

2016 Report on Customer Service Texas Education Agency

June 1, 2016

Executive Summary

Results from the 2016 Texas Education Agency (TEA) Customer Satisfaction Survey found that 82% of TEA customers are satisfied with the customer service TEA provides. 91% of respondents state TEA treats them with respect, and 86% report the staff demonstrates a willingness to assist them.

The survey collected information about TEA's website, service provided by phone and email, information quality, educator certification support, complaints process, and online training resources. Overall, school and district staff responded positively across these services. A random sample of ~17,000 school and district-level personnel across the state of Texas were surveyed with a total of **3,527** responding.

Responses were received from a variety of school staff including teachers, superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, and other district staff throughout all 20 of the Education Service Center regions. The survey was available from April 4 through April 18, 2016. There was a >20% response rate with a margin of sampling error of +/- .59 at a 95% confidence level.

Introduction

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) conducted the 2016 Customer Satisfaction Survey for the purposes of fulfilling a legislative mandate to assess the satisfaction level of customers who have had contact with the agency since September 1, 2014 (Texas Government Code § 2114.002), and identifying opportunities for improvement. The Texas Government Code specifies that each agency and higher education institute within the state will collect feedback from its customers along several areas of customer service that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Facilities, including the customer's ability to access the agency, the office location, signs and cleanliness.
- Staff, including employee courtesy, friendliness, knowledge, and whether staff adequately identifies themselves to customers by name, including the use of name plates or tags for accountability.
- Communications, including toll-free telephone access, the average amount of time a customer spends on hold, call transfers, access to a live person, letters, and electronic mail.
- Internet site, including the ease of use of the site, information found on the site, such as the physical location of the agency, program and service listings, and who to contact for further information or to complain.
- Complaint handling process, including whether it is easy to file a complaint and whether responses are timely.
- Ability to timely serve its customers, including the amount of time a customer waits for service in person, by phone, by letter or at a website.
- Brochures or other printed information, including the accuracy of that information.

In accordance with these requirements and in an effort to obtain valuable feedback about the services it provides, TEA conducted the Customer Satisfaction Survey with school and district-level personnel across the state of Texas between April 4 and April 18, 2016. The Texas Government Code §2114.002 also states agencies are required to submit a report on customer service to the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy and to the Legislative Budget Board no later than June 1 of every even-numbered year. This report presents the findings from the evaluation of customer service and fulfills the reporting requirements.

Methodology

Survey Development

The TEA Customer Satisfaction Survey was developed based on suggested content from the Texas Government Code § 2114.002, as well as agency-specific requests. The survey included a range of questions seeking customer input regarding levels of satisfaction related to TEA-customer interactions, and with the products and projects TEA administers.

Participants and Data Collection

For the purposes of this evaluation tool, TEA customers were defined as school and district-level personnel who may have had contact with TEA since September 1, 2014. The respondents included teachers (36%), school principals (26%), superintendents/assistant superintendents (17%), district office staff (11%), counselors (3%), and a variety of additional personnel (7%).

In order to obtain a wide sample of respondents from across the state, a list of email addresses for certified teachers (as of March 1, 2016) was used to create a random sample of ~11,000 classroom educators. In addition, ~6,000 principals, administrators, superintendents, and other district personnel were randomly selected from emails queried from the [AskTED](#) directory.

The survey was emailed to ~17,000 customers utilizing a link to a web-based survey administration system at no monetary cost to the agency. The survey link was also provided on the Texas Association of School Administrators' website to promote additional customer feedback. The survey was voluntary and remained open for data collection from April 4 through April 18, 2016.

Respondents

A total of 3,527 individuals responded to the online customer satisfaction survey.

Of those responding, 1,705 (48%) reported they had contacted (or had been contacted) by TEA since September 1, 2014. The remainder of the respondents had not had direct contact with TEA within that timeframe.

When asked their job titles: 36% were teachers, 26% principals, 17% superintendents or assistant superintendents, 11% district office staff, with the remainder being counselors, librarians, teacher assistants, assistant principals, and other support staff.

The state of Texas is divided into 20 Education Service Center regions. Survey respondents were from all of the 20 regions across the state with the largest percentage from Region 4 (15.34%) which serves the Houston area. The next two largest response rates came from Region 10 (11.95%) and Region 11 (9.18%) which serve the Richardson/Dallas and Fort Worth areas respectively. These areas are some of the more densely populated regions in the state; therefore, more respondents from these areas would be expected.

Key Findings

The following highlights the responses received from the 3,527 school and district-level personnel.

- The top reasons for contacting (or being contacted by) TEA was to seek information about: (in % order)
 - (1) STAAR/ Assessment Testing;
 - (2) Educator Certification & Exams;
 - (3) Accountability Ratings & Reporting;
 - (4) Information Technology (e.g. PEIMS, TSDS, TEASE, TEAL);
 - (5) Federal Program Compliance
 - (6) Grant Administration
 - (7) Foundation School Program/ School Funding
 - (8) State Board of Education or Commissioner's Rules
 - (9) Curriculum & Graduation Plans
 - (10) Programs for Students with Disabilities (Special Ed.)Inquiries represent a minimum of 4,609 contacts made by the 3,527 respondents during the two-year timeframe.
- For those interacting with TEA by telephone (adjusted for those marking N/A), over 92% reported that the TEA staff were courteous and that they were treated in a professional manner. Almost two-thirds of the respondents (~74%) indicated they were routed directly to the proper person and were given a clear explanation. 77% reported TEA staff responded to their telephone requests promptly. 67% agreed they gained access to a live person quickly with 16% disagreeing.
- When interacting with TEA via email (adjusted for those marking N/A), 92% stated the staff was courteous and they were treated in a professional manner. 78% said their email requests were responded to promptly, were routed directly to the proper person, and they received a clear explanation to their request via email.
- Overall, 82% of TEA customers were satisfied with the customer service provided by TEA.
- 91% of respondents agreed they were treated with respect by TEA staff (with only 1% in disagreement). 86% reported staff members demonstrated a willingness to assist.
- The majority of respondents (84%) indicated they had not accessed the TEA complaint process (i.e. skipped questions or marked N/A). Of those applicable, 98% were satisfied or neutral regarding the ease of submitting complaints to TEA and their timely handling; only 2% indicated dissatisfaction.
- Overall, 71% were satisfied with the information that was provided by TEA during this timeframe. "Usefulness" of the information provided by TEA was dis-aggregated by subject areas and adjusted for those marking N/A. Rankings in order of usefulness were:
 - (1) Educator Preparation & Certification 80%;
 - (2) Curriculum & Graduation Plans 74%;
 - (3) Accountability Ratings & Reporting 73%;
 - (4) STAAR/ Assessment Testing 71%;
 - (5) School Financial Information 69%;
 - (6) Grant Information 67%;
 - and (7) Program Guidance 64%.

- When asked if TEA allows adequate time for school personnel to respond to TEA requests (adjusting for those marking N/A) 68% agreed, 7% disagreed, 25% were neutral. When asked if requests were reasonable: 65% agreed, 12% disagreed, and 23% were neutral.
- About half (59%) of the respondents believed TEA's process for requesting information seemed to be improving, with 6% disagreeing when adjusted for those marking N/A.
- Correspondence received from TEA was considered useful and accurate by the majority of respondents (~72%); 10% disagreed that the correspondence was understandable.
- When asked about their experience with "To the Administrator Addressed Letters", half of the respondents had seen or utilized them. Of those, 94% believed they were relevant and useful, with 86% agreeing that they "greatly benefitted from this correspondence" (with only 1% disagreeing).
- With regard to TEA's website, 97% had utilized the website during the last two years. 78% agreed the content was accurate; however, 29% disagreed that it was easy for them to find the information they needed. Approximately 66% stated the website met their needs and the content was easy to understand.
- Over half (57%) of the respondents believed TEA's website quality and ease-of-use seemed to be improving, with 14% disagreeing, and others marking N/A or staying neutral.
- When asked about their experience with the Educator Certification process, over one-third of respondents marked N/A. Of those applicable, 86% agreed that the information provided was helpful and understandable, and that they were satisfied with their experience when contacting TEA for guidance regarding educator certifications.
- When respondents were asked if they had accessed the Project Share educator training and/or the newly launched Texas Gateway Online Resources, only 18% said they had during this timeframe. Of those, over 60% agreed that the online training was easy to access, useful, clear, understandable, and in a good format for their learning style. Over half agreed they would recommend the online educator training to their colleagues (with 14% disagreeing). It should be noted that The Texas Gateway Online Resources site was launched only 7 weeks prior to this survey being conducted.

Conclusions

The survey indicates school and district-level personnel were satisfied with the quality of service received from TEA since September 1, 2014. During this period, the "overall satisfaction rating" increased from 75% in 2014 to 82% in 2016.

Respondents gave their highest satisfaction ratings (92%) to their experience interacting directly with TEA staff – being treated courteously and professionally. In addition, customers were highly satisfied with TEA staff treating them with respect and demonstrating a willingness to assist them.

Opportunities exist regarding: phones being answered quickly by a live-person, improving the reasonableness of requests for information from the districts, improving the agency website to help customers find information quickly, making TEA's correspondence more understandable, and increasing the number of educators using the TEA-provided online training resources.

In summary, TEA is very pleased with the overall results and high survey response rate of >20% and appreciates all the customers who took the time to respond. We look forward to continuously improving our services provided to our customers in the coming years.

(See [Appendix A](#) for detailed survey results.)

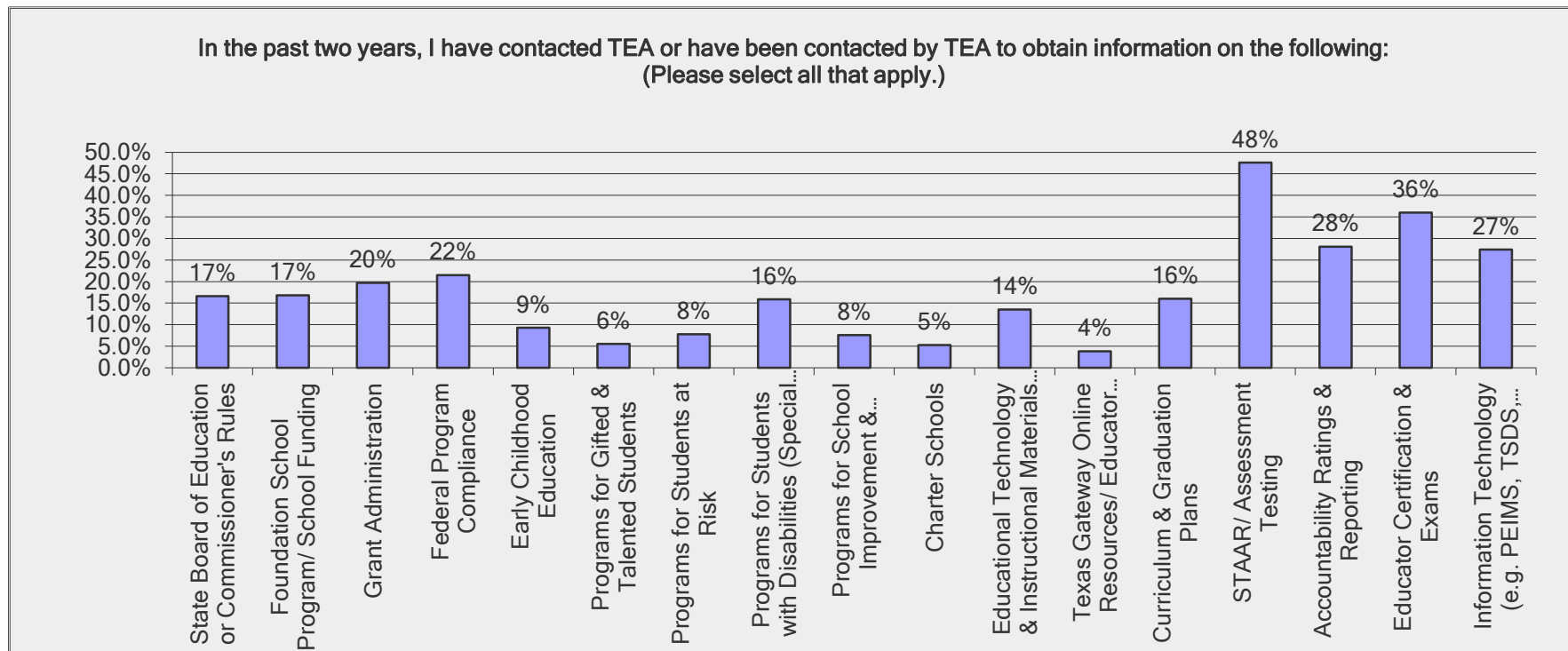
Texas Education Agency Customer Satisfaction Survey 2016

Results

1. Have you contacted TEA, or have you been contacted by TEA in the last two years (since September 1, 2014)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	48.3%	1705
No	51.7%	1822
<i>answered question</i>		3527
<i>skipped question</i>		0

2. In the past two years, I have contacted TEA or have been contacted by TEA to obtain information on the following:



In the past two years, I have contacted TEA or have been contacted by TEA to obtain information on the following: (Please select all that apply.)	Response Percent	Response Count
State Board of Education or Commissioner's Rules	16.6%	256
Foundation School Program/ School Funding	16.8%	259
Grant Administration	19.7%	305
Federal Program Compliance	21.5%	332
Early Childhood Education	9.3%	143
Programs for Gifted & Talented Students	5.5%	85
Programs for Students at Risk	7.8%	120
Programs for Students with Disabilities (Special Ed.)	15.9%	245
Programs for School Improvement & Accreditation	7.6%	118
Charter Schools	5.3%	82
Educational Technology & Instructional Materials (Textbooks)	13.5%	209
Texas Gateway Online Resources/ Educator Professional Development (Project Share)	3.8%	58
Curriculum & Graduation Plans	16.0%	247
STAAR/ Assessment Testing	47.6%	736
Accountability Ratings & Reporting	28.1%	434
Educator Certification & Exams	36.0%	556
Information Technology (e.g. PEIMS, TSDS, TEASE, TEAL)	27.4%	424
Other (please specify)		187
	<i>answered question</i>	1545
	<i>skipped question</i>	1982

187 respondents specified other areas such as: bilingual programs, UIL, grievance issues, waivers, Early College High Schools, career education, retirement, compliance issues, monitoring site visits, military and homeless students, Pre-K programs, foster care issues, extracurricular credits, graduation and transition plans, attendance, music and fine arts, etc.

3. If you have contact with TEA via telephone, please respond regarding your overall experience with the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Staff members are courteous.	41.40% 623	42.72% 643	5.85% 88	1.06% 16	0.27% 4	8.70% 131	1,505
I gain access to a live person quickly.	22.29% 335	38.19% 574	15.17% 228	11.18% 168	3.46% 52	9.71% 146	1,503
I am routed directly to the proper person.	23.72% 356	42.04% 631	14.26% 214	8.06% 121	2.00% 30	9.93% 149	1,501
I am given a clear explanation.	27.16% 408	41.08% 617	13.85% 208	7.72% 116	1.60% 24	8.59% 129	1,502
I am treated in a professional manner.	41.96% 629	43.16% 647	4.60% 69	1.27% 19	0.33% 5	8.67% 130	1,499
Staff members respond to my telephone request promptly.	29.37% 440	40.05% 600	12.22% 183	6.07% 91	2.07% 31	10.21% 153	1,498

4. If you have contact with TEA via email, please respond regarding your overall experience with the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Staff members respond to email requests promptly.	23.11% 339	35.51% 521	9.68% 142	4.98% 73	1.57% 23	25.15% 369	1,467
Staff members are courteous.	31.42% 459	37.37% 546	5.61% 82	0.55% 8	0.14% 2	24.91% 364	1,461
I am routed directly to the proper person.	22.88% 334	36.03% 526	10.34% 151	3.77% 55	0.75% 11	26.23% 383	1,460
I am given a clear explanation.	24.57% 358	33.84% 493	10.09% 147	6.25% 91	1.03% 15	24.23% 353	1,457
I am treated in a professional manner.	33.58% 490	35.98% 525	5.28% 77	0.62% 9	0.14% 2	24.40% 356	1,459

5. Regarding contact with TEA staff in general, please respond regarding your overall experience with the following:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
TEA staff members treat me with respect.	43.71% 657	47.24% 710	4.79% 72	1.13% 17	0.13% 2	2.99% 45	1,503
TEA staff members demonstrate a willingness to assist.	41.45% 628	44.55% 675	7.92% 120	2.77% 42	0.40% 6	2.90% 44	1,515

6. Overall, I am satisfied with my contact with TEA.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Overall, I am satisfied with my contact with TEA.	35.48% 541	46.03% 702	11.80% 180	4.79% 73	0.79% 12	1.11% 17	1,525

82% of customers reported they were satisfied with the customer service provided by TEA.

7. Please respond to the following regarding your overall experience with TEA's customer complaint process for any TEA employee concerns:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Complaints to TEA are easy to submit.	6.68% 99	13.57% 201	12.42% 184	4.79% 71	1.08% 16	61.44% 910	1,481
My complaints are handled in a timely manner.	6.51% 97	12.42% 185	13.76% 205	3.96% 59	0.94% 14	62.42% 930	1,490

8. Please respond to the following regarding your overall experience with information provided by or requested from TEA:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
TEA provides thorough and accurate information.	17.93% 507	52.78% 1,492	15.99% 452	7.61% 215	1.38% 39	4.32% 122	2,827
School financial information is useful.	13.86% 389	40.22% 1,129	19.56% 549	3.63% 102	0.86% 24	21.87% 614	2,807
Program guidance information is useful.	15.82% 444	48.24% 1,354	17.35% 487	4.63% 130	0.89% 25	13.07% 367	2,807
STAAR/ Assessment information is useful.	21.75% 612	40.30% 1,134	12.69% 357	7.75% 218	4.87% 137	12.65% 356	2,814
Curriculum and graduation plan information is useful.	17.07% 479	42.27% 1,186	16.43% 461	3.35% 94	0.89% 25	19.99% 561	2,806
Accountability ratings and reporting information is useful.	20.55% 578	44.17% 1,242	13.73% 386	6.79% 191	3.31% 93	11.45% 322	2,812
Grant information is useful.	14.15% 395	36.22% 1,011	19.81% 553	3.58% 100	0.86% 24	25.37% 708	2,791
Educator preparation and certification information is useful.	20.31% 572	45.58% 1,284	12.71% 358	2.98% 84	1.10% 31	17.32% 488	2,817
Overall, I am satisfied with the information I receive from TEA.	20.06% 566	51.13% 1,443	17.68% 499	5.81% 164	2.06% 58	3.26% 92	2,822
TEA's requests of information from educators are reasonable.	13.14% 369	42.86% 1,204	19.97% 561	7.33% 206	3.42% 96	13.28% 373	2,809
TEA allows adequate time for me to respond to their requests.	13.76% 388	43.49% 1,226	20.75% 585	3.97% 112	2.23% 63	15.79% 445	2,819
TEA's process for requesting information from me seems to be improving.	11.30% 318	36.26% 1,020	28.47% 801	3.45% 97	1.71% 48	18.81% 529	2,813

9. Please respond to the following questions regarding your overall experience with TEA’s distributed correspondence:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
Correspondence from TEA is generally useful to me.	19.45% 546	53.22% 1,494	17.06% 479	3.53% 99	0.96% 27	5.77% 162	2,807
Correspondence from TEA is accurate.	19.64% 551	51.80% 1,453	19.61% 550	2.60% 73	0.61% 17	5.74% 161	2,805
Correspondence from TEA is easy to understand.	14.81% 415	47.57% 1,333	22.02% 617	8.14% 228	2.32% 65	5.14% 144	2,802

10. Have you seen or utilized the TEA correspondence entitled “To the Administrator Addressed Letters” which provide important messages of interest to school districts?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	50.76%	1432
No	28.08%	792
I don't think so	21.16%	597
<i>answered question</i>		2,821

11. Please respond to the following regarding your overall experience with information in the “To the Administrator Addressed Letters”:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
This information is relevant and useful.	34.76% 495	59.48% 847	4.71% 67	0.70% 10	0.21% 3	0.14% 2	1,424
It is easy for me to join the email distribution list for this correspondence.	33.52% 477	48.56% 691	11.03% 157	1.97% 28	0.56% 8	4.36% 62	1,423
Overall, I greatly benefit from this correspondence (“To the Administrator Addressed Letters”).	33.36% 475	53.37% 760	11.24% 160	1.33% 19	0.28% 4	0.42% 6	1,424

12. Have you visited the TEA website (www.tea.texas.gov)?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	96.52%	2715
No	3.48%	98
<i>answered question</i>		2,813

13. Please respond to the following questions regarding your experience with the TEA website:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
It is easy to find information I need on the website.	11.34% 302	43.43% 1,156	16.23% 432	22.65% 603	6.24% 166	0.11% 3	2,662
I am able to easily find contact information for agency employees.	11.65% 310	38.52% 1,025	22.40% 596	14.66% 390	3.98% 106	8.79% 234	2,661
The website content is accurate.	17.04% 453	60.61% 1,611	17.80% 473	2.67% 71	1.02% 27	0.87% 23	2,658
The information on the website is easy to understand.	14.19% 377	52.71% 1,400	18.67% 496	11.60% 308	2.60% 69	0.23% 6	2,656
It is easy for me to locate complaint procedures.	6.79% 180	20.89% 554	23.64% 627	9.24% 245	3.17% 84	36.27% 962	2,652
It is easy for me to locate the Compact With Texans.	6.28% 166	17.25% 456	25.04% 662	7.83% 207	2.61% 69	41.00% 1,084	2,644
I am satisfied with the content quality.	12.16% 322	51.87% 1,373	24.37% 645	8.42% 223	2.23% 59	0.94% 25	2,647
The overall organization of the website helps me locate what I am looking for.	11.15% 297	43.56% 1,160	19.71% 525	18.21% 485	6.76% 180	0.60% 16	2,663
My visits to the website meet my needs.	13.97% 372	52.29% 1,392	19.72% 525	10.33% 275	3.38% 90	0.30% 8	2,662
TEA's website quality and ease-of-use seems to be improving.	12.62% 335	43.92% 1,166	27.34% 726	10.58% 281	3.73% 99	1.81% 48	2,655

14. Do you have a suggestion to improve TEA’s website?
 (Please do not include confidential or personally identifiable information. Thanks!)

Over 700 respondents provided comments. Many simply said “Make it more user friendly”.

Specific suggestions included topics such as: improving website navigation, purging old information, revising the sensitivity of the menu bar and banner, improving the drop-down tool, linking directly to the information needed (rather than just the page), making STAAR information easier to find and more usable, providing instructions for using various reports, limiting information on the web pages and writing more succinctly (“less wordy”).

In addition, many respondents complimented the website, felt it was “very helpful”, and acknowledged recent improvements.

15. Please respond to the following regarding your overall experience with TEA’s Educator Certification process:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
TEA provides thorough information regarding educator certifications.	15.82% 419	40.18% 1,064	8.91% 236	3.44% 91	1.02% 27	30.63% 811	2,648
TEA’s website information on this topic has been helpful to me.	13.92% 368	37.86% 1,001	11.69% 309	3.59% 95	1.10% 29	31.85% 842	2,644
I am satisfied with my experience when contacting TEA for guidance regarding educator certifications.	13.45% 355	32.93% 869	11.60% 306	2.96% 78	0.87% 23	38.20% 1,008	2,639
I understand the process necessary to register and take educator certification exams.	15.40% 407	37.76% 998	8.82% 233	2.99% 79	0.95% 25	34.09% 901	2,643
I understand the process necessary to maintain my educator certification.	17.64% 467	40.88% 1,082	7.86% 208	2.98% 79	0.98% 26	29.66% 785	2,647

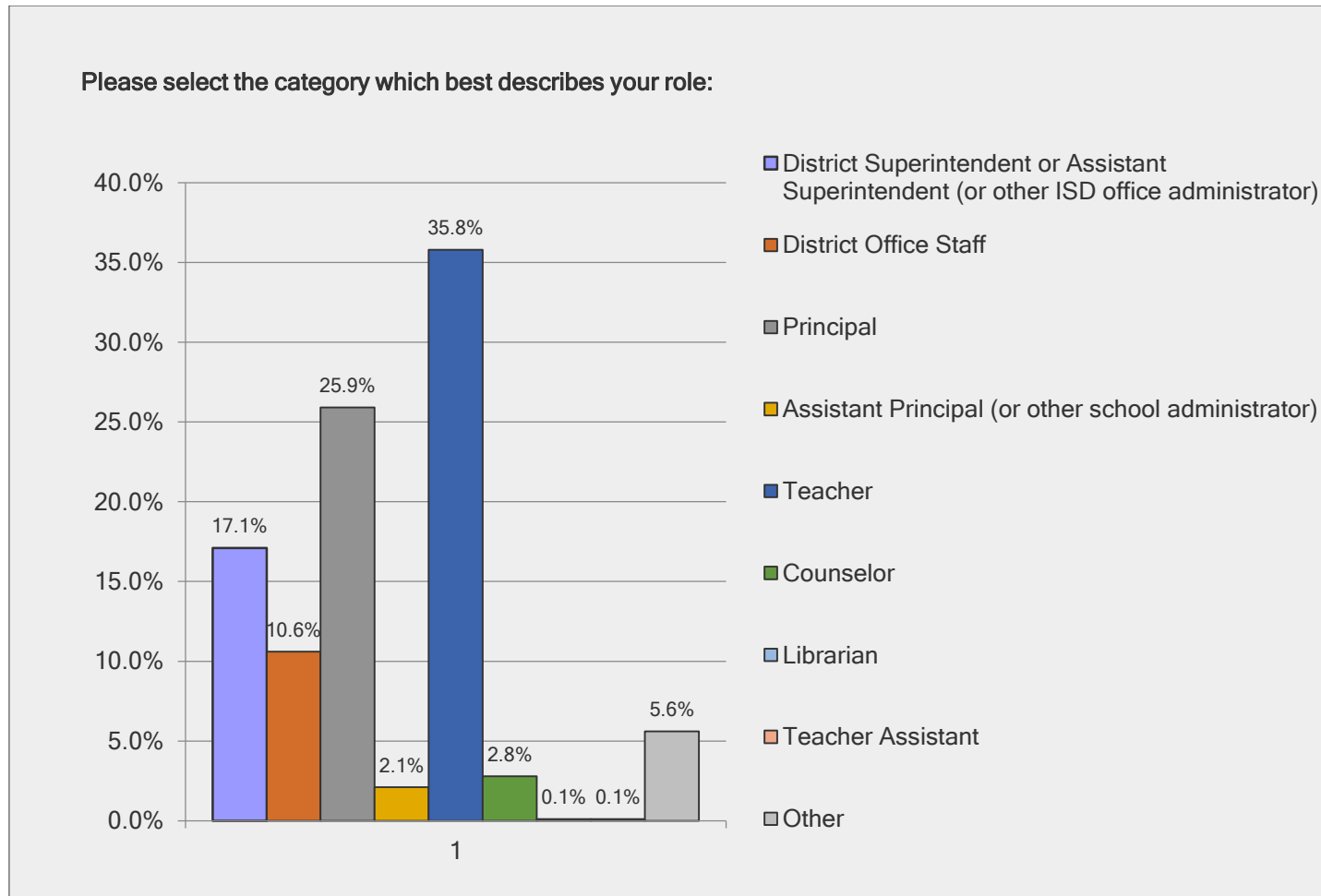
16. Have you accessed TEA’s online educator training (Project Share) and/or the newly launched Texas Gateway Online Resources in the last two years?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	18.49%	504
No	81.51%	2,222
<i>answered question</i>		2,726

17. Please respond to the following questions regarding your overall experience with TEA’s online educator training (Project Share) and/or the newly launched Texas Gateway Online Resources:

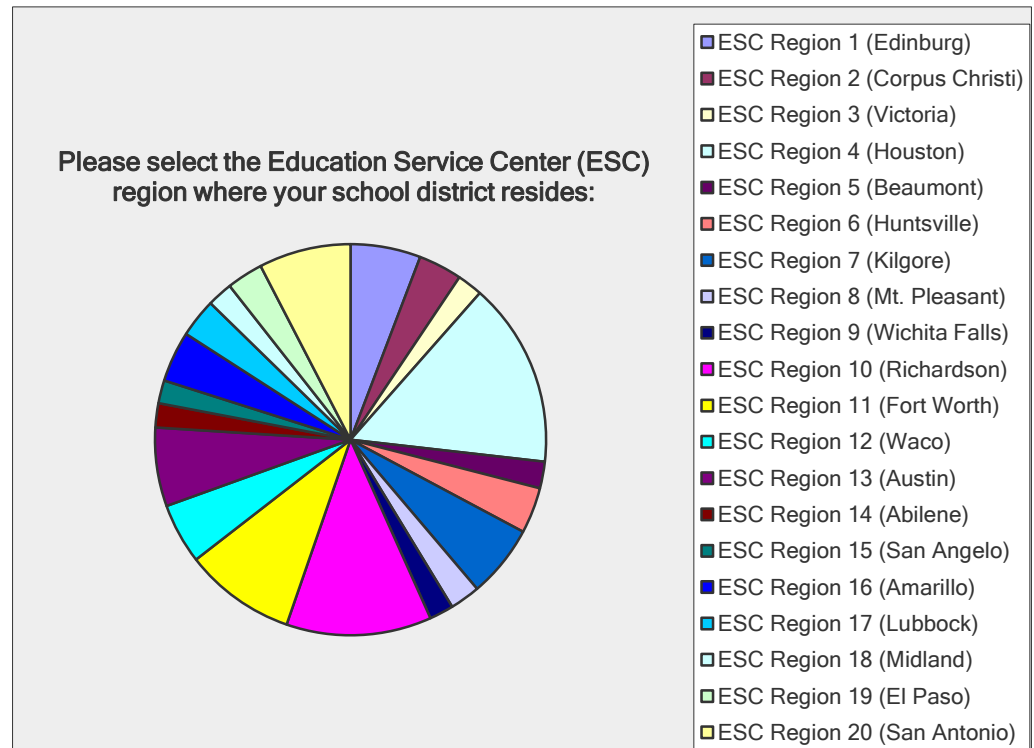
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A	Total
It is easy for me to access TEA’s online educator training.	15.80% 79	48.20% 241	18.20% 91	12.00% 60	3.60% 18	2.20% 11	500
The information provided in TEA’s online educator training is clear and understandable.	15.60% 78	46.00% 230	22.60% 113	9.00% 45	3.20% 16	3.60% 18	500
The information provided in the online training is useful.	15.80% 79	50.40% 252	21.60% 108	5.20% 26	2.80% 14	4.20% 21	500
The online training resources are in a good format for my learning style.	15.00% 75	48.20% 241	21.80% 109	7.60% 38	3.00% 15	4.40% 22	500
I would recommend TEA’s online educator training to my colleagues.	16.20% 81	44.20% 221	23.00% 115	10.00% 50	3.80% 19	2.80% 14	500

18. Please select the category which best describes your role:



19. Please select the Education Service Center (ESC) region where your school district resides:

Education Service Center (ESC) Regions:	Response Percent	Response Count
ESC Region 1 (Edinburg)	5.8%	157
ESC Region 2 (Corpus Christi)	3.6%	98
ESC Region 3 (Victoria)	2.1%	57
ESC Region 4 (Houston)	15.3%	416
ESC Region 5 (Beaumont)	2.2%	60
ESC Region 6 (Huntsville)	3.8%	102
ESC Region 7 (Kilgore)	6.0%	164
ESC Region 8 (Mt. Pleasant)	2.5%	68
ESC Region 9 (Wichita Falls)	2.0%	55
ESC Region 10 (Richardson)	12.0%	324
ESC Region 11 (Fort Worth)	9.2%	249
ESC Region 12 (Waco)	5.0%	135
ESC Region 13 (Austin)	6.5%	175
ESC Region 14 (Abilene)	2.0%	54
ESC Region 15 (San Angelo)	1.9%	52
ESC Region 16 (Amarillo)	4.2%	115
ESC Region 17 (Lubbock)	3.2%	87
ESC Region 18 (Midland)	2.1%	58
ESC Region 19 (El Paso)	3.0%	80
ESC Region 20 (San Antonio)	7.6%	205
<i>answered question</i>		2711
<i>skipped question</i>		816



20. Do you have a suggestion to improve customer service at TEA?
(Please do not include confidential or personally identifiable information. Thanks!)

TEA received over 500 comments on topics such as: phone wait-times, communications to teachers, assessment testing, teacher certifications, and consistent answers provided throughout TEA. Respondents also asked for more information about the new Texas Gateway Online Resources, and many complimented TEA for their efforts and thanked the staff for their support and assistance.