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The Early Childhood Education Workforce in Jefferson Parish, Louisiana: Findings from the 2018 Early Childhood Workforce Survey

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

Decades of research indicate that high-quality early care and education (ECE) can have a profound impact on a range of both short- and long-term outcomes. Early educators are the most critical driver of quality in ECE settings. It is therefore troubling that the ECE workforce in the United States is characterized by low levels of education, little training related to children's development, very low pay and, in turn, high levels of poverty, stress, and turnover. There are now widespread calls for bold new strategies to ensure the ECE workforce has access to the training and resources needed to provide young children with warm, responsive early learning opportunities.

Despite this growing interest and investment, there is surprisingly little information available about the lives and professional experiences of the ECE workforce. It is particularly uncommon to have comparable information about the workforce across the diverse types of publicly-funded ECE settings including subsidized child care, Head Start, and school-based pre-kindergarten.

To fill this gap, in the fall of 2018, a team at the University of Virginia (UVA), in partnership with the Early Childhood Office at the Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE), collected survey data as a part of the Study of Early Education in Louisiana (SEE-LA). Through this collaboration, every assistant teacher, lead teacher, and site leader in publicly-funded sites in Jefferson Parish was invited to participate in the voluntary SEE-LA Workforce Survey. The survey asked teachers and leaders about key early childhood quality improvement efforts in their communities, including classroom observations using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which is an observation-based assessment tool that measures the quality of adult-child interactions in the classroom (CLASS, Pianta, La Paro, & Hamre, 2008) and the focus of Louisiana's Quality Rating Information System; as well as curricula, site resources, professional development, job satisfaction, and personal wellbeing. Together these categories encapsulate much of an early childhood educator's professional experiences in Louisiana.

The surveys were distributed both online and on paper to ensure widespread access. In Jefferson Parish, surveys were received from 676 assistant and lead teachers, representing approximately 82% of the teachers in these settings; and from 81 site leaders, representing 66% of the ECE sites in Jefferson Parish. These unusually high response rates offer an unprecedented look at the experiences of nearly the entire universe of early educators working in publicly-funded early childhood settings in Jefferson.

Jefferson is the second largest parishes in Louisiana. It was selected for this "deep dive" into the early childhood workforce because of its diverse early childhood landscape and commitment to improving the quality of early childhood education. In Jefferson Parish, 27% of children live in poverty, a number that exceeds the national average, and a high proportion of families receive means-tested services (US Census Bureau, 2019). In 2018, Jefferson was about 53% White, 28% Black, 15.5% Hispanic, and 4% Asian. (US Census Bureau, 2018).

This report summarizes key findings from the SEE-LA Workforce Survey. Section 1 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the ECE workforce in Jefferson. Section 2 describes site materials and curricula. Section 3 addresses teachers' experiences with professional development. Section 4 examines teachers' use of, and attitudes about, CLASS. Section 5 looks at ECE site leadership, including leaders' self-reports of their management practices as well as teachers' perspectives on their leaders. Section 6 describes compensation and supports for the ECE workforce. Section 7 describes the workforce's emotional and financial wellbeing. Finally, section 8 examines hiring, teacher turnover, and job satisfaction. In each section, we first present overall patterns, and then highlight how results vary across site types (i.e., subsidized child care sites, Head Starts, and school-based pre-kindergarten[1]). We discuss workforce characteristics across roles (i.e., assistant teachers[2], lead teachers[3], and site leaders[4]), but the bulk of the main body of this report focuses primarily on the experiences of lead teachers and, as applicable, site leaders. Additional information about early educators in other roles—primarily assistant teachers—is available in the Appendix, which begins on page 66.

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[1] Nonpublic schools were also included in our sample as schools. For parsimony we use the term school or school-based to encompass both public and nonpublic schools.

[2] Assistant teachers include teaching aides and paraprofessionals. They are defined as any teacher who does not serve as the main teacher or one of the main co-teachers of a classroom.

[3] Lead teachers are the primary caretaker or instructor in their classroom. This may include co-teachers who both identify as the leader of the classroom.

[4] Site leaders include site directors, school principals, assistant directors, assistant principals, educational coordinators, and site supervisors.

Section 1: Workforce Characteristics

This section describes the early childhood workforce in Jefferson Parish, including assistant teachers, lead teachers, and site leaders. It begins with basic demographic information – such as age, gender, and race – and then describes the workforce's education and experience. Throughout the report, we examine three early childhood site types: child care centers (restricted to sites receiving public funding, such as child cares subsidies through the Child Care Assistance Program), Head Start (including Early Head Start) sites, and public and nonpublic schools with pre-kindergarten classrooms.

Demographics

Table 1 shows basic demographic characteristics of the early childhood education workforce. The overwhelming majority of early childhood educators are female. Roughly half of lead teachers and site leaders are white, and a somewhat lower percentage of assistant teachers are white (43%).

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	Site Leaders
Average Age	44.1	43.6	47.7
% Female	98.2	98.5	96.3
% White	43.1	48.5	50.0
% Black	47.7	41.8	44.9
% Hispanic	5.5	5.6	1.3
% Other / Multiracial	3.7	4.0	3.8

The average age of lead teachers varied across site types. On average, Head Start lead teachers were 50 years old, approximately five years older than lead teachers in schools and eight years older than child care lead teachers (Table 2). Assistant teachers were somewhat older than lead teachers on average, however this difference is driven entirely by assistant teachers in schools. In both child care and Head Start settings lead teachers are on average older than assistant teachers. Overall, site leaders were the oldest group.

Table 2. Mean Age of Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	Schools	Entire Sample
Assistant Teachers	37.1	42.3	47.8	44.1
Lead Teachers	41.4	49.6	44.7	43.6
Site Leaders	47.6	45.4	48.2	47.8

There were also stark differences in the racial composition of lead teachers across site types. Figure 1 indicates that lead teachers in child care sites were moderately more likely to be Black than White. In contrast, the vast majority of Head Start lead teachers (89%) were Black, while nearly 70% of school-based pre-kindergarten teachers were White.

Figure 1. Lead Teacher Race/Ethnicity by Site Type
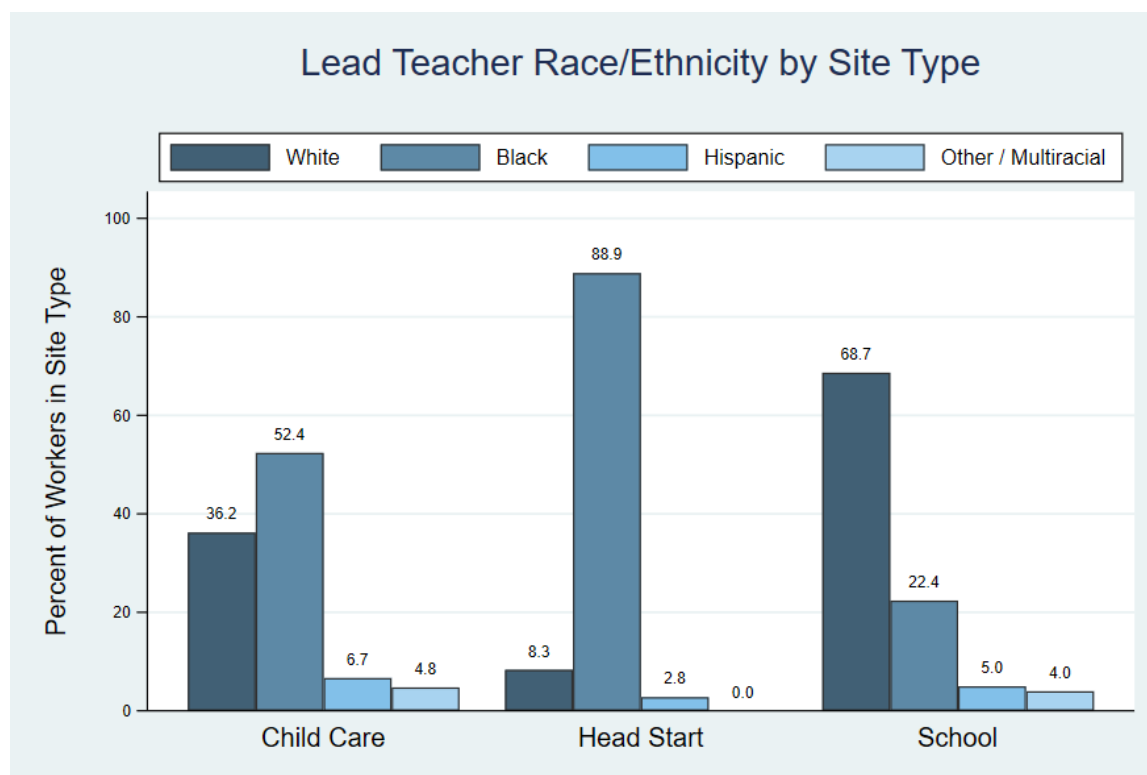
Although the ECE workforce is often characterized by high levels of turnover, in the current sample both assistant and lead teachers had been in their current positions for an average of six years, and site leaders had been in their positions even longer (8.2 years). Lead teachers and site leaders reported approximately a decade of experience in early childhood education (Table 3).

Table 3. Years of Work Experience of Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	Site Leaders
Current Position	6.1	6.3	8.2
ECE Field	9.0	11.4	10.6

As illustrated in Table 4, however, lead teachers at child care sites had significantly fewer years of experience than Head Start teachers: 5.5 years fewer experience in their current position and about four years fewer experience in the ECE field.

Table 4. Years of Work Experience of Lead Teachers by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	School	Entire Sample
Current Position	5.1	11.6	7.5	6.5
ECE Field	10.7	14.9	14.1	12.7

Training and Education

Teacher training and education are often viewed as key policy levers for supporting ECE teachers. In the SEE-LA sample, site leaders had much higher levels of education than both assistant and lead teachers. As shown in Table 5, approximately 53% of site leaders held a graduate degree, compared to only 2% of assistant teachers and about 17% of lead teachers. Further, while nearly 70% of site leaders had at least a Bachelor's degree, only 13% of assistant teachers and 50% of lead teachers held a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Table 5. Highest Level of Education of Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders

	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	Site Leaders
High School Diploma or Less	26.4%	18.6%	5.1%
Some College	38.5%	19.7%	16.5%
Associate Degree	21.6%	11.1%	8.9%
Bachelor's Degree	10.6%	34.1%	16.5%
Graduate Degree	2.3%	16.5%	53.2%
	100%	100%	100%

Figure 2 compares lead teachers' education levels across site types. Child care teachers had the lowest levels of educational attainment. About 75% of these teachers had not attained a post-secondary degree. Only about 14% of child care lead teachers held a Bachelor's degree or higher, as compared to about 40%

of Head Start teachers. On average, lead teachers at schools had the highest level of education; as expected based on state credentialing requirements, the vast majority - almost 91% - held at least a bachelor's degree.

Figure 2. Lead Teacher Highest Level of Education by Site Type
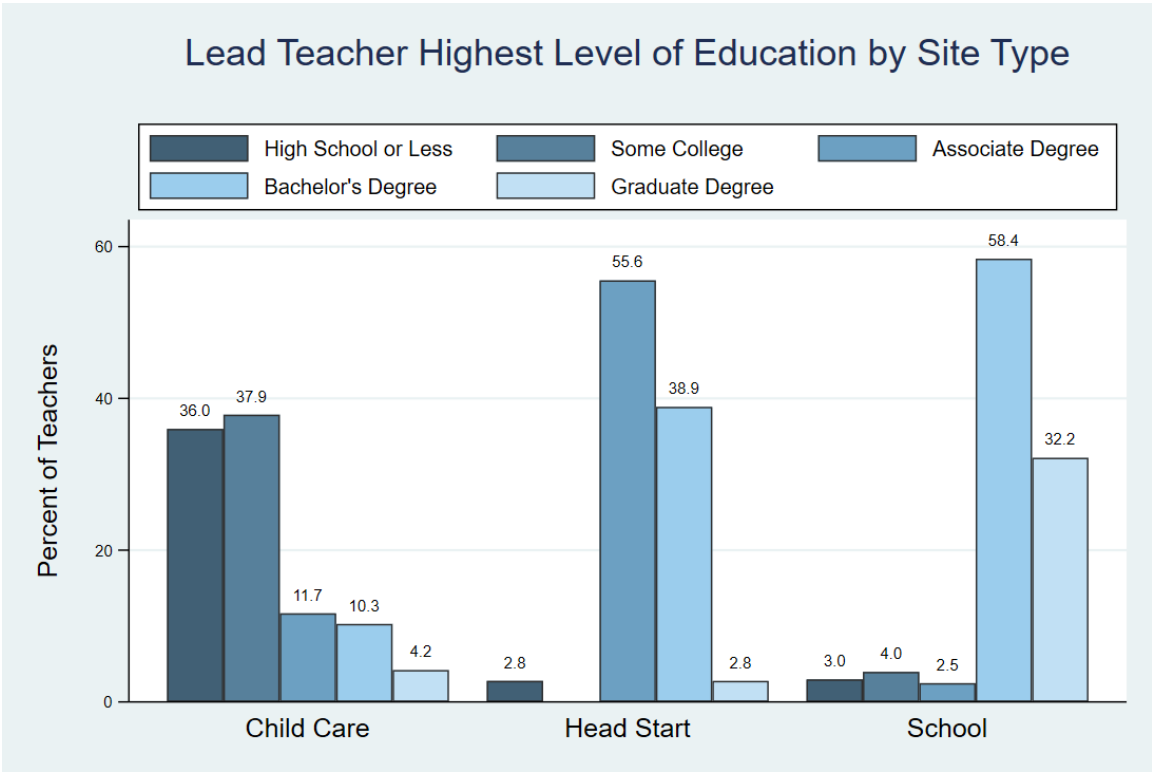

Table 6 highlights the significant differences in the educational attainment of the ECE workforce both by role and site type (i.e., child care (CC), Head Start (HS), and schools). Patterns for assistant teachers and site leaders largely mirrored those observed among lead teachers: on average, both assistant teachers and site leaders in child care sites had considerably lower levels of educational attainment than their counterparts at Head Start sites and in school-based pre-kindergarten classrooms. For instance, only 14% of site leaders in child care sites held a graduate degree as compared to 92% of school-based site leaders.

Table 6. Highest Level of Education by Role and Site Type

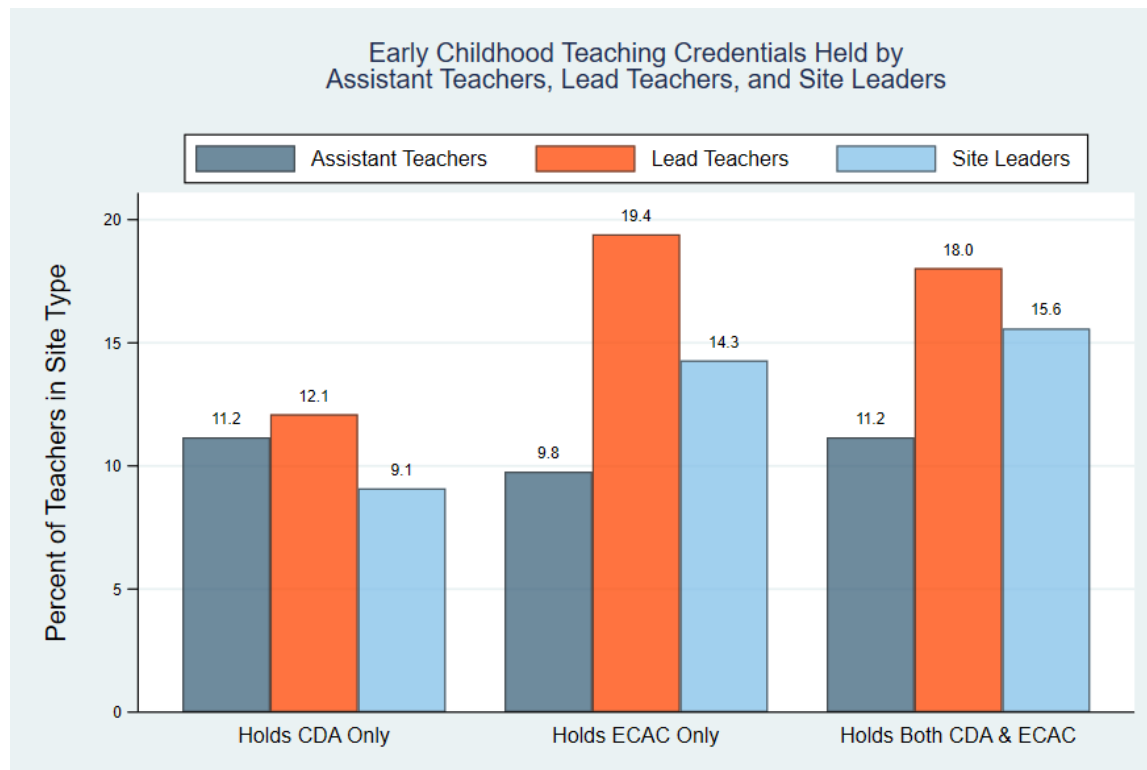|	Assistant Teachers			Lead Teachers			Site Leaders		
	CC	HS	School	CC	HS	School	CC	HS	School
High School Diploma or Less	43%	18%	21%	36%	3%	2%	12%	0%	0%
Some College	38%	50%	36%	38%	0%	4%	31%	20%	3%
Associate Degree	8%	21%	28%	12%	56%	2%	20%	0%	0%
Bachelor's Degree	10%	7%	12%	11%	38%	60%	23%	60%	5%
Graduate Degree	1%	4%	3%	3%	3%	32%	14%	20%	92%
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Early Childhood Teaching Credentials

In 2014, Louisiana enacted a new policy requiring that all lead teachers in child care sites that receive public funding must attain a new educational credential called the Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) by July of 2019. The large number of Louisiana child care teachers who did not already have a college degree could meet the requirements of the new policy either by demonstrating that they already held a Child Development Associate (CDA), or by attaining the ECAC from a state-approved training program.

A Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education in the United States. To receive the CDA credential, an individual must pass an exam, receive at least 120 hours of training, complete 480 hours of professional experience with the relevant age group (infant/toddler or preschool), and receive a formal teaching observation conducted by an observer from the Council for Professional Recognition. The CDA is seen as a means of professionalizing the early childhood education workforce, particularly for workers in private child care.

State-approved Early Childhood Ancillary Certificate (ECAC) programs combine typical CDA requirements with a more explicit focus on teacher-child interactions, as well as purposeful opportunities for the practice, mentoring, and coaching teachers need to effectively support young children. By requiring these supports, the ECAC aims to provide training that is well-aligned – in both content and format – with best practices for effective professional development for early educators.

Figure 3 shows that a modest portion of assistant teachers, lead teachers, and site leaders in the sample held either a CDA or an ECAC, or both.

Figure 3. Early Childhood Credentials by Role

Early Childhood Teaching Credentials Held by
Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders

Among lead teachers, who were more likely to hold an early childhood teaching credential than either assistant teachers or site leaders, there were substantial differences across site types. Figure 4 indicates that Head Start lead teachers were most likely to hold a CDA or ECAC (94%), as compared to 58% of child care lead teachers and 33% of lead teachers in schools.

Figure 4. Early Childhood Teaching Credentials: Lead Teachers by Site Type

Early Childhood Teaching Credentials: Lead Teachers by Site Type
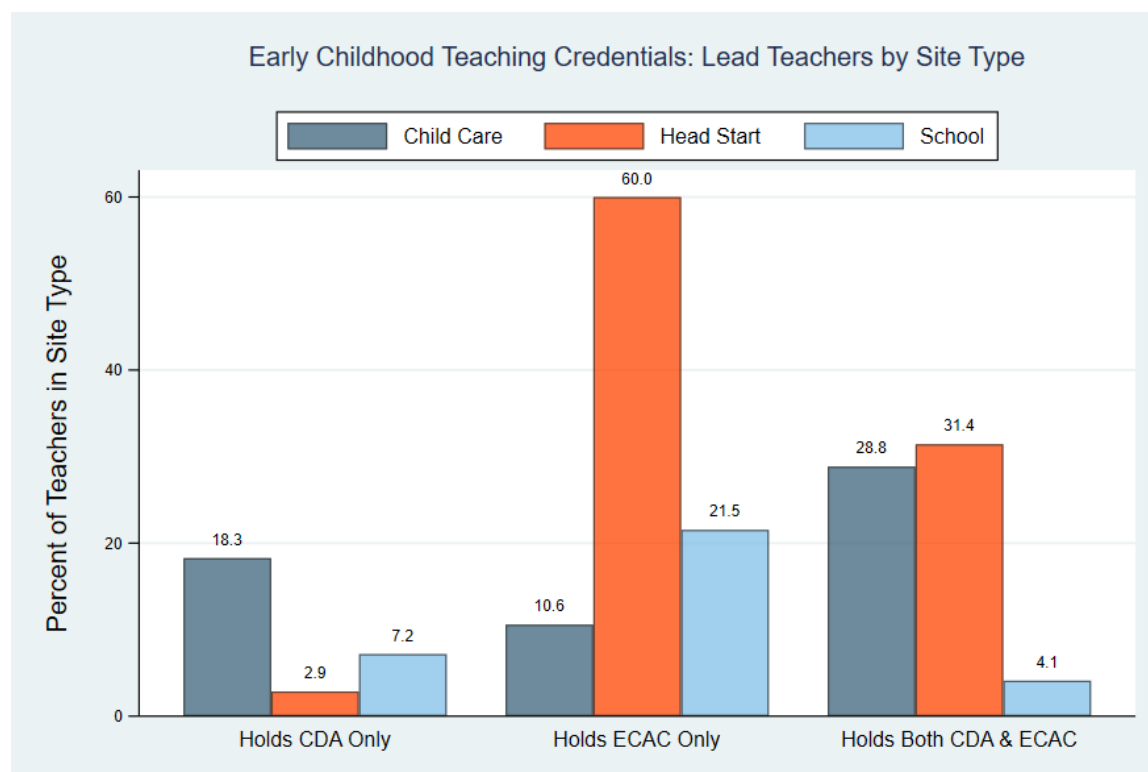
Section 2: Classroom Materials & Curriculum

This section examines lead teachers' perspectives of their classroom resources, including learning materials and curricula.

Materials

Lead teachers were asked to report whether their site had enough basic supplies and resources (e.g. paper, pencils, markers, copy machines, etc.), enough high-quality materials for teaching and learning (e.g. books, manipulatives, blocks, etc.), and sufficient Internet access. Figures 5, 6, and 7 illustrate that perceived access to resources differed by site type: across all three questions, Head Start teachers consistently reported the greatest need.

Figure 5 shows that about 44% of child care lead teachers "strongly agree" that they had access to sufficient basic supplies, compared to 27% of teachers in schools and 14% of Head Start teachers. Nearly half of Head Start teachers and over one-quarter of school teachers "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that their site is adequately stocked with basic supplies.

Figure 5. My Program Has Enough Basic Supplies: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
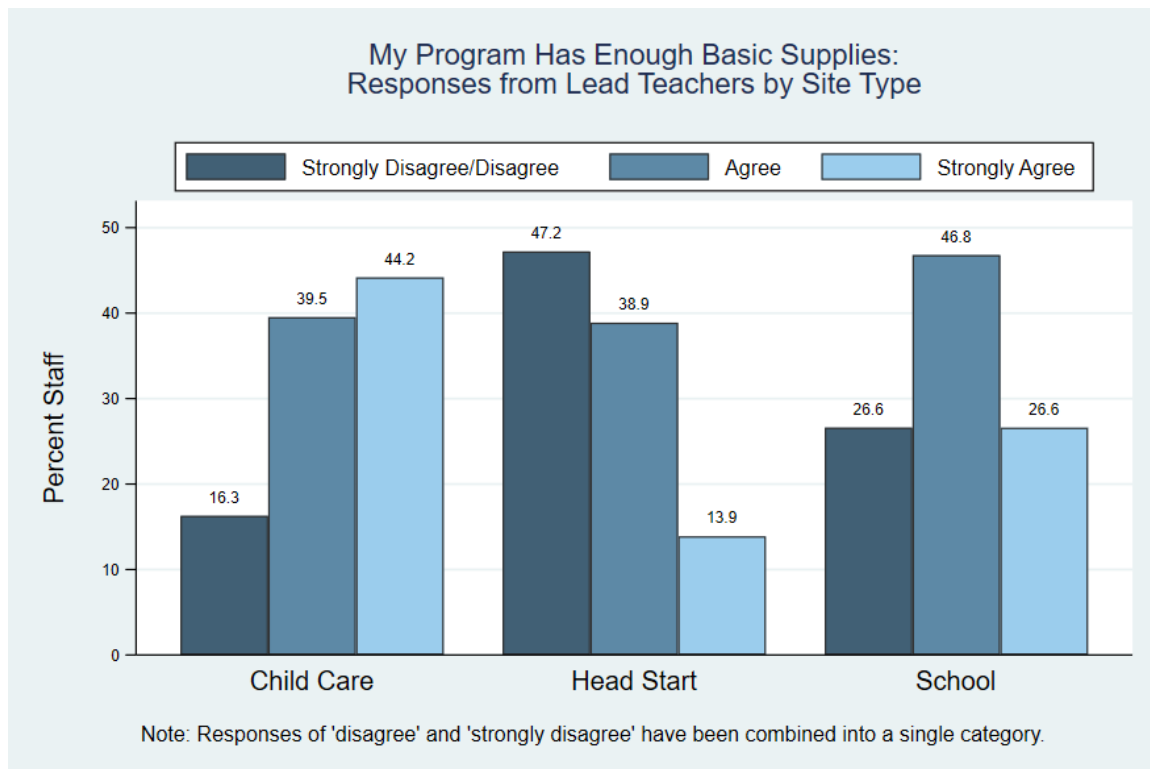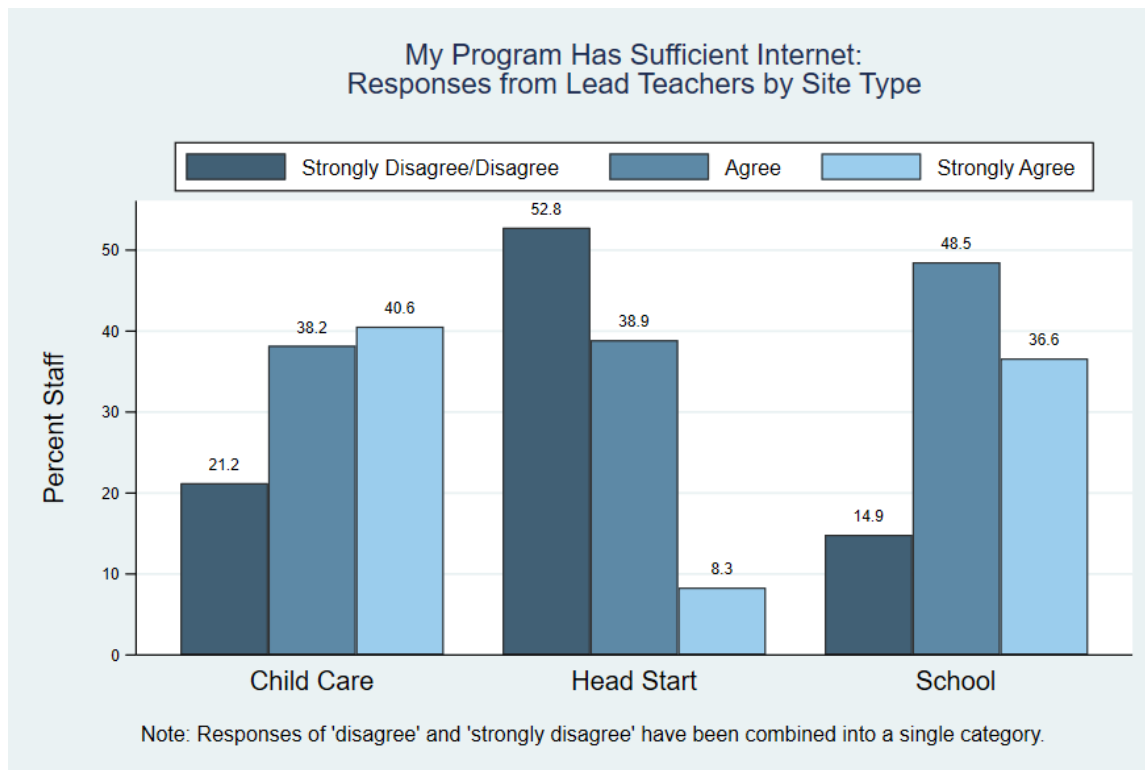
Figure 6 indicates similar patterns for high-quality learning materials. Child care teachers were roughly 14 percentage points more likely than Head Start teachers, and 10 percentage points more likely than school-based pre-kindergarten teachers, to "strongly agree" they had sufficient access to learning materials.

Figure 6. My Program Has Enough Learning Materials: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
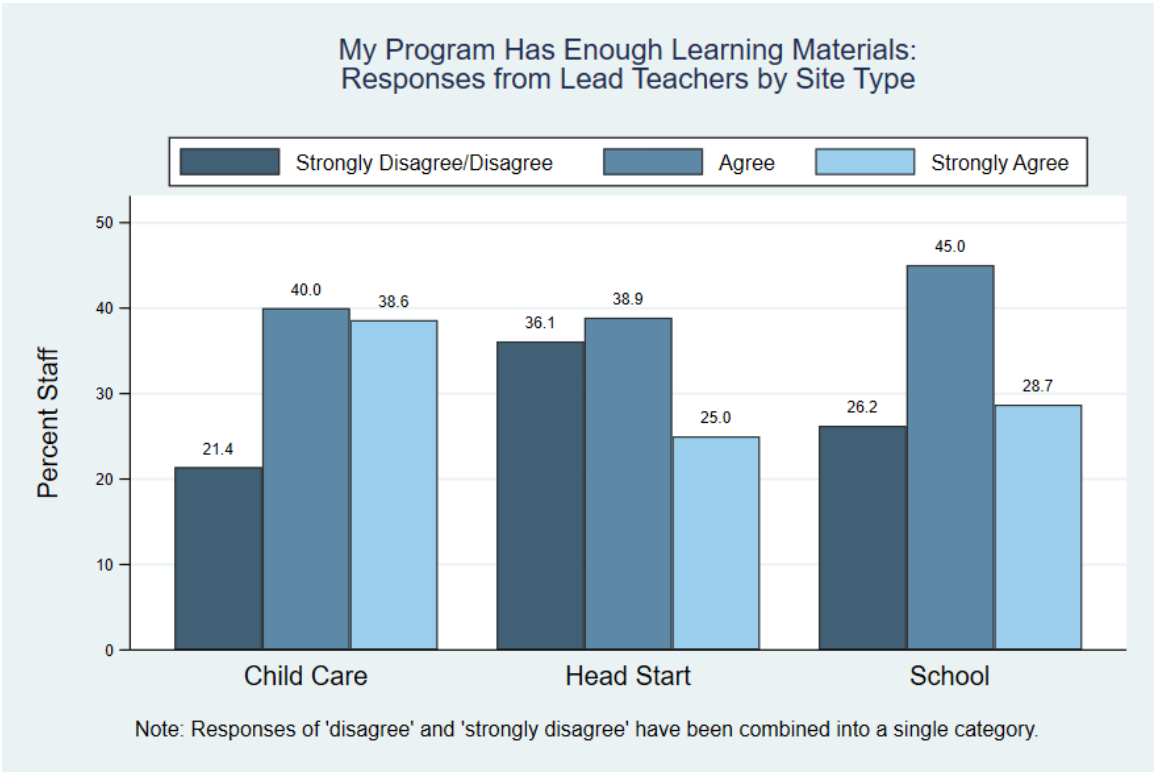
Finally, Head Start teachers were also considerably more likely to report a lack of access to Internet. In fact, over half of Head Start teachers reported insufficient Internet access, compared to 21% of child care teachers and 15% of school-based teachers, as seen in Figure 7.

Figure 7. My Program Has Sufficient Internet: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

My Program Has Sufficient Internet:
Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Note: Responses of 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' have been combined into a single category.
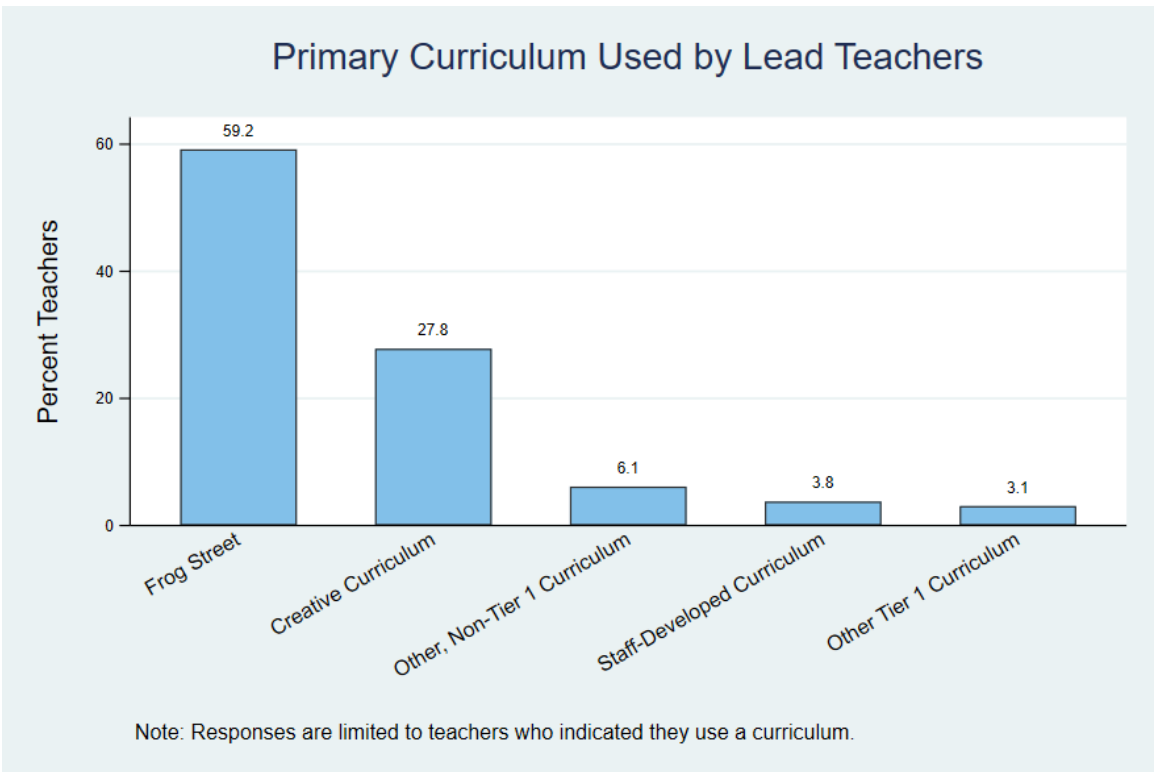
Curriculum

The Louisiana Department of Education provides funding for and strongly encourages early childhood sites to use curricula designated by LDOE as "Tier 1" curricula, which align with state content standards and "exemplify quality."

Across all site types, 97% of lead teachers and 97% of leaders reported regular curriculum use in their classrooms or sites (not shown). All Head Start teachers, 95% of child care teachers, and 98% of school-based teachers reported using a curriculum (not shown).

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked teachers to specify the curriculum they used most often, which is referred to as their primary curriculum. Figure 8 shows that, among those lead teachers who reported using a curriculum, nearly all (90%) reported using a Tier 1 curriculum as their primary curriculum. The vast majority used either Frog Street or Creative Curriculum. Three percent of teachers reported using another Tier 1 curriculum such as Develop.Inspire.Grow, Eureka Math, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt – Big Day for Pre-K, InvestiGators, or Opening the World of Learning (OWL).

Figure 8. Primary Curriculum Used: Responses from Lead Teachers

Primary Curriculum Used by Lead Teachers

Note: Responses are limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum.

10 percent of lead teachers reported that they did not use a Tier 1 curriculum for their primary curriculum: 6% indicated they used a different curriculum such as Core Knowledge Language Arts, Unique Learning System, or Montessori curricular materials; and 4% indicated they created their own curriculum.

Table 7 indicates substantial differences in curricula used across site types. Of those teachers who reported using a curriculum, almost all Head Start teachers indicated that they use Creative Curriculum as their primary curriculum. Meanwhile, among school teachers, Frog Street was the most commonly used. In child care, programs were more split—36% report using Creative and 55% report using Frog Street.

Table 7. Primary Curriculum Used: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	School
Frog Street	54.9%	0%	74.6%
Creative Curriculum	35.9%	97.2%	6.8%
Other Tier 1 Curriculum	1.5%	0%	5.2%
Staff-created Curriculum	4.1%	0%	4.1%
Other, non-Tier 1 Curriculum	3.6%	2.8%	9.3%
	100%	100%	100%

Of teachers who reported using a curriculum regularly, most reported their curriculum was easy to implement: 79% believed their primary curriculum was either "fairly easy" or "very easy" to use, as seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9. How Easy is Your Primary Curriculum to Use? Reponses from Lead Teachers
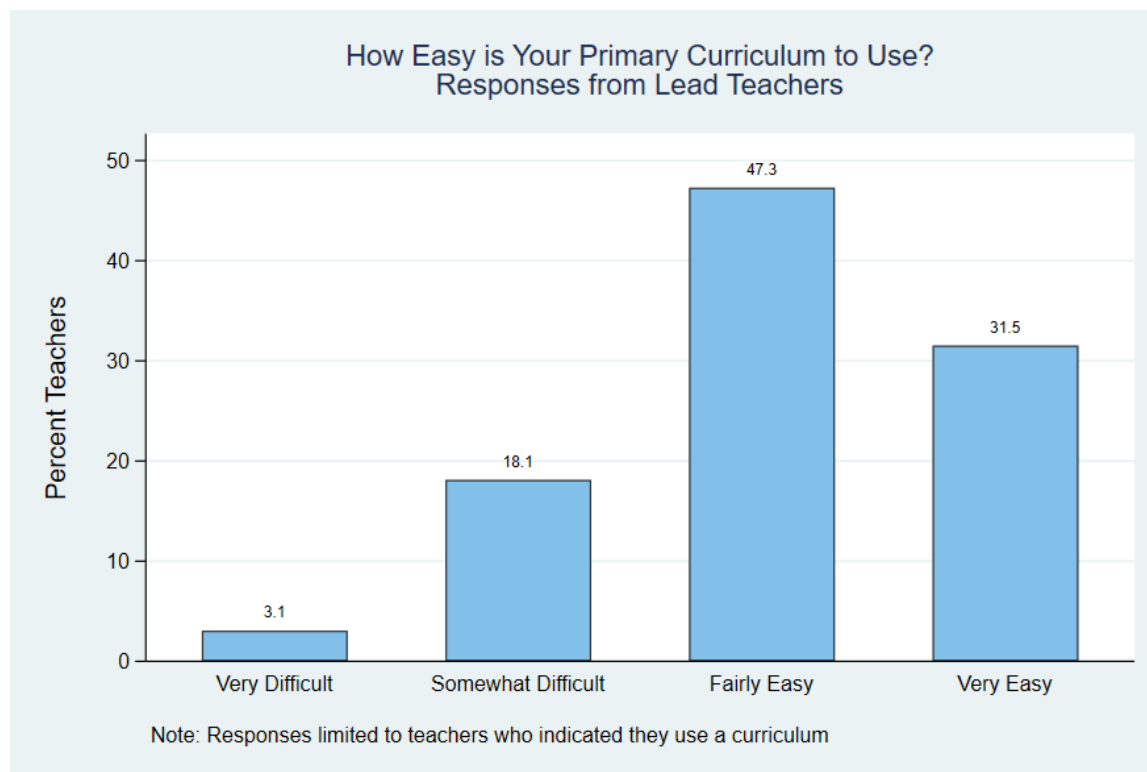
While most teachers indicated their primary curriculum was user-friendly, there were differences in perceptions across site types. As illustrated in Figure 10, school teachers were less likely than teachers at child care or Head Start sites to rate their curriculum as "very easy" to use. School teachers were also most

likely to find their curriculum difficult to use: About 27% of school-based teachers indicated that their primary curriculum was "very difficult" or "somewhat difficult" to use, compared to 17% of child care and 14% of Head Start teachers.

Figure 10. How Easy is Your Primary Curriculum to Use? Reponses from Lead Teachers by Site Type


Note: Responses limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum
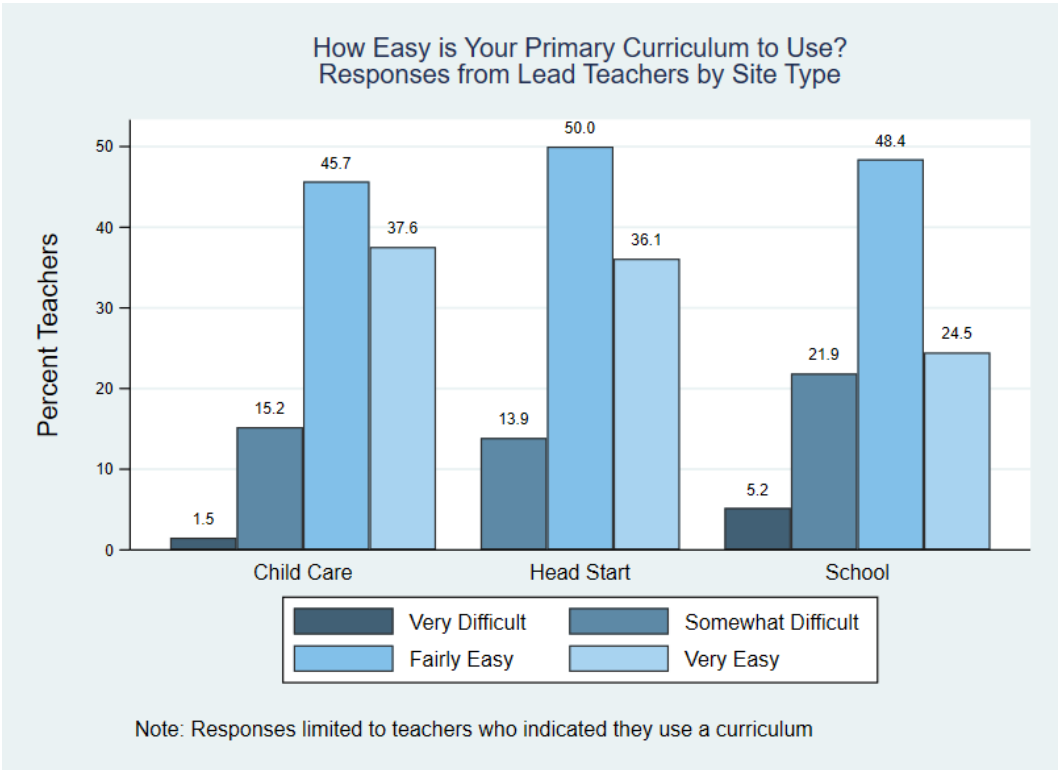
Finally, most lead teachers (53%) indicated that their curriculum is very useful in "helping to support children's learning in [the] classroom," and an additional 44% indicated the curriculum was somewhat useful, as seen in Figure 11.

Figure 11. How Useful is Your Primary Curriculum? Reponses from Lead Teachers

How Useful is Your Primary Curriculum?
Responses from Lead Teachers

Note: Responses limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum
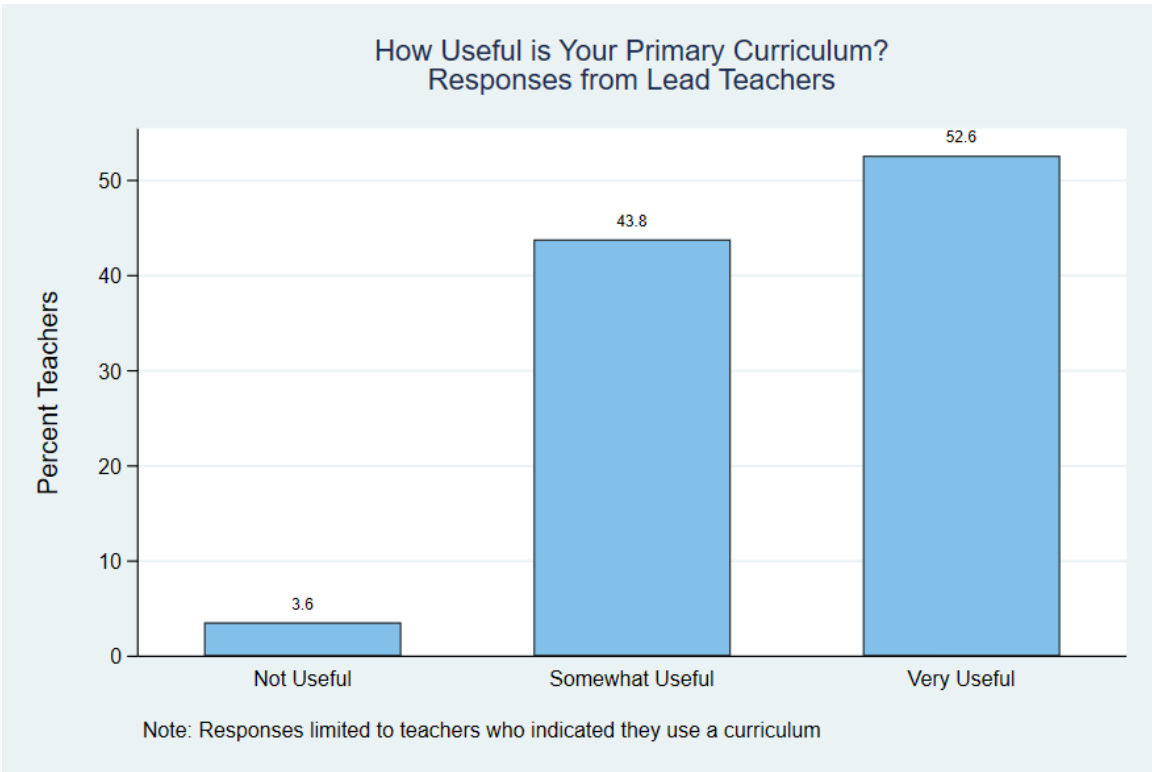
While nearly all teachers indicated their curriculum was either "somewhat" or "very" useful, child care teachers were about 15 percentage points more likely to rate their curriculum in the highest, "very useful" range, compared to teachers in schools, with teachers in Head Start sites in the middle (see Figure 12).

Figure 12. How Useful is Your Primary Curriculum? Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

How Useful is Your Primary Curriculum?
Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Note: Responses limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum
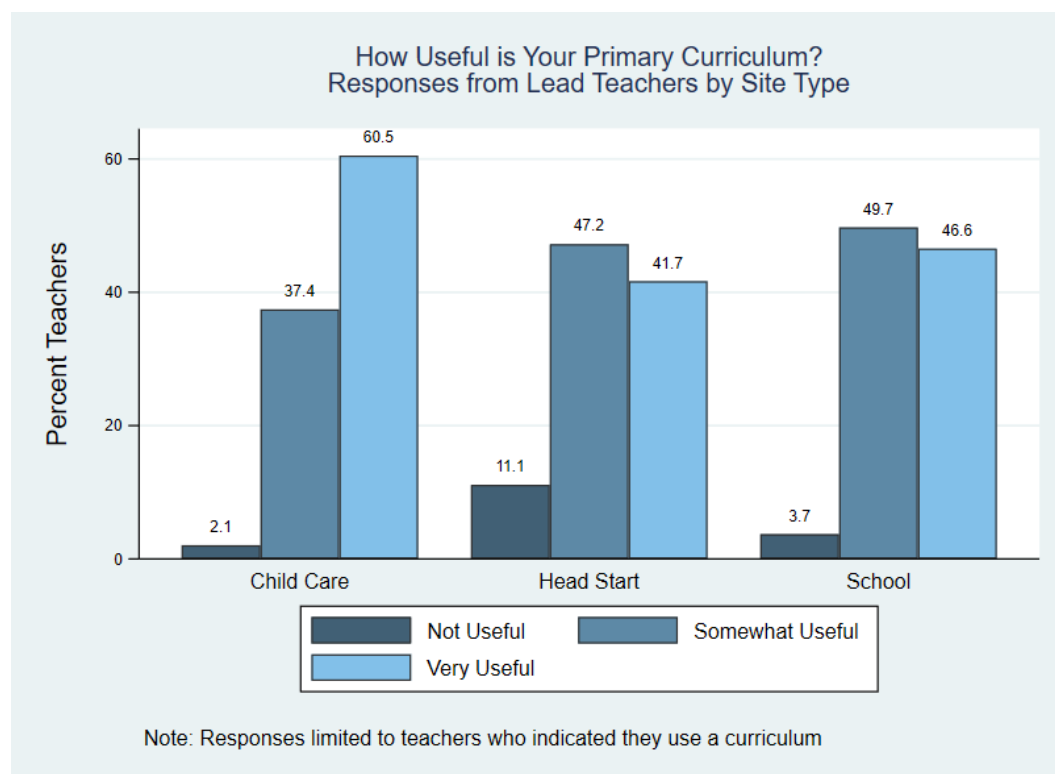
## Section 3: Professional Development and Coaching

Access to professional supports is essential for helping teachers improve the quality of classroom instruction. This section covers lead teachers' participation in professional development trainings (PD) and coaching programs.

Professional Development

Almost all lead teachers (99.8%) attended at least one professional development (PD) training or workshop in the 12 months prior to taking the SEE-LA Workforce Survey (as indicated by the "Any Topic" bar in Figure 13 below).

Over 80% of teachers reported having at least one professional development training or workshop on each of the following topics: Curriculum, the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), Teaching Strategies GOLD (TS-GOLD), and Social-Emotional Development. PD on subject matter instruction (e.g. literacy or math) was somewhat less common (65%).

Figure 13. Participation in Professional Development, Overall and by Topic: Responses from Lead Teachers
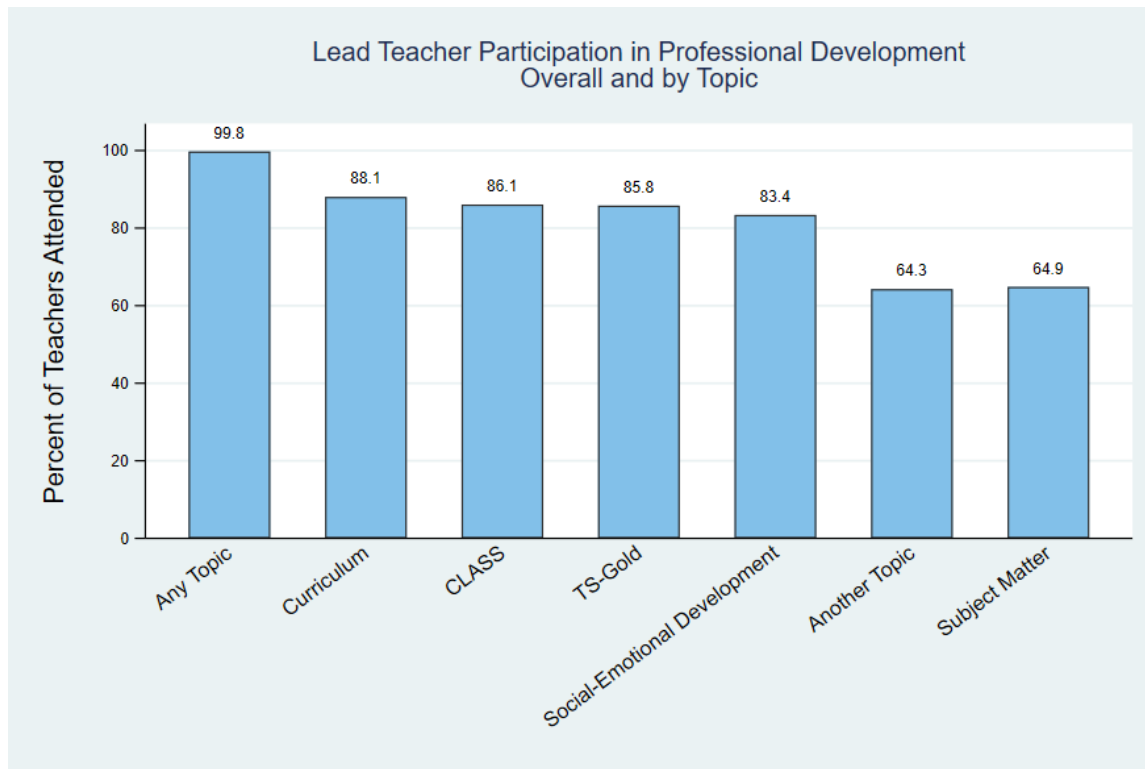
Access to specific types of professional development differed across site types. As seen in Figure 14, Head Start teachers reported access to more professional development than school-based and especially child care teachers. This difference was particularly stark for professional development on subject matter. While 85% of Head Start teachers attended at least one professional development training on subject matter content, only about half of child care teachers did.

Figure 14. Professional Development Attendance in Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
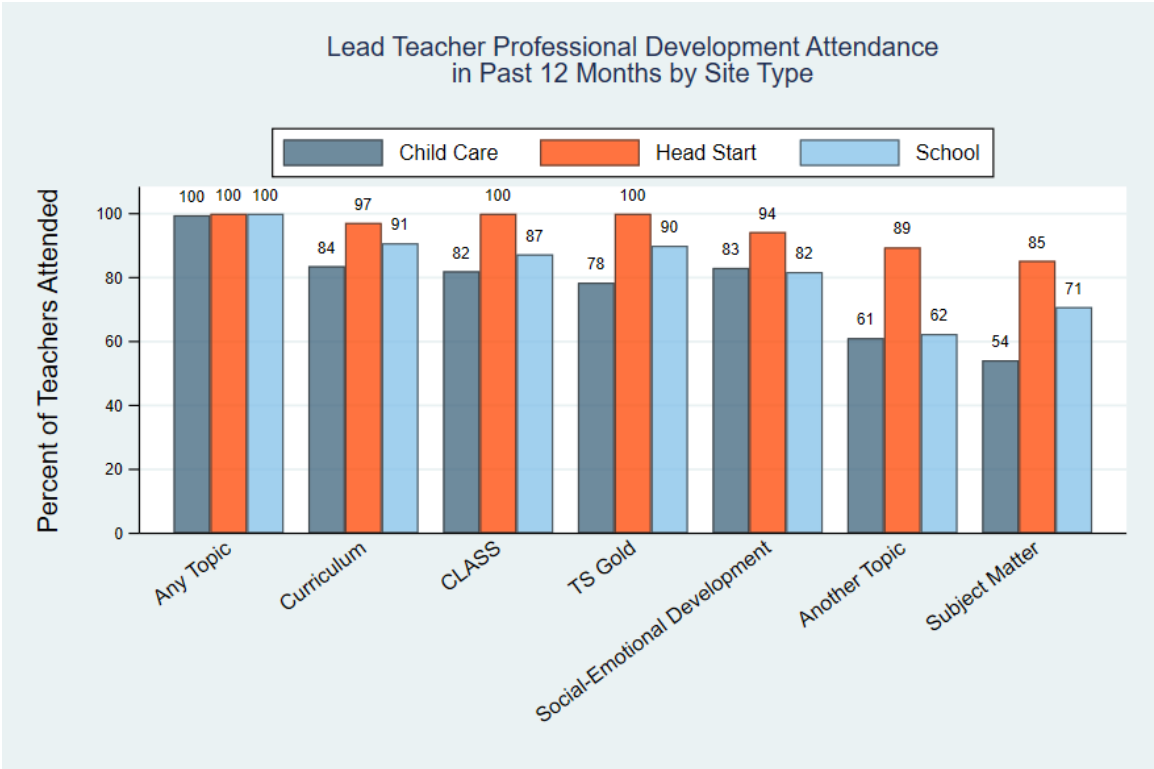
Time Spent on Professional Development

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked how much time in total teachers spent on professional development in the past year. As shown in Figure 15, 63% of lead teachers devoted 13 or more hours to professional development. About 3% of teachers reported having no professional development at all, and another 8% reported only 1-4 hours in the past 12 months.

Figure 15. Hours Spent on Professional Development in Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers

Time Lead Teachers Spent on Professional Development in the Past 12 Months
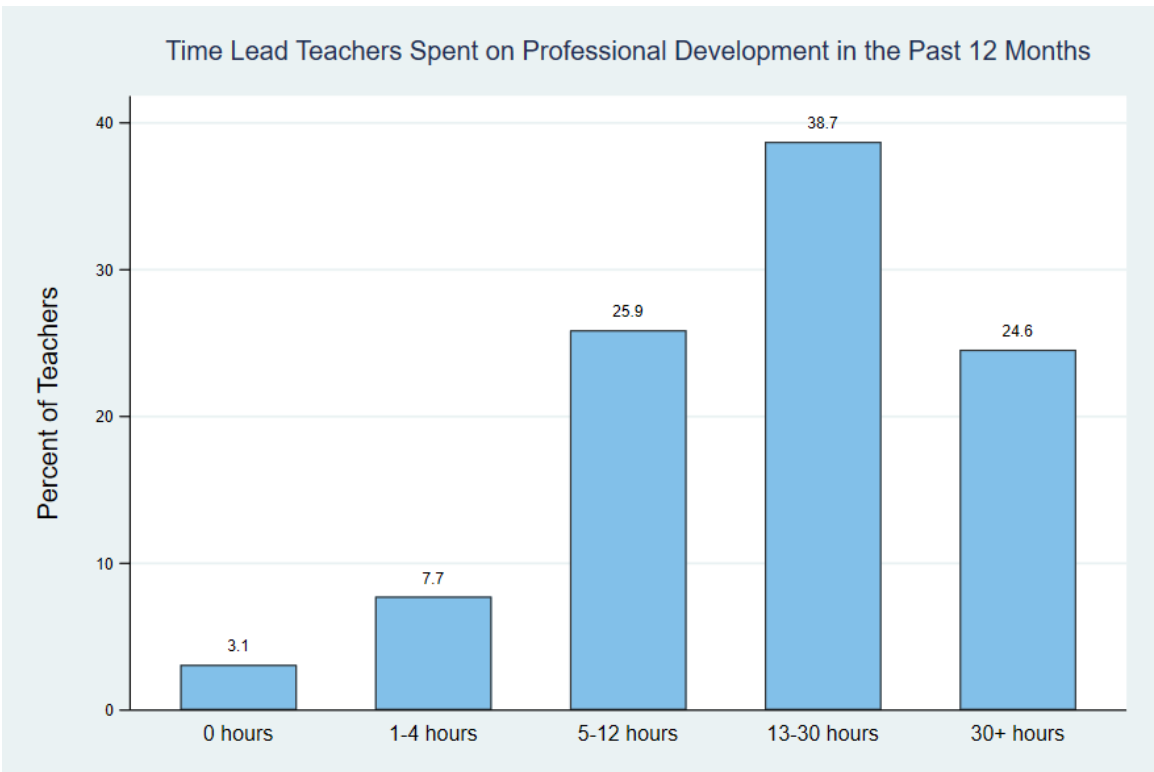
Notably, the amount of exposure to professional development was much lower among assistant teachers: 37% of assistant teachers reported 13 or more hours of professional development and a little over a fourth indicated four hours or less of professional development in the past 12 months (see Appendix for more information).

The amount of professional development teachers engaged in differed substantially by site type, with child care teachers reporting much less time on professional development than Head Start and school-based teachers (Figure 16). Whereas approximately 81% of Head Start and 75% of school-based teachers received 13 or more hours of professional development in the 12 months prior to the survey, fewer than half of child care teachers did. Further, no Head Start teachers and only about 6% of school teachers devoted four or fewer hours to professional development in the preceding 12 months. In child care, that figure was almost three times higher (17%).
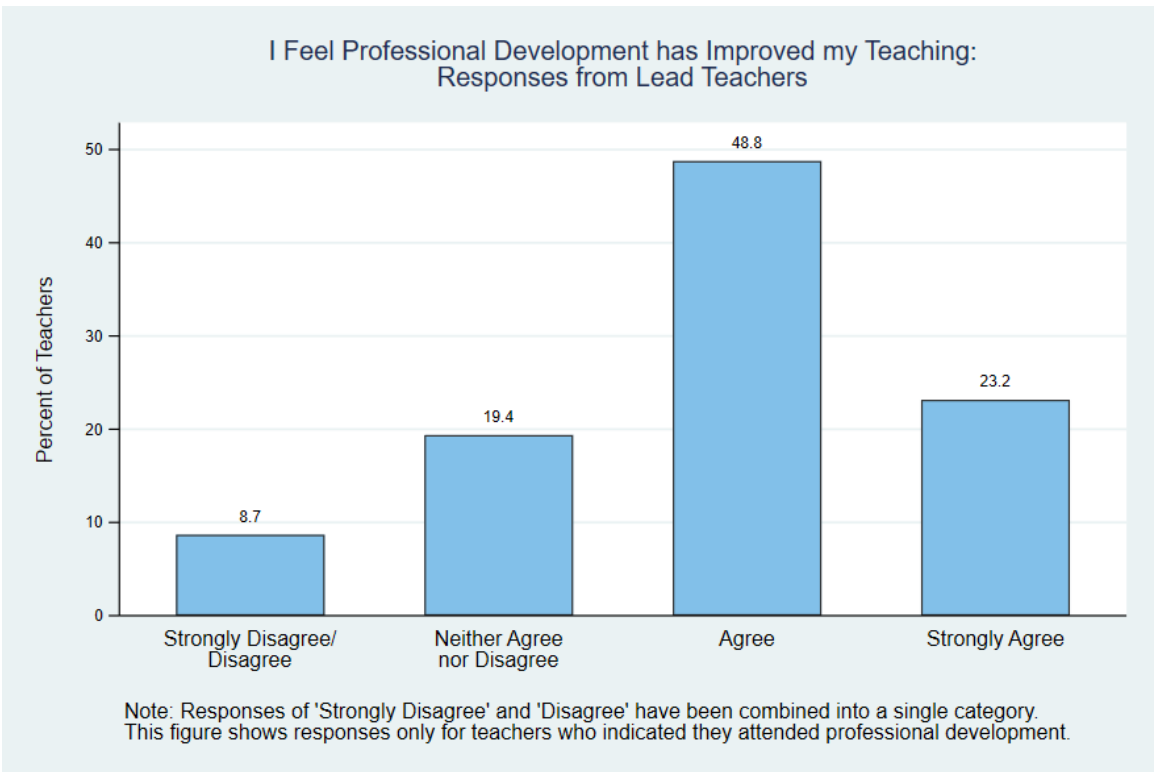
Figure 16. Hours Spent on Professional Development in Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Lead Teacher Time Spent on Professional Development in Past 12 Months by Site Type
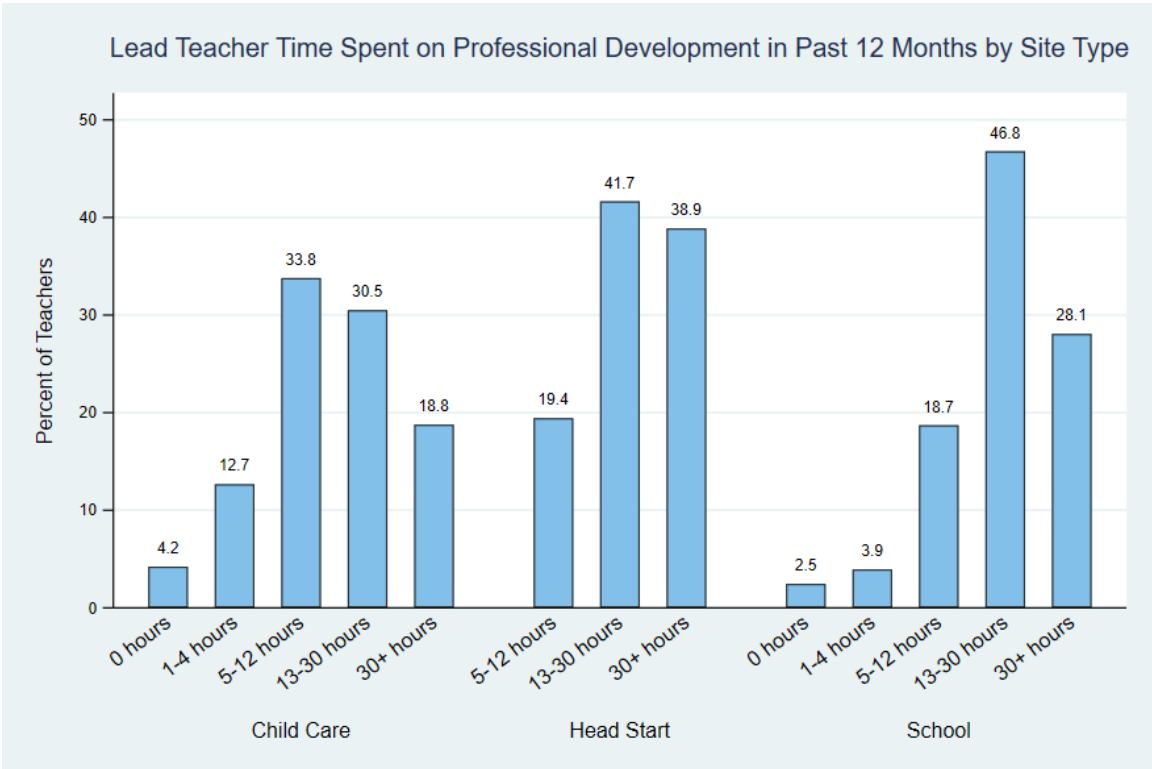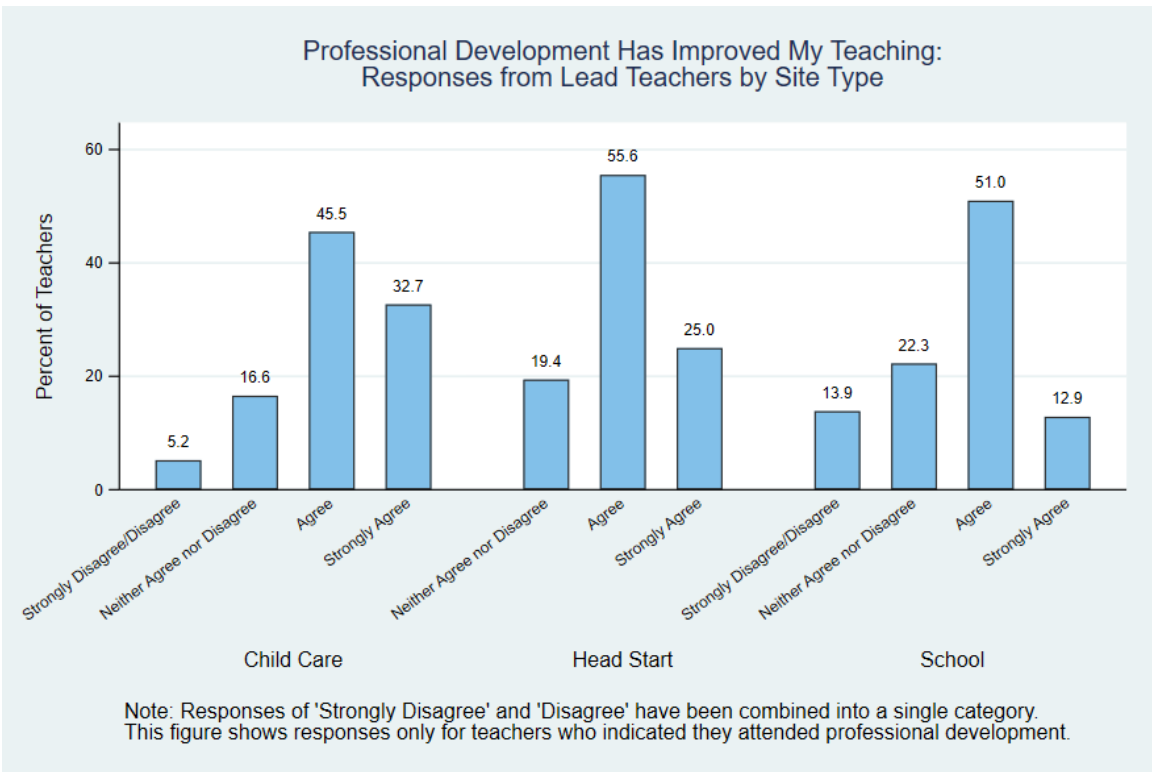
Usefulness of Professional Development

Across all site types, most teachers believed that professional development had improved their teaching. As Figure 17 shows, approximately 72% "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement that "overall, the professional development workshops and trainings that I have received over the past 12 months have helped me improve my teaching."

Figure 17: Utility of Professional Development: Responses from Lead Teachers

Note: Responses of 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' have been combined into a single category. This figure shows responses only for teachers who indicated they attended professional development.

Lead teachers' perceptions of the utility of professional development varied substantially across site types (Figure 18). School-based teachers were least likely, and child care teachers most likely, to assign high value to their professional development experiences. Although child care workers received, on average, the fewest hours of professional development (Figure 16), they were most likely to find their professional development useful: 33% "strongly agreed" that professional development improved their teaching, as compared to 25% of Head Start teachers and only 13% of school teachers. Additionally, whereas 14% of school-based teachers "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that professional development was useful, no Head Start teachers and only 5% child care teachers shared these responses.

Figure 18: Utility of Professional Development: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Professional Development Has Improved My Teaching:
Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Note: Responses of 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' have been combined into a single category.
This figure shows responses only for teachers who indicated they attended professional development.

Teachers were asked to report whether the amount of professional development they received overall and in different content areas was "not enough," "just right," or "too much." Overall, 49% of teachers indicated that the amount of professional development they received in at least one content area in the past year was not enough (Figure 19). About one-third of lead teachers indicated they did not receive enough training in subject matter instruction (e.g. early literacy and mathematics). Approximately one-quarter of lead teachers indicated they did not receive sufficient professional development on social-emotional development, curriculum, or formative assessments such as TS-GOLD, and 18% reported not receiving enough professional development on CLASS.

Figure 19. Amount of Professional Development was Not Enough by Topic: Responses from Lead Teachers
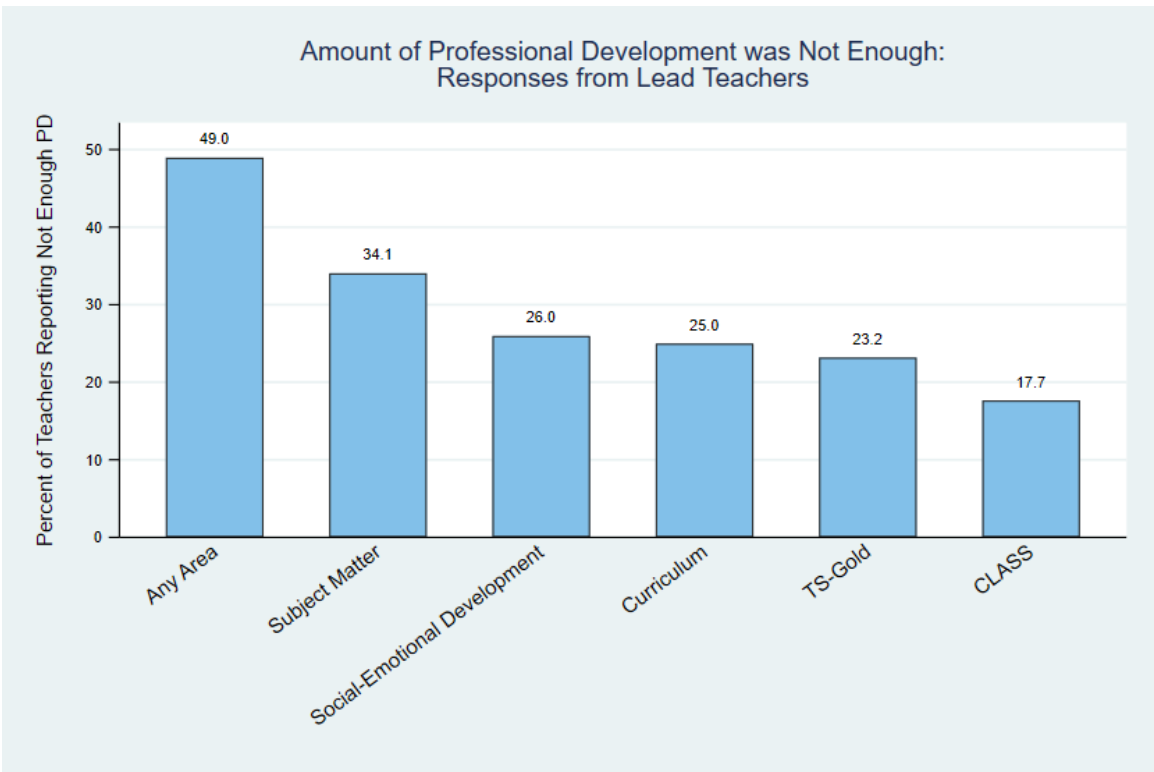

Figure 20 disaggregrates these patterns across site types. Compared to child care and Head Start teachers, a greater percentage of school-based teachers indicated they did not receive enough professional development in at least one area. Both overall and within each professional development area, school-based teachesr reported the greatest need for additional training. Child care teachers and Head Start indicated different training needs: 31% of Head Start teachers stated they did not receive enough training in social-emotional devleopment, compared to 19% of child care teachers; wheras 24% of child care teachers did not feel they received enough PD in curriculum, compared to 15% of Head Start teachers.

Figure 20. Amount of Professional Development was Not Enough by Topic: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
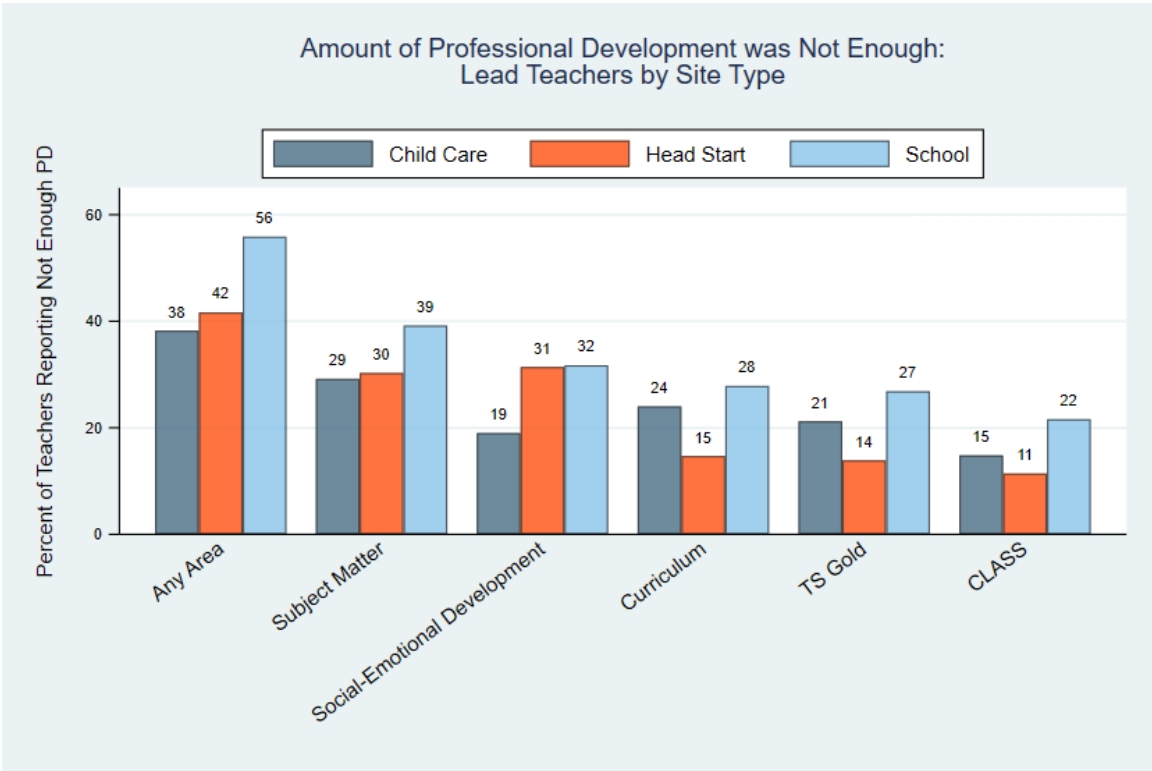
Coaching

In addition to traditional professional development trainings and workshops, in some sites, teachers had access to a coach or mentor. This section explores participation in coaching programs and its perceived value among lead teachers. It examines participation in Making the Most of Classroom Interactions (MMCI), MyTeachingPartner (MTP), and other coaching programs.

About 38% of all lead teachers participated in at least one coaching program in the past 12 months. Table 8 shows that participation in coaching differed across site types, with only 20% of school teachers reporting coaching compared to 54% of child care teachers and 44% of Head Start teachers.

Table 8. Coaching Participation in Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

|	Child Care	Head Start	School	Entire Sample
% Lead Teachers Participated in Coaching	54.1%	44.4%	19.6%	37.9%

Figure 21 shows that among lead teachers who participated in a coaching program, MMCI was the most common program for both child care and Head Start teachers: 81% of child care teachers and 64% of Head Start teachers received MMCI coaching. Schools were more likely to use a coaching/mentoring program other than MMCI or MTP: 60% of teacher participating in coaching used another coaching program.

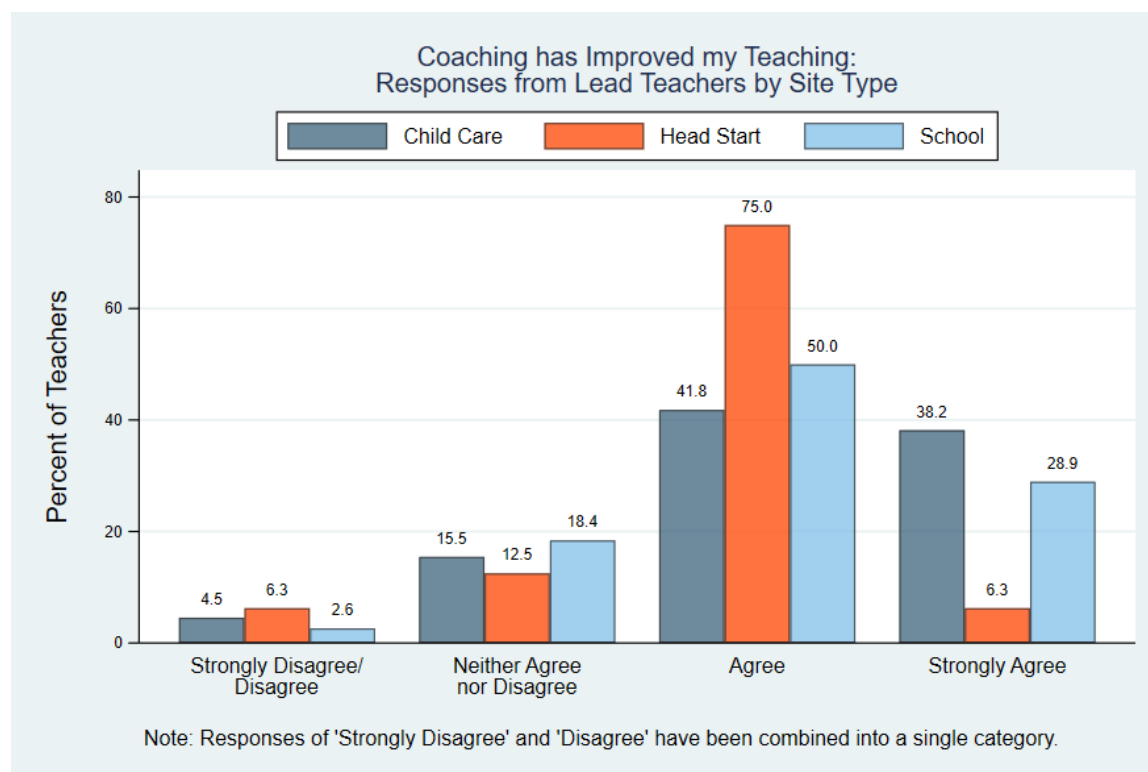**Figure 21. Coaching Program Participation: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type**
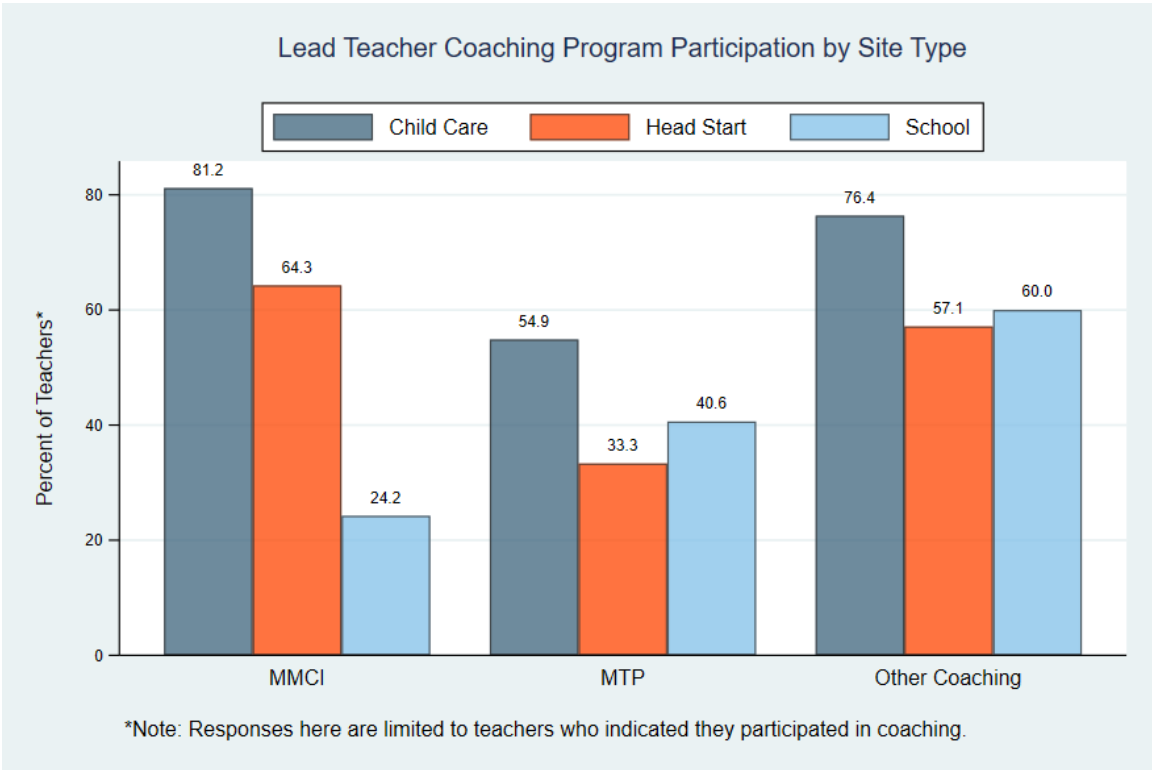
Overall, 80% of lead teachers who reported participating in a coaching program agreed that coaching had been valuable to improving their teaching practice, as seen in Figure 22.

Figure 22. Utility of Coaching Programs: Responses from Lead Teachers

Coaching has Improved my Teaching:
Responses from Lead Teachers
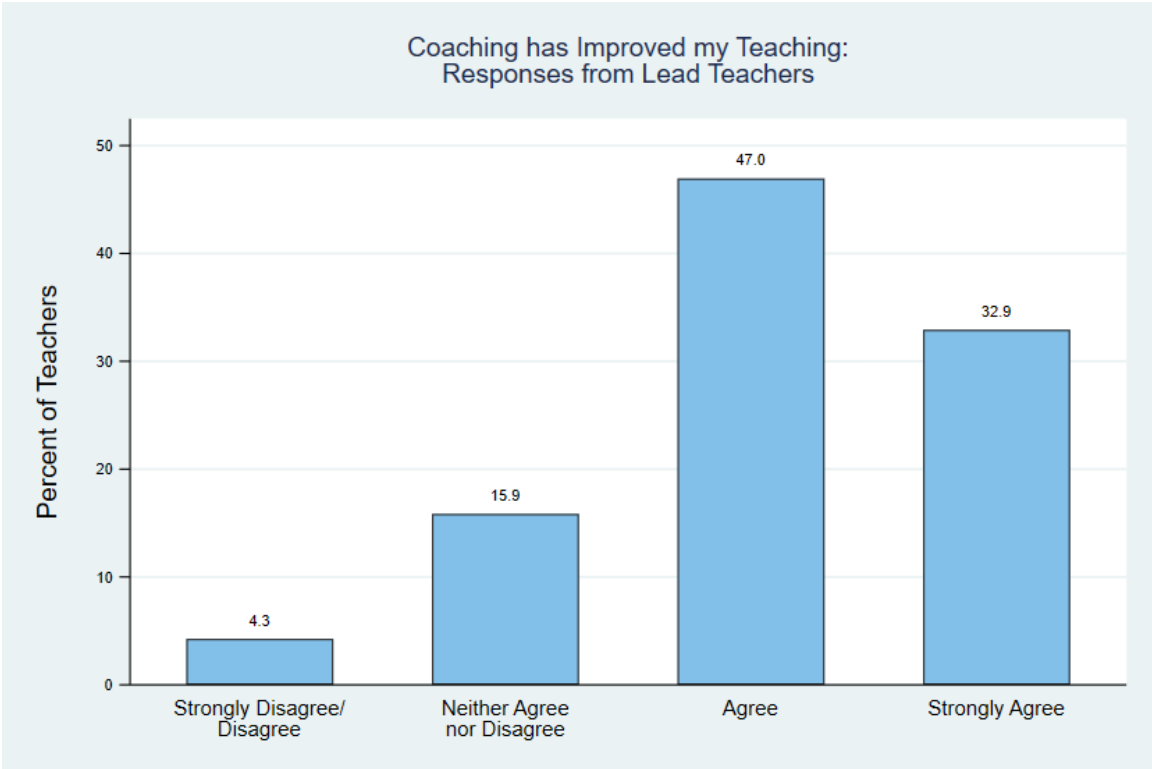
Within each site type, the majority of teachers who participated in a coaching program found it valuable (see Figure 23). About eighty percent of teachers in each of the three site types agreed or strongly agreed that coaching participation had improved their teaching. Notably, despite similar levels of agreement between school-based, child care and Head Start teachers, Head Start teachers had by far the smallest proportion (5%) of teachers who *strongly* agreed that coaching had helped them improve their teaching.

Figure 23. Utility of Coaching Programs: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Coaching has Improved my Teaching:
Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Legend: Child Care | Head Start | School

Response	Child Care	Head Start	School
Strongly Disagree/Disagree	4.5	6.3	2.6
Neither Agree nor Disagree	15.5	12.5	18.4
Agree	41.8	75.0	50.0
Strongly Agree	38.2	6.3	28.9

Y-axis: Percent of Teachers

Note: Responses of 'Strongly Disagree' and 'Disagree' have been combined into a single category.

Section 4: Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

In Louisiana, all toddler and preschool classrooms in publicly-funded sites are observed twice a year using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which measures the quality of teacher-child interactions. The SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked teachers and leaders to report on their experiences and beliefs about CLASS.

CLASS Observations

As expected, all site leaders reported that classrooms in their site were observed using CLASS (not shown). However, while all classrooms are supposed to be observed at least twice a year with CLASS, not all lead teachers reported being observed in the past 12 months (Table 9). In fact, 15% of lead teachers indicated they were not observed with the CLASS, and this rate was even higher in child care where almost one-fifth of lead teachers indicated they were not CLASS observed. Two possible reasons that a teacher would not receive a CLASS observation are if the teacher were new to their center and had missed the latest CLASS observation cycle, or if the teacher worked primarily with infants. When new and infant teachers are excluded from analysis, reported rates of CLASS observations increase, but remain under the expected 100%: 90% of child care, 97% of Head Start, and 92% of school-based teachers who work with toddlers and preschoolers and had been at their site for longer than a year reported CLASS observations.

Table 9. Percent of Teachers who Reported Being CLASS Observed in the Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

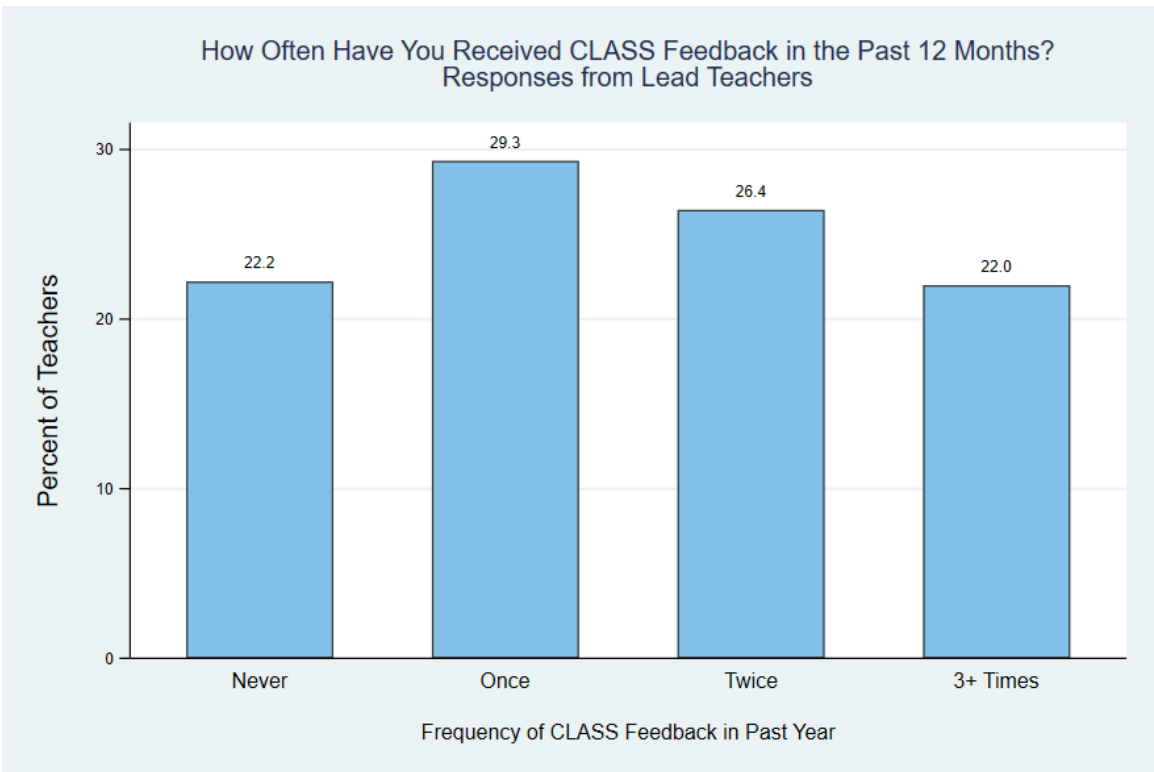|	Child Care	Head Start	School	Overall
% Lead Teachers Reported CLASS Observation	82.1%	94.4%	85.7%	84.8%

Feedback on CLASS

Providing teachers with feedback based on their CLASS observation may help them improve the quality of their interactions with young children. The SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked site leaders how often they talk to teachers about their classroom's specific CLASS scores. As is illustrated in Figure 24, nearly 90% of leaders indicated that they talk with teachers about their CLASS scores at least twice a year; in fact, half of leaders reported talking with their teachers three or more times a year. Ten percent of leaders reported never talking to their teachers about CLASS, but this does not necessarily imply that teachers in those sites receive no feedback, as staff other than site leaders, such as assistant directors or instructional coaches, may communicate feedback to teachers.

**Figure 24. How Often Do You Give CLASS Feedback? Responses from Site Leaders**
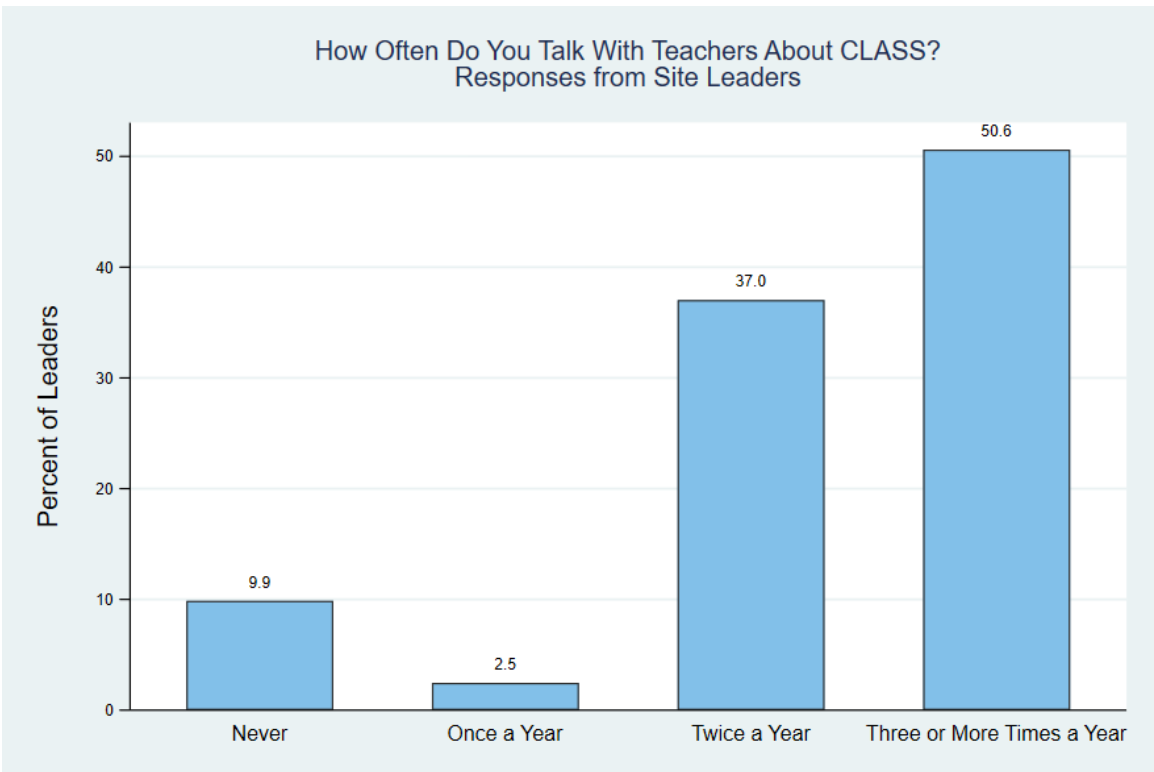
The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked lead teachers to report how often they *received* feedback on their CLASS observations, and those responses are shown in Figure 25. Notably, while the vast majority (almost 90%) of site leaders reported communicating feedback to teachers at least twice a year, a much smaller percentage of teachers (48%) reported recieveing feedback this frequently.

Figure 25. Frequency of CLASS Feedback: Responses from Lead Teachers

Teachers at schools were far more likely than their counterparts at child care and Head Start sites to report receiving feedback two or more times (Figure 26). While 42% of both Head Start teachers and child care teachers indicated they received feedback two or more times, 56% of school-based teachers did. Similar proportions of teachers in child care, Head Start, and school-based sites (approximately 22%) reported not receiving any CLASS feedback in the previous year.

Figure 26. Frequency of CLASS Feedback: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

How Often Have You Received CLASS Feedback in the Past 12 Months?
Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
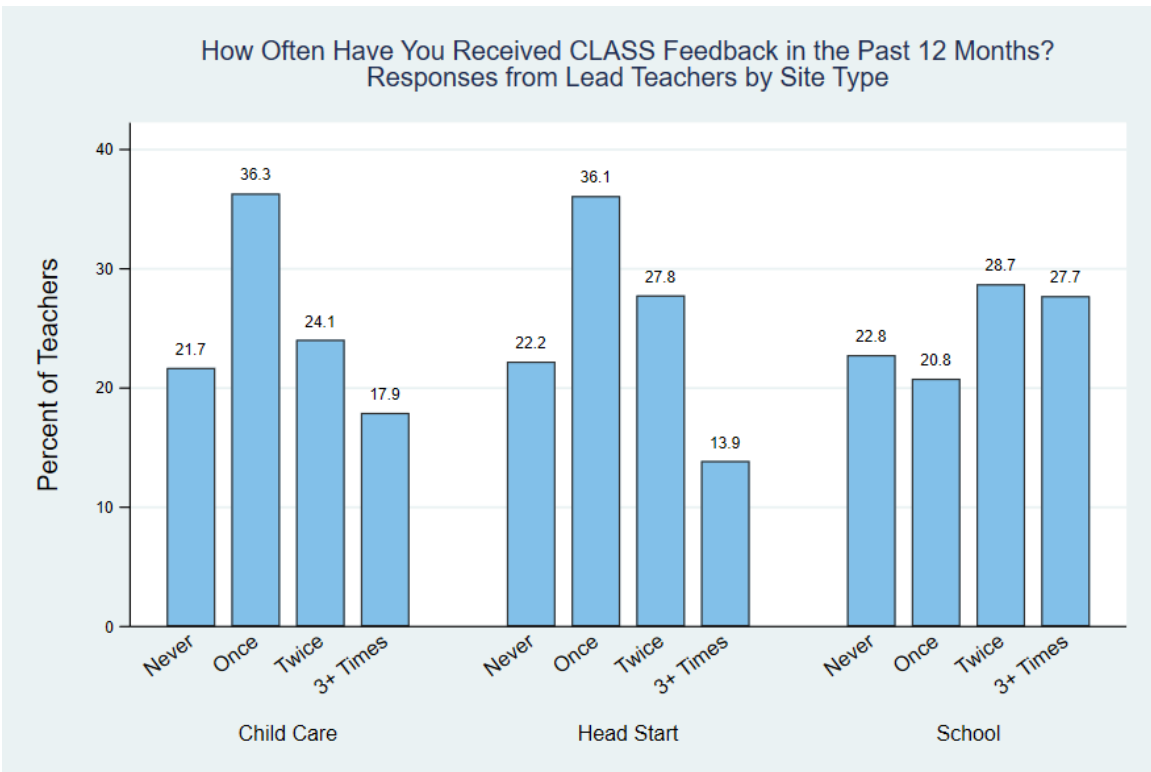
CLASS-Based Performance Profiles

Each classroom's CLASS scores are reported to the Louisiana Department of Education, who uses this information to create a Performance Profile for each publicly-funded early learning site in the state. In addition to reporting on the quality of teacher-child interactions as measured by CLASS, Performance Profiles provide information on other site features such as adult-child ratios, curriculum use, and operating schedule. Performance Profiles are made publicly available for parents to refer to when making decisions about early childhood education options.

Nearly all site leaders were aware that their site received an LDOE Performance Profile. Whereas all leaders at school-based and Head Start sites were aware of the profile, only 89% of child care leaders were (not shown).

Awareness of Performance Profiles was lower among lead teachers. About 31% of lead teachers indicated either that their site did not have a Performance Profile (7%) or that they did not know whether they had a Performance Profile (24%) (Table 10). Lead teachers in child care sites were least likely to know whether

their site had a performance profile (32%), whereas almost all Head Start teachers (96%) were aware of their site's profile.

Table 10. Awareness of LDOE Performance Profile: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

"Does your site have a LDOE Performance Profile?"	Child Care	Head Start	School	Entire Sample
% Lead Teachers Responded Yes	63.8%	96%	70.5%	69.2%
% Lead Teachers Responded No	4.6%	4%	10.7%	6.9%
% Lead Teachers Responded Don't Know	31.6%	0%	18.8%	23.9%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Beliefs About and Perceptions of CLASS

The SEE-LA Workforce survey asked about the extent to which teachers and site leaders believed the CLASS was a useful measure of classroom quality, and about the extent to which CLASS was leading to improvements in their own site and classroom.

Figure 27 shows the extent to which lead teachers and site leaders agree with a set of general statements about the CLASS and its utility. The items include:

- *"With practice and support, **teachers can improve** their CLASS scores."*
- *"I have a **clear understanding** of what the CLASS measures."*
- *"CLASS is a **good way to measure** the quality of teachers' interactions with children."*
- *"Louisiana's focus on CLASS will **improve the quality** of ECE sites in the state."*
- *"**Children learn more** in classrooms with higher CLASS scores."*

Figure 27. Beliefs about CLASS as a Quality Measure: Responses from Lead Teachers and Site Leaders
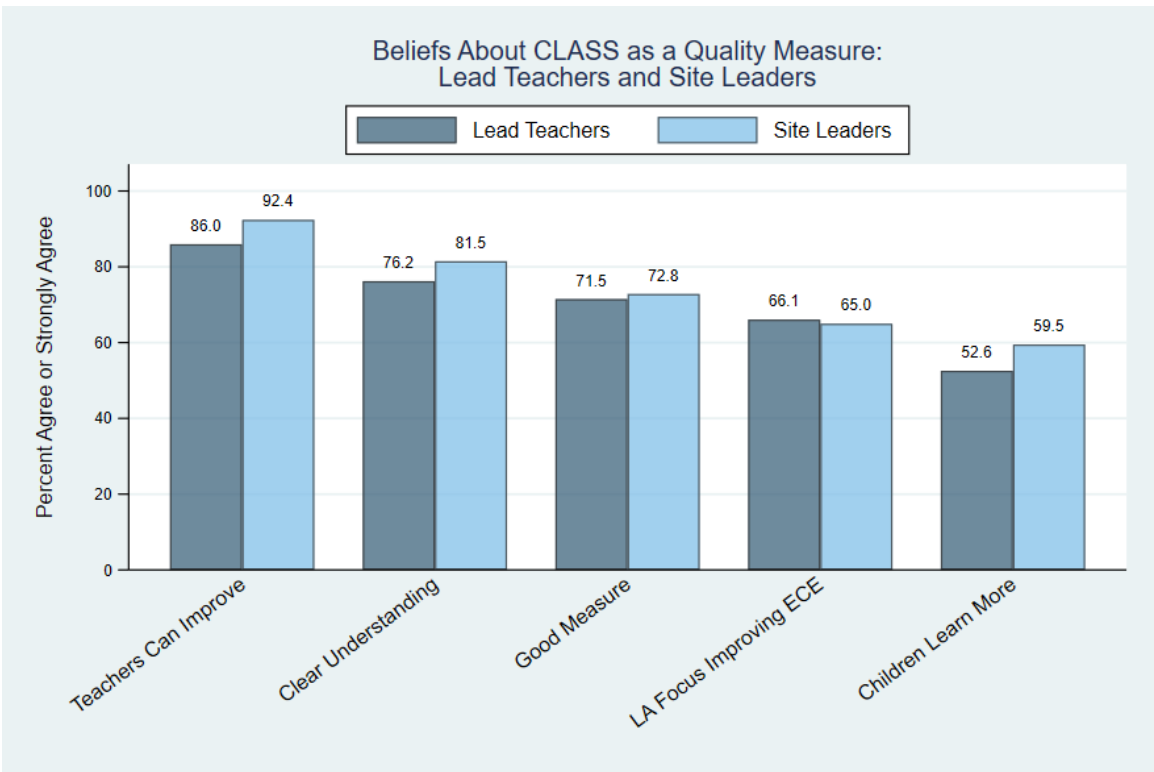
In general, responses suggest that both lead teachers and site leaders had a clear understanding of the CLASS and a favorable opinion of the tool. The majority of lead teachers and site leaders agreed with each of the statements. Teachers (86%) and leaders (92%) were confident that teachers can improve their CLASS scores with practice and support. Most lead teachers (76%) and leaders (82%) also "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they had a clear understanding of what the CLASS measures. Of all of the statements, teachers and leaders had the lowest confidence that children learn more in classrooms with higher CLASS scores. Only 53% of lead teachers and 60% of leaders agreed with this statement.

In general, perceptions of the CLASS did not vary substantially across site types. However, lead teachers at child care sites demonstrated the lowest levels of agreement with nearly all of the statements regarding CLASS as a quality measure, though often by a small amount (Figure 28).

Figure 28. Beliefs about CLASS as a Quality Measure: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
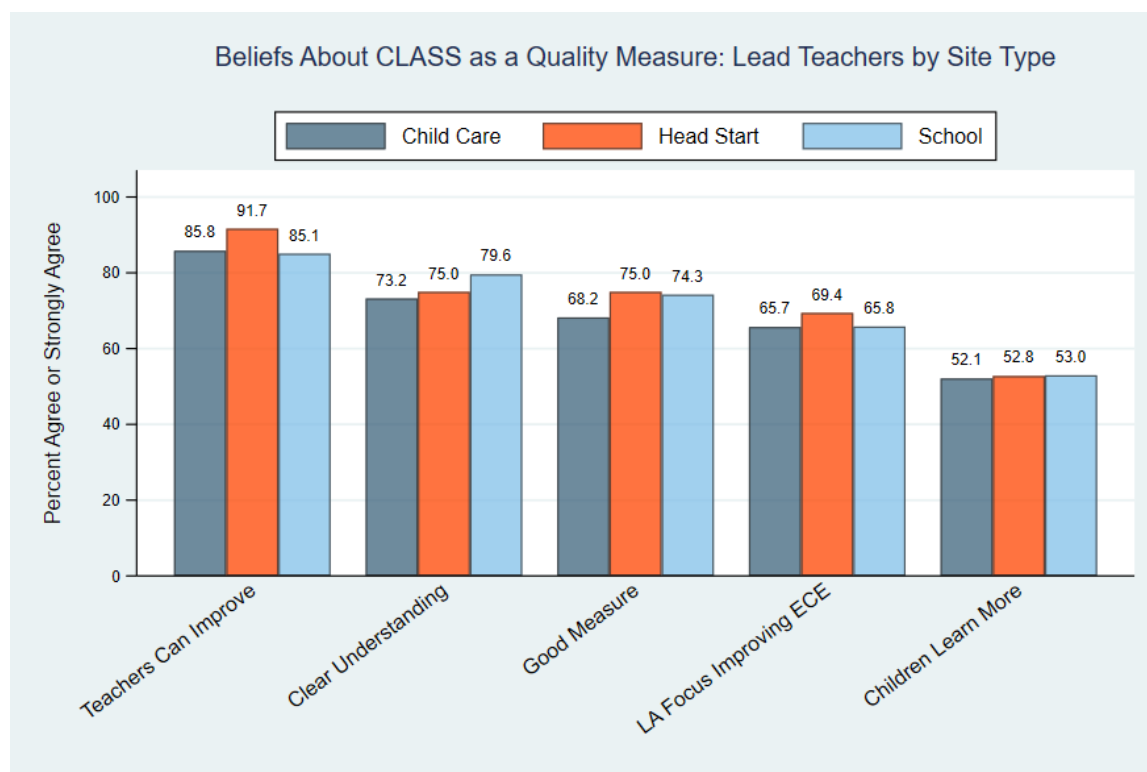
In addition to asking early educators about their opinions on CLASS as an overall measure of quality, the SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked about CLASS use in their own classrooms and sites. The survey asked how much lead teachers and site leaders agreed with the following statements:

· *"Ensuring high quality teacher-child interactions is a **priority for my program**."*

· *"I have **frequent conversations** with my teachers / director or other teachers about CLASS."*

· *"The focus on class in my site has led to **real improvements in teaching** at my program."*

· *"I believe CLASS **is improving my teaching** practice." (Note: this item was only asked of teachers, not site leaders.)*

Figure 29. Beliefs About CLASS in their Program: Responses from Lead Teachers and Site Leaders
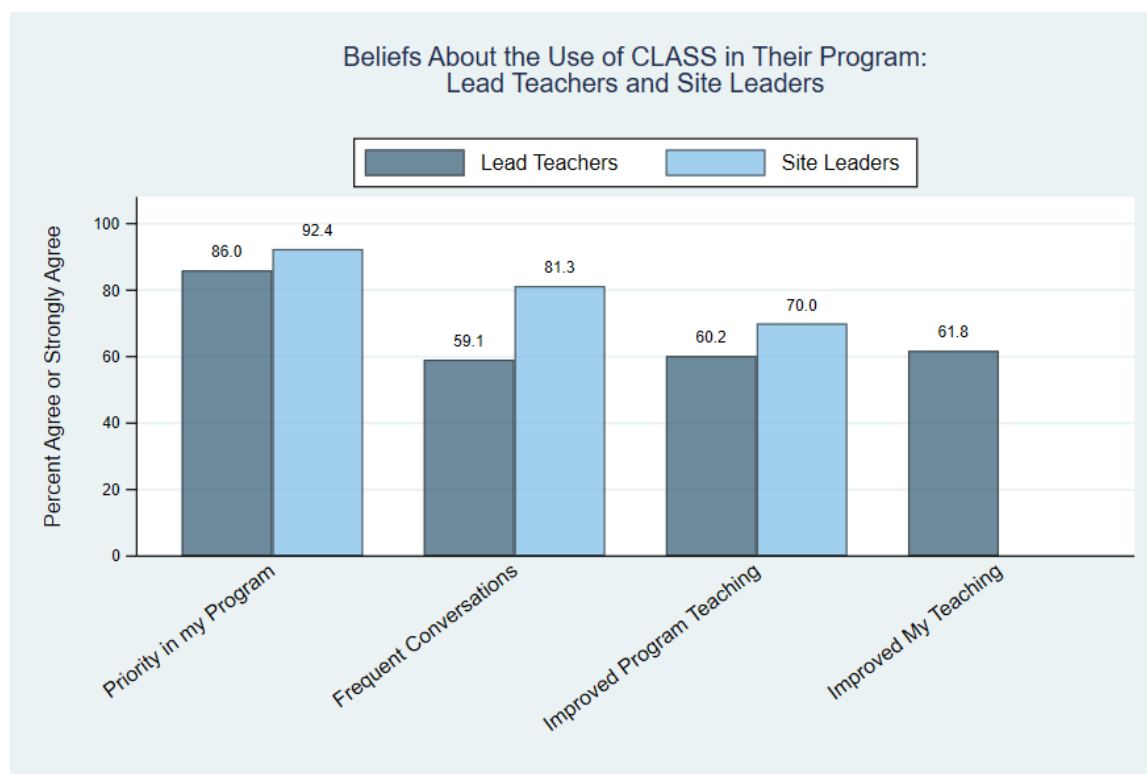
The majority of lead teachers (86%) and site leaders (92%) agreed that "ensuring high quality teacher-child interactions is a priority for my program" (Figure 29). However, site leaders were 22 percentage points more likely than lead teachers to report that they have frequent conversations about the CLASS. About 60% of lead teachers believed CLASS had improved teaching at their program, as did 70% of site leaders. Finally, about 62% of teachers believed that the CLASS was improving their own teaching.

Figure 30 disaggregates these patterns for lead teachers by site type and shows relatively similar patterns across types. Compared to child care and Head Start teachers, school teachers were somewhat less likely to agree that they had frequent CLASS conversations and that CLASS had improved the quality of their own teaching and the teaching at their site.

Figure 30. Beliefs About CLASS in their Program: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Beliefs About the Use of CLASS in Their Program:
Lead Teachers by Site Type
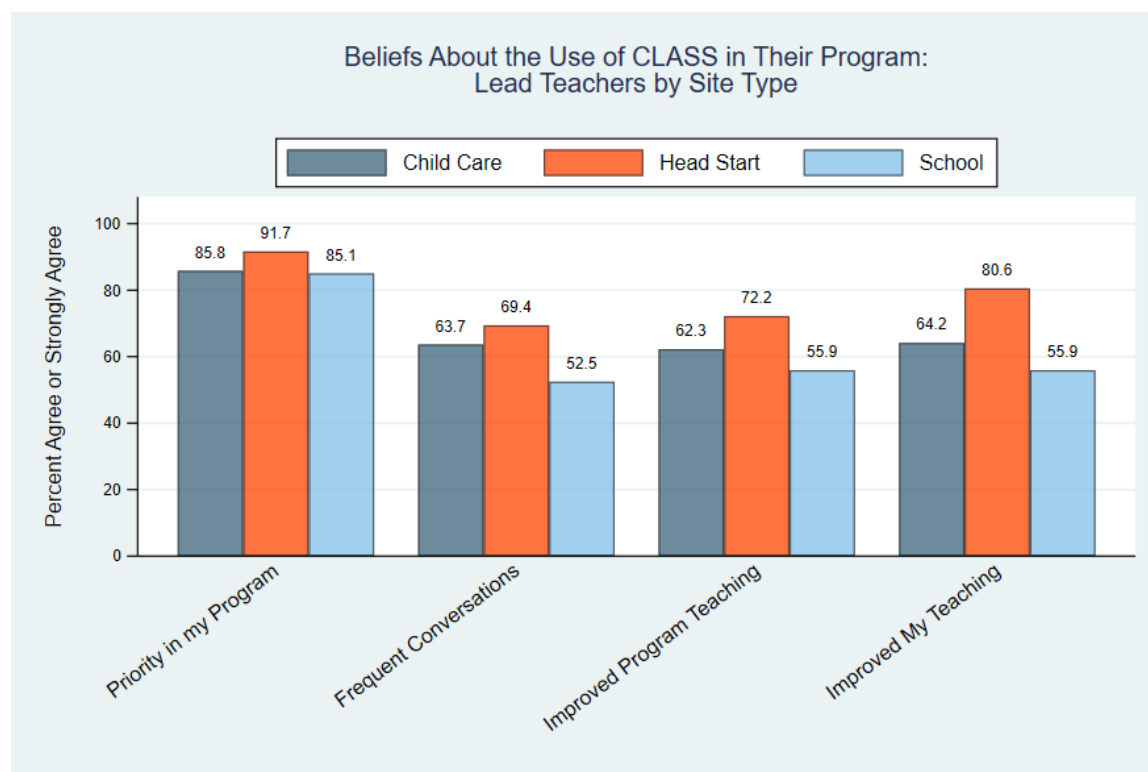
Section 5: Leadership

Early childhood site leaders (e.g. child care directors, Head Start directors, school principals, etc.) likely play an important role in shaping site quality. This section describes leaders' self-reported practices as well as lead teachers' perspectives of their leaders.

Staff Meetings

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked site leaders to answer a series of questions about the support they provide their teachers. Overall, 30% of site leaders indicated they meet with their full staff daily or weekly, 38% indicated they did so monthly, and 32% indicated they do so a few times a year (Figure 31). While "never" was a response option for this survey question, no leaders at any site type reported that they never meet with their entire staff. Child care leaders were most likely to report frequent meetings with the whole staff. Fourteen percent reported daily staff meetings. In contrast, 3% of school leaders, and no Head Start site leaders, reported meeting with the entire staff this often.

Figure 31. Frequency of Meeting with Entire Staff: Responses from Site Leaders Overall and by Site Type
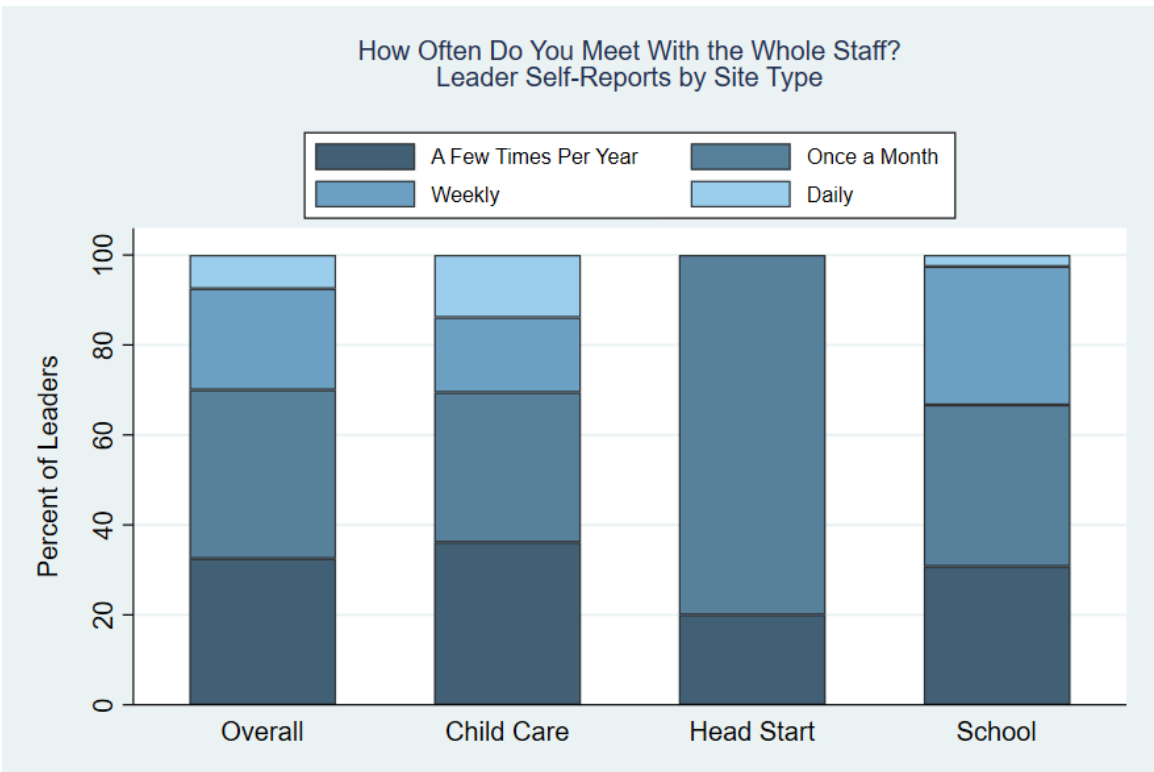

Site leaders reported more frequently meeting with individual teachers than meeting with the whole staff. Overall, about 76% of leaders met with individual teachers daily or weekly, as illustrated in Figure 32. Head Start leaders reported meeting with their teachers less frequently than leaders in other site types. For instance, while 20% of Head Start leaders reported meeting with individual teachers only a few times a year, this figure was 9% among child care leaders and 8% in schools.

Figure 32. Frequency of Meetings with Individual Teachers: Responses from Site Leaders Overall and by Site Type
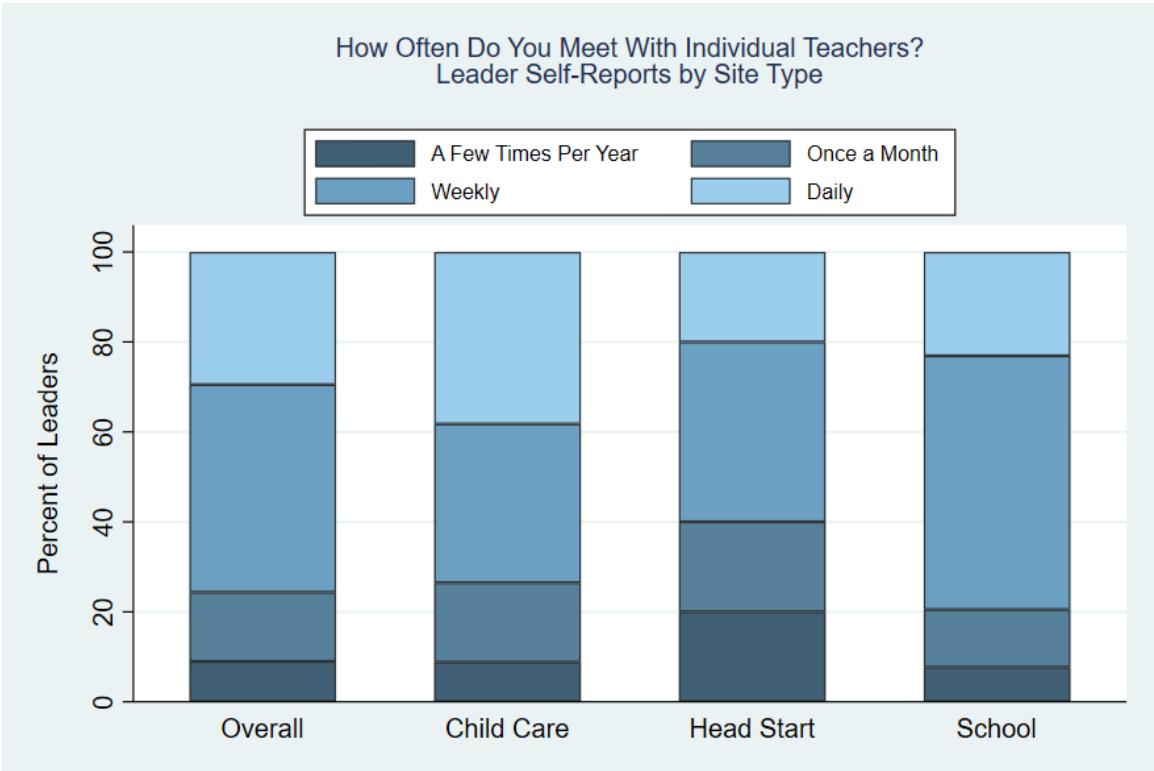
About two thirds of leaders met with new teachers either daily or weekly (Figure 33). Child care leaders reported the most frequent meetings with new teachers: 37% of child care leaders met with new teachers daily, compared to 20% of Head Start leaders and 10% of school leaders.

Figure 33. Frequency of Meetings with New Teachers: Responses from Site Leaders Overall and by Site Type

How Often Do You Meet With New Teachers?
Leader Self-Reports by Site Type
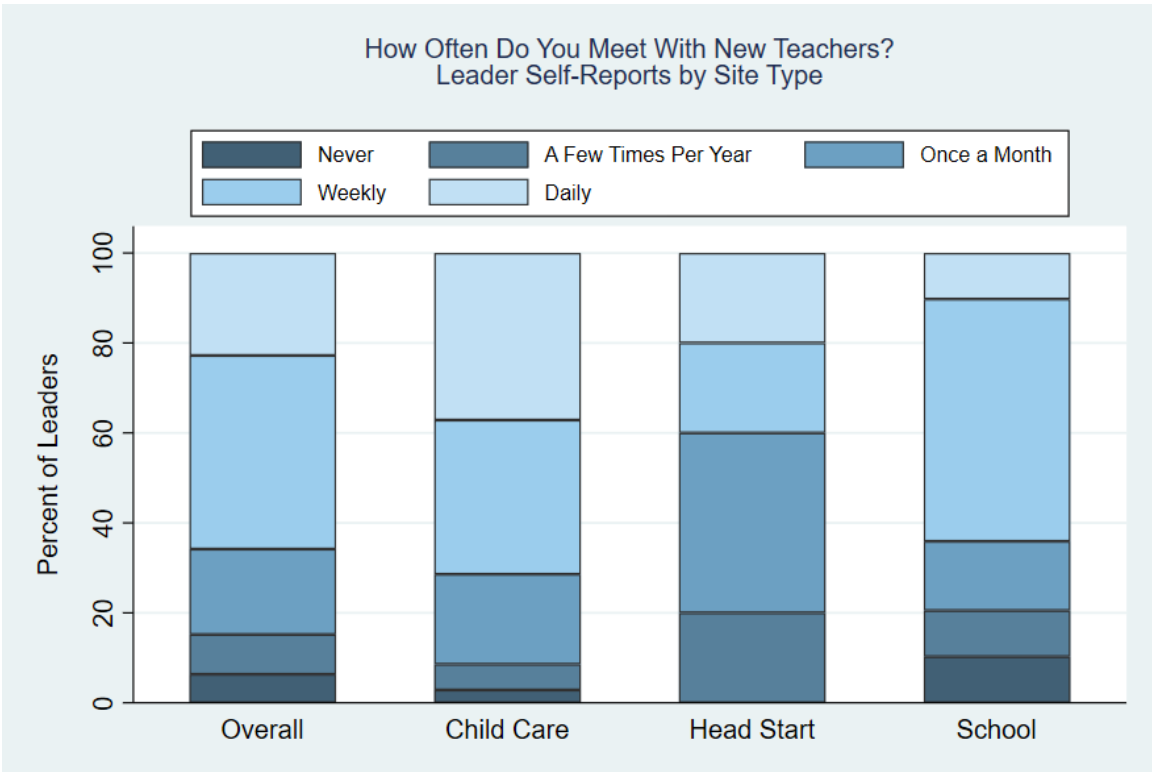
Classroom Observations

Conducting classroom observations is another key way that many site leaders support their teachers. Overall, almost 70% of leaders reported observing classrooms either daily or weekly (Figure 34). These patterns differ considerably across site types, however. While 82% of school leaders reported conducting observations daily or weekly, 57% of child care leaders and 40% of Head Start leaders did so.

Figure 34. Frequency of Classroom Observations: Responses from Site Leaders Overall and by Site Type
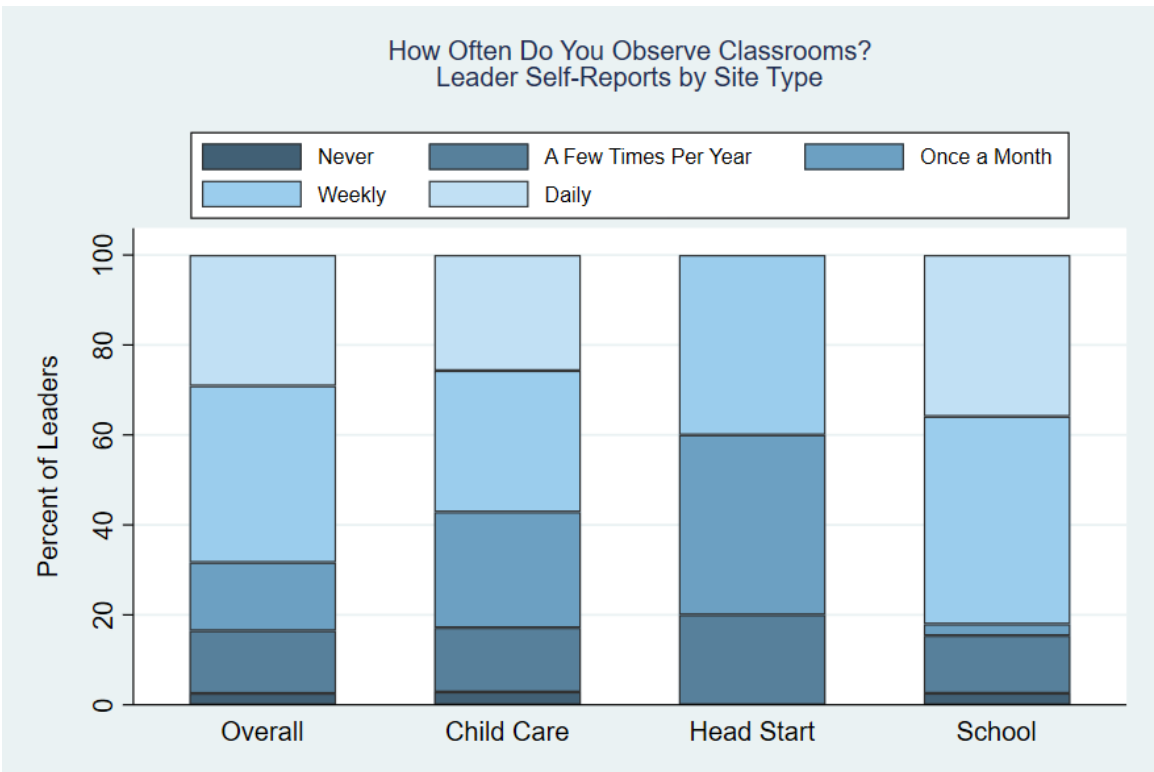
Evaluation of Leadership

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked leaders to evaluate their own management practices. They were asked how much they disagreed or agreed with each of the following statements:

· *"I respond to teachers' concerns in a timely manner."*

· *"I work hard to promote teamwork in this center."*

· *"My teachers' well-being is important to me."*

· *"I know about teachers' day-to-day classroom experiences."*

· *"Teachers feel comfortable checking in with me about issues or concerns that are important to them."*

· *"I provide teachers with regular feedback on their classroom practice."*

· *"I ensure teachers have structured opportunities to learn from one another."*

The overwhelming majority of leaders (93% or more) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with these statements regarding positive leadership practices (not shown).

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked teachers to report on their leaders' practices and capabilities. Table 11 indicates the percentage of teachers who "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with a set of statements about their leaders.

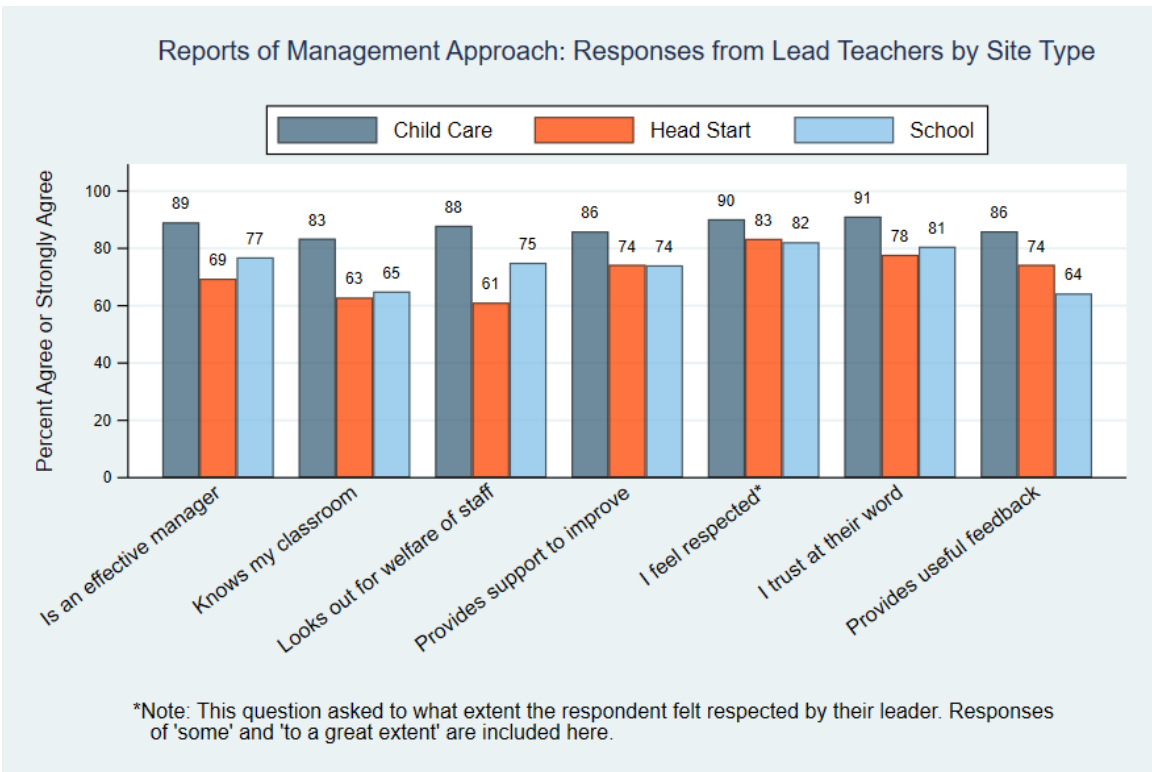**Table 11. Reports of Leader Management Practices: Responses by Lead Teachers**

	Percent "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"
The site leader is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly.	82.1%
The site leader knows what's going on in my classroom.	86.1%
The site leader looks out for the personal welfare of the staff members.	85.4%
I trust the site leader at their word.	73.5%
The site leader provides me with useful feedback to improve my teaching.	79.7%
To what extent do you feel respected by site leader?*	80.0%

Note: This question asked to what extent the respondent felt respected by their leader. Responses of "some" and "to a great extent" are included here.

The majority of lead teachers reported favorable perceptions of their leaders. For example, 82% considered their leader an effective manager, and 86% agreed that the leader knows what's going in in the classroom. However, nearly 30% of lead teachers "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that they could trust their leaders at their word. Further, about 20% of teachers did not believe their leader provides useful feedback or feel that their site leader respects them.

Additionally, there were notable differences in teachers' perceptions of leaders across site types. As illustrated in Figure 35, child care teachers were most likely to be satisfied with their leaders' practices. For all seven statements, the child care teachers were most likely to "agree" or "strongly agree" with positive statements regarding their leaders' management. In fact, 86% of child care teachers agreed that "My leader provides useful feedback," a proportion that was a full 20 percentage points higher than among school teachers.

Figure 35. Reports of Management Approach: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Reports of Management Approach: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

*Note: This question asked to what extent the respondent felt respected by their leader. Responses of 'some' and 'to a great extent' are included here.

Section 6: Compensation & Supports

The early childhood workforce in the United States is characterized by low pay and many ECE educators face challenges making ends meet. Low wages make it difficult to attract and retain qualified educators (National Research Council and Institute of Medicine, 2015). This section examines the compensation and benefits of teachers and leaders[5].

Salary

Overall, lead teachers earned approximately $31,600 per year or, $15.19/hour – only 122% of the 2019 Federal Poverty Level for a family of four. For site leaders, the average annual salary was $50,400 per year.

Figure 36 shows both lead teacher and site leader annual salaries by site type. Child care lead teachers and leaders received the lowest annual average salary. Lead teachers at child care sites earned an estimated average annual salary of $21,200, approximately half of what lead teachers at schools earned ($41,200). Further, while child care site leaders earned an estimated $25,500 annually, school site leaders earned roughly three times more: $71,900 on average. The Head Start workforce also earned considerably more than the child care workforce, though less than school employees.

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[5] To report compensation, teachers and leaders were asked to provide a dollar amount and select a corresponding time period. For example, a respondent may have entered "10" as the dollar amount, and then selected "hourly" from the time period options. The amounts presented here were calculated by assuming a full-time, full-year work schedule (because many early childhood sites operate year-round) and multiplying or dividing dollar amounts as appropriate based on the time period. For example, the response of $10 per hour would be multiplied by 40 (hours per week), and then multiplied by 52 (weeks per year) to arrive at an estimated annual salary. Nearly all school teachers reported annual salaries, in line with what is reported here, and as such represents their school year earnings, but not their potential for a second job in the summer.

Figure 36. Estimated Annual Earnings of Lead Teachers and Site Leaders
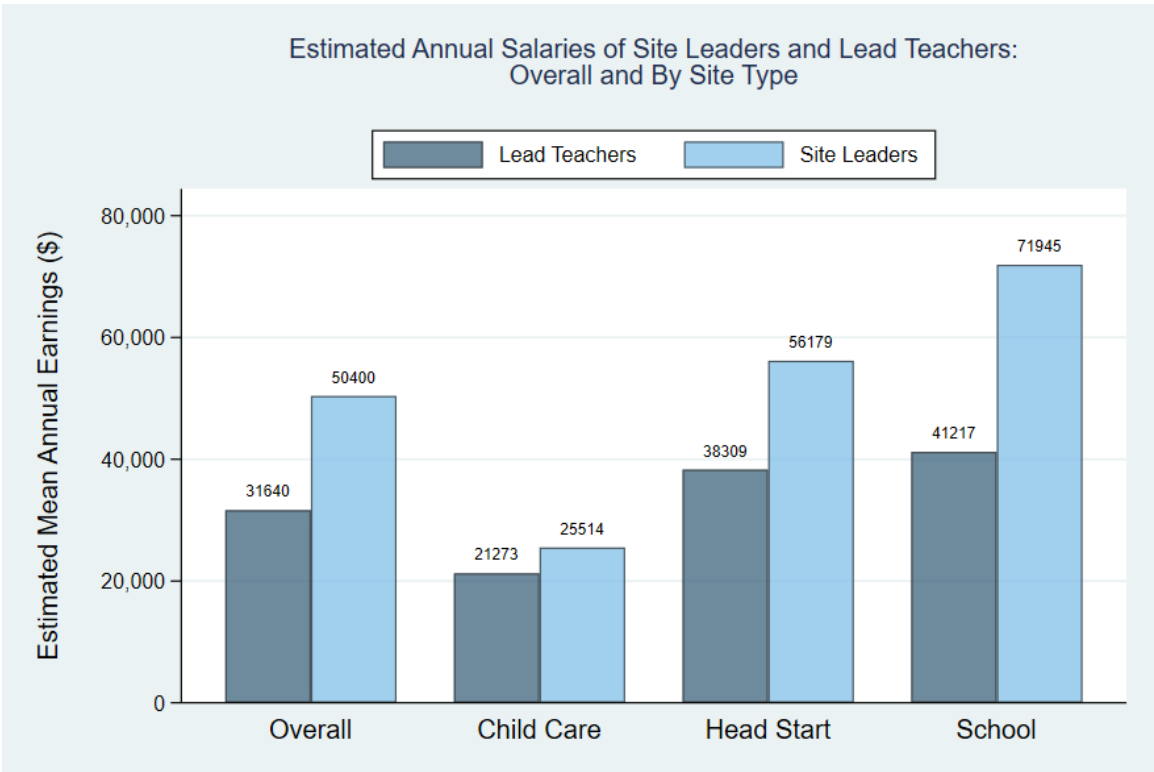
Hours Worked

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked respondents to record the number of hours they work in a typical week. As seen in Table 12, site leaders reported more hours per week (42) than lead teachers (36).

Table 12. Hours Worked Per Week: Responses from Lead Teachers and Site Leaders

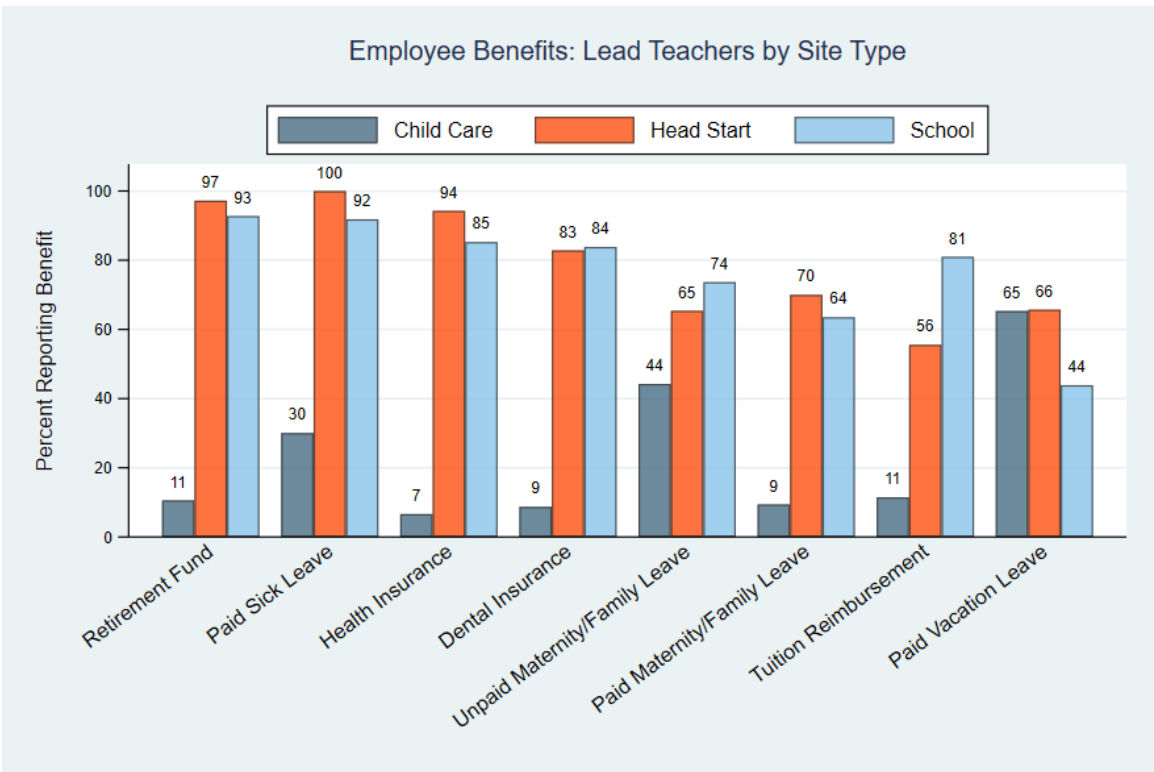|	Lead Teachers				Site Leaders			
	CC	HS	School	Overall	CC	HS	School	Overall
Hours per Week	37.6	35.0	33.9	35.7	38.1	40.0	46.2	42.1

Benefits

The SEE-LA Workforce Survey also asked respondents to report the job benefits available to them through their site. Figure 37 shows the benefits available to teachers overall.

Figure 37. Employee Benefits: Responses from Lead Teachers

Lead Teacher Employee Benefits
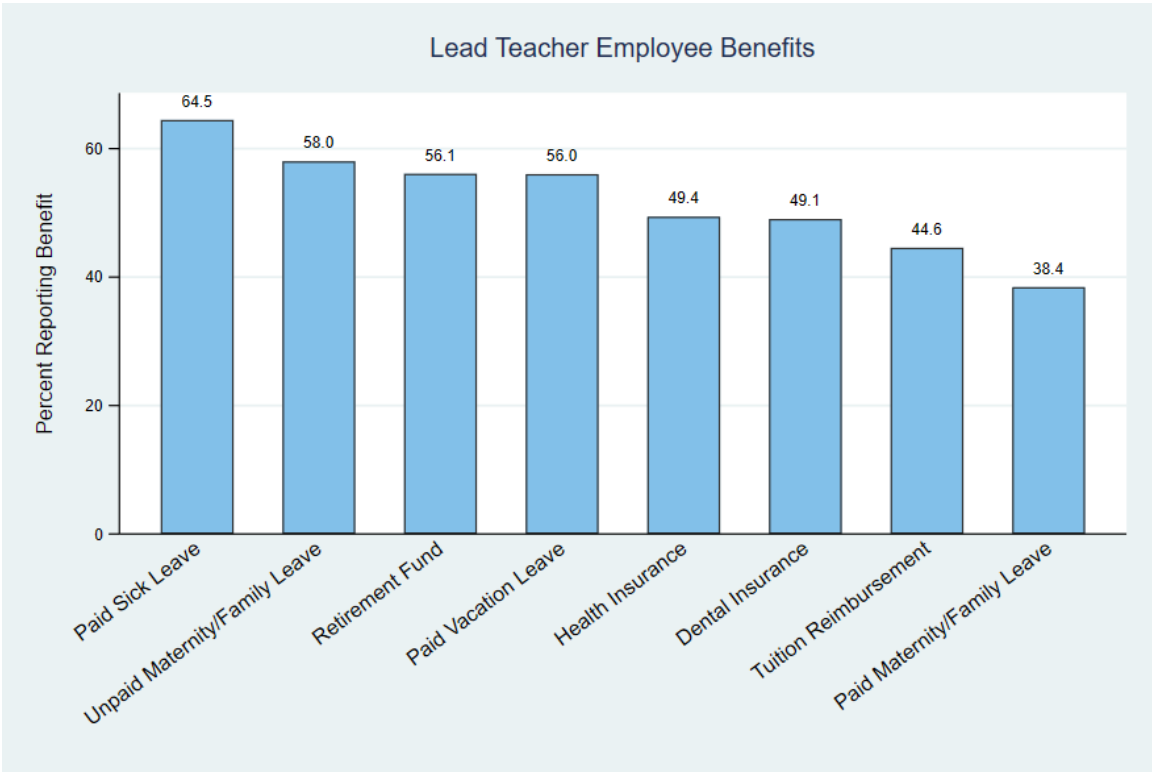
Comparing across site types (Figure 38), child care teachers were far less likely to receive each benefit. For instance, the percentage of Head Start and school teachers who received health insurance from their site was at least 12 times greater than that of child care teachers. Moreover, the percentage of teachers who received paid maternity/family leave was more than seven times lower for child care lead teachers than for Head Start sites and schools: only 9% of child care teacher reported receiving this benefit from their site, as compared to 64% and 70% of Head Start and school teachers, respectively.

Figure 38. Employee Benefits: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

Working a Second Job

Finally, a significant proportion of early childhood workers held additional jobs to supplement their income (Figure 39). Almost 30% of lead teachers and 17% of leaders worked at another job outside of their site. School lead teachers were most likely to do so, with more than one-third taking on extra work, despite earning the highest annual salary of the three site types (though this may include work during summer vacation). Further, approximately 20% of child care and 40% of Head Start site leaders worked a second job, despite working roughly 40 hours a week in their primary roles.

Figure 39. Percent that Work an Additional Job: Responses from Lead Teachers and Site Leaders by Site Type
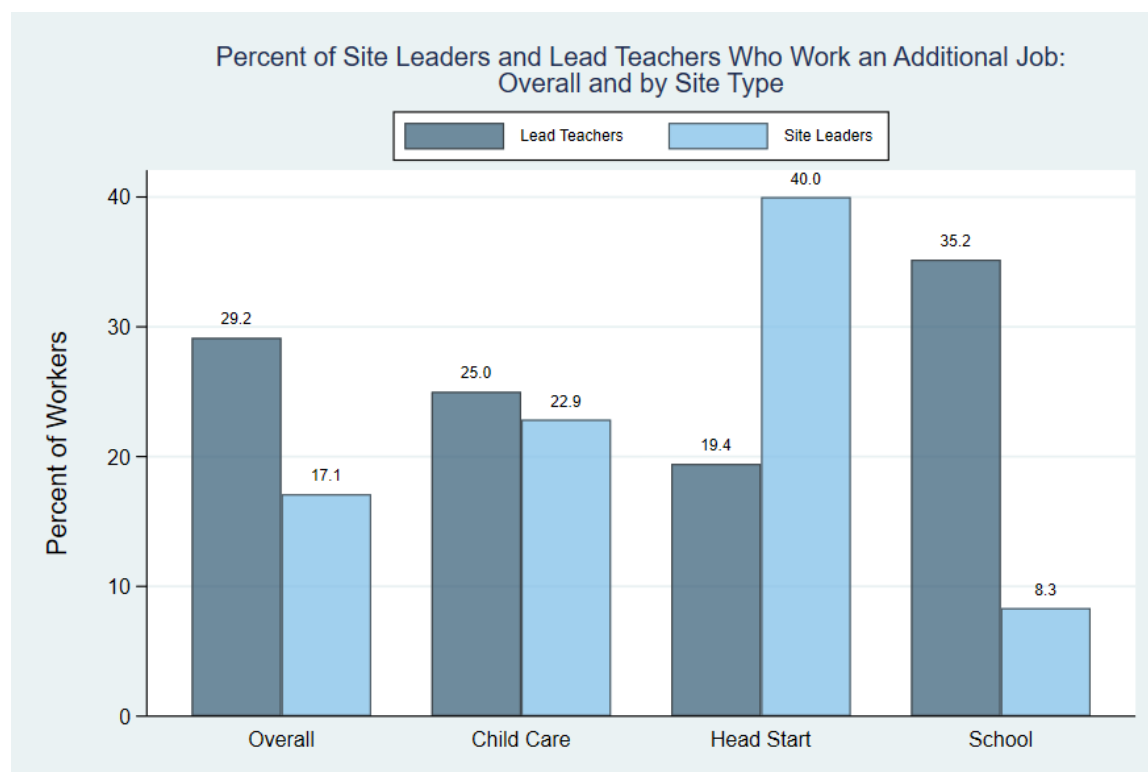
Section 7: Wellbeing

Low pay and other job stressors can negatively influence the wellbeing of the ECE workforce, which is a significant concern both for the educators themselves and for the young children they serve. Studies show that children in early childhood classrooms with more depressed teachers experience less growth in social-emotional skills (Roberts et al., 2016). The SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked teachers and leaders to report on three aspects of their wellbeing: emotional and mental wellbeing, financial security, and food security.

Emotional and Mental Wellbeing

Teachers and leaders completed the Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale Short Form (CES-D-SF), a seven-item questionnaire that measures the frequency and severity of depression symptoms[6]. The CES-D short form asks participants to report how often they experienced lack of appetite, trouble concentrating, inadequate sleep, sadness, and fatigue in the past week.

Overall, 23% of lead teachers and 22% of site leaders scored at least an 8 on the CES-D-SF and therefore are considered at risk for clinical depression. In comparison, in the United States, 7% of all adults and 8.6% of female adults experienced at least one depressive episode in 2017 (National Institute of Mental Health). Survey data from the Centers for Disease Control indicate that, nationwide, 19.8% of women who earn less than 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, and 13.9% of women who earn between 100-200% of the Federal Poverty Level, were at risk for depression between 2013-2019 (Brody et al., 2018).

Table 13 shows that teachers at Head Start sites were the most likely to meet the clinical threshold for depression risk (30%), compared to 22% of child care teachers and 24% of school teachers.

Table 13. Percent Meeting CES-D-SF Clinical Threshold: Lead Teachers and Site Leaders

	Lead Teachers				Site Leaders			
	CC	HS	School	Overall	CC	HS	School	Overall
% Meeting Clinical Threshold	21.7%	30.6%	24.0%	23.4%	29.7%	20.0%	15.4%	22.2%

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[6] Response options were: (1) rarely or never, (2) some or a little, (3) occasionally or moderately, (4) most or all of the time, or (5) don't know. The scale is coded such that "rarely or never" receives a score of zero and "most or all of the time" receives a score of three. These scores are summed to produce a total such that higher scores indicate greater severity of depression. The CES-D-SF cutoff score for identifying individuals at risk for clinical depression is a score of 8 (Levine 2013). These scores have been shown to be a valid and reliable measure of depression.

Figure 40 illustrates the percent of lead teachers who experienced specific depression symptoms "occasionally" or "most of the time" in the previous week. Nearly 35% of lead teachers reported having felt "that everything I did was an effort," and over one-quarter of teachers reported experience restless sleep. More than 10% of leader teachers indicated they "felt sad" or "felt depressed" occasionally or most of the time in the prior week.

Figure 40. Percent Lead Teachers Experiencing Depression Symptoms
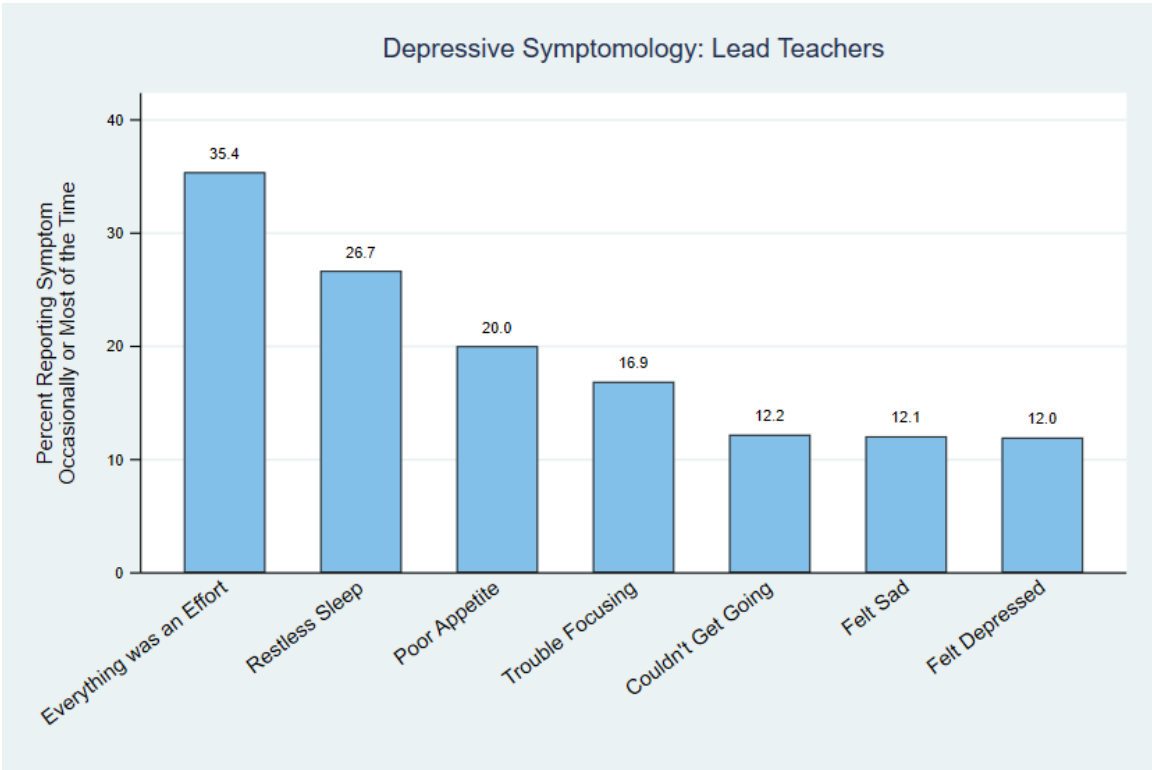
Figure 41 shows differences in depressive symptomology across teachers at different site types. Substantially fewer school-based teachers reported feeling that "everything was an effort" than Head Start or child care teachers, although they were the most likely of the three groups to experience many of the symptoms, including restless sleep, trouble focusing, and low energy ("couldn't get going").

Figure 41. Percent Lead Teachers Experiencing Depression Symptoms by Site Type

Depressive Symptomology: Lead Teachers By Site Type
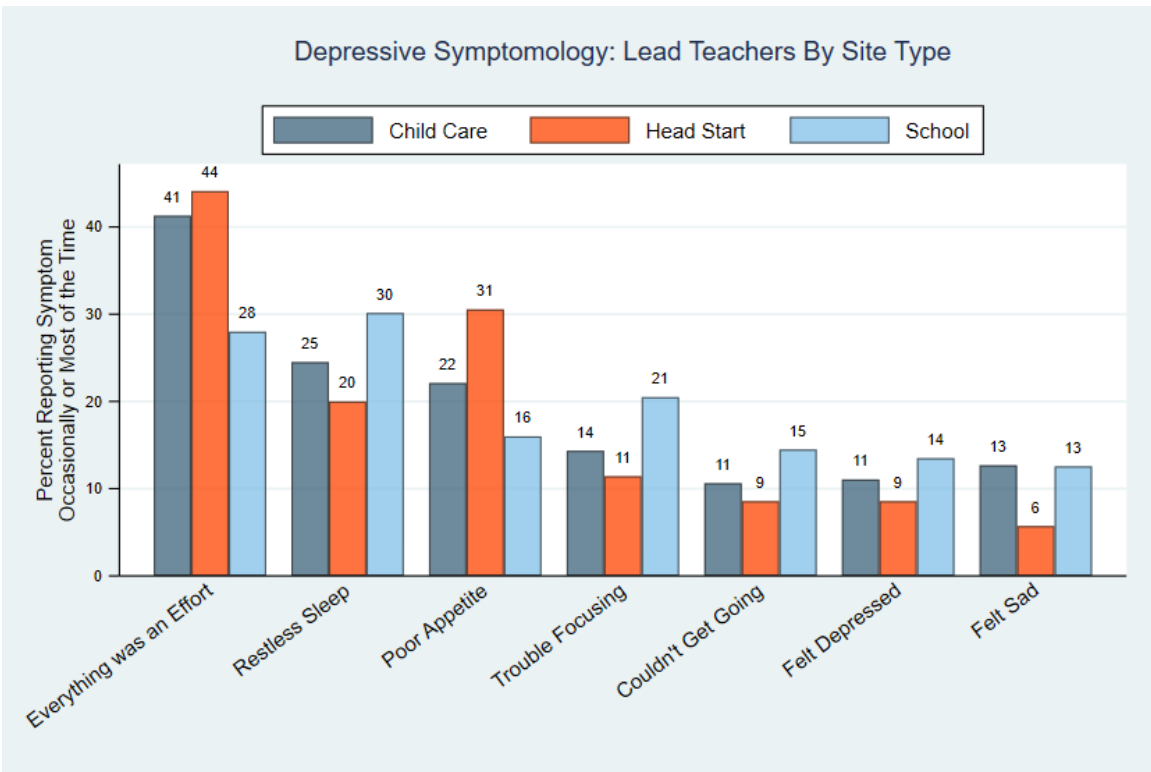
Financial Security and Food Security

Survey respondents were also asked to report on their financial wellbeing and food security. The workforce's low wages impact educators' ability to afford basic expenses such as housing, food, and healthcare. Likewise, food security—reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food—is critical to an individual's mental and physical wellbeing.

Results indicate that a substantial proportion of lead teachers could not afford basic necessities (Figure 42). Over 45% of lead teachers indicated they did not have enough money for medical expenses in the last 3 months and over 20% could not afford rent. Almost 60% of lead teachers also could not afford to pay their debts, which could have a negative impact on their future financial security.

Figure 42. Percent that Could Not Afford Basic Expenses: Reponses from Lead Teachers
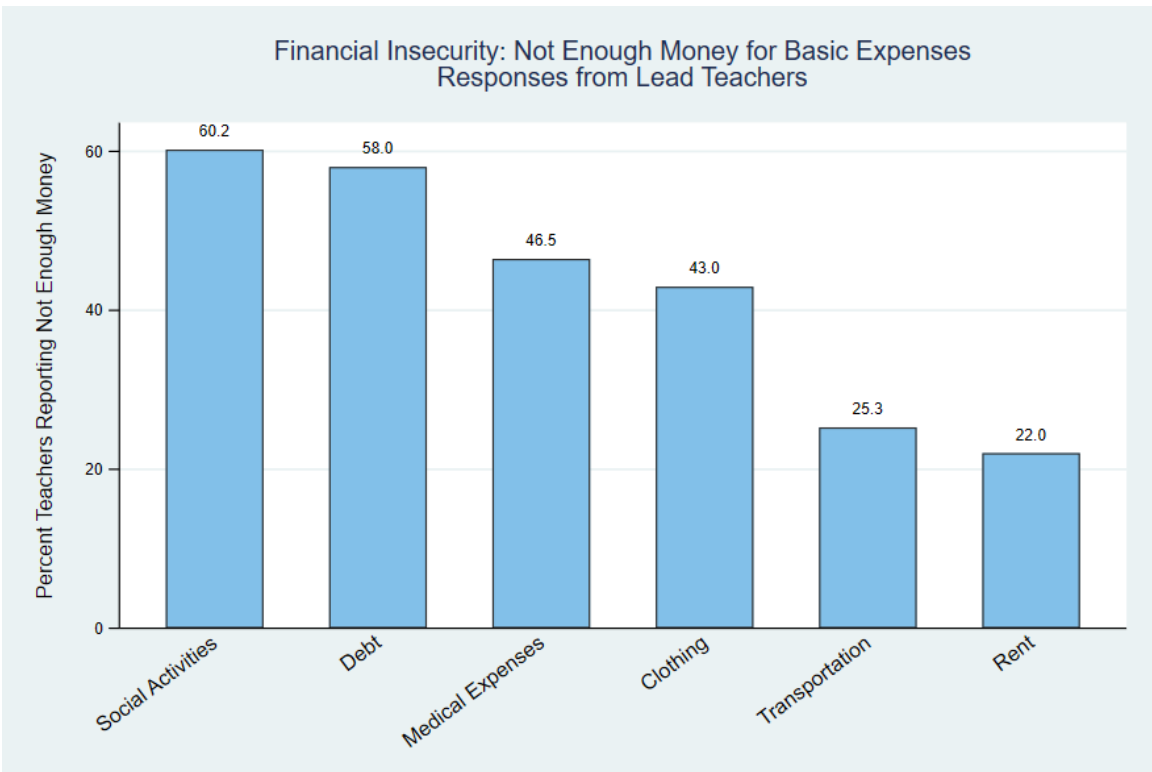
Lead teachers at child care sites were much more likely than school and Head Start teachers to report not being able to afford each type of expense (Figure 43). For all expenses except clothing, school-based teachers were least likely to report difficulty affording these expenses. This trend aligns with lead teachers' self-reported salaries and wages; child care and Head Start teachers received lower pay than school teachers on average. While 33% of school-based pre-kindergarten teachers reported not being able to afford medical expenses, 60% of child care teachers – who were the least likely to have health insurance provided by their site – provided this response. Child care and Head Start teachers were also more likely to report not being able to afford transportation and rent. It is worth noting however, that while less pronounced, large proportions of school teachers were also financially insecure, as is particularly apparent in the inability of 51% of all school-based teachers to pay for debt.

Figure 43. Percent that Could Not Afford Basic Expenses: Reponses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
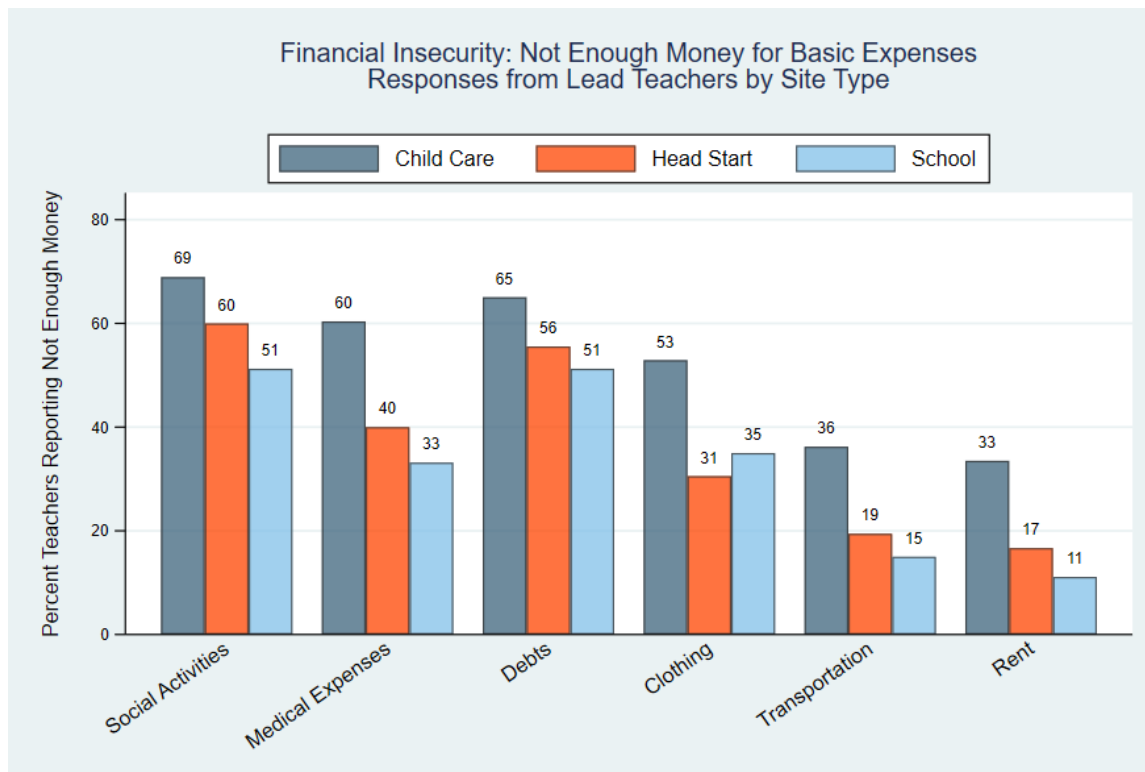
In addition to these expenses, the SEE-LA Workforce Survey asked teachers to report how often in three months prior to the survey they were unable to afford balanced meals and how often they had run out of food and could not afford to buy more (Table 14). More than 40% of lead teachers responded affirmatively to each question, suggesting high levels of food insecurity among early educators. Similar to the findings on financial insecurity, lead teachers at child care and Head Start sites were more likely to experience food insecurity than school-based pre-kindergarten teachers. About 55% of child care and Head Start teachers could not afford to buy an adequate amount of food – almost 20 percentage points higher than school-based pre-kindergarten teachers. Child care and Head Start lead teachers were also more likely to report not being able to afford balanced meals.

Table 14. Food Insecurity: Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	School	Overall
"I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals": % Teachers Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	47.2%	52.9%	40.2%	42.2%
"The food I bought didn't last and I didn't have the money to buy more": % Teachers Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	53.4%	58%	36.7%	45.4%

Section 8: Job Satisfaction, Job Commitment, and Teacher Turnover

Nationally, the early childhood education workforce is characterized by high levels of teacher turnover, which can pose challenges for quality improvement efforts and negatively impact children. This section examines teachers' satisfaction with their jobs as well as site leaders' perspectives on lead teacher turnover and hiring.

Satisfaction

Overall, lead teachers reported high levels of satisfaction with the contribution their work makes. In each site type, nearly all lead teachers reported they felt they were making a difference (Figure 44). Additionally, over 85% of lead teachers in each site type "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they enjoy their job (Figure 45), and over 70% indicated that they would choose to teach early childhood education again "if they could start over" (Figure 46). Similarly, about 80% of teachers overall indicated they planned on staying in their current roles until August of 2019, which was about 9-10 months after they took the survey (Figure 47).

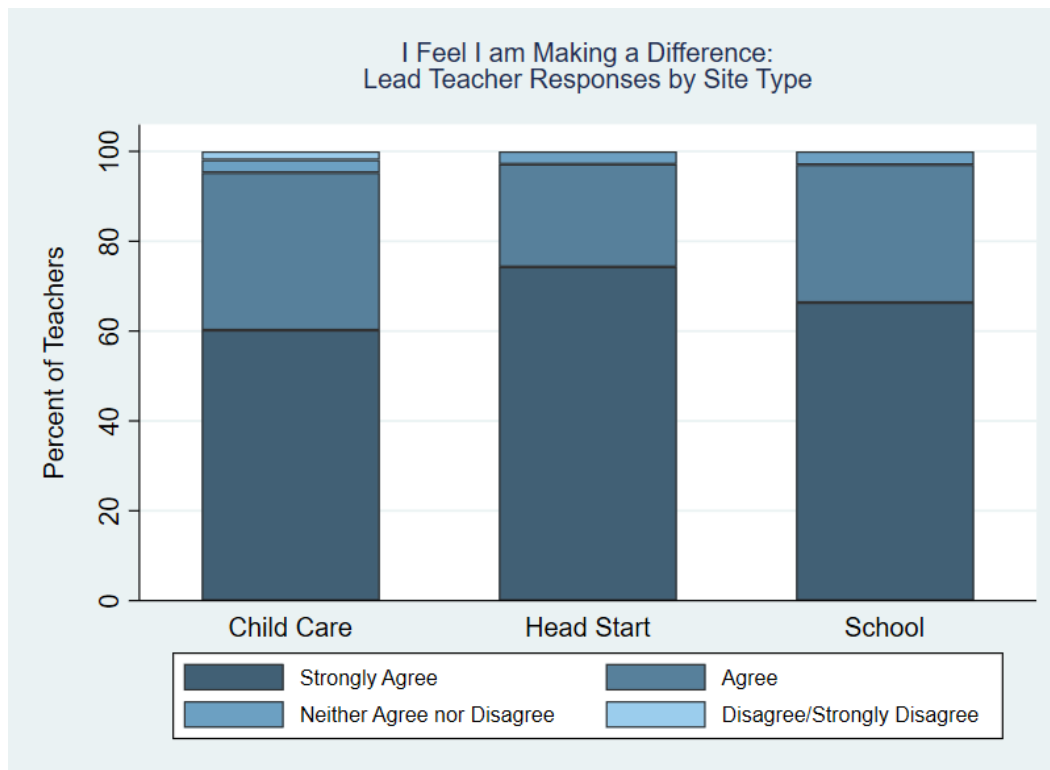**Figure 44. "I Feel I am Making a Difference": Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type**

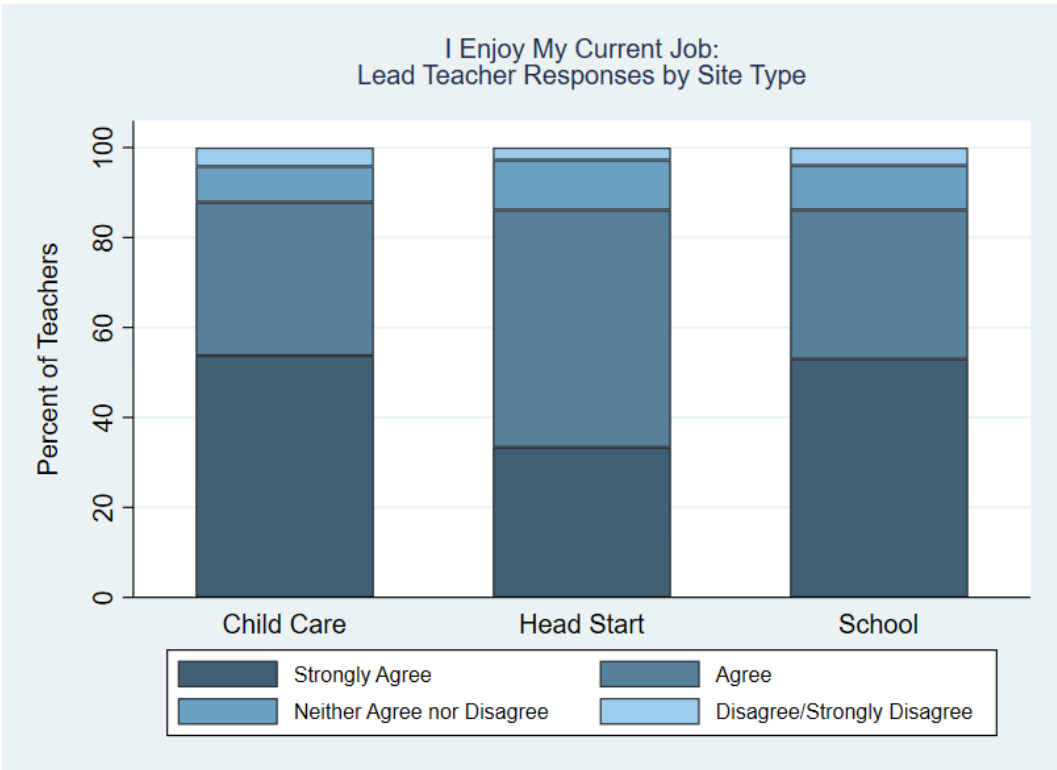**Figure 45. "I Enjoy My Current Job": Response from Lead Teachers by Site Type**

Figure 46. "I Would Choose My Career Again": Responses from Lead Teachers by Site Type
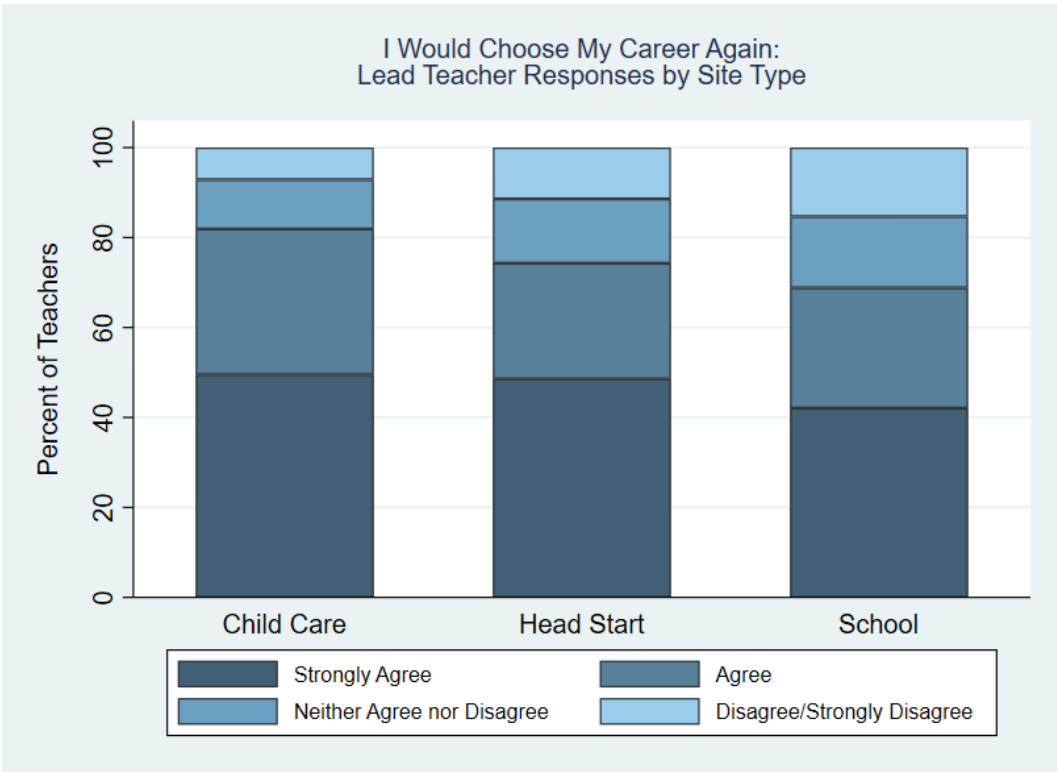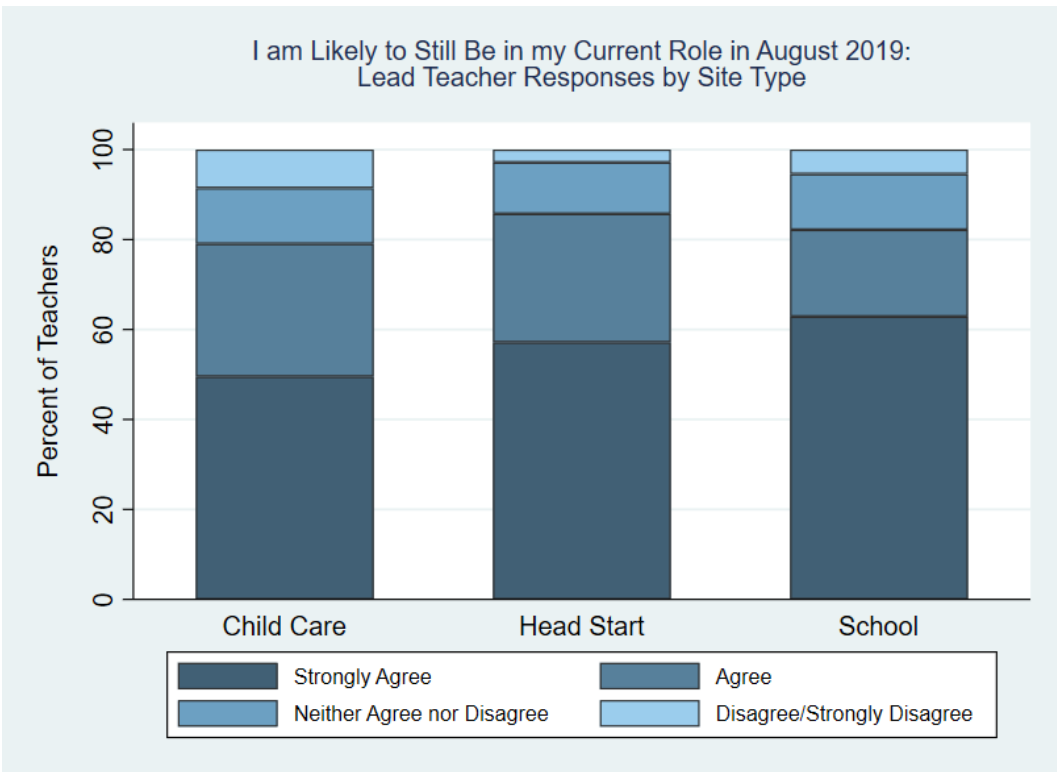
Figure 47. Intention to Remain in Current Role: Responses from Lead Teacher by Site Type


Turnover

Although the majority of lead teachers indicated they planned to stay in their positions, more than half of all site leaders reported teacher turnover in the 12 months prior to completing the survey. A far greater percentage of child care and Head Start sites reported experiencing turnover than schools (Figure 48). Twenty eight percent of school leaders reported having at least one teacher leave her/his position in the last year. In contrast, three-quarters of child care leaders and 80% of Head Start leaders reported at least one teacher leaving.

A much larger percent of child care and Head Start site leaders also reported having an unfilled teaching position at their program at the time that they took the survey. No school leaders indicated that they had an unfilled lead teacher position. In contrast, roughly a third of child care leaders and 40% of Head Start leaders reported having a vacancy at their program.

Figure 48. Teacher Turnover and Vacancies: Responses from Site Leaders Overall and by Site Type
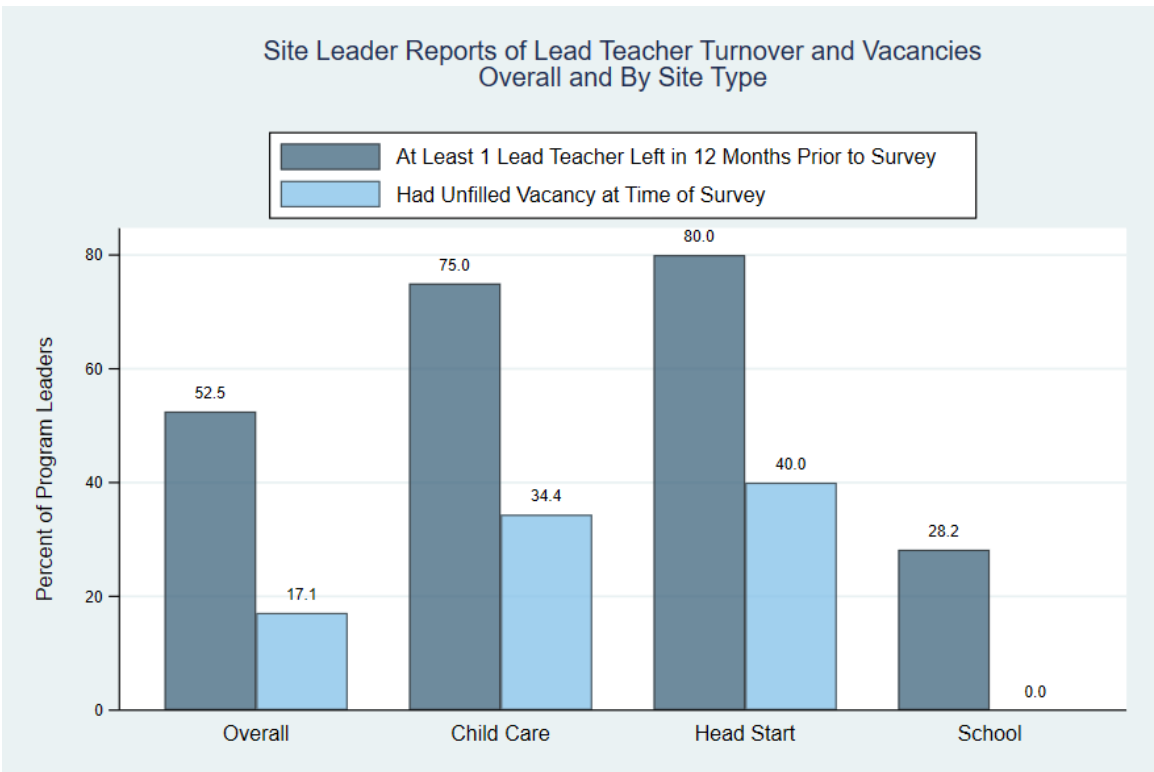
The survey also asked leaders to report the reasons why lead teachers left their positions in the past 12 months (Figure 49). More than half of site leaders who indicated that at least one of their lead teachers had left in the past year reported that a lead teacher left for "personal reasons (health, baby, moving, etc.)," and a third of these leaders terminated at least one teacher. About a fourth of leaders reported that a teacher left to take a non-teaching position. About one fifth of leaders who experienced turnover indicated they had a teacher leave for a teaching position at a public school.

Figure 49. Teachers' Reasons for Leaving Position: Responses from Site Leaders

Site Leader Reports of Teachers' Turnover Motivation

Note: Responses limited to program leaders who reported a lead teacher leaving in the past year.
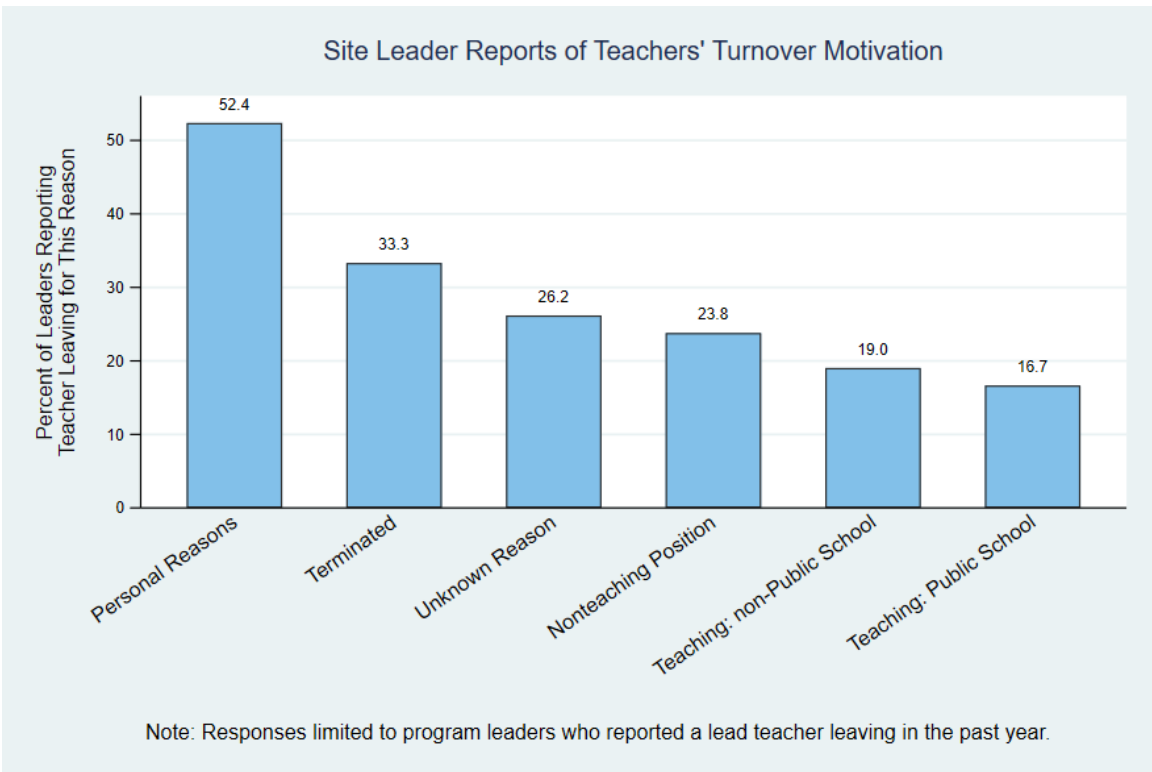
Figure 50 indicates substantial differences across site types in reasons for teacher turnover. For instance, 44% of child care teachers reported terminating at least one lead teacher over the past 12 months, as did 25% of leaders in Head Start centers. In contrast, only 9% of school leaders reported terminating a teacher in the past 12 months. Child care leaders were about as likely as Head Start and school leaders to indicate teachers left for teaching positions *outside* the public schools, but less likely to report teacher exits for positions in public schools. While no school sites had teachers leave to take on a teaching position in a non-public school, 9% of school leaders reported a teacher left their site to teach in the public school system.

Figure 50. Teachers' Reasons for Leaving Position: Responses from Site Leaders by Site Type

Note: Responses limited to program leaders who reported a lead teacher leaving in the past year.
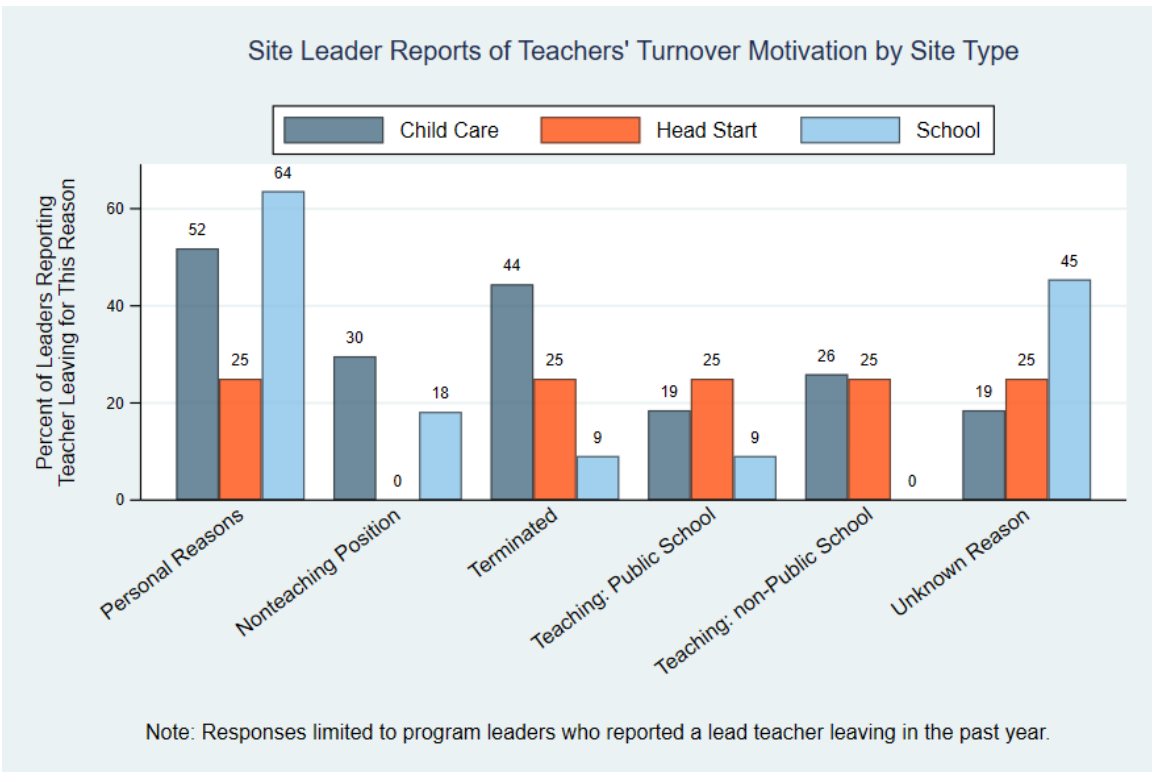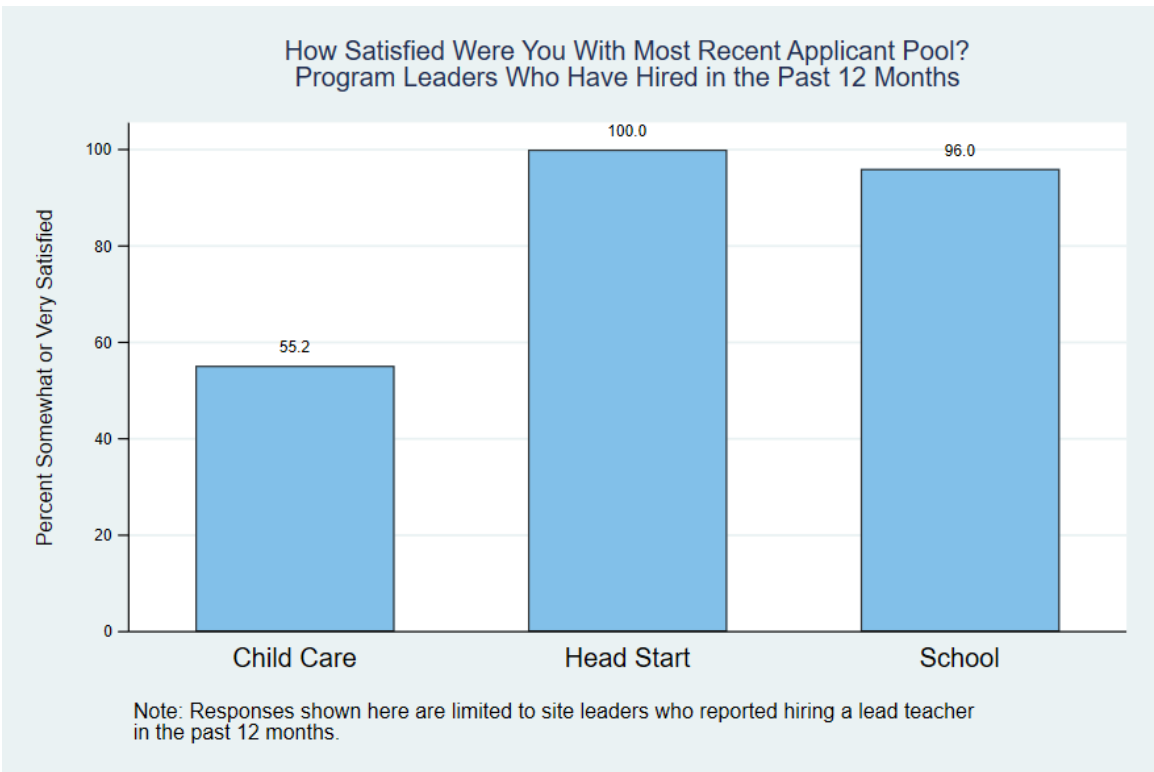
Hiring

Of site leaders who reported hiring a lead teacher in the 12 months prior to the survey, site leaders at child care and Head Start sites were far more likely to report difficulty in hiring new teachers than school leaders (Figure 51). Whereas all child care site leaders and all Head Start leaders reported that finding replacement teachers was either "fairly difficult" or "very difficult," only a third of school leaders indicated they experienced difficulty in replacing teachers who had left their site.

Figure 51. Hiring Difficulty: Responses from Site Leaders by Site Type

How Difficult is it to Hire Replacement Teachers?
Responses from Site Leaders by Site Type

Note: Responses shown here are limited to site leaders who reported hiring a lead teacher in the past 12 months.
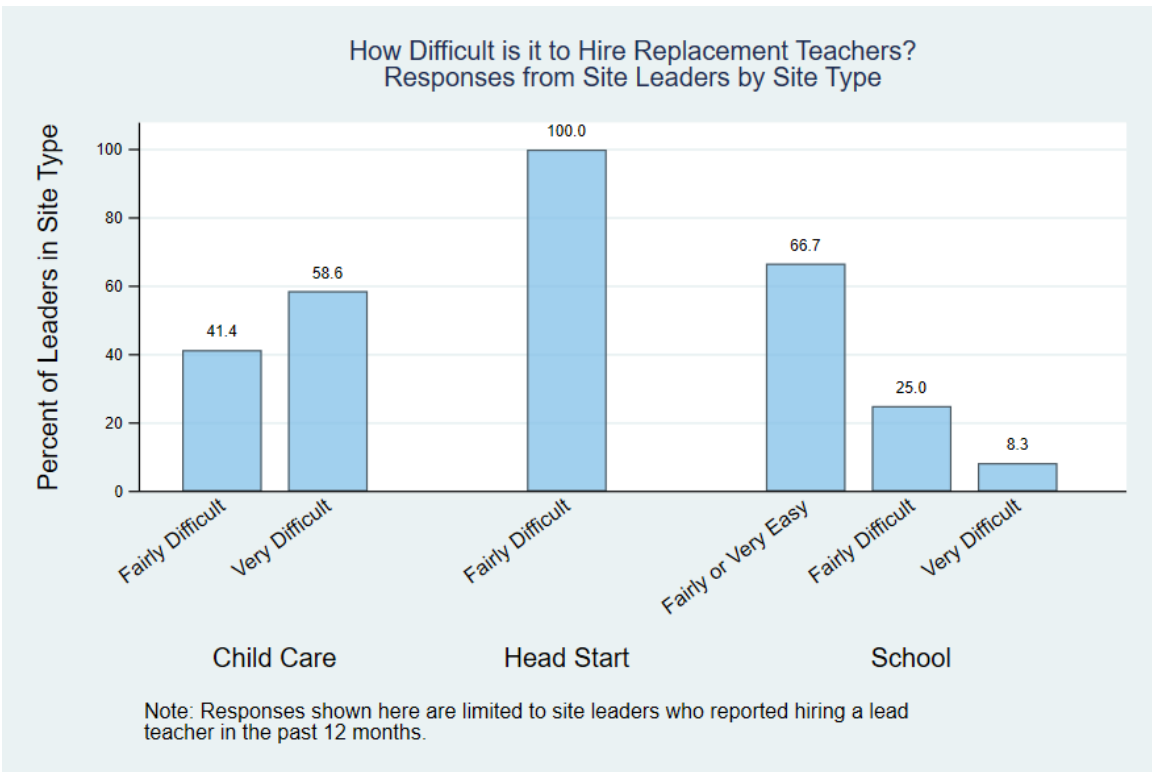
Although all Head Start leaders who had hired in the past year reported difficulty in finding replacement teachers, 100% of those leaders reported being satisfied with the applicant pool (Figure 53). Compared to other leaders who had also hired in the previous year, a slightly lower percentage of school leaders reported being "somewhat satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the applicant pool. In comparison, only slightly over half of site leaders at child care sites expressed satisfaction with the applicant pool.

Figure 52. Satisfaction with Applicant Pool: Responses from Site Leaders by Site Type

How Satisfied Were You With Most Recent Applicant Pool?
Program Leaders Who Have Hired in the Past 12 Months

Note: Responses shown here are limited to site leaders who reported hiring a lead teacher in the past 12 months.

Conclusion

Data from the 2018 SEE-LA Workforce Survey provide an unprecedented look at the lives and work of early educators in Jefferson Parish. The survey provides one of the only opportunities to compare the experiences of early educators across all types of publicly-funded ECE settings including subsidized child care, Head Start, and school-based pre-kindergarten settings. Moreover, every teacher, in every publicly-funded ECE site in this community was invited to take the survey, and 85% of teachers responded. This exceptionally high response rate, including over 1,000 teachers, provides some of the most comprehensive data available to date about the experiences and unique challenges these educators face.

The data paint a picture of diverse, hard-working early educators who, by and large, are eager to improve their practice to serve children. Educator buy-in to CLASS and LDOE's reforms was strong; most early educators used and approved of their curriculum; and most early educators attended professional development regularly.

However, the challenges these educators face were also revealed, not only in terms of site resources, but also in their personal, financial, and emotional wellbeing. Early educators, particularly in child care, work for very low wages, and struggle to make ends meet. The rate of depression in the sample was over 20%. These realities pose real hurdles for the hard work needed to improve ECE quality, and likely negatively impact the young children these educators work with.

That the SEE-LA Workforce Survey data consistently showed differences across site types. LDOE's approach to statewide ECE improvement is unique in its explicit efforts to unite all site types, including subsidized child care, Head Start, and school-based pre-kindergarten, into a single system. Still, substantial differences across settings with respect to funding levels, regulations, and supports remain. Further, teachers in these settings are having very different experiences and it is likely that children are as well.

Taken together, this report sheds new light on the experiences of early educators, and in doing so can inform new investments and efforts to support these early educators, and, by extension, the children of Louisiana.

Appendix

This appendix includes supplementary tables and figures related to assistant teachers and mirrors the organization of the full report.

Classroom Materials and Curriculum

Assistant teachers also interact with and use curriculum to guide children's learning in the classroom. Ninety two percent of assistant teachers reported using a Tier 1 curriculum, as compared to 90% of lead teachers and 91% of site leaders (not shown). As shown in Figure 1A, most assistants teachers who used a curriculum reported using a Tier 1 curriculum. Just 8.5% of assistant teachers reported using a non- Tier 1 or staff-developed curriculum as their primary curriculum. Similar to lead teachers, the most commonly reported curriculum was Frog Street, and the second most common curriculum was Creative Curriculum. More assistant teachers reported using Frog Street than lead teachers (68% as compared to 59%), and slightly fewer assistant teachers reported using Creative Curriculum than lead teachers (21% as compared to 27%).

Figure 1A. Primary Curriculum Used: Responses from Assistant Teachers

Note: Responses are limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum.
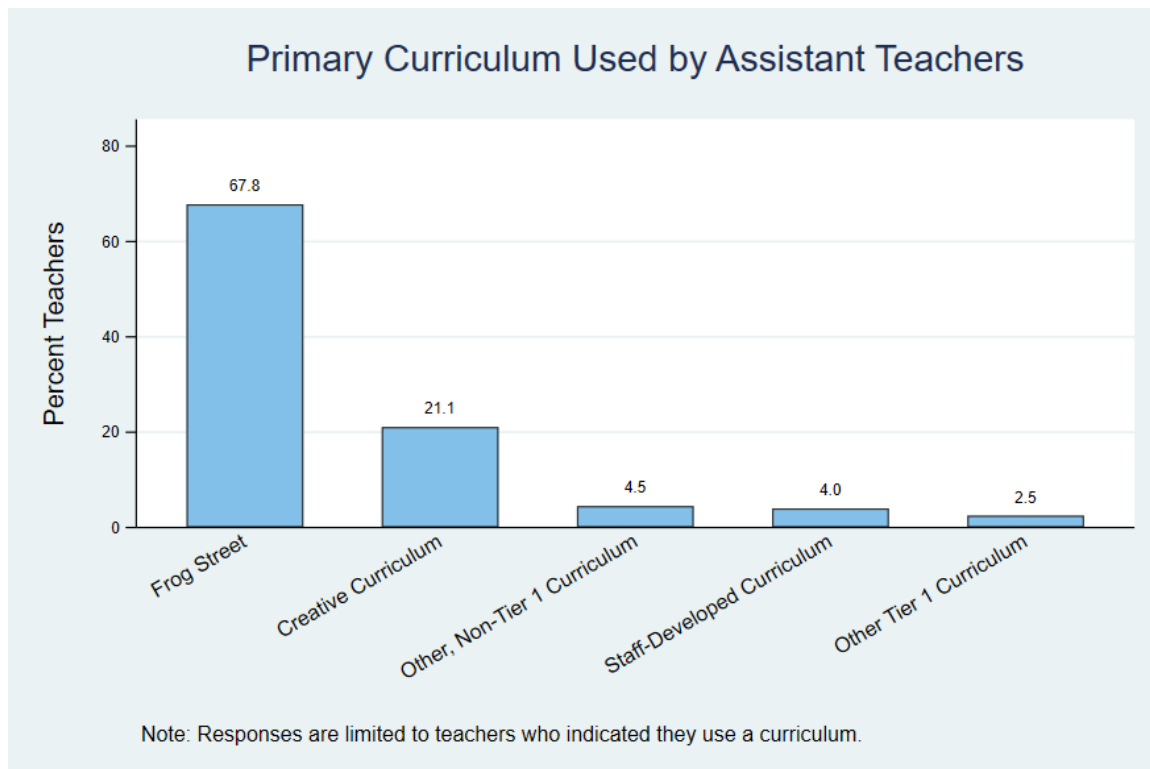
Ease of Curriculum Use

Similar to lead teachers, assistant teachers who used a curriculum generally reported that the curriculum was easy to use. Figure 2A shows that about 88% of assistant teachers viewed their primary curriculum as either "fairly" or "very" easy. For lead teachers this figure was 79%.

Figure 2A. Ease of Curriculum Use: Responses from Assistant Teachers
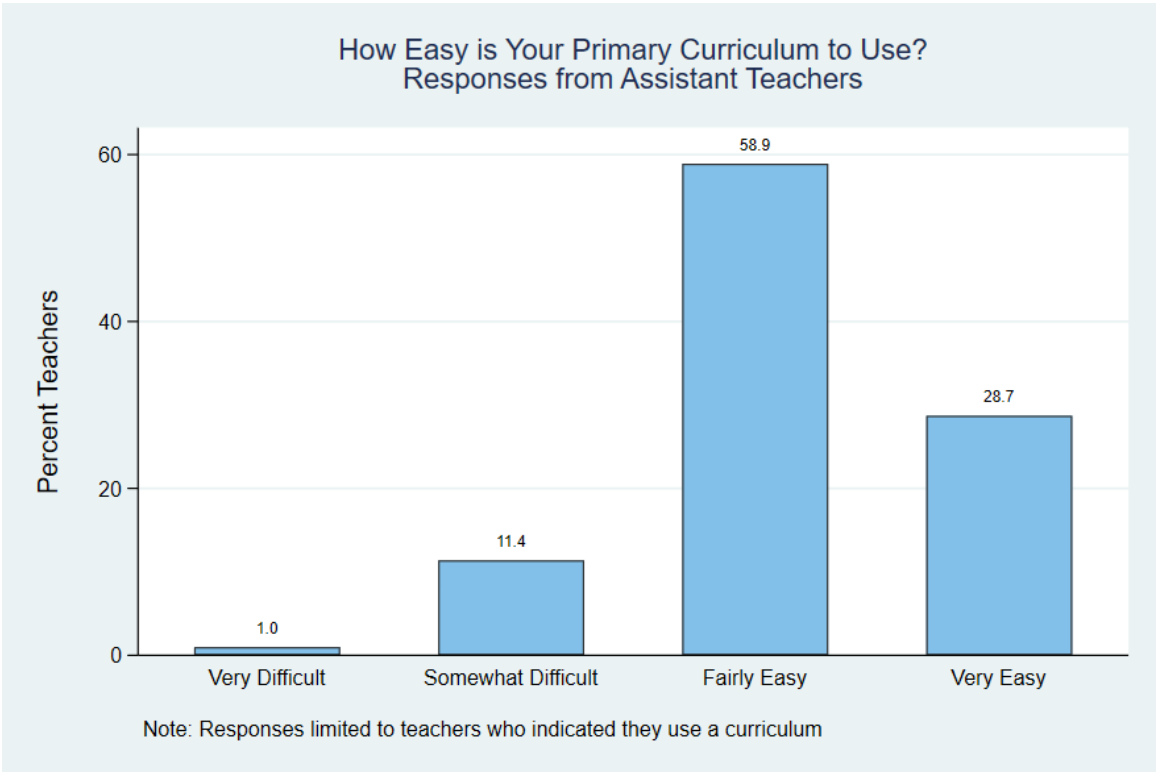
Within each site type, most assistant teachers reported finding their curriculum user-friendly, and patterns mirrored those observed for lead teachers, as shown in in Figure 3A.

Figure 3A. Ease of Curriculum Use: Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type

How Easy is Your Primary Curriculum to Use?
Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type

Note: Responses limited to teachers who indicated they use a curriculum
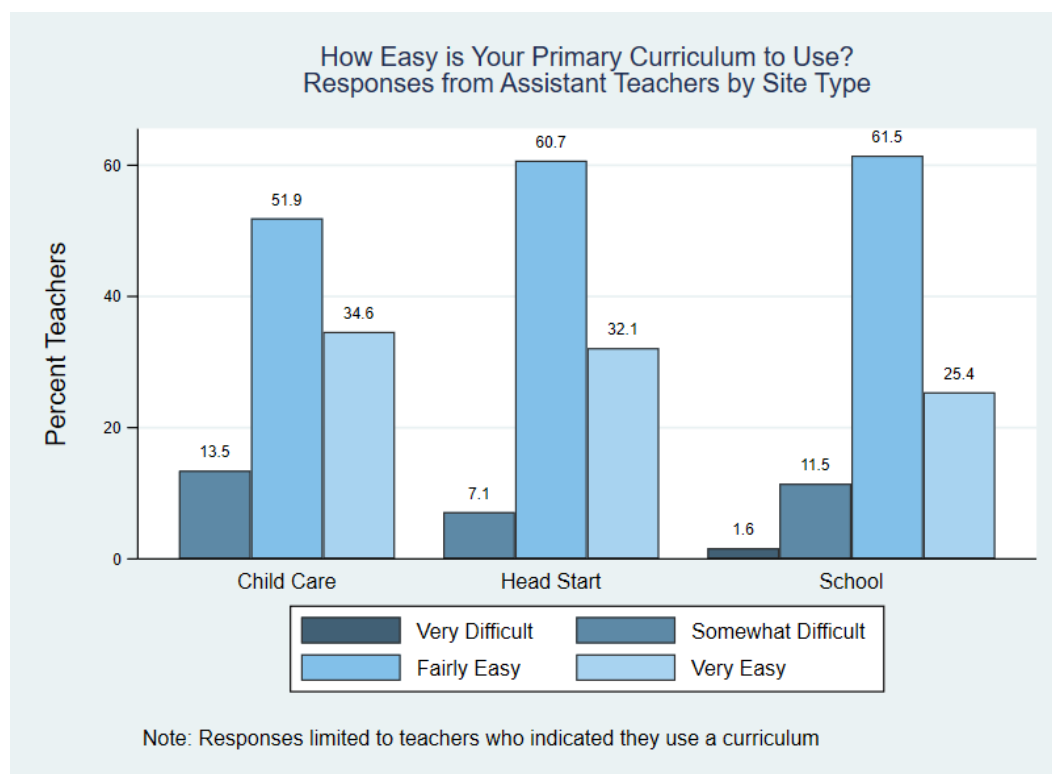
Usefulness of Curriculum

Overall, assistant and lead teachers held very similar views on the usefulness of their primary curriculum. Approximately 96% of both assistant and lead teachers indicated that their curriculum helped them support children's learning in the classroom (Figure 4A). Child care assistant teachers were the most likely to rate their curriculum "very useful," a pattern observed among lead teachers as well (see Figure 5A). Within each site type, a greater percentage of assistant teachers believed that their curriculum was "very useful" than did lead teachers.

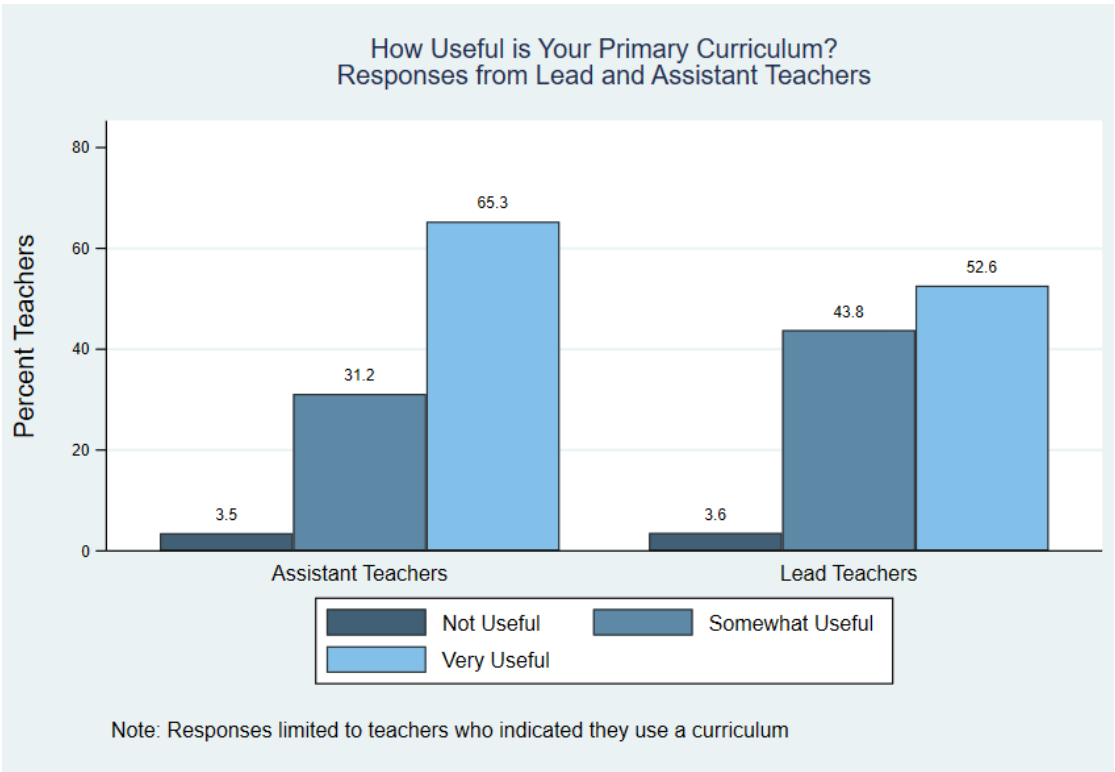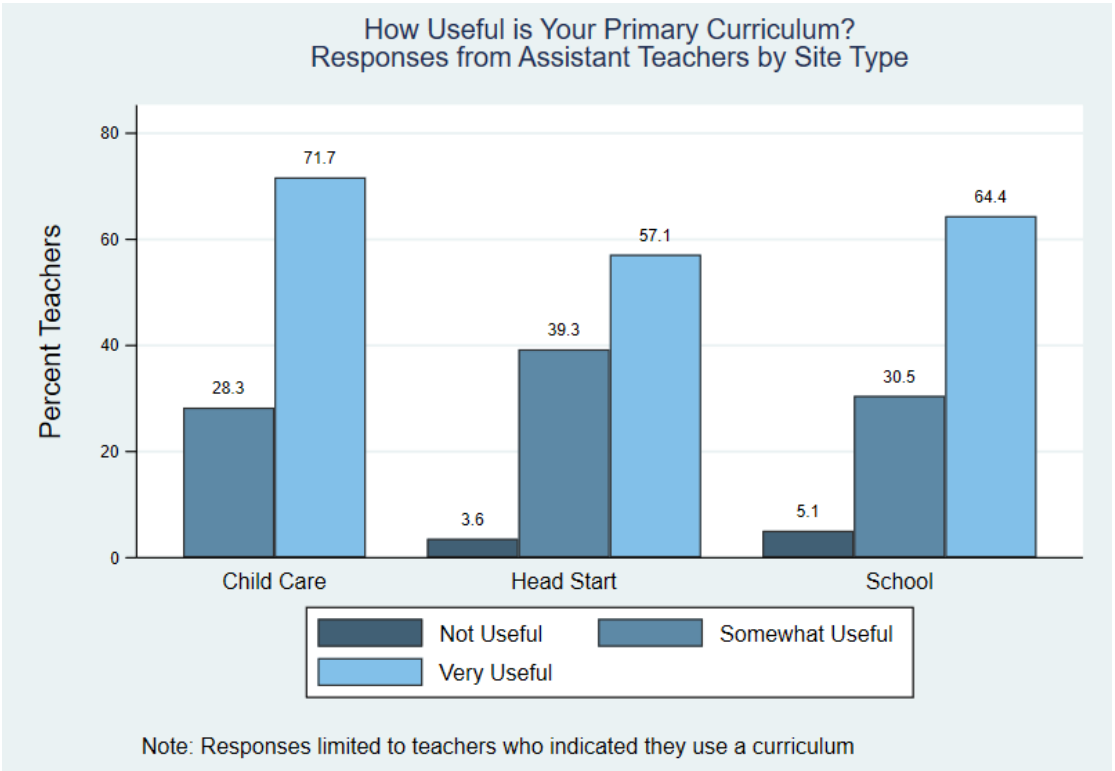**Figure 4A. Utility of Curriculum: Responses from Lead and Assistant Teachers**

Figure 5A. Utility of Curriculum: Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type
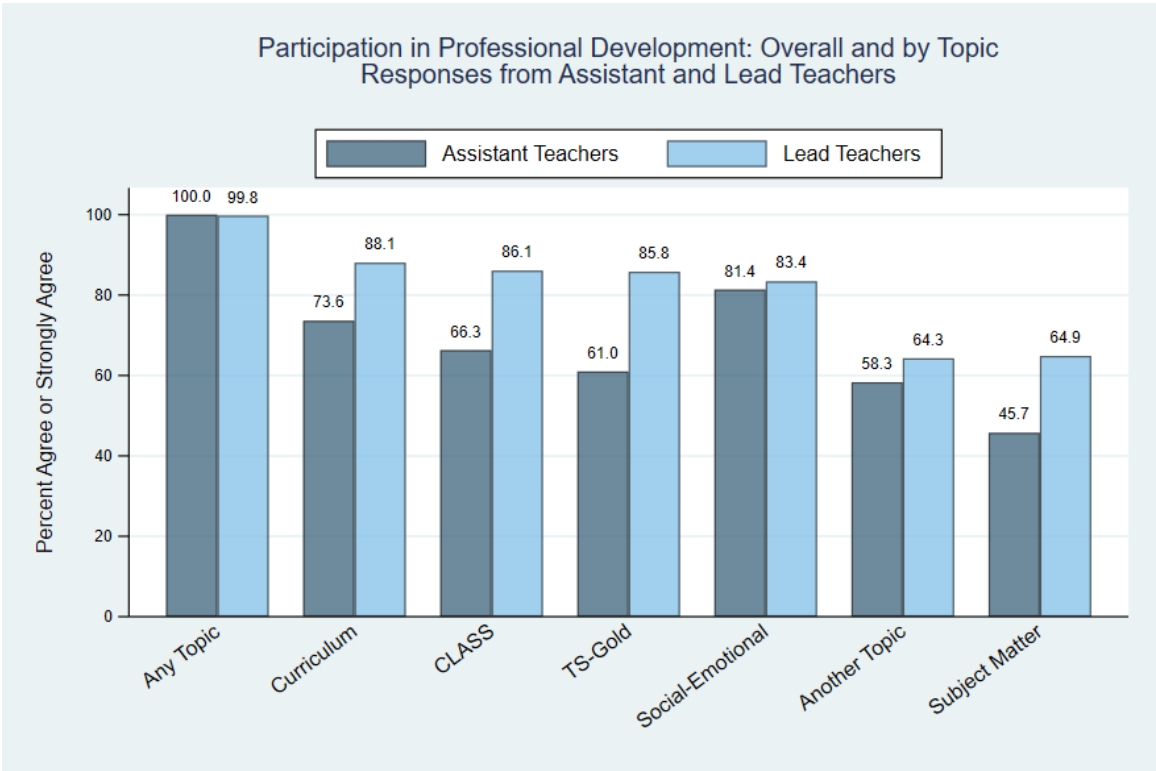
Professional Development

Professional development (PD) activities may help assistant teachers develop skills needed to support young children in the classroom and may help retain them in their position and the profession. Like lead teachers, nearly all assistant teachers in Jefferson Parish (99.8%) attended at least one professional development session in the 12 months prior to the survey (Figure 6A).

Professional Development Content

Compared to lead teachers, assistant teachers' attendance in professional development on each topic was much lower. Notably, while 86% of lead teachers had attended at least one professional development session about the CLASS, this figure was only 66% for assistant teachers. It is also notable that 19 percentage point fewer assistant teachers received professional development on subject matter and 15 percentage points fewer received professional development on curriculum. The largest gap in professional development attendance was in training sessions on TS-Gold: 86% of lead teachers received PD in this area, as compared to 61% of assistant teachers.

Figure 6A. PD Attendance Overall and by Topic: Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers

Time Spent on Professional Development

Just 37% of assistant teachers received 13 or more hours of professional development, as compared to 63% of lead teachers. Further, more than one fourth of assistant teachers only received four or fewer hours of professional development in the preceding 12 months, more than double the percentage of lead teachers who had received the same amount of professional development.

Figure 7A. Time Spent on Professional Development: Reponses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
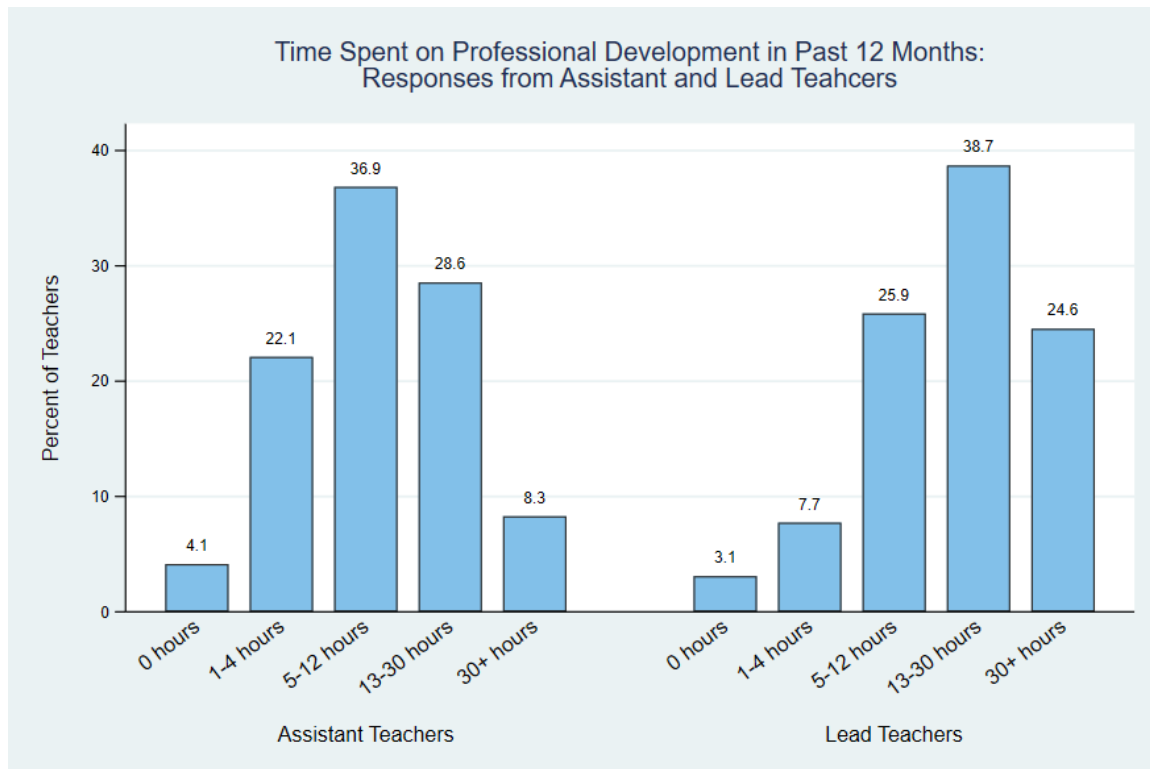
Usefulness of Professional Development

Most assistant teachers (68%) "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that professional development had improved their teaching, which was somewhat lower than the percentage of lead teachers who agreed with this statement (72%). Compared to lead teachers, a similar percentage of assistant teachers "disagreed" or "strongly disagreed" that professional development was useful, and slightly more (23%) neither agreed nor disagreed that PD was useful than lead teachers (19%) (Figure 8A).

Figure 8A. PD has Improved My Teaching: Reponses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
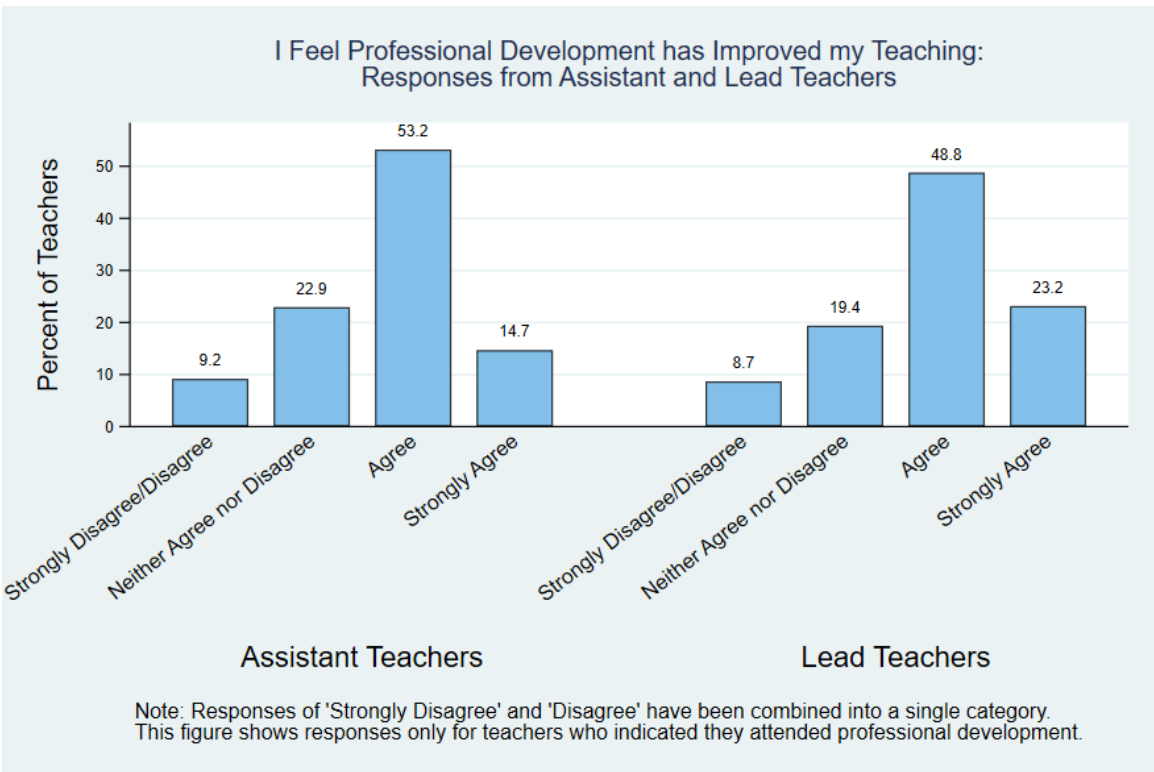
Areas for Additional Professional Development

Thirty-nine percent of assistant teachers expressed a desire for more professional development, as compared to 46% of lead teachers (Figure 9A). Assistant teachers were most likely to note they had not received enough training on TS Gold (27%), whereas lead teachers were most likely to report insufficient professional development opportunities in subject matter instruction (34%).

Figure 9A. Amount of Professional Development was Not Enough by Topic: Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
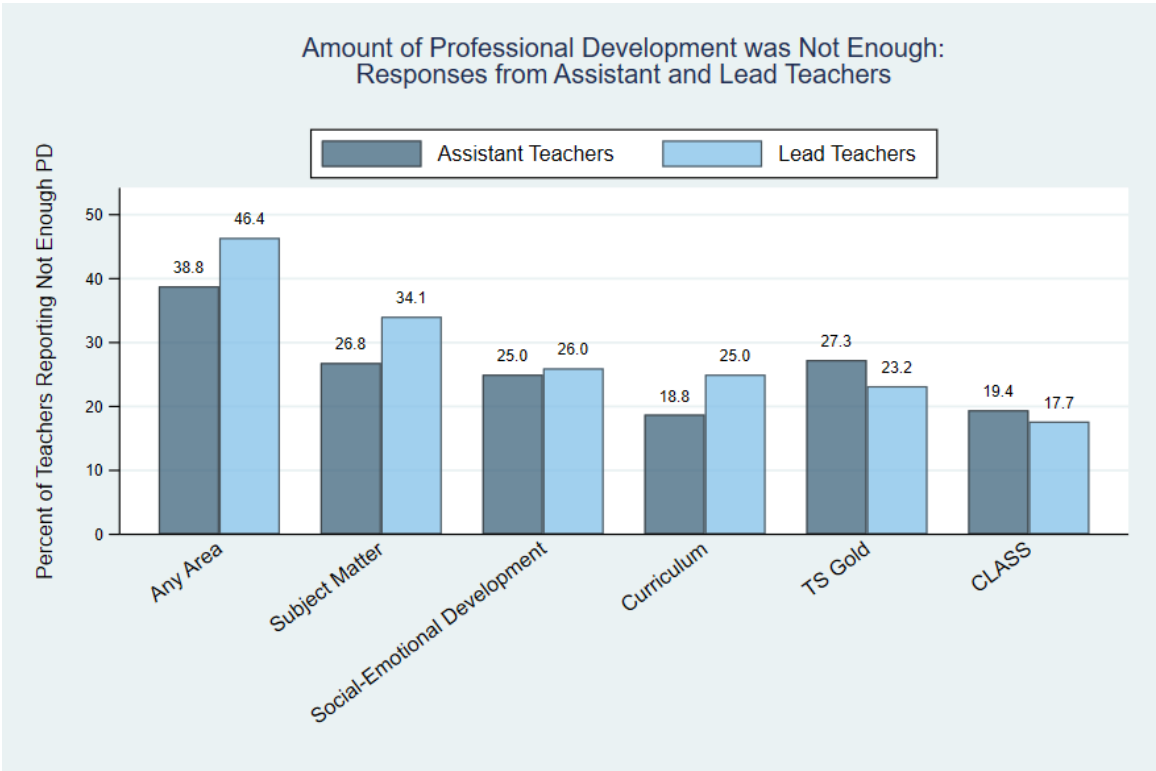
Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Assistant teachers also reported on their experiences with and beliefs about CLASS.

Observations and Feedback

Like lead teachers, the majority of assistant teachers reported that their classrooms were observed using CLASS (Table 1A).

Table 1A. Percent of Teachers who Reported Being CLASS Observed in the Past 12 Months: Responses from Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers Overall and by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	School	Overall
% Lead Teachers Reported CLASS Observation	82.1%	94.4%	85.7%	84.8%
% Assistant Teachers Reported CLASS Observation	76.5%	92.0%	87.9%	85.2%

Although a similar percentage of assistant teachers and lead teachers reported that their classrooms were observed using CLASS, a smaller percentage of assistant teachers reported receiving feedback. As seen in Figure 10A, while about half of lead teachers had received feedback at least twice, only about 30% assistant teachers had received feedback this frequently. Similarly, while 34% of assistant teachers never received CLASS feedback, this number was 22% for lead teachers.

Figure 10A. CLASS Feedback: Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
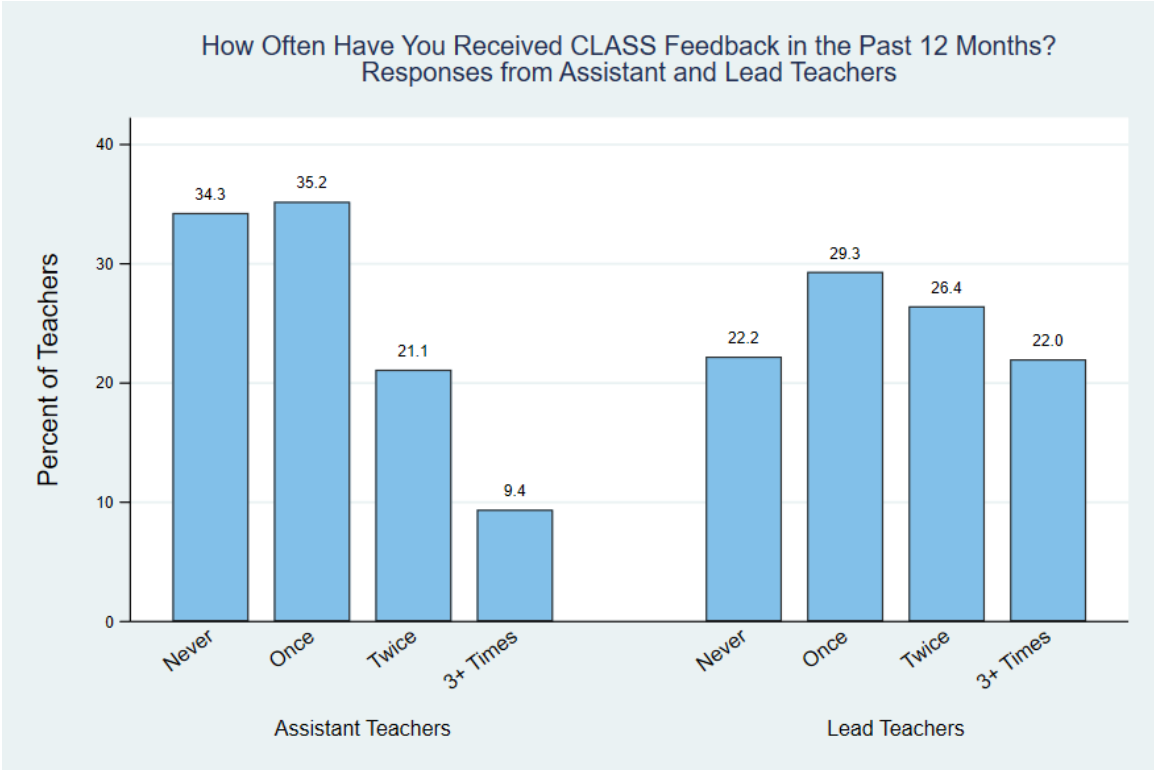
Performance Profile Awareness

Overall, awareness of the LDOE performance profile was lower among assistant teachers than among lead teachers (62% of assistant teachers reported being aware of the profile, as compared to 69% of lead teachers, see Table 2A). In both Head Start and school sites, about 20 percentage point more lead teachers reported that they knew of the performance profile than assistant teachers. Interestingly, this trend was reversed in child care, where assistant teachers reported being aware of the performance profile more than lead teachers by 11 percentage points.

Table 2A. Awareness of LDOE Performance Profile: Responses from Assistant Teachers Overall and by Site Type

| "Does your site have a LDOE Performance Profile?"	Child Care	Head Start	School	Overall
% Assistant Teachers Responded Yes	75%	79%	50%	61.6%
% Assistant Teachers Responded No	8.3%	5.2%	15.5%	11.9%
% Assistant Teachers Responded Don't Know	16.7%	15.8%	34.5%	26.5%
	100%	100%	100%	100%
% Lead Teachers Responded Yes	63.8%	96%	70.5%	69.2%
% Lead Teachers Responded No	4.6%	4%	10.7%	6.9%
% Lead Teachers Responded Don't Know	31.6%	0%	18.8%	23.9%
	100%	100%	100%	100%

Beliefs about CLASS

Assistant teachers' beliefs about CLASS were somewhat less positive than those of lead teachers, though more than 50% of assistant teachers still agreed with nearly all items (Figure 11A). For example, 86% of lead teachers believed that teachers can improve their CLASS scores, while 79% of assistant teachers did so. Sixty-two percent of assistant teachers said they understood CLASS and 67% said it was a good measure. Like lead teachers, the weakest agreement was that children learn more in classrooms with higher CLASS scores (45% of assistant teachers and 53% of lead teachers supported this statement).

Figure 11A. Beliefs about CLASS as a Quality Measure: Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers

Beliefs About CLASS as a Quality Measure:
Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
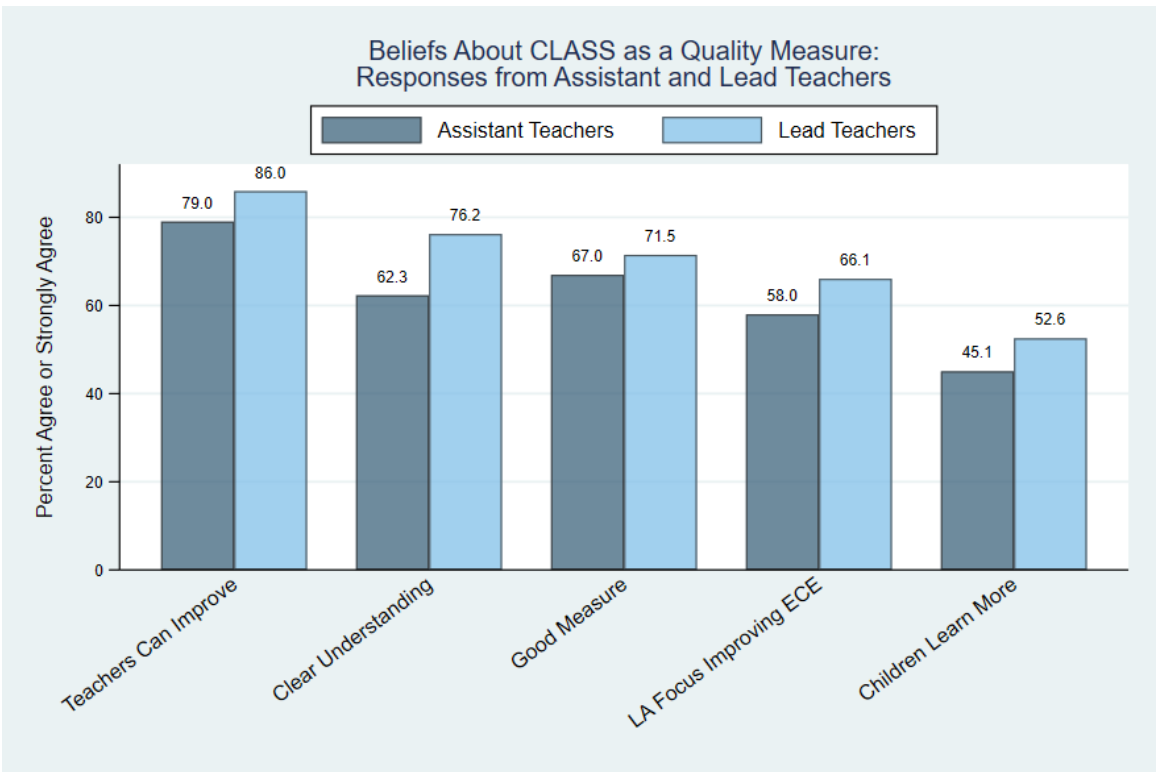
When asked about CLASS in their own programs, assistant teachers again reported a slightly less positive view of the measure than lead teachers (Figure 12A). Most (79%) agreed that ensuring high quality interactions is a priority in their program, as compared to 86% of lead teachers. However, less than 55% of assistant teachers indicated they had frequent conversations about the CLASS or that they thought CLASS had improved their own teaching or teaching in their program.

Figure 12A: Beliefs About CLASS in Their Program: Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
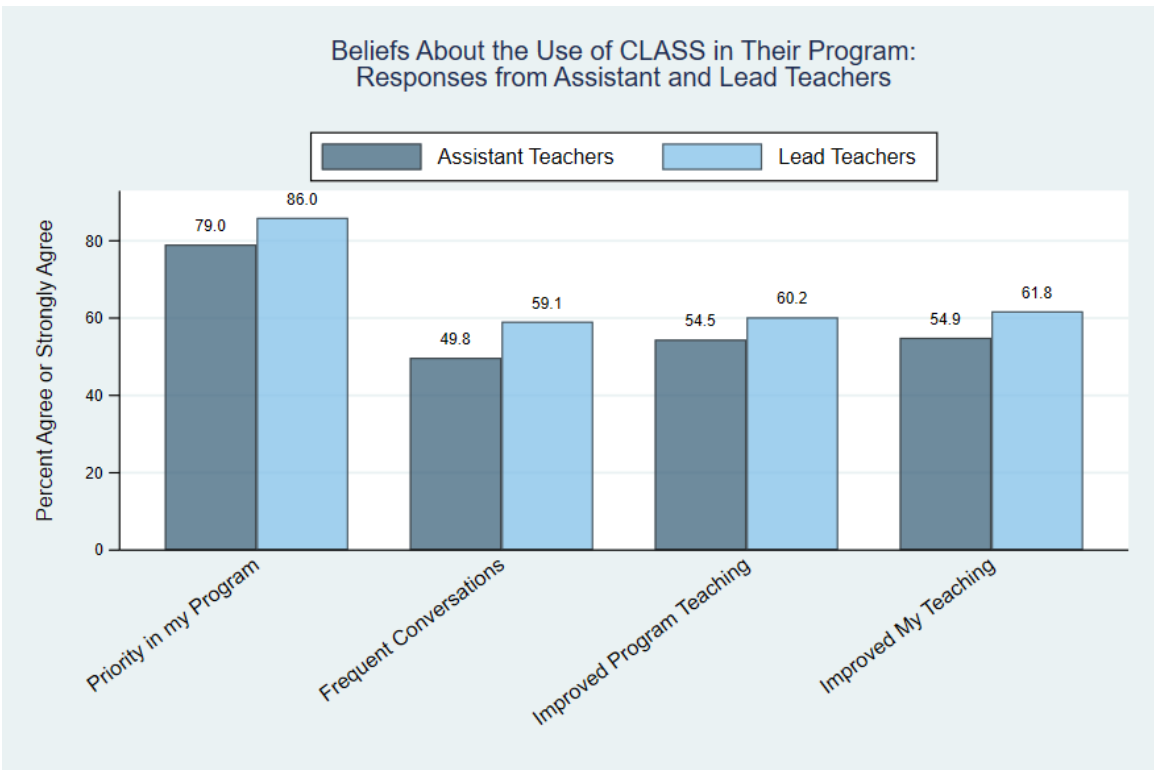
Leadership

Like lead teachers, assistant teachers generally viewed their leader as an effective manager who cares about their staff members. For example, 78% or more agreed with each of the positive statements about their leadership highlighted in Table 3A, and the proportion in agreement was similar to that of lead teachers.

Table 3A. Reports of Leader Management Practices: Responses by Assistant Teachers

	Percent "Agree" or "Strongly Agree"	
	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers
The site leader is an effective manager who makes the school run smoothly.	82.9%	82.1%
The site leader knows what's going on in my classroom.	83.3%	86.1%
The site leader looks out for the personal welfare of the staff members.	86.4%	85.4%
I trust the site leader at their word.	78.8%	73.5%
The site leader provides me with useful feedback to improve my teaching.	79.2%	79.7%
To what extent do you feel respected by your site leader?*	81.1%	80.0%

Note: This question asked to what extent the respondent felt respected by their leader. Responses of "some" and "to a great extent" are included here.

Compensation

Overall, the average assistant teacher in the sample was estimated to earn about $22,000, annually (Figure 13A, see footnote 5 for a description of the estimation process). Unsurprisingly, they earned less than both lead teachers and site leaders (see Figure 36) working in the same site types. Assistant teachers in Head Start and schools, however, made more, on average, than lead teachers in child care centers (average salary estimated to be $21,273). Assistant teachers who worked at child care sites earned the lowest salaries, on average, despite reporting working more hours than assistant teachers in both Head Start and school settings (Table 4A). They earned an average annual salary estimated at about $8,800 lower than Head Start assistant teachers, who were the highest paid assistant teachers across the site types.

Figure 13A. Estimated Annual Salaries of Assistant Teachers and Lead Teachers Overall and by Site Type
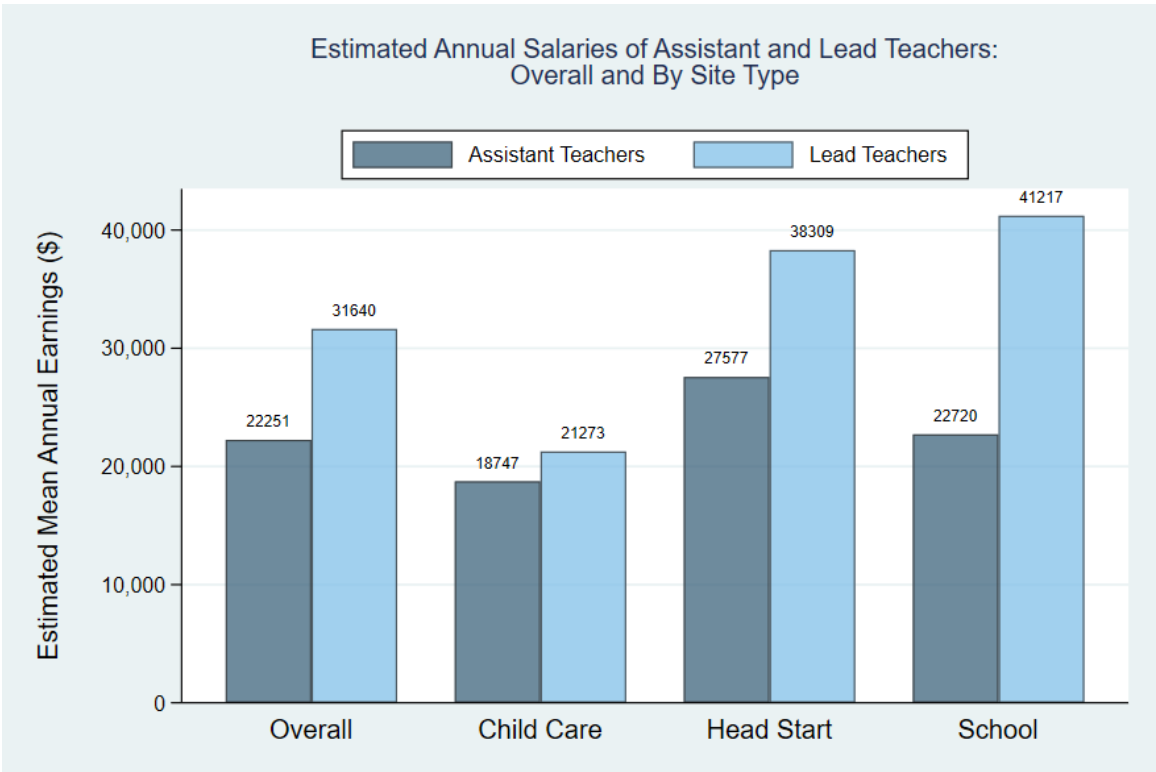

Table 4A. Hours Worked Per Week: Responses from Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers

	Lead Teachers				Assistant Teachers			
	CC	HS	School	Overall	CC	HS	School	Overall
Hours per Week	37.6	34.9	33.9	35.7	33.6	31.3	29.1	30.6

Additionally, more than one third of all assistant teachers worked an additional job to supplement their income (Figure 14A), a higher percentage than among lead teachers (29%).

Figure 14A. Percent that Work an Additional Job: Responses from Assistant Teachers Overall and by Site Type
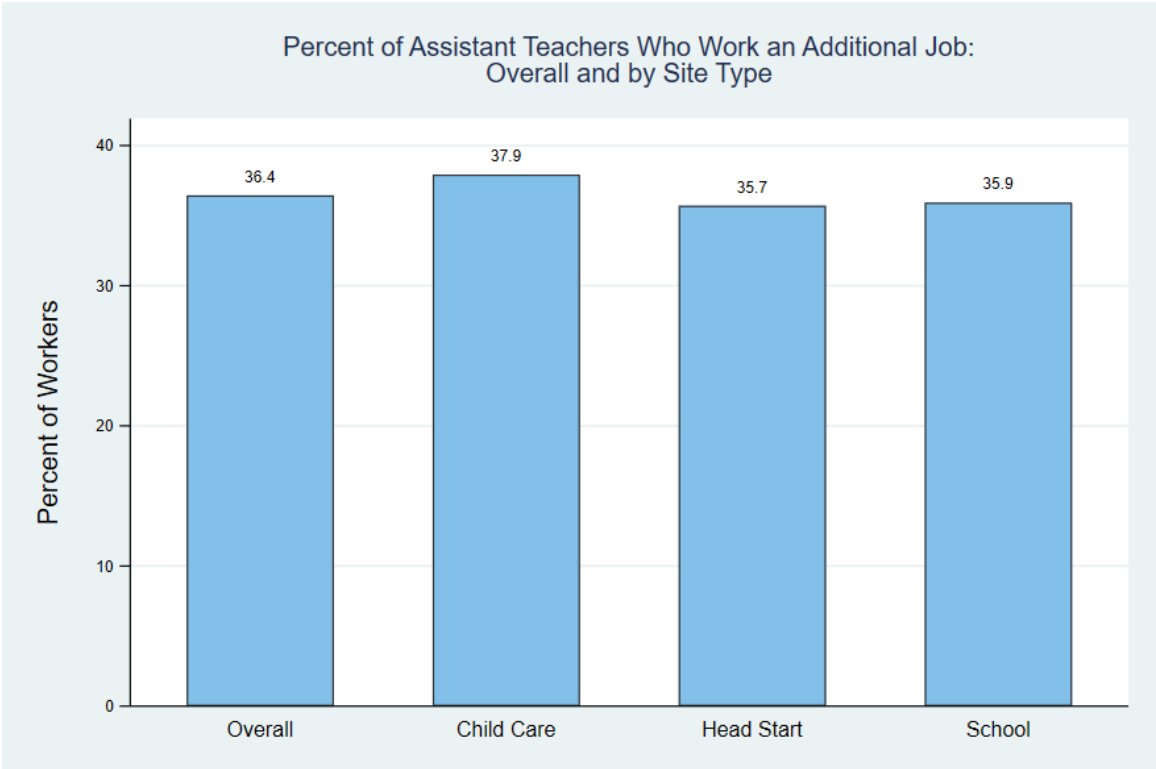
Wellbeing
Assistant teachers also reported on their emotional wellbeing, financial wellbeing, and food security.

Emotional Wellbeing
Overall, 22% of assistant teachers scored at least an 8 on the CES-D-SF and therefore were considered at risk for clinical depression, as compared to 23% of lead teachers and 22% of site leaders (not shown). Assistant teachers in schools were about ten percentage points less likely to be at risk for depression that assistant teachers in either child care or Head Start settings—this is equivalent to about 1.5 times more likely (see Table 5A).

Table 5A. Percent Meeting CES-D-SF Clinical Threshold: Lead Teachers and Assistant Teachers

	Lead Teachers				Assistant Teachers			
	CC	HS	School	Overall	CC	HS	School	Overall
% Meeting Clinical Threshold	21.7%	30.6%	24.0%	23.4%	27.9%	28.5%	17.7%	21.9%

Figure 15A illustrates the percent of assistant and lead teachers who experienced specific depression symptoms "occasionally" or "most of the time" in the week prior to taking the survey. Approximately 35% of both assistant and lead teachers reported having felt that "everything was an effort," and similar proportions of each group reported experiencing each symptom occasionally or most of the time—though assistant teachers were about 25% more likely to report feeling depressed than lead teachers.

Figure 15A. Percent Experiencing Depression Symptoms "Occasionally" or "Most of the Time": Responses from Assistant and Lead Teachers
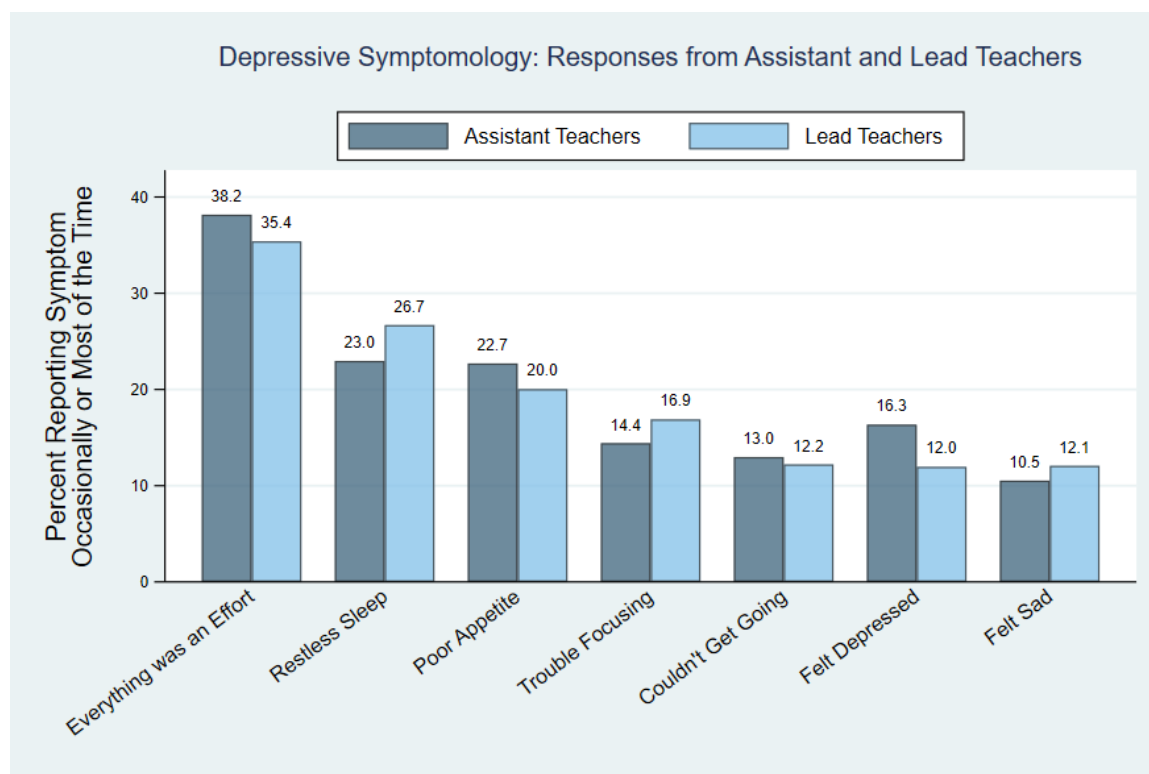
Financial Security and Food Security

Low wages are a challenge for all early educators, including assistant teachers, lead teachers, and site leaders. This section explores the financial security and food security of both assistant teachers and site leaders, and compares them to lead teachers.

Consistent with the low wages reported by assistant teachers, when asked about the ability to afford a variety of basic expenses, assistant teachers reported the highest levels of financial insecurity and sites leaders reported the lowest. Like lead teachers, large percentages of assistant teachers could not afford basic needs. Approximately half of assistant teachers could not afford medical expenses and 35% could not afford rent (see Table 6A). Leaders had the lowest reported levels of financial insecurity, yet even among this group almost 20% reported not being able to afford medical expenses.

Table 6A. Percent that Could Not Afford Basic Expenses: Reponses from Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders

|	% Reporting They Could Not Afford Expense		
	Assistant Teachers	Lead Teachers	Site Leaders
Social activities	63.6%	60.2%	30.3%
Debt	64.0%	58.0%	33.0%
Medical Expenses	52.3%	46.5%	18.4%
Clothing	51.8%	43.0%	22.4%
Transportation	33.3%	25.3%	9.3%
Rent	35.8%	22.0%	6.6%

For most of the items considered, Head Start assistant teachers reported the highest level of financial insecurity (Figure 16A). In general, however, differences across site types were much smaller among assistant teachers than they were for lead teachers, where school-based teachers reported far less financial insecurity than lead teachers in other site types.

Figure 16A. Percent that Could Not Afford Basic Expenses: Reponses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type
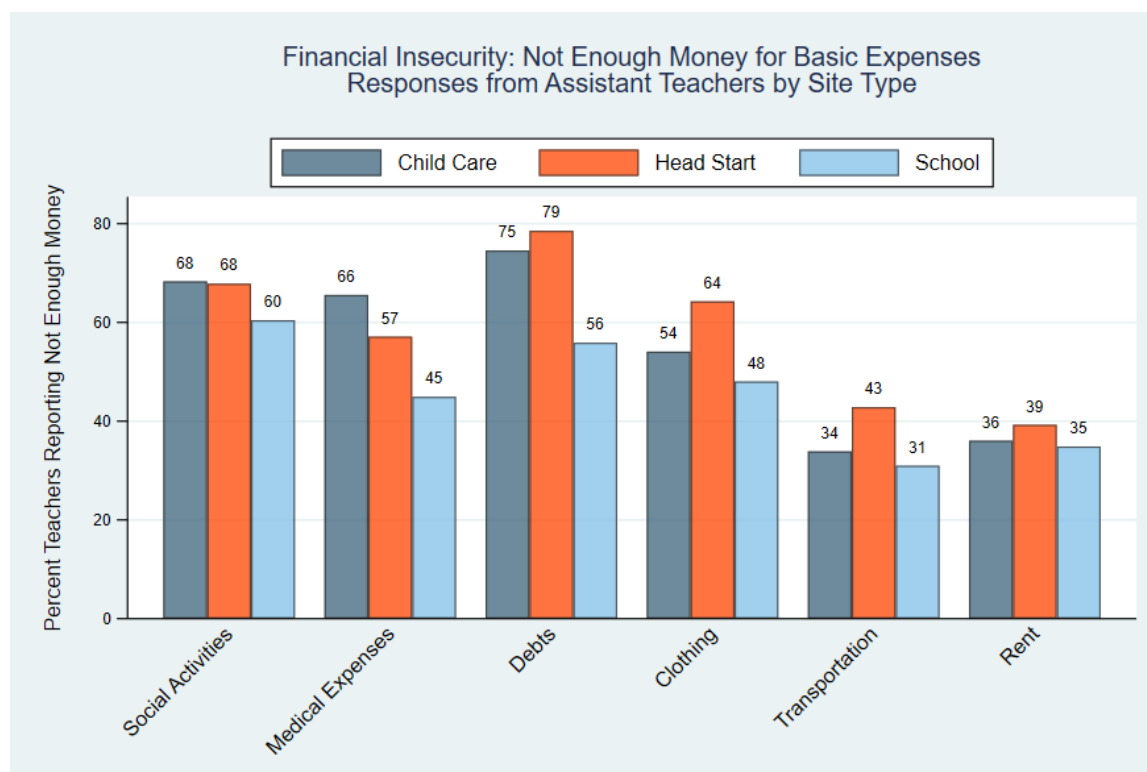
Head Start leaders were far more likely to report financial challenges with respect to debts, clothing, and social activities, relative to both child care leaders and especially school leaders (Figure 17A). However, *no* Head Start leaders reported difficulty affording rent and transportation. In other areas, child care leaders were most likely to report financial insecurity; for example, 34% of child care site leaders could not afford medical expenses, compared to 20% of Head Start and 3% of school leaders.

Figure 17A. Percent that Could Not Afford Basic Expenses: Reponses from Site Leaders by Site Type
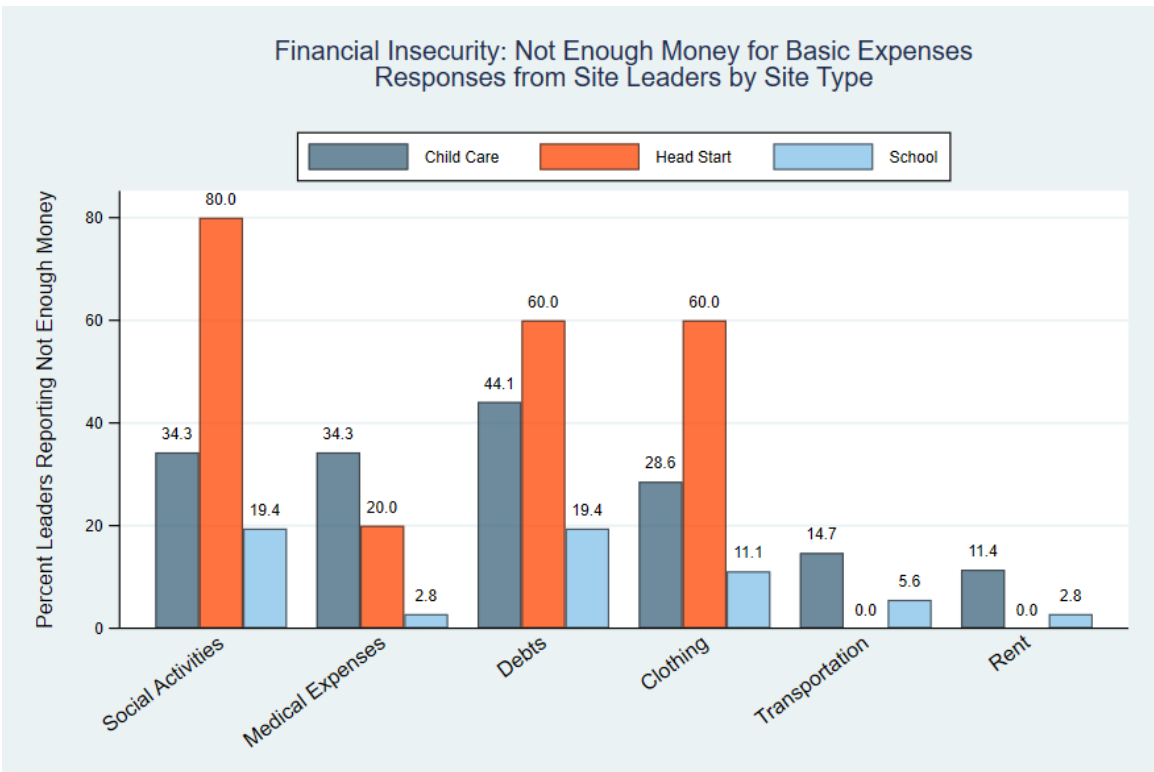
Finally, consistent with the other measures of financial security, assistant teachers were on the whole more likely to report food insecurity than site leaders and lead teachers (Table 7A). For instance, 57% of assistant teachers reported running out of food and not having enough money to buy more. Among lead teachers and site leaders the rates were 45% and 15% respectively. However, there were important differences by site type. Over 40% of Head Start educators, irrespective of role, responded affirmatively to indicators food insecurity. In contrast, in schools, while assistant teachers responded affirmatively about 50% of the time, for lead teachers this figure is between 33-47%, and for site leaders between 5% and 11%.

Table 7A. Food Insecurity: Responses from Assistant Teachers, Lead Teachers, and Site Leaders by Site Type

	Child Care	Head Start	School	Overall
Assistant Teachers				
"I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals": % Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	64.4%	66.7%	53.9%	58.4%
"The food I bought didn't last and I didn't have the money to buy more": % Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	66.1%	64.3%	51.2%	57.0%
Lead Teachers				
"I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals": % Teachers Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	47.6%	41.7%	36.7%	42.2%
"The food I bought didn't last and I didn't have the money to buy more": % Teachers Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	56.1%	50.0%	33.2%	45.4%
Site Leaders				
"I couldn't afford to eat balanced meals": % Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	14.7%	60.0%	11.1%	16.0%
"The food I bought didn't last and I didn't have the money to buy more": % Responding "Sometimes" or "Often"	14.7%	80.0%	5.6%	14.7%

Job Satisfaction and Job Commitment

High rates of turnover among teachers and assistant teachers pose a major challenge to sites. This section explores this concern by asking assistant teachers about their satisfaction and their intention to stay in their current job.

Like lead teachers, assistant teachers across site types reported they felt they were making a difference through their work (Figure 18A), though assistant teachers in child care sites were less likely to "strongly" agree than Head Start or school-based assistant teachers. Figure 19A shows that the majority enjoy their current job; and Figure 20A shows that over three quarters say they would choose this career again.

Figure 18A. "I Feel I am Making a Difference": Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type
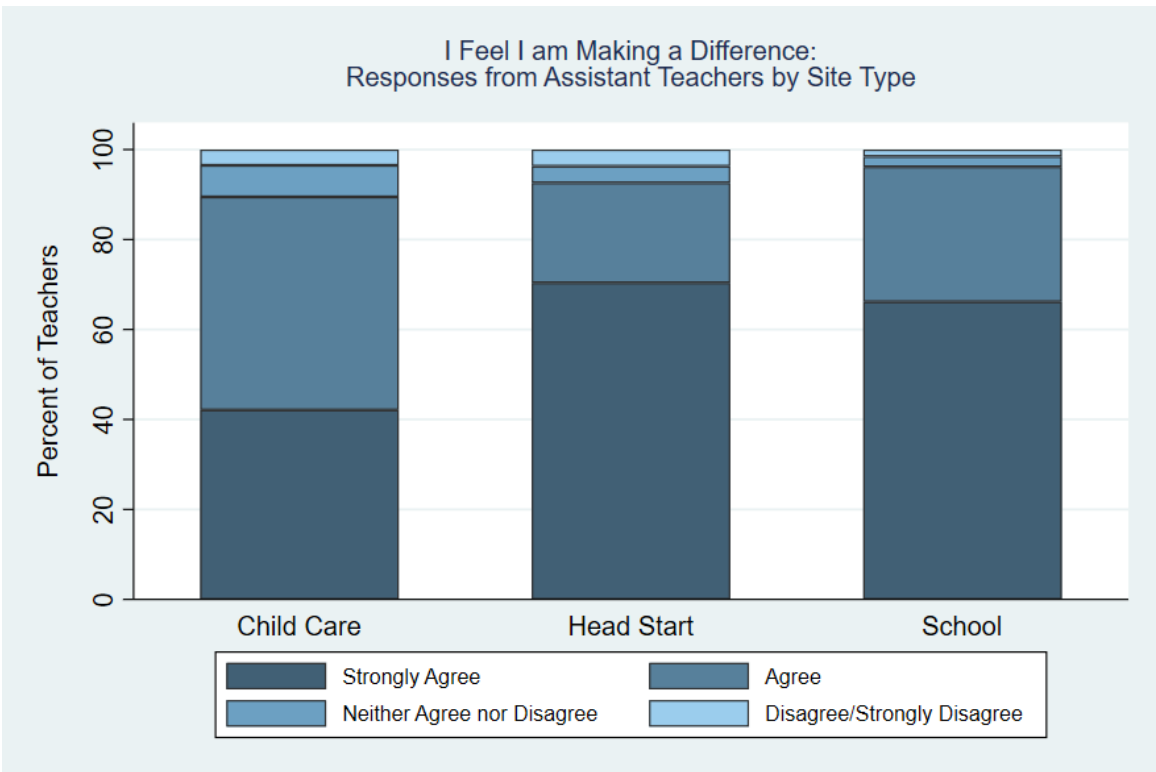

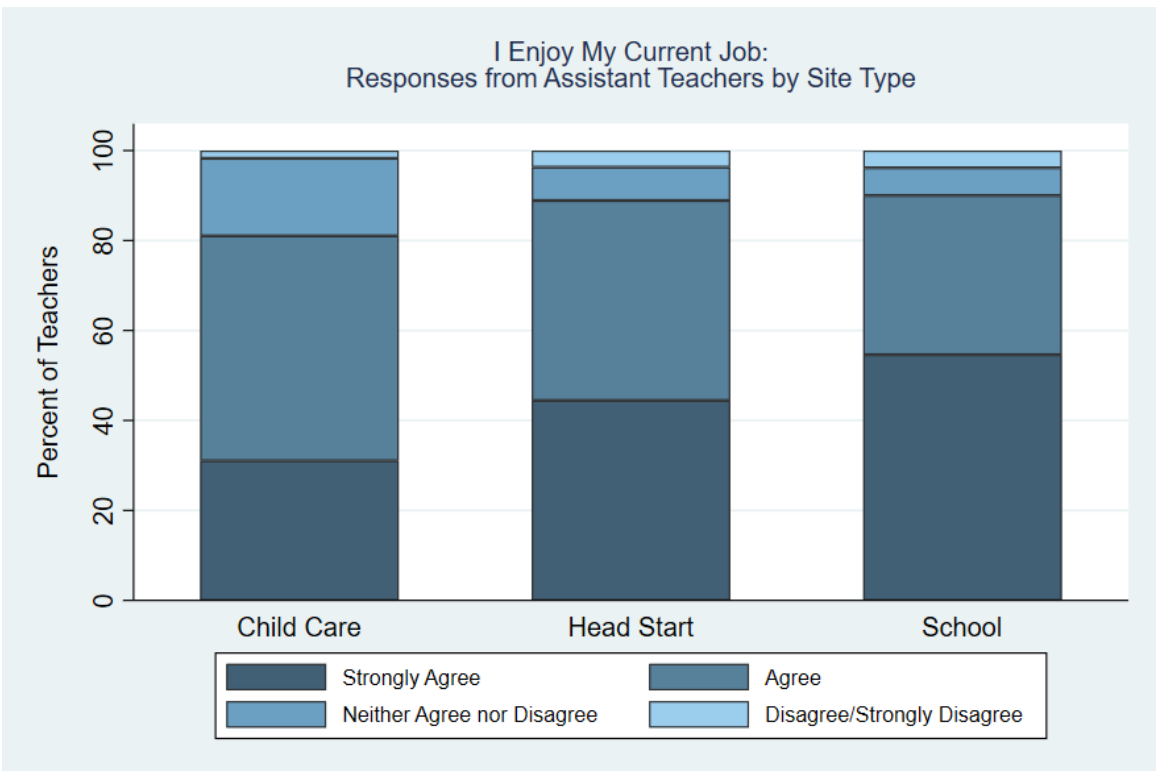**Figure 19A. "I Enjoy My Current Job": Response from Assistant Teachers by Site Type**
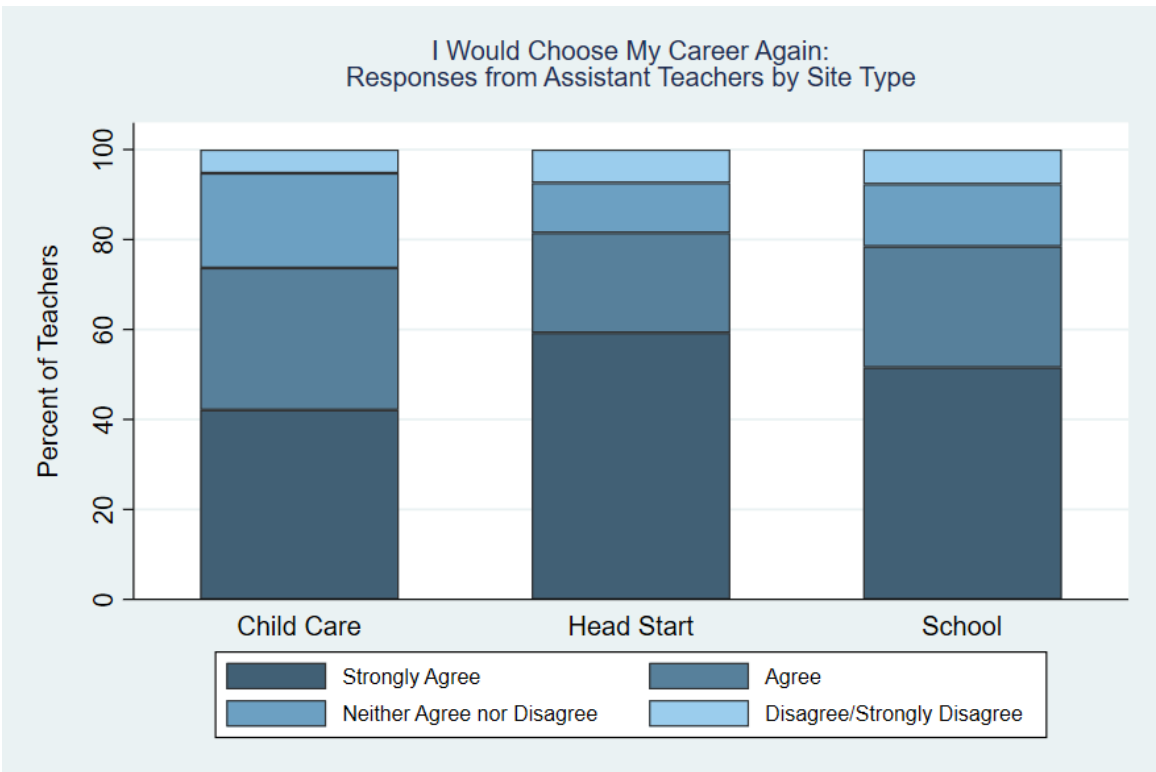
Figure 20A. "I Would Choose My Career": Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type

Consistent with these high levels of satisfaction, assistant teachers also reported that they were likely to remain in their current role through August of 2019. Among assistant teachers, approximately 85% of Head Start and school-based teachers, and 67% of child care teachers, agreed or strongly agreed that they would remain in their role. In Head Start sites and schools, lead and assistant teachers were about equally as likely to report an intention to stay in their position through August of 2019 (Figure 21A; also see Figure 47). However, assistant teachers in child care settings were less certain than lead teachers, with 67% of assistants agreeing or strongly agreeing that they would stay in their role, as compared to 79% of lead teachers (not shown).

Figure 21A. Intention to Remain in Current Role: Responses from Assistant Teacher by Site Type

I am Likely to Still Be in my Current Role in August 2019:
Responses from Assistant Teachers by Site Type