

Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction Final Report

Prepared for the Virginia Department of Education

By UVA-CASTL

June 30, 2023

Acknowledgements:

This report was prepared by the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) for the Virginia Department of Education with funding provided through appropriations from the Virginia General Assembly. Brianna Jaworski, Tara Scott, Ann Lhospital, Jason Downer, and Amanda Williford are the authors of this report. The opinions expressed in the report are those of the CASTL team and do not represent views of the funding agencies. Correspondence concerning this report should be addressed to Amanda Williford at williford@virginia.edu.

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary	1
Key Takeaways from 2022-23	1
Looking Ahead to 2023-24	1
2. Overview	2
Background	2
CASTL-AEII Objectives	2
Contents of this Report	3
3. CASTL-AEII Coaching	3
Overview of Coaching Model	3
Model Revisions	3
Formats and Flexibility	5
Training and Support for CASTL-AEII Coaches	5
Collaboration and Recruitment Efforts	6
Collaboration Efforts	6
Recruitment Efforts	7
Teacher Recruitment and Participation in Coaching	9
Teacher Recruitment	9
Description of Recruited Teachers and Classrooms	10
Coaching Implementation and Outcomes	11
Coaching Implementation: Dosage and Focus	11
Coaching Implementation: Video Observations	12
Coaching Outcomes	13
Teacher Feedback	14
4. Key Takeaways and Looking Ahead to 2023-2024	16

1. Executive Summary

The [Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction](#) (AEII) team at the University of Virginia's Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) worked in partnership with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) to provide coaching to Virginia's early childhood teachers in publicly-funded birth-to-five early childhood programs. This coaching aimed to improve the quality of teachers' interactions to support children's learning and development.

Key Takeaways from 2022-23

CASTL-AEII expanded its reach to all publicly-funded, birth-to-five classrooms to provide virtual coaching focused on improving teacher-child interactions and equitable social-emotional instruction.

Key takeaways from data on coaching include:

- CASTL-AEII Coaching is an accessible service that is of interest to early childhood education (ECE) teachers, and those who participated indicated satisfaction with the services.
- Collaborations with Quality Improvement Partners (e.g., the VDOE, Virginia's Ready Regions) bolstered recruitment, but priority ECE sites were often more challenging to reach.
- The modifications to the CASTL-AEII Coaching model resulted in increased teacher engagement with the services.
- Although the COVID-19 pandemic was no longer the primary barrier to coaching participation, ECE teachers were still experiencing the lingering effects including illness, burnout, and staff shortages. These impacts posed significant challenges to teacher engagement.

Looking Ahead to 2023-24

CASTL-AEII will collaborate with the VDOE to support ECE leaders and educators in the first year of required participation in the Unified Virginia Quality Birth-to-Five System (VQB5), which is intended to strengthen teacher-child interactions to ensure high-quality ECE experiences for all children across various program types in the 2023-24 school year.

To this end, CASTL-AEII will:

- Provide coaching services to highest needs classrooms (evidenced by CLASS® scores) to improve learning experiences for birth-to-five children through CASTL-AEII Coaching. CASTL-AEII will use data collected in 2022-2023 to refine service models to maximize efficiency and outcomes.
- Pilot an in-person service format with select classrooms within the Virginia Beach area.
- Pilot virtual consultation services with select leaders that focus on providing teachers with effective feedback using CLASS® data.

- Build and sustain existing partnerships and work to enhance collaboration with birth-to-five initiatives and partners across Virginia, including Virginia’s Ready Regions, Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN), and Training and Technical Assistance (T/TAC).
- Collect and analyze ongoing implementation data from CASTL-AEII coaching to track referrals, teacher engagement, and outcome data to monitor growth and impact.

2. Overview

Background

Since 2019, the University of Virginia’s Center for Advanced Study of Teaching and Learning (CASTL) has partnered with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and publicly-funded preschool programs to strengthen and support quality teacher-child interactions, instruction, and research-based curriculum implementation across Virginia. CASTL’s Advancing Effective Interactions and Instruction (AEII) initiative was initially funded through Item 128.K of the 2019 Appropriation Act, referenced in the 2020 Legislative Report, with a sole focus on serving Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) programs. In March 2020, the General Assembly expanded the charge for CASTL’s observations and professional development support to be provided to all publicly funded preschool classrooms, including VPI, Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Title I, and 3-year-old classrooms in 2020-21.

The Governor’s Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund provided additional support for CASTL and VDOE to develop and provide resources (e.g., coaching, online learning, leader supports) to address rising concerns about young children’s social-emotional development in the context of the pandemic. CASTL-AEII’s resources were also intended to foster equitable early learning experiences through strengthening teachers’ practices related to addressing diversity in their classrooms, individualizing supports, and including all learners. In 2021-22, during the first practice year of the Unified Virginia Quality Birth-to-Five System (VQB5), CASTL-AEII expanded to serve all publicly-funded birth-to-five programs, and continued to support leaders’ efforts to provide focused, data-informed professional learning opportunities for their staff, as well as teachers’ efforts to provide effective, responsive classroom interactions that prepare children for success in kindergarten and beyond. In 2022-23, during the second practice year of VQB5, CASTL-AEII collaborated with key partners (the VDOE, Virginia’s Ready Regions, VQ, ITSN, T/TAC) to expand its capacity to provide virtual coaching services and serve more classrooms and children across the Commonwealth.

CASTL-AEII Objectives

In collaboration with the VDOE, CASTL-AEII’s focus in 2022-23 supported the implementation of VQB5 (Practice Year 2) through engaging Virginia’s ECE teachers in coaching to promote equitable, high-quality early learning experiences for all children. CASTL-AEII’s main objectives were to:

1. **Provide individualized coaching for select birth-to-five teachers** in school-based preschool classrooms (VPI, ECSE, Title I pre-K classrooms) and publicly-funded early childhood programs (child care centers, family day homes) participating in Practice Year 2 (2022-2023) of Virginia’s Unified Measurement and Improvement System (VQB5).

2. **Coordinate with other Quality Improvement Partners to support the implementation of VQB5** both within CASTL (e.g., LinkB5) and external to CASTL (e.g., Virginia's Ready Regions, VQ, ITSN, T/TAC) through planning and delivering aligned services and resources for birth-to-five teachers.
3. **Coordinate with CASTL-Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (ECMHC)** to provide AEII coaching to ECMHC cases that were referred for PreK classroom-level services.

Contents of this Report

This report was prepared by CASTL-AEII for the Virginia Department of Education. It summarizes CASTL-AEII's activities, outcomes, and lessons learned regarding coaching and collaboration in 2022-23 during VQB5 Practice Year 2. The report also outlines next steps heading into 2023-24 (see Looking Ahead section) as CASTL-AEII continues to support VQB5 quality improvement.

3. CASTL-AEII Coaching

CASTL-AEII provided professional development (PD) resources and supports to teachers across a variety of program settings (i.e., family day homes, childcare centers, and schools) serving different early childhood age groups (i.e., infant, toddler, mixed-age, and PreK classrooms). In 2022-23, CASTL-AEII's resources and supports focused on individualized, virtual coaching for teachers. This section includes a summary of CASTL-AEII's progress on key PD activities, including virtual coaching for teachers and other professional development and collaborative work with partners.

Overview of Coaching Model

The CASTL-AEII Coaching model was developed in 2019-2020 to mitigate children's heightened social-emotional needs and inequities resulting from COVID-19 by bolstering teachers' well-being and helping teachers to use effective social-emotional teaching practices with every child. CASTL-AEII Coaching aimed to improve teacher-child interactions, especially as measured by CLASS®, and support children's social skills, self-regulation skills, and overall learning.

Model Revisions

Since 2020, CASTL-AEII has engaged in ongoing development and continuous improvement to enhance the coaching model and best meet the needs of ECE teachers and the children they serve. In 2022-2023, CASTL-AEII made modifications to the AEII Coaching model to increase teacher engagement with and uptake of services. Rather than continuing to follow a Scope and Sequence that covered all six social-emotional topics (Table 1) across twelve thirty-minute sessions (virtual meetings), the revised model allowed educators to choose two or three of the topics, the length of their coaching track (intended to be 6-12 weeks), and the frequency of their sessions. Teachers chose between the accelerated track (two topics, four sessions) on a weekly basis, the regular track (two topics, four sessions) on a biweekly basis, or the extended track (three topics, six sessions) on a biweekly basis (not including the Teacher Kickoff or Reflection and Exploration sessions). All social-emotional topics were closely aligned to teacher-child interactions measured by the CLASS® tool, as indicated in this [crosswalk](#).

Coaches also held Leader Kickoff sessions at the start of coaching to promote leaders' engagement and support with coaching, and Leader Wrap-Up sessions at the end of coaching to reflect on a teacher's

growth and discuss next steps for professional development. See Table 2 for an outline of the intended coaching sequence.

Table 1

CASTL-AEII Coaching Topics

Topics Offered
Building Teacher-Child Relationships
Developing Empathy and Sense of Self
Supporting Children’s Emotions
Supporting Children's Behavior
Strengthening Peer Relationships
Supporting Social Problem-Solving

Table 2

CASTL-AEII Coaching Intended Sequence

Intended Sequence of Sessions
Leader Kickoff Session (if applicable)
Teacher Kickoff Session
Selected Topic 1: Two sessions
Selected Topic 2: Two sessions
Selected Topic 3: Two sessions <i>(Optional; extended track only)</i>
Reflection and Exploration (Wrap-Up) Session
Leader Wrap-Up Session (if applicable)

As part of the revised CASTL-AEII coaching model, “Teacher Engagement Check-Ins” were used to promote teacher engagement and well-being. In between scheduled sessions, coaches provided teachers with individualized messages of support via text, email, or phone call (per the teacher’s preference). Coaches communicated with teachers to enhance teacher-coach relationships, bolster teachers’ coping, and support teachers’ action plan implementation. For example, coaches would text a teacher to ask how they were feeling after a session and how they were progressing on their self-care goal. Coaches also texted or emailed teachers reminders of their action plans and offered encouragement, resources, and help with videotaping.

Formats and Flexibility

CASTL-AEII Coaching used the TORSH Talent HIPAA Secure (TORSH Talent HS) platform as a video coaching system to conduct all parts of the Practice-Based Coaching cycle. In TORSH Talent HS, teachers completed *self-assessments*, coaches and teachers co-created *action plans* with linked strategies and resources, teachers uploaded videos of their practice for coaches to *observe*, and coaches provided teachers time-stamped *feedback*. To increase teacher engagement with TORSH Talent HS, CASTL-AEII developed a *TORSH Talent Implementation Plan* in fall 2022 to help coaches effectively implement the platform and maximize teacher engagement in virtual coaching.

To provide flexibility for teachers who experienced challenges with videotaping or using TORSH Talent HS, coaches offered teachers alternative observation formats. The alternative formats included but were not limited to: live observations via Zoom (recorded by coach), videos emailed or texted directly to the coach rather than uploaded to TORSH Talent HS, and audio (rather than video) files. If providing feedback in TORSH Talent HS was not an option, coaches used an *Observation Reflection and Feedback form*, developed to prompt teacher self-reflection and analysis. While the alternatives were not as ideal as uploading video footage to TORSH Talent HS where coaches could provide timestamped feedback, the flexibility increased completion of observations for select teachers and still allowed for observation and reflection.

Training and Support for CASTL-AEII Coaches

CASTL-AEII collaborated with CASTL-ECMHC to develop onboarding training for new coaches, which included a comprehensive, 6-week series intended to deliver pieces of the coaching model and protocols over time (i.e., TORSH Talent HS implementation, Teacher Engagement Check-ins). Training was largely conducted through asynchronous virtual formats for efficiency. This onboarding training also established relationships and fostered a sense of belonging through regular check-ins with a “peer partner” and one-on-one meetings with a lead coach. In summer 2022, CASTL-AEII hired and trained two new part-time coaches using the newly developed onboarding process.

Both new ($n=2$) and returning coaches ($n=5$) received ongoing supports designed to promote implementation fidelity and coach-to-coach collaboration. Monthly one-on-one meetings with a Lead Coach included coaching session review using the *CASTL Coaching Cycle Fidelity Tool* and goal-setting for areas of growth. Collaborative, bi-weekly group supervision meetings with CASTL-AEII coaches and CASTL-ECMH consultants included case studies and professional development on specific themes and topics (i.e., Effective Feedback & Teacher Analysis, Content Fidelity, Teacher & Family Collaboration). Bi-weekly data review meetings provided opportunities for CASTL-AEII coaches to review team-level growth, case progression, and teamwide goal-setting on select areas of growth (i.e., increasing completion of focused observations). Beginning in February 2023, all coaches received an email each

Monday with a detailed individualized report of their case progression with each classroom in the previous week, including tips and feedback on next steps with teachers experiencing delays between sessions and observations.

Lead CASTL-AEII coaches revised and developed materials intended to support coaching fidelity and increase time available for coaching activities. Materials included communication templates (i.e., invitation email), prepared session slides and scripts for each social-emotional learning (SEL) topic, and a *Contact Protocol* to provide step-by-step instructions for re-engaging unresponsive teachers. CASTL-AEII also developed the *AEII Coaching Hub*, a one-stop document for coaches to have quick access to coaching materials and resources.

Most recently, CASTL-AEII and CASTL-ECMHC collaborated to create a *What Works for Case Progression* resource, a comprehensive document outlining strategies that have worked across CASTL initiatives to support implementation fidelity and case progression. Strategies were grouped under five main themes that target challenges which commonly underlie case progression delays: Scheduling Meetings, Scheduling Focused Observations, Planning Observation Formats (video-based and alternatives), Teacher Motivation and Beliefs, and Teacher & Leader Lenses for Children & Families.

Collaboration and Recruitment Efforts

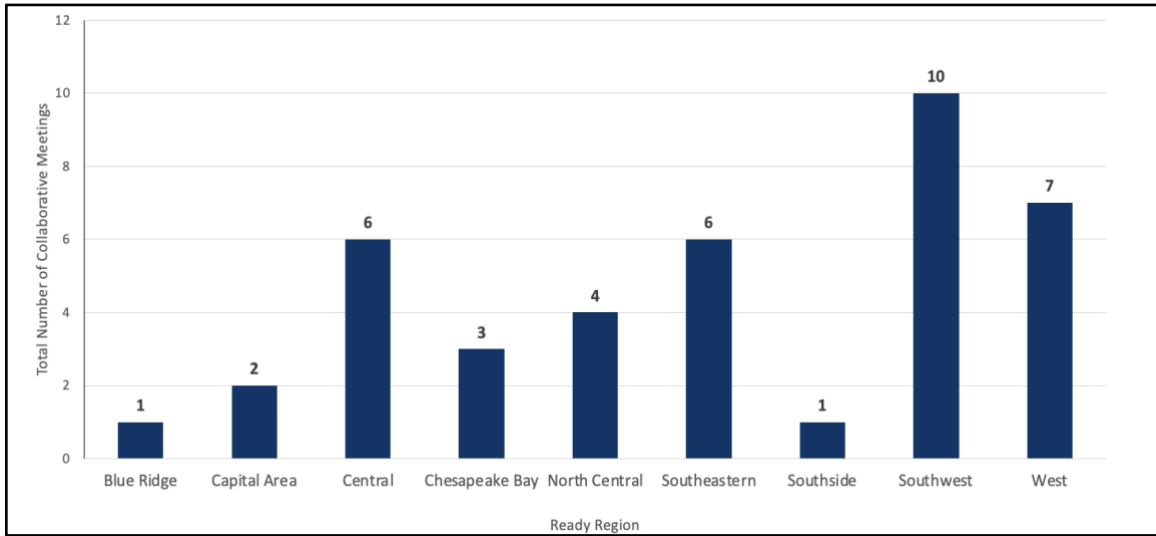
Collaboration Efforts

In line with the VDOE's focus on unifying measurement and improvement systems across the Commonwealth, CASTL-AEII increased collaboration across initiatives and agencies in Practice Year 2. CASTL-AEII worked closely with representatives from the VDOE, Virginia's 9 Ready Regions, ITSN, regional T/TAC providers, Virginia Quality, and other quality improvement partners to align supports to the field and maximize collective impacts. The positive relationships built with key players in quality improvement enabled CASTL-AEII to provide virtual, individualized coaching to the programs and teachers who needed it most.

Per the VDOE's request, CASTL-AEII team members coordinated with Ready Region (RR) teams to meet regularly and discuss outreach plans and status of recruited programs. Collaboration was more frequent with some Ready Regions than others, due to delays in response to CASTL-AEII's communications and requests to schedule meetings. With the more responsive and engaged Ready Regions, CASTL-AEII built strong partnerships through ongoing communications, support for teacher recruitment and retention, and opportunities for CASTL-AEII presentations at regional meetings. See Figure 1 for an overview of meetings with each Ready Region from August 2022-May 2023.

Figure 1

Total Number of Meetings between CASTL-AEII and each Ready Region



Recruitment Efforts

After receiving the priority list identifying programs with the highest needs (as evidenced by their CLASS® scores) from the VDOE in September 2022, CASTL-AEII leveraged the successful foundations built with Virginia’s Ready Regions and began targeted recruitment efforts with the identified programs. Recruitment efforts continued on a rolling basis throughout the fall, including emails and phone calls to priority site leaders, distribution of recruitment materials (e.g., e-flyer, informational video, mailed postcard), and 9 virtual *Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Coaching* sessions (30-minute informational sessions). The GTK CASTL-AEII sessions provided a snapshot of why CASTL-AEII coaching exists, how teachers can benefit from services, and what intentional teaching strategies and resources strengthen teacher-child interactions (as aligned with CLASS®). CASTL-AEII also participated in a statewide Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) Webinar hosted by VDOE in September 2022, and regularly attended and occasionally presented on coaching services at the weekly Ready Region Office Hours hosted by VDOE. In addition, select Ready Region teams invited CASTL-AEII to present on coaching topics and an overview of CASTL-AEII Coaching services in their regional meetings with program leaders and teachers.

CASTL-AEII met recruitment targets in fall 2022 and continued successful strategies for spring recruitment. Table 3 describes how monthly recruitment efforts were distributed from August 2022-May 2023. Through collaboration with key players in VQB5 and persistent outreach and recruitment efforts, CASTL-AEII recruited 189 teachers in 2022-2023 - more than double the number of teachers recruited in 2021-2022 ($n=71$).

Table 3*CASTL-AEII Recruitment Efforts by Month*

Month	Recruitment Efforts
August	- Initial Meetings with all 9 Ready Regions
September	- Emailed each priority site leader with information about CASTL-AEII Coaching - Phone outreach to priority sites - Mailed postcards to each priority site - Mailed 50 postcards to each Ready Region team to distribute - Hosted 5 Getting to Know (GTK) CASTL-AEII Sessions - Presented at the Social Emotional Supports Statewide Webinar
October	- Continued phone outreach to priority sites - Presented information about CASTL-AEII at Ready Region Office Hours
November	- Emailed each priority site leader (Updated Priority List) - Hosted 2 Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Sessions - Invited to present at RR Southeastern's Child Care Center Roundtable Session - Invited to present on Strengthening Peer Relationships at RR Chesapeake Bay's SEL Office Hours - Invited to present on CASTL-AEII Coaching Services for RR Blue Ridge educators
December	- Hosted 2 Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Sessions
January	- Hosted 1 Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Session
February	- Hosted 2 Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Sessions - Emailed each priority site leader (Updated Priority List)
March	- Hosted 2 Getting to Know (GTK) AEII Sessions - Invited to present at RR Southside's VQB5 Roundtable Session - Distributed CASTL-AEII Coaching Flyers at the Virginia Association for the Education of Young Children (VAAEYC) Conference - Mailed postcards to each priority site - Invited to present on Supporting Children's Strong Emotions at RR Chesapeake Bay's SEL Office Hours for leaders - Invited to present on Supporting Children's Strong Emotions at RR Chesapeake Bay's SEL Office Hours for staff
April	- Hosted 2 Getting to Know (GTK) CASTL-AEII Sessions
May	- Hosted a session with CASTL-ECMHC on Supporting Children's Strong Emotions - Emailed each Ready Region team requesting they share information about AEII services and availability - Invited to present at RR Central's VQB5 Mini Conference for directors on coaching panel (along with T/TAC, ChildSavers-ITSN)

Teacher Recruitment and Participation in Coaching

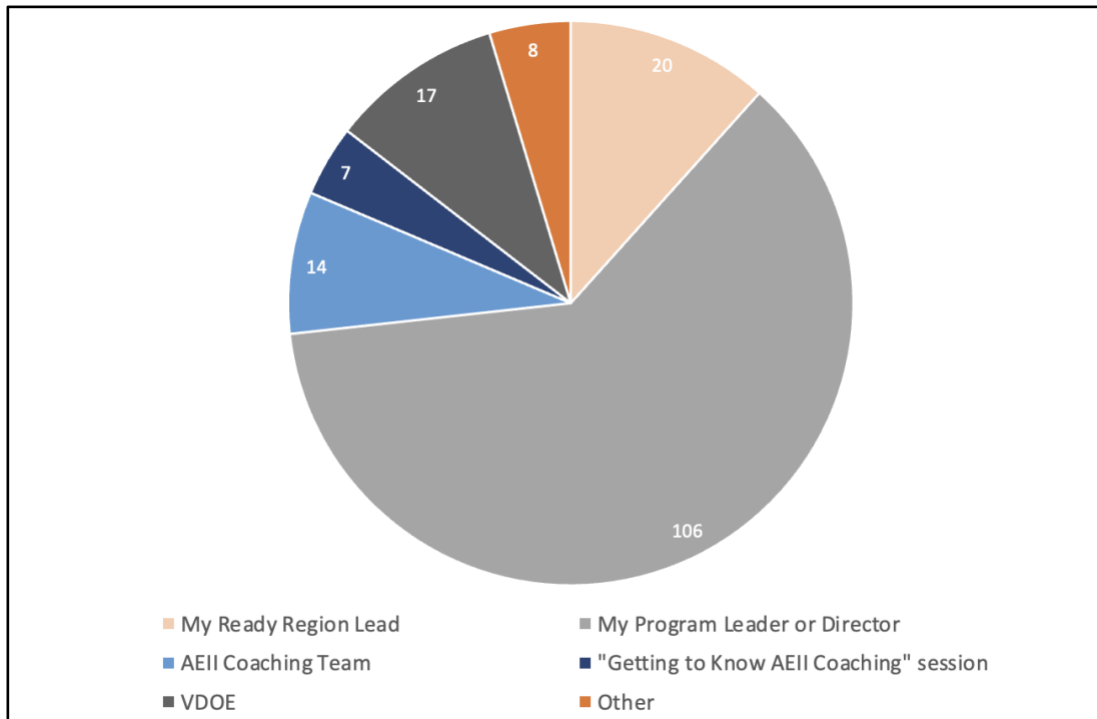
Teacher Recruitment

Due to VQB5 Practice Year 2 constraints, CASTL-AEII was not provided access to local CLASS® data to target classrooms based on need, so instead targeted recruitment to programs based on their site rating. Sites scoring less than 3.99 were considered Priority, whereas those at 4.00 and above were considered Non-Priority. Recruitment occurred on a rolling basis throughout the fall and spring.

Over the course of the year, 167 teachers voluntarily signed up to participate through the CASTL-AEII Sign-Up form, with another 22 referred through ECMHC for classroom-level services. Of the 189 teachers recruited from 105 sites across Virginia's 9 Ready Regions, 125 (66%) were in classrooms at Priority (<3.99) sites. The sign-up form asked teachers how they heard about CASTL-AEII Coaching, with the ability to select more than one option. "My Program Leader or Director" was selected the most (106) by far, followed by "My Ready Region Lead" (20) and "VDOE" (17). This was expected, given that recruitment efforts were primarily targeted to program leaders or directors, and the Ready Region and VDOE teams shared information with program leaders about CASTL-AEII in various communications throughout the year (i.e., newsletters, Ready Region Office Hours). See Figure 2 for the number of selections for each response option.

Figure 2

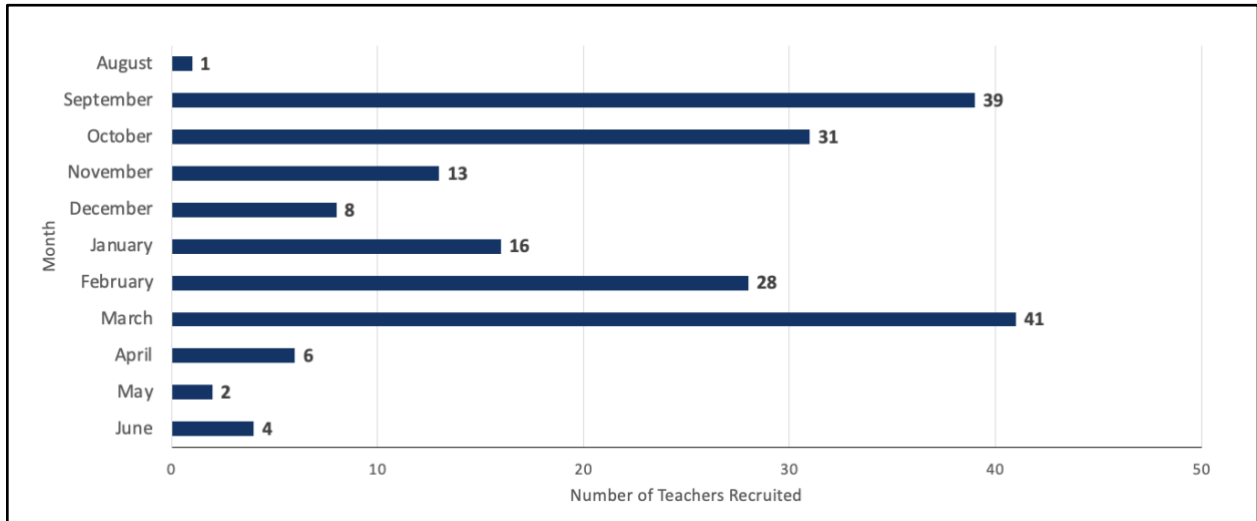
Teacher Responses to "How Did You Hear about AEII Coaching?"



**Excludes 29 teachers who either completed the sign-up form before the addition of this question (n=7) or were referred through ECMHC's referral form (n=22).*

CASTL-AEII actively recruited teachers from August 2022-May 2023, with variation in recruitment numbers across the year (see Figure 3). The biggest spikes in recruitment occurred in September, October, February, and March, which corresponded with increased CASTL-AEII recruitment activities after receiving the program priority lists from the VDOE in September 2022 and January 2023.

Figure 3
Number of Teachers Recruited by Month, 2022-2023

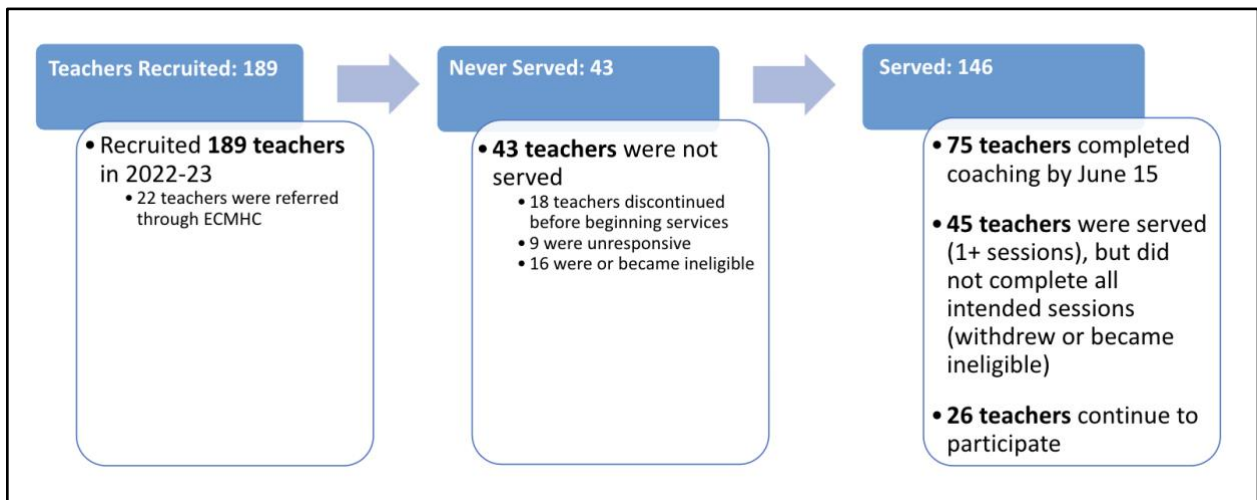


Description of Recruited Teachers and Classrooms

The 189 teachers represented classrooms from varied site types: child care centers (65%), Head Start (11%), family day homes (11%), VPI classrooms (8%), ECSE classrooms (4%), and Public Schools (1%).

All 189 teachers were invited to participate; however, 43 did not receive any services. See Figure 4 for details (3 teachers who completed coaching and 7 teachers who withdrew early have expressed an interest in participating with AEII Coaching in 2023-24).

Figure 4
CASTL-AEII Coaching Attrition, 2022-23



Recruited teachers who completed the Pre-Coaching Survey ($n=111$) identified as female (95%), male (3%), or preferred not to say (2%). 42% of teachers identified as White, 28% as Black or African American, 15% as Hispanic or Latinx, 7% as Multiracial, 3% as Other, 3% as Middle Eastern or North African, and 2% as Asian. Educational attainment varied widely, ranging from not completing high school (2%); obtaining high school diploma or equivalent (14%); received some college but no degree (15%), high school diploma or equivalent with technical training or certificate (19%); achieved a two-year degree (e.g., AA, AS) (8%); to holding a bachelor's degree (26%) or master's degree (16%). Years of teaching in early childhood education also varied widely, with most teachers having significant experience ($M = 11$ years, range: 0-42 years). Eight teachers received coaching services in Spanish (provided by a bilingual coach).

Demographic data indicated that children served in these classrooms ranged from infants to age five and were racially and ethnically diverse. Teachers indicated the race and ethnicity of the 1,225 children in their classrooms as follows: 36% White, 33% as Black or African American, 12% as Hispanic or Latinx, 10% as Multiracial, 4% as Middle Eastern or North African, 3% as Asian, less than 1% Native American, American Indian or Alaska Native, and less than 1% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. The remaining children were not identified. 41% of teachers indicated that two or more languages were spoken by children in the classroom. The average class size was 11 students (ranging from 1-20 students).

Coaching Implementation and Outcomes

The following data on coaching implementation and outcomes were collected via coaching logs and surveys from teachers throughout the coaching process, whether they stopped services ($n=88$), completed coaching in spring 2023 ($n=75$), or continued to participate into summer 2023 ($n=26$).

Coaching Implementation: Dosage and Focus

At the Teacher Kickoff (onboarding) session, teachers chose their track (accelerated, regular, or extended) and their topics (two topics for the accelerated or regular tracks, three topics for the extended track). Of the teachers who completed coaching in spring 2023 or continue to participate into summer 2023 ($n=102$), most selected the regular track ($n=42$) and focused on completing two topics on a biweekly basis (4 total coaching sessions). The remaining teachers chose the accelerated track ($n=21$) to complete two topics on a weekly basis (4 coaching sessions), the extended track ($n=32$) to complete three topics on a biweekly basis (across 6 coaching sessions) or have not yet completed the Kickoff and chosen their track ($n=7$) at the time of this report. Some teachers ($n=18$) completed additional sessions per topic, and coaching data indicated that teachers who completed coaching had an average of 5 coaching sessions ($SD = .94$, Range 4-7) after completing the Kickoff session. Topics covered also varied, but of those who completed coaching ($n=75$) most teachers (72%) chose to focus on Supporting Children's Behavior as one of their topics and nearly half (47%) selected Supporting Children's Emotions (see Table 4).

Table 4
Coaching Topics Selected

Topic	Number of Teachers (n=75) Who Selected Each Topic
Building Teacher-Child Relationships	16 (21%)
Developing Empathy and Sense of Self	11 (15%)
Supporting Children’s Emotions	35 (47%)
Supporting Children's Behavior	54 (72%)
Strengthening Peer Relationships	11 (15%)
Supporting Social Problem-Solving	24 (32%)

To complete coaching, teachers were required to engage in the Kickoff Session and four topic sessions (two sessions per topic), with additional sessions being optional and at the request of the teacher. Coaching completion took longer than originally anticipated, with the average teacher participating for 13 weeks ($SD=5.6$) and variation in duration across tracks (See Table 5). Reasons for delays, noted in coach logs, included teacher illness, periods of teacher unresponsiveness to coach contacts, and staffing shortages. When teachers’ availability for coaching was limited, coaches were flexible with their supports, including extending time between sessions and communicating with site leaders to request protected time for coaching sessions. Teacher Engagement Check-Ins were also useful to maintain communication with teachers in cases of session cancellations or no-shows. On average, teachers had three (weeks of) Engagement Check-Ins, typically via email or text, as intended in our model. Teachers responded to most check-ins (79%) from their coaches.

Table 5
Average Coaching Length for Completed Teachers (n=75) by Track

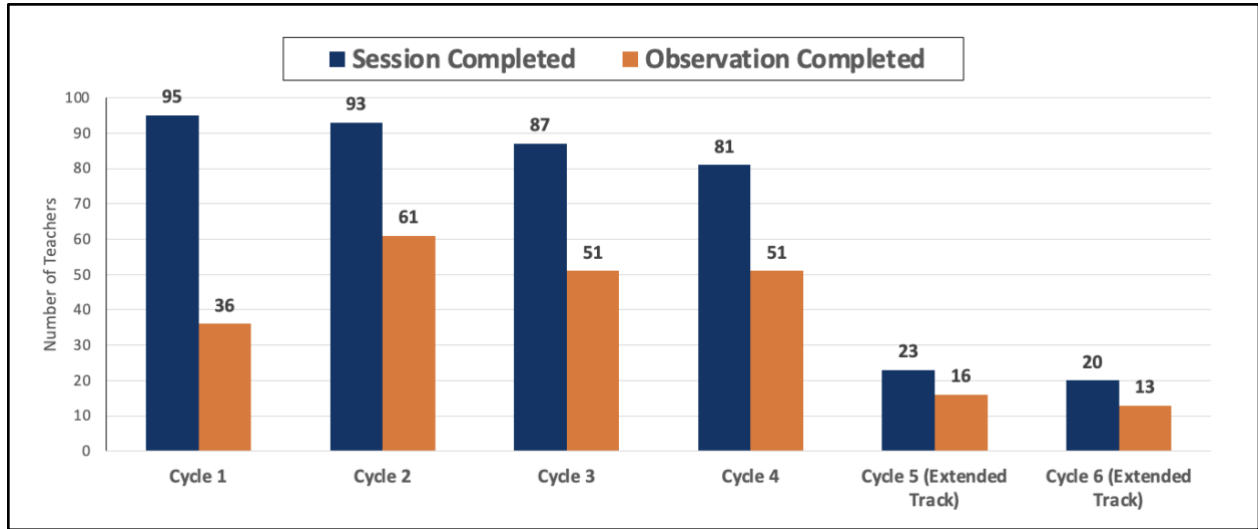
Track	Anticipated Length	Average	Range
Accelerated (n=15)	6 weeks	8 weeks	5-12 weeks
Regular (n=36)	8 weeks	13 weeks	7-26 weeks
Extended (n=24)	12 weeks	17 weeks	10-26 weeks

Coaching Implementation: Video Observations

After creating an action plan with a specific goal, teachers were asked to upload one video of their practice to TORSH Talent HS before their next session. The coach then provided time-stamped feedback on the video within TORSH Talent HS and requested the teacher review and respond to the feedback

before or in their next session. Across their coaching, 102 teachers had an average of 2 ($SD=1.6$) video observations with feedback from their coaches, with roughly half ($M=0.56$, $SD=0.33$) of their coaching cycles including observations. Figure 5 details variation.

Figure 5
Coaching Cycles with Observations per Teacher (n=102)

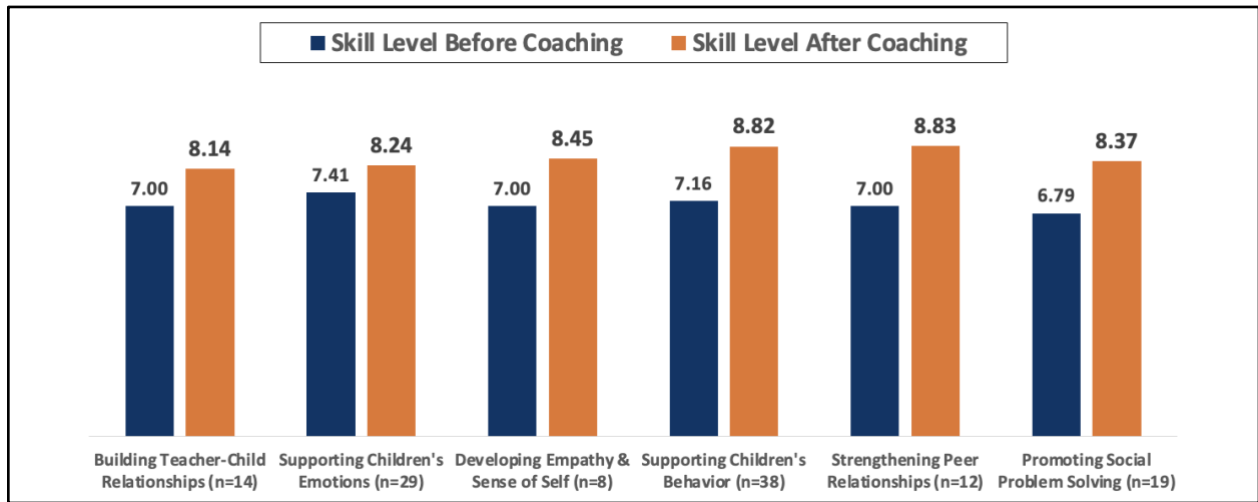


Coaching Outcomes

As part of the pre-coaching survey, teachers reported on their skill level in all six coaching topics aligned with CLASS® (where 1 = not very skilled and 10 = highly skilled). On average, teachers who completed the pre-survey ($n=111$) indicated they were least skilled in Supporting Children’s Behaviors and most skilled in Building Teacher-Child Relationships. This aligned with the topics teachers then selected for coaching, with Supporting Children’s Behavior as the most commonly selected and Building Teacher-Child Relationships being selected far less often (Table 4).

Of the teachers who completed both the pre-coaching and the post-coaching survey ($n=52$), most self-reported growth in all equitable social-emotional instructional topics (mean increases of 0.8-1.86 on a 10-point scale). Figure 6 shows average reported growth across the topics each teacher covered during coaching.

Figure 6
Teacher Self-Report of Growth on Selected Topics



Teacher Feedback

After completing one full coaching cycle, teachers were asked to complete a short satisfaction survey designed to provide the team formative feedback and opportunities to continuously improve. Teachers rated how much they liked coaching so far (on a scale of 1-5) and were prompted to provide any additional feedback. The survey was sent to 111 teachers, and of 85 responses (77% of teachers), the mean response was 4.38 (range 1-5). See teacher responses to “*What do you like about AEII Coaching so far?*” in Figure 7. There was limited critical feedback on CASTL-AEII Coaching, but two teachers stated they wished the sessions were longer and allowed for more feedback and discussion per SEL topic.

Figure 7
Sample Teacher Feedback from the Initial Satisfaction Survey: “What do you like about AEII Coaching so far?”

“Actually getting ideas about what might help in my classroom. Sometimes I just really feel alone in this.”

“The training approach is so unique and it is one to one which makes it individual-based [sic].”

“I like how personal [my coach] is and how [they] invest.”

“[Coaching] keeps me focused on a goal, it also helps me see my teaching from another point of view.”

After completing coaching (Kickoff and at least 4 topic sessions), teachers were invited to complete the post-coaching survey which included items related to growth in teaching practices and coaching barriers and benefits. On average, teachers who completed the post-coaching survey ($n=58$, 77% of teachers who completed coaching) reported that they were satisfied with their coach in all areas assessed (mean scores ranged from 4.51-4.67 on a scale with 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree). See Figure 8 for

teacher feedback on satisfaction and Figure 9 for teacher quotes on their growth from CASTL-AEII Coaching.

Figure 8

Teacher Feedback on Perceived Benefits of Coaching

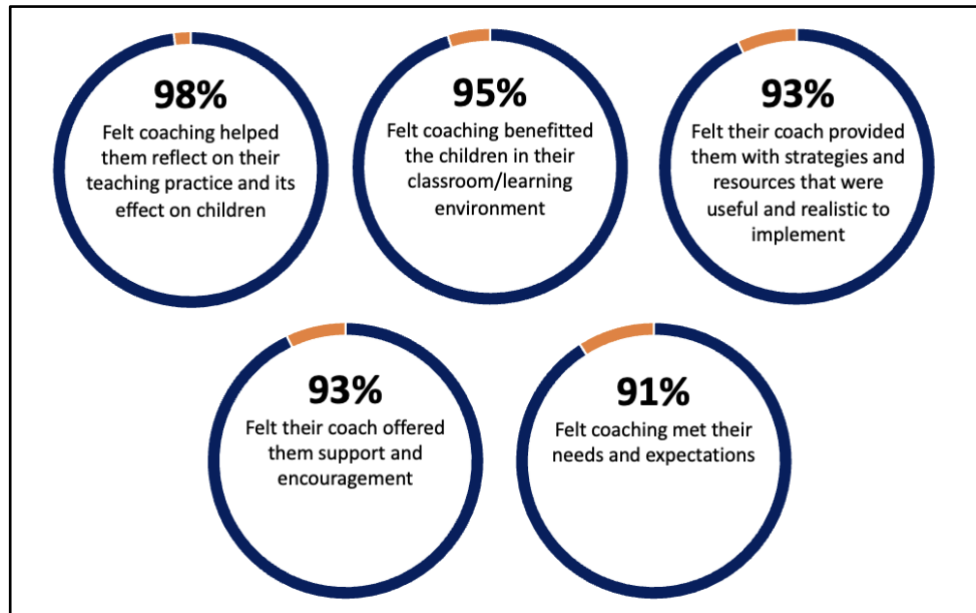


Figure 9

Sample Teacher Feedback from the Post-Coaching Survey: Self-Assessed Growth from CASTL-AEII Coaching

"I am more confident in helping to calm down the children who are displaying those big emotions."

"Having specific goals gave me the opportunity to become very intentional on skills that I felt I needed help with."

"I have learned variations of how to promote a positive classroom environment and how to encourage positive behaviors from the children in the classroom."

"I have learned to shape myself into a better teacher by taking a step back and managing my own emotions first then going from there."

"The videos of myself and how I interact or teach has been the biggest feedback for myself."

While the majority (66%) of teachers thought TORSH Talent HS was beneficial for coaching, coaches and teachers shared challenges throughout the coaching year. One teacher expressed challenges with having to record themselves, stating *"Sometimes it would be a challenge to record myself working on my goal in action. For example, if I was working on helping children use calm down strategies it was very awkward for me to whip out [sic] my phone and start recording while one of my children was having a hard time with their emotions. They would become more fixated on my phone than they would working with me."*

Though challenges like this can be overcome with strategies already identified in CASTL-AEII resources for coaches (*TORSH Implementation Plan, What Works for Promoting Case Progression*), these data highlight the need for CASTL-AEII to refine TORSH implementation plans, training for coaches, and observation support to teachers as part of our goal to increase observations per coaching cycle.

4. Key Takeaways and Looking Ahead to 2023-2024

- 1. Collaborations with key partners (e.g., Virginia's Ready Regions, CASTL-ECMHC) bolstered recruitment and supported teacher engagement throughout coaching delivery.** In 2023-24, CASTL-AEII will build from these existing partnerships to continue to provide equitable access to coaching services.
- 2. Birth-to-five educators in diverse settings were interested in CASTL-AEII Coaching services, and felt their expectations were met.** CASTL-AEII was an accessible service that was of interest to ECE teachers, and those who participated indicated satisfaction with services. However, priority sites, as identified by CLASS scores (<3.99), proved to be more difficult to recruit, so additional collaboration efforts with the VDOE and other key partners are needed to ensure CASTL-AEII reaches the teachers who need services most.
- 3. Birth-to-five educators felt CASTL-AEII Coaching supported growth in their equitable social-emotional teaching practices, which are aligned to teacher-child interactions measured across all CLASS® Domains.** In 2023-24, CASTL-AEII will continue to target birth-to-five programs that demonstrate the highest needs as evidenced by their CLASS® scores. With VDOE providing CASTL-AEII access to teacher data, coaches will use teachers' CLASS® scores to guide the coaching focus and target their highest interaction needs. Coaches will then track growth in the targeted areas to monitor outcomes and suggest next steps. CASTL-AEII will also support leaders' use of CLASS® data and effective feedback for program improvement through piloting Leader Consultation sessions with select programs.
- 4. Modifications to the CASTL-AEII Coaching Model in 2022-2023 (e.g., choices around coaching length and topics, regular check-ins) were beneficial for increasing teacher engagement in services, but virtual delivery poses challenges, particularly with completing focused observations.** In 2023-24, CASTL-AEII will continue to use strategies that worked to increase observations (e.g., offering alternative formats such as live observations via Zoom), while using lessons learned to enhance training for coaches and observation support for teachers. CASTL-AEII will refine its *TORSH Implementation Plan* and train coaches so they will be prepared to problem-solve challenges and maximize teachers' motivation and use of the platform. CASTL-AEII will also pilot in-person services with select teachers in the Virginia Beach area.
- 5. Teacher burnout and turnover continue to pose significant challenges for coaching completion and engagement.** In 2023-2024, CASTL-AEII will explore additional ways to support teacher well-being and encourage leaders to play a key role in making space for teachers to fully engage in coaching.