THE PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHER SKILLS GAP

What K–12 Private School Educators Know and What They Need to Know

Michael Q. McShane

ed CHOICE

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AAPOR Transparency Initiative
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR PUBLIC OPINION RESEARCH

ABOUT EDCHOICE

EdChoice is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advancing full and unencumbered educational choice as the best pathway to successful lives and a stronger society. EdChoice believes that families, not bureaucrats, are best equipped to make K–12 schooling decisions for their children. The organization works at the state level to educate diverse audiences, train advocates and engage policymakers on the benefits of high-quality school choice programs. EdChoice is the intellectual legacy of Milton and Rose D. Friedman, who founded the organization in 1996 as the Friedman Foundation for Educational Choice.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

I host EdChoice's Cool Schools Podcast, interviewing the leaders of cool and innovative schools around the country. I ask them about the story of their school, the lessons that they've learned, the challenges they face, and the hurdles they've had to overcome to get to where they are today.

Finding great teachers and leaders is usually toward the top of the list of challenges that the leaders of cool schools face. If schools want to do something different or have a different pedagogical philosophy than the dominant model practiced by local public schools, they can struggle to find good educators to work there.

Their experience meshed with stories I have heard throughout the past several years from private school leaders across the country, so I thought it was time to try to systematically measure this phenomenon and see if there was anything that can be done about it.

This paper set out to answer a simple question: Do private school educators need a different set of skills to be successful than public school educators?

To answer that question, I, in partnership with Hanover Research, administered a detailed survey to private school teachers and leaders across three states. In total, 447 respondents (281 teachers and 166 administrators) answered questions about what skills were important in their jobs, what skills they had to learn "on the job," and, for the substantial subset of respondents who had taught or led in both the public and private sectors, how was teaching in or leading a private school different than teaching in or leading in a public school.

After identifying the key skills that they found to be important, they identified the skills that they had to learn "on the job." This is an indirect way of identifying holes in their pre-service preparation.

The great painter Bob Ross popularized the saying, "There is no such thing as mistakes, only happy accidents." One of the happy accidents of our survey sample was the fact that 51 percent of survey respondents had taught in both public and private schools, with an average public school tenure of 9.39 years. This allowed us to ask a rich set of questions comparing teaching and leading in private schools versus in public schools.

The similarities and differences are best expressed in the Venn Diagram on page 2.

As it turns out, the vast majority of skills that make an educator successful in the private sector are also important in the public sector. Managing classrooms, planning instruction, administering assessments, and much of the day-to-day work of educators looks the same in both sectors.

There is, however, a discrete set of skills that private school educators need that their public school colleagues don't. Because private schools often act as independent and autonomous organizations, leaders need more preparation in legal compliance and accounting and finance than their public school peers. Because they almost always exist in a competitive space, private school educators were also more likely to indicate that they needed more public relations and marketing skills. Because private schools are more likely to be faith-based, both teachers and leaders indicated the need to act as faith leaders and models of faith.

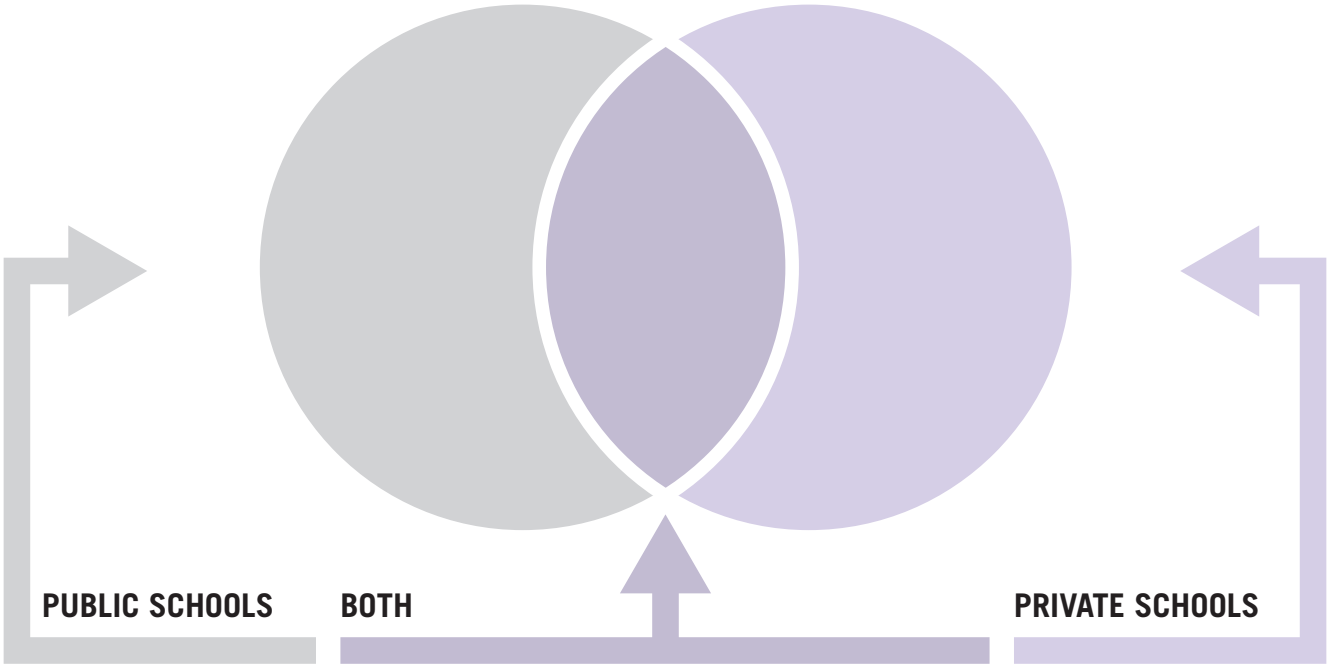
This presents an opportunity. Entrepreneurial educator preparation programs could take advantage of this gap in the market and, with a few changes, provide pathways for pre-service private school educators. By simply cross-listing courses from other departments and giving students credit for taking them, any number of deficiencies in knowledge around budgeting, finance, legal compliance, or even theology could be addressed. Particularly in states with large private school populations or large school choice programs (that are growing the number of private schools and thus the need for educators), programs could create

whole streams, concentrations, or certificates for private school educators-to-be. Some of these programs already exist across the country, but more could be of use.

There is also an opportunity for schools that might only prepare a subset of educators today (like elementary school teachers) to grow their programs with private school-specific, or at least private school-focused preparation programs. Creating new, standalone private school-focused preparation programs might also make sense for religious colleges aligned to elementary and secondary schools that share their faith tradition.

Finally, educators in our sample requested professional development in areas where they feel their pre-service preparation came up short. This provides an opportunity for one-off courses and workshops in these particular areas that could be provided either by colleges of education or outside organizations.

There is a large market to serve here, and entrepreneurial educator preparation programs could take advantage of it.



- Fluency in Spanish
- Understanding the Common Core

- Being Innovative
- Communication Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Implementing Curriculum
- Leadership Skills
- Organization and Planning Skills
- Setting Goal and Vision
- Administrative Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Legal Compliance
- Understanding Research
- Ability to Listen
- Acting as a Role Model
- Being a Team Player
- Flexibility
- Patience
- Tech Savviness
- Work Ethic
- Creating a Comfortable Learning Enviorment

- Being Entrepreneurial
- Budgeting
- PR Skills
- Accounting and Finance
- Teaching Multiple Subjects
- Modeling Faith in Action
- Religious Instruction

INTRODUCTION

Leaders in the business community often talk about the "skills gap," the gap between the skills needed for good jobs in the economy and the skills that prospective employees possess.[1] Though there is debate as to whether or not such a gap actually exists, the idea of the "skills gap" can be a helpful way to frame instances where recent graduates realize that their preparation might not have been as complete as they would have liked.[2]

A "skills gap" appears to exist in private schooling in America. Based on a survey of private school teachers and leaders in three states, a large number identified important skills that they had to learn on the job.

As it turns out, there is significant overlap between the skills necessary to be successful teaching and leading in private schools and in public schools—the sector toward which most teacher and leader preparation programs gear their training—but still there are unique skills that private school teachers and leaders need that they are not receiving in their training.

This is a problem.

America has 34,576 private elementary and high schools educating some 4,903,596 students, according to the most recent federal data.[3] To accomplish this task, these schools employ 481,558 full-time teachers.[4] While there is not the same level of specificity of data on the number of administrators, assuming an average of three per school works out to more than 100,000 additional employees.

But this is also an opportunity for enterprising teacher and leader preparation programs.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, 481,558 private school teachers is roughly the same number of United States:

- plumbers and pipe layers (466,950)
- farmers, fishermen, and foresters (470,920)
- bailiffs, correctional officers, and jailers (447,350)

and is substantially more than:

- software developers (394,590)
- barbers, hairdressers, and cosmetologists (370,710)
- and mail carriers (336,900).

We're talking about a lot of people and a substantial segment of the American economy. No one would think that we should ignore the needs of any of those professions, so it is important for us to understand the human capital needs of private schools. They employ hundreds of thousands of people. They educate millions of students. And they will need a steady supply of teachers and leaders for years to come.

Private school choice programs are also growing, allowing more and more students to attend private schools with public support.

According to EdChoice's *ABCs of School Choice*, approximately 466,000 students attended private school with support from a voucher, tax-credit scholarship, or education savings account in the 2017–18 school year.[5] This is almost double the number from five years before, which itself was more than a doubling of five years before that. With more than 60 separate private school choice programs already in existence around the country and new ones being created at the rate of roughly three per year, the utilization of private school choice programs is trending upward.[6]

A large and growing market exists and wishes to be served better. Innovative preparation programs can fill that gap.

This paper set out to understand the needs of private school teachers and leaders by surveying them. In total, 447 private school employees (281

teachers and 166 administrators) from three states responded to a detailed survey asking them specific questions about the skills and dispositions needed to be successful in a private school and whether they felt adequately prepared in them. Interestingly, 230 of those teachers and leaders had also taught in or led a traditional public school, which allowed for comparison between the two environments.

TEACHING AND LEADING IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Having high-quality teachers in a school is incredibly important. The quality of a student's teacher is the single largest in-school determinant of student performance.[7] A substantial amount of research argues that quality varies among teachers, and higher-quality teachers have substantial positive effects on students.[8] These effects are not a flash in the pan, they persist for years after the student leaves that teacher's classroom.[9]

High-quality school leaders are incredibly important, too.[10] Some researchers have argued that quality school leadership is second only to quality teaching in determining student achievement.[11] There are numerous reasons to believe this argument. Administrators are responsible for identifying effective teachers.[12] They determine the working conditions of the teachers in their school.[13] They set the culture in the school and orient it toward the goals it needs to achieve.[14] Leadership matters.

Private school and public school teachers and leaders differ in meaningful ways. Public school teachers, on average, earn 25 percent more than their private school peers, are more likely to have a master's degree, and are slightly younger.[15] Public school leaders, on average, earn 20 percent more than their private school peers, are more likely to have a master's degree or higher, and are also slightly younger.[16] On average, class sizes are smaller in private schools.[17] Private school teachers have much higher turnover rates than their public school counterparts, as well.[18]

There are similarities between educators in each sector, too. Researchers using the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development found that classroom processes did not vary significantly between public and private schools.[19] Research from the *Choosing to Teach* study found that teachers in public, Catholic, and Jewish Day schools all needed mentoring, meaning, and support to be successful.[20] Public school and private school leaders both report spending the largest percentage of their time on internal administrative tasks and report statistically similar levels of time on curriculum and teaching-related tasks.[21]

There are important differences, though. Private schools are much more likely to be religious in nature, and teaching in a religious environment is different than teaching in a secular one. Leading a private school also presents unique challenges. Private schools operate independently, without the support from central school district offices or state education agencies. It is not inconceivable that while the skill set of effective teachers and leaders has a great deal of overlap between educators in the public sector and educators in the private sector, that it does not overlap perfectly.

METHODS

This paper surveyed teachers and leaders in private schools in Arizona, Iowa, and South Carolina. Survey administration and design was done in collaboration with Hanover Research of Arlington, Virginia.

The sample was constructed by first identifying all private schools in the three states. These states were chosen because they represented a cross-section of America geographically and demographically. All three states also have private school choice

programs. Previous EdChoice surveys had created contact lists for Arizona and South Carolina.[22] A new list was constructed for Iowa. Lists were constructed first by identifying all schools in the Private School Universe Survey and supplementing those with internet searches for private schools in those states. School websites were scraped for contact information for both administrators and teachers.

In total, a list of 3,720 contacts were created, split evenly between teachers and administrators and split evenly across the three states.

The survey was launched on April 9, 2018 via email. The initial email was followed up by 11 follow-up emails to non-completers and was closed on May 30. Participants were offered $10 gift cards for participation in the survey. After funding for gift cards ran out, participants were notified that they would not be receiving a gift card but were asked to fill out the survey anyway. In total, there were 447 respondents, a response rate of 12 percent.

RESULTS

Demographics

Who took this survey? Table 1 on page 12 offers some descriptive statistics on the 447 respondents to the survey.

- Sixty-three percent of respondents were teachers and 37 percent were administrators.
- Overwhelmingly, respondents were women (73%).
- The largest group of respondents were in the 45–54 age band (31%), with the two age bands on either side, 35–44 and 55–64 tied for second at 21 percent of all respondents.
- Eighty-four percent of respondents had either a 4-year bachelor's degree or a master's degree.
- Overwhelmingly respondents were white, with 91 percent of respondents responding as such; 1 percent identifying as black; and 7 percent identifying as "other" or preferring not to answer.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, private school teachers, on the whole, are 75 percent female, 88 percent white, 4 percent black, and 5 percent Hispanic. While very close on gender distribution, the sample for this study skews more white than the overall private school teacher population.

Where do survey respondents work? Table 2 on page 13 offers some descriptive statistics on the schools where these educators work.

- The majority of schools were religious, and a smaller number had distinctive pedagogical or philosophical orientations such as Montessori or language immersion.
- Of those who worked in a religious school, a plurality (43%) worked in Catholic schools, but Protestant schools were a close second at 35 percent.
- Teachers also taught in a mix of elementary, secondary, and combined elementary and secondary schools.
- All three states from which the sample was drawn have private school choice programs. Of the 333 respondents who answered the question, 72 percent stated that their school participated in one of their state's school choice programs. Given that there might be more than one teacher from a given school in the sample, this shouldn't be interpreted that 72 percent of schools participated, but simply that 72 percent of survey respondents work in a school that participates in such a program.

Most Important Skills for Success

The survey asked teachers and leaders what skills they thought were most important for success as a teacher or leader in a private school. Respondents could choose from a bank of potential answers, and were asked to rank their top five choices. Figures 1 and 2 on pages 14 and 15 show how many educators selected a given skill or disposition in their top five and how many chose that skill or disposition as their number one most important.

For teachers, the top five skills or dispositions were:

- "passion for teaching,"
- "modeling faith in action,"
- "managing classrooms,"
- "creating a comfortable learning environment," and
- "communication skills."

For administrators, the top five skills or dispositions were:

- "communication skills,"
- "interpersonal skills,"
- "leadership skills,"
- "setting academic goals and strategic vision," and
- "organization and planning skills."

The Onboarding Experience

How do educators get up to speed when they start working in their schools? Table 3 on page 16 presents results from a series of questions asking educators what is done to integrate new teachers and leaders into school environments.

- By far, the largest tool that schools use is professional development workshops and events (69% of respondents said that their school does this).
- More than a quarter of respondents said that their school either subsidizes their teachers to get outside training at organizations or institutions like universities, or have partnered with an outside organization or institution to provide training for teachers.
- The largest percentage of respondents, 44 percent, said that the training period for new teachers and leaders lasts six months to a year.
- More than 50 percent of respondents stated that new private school principals and teachers need professional development in parental engagement, classroom management, and team-building techniques.
- Finally, 42 percent of administrators (the plurality of respondents) stated that the cost to bring a new teacher up to speed was between $500 and $999.

On-the-Job Training

Figures 3 and 4 on page 17 and 18 show the skills and dispositions teachers and leaders said that they needed to learn while working in private schools. This is an indirect way of asking them about what skills they didn't learn during their preparation program.

These are the top six skills that teachers said they didn't get from their formal training:

- 29% said "learning 'on the job,'"
- 28% said "managing classrooms,"
- 27% said "communication skills,"
- 25% respectively said "being flexible," "being tech savvy," and "modeling faith in action."

Administrators offered stronger responses when asked what they had to learn on the job. The top four most-selected responses by administrators include the following:

- 52% said "school budgeting,"
- 39% said "understanding legal compliance,"
- 39% said "understanding accounting and finance," and
- 36% said "navigating bureaucracy."

Professional Development

How can schools get these professionals up to speed in these topics? Table 4 on page 19 reflects the responses teachers and administrators had about potential development opportunities.

The largest group of respondents stated that they would like professional development workshops or events (266 respondents, 78% of those who answered the question), but more than half also supported online courses (186 respondents, 54% of those who answered the question) and continuing education in partnership with colleges and universities (171 respondents, 50% of those who answered the question).

Preparation Before Entering the Workforce

Respondents were also asked about their pre-service training and how well they think it prepared them. Table 5 on pages 19 and 20 shows the results to numerous questions about the types of pre-service education and the level of preparation it provided.

The majority of respondents attended a traditional preparation program at a college or university (70% of respondents). Perhaps surprisingly, 18 percent of respondents received no formal teacher training at all. For those who did attend a traditional path, 68 percent had a bachelor's degree and 45 percent had earned a master's degree. When asked about how helpful they thought each level of preparation was, 64 percent of those who had earned a certificate in education thought it was "very helpful" or "extremely helpful." Fifty-eight percent said the same about associate's degrees in education; 80 percent about bachelor's degrees in education; and 76 percent about master's degrees.

Private vs. Public

An interesting coincidence in the survey sample is the large number of respondents who have worked in both public and private schools. In total, 51 percent of the sample (230 respondents) also have taught in public schools. What's more, they taught for a substantial amount of time. The mean years of public school service was 9.39 years.

The survey asked this subgroup of respondents to compare their experience in private versus public schools.

Differences in Important Skills and Attributes

In the first set of questions, they were asked to compare the relative importance of skills and attributes in the two sectors. Most respondents said most skills and attributes were equally important across the two sectors. However, teachers and leaders who have worked in public and private schools said the following skills and attributes were "somewhat" or "much more important in a private school" than in a public school:

- 88% said religious instruction,
- 76% said being entrepreneurial,
- 67% said modeling faith in action,
- 54% said understanding accounting and finance,
- 50% said planning a school budget, and
- 50% said public relations skills.

Conversely, 51 percent of respondents said that understanding the Common Core standards was more important in public schools than in private schools, and 43 percent said that having fluency in Spanish was as well. Table 6 on page 21 provides a full breakdown of how respondents compared the importance of certain skills and attributes.

Differences in Responsibilities

The survey also asked about the responsibilities of teachers and leaders in private schools and how they differ from those in public schools. Table 7 on pages 23 and 24 presents the findings.

If one uses a cutoff of 40 percent of respondents stating that a responsibility was "very different" or "completely different" as an indicator, there are 12 responsibilities that respondents identified as meaningfully different in private versus public schools . They are:

- 93% said act as a faith leader,
- 91% said ensure parents pay tuition,
- 91% said teaching religious values,
- 88% said attracting students to enroll,
- 82% said bringing in endowment, grants, or charitable contributions,
- 70% said establishing admission requirements for students,
- 62% said issuing press releases and advertising,
- 45% said managing the school budget,
- 44% said managing class sizes,
- 44% said representing the school/meeting with community members,
- 41% said serving ESL students, and
- 40% said managing school support services.

Figure 5 on page 22 synthesizes these skills, attributes, and responsibilities into a handy Venn Diagram. While there are substantial similarities in what makes a successful educator in both public and private schools, there are some distinct skills and responsibilities that private school educators need that public school educators don't.

DISCUSSION

So what can we make of this avalanche of information? I think a few things.

Most teachers found value in their preparation programs.

When educators were asked how helpful their preparation programs were, for those who earned a bachelor's degree, 80 percent said that it was "very" or "extremely" helpful in preparing them to teach or lead a private school. For those who earned master's degrees, it was 76 percent. For those operating educator preparation programs, they should be happy that their graduates think so highly of them.

Many teachers had to learn important skills on the job.

Even though graduates generally described their preparation programs as "very" or "extremely" helpful with their preparation, they did identify some skills for which they were not prepared. Communication skills, planning school budgets, being innovative, learning on the job, and managing classrooms were at the top of the list. It is probably too much to ask that pre-service preparation programs prepare teachers for every single skill that they might possibly need throughout their entire careers, but some of these are extremely important facets of being a teacher or leader, and large numbers of educators identifying that they had to learn them on the job should give us some pause.

The skills that public school educators need by and large overlaps with the skills that private school educators need.

Having such a substantial segment of the survey sample with experience in both public and private schools allowed for a wealth of insight on the similarities and differences between the two sectors. The topline finding when asked about differences between the two sectors was that the majority of skills and responsibilities are the same. This makes a great deal of sense. It is important to be a good listener, to have good presentation skills, to be patient with students, and to have a positive attitude no matter what type of school you teach in. Teaching and leading in these two sectors is more similar than it is different.

There is a distinct set of skills that private school educators need that public school leaders don't.

That said, there are some distinct differences between teaching and leading in the two sectors. Figure 5 on page 22 depicts this in a Venn Diagram. Respondents who had taught or led in both sectors clearly identified a set of skills and responsibilities that were different. Some of these are obvious, like religious instruction and modeling faith in action. Many private schools are religious; no public schools are. Therefore, it is much more likely that a private school teacher or leader will take on some role in the faith formation of students.

But other elements spoke to the unique environment of private schools. Respondents identified the need to be entrepreneurial, to understand school budgets and accounting and finance, to have good public relations skills, and to have the ability to teach multiple subjects as key skills that private school educators need more than public school educators.

They also identified unique responsibilities, such as acting as a faith leader, establishing admission requirements for students, ensuring that parents pay tuition, teaching religious values, attracting students to enroll, as well as bringing in endowments, grants, and/or charitable donations.

Private schools are more autonomous organizations than public schools. While many exist within larger networks of dioceses or synods or organizations of similar schools, mostly they are on their own to not just educate children, but also to operate as financial entities. That means that school leaders have to balance the budget without support or guidance from the central office and need to make sure that students' families pay tuition. They have to attract students and communicate with the public in a different way than educators who have students residentially assigned to them.

The Opportunity

Educator preparation programs in states with large private school populations have a real opportunity here. So do educator preparation programs in states with growing private school choice programs. Many of their graduates will teach in or lead private schools. With minor changes, current preparation programs could better serve this group of teachers and, ultimately, students.

Recommendation 1: Cross-list courses from other departments/schools to supplement existing coursework.

It appears that most of the skills that educators identify could be taught in one or two elective courses, or by allowing students to take courses in business or religious studies programs. Taking a course in accounting and a course in marketing could go a long way in helping potential private school leaders who need public relations skills and knowledge of budgeting and accounting to make sure they can balance their school's books. Many universities offer courses in theology in religious studies departments. Perhaps partnering with that

department to create a course in "religious studies for teachers," like many science and mathematics departments have, would help meet this need as well.

Recommendation 2: Create specific tracks/concentrations for private school teachers and leaders within traditional teacher and leader training programs.

Educator preparation programs could create these programs in-house, or perhaps create a concentration in private school leadership that includes classes in management and accounting as well as public relations. It could also have courses in fundraising and other non-profit management-type skills and knowledge.

There are already efforts afoot to provide something like this model. Columbia University's Teachers College has the Klingenstein Center, for instance, which offers a master's degree focused on independent school leadership. It teaches finance, negotiating, and marketing as part of its core curriculum along with school leadership, curriculum and cognitive development, and philosophy and ethics. It also offers a summer institute for early career teachers and a fellowship for heads of schools.[23]

Recommendation 3: Create more standalone private school teacher and leader training programs.

There is also an opportunity for a new or outside provider to get into this space and make custom-tailored classes for potential private school leaders. The University of Notre Dame launched the Alliance for Catholic Education program in 1993 specifically to prepare Catholic school teachers. That program has spread to include Catholic school leaders, teachers of students with special needs, teachers of English language learners, and a network of Catholic elementary schools spread across the country. That said, creating new programs whole cloth is expensive and time-consuming. Minor tweaks to existing programs can get a lot of the way there.

Recommendation 4: Create professional development opportunities for teachers to address specific needed skills.

When asked how to best remedy the skills gap, the largest group of respondents asked for professional development workshops or events geared toward those specific skills. More than half also supported online courses and half supported continuing education in partnership with colleges and universities.

Professional development is a tricky topic. Research from organizations like TNTP has called into question the effectiveness of the huge investment that schools made in professional development for teachers.[24] An earlier review of the literature showed positive effects, but primarily served to highlight the paucity of high-quality research on the question.[25] That said, it is what the teachers in the survey thought would best remedy their issues. Any effort to use professional development should be undertaken with an eye to cost and with a rigorous evaluation component to make sure it is meeting its goals.

It's not just preparation programs that should care about this. Ensuring a robust pipeline of talented private school educators is essential to the school choice movement as well. If the school choice movement wants the options available to students to grow, people will have to teach in and lead those schools. It doesn't do any good to offer thousands of vouchers, tax-credit scholarships, or education savings accounts (also known as ESAs) if students have nowhere to take them. If the set of schools is going to expand, and if those options are going to be any good, it is going to mean an influx of talented educators. It's more than good public policy that makes school choice work. The people matter, too.

CONCLUSION

There are nearly 2,000 teacher preparation programs across the country.[26] Many of these programs exist in states with large populations of private schools. Many others exist in states with public policies that will drive more students to attend private schools in the future. Many of the individuals who will teach in or lead those school will graduate from one of those programs. Making sure that those educators have the opportunity to learn the skills they need is important.

There is a large need for great private school teacher or leaders and, with some changes, programs can help fill private schools with well-prepared educators who can better serve the nation's children.

TABLE 1 Descriptive Statistics for Respondents

Sample	Count	Percentage
Teachers	281	63
Administrators	166	37
n=447		

Educator Characteristics	Count	Percentage
Gender		
Female	284	73
Male	97	25
Non-Binary	1	0
Prefer not to answer	5	1
n=387		
Age		
18–24	13	3
25–34	60	15
35–44	80	21
45–54	120	31
55–64	83	21
65+	25	6
Prefer not to disclose	7	2
n=388		
Education		
Some college	7	2
2-year degree	10	3
4-year degree	167	43
Master's degree	159	41
Professional degree	13	3
Doctorate	26	7
Prefer not to answer	5	1
n=387		
Race		
White	355	91
Asian	3	1
Black or African American	3	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0
Other	11	3
Prefer not to answer	15	4
n=388		

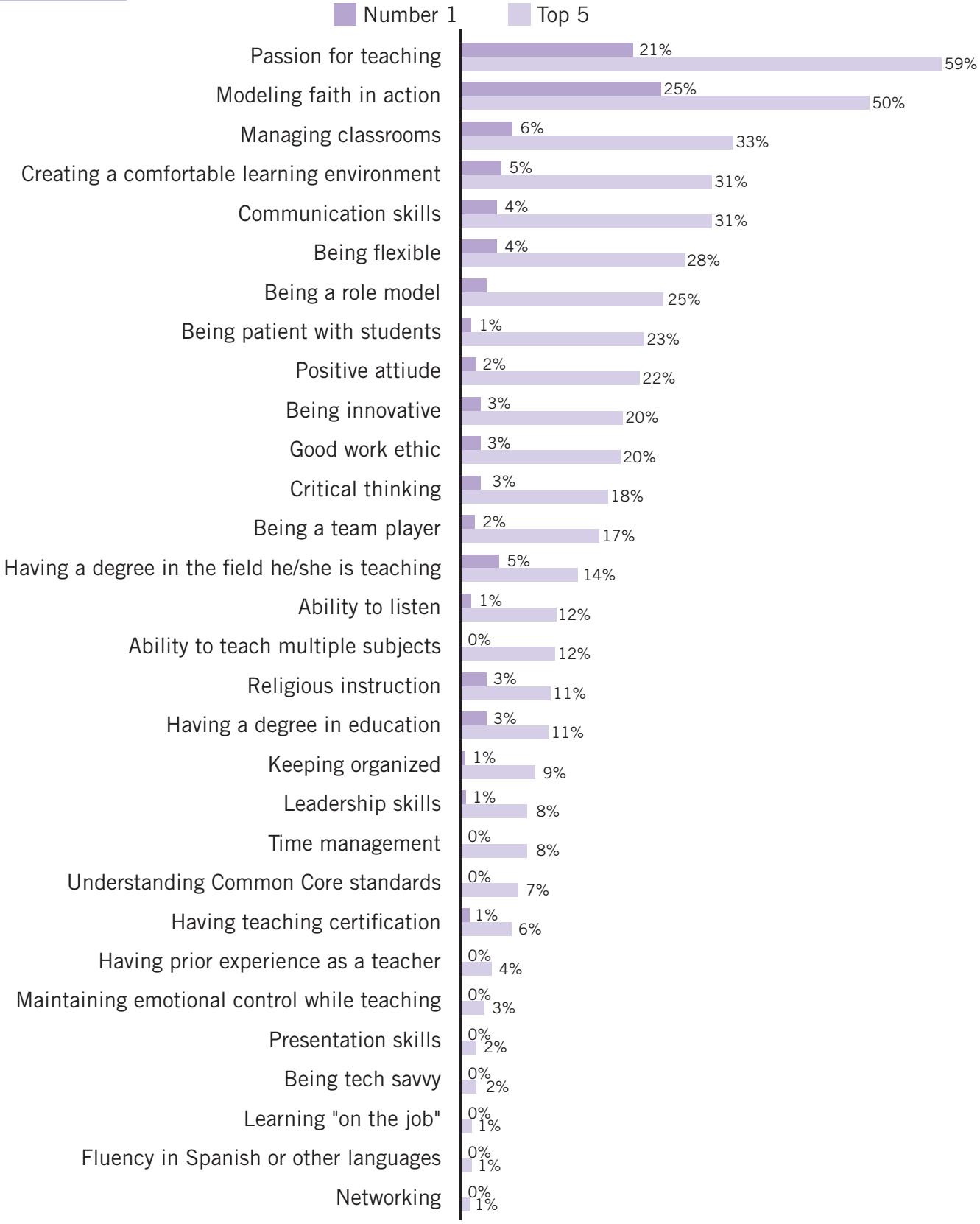
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018).

TABLE 2 Descriptive Statistics for Schools

	Count	Percentage
Participation in private school choice program		
Yes	240	72
No	93	28
n=333		
Distinctive Features		
Religious school	271	61
Parochial school	129	29
Private special education school	30	7
Montessori school	21	5
Boarding school	13	3
Virtual or Online school	12	3
Language immersion school	8	2
Waldorf school	8	2
Reggio Emilia school	2	0
Other	34	8
None of the above	59	13
n=447		
Religious Affliiation		
Catholic	117	43
Protestant	96	35
Jewish	5	2
Muslim	2	1
Other	51	19
n=271		
Grades Served		
Pre-Kindergarten	293	66
Kindergarten	349	78
1st Grade	345	77
2nd Grade	342	77
3rd Grade	346	77
4th Grade	342	77
5th Grade	351	79
6th Grade	344	77
7th Grade	324	72
8th grade	322	72
9th Grade	260	58
10th Grade	260	58
11th Grade	260	58
12th Grade	259	58
n=447		

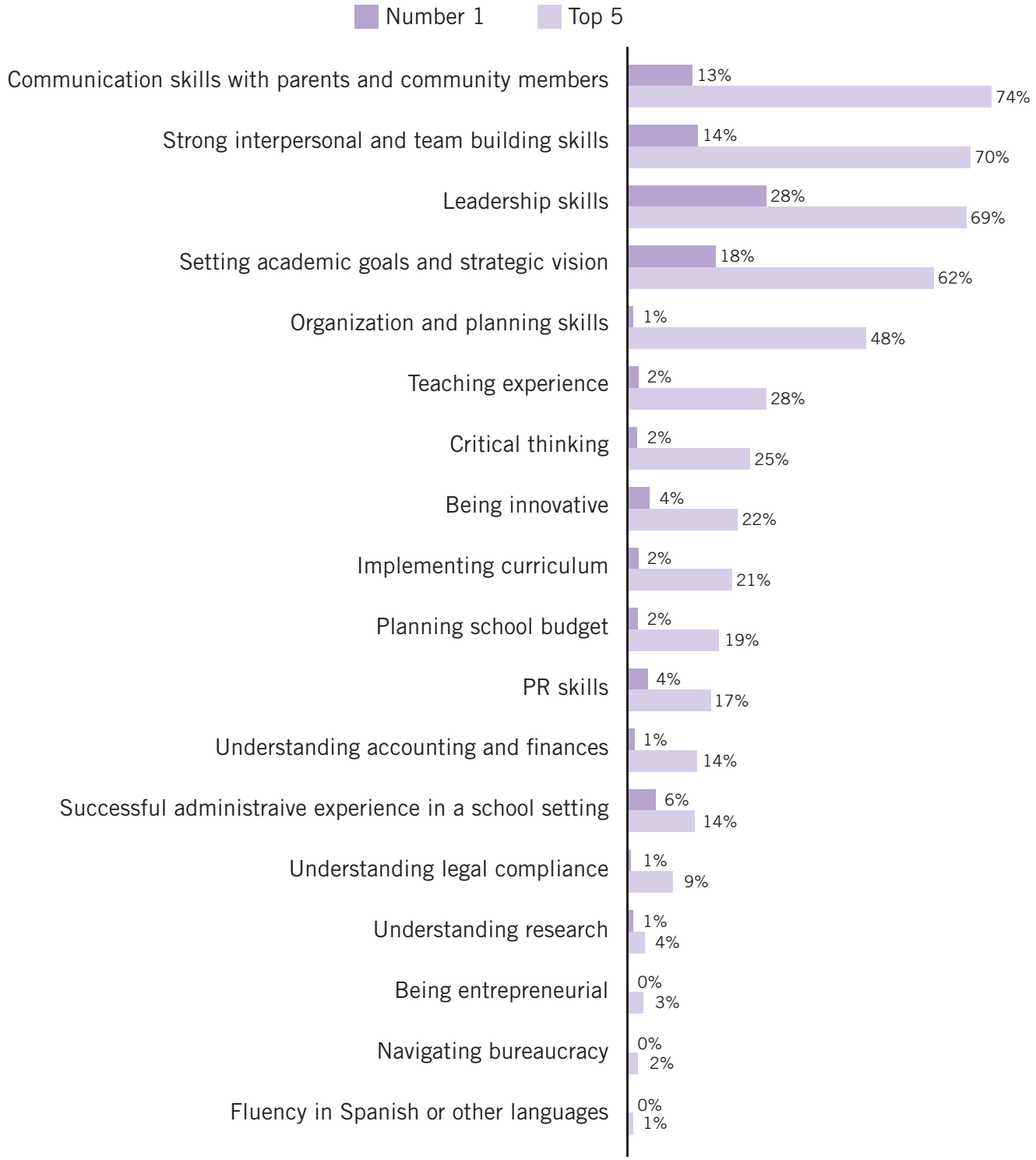
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018).

FIGURE 1 "Which of the following do you believe are the most important skills to being a principal/teacher at a private school?" (Teachers)



Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q34.

FIGURE 2 "Which of the following do you believe are the most important skills to being a principal/teacher at a private school?" (Administrators)



Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q34.

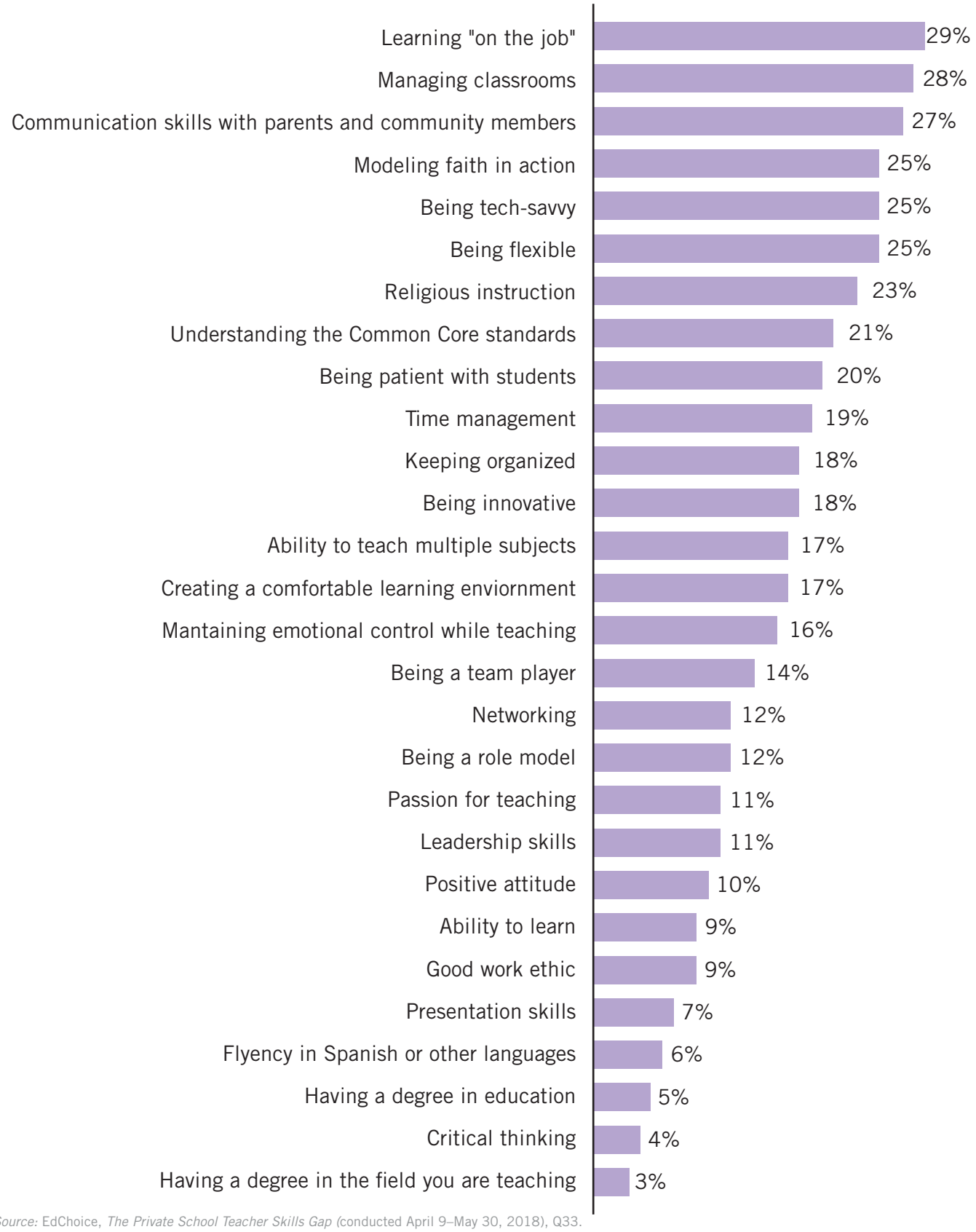
TABLE 3 School Actions for New Hires

	Count	Percentage
What training opportunities are typically provided for a newly hired principal/teacher at your school? Please select all that apply.		
Professional Development Workshops or events	273	69
School-subsidized training (the school provides money for teachers to seek training elsewhere such as at a university)	106	27
Continued education (school has partnered with a college or university to provide credits to the teacher's education)	102	26
Training period where they observe and assist other teachers for a few months before teaching	58	15
Other in-school training	183	46
Other	41	10
None	42	11
n=396		
How long do you expect the training period to be for a newly hired principal/teacher?		
Fewer than 3 months	82	23
3–6 months	61	17
6 months to a year	156	44
More than a year	55	16
n=354		
What type of professional development opportunities do you think would be useful for a principal/teacher that is newly hired? Please select all that apply.		
Parental engagement	229	59
Classroom management	224	57
Team-building techniques	200	51
Leadership skills	192	49
Student-centered learning	172	44
Subject area development (e.g., English development, Mathematics development)	147	38
Marketing*	85	22
Legal compliance*	82	21
Religious education*	47	12
Other	21	5
I don't know	12	3
n=391		
What is the estimated cost of training newly hired teachers? (Only administrators responded to this item.)		
Fewer than $500 per teacher	31	30
$500 to $999 per teacher	43	42
$1,000 to $1,499 per teacher	14	14
$1,500 to $1,999 per teacher	6	6
$2,000 to $2,499 per teacher	2	2
$2,500 per teacher or more	7	7
n=103		

Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q21 and Q46.

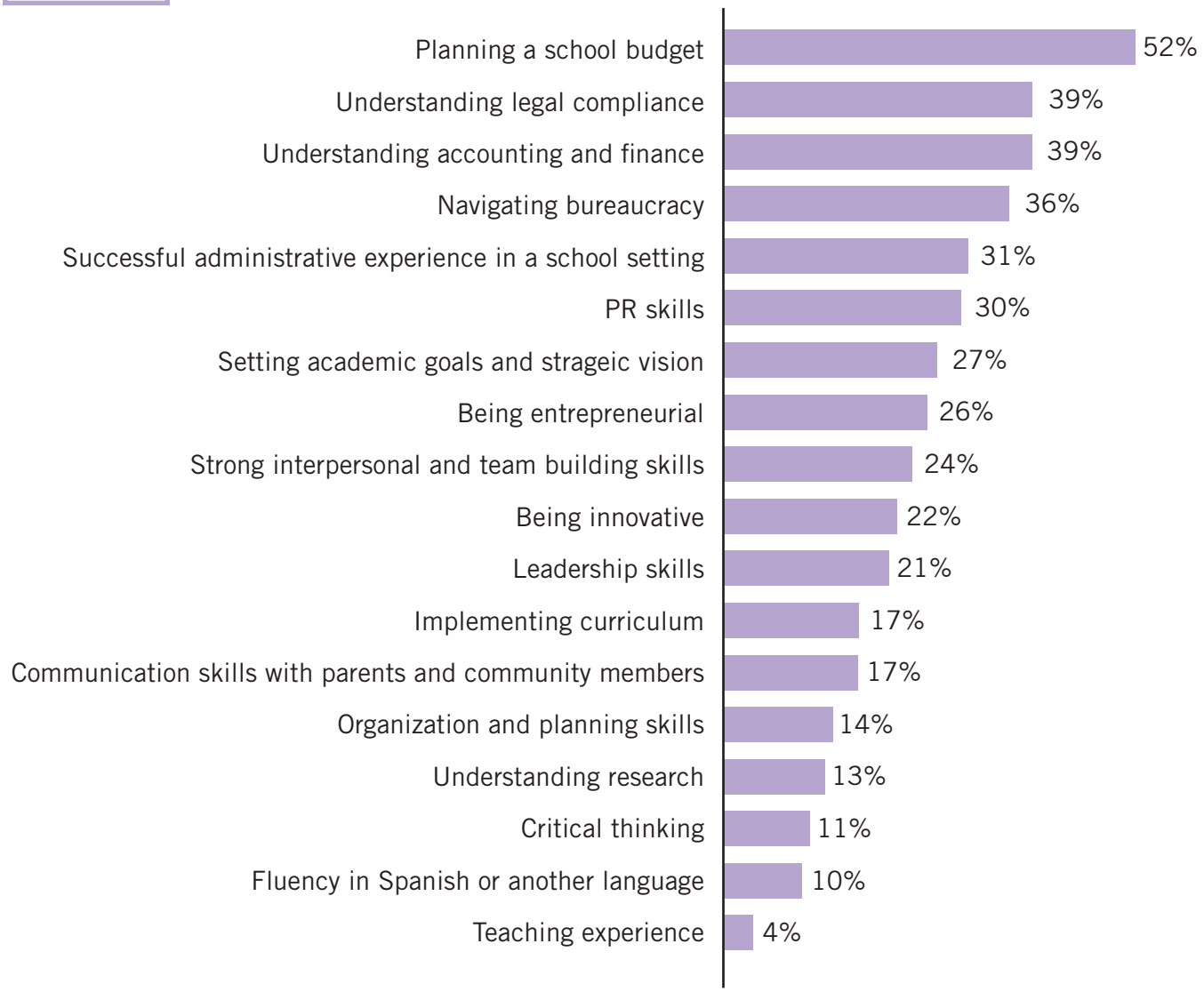
* administrators

FIGURE 3 "Which of these skills, if any, did you have to learn while being a leader/teacher at a private school?" (Teachers)



Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q33.

FIGURE 4 "Which of these skills, if any, did you have to learn while being a leader/teacher at a private school?" (Administrators)



Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q10.

TABLE 4 Further Training Opportunities

	Count	Percentage
In what ways would you like to receive further training to become a better leader/teacher at your private school? Please select all that apply.		
Professional development workshops or events	266	78
Online courses (e.g., webinars)	186	54
Continuing education (school partners with a college or university to provide formal credit hours)	171	50
School-subsidized training (the school provides money to seek training elsewhere, such as a university)	160	47
Other types of in-school training (e.g., coaching)	119	35
I have no preference	18	5
Other	2	1

Note: n=343
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q24 and Q49.

TABLE 5 Pre-Service Preparation

Did you receive any formal teacher training prior to becoming a principal/teacher?

Answers	Count	Percentage
Yes, through a School of Education.	193	48
Yes, through a School of Education at a college or university.	90	22
Yes, but I did not go through a traditional education route.	49	12
No, I did not receive any formal teacher training.	72	18
n=404		

Which of the following training have you received at a School of Education? Please select all that apply.

Answers	Count	Percentage
Certificate in education	74	26
Associate's degree in education	12	4
Bachelor's degree in education	192	68
Master's degree in education	128	45
Other	27	10
n=282		

Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q13–15 and Q36–Q40.

TABLE 5 Pre-Service Preparation (cont.)

How helpful were the following programs in preparing you to lead a private school?

Answers	Count	Percentage
Certificate in education (n=74)		
Not at All Helpful	4	5
Slightly Helpful	4	5
Moderately Helpful	18	24
Very Helpful	21	28
Extremely Helpful	27	36
Associate's degree in education (n=12)		
Not at All Helpful	0	0
Slightly Helpful	2	17
Moderately Helpful	3	25
Very Helpful	4	33
Extremely Helpful	3	25
Bachelor's degree in education (n=192)		
Not at All Helpful	3	2
Slightly Helpful	7	4
Moderately Helpful	27	14
Very Helpful	70	36
Extremely Helpful	85	44
Master's degree in education (n=128)		
Not at All Helpful	2	2
Slightly Helpful	6	5
Moderately Helpful	23	18
Very Helpful	43	34
Extremely Helpful	54	42
Other (n=27)		
Not at All Helpful	0	0
Slightly Helpful	1	4
Moderately Helpful	5	19
Very Helpful	7	26
Extremely Helpful	14	52

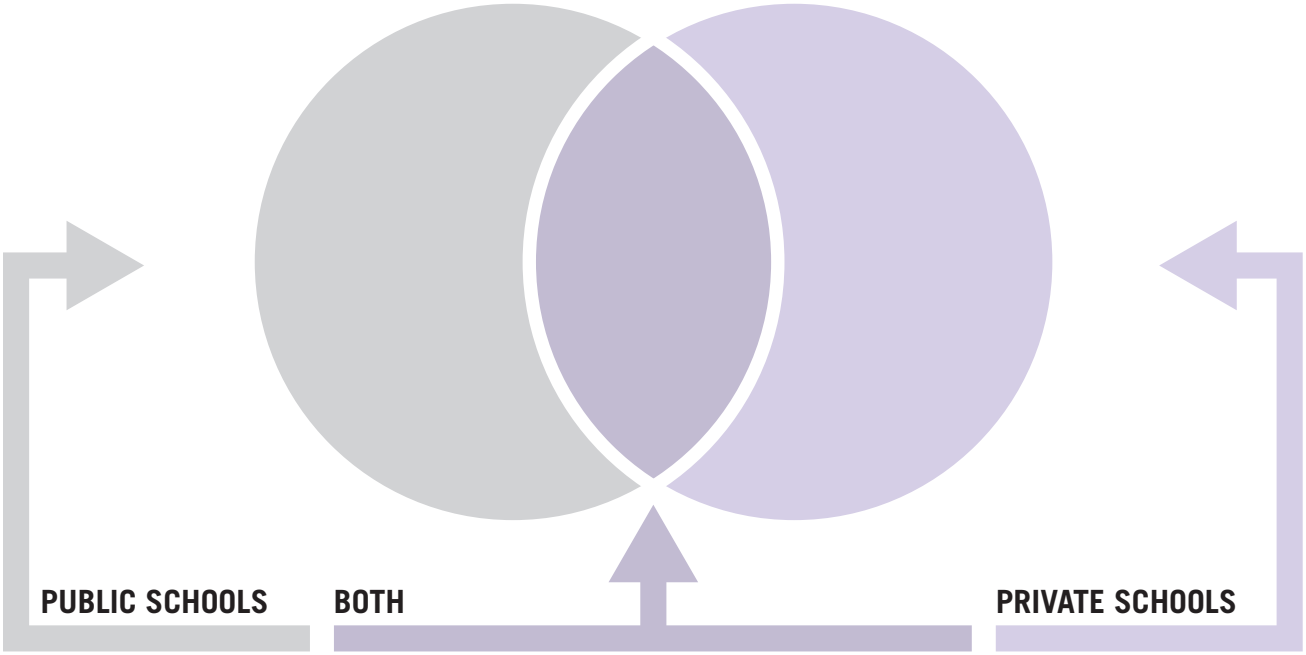
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q13–15 and Q36–Q40.

TABLE 6 Attributes and Skills

Skill	Much more important in a public school	Somewhat more important in a public school	Equally important	Somewhat more important in a private school	Much more important in a private school	n=	Top 2
Religious instruction*	2%	0%	10%	14%	74%	133	88%
Being entreprenurial**	0%	3%	21%	30%	46%	70	76%
Modeling faith in action*	1%	1%	29%	17%	50%	143	67%
Understanding accounting and finance**	0%	4%	42%	20%	34%	71	54%
Planning school budget**	0%	1%	46%	27%	26%	70	53%
PR skills**	1%	3%	46%	20%	30%	71	50%
Ability to teach multiple subjects*	1%	3%	52%	27%	16%	151	43%
Passion for teaching*	1%	1%	90%	30%	4%	157	34%
Understanding legal compliance**	7%	8%	56%	14%	14%	71	28%
Being innovative	1%	2%	70%	18%	9%	228	27%
Navigating bureaucracy**	17%	29%	27%	11%	16%	70	27%
Communication skills	0%	3%	73%	13%	11%	227	24%
Being flexible*	1%	4%	73%	14%	8%	157	22%
Setting academic goals and strategic vision**	0%	4%	75%	13%	8%	71	21%
Being a team player*	3%	2%	78%	14%	4%	157	18%
Leadership skills	1%	2%	80%	10%	7%	228	17%
Implementing curriculum**	1%	1%	82%	6%	10%	71	16%
Interpersonal and team building skills**	0%	0%	85%	6%	10%	71	16%
Being a role model*	1%	1%	83%	9%	7%	157	16%
Networking*	3%	9%	71%	13%	3%	156	16%
Good work ethic*	1%	1%	87%	8%	4%	157	12%
Critical thinking	0%	3%	86%	7%	4%	228	11%
Administrative experience**	0%	10%	79%	3%	8%	71	11%
Being tech-savvy*	3%	6%	82%	4%	6%	157	10%
Organization and planning skills**	0%	1%	90%	6%	3%	71	9%
Learning "on-the-job"*	2%	3%	86%	6%	3%	154	9%
Teaching experience**	1%	3%	87%	4%	4%	70	8%
Understanding research**	1%	10%	80%	4%	4%	71	8%
Positive attitude*	1%	0%	90%	4%	4%	157	8%
Ability to listen*	0%	2%	91%	4%	3%	156	7%
Creating a comfortable learning enviornment*	3%	4%	87%	4%	3%	157	7%
Presentation skills*	2%	3%	89%	5%	1%	156	6%
Being patient with students*	2%	4%	88%	4%	2%	157	6%
Time management*	1%	3%	89%	4%	2%	156	6%
Managing classrooms*	3%	15%	77%	2%	3%	157	5%
Having a degree in the field he/she is teaching*	12%	12%	73%	3%	1%	155	4%
Keeping organized*	1%	2%	93%	3%	1%	156	4%
Flunecy in Spanish or other languages	13%	30%	54%	2%	1%	176	3%
Having a degree in education*	8%	16%	74%	1%	1%	154	2%
Maintainging emotional control while teaching*	4%	4%	90%	1%	1%	156	2%
Having teaching certification*	13%	14%	72%	1%	0%	157	1%
Understanding Common Core standards*	29%	22%	49%	0%	0%	154	0%

Notes: *Denotes question asked only to teachers, **denotes question asked only to administrators
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q18 and Q43.

FIGURE 5 Public and Private School Skills Overlap



PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Fluency in Spanish
- Understanding the Common Core

BOTH

- Being Innovative
- Communication Skills
- Critical Thinking
- Implementing Curriculum
- Leadership Skills
- Organization and Planning Skills
- Setting Goal and Vision
- Administrative Experience
- Teaching Experience
- Legal Compliance
- Understanding Research
- Ability to Listen
- Acting as a Role Model
- Being a Team Player
- Flexibility
- Patience
- Tech Savviness
- Work Ethic
- Creating a Comfortable Learning Enviorment

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

- Being Entrepreneurial
- Budgeting
- PR Skills
- Accounting and Finance
- Teaching Multiple Subjects
- Modeling Faith in Action
- Religious Instruction

TABLE 7 Responsibilities

Responsibility	Not at all different to a public school	Slighly different to a public school	Moderately different to a public school	Very different to a public school	Completely different to a public school	n=	Top 2
Act a a faith leader**	2%	0%	5%	13%	80%	61	93%
Ensure parents pay tuition**	1%	4%	3%	4%	87%	67	91%
Teaching religious values*	4%	1%	4%	27%	64%	138	91%
Attract students to enroll**	0%	7%	4%	19%	69%	67	88%
Bring in endowment, grants, or charitable donations**	6%	3%	9%	26%	56%	66	82%
Establish admission requirements for students**	12%	7%	10%	19%	51%	67	70%
Issue press releases and advertising**	9%	11%	18%	26%	36%	66	62%
Manage school budget**	16%	22%	16%	15%	30%	67	45%
Manage class sizes**	24%	12%	19%	22%	22%	67	44%
Represent the schoo/meet with community members**	19%	22%	15%	26%	18%	68	44%
Serve ESL students*	27%	11%	22%	22%	19%	142	41%
Manage school support services**	9%	28%	22%	16%	24%	67	40%
Involve parents to volunteer at the school	25%	16%	19%	21%	18%	216	39%
Recruit well-qualified teachers with subject expertise**	38%	13%	12%	18%	19%	68	37%
Discipline students	25%	18%	25%	17%	16%	219	33%
Set goals, beliefes, and expectations for the school**	41%	10%	16%	15%	18%	68	33%
Create reports	34%	21%	7%	18%	14%	68	32%
Create a sense of community	38%	16%	14%	18%	14%	219	32%
Address needs of at-risk students*	36%	14%	18%	17%	15%	151	32%
Encourage parent and community involvement*	33%	17%	19%	23%	9%	151	32%
Establish and design curriculum	32%	16%	21%	17%	14%	218	31%
Select textbooks and other materials*	30%	16%	24%	17%	14%	148	31%
Provide fellowships or internships to qualified college graduates**	38%	21%	11%	6%	25%	53	31%
Counsel students*	35%	14%	21%	19%	11%	150	30%
Establish graduation requirements**	34%	26%	12%	9%	19%	58	28%
Provide career advancement opporunities to teachers**	36%	23%	14%	11%	17%	66	28%
Shape a vision of academic success**	42%	19%	12%	9%	18%	67	27%
Contribute to extra-curricular activities*	36%	15%	22%	13%	14%	147	27%
Develop organization structures**	47%	9%	18%	11%	15%	66	26%
Handle teacher attritition**	40%	16%	19%	7%	18%	68	25%
Work with students from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds*	34%	17%	24%	14%	11%	149	25%
Contribute to student support services*	38%	14%	24%	16%	8%	146	24%
Solve conflicts among students*	41%	18%	17%	15%	9%	148	24%
Collect and analysis data to support student learning**	46%	18%	13%	13%	10%	68	23%
Deal with conflicts among teachers or students**	46%	15%	16%	13%	10%	68	23%
Delegate responsibilities**	42%	18%	16%	10%	13%	67	23%
Select content, topics, skills to be taught*	41%	14%	22%	14%	9%	150	23%
Design learning improvement agenda**	40%	16%	22%	12%	9%	67	21%

Notes: *Denotes question asked only to teachers, **denotes question asked only to administrators
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q19 and Q44.

TABLE 7 Responsibilities (cont.)

Responsibility	Not at all different to a public school	Slighly different to a public school	Moderately different to a public school	Very different to a public school	Completely different to a public school	n=	Top 2
Create a comfortable learning enviornment	53%	18%	9%	13%	7%	68	20%
Inform parents about student performance, behavior, and attendance	46%	18%	16%	12%	8%	217	20%
Developing PD opportunities**	38%	21%	22%	12%	7%	68	19%
Comply with laws and regulations**	49%	13%	18%	7%	12%	67	19%
Handle student bullying*	39%	21%	21%	13%	6%	148	19%
Provide training to other teachers*	50%	15%	15%	13%	6%	143	19%
Select teaching techiques*	51%	20%	10%	13%	6%	147	19%
Deal with issues among colleagues*	52%	17%	13%	11%	7%	146	18%
Participate in department and school meetings*	56%	14%	11%	11%	7%	149	18%
Participate in professional development*	44%	18%	21%	11%	7%	150	18%
Write reports*	45%	18%	18%	11%	7%	150	18%
Create exams, class work, assignments, and homework*	56%	12%	15%	10%	7%	150	17%
Supervise students*	48%	19%	16%	11%	6%	151	17%
Encourage staff collaboration**	51%	19%	13%	10%	6%	68	16%
Ensure suitable working conditions**	56%	10%	18%	7%	9%	68	16%
Maintain school safety**	62%	12%	10%	9%	7%	68	16%
Provide feedback to teachers on performance**	54%	21%	9%	10%	6%	68	16%
Inform parents on how to help students with homework*	51%	15%	18%	11%	5%	150	16%
Provide academic and instructional guidance**	59%	16%	10%	9%	6%	68	15%
Establish and communicate academic objectives*	59%	14%	13%	9%	5%	150	14%
Evaluate and grade students*	57%	14%	15%	9%	5%	150	14%
Update records to comply with regulations and policies*	55%	16%	15%	9%	5%	148	14%
Supervise teachers and staff**	51%	26%	9%	7%	6%	68	13%
Maintain records of students' progress and development*	57%	15%	15%	10%	3%	148	13%
Plan lessons*	56%	16%	15%	10%	3%	151	13%
Provide a variety of learning materials*	53%	15%	18%	10%	3%	149	13%
Recognize staff for good work**	63%	12%	13%	4%	7%	68	11%
Setting expectations and goals*	58%	15%	17%	6%	5%	149	11%
Visit classrooms to ensure teaching quality**	63%	16%	10%	4%	6%	68	10%
Provide feedback to students*	65%	11%	16%	5%	3%	150	8%

Notes: *Denotes question asked only to teachers, **denotes question asked only to administrators
Source: EdChoice, *The Private School Teacher Skills Gap* (conducted April 9–May 30, 2018), Q19 and Q44.

APPENDIX

Survey Project and Profile

Title:	The Private School Teacher Skills Gap
Survey Funder:	EdChoice
Survey Data Collection and Quality Control:	Hanover Research
Interview Dates:	April 9 to May 30, 2018
Sample Frames:	Self-generated lists of private school educators in Arizona, Iowa, and South Carolina
Sampling Method:	Online, non-probability-based sample. Opt-in panel.
Language(s):	English
Interview Method:	Online
Interview Length:	16 min, 7 Seconds (Median length)
Sample Size:	3,720
Response Rate:	12.0%
Weighting:	None
Oversampling:	None
Project Contact:	Michael McShane, mcshane@edchoice.org

The author is responsible for overall survey design; question wording and ordering; this report's analysis, charts, and writing; and any unintentional errors or misrepresentations.

EdChoice is the survey's sponsor and sole funder at the time of publication.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Michael Q. McShane

Michael Q. McShane serves as the director of national research at EdChoice.

In addition to his work at EdChoice, he is currently an opinion contributor to Forbes, and his analyses and commentary have been published widely in the media, including in USA Today, The Washington Post, and National Affairs. He has also been featured in education-specific outlets such as Teachers College Record, Education Week, Phi Delta Kappan, and Education Next. In addition to authoring numerous white papers, McShane has had academic work published in Education Finance and Policy, The Handbook of Education Politics and Policy, and the Journal of School Choice.

He is the editor of *New and Better Schools* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2015), the author of *Education and Opportunity* (AEI Press, 2014), and coeditor of *Bush-Obama School Reform: Lessons Learned* (Harvard Education Press 2018), *No Longer Forgotten: The Triumphs and Struggles of Rural Education in America* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), *Failure Up Close: What Happens, Why it Happens, and What We Can Learn from It* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2018), *Educational Entrepreneurship Today* (Harvard Education Press, 2016), *Teacher Quality 2.0* (Harvard Education Press, 2014) and *Common Core Meets Education Reform* (Teachers College Press, 2013).

A former high school teacher, he earned a Ph.D. in education policy from the University of Arkansas, an M.Ed. from the University of Notre Dame, and a B.A. in English from St. Louis University. He is also an adjunct fellow in education policy studies at the American Enterprise Institute and a senior fellow at the Show-Me Institute.

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