



# A Closer Look at Classroom Management

## Traditional Graduate Programs, Residencies, and Alternate Route Programs

**KEY FINDINGS:** About half (49 percent) of traditional graduate teacher preparation programs attend to all or nearly all of the five key classroom management strategies. Almost three quarters of residencies and alternate route programs (72 percent) reach the same mark. Looking for evidence that programs require candidates to apply five research-based strategies in the classroom, we found the most evidence for these two strategies: 1) the teacher establishes standards of behavior and 2) the teacher maximizes the amount of class time in which students are focused on learning. Found least frequently is the teacher's use of meaningful praise to encourage positive behavior.

**We can report some significant progress in this standard since our last ratings in 2014**

### Why teacher prep programs should teach key classroom management skills

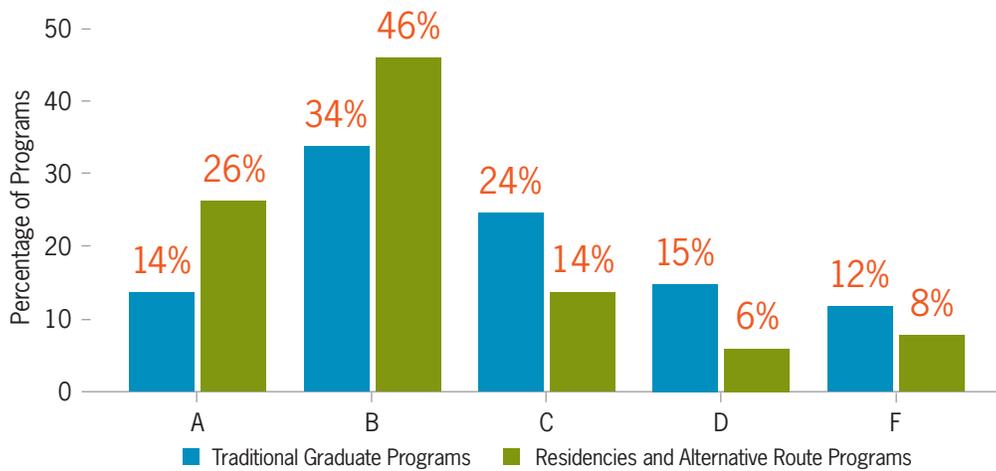
New teachers and their principals consistently report that classroom management is one of their greatest challenges. Given that students learn best in an orderly, well-run classroom, teacher candidates should be trained in a coherent management approach focusing on the five strategies identified by the Institute for Education Science as having conclusive research support and being useful with all students.<sup>1</sup> These strategies are:

1. Establishing classroom rules and routines that set expectations for behavior;
2. Maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning by pacing lessons appropriately, managing class materials and the physical setup of the classroom, and teaching interesting lessons;
3. Using meaningful praise and other forms of positive reinforcement to encourage appropriate behavior;
4. Using unobtrusive means that do not interrupt instruction to prevent and manage minimally disruptive behavior; and,
5. Addressing more serious misbehavior with consistent, appropriate consequences.

Our evaluation examines the feedback that teacher candidates receive from their supervisors and cooperating teachers regarding their use of these five classroom management strategies. For traditional programs, we focus on student teaching. Similarly, participants in residencies and alternate route certification programs — whether they spend time in the classroom of a mentor teacher or immediately take over their own classroom — need guidance on crucial classroom management skills, and we check to see that they receive feedback from the program on their use of these strategies in the classroom.

1 For more on the research underpinning this analysis, see our [Classroom Management](#) report and our [Standard Book](#) for the Classroom Management Standard.

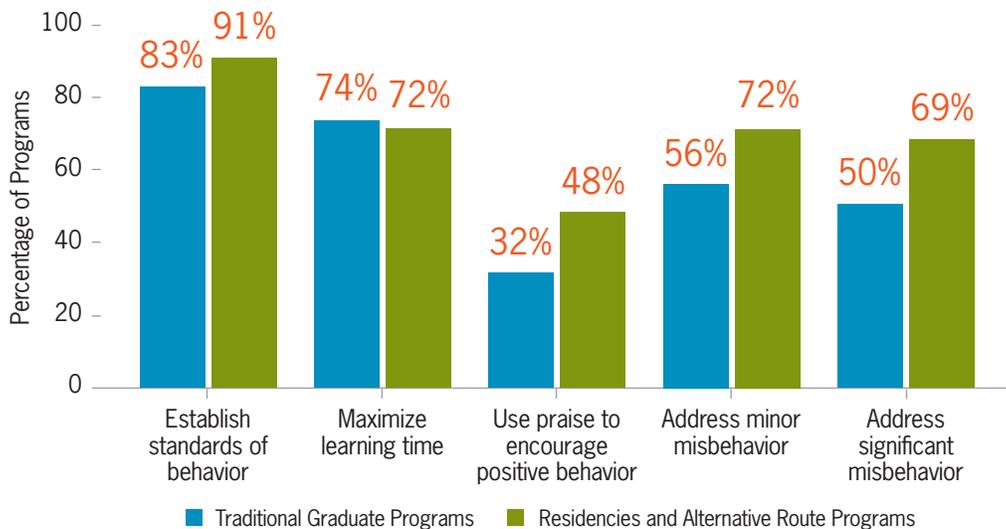
How many programs provide feedback to aspiring teachers on proven classroom management strategies?  
(N=438 traditional graduate programs; N=65 alternative programs)



About half of all traditional graduate programs (49 percent) earn an “A” or “B,” meaning that they provide feedback on all or nearly all of the key classroom management strategies. That performance is exceeded by residencies and alternative route programs, with more than two thirds (72 percent) reaching the same mark.

The findings discussed here for traditional graduate programs are very similar to those we reported for traditional undergraduate programs in the fall of 2016. This is unsurprising because many institutions use the same or similar evaluation forms to give feedback to undergraduate and graduate students in programs leading to certification.

What percentage of programs provide feedback on each key skill?<sup>2</sup>

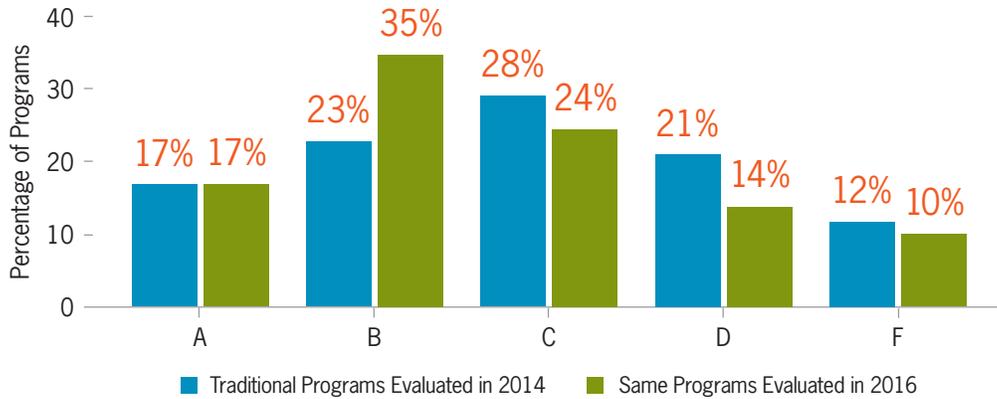


Most notable in this graph is the inattention to the strategy with the strongest research basis, the teacher’s use of praise and other reinforcements to encourage positive behavior. This finding is concerning because praise, delivered meaningfully and appropriately (both of which require training), has been shown to be a powerful tool that can instill in students the motivation to improve their own behavior.

2 Maximizing learning time is the only area in which our evaluation is divided among separate skills: 1) maintaining student engagement, and managing 2) time, 3) materials, and 4) the physical classroom environment. Programs are included in the graph if their student teachers receive feedback on at least three of the four skills.

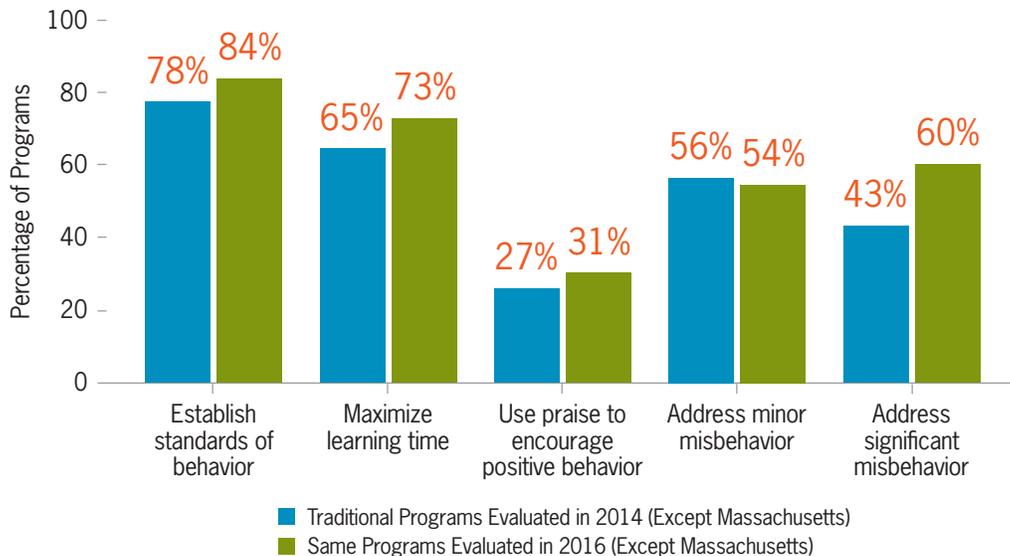
### Improvement since the last edition of the *Teacher Prep Review*

The overall grade distribution for this standard is somewhat better than that for traditional graduate programs in the 2014 *Teacher Prep Review*. Examining the 260 traditional graduate programs that were evaluated in both the 2014 *Teacher Prep Review* and the current edition of *Teacher Prep Review* shows improvement: in 2014, 36 percent of programs earned an “A” or “B”, while in 2018, 49 percent now receive those grades.



Most of this change can be explained by a change in Massachusetts under a new version of its mandatory, statewide teacher performance assessment. It offers feedback on more of the key strategies of classroom management than the previous version. Most programs in the state of Massachusetts now earn a B instead of a D or F.

Still, looking at the 249 programs evaluated in both 2014 and 2016 in states other than Massachusetts, small but noticeable improvements have occurred in almost all strategies of classroom management. In particular, the fraction of programs giving candidates feedback on the way in which they address significant misbehavior has grown from 43 percent in 2014 to 60 percent in 2016.



### Methodology in brief

To examine program practice, we look at the observation and evaluation forms that supervisors and cooperating teachers use to give feedback on program participants’ performance in the classroom. We read each form in full to determine if it requires the user to give feedback in any of the five key classroom management strategies listed here.

To learn more about how we evaluate programs' feedback on classroom management techniques, including how individual indicators are satisfied, please see the methodology section of our [Standard Book](#) for the Classroom Management standard.

For examples of model materials related to this standard, please see the "What You Can Do on Classroom Management" section on the "[Standards & Methods](#)" page.

## Understanding program grades for Classroom Management

*Note: One area of our analysis, maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, is divided into four subskills (maintaining student engagement, and managing time, materials, and the physical environment).*

### All Programs

- A** Program provides feedback to student teachers on all five key classroom management strategies. One or two of the four subskills related to maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning may be omitted.
- B** There are multiple ways to earn a B. The most common is:
  - Program provides feedback in four of the five key classroom management strategies.
- C** There are multiple ways to earn a C. The most common are:
  - Program provides feedback in three of the five key classroom management strategies. If maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning is one of the three strategies, feedback in this area may not address all four subskills.
  - Program provides feedback in two of the five key classroom management strategies. If maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning is one of these two strategies, feedback in this area must address all four subskills.
- D** There are multiple ways to earn a D. The most common are:
  - Program provides feedback in only one of the five key classroom management strategies. If feedback is provided on the strategy of maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning, the feedback must address all four subskills.
  - Program provides feedback in two of the five key classroom management strategies. Maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning is one of the two strategies, and feedback for this strategies does not address all four subskills.
- F** Program does not provide feedback on any of the five key classroom management strategies, with the possible exception of feedback on up to three of the four subskills in the area of maximizing the time that students are engaged in learning.



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