SP3 Teacher Survey Report

June 19, 2015

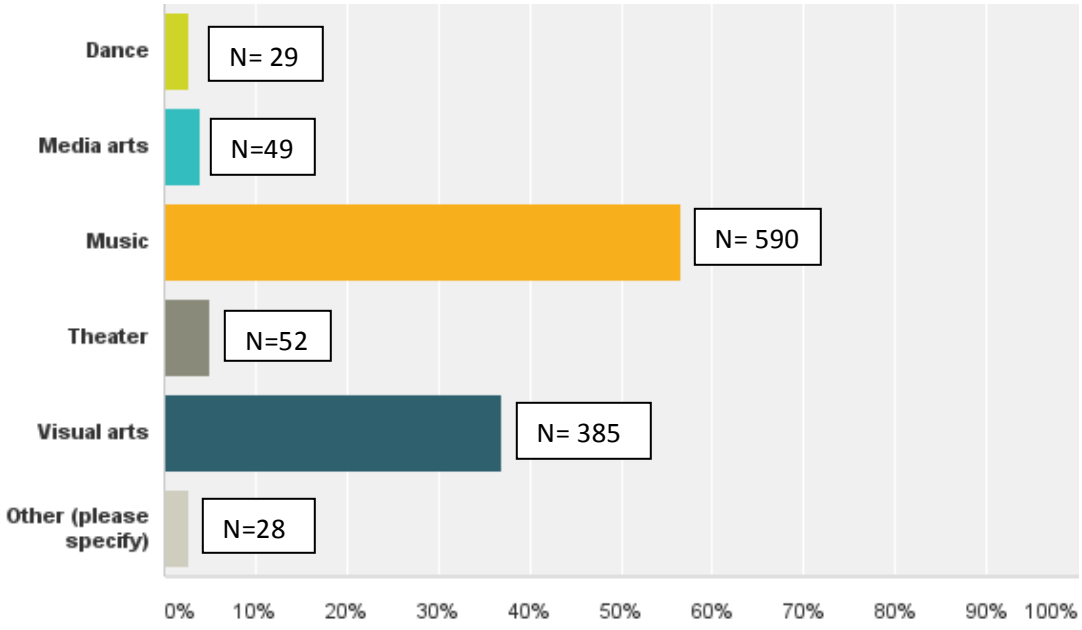
Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI)—University of Minnesota

Survey Response Rate

In May, 2015, the survey link was emailed to 4, 365 arts educators in the state of Minnesota. There were 1042 completed surveys for a response rate of 24%.

Question 1

Which discipline(s) do you teach? Check all that apply.

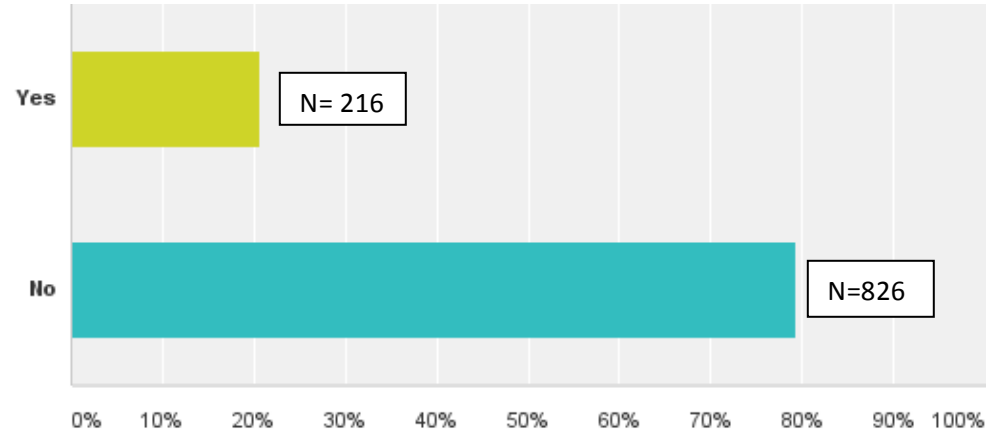


Answer Choices	Responses	
Dance	**2.78%**	29
Media arts	**3.93%**	41
Music	**56.62%**	590
Theater	**4.99%**	52
Visual arts	**36.95%**	385
Other (please specify)	**2.69%**	28
Total Respondents: 1,042		

Out of 1,042 respondents, a slight majority of our sample were music teachers. Although not described individually above, music includes band, orchestra, and vocal music.

Question 2

Do you teach in more than one school?

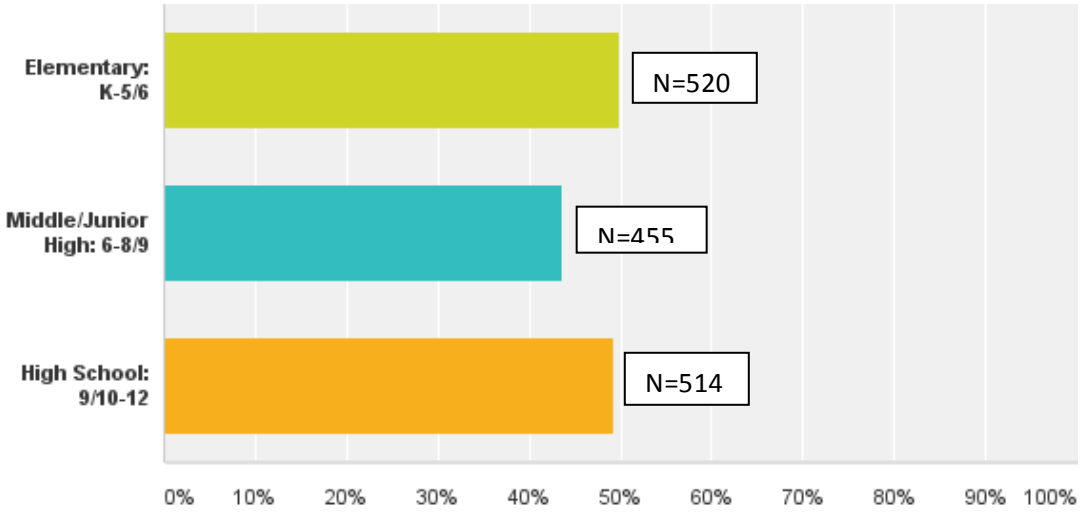


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**20.73%**	216
No	**79.27%**	826
Total		**1,042**

Almost 80% of the sample teaches in only one school. Of those that teach in more than one school, a majority teach in two schools, though some teachers teach in as many as four or five.

Question 3

What grade levels do you teach? Check all that apply.

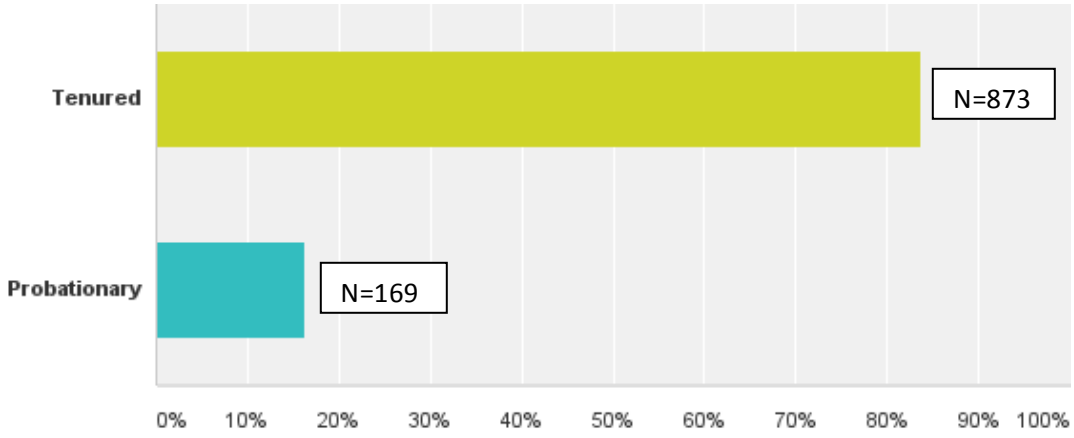


Answer Choices	Responses	
Elementary: K-5/6	**49.90%**	520
Middle/Junior High: 6-8/9	**43.67%**	455
High School: 9/10-12	**49.33%**	514
Total Respondents: 1,042		

The sample included a balance of teachers from grades K-12. Percentages sum to more than 100% because many teachers manage students from several grades.

Question 4

Are you tenured or probationary?

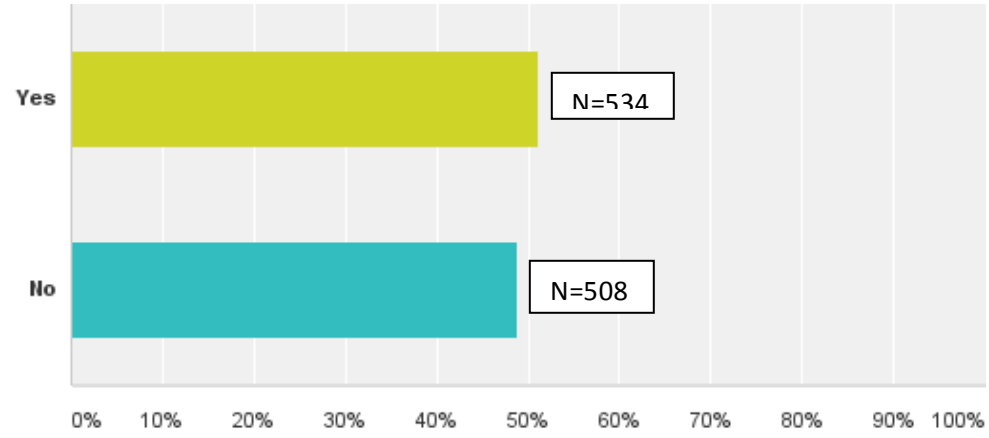


Answer Choices	Responses	
Tenured	**83.78%**	873
Probationary	**16.22%**	169
Total		**1,042**

More than 80% of polled teachers were tenured.

Question 5

Is your school a Q comp district?

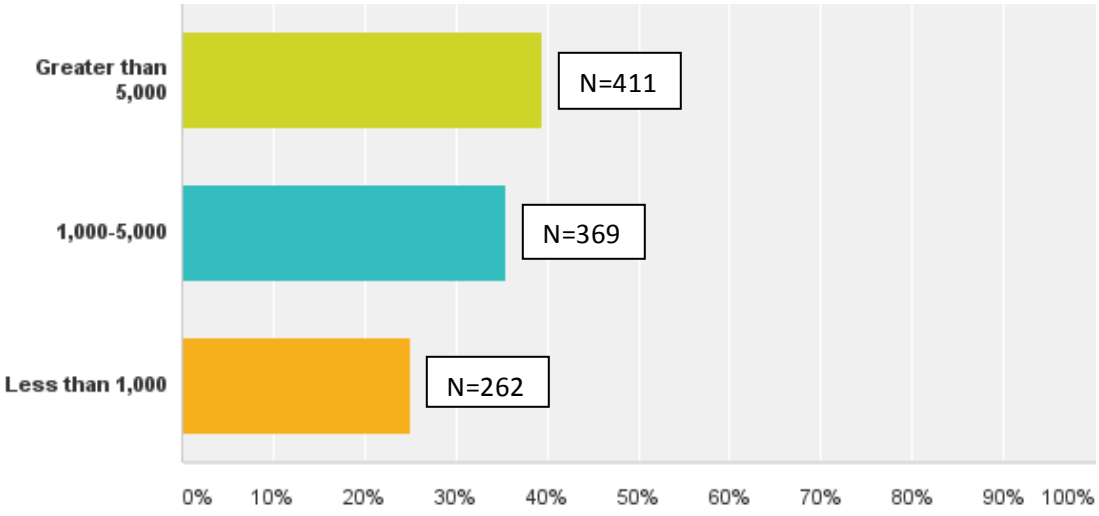


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**51.25%**	534
No	**48.75%**	508
Total		**1,042**

Our sample featured an even mix of Q comp and non-Q comp districts.

Question 6

Approximately, what is your district's total student enrollment?

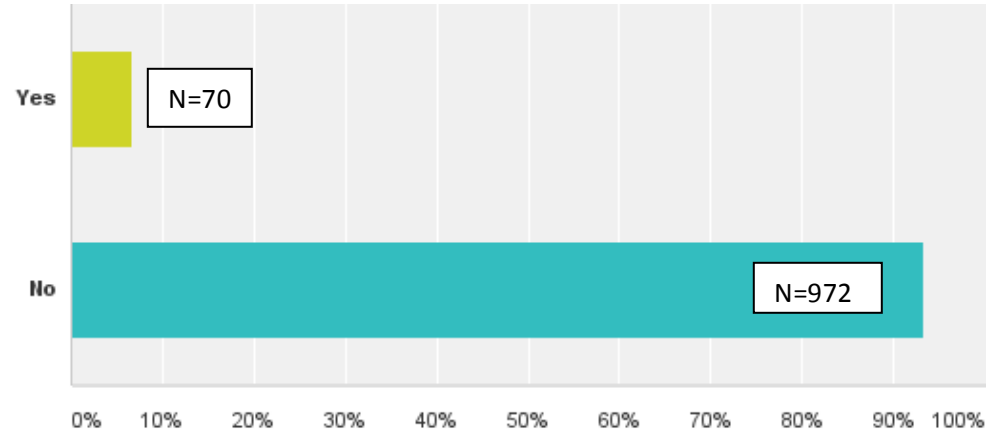


Answer Choices	Responses	
Greater than 5,000	**39.44%**	411
1,000-5,000	**35.41%**	369
Less than 1,000	**25.14%**	262
Total		**1,042**

The sample also featured a balance of larger and smaller Minnesota school districts.

Question 7

Is your school a private and/or charter school?

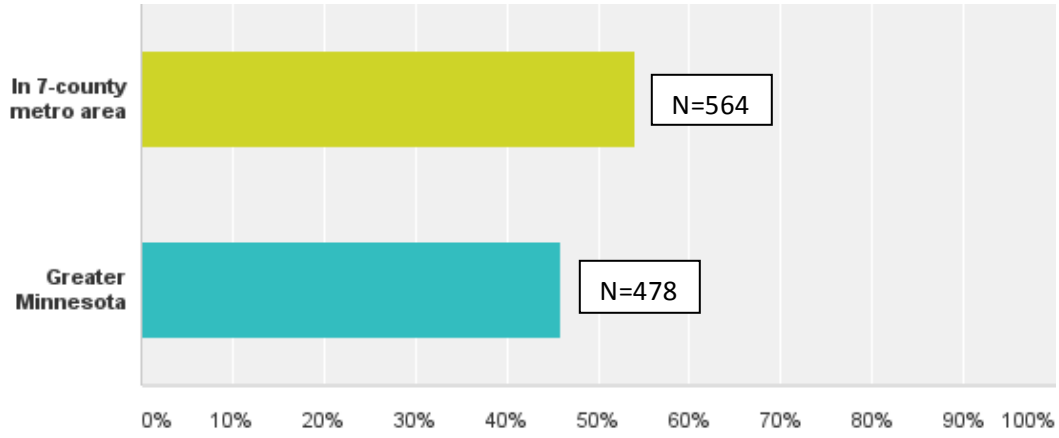


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**6.72%**	70
No	**93.28%**	972
Total		**1,042**

Very few of the schools in our sample were private and/or charter schools.

Question 8

Is your school in the 7-county metro area or in Greater Minnesota?

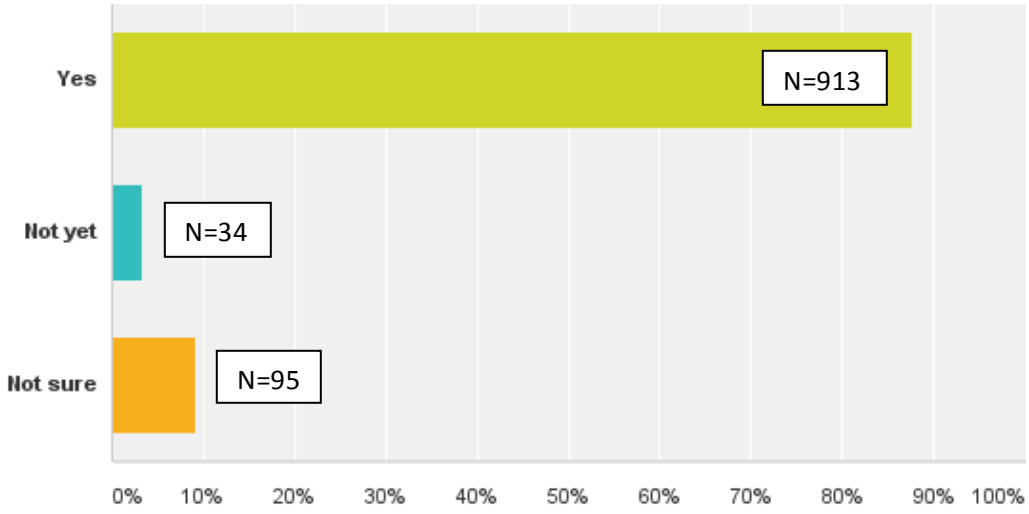


Answer Choices	Responses	
In 7-county metro area	**54.13%**	564
Greater Minnesota	**45.87%**	478
Total		**1,042**

The sample captured both metro area school districts and schools districts from the rest of the state in nearly equal proportion.

Question 9

As of the 2014-2015 school year, districts had to implement a new teacher evaluation system in order to meet a statutory requirement. Has your district begun to implement a new system to meet these requirements?

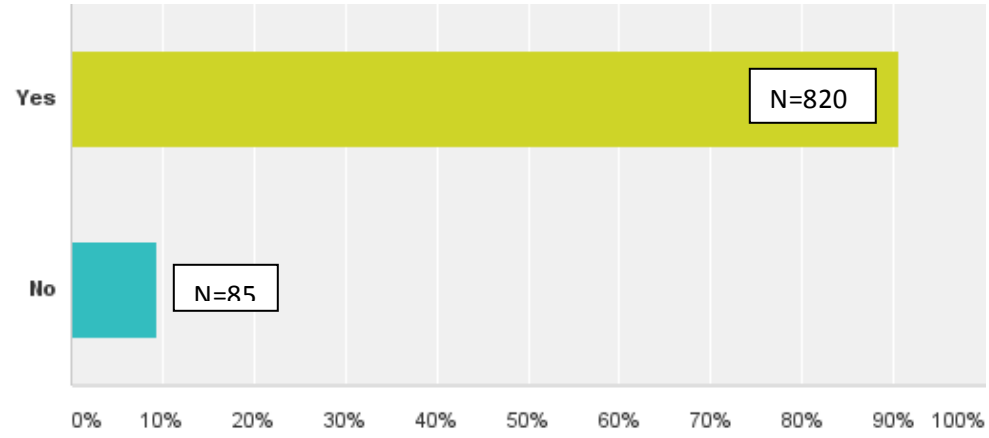


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**87.62%**	913
Not yet	**3.26%**	34
Not sure	**9.12%**	95
Total		**1,042**

The vast majority of districts have begun to implement new teacher evaluation systems.

Question 10

Does your district/school use student growth/student learning goals?

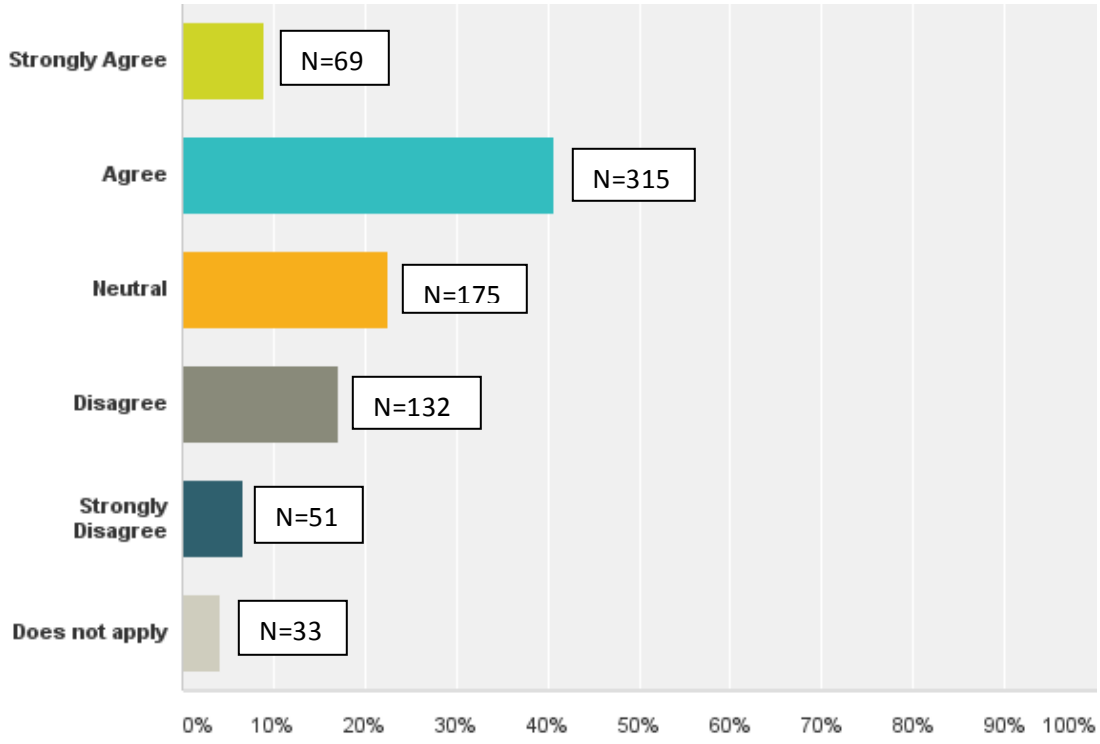


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**90.61%**	820
No	**9.39%**	85
Total		**905**

More than 90% of districts/schools make use of student growth/student learning goals.

Question 11

I found it easy to develop a student growth goal that could be measured pre and post.

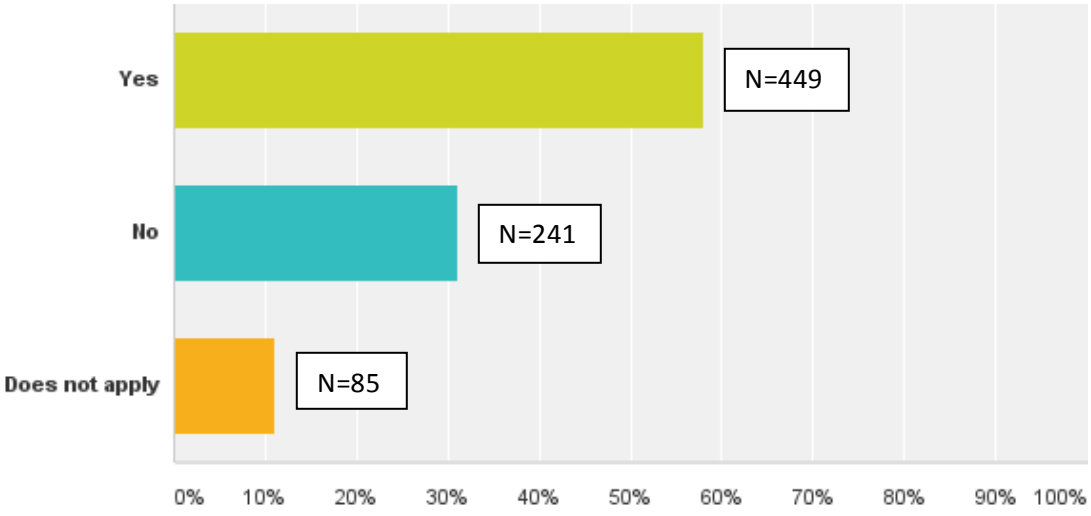


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**8.90%**	69
Agree	**40.65%**	315
Neutral	**22.58%**	175
Disagree	**17.03%**	132
Strongly Disagree	**6.58%**	51
Does not apply	**4.26%**	33
Total		**775**

Almost half of respondents felt that the task of developing a student growth goal measured with pre-teaching and post-teaching assessments to be an easy one. Less than a quarter of the respondents found the task difficult.

Question 12

My student growth goal had to be aligned with a district or school goal.

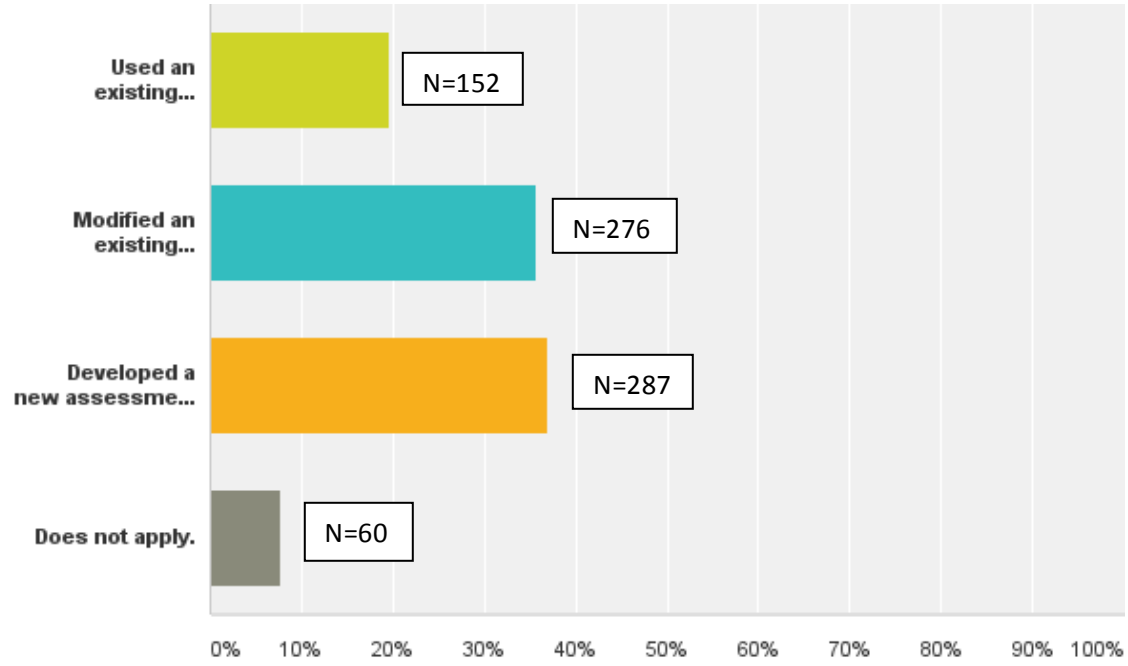


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**57.94%**	449
No	**31.10%**	241
Does not apply	**10.97%**	85
Total		**775**

More than half of our respondents' student growth/student learning goals were shaped by district or school goals.

Question 13

In measuring student growth, I… (choose one):

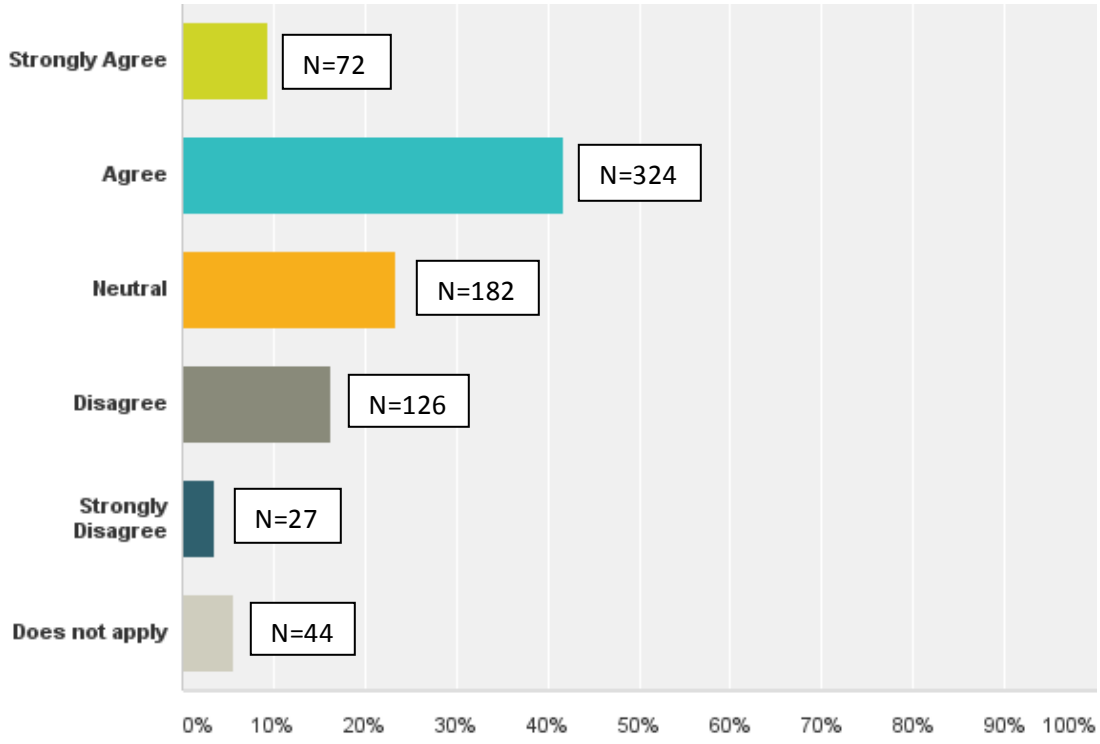


Answer Choices	Responses	
Used an existing assessment tool to measure my student growth goal.	**19.61%**	152
Modified an existing assessment tool to measure my student growth goal.	**35.61%**	276
Developed a new assessment tool to measure my student growth goal.	**37.03%**	287
Does not apply.	**7.74%**	60
Total		**775**

Our sample contained a good mix of teachers who chose to use an existing assessment, teachers who modified an existing assessment, and teachers who developed new assessments.

Question 14

It was easy to implement the assessment I used to measure my student growth goal.

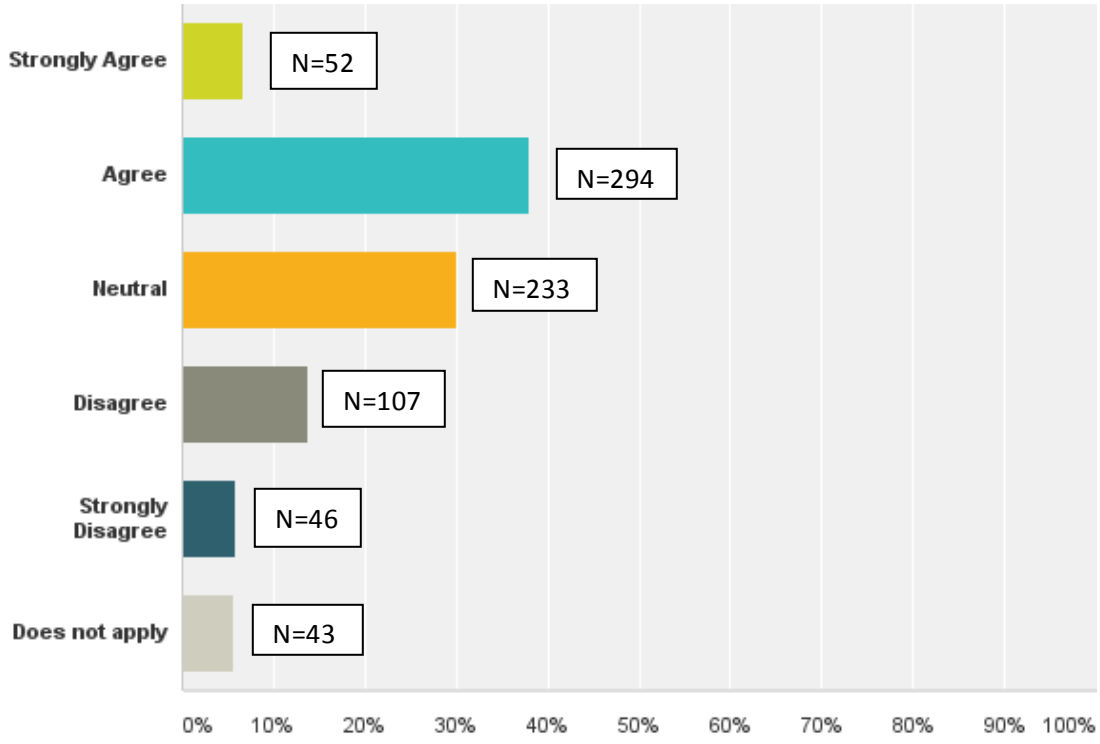


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**9.29%**	72
Agree	**41.81%**	324
Neutral	**23.48%**	182
Disagree	**16.26%**	126
Strongly Disagree	**3.48%**	27
Does not apply	**5.68%**	44
Total		**775**

Slightly more than half of respondents reported that their chosen assessment was easy to implement, while less than 20% found it difficult.

Question 15

The process of measuring my student growth goal gave me data that helped me improve my practice.



Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**6.71%**	52
Agree	**37.94%**	294
Neutral	**30.06%**	233
Disagree	**13.81%**	107
Strongly Disagree	**5.94%**	46
Does not apply	**5.55%**	43
Total		**775**

Although a plurality of respondents agreed that the process of measuring student growth helped improve their practice, almost a third of respondents were neutral about the process. Less than 20% of respondents thought the process did not improve their practice.

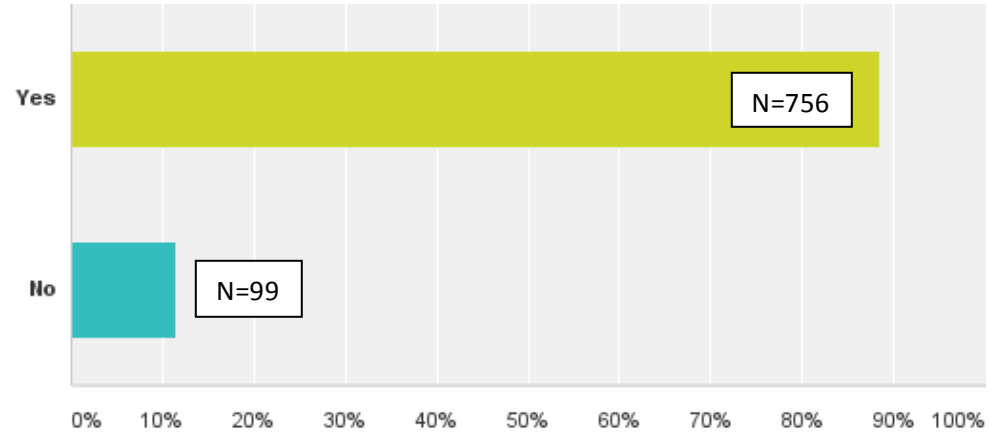
Question 16

What are the challenges, if any, in measuring student growth in your discipline?

Analysis of these open-ended responses is not yet complete.

Question 17

Did you develop a professional growth goal?

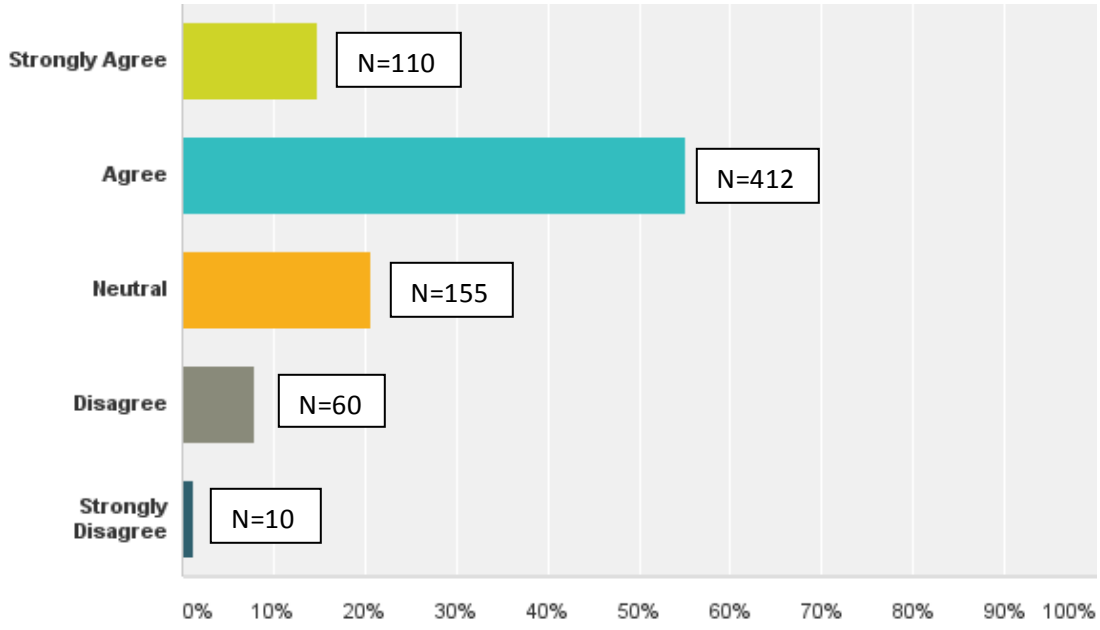


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**88.42%**	756
No	**11.58%**	99
Total		**855**

Nearly nine out of ten of teachers polled developed a professional growth goal.

Question 18

I found it easy to develop a professional growth goal.

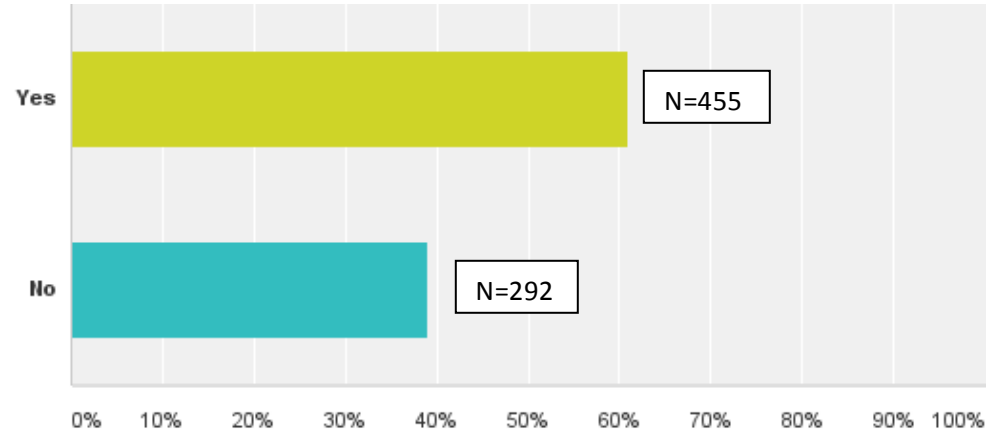


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**14.73%**	110
Agree	**55.15%**	412
Neutral	**20.75%**	155
Disagree	**8.03%**	60
Strongly Disagree	**1.34%**	10
Total		**747**

Almost 70% of teachers agreed that it was easy to develop a professional growth goal. Fewer than 10% did not agree that it was easy. Roughly 20% of teachers were neutral on the subject.

Question 19

My professional growth goal had to be aligned with a district or school goal.

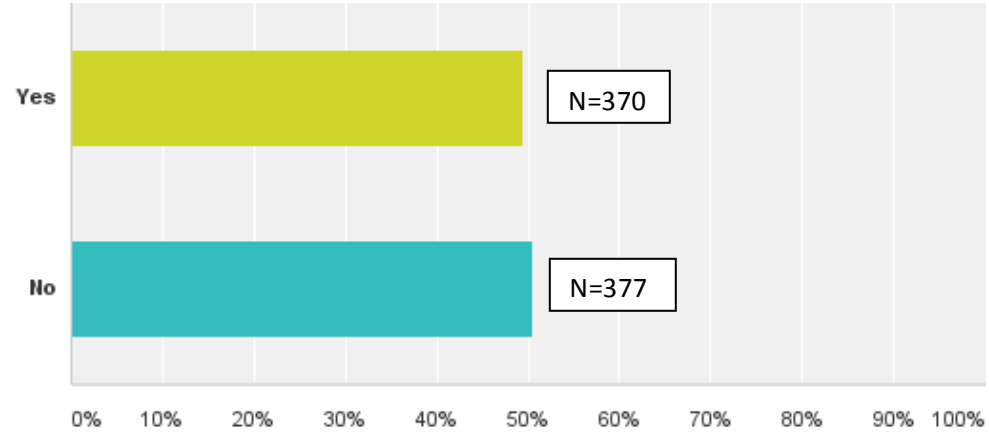


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**60.91%**	455
No	**39.09%**	292
Total		**747**

About 60% of responding teachers were required to align their professional growth goals with a district or school goal.

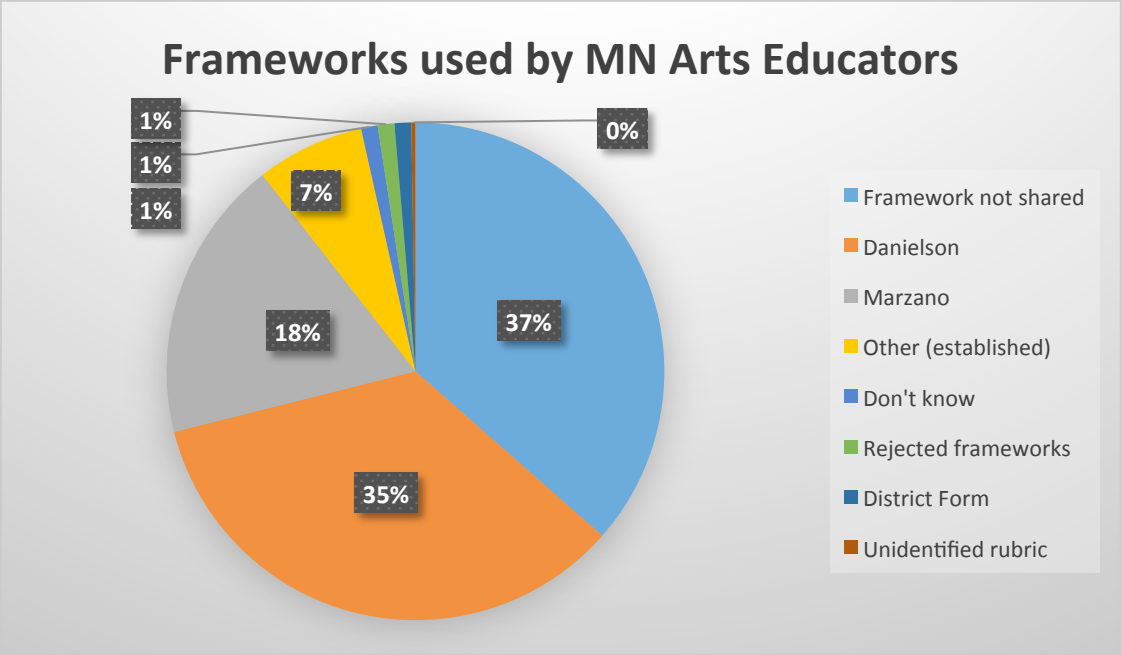
Question 20

Did you use an established rubric or teaching framework (e.g. Danielson; Marzano; etc.) to develop your professional growth goal?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**49.53%**	370
No	**50.47%**	377
Total		**747**

Of respondents who answered yes, most used either the Danielson framework or the Marzano framework or variations thereof. Others used district-supplied frameworks, Teach Like a Champion, and 5D.



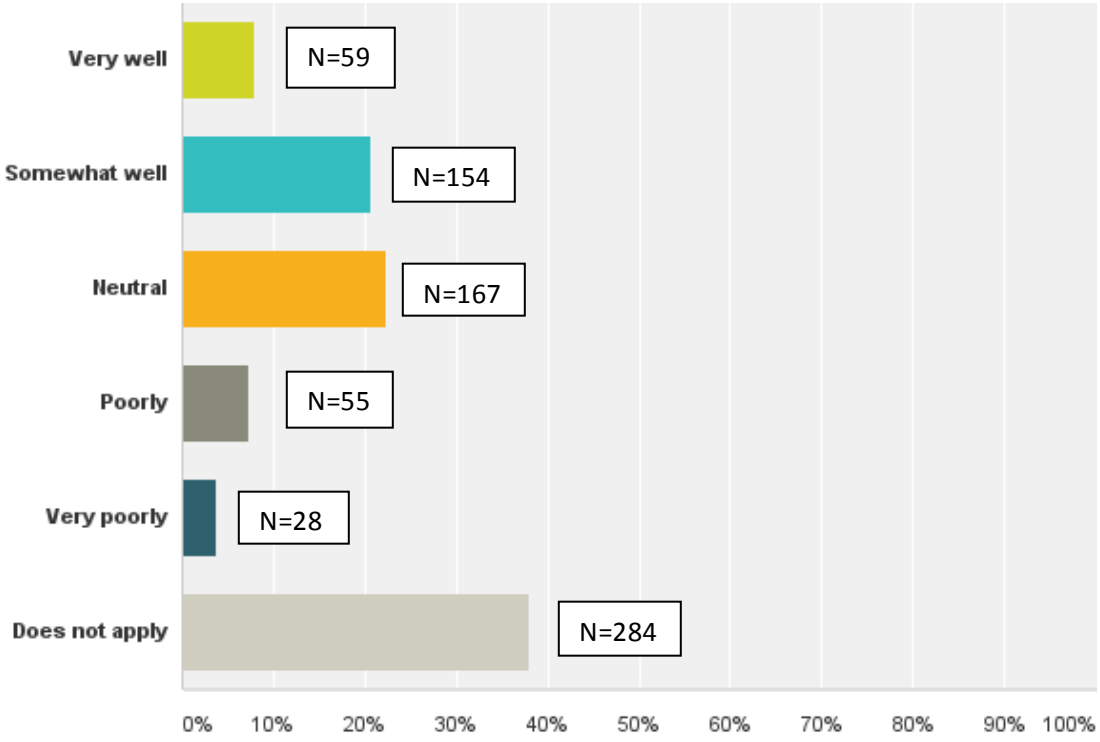
Notes:

"Framework not shared" means that the educator did use an established framework but declined to describe it.

"Other (established)" means that the educator used another resource to develop their goal. These other tools were sometimes used in conjunction with Danielson or Marzano frameworks. "Other (established)" frameworks that were indicated by respondents included ATTPS, Q-Comp, Bloom's, Teach Like a Champion, SMART, iObservation, McREL, MN State Standards Rubric, SOEI, 5D, and WIDA standards.

Question 21

If you used an established rubric or framework, how effectively did it represent your discipline?



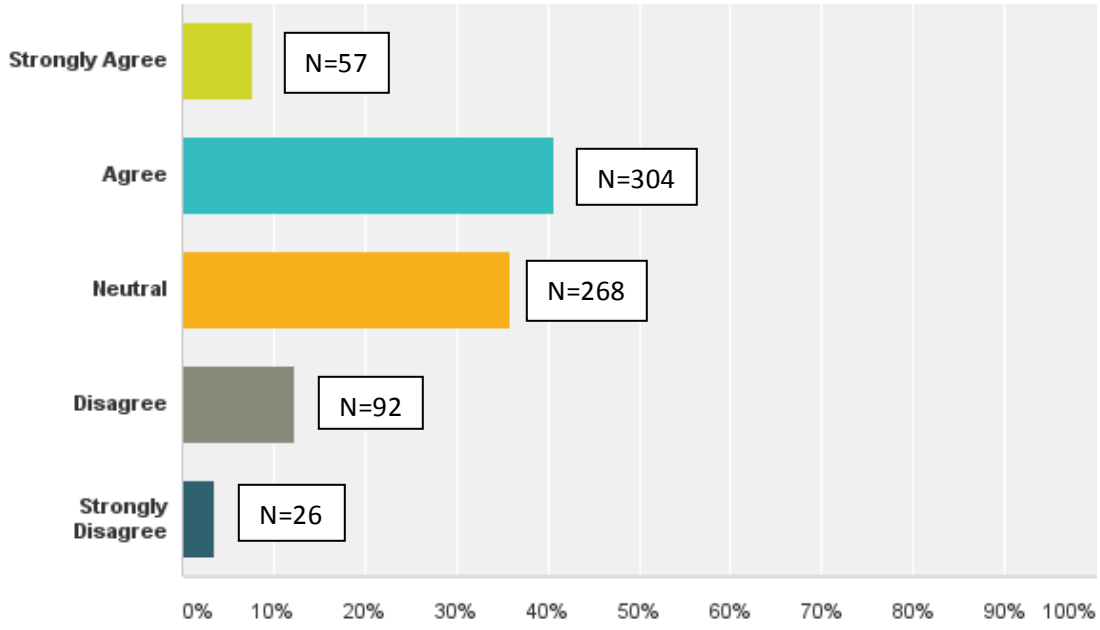
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very well	**7.90%**	59
Somewhat well	**20.62%**	154
Neutral	**22.36%**	167
Poorly	**7.36%**	55
Very poorly	**3.75%**	28
Does not apply	**38.02%**	284
Total		**747**

Total number of respondents who used an established rubric or framework = 463

Of the 463 respondents who used an established rubric or framework, almost 50% felt it effectively mapped onto their discipline. However, 36% of respondents were neutral on the subject and 18% felt that the rubric or framework was not a good fit.

Question 22

The process of developing a professional growth goal and plan helped me improve my practice.

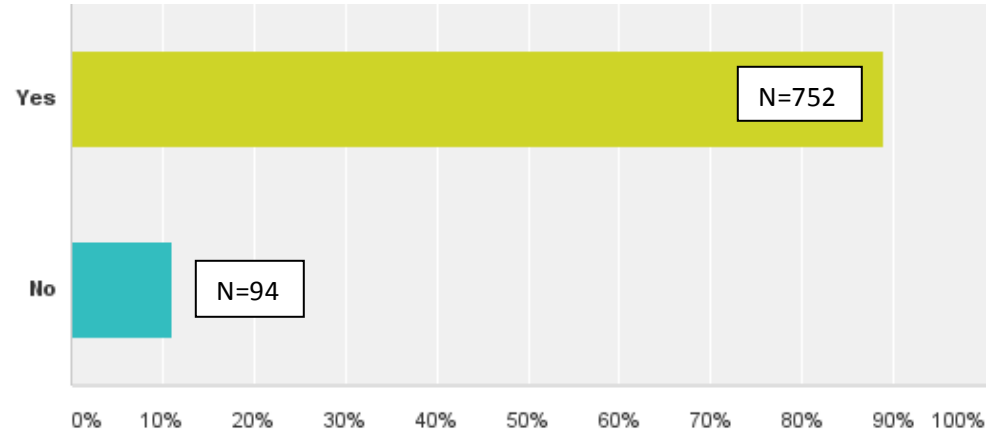


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**7.63%**	57
Agree	**40.70%**	304
Neutral	**35.88%**	268
Disagree	**12.32%**	92
Strongly Disagree	**3.48%**	26
Total		**747**

Although nearly 16% of respondents disagreed with the notion that the process of developing a professional growth goal improved their practice, nearly half of the respondents found the process helpful. Well over one-third of respondents felt only neutral about the process.

Question 23

Are you part of a professional learning community (PLC)?

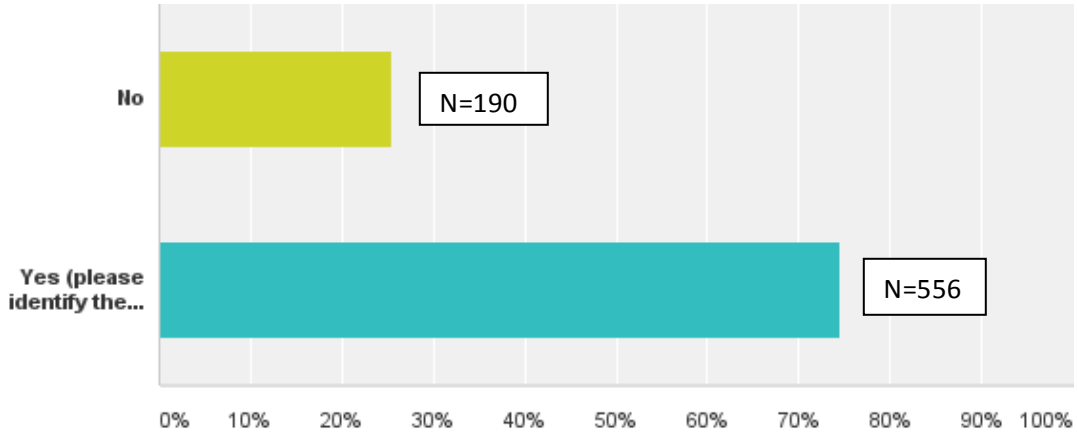


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**88.89%**	752
No	**11.11%**	94
Total		**846**

Almost 90% of responding teachers are part of a professional learning community.

Question 24

If yes, are there any other arts specialists in your PLC?

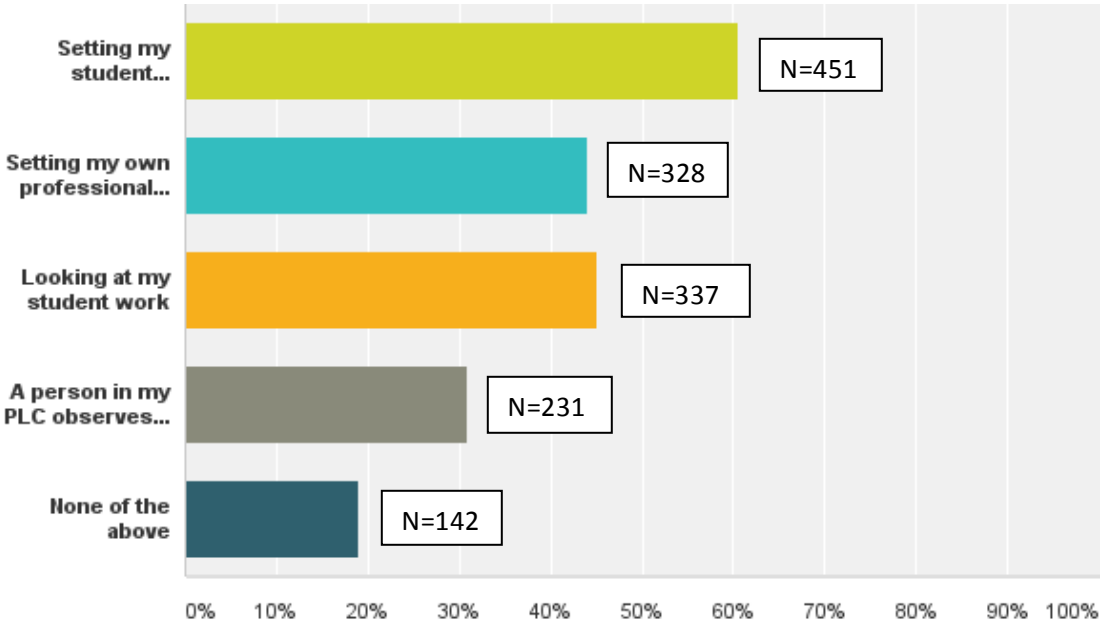


Answer Choices	Responses	
No	**25.47%**	190
Yes (please identify their discipline area)	**74.53%**	556
Total		**746**

Surprisingly, nearly three-quarters of arts teachers have other arts specialists in their professional learning community.

Question 25

How does your PLC have a role in your growth? (Check all that apply):

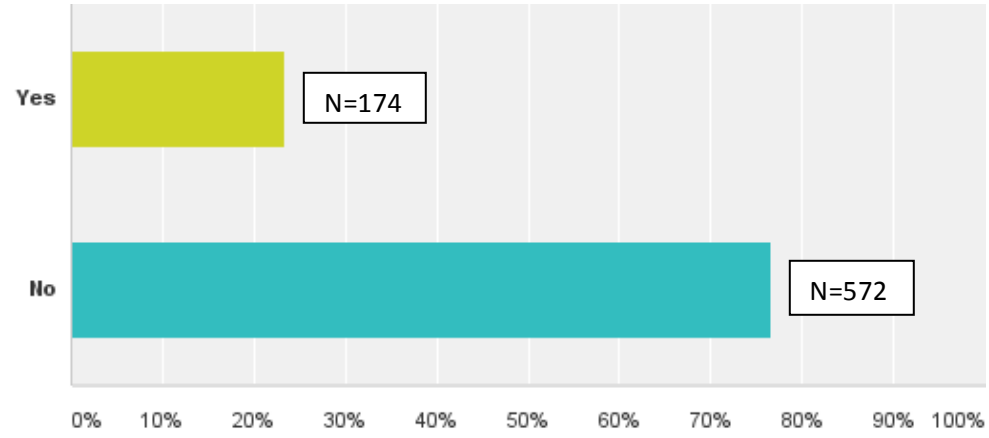


Answer Choices	Responses	
Setting my student growth/student learning goals	**60.46%**	451
Setting my own professional growth goals	**43.97%**	328
Looking at my student work	**45.17%**	337
A person in my PLC observes my teaching and gives me feedback	**30.97%**	231
None of the above	**19.03%**	142
Total Respondents: 746		

Professional learning communities function in a number of ways to support arts teachers, including aiding in the formation of student growth/student learning goals, setting of professional growth goals, analysis of student work, and observation and feedback. Some teachers reported that their professional learning community also brainstormed ways to address individual student needs, collaborated on projects, shared advice on how best to teach certain concepts, learned new skills together, developed common assessments, and discussed curriculum. Several teachers felt that PLCs were not a productive use of their time.

Question 26

Do you have an arts specialist peer who serves as your peer reviewer?

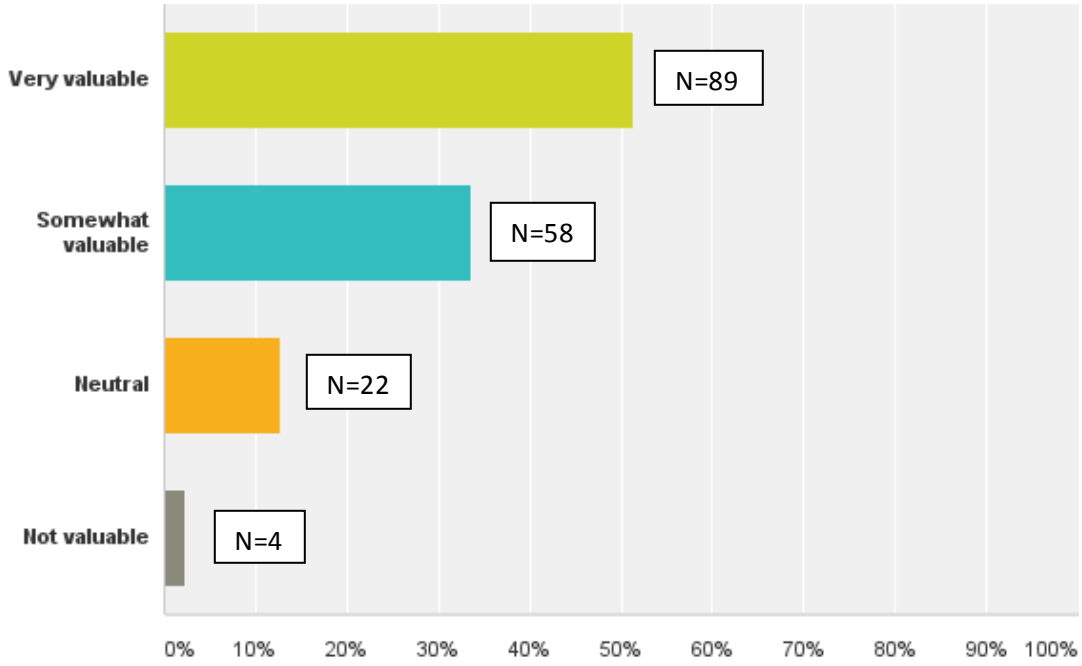


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**23.32%**	174
No	**76.68%**	572
Total		**746**

Less than a quarter of arts teachers have an arts specialist peer who serves as their peer reviewer.

Follow-up to Question 26:

If yes, how valuable is the feedback you get from a peer about your teaching?

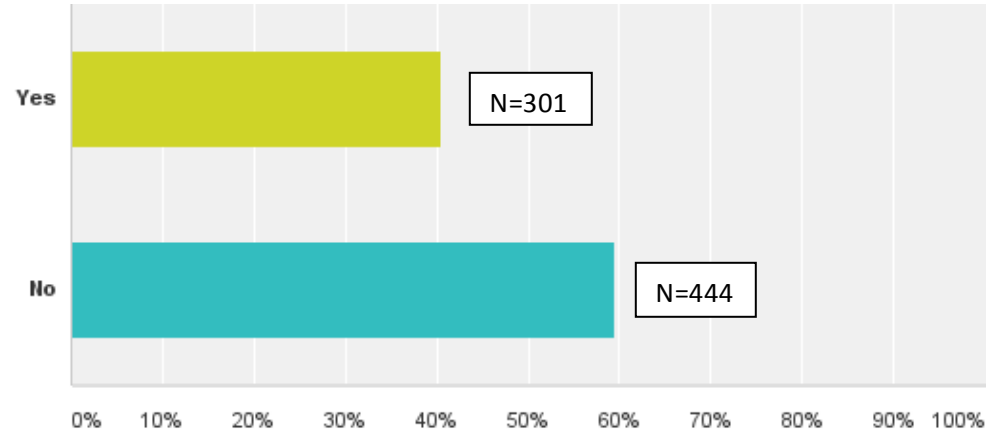


Answer Choices	Responses	
Very valuable	**51.45%**	89
Somewhat valuable	**33.53%**	58
Neutral	**12.72%**	22
Not valuable	**2.31%**	4
Total		**173**

When observed by an arts specialist peer, over 80% of arts teachers reported that feedback provided on their teaching was valuable. Only about 2% of teachers said such feedback was not valuable.

Question 27

Are you offered sub coverage so you can observe other teachers in your discipline IN YOUR DISTRICT?

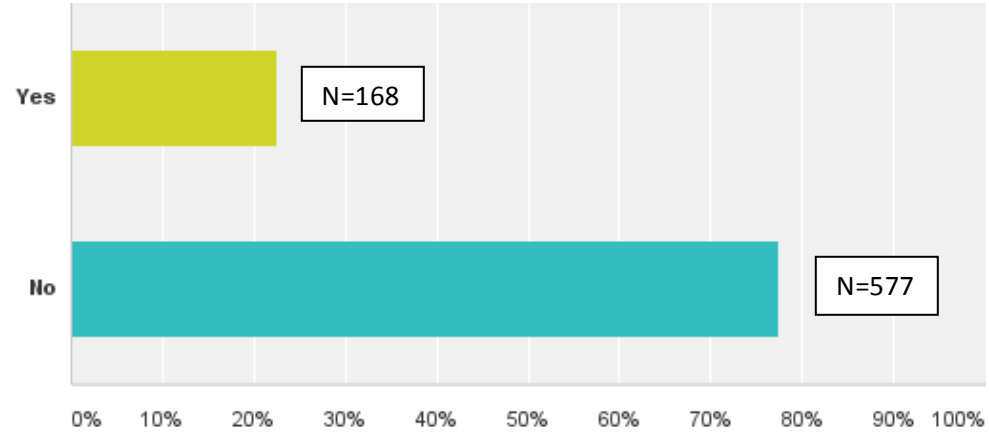


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**40.40%**	301
No	**59.60%**	444
Total		**745**

About 40% of teachers are provided sub coverage to allow them to observe other teachers in their discipline in their district.

Question 28

Are you offered sub coverage so you can observe other teachers in your discipline OUTSIDE YOUR DISTRICT?

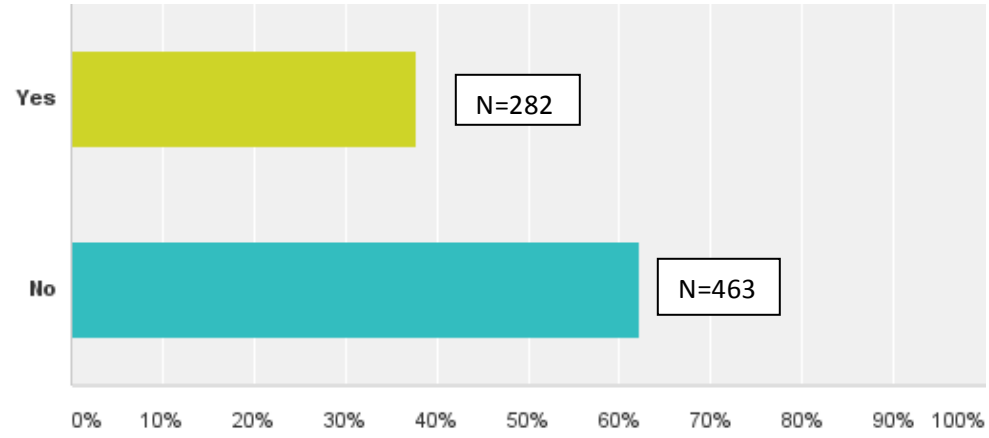


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**22.55%**	168
No	**77.45%**	577
Total		**745**

Only 22% of polled teachers are provided sub coverage to observe outside of their district.

Question 29

Have you been able to visit other classrooms to observe other teachers in your discipline?

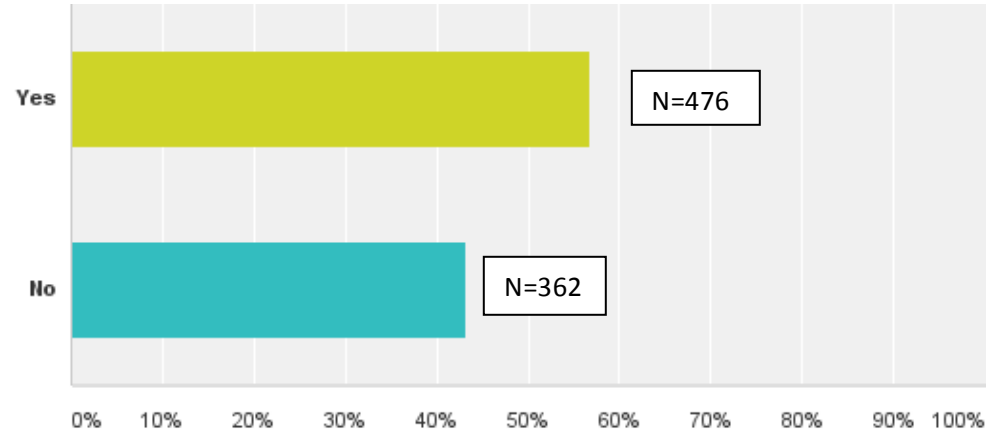


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**37.85%**	282
No	**62.15%**	463
Total		**745**

Although less than 38% of teachers polled have had the opportunity to observe other teachers in their discipline, this number is similar to the percentage of teachers (40%) who are also provided sub coverage to engage in classroom observation in their discipline. In other words, it appears that when the sub coverage is provided for observations, teachers take advantage of that opportunity.

Question 30

Does your district collect data on student engagement?

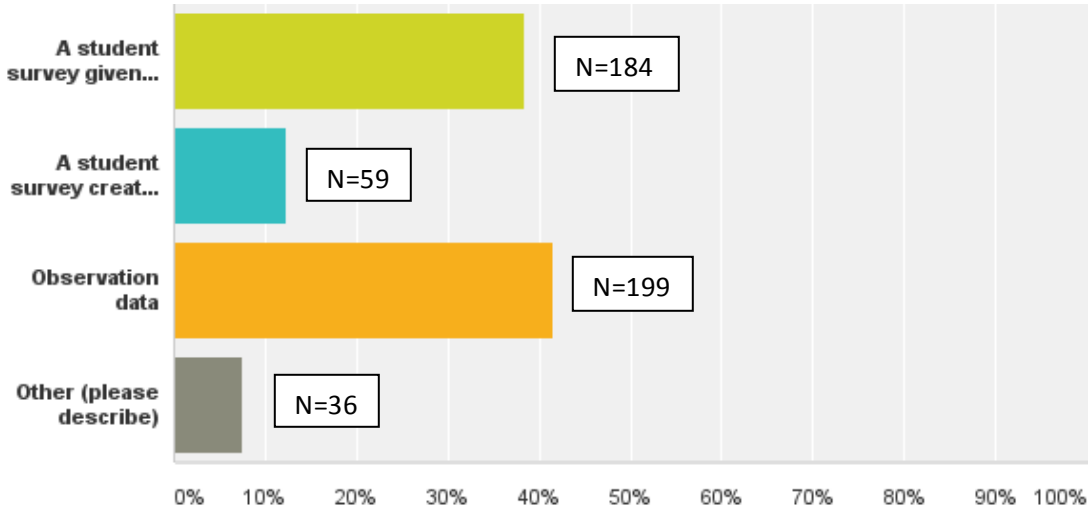


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**56.80%**	476
No	**43.20%**	362
Total		**838**

Slightly more than half of polled teachers reported that their districts collect data on student engagement.

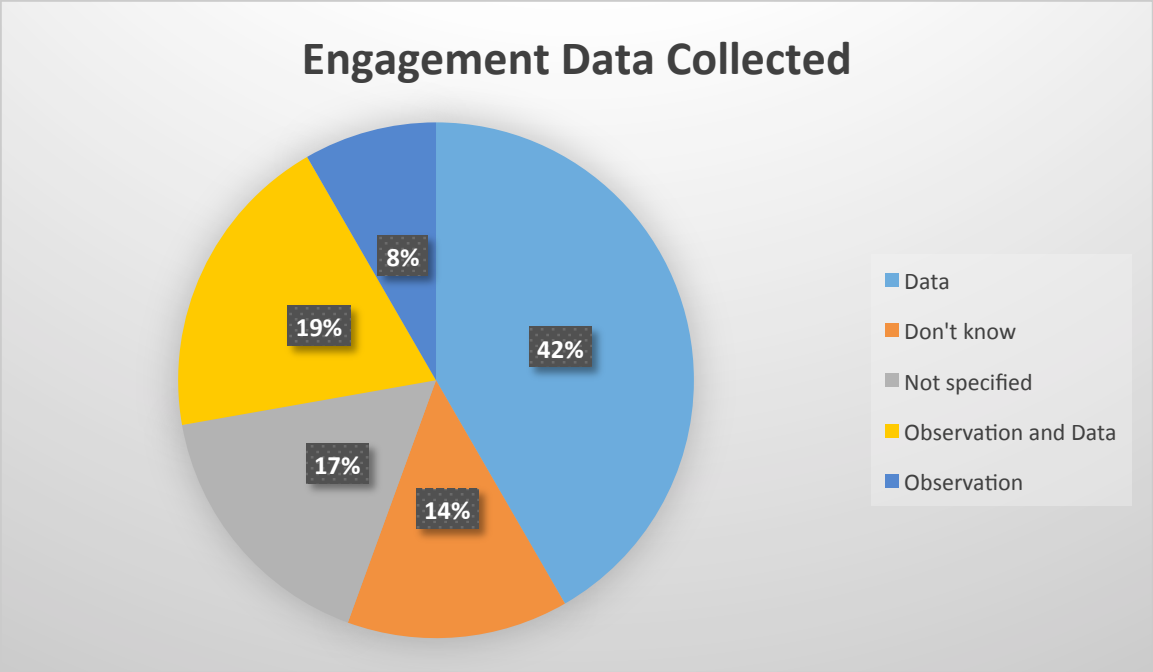
Follow-up to Question 30

If yes, what kind of data is collected? (Check one):



Answer Choices	Responses
A student survey given in all disciplines using a standardized district survey	38.49% 184
A student survey created by each teacher using an item bank of questions that teachers can draw from	12.34% 59
Observation data	41.63% 199
Other (please describe)	7.53% 36
Total	**478**

More than 90% of teachers stated that student engagement data is collected in one of three forms: a standardized survey provided to all students by the district, a survey designed by individual teachers containing questions from a vetted question bank, or observation data.



Notes:

"Data" includes stored qualitative or quantitative data measuring student engagement. Responses that mentioned the use of surveys were coded into this group.

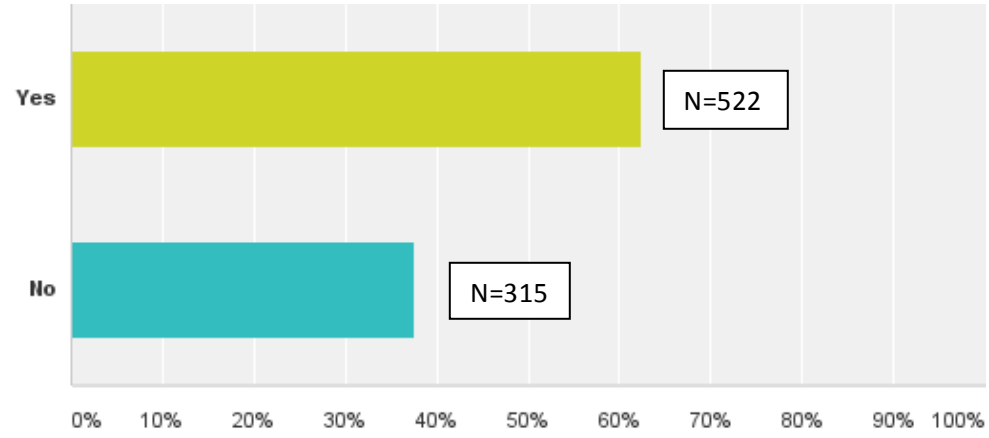
"Not specified" means that the teacher did not respond to the question in a way that informed analysis, or that the response was so general that it could not be coded.

"Observation and Data" means that observation was conducted in conjunction with the use of student surveys or that observation was carried out in a methodologically rigorous way.

"Observation" means that the response included some form of observation, but the methodological rigor of that observation was unclear.

Question 31

Have you been observed by your summative evaluator using the new evaluation system?

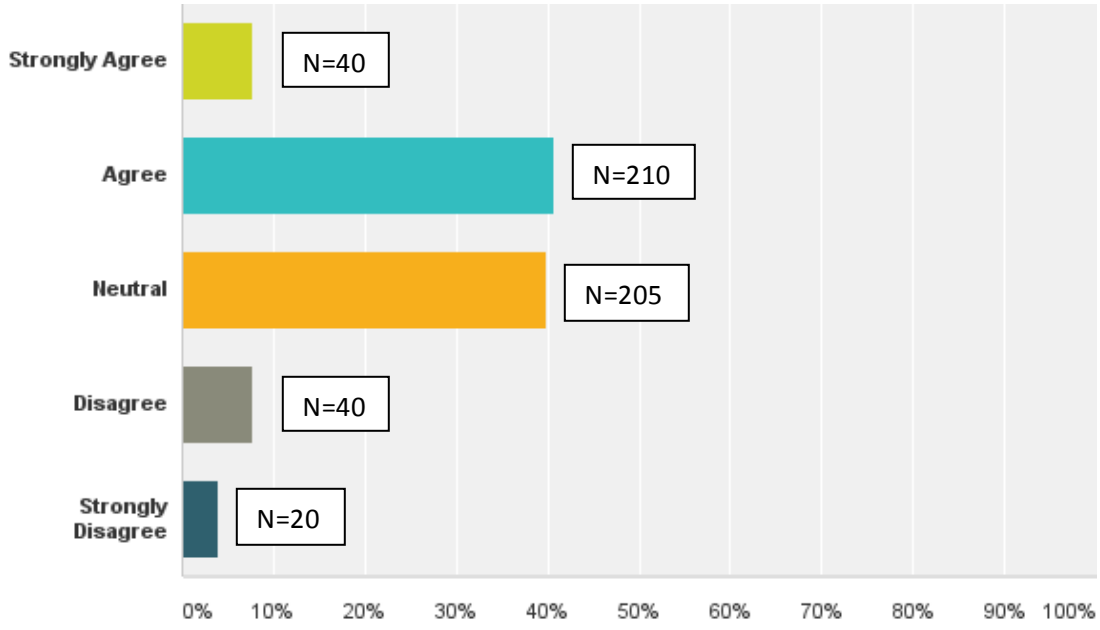


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**62.37%**	522
No	**37.63%**	315
Total		**837**

Almost two-thirds of polled teachers had been observed by their summative evaluator under the new evaluation system.

Follow-up to Question 34

If yes, the feedback led to positive changes in my practice...(choose one).

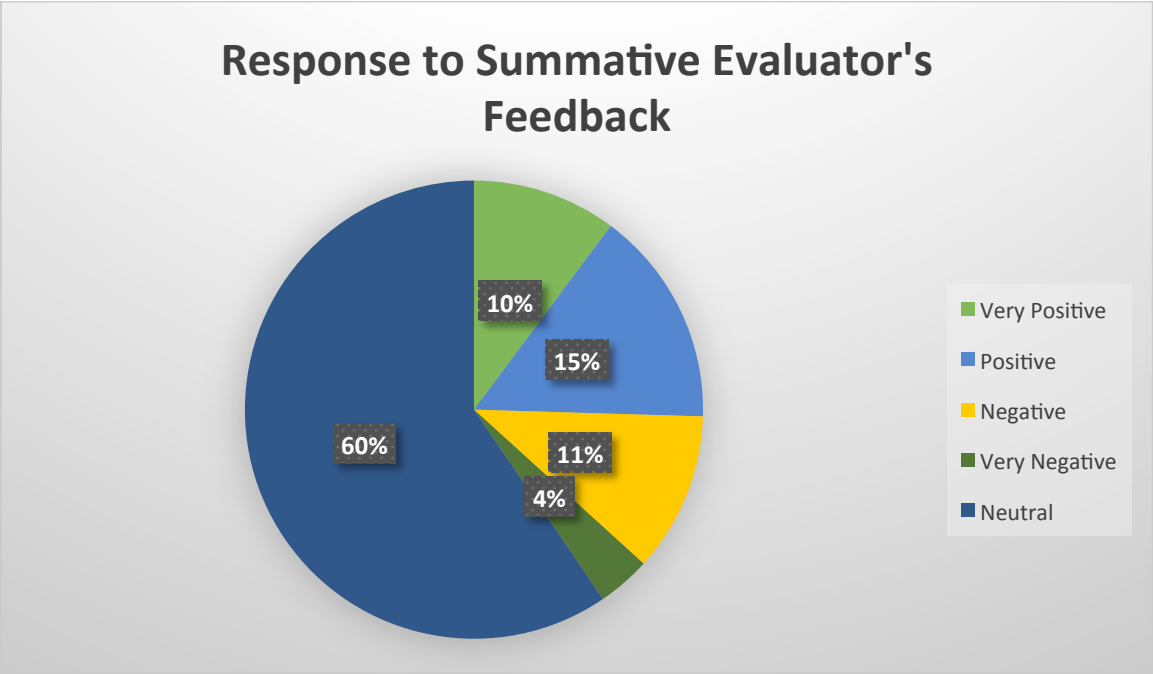


Answer Choices	Responses	
Strongly Agree	**7.77%**	40
Agree	**40.78%**	210
Neutral	**39.81%**	205
Disagree	**7.77%**	40
Strongly Disagree	**3.88%**	20
Total		**515**

Although nearly 40% of respondents were neutral when asked if their summative evaluator's feedback had led to positive changes in practice, almost 50% had found the feedback useful. Only about 10% did not find such feedback useful.

Question 32

What could have made the observation and feedback from the summative evaluator more meaningful to you?



Notes about how the responses were coded:

"Very Positive" comments (n=38 or 10%) reflected the view that the feedback was both informative and useful. These respondents had no additional comment or suggestions to make the feedback be better.

"Positive" comments (n=57 or 15%) were ones where the respondent thought the feedback was good/useful, but he/she also had one or more additional suggestions to improve the observation and feedback process.

"Negative" comments (n=42 or 11%) reflected dissatisfaction with the feedback, and had one or more suggestions to improve the observation and feedback process.

"Very Negative" comments (n=14 or 4%) included those where the respondent thought the observation and feedback process was totally not useful or not helpful, mostly expressing that it was a waste of time and had no suggestions for improvement.

"Neutral" comments (n=222 or 60%) had no positive or negative valence directly expressed, where only suggestions were made. Nearly all of the suggestions concerned the need for the person doing the evaluation to have either had a background in some form of arts education or to have a sufficiently sensitive rubric by which to observe and make judgements about the instructional behaviors of the arts educator. The sense of frustration in the comments could be clearly inferred, but it was not stated.

The other 142 comments were unable to be categorized – e.g., No Comment; N/A; I am not sure; None

Examples of "Very Positive" comments include:

I can think of nothing that would help our interaction at this time. My principal was positive and helpful.

I have a great observer who does not have any sort of arts background. They are objective and give me great insight into my practice as an educator.

The observation and feedback were excellent (no real change needed) because the evaluator is knowledgeable about teaching music and has learned the details of her Q-Comp role very well.

Nothing- she was very thorough with a script of the lesson and video clips to augment and deepen our discussion.

I am extremely happy with my observer and how the feedback is given. I believe that this is a valuable process and has helped me grow as an educator.

This year was the best feedback I was given and I actually got to make changes that benefited me. The one on one time is important and it really helps to have an outside perspective. I have been in a PLC for 5 years and the previous years were not as good.

Examples of "Positive" comments include:

The process is a good one. I feel like it forces me to think more about my lesson and to reflect on my own performance, not just my students.

Sometimes the evaluator does not fully understand the artistic process and project-based learning BUT he is learning. That's wonderful!

I think the evaluator did a good job. We discussed my strategy and then I was offered a suggestion to try the next time.

The observation and feedback was fine but since both observers were not art educators most of the feedback was generic or something I was already aware of.

The feedback was inspiring and objective, but no ideas on what to improve on or change.

Examples of "Negative" comments include:

Evaluation by someone who has a clue regarding music standards.

Administration conducted my observation/evaluation - to tell you the truth he has no clue what happens in an art room.

If the observer had even a LITTLE theatre background he could have understood that my classroom, my student engagement, my assignments, activities and rubrics were being well met. As it was, he thought I lacked rigor.

The evaluation focused on things that aren't applicable to my classroom, and I was marked down for things that I am not able to do.

An observation that takes more than 4/10 of 1 percent of my total yearly teaching time would be a good start…

For one, the summative evaluator could have bothered to actually do a follow up and conference with me... I was observed twice last year per our contract by the principal and neither time was I followed up on.

Examples of "Very Negative" comments include:

All they can comment on is whether or not I'm doing the rubric. They don't know my content, they don't know the vocabulary, difficulty, levels that are appropriate at each grade or even how to see student self eval or initiation. It's different than a core content classroom.

There was one category where I didn't score where I wanted to, so I asked what I can do better, and the evaluator said "Well, this doesn't really apply to band, so...nothing." It is insulting to me that I get evaluated poorly on something that I am told I can't change and that doesn't apply to my field.

I was evaluated by two principals. The evaluations were very different. Neither were art professionals nor familiar with art specialist techniques, practice or technologies. One was professional but biased toward the latest technology developments. The other acted unprofessionally and used the observation feedback as a venue for venting personal grievances and spreading gossip. It was a disgrace to the process. The criteria of the evaluation should fit the discipline, which it doesn't. A politician should not interrupt a surgeon to suggest how to do surgery, nor a car mechanic interrupt a lawyer to suggest how to practice law. Politicians are suggesting "one size fits all" for teacher evaluations, when they know this hasn't worked well for any human or other animal on any level. A team approach, to build evaluation models which fit the discipline and school type (i.e. standards) is the only way to approach the matter in an equiQuestion manner. Likewise, evaluators from out-of-district should be utilized to avoid bias.

Examples of "Neutral" comments include:

More direct knowledge of music pedagogy for more music-related feedback.

We never talked about the observation so there was no feedback.

It would be good to be evaluated by someone that understands what we teach.

More time to reflect after the observation with the evaluator.

Look at my plans for the unit, see how the unit plan is applicable for the day's "lesson plan". Understand that there are studio work days, usually following more structured lessons and demonstrations, etc. Understand that the studio work days give a glimpse into my best teaching moments, and that it is not always going to be a neat, discreet lesson that is taught and assessed in one class period. Give feedback about students' level of engagement, especially when I'm not looking, as in when I'm helping another

student or washing hands, etc. Give feedback about the unit plans, based on observation one day in the process, and the finished artwork.

Someone who has experience in performing arts.

The observation feedback was given through email. It would be nice to meet in person to discuss back and forth.

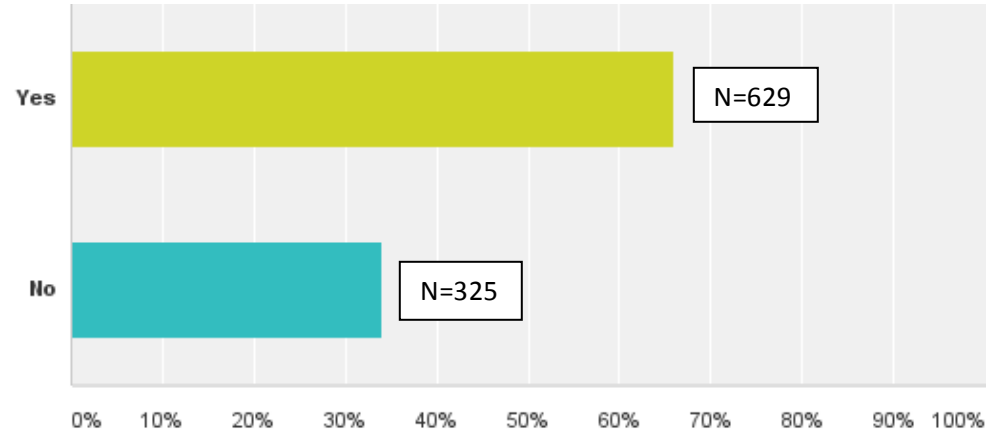
My evaluator was not a music teacher and told me she did not know anything about teaching music. Because I teach 300 students every 2 days, it is difficult to maintain flex groups and modified instruction with 12 different classes at the same time. I think having someone who understands the discipline and the job when they are my evaluator would help a lot.

I've noticed the evaluation is heavily focused around daily lesson planning, and doesn't accommodate project-based learning as nicely. It's difficult for me to find content that can be started and finished in a day. When I am observed teaching an art project (whether it be introduction, work time, or conclusion), I can't always get to show the summative evaluation, reflection, and pre-learning activities because they can't happen on the same day. Art takes time, and I wish the rubric was more reflective of that.

My principal does not have a clue what an elementary music teacher is supposed to be doing in the classroom. She spent many years in a middle school as a math teacher before being our principal. She was very positive about my teaching but can offer no meaningful feedback.

Question 33

Have you previously had an opportunity to collaborate with colleagues to share and evaluate student arts products/performances?

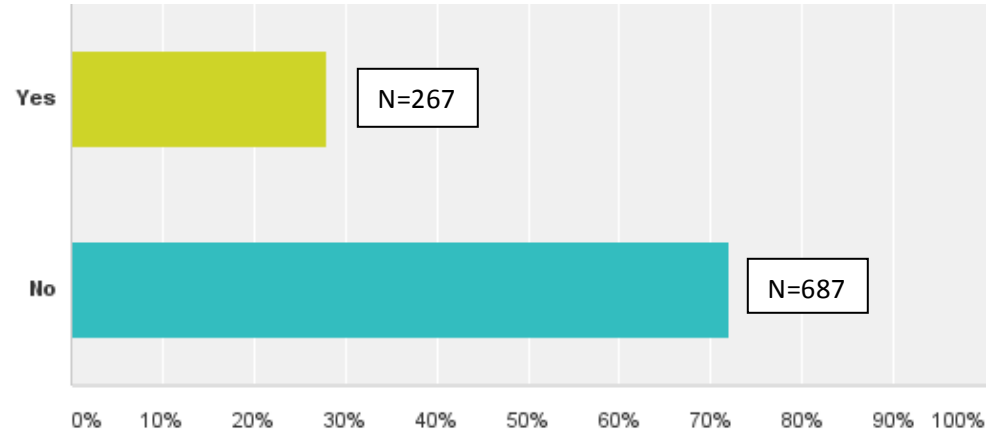


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**65.93%**	629
No	**34.07%**	325
Total		**954**

Almost two-thirds of teachers surveyed reported that they had been given the opportunity to collaborate with colleagues to share and evaluate student work.

Question 34

Are you currently part of any online sharing with colleagues?

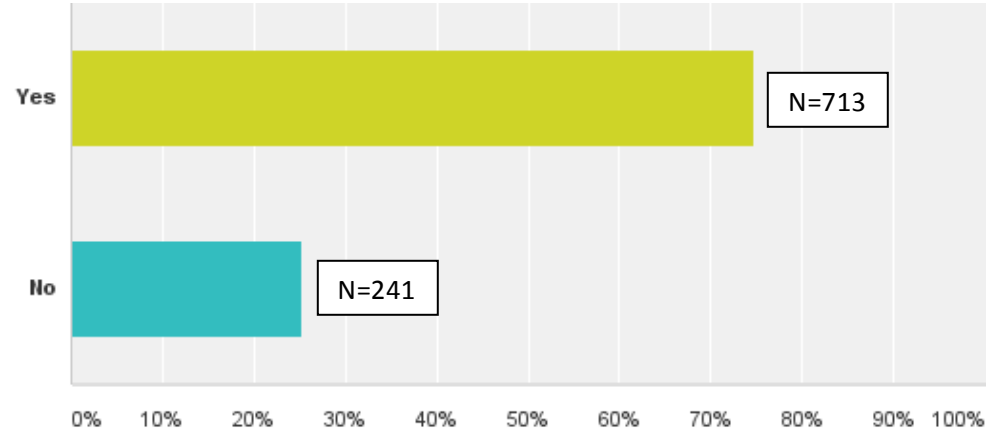


Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**27.99%**	267
No	**72.01%**	687
Total		**954**

Slightly less than 30% of respondents engaged in online sharing with colleagues as a part of their current practice.

Question 35

Would you be interested in having this type of online opportunity (including sharing student work samples, with someone from another district), if they were in the same arts discipline?



Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	**74.74%**	713
No	**25.26%**	241
Total		**954**

Although fewer than 30% of teachers polled currently engaged in online sharing, almost 75% said they would be interested in having this type of online opportunity, provided other members were of the same arts discipline.