classroom simulation entitled SimSchool ([www.simschool.org](http://www.simschool.org)) is also now being launched, but it focuses more on simulating the effects of instructional decisions made by the teacher candidate.

## ➡ Align feedback from teaching episodes with what is taught in foundational coursework

When teacher candidates begin to have practice opportunities in PK-12 classrooms, formal observations should reinforce the same skills that teacher candidates have learned and practiced previously. All observation/evaluation instruments associated with clinical coursework and student teaching should be examined to ensure their consistency with the Big Five, as well as with other research-based classroom management approaches and techniques.

An exemplary observation/evaluation instrument from the **Teachers College of Western Governors University**, posted as a resource on NCTQ's website, addresses the Big Five in language that is sufficiently specific to provide useable feedback to the teacher candidate. It can be accessed at <http://www.nctq.org/teacherPrep/resources/elementary/classroomManagement.jsp>

## ➡ Increase the amount of feedback on practice in PK-12 classrooms

A post-observation conference with a cooperating teacher, university supervisor or both to discuss a recent teaching episode provides valuable feedback to a teacher candidate. The impact of feedback can be further enhanced if videotaping is included to allow the candidate to match the feedback from observers to specific actions. Earbuds allowing in-time feedback from supervisors or mentors (increasingly used in both preservice and in-service) are another way to ensure that each teaching episode for which an expert observer is available is fully exploited for training purposes.



## ➔ Improve the selection process for classroom teachers who are partners in clinical coursework

When attempting to improve any aspect of teacher preparation, teacher educators often seize on the possibility of requiring more clinical coursework. Here we borrow from our work in earlier studies: NCTQ's take on clinical practice (with regard to preparation in all aspects of professional practice, not just classroom management) is not that more is needed, but rather that “better” is needed. As documented in our national study on student teaching<sup>51</sup> and the *Teacher Prep Review 2013*, the quality of any clinical coursework is largely dependent on selecting effective cooperating teachers who are also skilled adult mentors. As we discussed in *Teacher Prep Review 2013*,

*While more clinical practice may create a more polished novice teacher, it does not necessarily create a more effective novice. If the ultimate goal is to improve PPK-12 education rather than preserve the status quo, the logic of trying to do so with earlier and longer placements in indiscriminately chosen classrooms with potentially mediocre (or worse) teachers is puzzling.*

Only classroom teachers who are both effective instructors and good adult mentors should be selected as cooperating teachers for clinical placements. Those who are selected should be well-trained on the use of the observation/evaluation instrument to ensure that they clearly understand the nature of the feedback they are expected to provide on classroom management skills.

## State Policymakers and Accrediting Organizations

### ➔ Ensure that all performance assessments, including the edTPA, assess a teacher's knowledge and ability to manage a classroom

The edTPA is a performance assessment that is being heavily promoted by the AACTE and many teacher educators as a new instrument to provide states with evidence that teacher candidates deserve a teacher license. The extent of the role that the edTPA will play in licensing decisions is unsettled, but the investment by the teacher education field in its development ensures that it will play some role.

Currently, the edTPA suffers from key shortcomings; specifically, it contains almost no reference to classroom management except to cast it as somehow antithetical to learning (i.e., *Candidate provides a learning environment that serves primarily to control student behavior, and minimally supports the learning goals*). By evaluating the “learning environment” only through a lens of student engagement, it conveys to teacher candidates that the only tool they will ever need to manage a classroom is to hit instructional notes high enough to consistently engage students.

The edTPA needs to be revised to ensure that candidates are evaluated on the two additional types of classroom management skills that every teacher needs and that can realistically be expected to be in evidence in any discrete episodes of whole class instruction: reinforcement of positive behavior using praise and demonstrations of student understanding of established classroom routines.

## ➔ Revise state regulations on teacher prep programs or teacher professional competencies to address the Big Five

Regulations in **California, New Mexico, Oregon** and **Texas** provide the best models for how to send a clear message to teacher preparation programs about the need for adequate preparation in the strategies for which research support is strongest. While state regulations provide no guarantee of effective classroom management preparation, they can send a message to teacher preparation programs that comprehensive preparation entails coursework and practice that addresses all of the Big Five.

## ➔ Incorporate into accreditation standards ALL the classroom management strategies for which research support is strongest

The accreditation process is involved in some way in the state approval process in 27 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>52</sup> This means that improving accreditation standards is an important avenue for improving teacher preparation in classroom management. As previously noted, InTASC standards for the teaching profession (adopted by about half of the states), now incorporated in the new CAEP teacher preparation program accreditation standards, include indicators on the ability of teachers to address only three of the Big Five: establishing and teaching rules, building structure and routine into the classroom, and maintaining student engagement.<sup>53</sup> CAEP's standards should also include indicators on the use of praise (and other forms of positive reinforcement) and addressing misbehavior.





## 7. Conclusion

---

The inadequacies noted in this report do not manifest themselves because programs are not providing comprehensive training on the research-based strategies we have termed the “Big Five.” Rather, these inadequacies are rampant because most programs are not providing comprehensive training on much of *anything* about classroom management. A lack of coherence is evident in how (or whether) any strategy is introduced in coursework, how (or whether) candidates have the relevant practice opportunities before student teaching and how (or whether) they receive feedback on their practice of the relevant skills in student teaching.

It is also worth noting that those alternative certification providers that rely primarily on clinical experiences to teach classroom management are also likely shortchanging their teacher candidates. Without a solid grounding in the research-based strategies that is *reinforced* in clinical experiences, classroom management strategies are based less on professional than on folk wisdom.

Admittedly, the task of preparing teacher candidates to manage a classroom is not an easy one. Unlike other aspects of teaching in which intermediate steps (e.g., conducting a tutorial, small-group instruction) can serve as a bridge to full-fledged practice, learning how to manage a classroom of several dozen children or adolescents would require no less than having a real classroom repeatedly available to teacher candidates. This is a tall order. Even in a program in which fieldwork and clinical experiences are extensive, full-class instruction by teacher candidates is almost exclusively found in student teaching; there, the period of full-time teaching is limited to a few weeks, and the classroom environment has been conditioned to a large extent by practices of the cooperating teacher.

Given that the classroom management challenges faced by novice teachers have been evident for decades, why do so few programs provide adequate preparation? We postulate that the inadequacy is the product of three factors. The first is an errant ideology espoused by many of the field’s leading thinkers as to what causes classroom management problems to begin with. The second

The inadequacies noted in this report do not manifest themselves solely because programs are not teaching research-based strategies. Rather, these inadequacies are rampant because the programs are not providing comprehensive training on much of anything about classroom management.

and third factors are prominent features of current approaches to teacher preparation. We explore each of these factors in more depth.

## 1. Programs have an expectation that “instructional virtuosity” will take care of any need for classroom management.

Consistent with other NCTQ findings about teacher preparation, there is little consensus in the field for what aspects of classroom management should be taught or practiced. The closest the field comes to an endorsed “approach” is the apparent conviction that teachers should be able to rise to a level of instructional virtuosity that would largely negate any need to consciously and deliberately “manage” a classroom using a variety of defined strategies. This conviction goes beyond an appreciation of the importance of engagement as one of a repertoire of management strategies. An approach which only views student engagement as an integral component of strong instruction, and which overlooks its application as a classroom management strategy, limits candidates’ understanding.

Linda Darling-Hammond, the intellectual leader of the teacher education community, mentions classroom management only a few times in her book *Powerful Teacher Education*, for reasons made clear in the longest passage she dedicates to this topic. Defending the lack of courses explicitly addressing classroom management in some teacher preparation programs she identifies as exemplary, she argues that the teacher candidate should instead learn to “manage many kinds of learning and teaching, through effective means of organizing and presenting information, managing discussions, organizing cooperative learning strategies, and supporting individual and group inquiry.”<sup>54</sup>

Her views appear to be broadly accepted by other teacher educators in positions of influence. A voluminous examination of teacher preparation self-described as a “benchmark and a guide to what research on teacher education is and can be,”<sup>55</sup> the American Educational Research Association’s (AERA) *Studying Teacher Education* (2006), fails to mention either current or needed research on preparation in classroom management.

The silence can be deafening and quite consequential — and it is not just a matter of scholarly musings. The edTPA, a relatively new performance assessment administered to teacher candidates before they graduate and scheduled for adoption in about half the states, fails to address most classroom management skills, only evaluating candidates on how they are “instructing and engaging students” in videotaped teaching episodes.<sup>56</sup> With the edTPA rapidly becoming a culminating assessment of classroom performance, evaluation of teacher candidates’ classroom management skills should be made more explicit in its rubrics.

It bears noting that teacher educators themselves, perhaps due to a better grounding in the realities of today’s classrooms, are understandably on the fence about this topic, with only half of them agreeing with teacher education leadership and institutions that a teacher having management problems has simply failed to sufficiently engage students in instruction.<sup>57</sup>



## 2. The field is reluctant to embrace scientifically based approaches.

The second feature is the field's general distrust for restricting itself to instructional approaches with a scientific basis.<sup>58</sup> We noted, for example, in *Teacher Prep Review 2013* that 866 different reading textbooks, the majority of which are partly or wholly unscientific, are used to teach the seminal skill needed by elementary and special education teachers. We also noted the nearly ubiquitous endorsement by teacher educators of the use of student “learning styles” in planning instruction, an approach to planning that has been shown conclusively by extensive research to be a waste of teachers' precious planning time.<sup>59</sup>

In the area of classroom management, this lack of interest in scientific content manifests itself in a widespread neglect of about half of what can be argued to be the comprehensive body of knowledge on what research has determined does and does not work in classroom management — especially how to use praise and other forms of positive reinforcement.

## 3. The field eschews responsibility for *training* teachers.

The third pervasive feature at work is the field's perception of its purpose. This observation is one that we've explained in some detail elsewhere<sup>60</sup> and revolves around the difference between a perceived mission of “training” teacher candidates and one of encouraging instead their “professional formation.” To this end, teacher candidate coursework is short on assignments ensuring that candidates have actually mastered content (see textbox beginning on p. 16) or can demonstrate specific instructional “moves,” and long on “philosophy of education” and “reflection” assignments.

Clearly, for many teacher educators, teaching classroom management falls into the category of mere “technical transmission” of skills, a function that the field has largely rejected<sup>61</sup> and replaced instead with the mission of forming professional identities.

## What can be done?

These constraints must be overcome by a combination of coordinated foundational and general clinical coursework including:

- Strong content delivered in lectures and textbooks
- Ample use of videotapes for instruction
- Simulations for initial practice and
- Maximum exploitation of time spent in classroom observations and teaching episodes using well-conceived assignments, videotaping and/or earbuds

Only this approach will produce graduates who possess a foundation on which classroom management competence can be built during the first few years of teaching. Further support and professional development can then be organized along the lines convincingly described by Doug Lemov and fellow authors in *Practice Perfect*, with the same rehearsal of skills that are unquestionably accepted in any other performance profession.<sup>62</sup> Needless to say, all aspects of this preparation should focus first on classroom management strategies for which research support is strongest.

NCTQ's profound belief — stated first in *Teacher Prep Review 2013* and worth repeating here — is that new teachers and our children deserve better from America's teacher preparation programs.

# Report endnotes

- 1 A 2013 OECD report found that “in 61 countries and economies that participated in PISA 2009, students in schools where the classroom climate is more conducive to learning tend to perform better.” Do students perform better in schools with orderly classrooms? *PISA in focus*. 32. Accessed at [http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisainfocus/pisa%20in%20focus%20n32%20\(eng\)-v07.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/pisa/pisainfocus/pisa%20in%20focus%20n32%20(eng)-v07.pdf) on November 14, 2013.
- 2 The mainstreaming of students with special needs such as autism and emotional disturbances into general education classrooms has been mentioned by teachers with whom NCTQ consults as adding new challenges to managing the classroom. See p. 23 for more discussion of this issue.
- 3 Allensworth, E., Ponisciak, S., & Mazzeo, C. (2009). *The schools teachers leave*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research. PDF file.
- 4 A variety of Praxis II examinations on pedagogy, used for licensing purposes in many states, also include classroom management questions in their sections on “Students as Learners.” However, as is true for the content tests that are used more commonly for licensing, each test contains many sections, with no separate cut-scores for each. We estimate that between 6 and 12 percent of the questions on these pedagogy tests could be connected to classroom management questions broadly defined.
- 5 Jones, V. (2005). How do teachers learn to be effective classroom managers? In C. Evertson, & C. Weinstein (Eds.), *Handbook of classroom management: Research, practice and contemporary issues* (pp. 888-889). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- 6 Langdon, C. A. (1997, November). The fourth Phi Delta Kappa poll of teachers’ attitudes towards the public schools. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 79(3), 212-220.
- 7 Farkas, S., Johnson, J., & Duffett, A. (2003). *Stand by me: What teachers really think about unions, merit pay and other professional matters* (Report from Public Agenda). Retrieved February 7, 2013, from <http://www.publicagenda.org/specials/standbyme/standbyme.htm>
- 8 Coggs, J. G., Bivona, L., & Reschly, D. J. (2012, August). *Evaluating the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs for support and accountability*. Washington, DC: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. This study analyzed data from the 2007-2008 Schools and Staffing Survey gathered by the National Center for Education Statistics.
- 9 The New Teacher Project. (2013). *Perspectives of irreplaceable teachers*. Retrieved August 19, 2013, from [http://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP\\_Perspectives\\_2013.pdf](http://tntp.org/assets/documents/TNTP_Perspectives_2013.pdf)
- 10 There is a difference between praise (telling students they did something well) and acknowledgement (thanking students for what they did). In some cases, the use of acknowledgement rather than of more effusive praise may be more appropriate if a student is simply meeting expectations rather than exceeding them. Regardless of whether they overtly praise or simply acknowledge appropriate behavior, teachers should recognize what students are doing right rather than focusing on what they are doing wrong.
- 11 Although we were not able to find explicit support for this in research, many practitioners, especially in special education, advocate a three-to-one ratio of praise to critical comments.
- 12 The use of praise and positive reinforcement as a classroom management technique has mixed support from the field. On one extreme, Alfie Kohn argues that rewards offer only “temporary compliance,” and that rewards for the purpose of student compliance are akin to punishment (Kohn, A. [2006]. *Beyond discipline: From compliance to community* [pp. 32-34]. Alexandria, VA: ASCD). However, a wealth of research disagrees. A meta-analysis of over 100 studies on various positive reinforcements found that “Verbal rewards were found to significantly enhance both free-choice intrinsic motivation and self-reported task interest,” and that tangible rewards were effective when based on the quality of performance rather than on the number of units completed (Cameron, J., Banko, K. M., & Pierce, W. D., [2001]. Pervasive negative effects of rewards on intrinsic motivation: The myth continues. *The Behavior Analyst*, 24(1) 1-44). This study further identifies a number of methodological concerns with an earlier meta-analysis by Deci et al., which found that positive reinforcement had negative effects on students’ intrinsic motivation (Deci, E. L., Ryan, R. M., & Koestner, R. (1999). A meta-analytic review of experiments examining the effects of extrinsic rewards on intrinsic motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125(6), 627-668). Overall, studies find in favor of using praise and positive reinforcement; however, these studies encourage and nearly always include a “fade-out” period in which the rate of reinforcement decreases so that students become accustomed to engaging in the appropriate behavior without rewards.
- 13 See endnote 12 for more discussion.



- 14 Conroy, M. A., Sutherland, K. S., Snyder, A., Al-Hendawi, M., & Vo, A. (2009). *Creating a positive classroom atmosphere: Teachers' use of effective praise and feedback*. *Beyond Behavior*, 18(2), 18-26. Hester, P. G., Hendrickson, J. M., & Gable, R. A. (2009). Forty years later – the value of praise, ignoring, and rules for preschoolers at risk for behavior disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 32(4), 513-535. Brophy, J. (1981). Teacher praise: A functional analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 51(1), 5-32.
- 15 Ibid.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 Hester, P. G., Hendrickson, J. M., & Gable, R. A. (2009). Forty years later – the value of praise, ignoring, and rules for preschoolers at risk for behavior disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 32(4), 513-535.
- 19 Conroy, M. A., Sutherland, K. S., Snyder, A., Al-Hendawi, M., & Vo, A. (2009). *Creating a positive classroom atmosphere: Teachers' use of effective praise and feedback*. *Beyond Behavior*, 18(2), 18-26.
- 20 Kamins, M. L., & Dweck, C. S. (1999). Person versus process praise and criticism: Implications for contingent self-worth and coping. *Developmental Psychology*, 35(3), 835-847. Dweck, C. S. (2006). *Mindset: The new psychology of success, how we can learn to fulfill our potential*. New York: Ballantine Books.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Cameron, J., Banko, K. M., & Pierce, W. D. (2001). Pervasive negative effects of rewards on intrinsic motivation: The myth continues. *The Behavior Analyst*, 24(1), 1-44.
- 23 Hester, P. G., Hendrickson, J. M., & Gable, R. A. (2009). Forty years later – the value of praise, ignoring, and rules for preschoolers at risk for behavior disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, 32(4), 513-535.
- 24 See endnote 12 for more discussion.
- 25 Marzano, R. J., Marzano, J. S., & Pickering, D. J. (2003). *Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- 26 Unfortunately, the CAEP glossary's (<http://caepnet.org/resources/glossary>) definitions of “field experiences,” “clinical experiences” and “clinical practice” are not suited to the categorization needed for this report.
- 27 Total time was calculated by using the lecture schedule in each syllabus to calculate the proportion of class meetings that discussed topics related to classroom management and adding that time across all courses addressing classroom management. To calculate the average percent of a course devoted to classroom management, the aggregated number of lectures on classroom management was divided by the average number of lectures in a course for that program. Any program with a course whose lecture schedule could not be determined was removed from the sample.
- 28 Almost all (86 percent) in the sample of 122 programs included in our foundational coursework analysis have syllabi for which it is possible to determine the topics addressed by lectures or assignments (both pencil-and-paper and practice assignments). The remaining 14 percent identify “classroom management” as a lecture topic without providing more specific information, do not provide any lecture topics (N=4) or do not offer any course on classroom management (N=3). While it is possible that these programs do address some research-based techniques, there is no reason to think that their coverage of strategies is any different from that of programs for which techniques can be categorized.
- 29 The one difference that emerged was between public and private institutions: Private institutions tended to address more of the Big Five than did public institutions. Public institutions addressed an average of 2.3 of the Big Five, while private institutions addressed an average of 2.9. This difference was moderately statistically significant ( $p=0.10$ ).
- 30 This number may be as high as 44 percent in the unlikely event that the fieldwork not described does contain opportunities for practice rather than simply observing classrooms. The one-third figure refers to programs that either explicitly require feedback on classroom management or include fieldwork with some sort of teaching or student interaction, which presumably would lead to feedback on classroom management.
- 31 It is often difficult to discern in syllabi whether a clinical course instructor or a different person operating solely as a fieldwork supervisor provides feedback on whole class instruction. In only three programs (10 percent) did it appear likely that the course instructor provides feedback.
- 32 We did not obtain or identify such instruments used for clinical coursework taken before student teaching.
- 33 In this vein, observation instruments such as the CLASS (<http://www.teachstone.com/about-the-class/>) have classroom organization and management of time, behavior and activity as one of three core elements of effective teaching.

- 34 The forms also often contain very general indicators (e.g., “Manages classroom well”) that are not helpful to a teacher candidate learning how to manage a classroom, whether or not the indicator is checked as satisfied.
- 35 Ibid.
- 36 While almost a quarter of programs have a course entitled “classroom management,” these courses often address one or more topics only tangentially related, such as developing grade books or managing student work. As a result, even programs with a Classroom Management course and lecture schedules for all relevant courses may dedicate less than a full course to actually teaching classroom management.
- 37 Motivation – a technique that is not among the ones more strongly supported by research – tends to dominate instruction in educational psychology courses to the extent that the topic of instruction can be determined. (Education psychology courses are more likely than other courses to identify an unspecified “classroom management” topic on their syllabus.)
- 38 See page 40 of the report accessed at: [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Teacher\\_Prep\\_Review\\_2013\\_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Teacher_Prep_Review_2013_Report)
- 39 For an in-depth analysis of what some of these textbooks cover, see the cross-program analysis. The cross-program analysis reviews an earlier edition of Charles & Senter, but the content is presumably similar. This report does not provide information on the quality of these textbooks; rather, it is reporting on their prevalence and a fairly superficial analysis of the strategies addressed, with virtually no attention paid to whether they were addressed correctly or adequately.
- 40 In only 23 states is the approval process completely divorced from accreditation processes. For more information, see page 48 of the NCTQ 2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook, accessed at: [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/2011\\_State\\_Teacher\\_Policy\\_Yearbook\\_National\\_Summary\\_NCTQ\\_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/2011_State_Teacher_Policy_Yearbook_National_Summary_NCTQ_Report)
- 41 Standard #3 Learning Environments: Performances: 3(d). *The teacher manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and learners' attention.* Progressions (3.1.1 for Performances 3(a)): *The teacher articulates explicit expectations for a safe, positive learning environment, including norms for behavior that include respect for others, as well as responsibility for preparation and completion of work. S/he develops purposeful routines that support these norms.* Accessed Oct. 21, 2013, at [http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/InTASC\\_Model\\_Core\\_Teaching\\_Standards\\_and\\_Learning\\_Progressions\\_for\\_Teachers\\_10.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_and_Learning_Progressions_for_Teachers_10.html)  
Unfortunately, the two InTASC indicators that touch on these three elements are contained in a section of the InTASC standards that are so divorced from the reality of classroom management in challenging classroom environments that a teacher candidate and novice teacher would be excused from considering them irrelevant. For example, in another section of Standard #3 we find Performance 3(b), which states ambitiously: *The teacher develops learning experiences that engage learners in collaborative and self-directed learning and that extend learner interaction with ideas and people locally and globally.*
- 42 Accessed Oct. 21, 2013, at: [http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/SM\\_for\\_Std10](http://www.nctq.org/dmsView/SM_for_Std10)
- 43 In terms of clinical coursework, this program also requires two practica courses prior to student teaching, one in elementary curriculum and instruction and one in multicultural/disabilities. We are unable to comment on additional instruction and practice in the former because we did not have the syllabus available for analysis; the syllabus for the second indicates that the only potential classroom management-related topic is “conflict management.”
- 44 In terms of clinical coursework, this program also requires two practica courses prior to student teaching, one in elementary curriculum and instruction and one in multicultural/disabilities.
- 45 We say “seems likely” because – at least as recently as 2005 when the AERA published Studying Teacher Education – there was no evidence of the efficacy of the use of videotapes in instruction.
- 46 As mentioned earlier, however, the candidate’s assignments regarding use of the videotape may not require much self-examination on specific classroom management strategies.
- 47 Unfortunately, other than these two class meetings, there is no other instruction on classroom management in the program, so we question the overall efficacy of this abbreviated videotaped introduction to classroom management, no matter how well-conceived.
- 48 A map showing the network can be accessed at <http://www.laureate.net/OurNetwork>
- 49 Only one of the IHEs included in this study is now partnering with TeachLivE developers, and that IHE (Western Michigan University) began the partnership in 2011. Both because we examined syllabi from the IHE’s undergraduate elementary program from 2010 and 2011, before this partnership was in place, and because TeachLivE focuses on middle school rather than elementary school, we were not surprised to find no indication in the syllabi of the use of this simulation program (<http://www.wmich.edu/education/about/pdfs/2011fall.pdf>, p. 6).



- 50 Dieker, L. (2011). Impatient optimists: Teachers learning in a virtual world (including comments). *Impatient Optimists – The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*. Retrieved November 18, 2013 from <http://www.impatientoptimists.org/Posts/2011/10/Teachers-Learning-in-a-Virtual-World>.
- 51 Accessed at [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Student\\_Teaching\\_United\\_States\\_NCTQ\\_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/Student_Teaching_United_States_NCTQ_Report)
- 52 See page 48 of the NCTQ 2011 State Teacher Policy Yearbook, accessed at: [http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/2011\\_State\\_Teacher\\_Policy\\_Yearbook\\_National\\_Summary\\_NCTQ\\_Report](http://www.nctq.org/dmsStage/2011_State_Teacher_Policy_Yearbook_National_Summary_NCTQ_Report)
- 53 Standard #3 Learning Environments: Performances: 3(d). The teacher manages the learning environment to actively and equitably engage learners by organizing, allocating, and coordinating the resources of time, space, and learners' attention. Progressions: The teacher articulates explicit expectations for a safe, positive learning environment, including norms for behavior that include respect for others, as well as responsibility for preparation and completion of work. S/he develops purposeful routines that support these norms. (3a) Accessed Oct. 21, 2013, at [http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/InTASC\\_Model\\_Core\\_Teaching\\_Standards\\_and\\_Learning\\_Progressions\\_for\\_Teachers\\_10.html](http://www.ccsso.org/Resources/Publications/InTASC_Model_Core_Teaching_Standards_and_Learning_Progressions_for_Teachers_10.html).
- 54 Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). *Powerful teacher education: Lessons from exemplary programs* (pp. 92-93), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. Ironically, having insinuated that a focus on student discipline inherently indicates an “absence of concerns for teaching and learning,” Darling-Hammond’s laudatory descriptions of the classroom management practices of a first-year teacher who has graduated from a program she identifies as exemplary are sufficiently detailed to make clear that the teacher is very deliberately using all of the Big Five strategies (pp. 71-72).
- 55 Cochran-Smith, M., & Zeichner, K. M. (Eds.). (2005). *Studying teacher education: The report of the AERA panel on research and teacher education* (p. viii). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associated.
- 56 Only one of the TPAs that we’ve evaluated involves assessment of classroom management, and that is the one developed by and used exclusively at the California State University, Fresno, which requires candidates to submit a classroom management plan and to evaluate how they “proactively preclude off-task behavior” in whole class instruction.
- 57 Half of teacher educator respondents believe that if teachers have behavior problems it is because their lessons are not sufficiently engaging. Farkas, S., & Duffett, A. (2010). *Cracks in the ivory tower? The views of education professors circa 2010*. Washington DC : Thomas B. Fordham Institute. Retrieved August 19, 2013, from <http://www.edexcellence.net/publications/cracks-in-the-ivory-tower-1.html>, p. 16.
- 58 It is fitting for traditional teacher preparation to distinguish itself from “fast track” alternative certification providers because it has the capacity to provide a scientifically grounded intellectual foundation to professional preparation. It is disingenuous to argue – as Susan Fuhrman, dean of Teachers College, did recently in a critique of alternative certification – that preparation should not cut itself off from “scholarship and from emerging research” when it has never actually exercised that capacity to firmly harness itself to either. (Keller, B. [2013, October 20]. An industry of mediocrity. *The New York Times*, Retrieved from [http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/21/opinion/keller-an-industry-of-mediocrity.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/21/opinion/keller-an-industry-of-mediocrity.html?_r=0)
- 59 Pashler, H., McDaniel, M., Rohrer, D., & Bjork, R. (2009). Learning styles: Concepts and evidence. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 9(3), 105-119. Retrieved March 3, 2013, from [http://www.psychologicalscience.org/journals/pspi/PSPI\\_9\\_3.pdf](http://www.psychologicalscience.org/journals/pspi/PSPI_9_3.pdf)
- Howard Gardner has recently critiqued the use of learning styles: Access at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/answer-sheet/wp/2013/10/16/howard-gardner-multiple-intelligences-are-not-learning-styles/>
- 60 For more on the teacher education community’s perspective on its mission, see Walsh, K. (2013, Summer). 21st century teacher education: Education schools don’t give teachers the tools they need. *Education Next*, 13(3). Retrieved April 25, 2013 from <http://educationnext.org/21st-century-teacher-education/>.
- 61 The evolution from a training purpose to a preparation purpose started in the 1970s and is described in detail by the coeditor of the American Educational Research Association’s (AERA) *Studying Teacher Education* (2005) and Boston College education professor Marilyn Cochran-Smith, who dismisses training as a “technical transmission activity.”
- 62 Lemov, D., Woolway, E., & Yezzi, K. (2012). *Practice perfect: 42 rules for getting better at getting better*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

 **National Council on Teacher Quality**

1120 G Street, NW, Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
Tel: 202 393-0020 Fax: 202 393-0095  
Web: [www.nctq.org](http://www.nctq.org)

*The National Council on Teacher Quality advocates for reforms in a broad range of teacher policies at the federal, state and local levels in order to increase the number of effective teachers.*

Subscribe to NCTQ's free monthly electronic newsletter, *Teacher Quality Bulletin*, ([www.nctq.org/p/tqb/subscribe.jsp](http://www.nctq.org/p/tqb/subscribe.jsp)), to stay abreast of trends in federal, state and local teacher policies and the events that help to shape them.

 Subscribe to NCTQ's blog, *PDQ*.

Follow us on  