

Colorado Department of Education Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program Year 2 Final Report

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Year 2 Final Report

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Executive Summary

Section 22-94-101, C.R.S (Senate Bill 13-260), created the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program, which authorizes the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to fund teacher preparation programs to recruit, prepare, and place highly qualified teachers in school districts that have had historic difficulty recruiting and retaining quality teachers.

In December 2013, through a competitive selection process, CDE awarded grant funds to the Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC) and Teach For America (TFA)–Colorado, to place 65 and 95 teachers, respectively, in 17 Colorado school districts by fall 2014-15. In addition, CDE selected OMNI Institute to conduct a two-year formative and summative evaluation of the program. This document summarizes findings from the evaluation.

PROGRAM APPROACH

PEBC, through its Boettcher Teacher Residency program, and TFA-Colorado each seek to place highly qualified teachers in high-need districts to promote effective teaching and increase student achievement. Each program implements a unique model to achieve these goals.

PEBC's Boettcher Teacher Residency	TFA-Colorado
Initiative to improve effectiveness of school systems by increasing teacher quality and retention district-wide, and enhancing capacity and collaborative leadership in partner schools and districts	Founded to reduce educational inequities by placing high-quality candidates in high-need/hard-to-serve schools and by creating alumni to serve as advocates and leaders for change in educational policy and ideology
Colorado Only	Colorado is one of 48 TFA regions
Candidates agree to a 5-year commitment	Corps members agree to a 2-year commitment
Program admission is generally contingent on successful placement (i.e., matched to a mentor teacher or a principal request to fill an open position in a rural district)	Corps members are admitted to the program, assigned to Colorado, and then apply for open teaching positions in partner districts
In the first year, most candidates serve as residents in the classrooms of mentor teachers; about 16% serve as teachers of record in rural districts (using current data)	In the first year, all corps members are placed as teachers of record
Institute of Higher Education Partner: Adams State University, located in the San Luis Valley, provides coursework for the required Masters	Institute of Higher Education Partner: University of Colorado-Denver's ASPIRE to Teach Program, provides required training for licensure, and offers an optional Masters program
Designated licensing agency: PEBC	Designated licensing agency: University of Colorado – Denver's ASPIRE to Teach Program
Grant goal: place 65 teachers in 14 partner districts	Grant goal: place 95 teachers in 3 partner districts

PROGRAM REACH

In 2014-15, programs placed 130 teachers who taught 9,115 students in 68 high-need schools in 15 districts. PEBC's Boettcher Teacher Residency program placed 47 of 56 candidates as residents in a classroom with a mentor teacher of record. Residents are expected to seek employment as a first-year teacher of record, often in a different school or district, after the residency year.

Performance Metric	PEBC	TFA
Teachers placed in a high-need district in 2014-15	56 (86% of target)	74 (78% of target)
Teachers remaining in the program through 2014-15	52	69
Teachers remaining in program that meet HQ* requirements	47 (100% of eligible)	69 (100% of eligible)
Number of districts served	12	3
Number of schools served	30	38
Number of students served	4,246	4,869

*Highly Qualified (HQ) determinations apply to all K-12 core content teachers. Five PEBC teachers were placed in a non-core content area (physical education) and were not included in HQ calculations.

COMMON THEMES AND KEY EVALUATION FINDINGS

The programs successfully placed highly qualified teachers in high-need Colorado schools, and most remained in the program after the first year. PEBC's Boettcher Teacher Residency program and TFA-Colorado set ambitious goals to place a high number of teachers in districts that have had difficulty retaining high-quality teachers. Ultimately, the Boettcher program placed 86.1% of its target and TFA-Colorado placed 77.9% of its target. Both programs experienced challenges meeting initial recruitment targets, but once placements were made, a high percentage (93%) of teachers remained in each program after the first year. Furthermore, although a few adjustments were made in placements during the year (n=7), most teachers remained in their original placements throughout 2014-15.

Principals reported that programs provided high-quality candidates who have many of the key attributes that support effective teaching. Principals seek to hire individuals who are motivated, collaborative, reflective, coachable, and professional. Candidates who can effectively manage a classroom, take on leadership, have strong content knowledge, and who are a good fit for the school culture and mission are desired. Although some principals would prefer candidates with more experience, most reported the programs provided high-quality candidates who possess the attributes they seek when hiring teachers for their schools.

Engaging in a thoughtful and deliberate matching/hiring process is key. Across both programs, the placement/hiring process was reported to be most successful when candidates 1) felt supported and helped by the program; 2) had multiple position options to consider; 3) had sufficient time to research, observe, interview, and learn about the different schools and positions available; and 4) were able to provide input and have a choice in where they would be teaching.

Teachers in both programs experienced challenges balancing program requirements with the stresses of first-year teaching. Teaching is a demanding career, especially for those new to the profession, and program participants have the additional responsibilities of completing coursework and meeting requirements for licensure. Identifying ways to support teachers to foster well-being while balancing program, teaching, and family demands will help support retention in the first year.

Strong mentorship, and multiple forms of ongoing and responsive supports, contribute to a successful first-year experience. First-year residents and teachers seek 1) frequent observations and tailored feedback to support skill development; 2) emotional supports to help navigate the challenges of being a new teacher, especially when teaching in a high-need environment and new community; 3) concrete supports to help with program and licensing requirements, issues related to relocation, and resources needed for the classroom; and 4) ongoing, relevant professional development that will improve practice. A combination of program, district, and school supports that promote a feeling of efficacy, belonging, integration, and being valued and appreciated are key factors that will support a positive experience.

Schools that have a positive culture and an effective and supportive administration are likely to retain teachers. Positive first-year experiences are most likely to be seen when the partner school 1) provides strong onboarding of new teachers; 2) has an intentional process of integrating new teachers into the school community; 3) has a strong and inclusive administration that promotes a positive atmosphere for students, teachers, and staff; and 4) is philosophically aligned with the program's approach and goals.

Both programs have adapted and refined their models based on feedback and learning from prior experiences. Each program strives to improve efforts to place high-quality teachers in Colorado and each continues to develop and strengthen its program.

Introduction

The inequitable distribution of highly qualified and effective teachers has been cited by the National Strategy Forum as possibly “...the most vexing public school problem facing America’s policymakers today”.¹ As one strategy to address disparities in students’ access to effective teachers, the State of Colorado enacted legislation to authorize the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to fund programs in Colorado to coordinate recruitment, preparation, and placement of highly qualified teachers in school districts with high need that have traditionally had difficulty attracting high-quality teachers.

Through a competitive grant application process, CDE and a group of external reviewers selected the Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC) and Teach For America (TFA)–Colorado to receive funding to meet legislative objectives. Grant recipients were required to provide 100% matching funds and place teachers in partner districts for the 2014-15 school year. The same legislation that provided funding for the teacher preparation program also allowed for a third-party evaluator to track program outcomes. OMNI Institute (OMNI), a non-profit research and evaluation firm located in Denver, was selected to conduct the evaluation.

OMNI researchers, in collaboration with CDE staff, developed an evaluation plan that aimed to 1) fulfill legislative reporting requirements (section 22-94-103, C.R.S.); 2) examine the effectiveness of the program to recruit, select, train, and retain highly qualified teachers; and 3) provide CDE with detailed information on program implementation that can be used to improve program administration. The evaluation plan includes both summative and formative components.

In the first year of the grant (November 25, 2013 – June 30, 2014), OMNI coordinated with CDE and finalized evaluation questions, established data sharing agreements with selected programs, and began gathering data from each of the programs regarding the teacher recruitment, preparation, and placement process. OMNI conducted interviews with key informants and obtained teacher recruitment and placement data from both programs. A year 1 report² was submitted to CDE in September, 2014. The year 1 report emphasizes recruitment, preparation, and placement activities.

In the second year of the grant (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2015), OMNI received final teacher recruitment and placement data from vendors; conducted a second phase of key informant interviews, including supplemental evaluation efforts that allowed for additional interviews and a deeper focus than originally planned; developed and administered a survey to teachers placed in classrooms in partner districts; and, to the extent available from vendors, examined data on educator effectiveness for placed teachers. In addition, through the supplemental evaluation, OMNI examined preliminary data from vendors on initial recruitment efforts for placing a second cohort of candidates in the 2015-16 academic year.

This report presents findings from formative and summative evaluation activities for the second year of the grant. After a brief overview of each program, the report is organized into the following four sections:

- Section 1: Teacher Recruitment, Placement, Retention, and Effectiveness
- Section 2: Principal and Program Perspectives on Support/Retention Strategies and Program Partnerships

¹ http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/HE/mf_nationalstrategyforumreport.pdf

² <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/qualityteacherrecruitmentgrantprogramyear1>

- Section 3: Teacher Perceptions and Satisfaction
- Section 4: Cohort 2 Recruitment

We end the report with a summary of lessons learned from the evaluation of teacher preparation programs and a brief discussion of evaluation limitations and considerations.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This section provides a brief overview of each program funded by the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program.

Public Education & Business Coalition (PEBC)

PEBC provides professional development in Colorado, and nationwide, to teachers, school leaders and administrators (<http://www.pebc.org/>). The Colorado Boettcher Teacher Residency, an initiative of PEBC, is an alternative-licensure program that partners with high-need school districts to increase teacher quality and retention district-wide, to support the ongoing development of residents and mentor teachers in the program, to enhance capacity and collaborative leadership in partner districts and schools, and to increase student achievement. Core philosophies of the program are the integration of theory and practice, job-embedded coaching, ongoing training and support, and a model of quality improvement that moves beyond individual teachers to improve the effectiveness of entire school systems. This report focuses on the placement of teachers in high-need schools in Colorado through the Boettcher Teacher Residency program (BTR).

Program participants agree to a five-year commitment during which they work toward earning an initial teaching license, a Masters of Education degree, and an endorsement in culturally and linguistically diverse education through the Colorado Department of Education. PEBC is the designated licensing agency for the initial license through BTR, and BTR's current higher education partnership for the Masters of Education is with Adams State University, located in the San Luis Valley. Adams State University field directors lead seminars and coursework for BTR residents and go into the field to observe residents and provide feedback, mentoring and support. The BTR program primarily employs a residency model, in which participants spend a year assisting a mentor teacher in a classroom before becoming a teacher of record in their own classroom. During this first year, participants are referred to as residents. Residents working in a classroom with a mentor teacher may be placed in either urban or rural school districts. After the residency year, candidates apply for open positions in BTR partner districts. To be responsive to schools in rural districts with immediate needs for teachers of record, BTR began implementing a model referred to by the program as alternative induction. In this model, candidates immediately become teachers of record and lead teach in the classroom full-time. These teachers do not have the full-time in-classroom support of a mentor teacher; however, they are paired with a mentor teacher who provides a modified level of support. BTR developed the alternative induction model to meet the needs of some rural districts, and it is not used in urban districts.

Teach For America (TFA)–Colorado

Teach For America (TFA) is a national teacher preparation program that was founded to reduce educational inequities. The primary goal of TFA is to eliminate the achievement gap through the recruitment of individuals with strong academic or leadership backgrounds to teach in high-need schools and communities, creating life-

long advocates for education, both within the field of education and outside of it. Specifically, TFA takes a two-pronged approach to achieve this goal:

- They seek to build capacity and reduce the achievement gap by recruiting high-quality candidates to become corps members and teach in high-need/hard-to-serve schools.
- They seek to decrease educational inequities by creating alumni who will serve as leaders and advocates for change in educational policy and ideology, regardless of their profession after their TFA experience.

Corps members make a two-year commitment to teach in a Title I or similar school that has been deemed hard-to-staff, or hard-to-serve. TFA partners with districts in Colorado that agree to consider corps members for open positions. Corps members must complete the hiring process to obtain a position for final placement. The program coordinates teacher preparation for licensure through a higher education partnership, and provides training, and continued professional development throughout the two-year commitment.

TFA-Colorado's current higher education partnership is with the University of Colorado – Denver's ASPIRE to Teach Program (ASPIRE). ASPIRE provides the required coursework for the pathway from alternative to initial licensure of TFA candidates, and also provides a Masters in Critical Pedagogy or Special Education for those corps members who choose to pursue the Masters. TFA and ASPIRE also both support corps member with ongoing professional development and training. Ideally, corps members will continue to teach beyond their initial commitment, and while a number do continue to teach, many also go on to work in other fields such as medicine or law, where TFA hopes they will advocate around educational issues.

SECTION 1: TEACHER RECRUITMENT, PLACEMENT, RETENTION, AND EFFECTIVENESS

Section 1 presents information on the number of teachers recruited, placed, and retained in 2014-15; the districts and schools reached through the program; characteristics of placed teachers, including demographics, highly qualified status, and grades/subjects taught; and the number of students taught by teachers placed through the grant. Information presented in Section 1 comes from vendor-provided teacher-level spreadsheets maintained by programs and transferred to OMNI for reporting.

Number of Teachers Recruited, Placed, and Retained

Table 1.1 provides the number of teachers recruited, placed, and retained in a partner high-need district in 2014-15.

Table 1.1. Number of Targeted and Placed Teachers

	BTR	TFA-Coloardo	Total
Target Number	65	95	160
Recruited	59	79	138
Not Placed in a Target District in 2014-15	3	5	8
Placed in 2014-15	56	74	130
Placed as Teachers of Record	9*	74	83
Placed as Residents	47	NA	47
Remained in the program through 2014-15	52	69	121
Remained in original placement	48	66	114
Remained in program, but in a new placement	4	3	7
Contracts/renewals in place for 2015-16	17**	60	77

Note. Numbers are slightly different than what was reported in the year 1 interim report due to small changes in year-two program files sent to OMNI.

*One teacher was a resident for one-half of the year and a teacher of record for the other half. In this report, the teacher is considered placed as a teacher of record.

**As of April 2015, many BTR residents were in the process of applying for open positions.

BTR recruited 59 individuals to teach in historically hard-to-serve schools and districts (91% of its target). Of the 59, BTR successfully placed 56 (94.9%) in classrooms in 2014-15 (47 as residents and nine as teachers of record). Of the three candidates who were not successfully placed in 2014-15, two withdrew from the program very early in the placement, and one was not matched with a mentor in 2014-15, but is expected to be placed with a mentor in 2015-16. Of the 56 individuals successfully placed in 2014-15, 52 (92.9%) remained in the program throughout the full academic year (45 residents and seven teachers of record). In addition, four of the residents changed their placement school and district during the 2014-15 academic year. Finally, as of April 2015, 17 individuals had renewed their positions or had contracts in place for 2015-16 positions in districts that are part of the BTR network. Residents must apply for open positions as a teacher of record, sometimes in a different school or district, after they complete the year of residency, and many were in the hiring process at the time data were submitted.

TFA-Colorado recruited 79 corps members to teach in historically hard-to-serve schools and districts (83% of its target). Of the 79, TFA successfully placed 74 (93.7%) in classrooms in 2014-15. Of the five corps members that were not successfully placed in 2014-15, three were placed in another TFA-partner district that is not part of the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. Of the 74 corps members successfully placed in 2014-15, 69 (93.2%) remained for the full academic year. In addition, three of the retained corps members changed their placement schools but remained within the same districts during the 2014-15 academic year. Finally, as of April 2015, 60 corps members had renewed their positions or had contracts in place for 2015-16 positions in districts with which TFA partners. Renewal status was unknown for two corps members, and seven corps members who had completed the first year of the program were not renewed for the 2015-16 academic year.

District and School Placements

Tables 1.2 and 1.3 provide information on the number of teachers placed in 2014-15, by district, for BTR and TFA-Colorado, respectively. In 2014-15, BTR placed 56 candidates in 12 districts in 30 schools. Seventy four TFA-Colorado corps members were hired to teach in 38 schools in its three grant-partner districts. The names of the schools in which teachers were placed is provided in Appendix A.

Table 1.2. Number of Teachers Placed in BTR Partner Districts

District	# placed in 2014-15	% of total placed
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	9	16.1
Alamosa School District RE-11J	6	10.7
Aurora Public Schools	9	16.1
Brighton School District	7	12.5
Center Consolidated School District 26JT	2	3.6
Durango School District 9-R	2	3.6
East Otero School District R-1	1	1.8
Ignacio School District 11-JT	3	5.4
Jefferson County R-1	5	8.9
Monte Vista School District C-8	4	7.1
Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1	1	1.8
North Conejos School District RE-1J	7	12.5
Total	56	100%

Table 1.3. Number of Teachers Placed in TFA Partner Districts

District	# placed to date	% of total placed
Denver Public Schools	46	62.2
Harrison School District 2	17	23.0
Pueblo City Schools	11	14.9
Total	74	100%

Teacher Demographics

Table 1.4 describes the available demographic characteristics of placed teachers, by program and overall.

Table 1.4. Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Education Level of Teachers Placed

	BTR		TFA-Coloardo		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Gender						
Female	28	51.9	49	67.1	77	60.6
Male	26	48.1	24	32.9	50	39.4
Total	54	100%	73	100%	127	100%
Ethnicity/Race						
African American	2	3.7	1	1.4	3	2.4
Asian	1	1.9	1	1.4	2	1.6
Hispanic or Latino	7	13.0	19	26.0	26	20.5
Native American	1	1.9	0	0.0	1	0.8
White	41	75.9	44	60.3	85	67.9
Other	0	0.0	2	2.7	2	1.6
Two or more races	2	3.7	6	8.2	8	6.3
Total	54	100%	73	100%	127	100%
Education						
Bachelor's Degree	49	90.7	63	85.1	112	87.5
Masters Degree	5	9.3	9	12.2	14	10.9
Professional School Degree	0	0.0	2	2.7	2	1.6
Total	54	100%	74	100%	128	100%

Note: there was some missing data on demographic characteristics of placed teachers. Percentages are based on the valid N.

Teacher Highly Qualified Status

To be considered Highly Qualified (HQ) under NCLB, teachers must hold a degree, be fully licensed (except when waivers have been granted in charter schools), and demonstrate subject matter competency.³ K-12 teachers who provide core content area instruction are required to be HQ. HQ requirements do not apply to some teaching positions (e.g., physical education teachers, secondary special education teachers who are not the primary providers of content).

As part of grant requirements, programs documented the HQ status of teachers placed through the program, and provided the information to OMNI for reporting. HQ status of placed teachers has not been confirmed by the Colorado Department of Education because this data is collected and verified in the subsequent school year.

³ http://www.cde.state.co.us/FedPrograms/tii/a_hqt

According to BTR, 56 individuals were placed through the program:

- 51 were required to meet HQ qualifications.
- 5 taught physical education and were not subject to HQ.
- 51 (100%) were deemed HQ.

According to TFA-Colorado, 74 individuals were placed through the program:

- 74 were required to meet HQ qualifications.
- 6 were missing information about HQ status in the submitted data.⁴
- 67 of the remaining 68 corps members (98.%) were deemed HQ. The corps member who did not meet HQ requirements did not remain in the program through the 2014-15 year.

Subjects/Grade Levels Taught

Tables 1.5 and 1.6 provide information on the subjects and grade levels taught by teachers placed through the program, respectively. Many teachers taught more than one grade level; thus, the number of teachers per grade level in Table 1.6 exceeds the total number of teachers placed.

Table 1.5. Number of Teachers Placed by Subject Area by Program

Primary Subject Area	BTR		TFA-Colorado	
	n	%	n	%
Elementary	28	50.0	21	30.4
English, reading, or language arts	7	12.5	13	18.8
Mathematics	3	5.4	6	8.7
Science	6	10.7	12	17.4
Social studies	4	7.1	3	4.3
Foreign languages	1	1.8	2	2.9
The arts	2	3.6	0	0.0
Physical education	5	8.9	0	0.0
Special education	0	0.0	12	17.4
Total	56	100%	69	100%

Note: Data on placement subject was missing for 5 TFA individuals. Percentages are based on the valid N.

⁴ Four of these corps members did not remain in the program throughout the 2014-15 year. The remaining two corps members completed the first year of the program, but were either not retained for a second year or retention status was unknown at the time of reporting.

Table 1.6. Number of Teachers Placed by Grade Level by Program

Grade Level	BTR	TFA-Coloardo
	n	n
K	4	2
1 st	5	4
2 nd	5	9
3 rd	8	4
4 th	7	4
5 th	5	7
6 th	11	12
7 th	7	15
8 th	9	13
9 th	9	14
10 th	9	5
11 th	9	3
12 th	6	3

Note: Data on grade level was missing for 3 BTR individuals.

Students Served

The Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program served 9,115 students enrolled in historically hard-to-serve schools in 2014-15. TFA-Colorado teachers served 4,869 students and BTR teachers served 4,246 students. Table 1.7 presents information on the total number of students served by teachers' primary subject area.

Table 1.7. Total Number of Students Served by Subject Area by Program

Primary Subject Area	BTR	TFA-Colorado
	# of students served	# of students served
Elementary education	1,037	1094
English, reading, or language arts	628	1066
Mathematics	372	477
Science	620	1115
Social studies	335	275
Foreign languages	71	195
The arts	136	0
Physical education	1,047	0
Special education	0	362
Placement subject not available	0	285
Total	4,246	4,869

Educator Effectiveness

Per Senate Bill 10-191, Colorado school districts are required to conduct annual evaluations of educators based on professional practice and measures of student learning. A district has the choice of completing its evaluations using the State's Model Evaluation System or by developing its own system, provided it meets all legislative requirements. Regardless of the system used, evaluation ratings eventually must be determined

equally from 1) measures of professional practice, using the five quality standards, and 2) multiple measures of student learning. Final ratings of *Highly Effective*, *Effective*, *Partially Effective*, or *Ineffective* are assigned to each teacher. However, because educator effectiveness requirements in Colorado are still in their infancy, in 2014-15, districts were provided flexibility in the degree to which they weighted measures of student learning in final rating calculations, with ranges of 0 to 50% allowed for the 2014-15 year.⁵ Flexibility was provided to districts to allow them an additional year to refine their measures and systems.

The Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program requires that vendors report the effectiveness ratings of teachers placed through the program at the end of their first year in the classroom. Considering the leeway districts are allowed in determining the criteria for effectiveness ratings, particularly in 2014-15, ratings may not be comparable across districts participating in the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant program. Specifically, some partner districts used the State's Model Evaluation System and others developed their own, and districts varied in the degree to which they weighted measures of student learning in 2014-15. Nonetheless, below we describe the effectiveness ratings provided to OMNI from programs of teachers placed through the program as of June 26th, 2015.

BOETTCHER TEACHER RESIDENCY

BTR placed nine teachers of record through the program and seven remained in the program throughout the 2014-15 year. BTR obtained district effectiveness ratings for six of the seven teachers. One teacher was a resident for one-half of the year and a final effectiveness rating for this teacher was not available. The six teachers with effectiveness ratings were placed in five rural districts throughout the southwest and San Luis Valley. The five districts varied in the systems used to determine effectiveness, and the degree to which measures of student learning were weighted in the evaluations (ranging from 0% to 50% of the overall rating). Of the six teachers with effectiveness ratings, all were rated *Effective* or *Highly Effective*.

Residents placed in classrooms with a mentor teacher do not receive educator effectiveness ratings from the district because they are not teachers of record. However, BTR conducts evaluations of residents using the BTR Teacher Development Rubric. The rubric is aligned with Colorado Teacher Quality Standards I-V.⁶ Using the rubric, residents are rated on each of the five standards and ratings are combined to create an overall rating of *Developing*, *Partially Proficient*, or *Proficient*. Mentors and field directors provide independent ratings of the residents, and residents conduct self-ratings.

BTR Teacher Development Rubric end-of-year scores were provided for the 45 residents who were placed and retained in partner districts through the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant program. According to field director end-of-year observations, 19 (42%) were *Proficient*, 22 (49%) were *Partially Proficient*, and four (9%) were *Developing*.

⁵ <http://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/sb14165factsheet>

⁶ <http://www.cde.state.co.us/sites/default/files/Colo%20Teacher%20Quality%20Standards%20Ref%20Guide%202.pdf>

TFA-COLORADO

TFA-Colorado placed 74 teachers and 69 remained teaching for the full year in three school districts: Denver Public Schools (n=41), Pueblo City Schools (n=11), and Harrison School District 2 (n=17).

Pueblo City Schools uses the Colorado State Model to determine effectiveness ratings, and in 2014-15, measures of student learning were weighted 50%. Of the 11 corps members placed in Pueblo in 2014-15, eight (73%) were rated *Effective* or *Highly Effective*.

Denver Public Schools (DPS) uses the Leading Effective Academic Practice (LEAP) system and the Framework for Effective Teachers⁷ to evaluate educators on professional practice and measures of student learning. In 2014-15, DPS did not factor measures of student learning into its LEAP ratings; thus, the LEAP ratings for corps members placed in DPS in 2014-15 were based on professional practice from observations, professionalism and, when appropriate, student perception surveys.⁸ DPS provided to TFA-Colorado final LEAP ratings for 31 of the 41 retained corps members in DPS. Of the 31, 13 (41.9%) were rated as *Effective* or *Highly Effective*.

The evaluation team did not receive effectiveness ratings on candidates placed by TFA-Colorado in Harrison School District 2.

SECTION 2: PRINCIPAL AND PROGRAM PERSPECTIVES ON SUPPORT/RETENTION STRATEGIES AND PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

OMNI researchers conducted a series of key informant interviews with principals and program staff to obtain qualitative data on program implementation. Interviews with program staff, including staff working directly with teachers in the field, primarily focused on support and retention strategies once teachers are in placed in their positions. Interviews with principals were designed to learn more about factors that influence successful partnership; the placement and hiring process of program candidates, from the school's perspective; and strategies schools and districts use to support and retain teachers placed through programs. In this section, we first provide a brief description of the interview methods, we then present key themes by program that arose from each set of interviews, and we finish with principal-identified strategies for successful partnerships.

Methods

Two OMNI researchers conducted interviews with 17 key informants across the two teacher preparation programs (TFA=8 interviews; BTR=9 interviews). Key informants included principals, higher education partners, and program and field staff involved with candidate support. The executive director of each program identified the program and field staff who were knowledgeable about program supports and retention strategies.

OMNI staff randomly selected principals from among the schools in which BTR candidates and TFA corps members were placed in the 2014-15 academic year. BTR and TFA then contacted principals to request their cooperation with the interview process. Both programs requested and were granted one replacement in the principal selection process. In addition, one principal declined to complete an interview, and one principal did

⁷ <http://leap.dpsk12.org/LEAP/media/Main/PDFs/Framework-for-Effective-Teaching-2014-15.pdf>

⁸ <http://careers.dpsk12.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Moving-Forward-with-LEAP.pdf>

not respond to requests for an interview. In all cases, new principals were randomly selected from among the remaining principals in schools where candidates were placed. One of the newly selected principals for TFA did not respond to requests for an interview, and due to time constraints, another principal was not selected. Selected principals were in schools that had been in partnerships with programs for varying amounts of time (1-4 years with BTR; 1-8 years with TFA-Colorado). Across the two programs, six program staff, two higher education partners, and nine principals were interviewed. A full list of key informants is included in Appendix B.

Key informants were initially contacted by e-mail and phone to schedule interviews. Once an appointment was set, key informants were e-mailed a reminder of the interview one to three days before their scheduled interview. This reminder included a brief interview guide with a short description of the evaluation, informed consent information, and the primary interview questions (Appendix B). Key informants also were notified that OMNI, per contractual obligations, will provide a copy of de-identified interview notes to CDE.

OMNI developed an interview guide based on the goals of the grant as specified in the legislation and in discussions with CDE. Interview topics included school partnerships and teacher support and retention. CDE program staff reviewed and approved the guide.

Interviews were conducted between March 5 and April 20, 2015, and lasted between 25 and 64 minutes. The average interview time was 43 minutes. All interviews were conducted by phone and were audio recorded.

A coding structure was developed based on the interview guide. Three OMNI staff members reviewed interview transcripts and codes and analyzed data to identify themes in each of the question areas.

The Boettcher Teacher Residency Program –Interview Findings

Below, we describe themes generated from key informant interviews with the program executive director, the institute of higher education partner, two field staff, and five principals in BTR partner schools. Based on the information gathered during the interviews, we describe 1) principals' perceptions of the partnership, placement of BTR candidates, and the mentor selection process; 2) program, district and school supports provided to residents and teachers of record placed through the program; 3) strategies used to retain teachers, including retention challenges and strategies used when teachers are struggling; 4) perceptions of program strengths and challenges; and 5) lessons learned to help strengthen the program.

PARTNERING WITH SCHOOLS AND BTR CANDIDATE PLACEMENT

Principals were asked why they chose to partner with BTR and how the placement of BTR residents and teachers of record occurred in their schools.

Principals partner with BTR for a number of reasons, including the program's strong reputation to provide high-quality professional development and candidates. Principals discussed partnering with BTR because of its reputation to provide high-quality professional development to educators in the state, and because of the future professional development opportunities for school staff specifically. Principals also partner with BTR because the program helps address the lack of high-quality candidates available to teach in rural, high-need schools. Principals mentioned that BTR candidates are better prepared than other applicants.

One principal noted an additional benefit to the program is that, once placed in a classroom with students, residents are expected to meet benchmarks and continue performing to the program's standards throughout the year, or they will not be recommended for licensure. This helps to ensure that high-quality candidates are retained in classrooms. Finally, one principal indicated that the school's relationship with Adams State University led to the partnership with BTR.

“...If you're a Boettcher Graduate or if you're a Boettcher Teacher, then you're going to be more highly qualified than just a regular graduate from any university.” –Kevin Jones, Principal

Principals look for a variety of qualities in candidates to hire for their schools, including whether candidates 'will be a good fit', and whether they have key dispositions believed to be successful for the resident/mentor model and for teaching, such as whether the candidate is collaborative, reflective, demonstrates professionalism, has a learning orientation, seems prepared to manage a classroom, and is motivated.

In addition, principals look for qualities in candidates that indicate an ability to effectively manage a classroom. For example, one principal noted that they are looking for, “A sense of kind-heartedness with backbone and firmness.” Furthermore, principals look for a candidate's previous experience in the classroom, bilingual abilities, strong content knowledge, and understanding of how to use data to inform instruction.

The placement process for BTR candidates varies depending on whether a candidate will be placed in a classroom as a resident with a mentor teacher, or whether he or she will be a teacher of record in his or her own classroom. In situations where a candidate is placed as a resident with a mentor teacher, principals may be minimally or not involved in the selection of residents. When a candidate will be placed as a teacher of record in his or her own classroom, or when applying for a position after a year of residency with a mentor teacher, candidates must go through the same hiring process as other teachers who are not part of the program.

Principals use several criteria to determine whether a placement is successful. When asked how they determine if a placement is successful during a candidate's first year, and in subsequent years, principals noted many of the same considerations that they examine when selecting candidates to hire and place in their schools initially. For example, principals look for individuals who have been reflective and able to incorporate feedback, who have grown and learned in their practice, and who are able to effectively manage the classroom. Principals also look for whether candidates appear confident in their abilities and have an increased presence in the school. For teachers of record, principals also review mid-year and final evaluations to help determine whether placements were successful. For residents, in the first year, much of the information is obtained through feedback from the mentor teacher. In subsequent years, when candidates are placed as teachers of record, principals consider whether teachers want to stay in the school, whether they are meeting expectations identified for them in the previous year, and whether they are building relationships with school staff.

SELECTING MENTOR TEACHERS

BTR, districts, and schools look for teachers who are highly qualified, effective, experienced, collaborative and willing to share the classroom space, and have strong leadership and teaching practice. A critical aspect of BTR’s model is to select appropriate mentor teachers who will model best practices and provide coaching to residents placed in the classroom with them. In most cases, the selection process involves BTR partnering with a district, the district nominating schools, and then principals in those schools nominating teachers to serve as mentors. Although not typical, one principal noted that the superintendent spoke directly with potential mentor teachers.

After schools identify potential mentor teachers, BTR staff interview them, observe them in the classroom, and provide mentor training to those who are selected. Residents are then given the opportunity to observe multiple mentor teachers, and mentors and residents rate one another to assess desired matches. BTR then selects and assigns the mentor/resident pairs. BTR provides mentor training to potential mentors in advance of matching, and a stipend to those who are selected.

According to participants, strengths of the mentor model are as follows:

- The long-term commitment, which allows residents to be coached, immediately put theory into practice, and receive feedback for an entire year,
- The model provides ample opportunity for professional growth for both the resident and the mentor, and
- The training provided to mentors, which benefits both the mentors and the school, regardless of whether the mentor is selected by a resident.

Identified challenges include time constraints and the extra responsibility placed on mentors, the lack of available mentors, and finding time to meet with mentor teachers if the candidate is a teacher of record.

Mentors must dedicate time and effort to effectively coach residents, which can be difficult, especially during stressful periods such as during state testing. Some districts have addressed this challenge by providing a small stipend to mentor teachers to help compensate for the added responsibilities. BTR also provides a stipend. The lack of available teachers to serve as mentors, particularly for teachers of record who are placed in a specific school to fill a specific need, is also a challenge. Finding time to meet with mentor teachers can be difficult for teachers of record, who are not in the same classroom with their mentor during the day and frequently were absent from the school on Fridays to attend weekly program seminars. As one principal noted:

“... then the challenge is time, to just find a time to be with the mentoring teacher or find a time to be with the school.... They would have some Friday classes, and it was hard to get my teachers out of the classroom for that process.” –Kevin Jones, Principal

SUPPORTS TO RESIDENTS AND TEACHERS OF RECORD

Once residents and teachers of record are in the classroom, there are a number of supports provided to them by the program. Districts and schools in which candidates have been placed also provide support throughout the year. In some instances, residents and teachers of record receive the same type of support across the program, the district, and the school (e.g., observations by program staff, and by district and school staff); in other instances, programs, districts, and schools each provide unique supports. These are described below.

BTR Supports

BTR provides a number of supports to candidates, including the partnership with Adams State University, the mentoring relationship, observations in a lab classroom, professional development opportunities, and observations and feedback.

As the higher education partner to BTR, Adams State University provides candidates needed coursework, best practices for instruction, and the opportunity for candidates to utilize what they learn in seminars in the classroom. Adams State University provides the coursework candidates are required to complete for licensure and the Master's program. The program provides training and professional development to the ASU instructors who provide the Master's level coursework for residents. Instructors for the program also demonstrate best practices in instruction while providing graduate coursework. Residents and teachers of record can then immediately translate theory learned in seminars into practice in the classroom.

Due to the challenges associated with requiring teachers of record to be absent from the classroom on Fridays to participate in seminars, the program has changed its delivery by scheduling seminars during evenings and weekends, and offering them online every other week. These changes have allowed teachers of record to access training with fewer disruptions to classroom teaching than previously.

The mentoring relationship allows the resident to observe strong teaching practice on a daily basis. By observing strong teaching practice over time, residents have the unique ability to identify effective strategies and solutions to ongoing and complex teaching challenges. In addition, the mentoring relationship provides an opportunity for immediate feedback on the resident's practice as he or she takes on more responsibility throughout the year. Immediate and ongoing feedback is important to the development of strong teaching skills, and allows residents to refine and adjust their approaches using mentors' expertise.

Observations of a lab classroom provide the opportunity for candidates to observe a master teacher. Lab classrooms are offered in Denver and taught by a master teacher who has demonstrated exceptional teaching skills and who can model the practices BTR seeks to foster in new residents and teachers of record. While some lab teachers have been through BTR, many have not, but all have utilized PEBC's professional development offerings to refine their practice. BTR is currently working to expand the offering of lab classrooms beyond the Denver area, so that this resource will be more readily available to teachers in rural districts.

PEBC offers professional development opportunities to candidates of BTR. Professional development opportunities include activities such as one- or-two day seminars on thinking strategies or math strategies. Other professional supports include understanding education-related legislation and evaluation in Colorado, and ensuring residents are connected with the San Juan BOCES, a regional support provided through the districts. Residents attend the BOCES' annual summit and participate in trainings on multi-cultural education. BTR also offers professional development opportunities to teachers and staff in the schools where residents are placed.

Field staff conduct classroom observations in order to provide residents with feedback. Program staff noted that a core component of the program model is regular observation and feedback, and that the program hired more staff in the past year to support these efforts. To provide regular observations in schools that are isolated geographically, the program sometimes hires local retired principals and coaches to conduct observations. In

conjunction with the principals, field staff use these observations to identify strengths, as well as areas for increased support. Key informants reported these observations occur anywhere from twice a month to once a year⁹ and are used to provide the resident with additional feedback beyond that which is received from the mentor teacher.

Additional program supports identified by individual key informants include:

- Providing emotional support and developing interpersonal relationships with residents and teachers of record,
- Providing information on how to collect, manage, and use data,
- Allowing residents into the classroom to think about layout and logistics for setting up a classroom,
- Obtaining feedback from mentors and residents about seminars and coursework to provide better support in the field,
- Providing opportunities for residents to engage in the community so that they learn about community resources, and understand community context for their students (e.g., the public library, public transportation),
- Providing expert panels in which district partners, administrators, teachers, and superintendents are invited to participate,
- Implementing a cohort model in rural districts in which participants are grouped and provided support regionally, and
- Providing support around school-specific initiatives when needed.

District and School Supports

In addition to supports provided through BTR, districts and schools also offer supports to residents and teachers of record. Program and field staff noted that the level of support provided by districts and schools can vary widely. Some districts have robust professional development and observation structures in place, and residents participate in the same professional development that is offered to all district teachers. Others provide little support to residents and do not include them in professional development opportunities because they are not considered employees of the district. In these districts, residents may only be able to take advantage of district professional development opportunities when they are administered at the school. To address these concerns, BTR advocates to principals and human resource departments for resident involvement in professional development opportunities as much as possible. Mentor teachers also advocate for residents to participate in trainings, in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) (e.g., grade-level and content teams), and in other professional development opportunities offered by the school or district.

Specific district supports mentioned by key informants include:

- Professional development opportunities, including work with the San Juan BOCES, and trainings on district data warehouse systems,
- District coaches,
- Financial support to mentor teachers, so that they can provide effective support to residents, and

⁹ The program indicated that visits occur much more frequently than once a year. They offer the explanation that school staff may not always be aware of when observations are happening.

- Leave time for teachers to be able to participate in the seminars, although not all districts were able to provide this.

Additionally, residents and teachers of record receive a number of supports through their schools, including observations and feedback, PLCs/grade-level teams, hiring and employment support, and professional development and training opportunities. Observations and feedback include mid-year and final teacher evaluations, as well as goals and expectations for the teacher. PLCs/grade-level teams are utilized when mentors and principals recognize the value of resident participation in these teams. This involvement allows residents to observe and participate in the discussion about student learning and growth.

Schools also provide hiring and employment support. For example, principals may advocate to other schools to hire a resident when they don't have an open position after the residency year is complete. Principals also have offered to review résumés, write letters of recommendation, and conduct mock interviews with residents. Additional examples of professional development provided by schools include trainings on strategies, norms, behaviors, expectations in the building, and training on the curriculum document that guides instruction.

“Almost every other week professional development, unit development, concept planning, backwards by design, all of that...and then we have a heavy emphasis in our district on formative assessment. So they've been part of that training, that development time.” –Michael Clow, Principal

Additional supports provided by schools include:

- Networking with other teachers and school counselors, both formally and informally,
- Assistance obtaining a sub license so the resident can be paid as a substitute teacher when a mentor teacher is on leave, and
- Resident participation in Response to Intervention (Rti).¹⁰

STRATEGIES TO RETAIN TEACHERS IN THE FIRST YEAR

Ensuring residents and teachers of record have needed supports in the first year of the program helps promote retention. Key supports include availability and responsiveness to provide emotional support, observations and feedback, integration into the school community, and the mentor/residency model. Some principals and BTR staff also noted that many of the daily supports provided to residents and teachers of record are used as retention strategies.

Providing available, responsive, and emotional support helps retain candidates. Multiple key informants discussed the need to provide emotional support to residents and teachers of record, and to acknowledge how difficult the first year can be. One key informant also noted the importance of building strong communication lines and relationships so that residents feel comfortable sharing their experiences.

¹⁰ For more information about RTI, please visit: <https://www.cde.state.co.us/rti/learnaboutrti>

Using observations and providing feedback make a resident a strong job candidate. Observations are used to identify strengths, as well as areas for additional support, in order to fill any gaps in the residents' instructional practice, and make the residents stronger and more marketable after the residency year.

Integration into the school community and ensuring residents and teachers feel valued are also important for retention. Principals noted the importance of showing residents and teachers of record appreciation for the work they do, and letting them know they are valued:

“I think just the fact that our residents are ingrained within a school and within a system for an entire year. They are taking part in all of the processes, the meetings, and the requirements that the district has, and are really developing those super important relationships and making those connections” –Jeb Holt, BTR Field Director

The mentor/residency model of support was also highlighted as a retention strategy and a best practice. The residency year provides more time in the classroom before becoming a teacher of record, and, as has been noted previously, BTR's model allows residents to immediately transfer theory into practice in a supported environment.

Key informants suggested other efforts that may be helpful with retention. First, one key informant proposed that it would be helpful to reward residents and teachers of record with financial incentives, such as gift cards and per diem stipends, to show appreciation for their work. Another mentioned having residents observe program and Adams State University staff as they model lessons and best practices. In a similar vein, another key informant suggested inviting residents and teachers of record to attend institutes, conferences, lab classrooms, and gallery lessons with a master teacher. One BTR staff member also highlighted how important it is for the program to build relationships with principals in the BTR network so the program can learn of concerns with a resident or teacher of record, observe the candidate's practice and coach him or her, or remove someone from the classroom, if needed. A BTR staff member also mentioned the importance of staying in touch with residents through Blackboard, the online platform the program uses on the weeks teachers of record don't meet face-to-face. And finally, one key informant noted how important it is for candidates to network in the broader community. This key informant pointed out that in small rural communities everyone knows everyone, and it is important for residents to build a good reputation, and build relationships with other teachers, the principal, the superintendent, HR, and with the community.

BEYOND THE FIRST YEAR

Candidates placed as a resident in a classroom with a mentor teacher must often seek a position as a teacher of record at another school after the residency year. Candidates will only continue in the school in which they completed their residency if there is an open position for which they can be hired. As a result, successful retention of residents in BTR does not necessarily mean remaining in the same school, or even remaining in the same district, for the second year of the program. The program offers supports to teachers in the second year as well.

A primary source of support beyond the first year is the post-residency coordinator. In addition to retention strategies implemented in the first year, there are a number of supports the program provides to 1) residents

embarking on the second year of the program who need to secure employment, and 2) existing teachers of record in the second year of the program and beyond. The post-residency coordinator works with residents on their résumés and letters of recommendation, provides guidance on where to apply for teaching positions, practices mock interviews with candidates, provides information on the overall hiring process, and informs what to do when they secure interviews with schools and are offered jobs. The post-residency coordinator also provides support and observations in the classroom in years 2-5 of the program. As noted earlier, principals also assist residents in the hiring process, and field directors will continue to provide informal support to program participants once they have completed the first year.

CHALLENGES WITH RETENTION IN THE FIRST YEAR

Although the attrition numbers are small, with only four of 56 candidates (7.1%) not remaining in the program through the first year, key informants mentioned some retention challenges. The most prominent concerns highlighted were the difficulty of teaching, particularly during the first year of the program when residents and teachers of record are in the classroom full-time and completing graduate coursework, and the need for financial support to residents.

The demands of teaching while balancing program requirements can be challenging. Principals, program staff, and field staff all highlighted that teaching is an incredibly demanding career. As one respondent explained, teachers have a “24-hour-job” where they are “constantly planning, grading, and reflecting.” These demands can be overwhelming to new teachers.

Residents and teachers of record have the additional responsibilities of completing their graduate coursework and meeting the requirements for licensure in the first year. It becomes critical for candidates of the program to find balance between the responsibilities of teaching and taking care of themselves and spending time with family. One principal felt the program could be more sensitive about these challenges:

“And when you’re teaching full-time you are expected to plan and turn in your lesson plan upgrade and do all the things that are necessary to be a teacher, and then plus you have to write a 7-page paper ... sometimes those extra little things can burn a teacher out.” –Kevin Jones, Principal

The lack of financial support to residents was cited as another challenge. Teachers of record receive a salary from the district for their work, but residents placed in a classroom with a mentor teacher receive no compensation for their time. One principal noted a resident was “stretched to the max” financially and suffering from the cumulative stress, demands of the program and lack of financial support. Another noted some candidates consider other careers because they have the potential to earn a higher salary.

Additional challenges that key informants identified were:

- A candidate may not have been a good fit for the program and the screening process did not identify this before he or she was placed.
- It can be difficult getting the mentors and residents into the same place at the same time before the year begins to determine whether the mentor/resident match will be a success.
- Hiring and employment challenges exist for residents embarking on their second year in the program, such as the timing of job listings, location, and fit.

Although rare, these challenges can affect the classroom environment in multiple ways. Principals noted that when residents and teachers of record feel stress regarding program requirements and deadlines, that stress can carry over into the classroom and affect mood and energy level.

SUPPORTING RESIDENTS AND TEACHERS OF RECORD WHO ARE STRUGGLING

Program staff use specific strategies when they identify a candidate who is struggling. BTR wishes to address issues quickly to ensure a positive environment for students and uses a handbook that clearly outlines the protocol for addressing such situations.

One important step the program takes is to identify a mentor/resident mismatch. First, program and field staff talk with the mentor and resident to determine the issue. The program trains mentors, teachers, and residents on professionalism and encourages them to engage in difficult conversations when needed. If necessary, field directors and other BTR staff can mediate. Most situations are resolved in this manner. If the issue is that the mentor and resident are not a good match, the program will work with the principal, human resources, and the superintendent to find a new mentor and placement. Program staff largely take ownership over the process when concerns are identified with a resident.

The program also develops a support plan to help candidates who are struggling to meet milestones. When there are concerns a resident or teacher of record is not meeting milestones in critical areas such as classroom management, BTR develops a support plan, which can escalate to a probation plan if needed. Program staff coach the resident or teacher of record, counsel them about the program, and work with the principal and school to address concerns. Support plans also include increased observations, both formal and informal, and weekly documentation from the mentor. If the candidate is a teacher of record, the program works directly with the principal in this process. If the resident or teacher of record does not make desired progress after receiving these additional supports, he or she may be counseled out of the program. In these situations, the program works closely with the school to identify what is best for the students regarding an exit schedule. Residents and teachers of record are also given an opportunity to say goodbye to students.

The structures for addressing concerns with residents are more robust than with teachers of record. Teachers of record are employees of the district and school, and the program may provide feedback about the teacher of record, but it will not have ultimate control over the outcome. Program staff may counsel a teacher out of the program, but it is up to the district and school whether that teacher remains in the classroom.

Principals also expressed a responsibility to observe in the classroom and provide teachers of record with regular feedback about their performance. One principal indicated teachers would be notified in writing by mid-year if there were any concerns. Another noted:

“If I’m going to have the program in this building, then it’s not about just Boettcher. It’s about our collaboration together to help these teachers be successful. So it’s a responsibility on me as well.” –Celeste Sultze, Principal

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

Principals noted several strengths to BTR’s model and placement process, including the full-year commitment required of residents, the positive relationship BTR establishes with all parties involved in placement, and the program’s knowledge of candidates and thoughtful matching process. Multiple principals highlighted the long-term commitment required of BTR residents, noting that it is a much longer commitment than is required in traditional student teaching models. Principals felt this process prepared the residents for the environment, often rural, in which they would teach, and increased residents’ commitment. They also reported that BTR candidates were better prepared than many candidates who had completed four-year university programs. Principals also liked that residents are usually allowed input regarding whether they feel the placement will be a good fit, and that the program is often able to facilitate a successful placement process because they know the candidates well and are very intentional about how they match them with mentor teachers. One principal expressed great trust in program staff to select appropriate candidates and ensure a good fit:

“They’re so intentional and they really wanted this to be a great fit for every candidate and for every teacher.” –Celeste Sultze, Principal

Principals noted additional benefits to partnering with BTR. Some felt their instructional leadership skills had expanded as a result of their work with the program. They also felt the program brought staff development, knowledge, and expertise to the broader school community.

A further strength according to key informants is that many residents and teachers of record will stay beyond their tenure with the program and will stay in the field of teaching. Principals asserted that the candidates will stay because they are a good fit and they feel valued. Some have grown up in the community, and others are becoming increasingly attached to the communities in which they teach. A field director noted of one resident:

“As the year progressed, as she got more and more ingrained into the community, more and more ingrained within the school culture, she is – I mean it’s hard to express...how much she actually moved on with this school, in this place, in this community and how much she wants to be a part of it.” –Jeb Holt, BTR Field Director

Despite confidence in the program to provide committed teachers, some noted that it can be difficult to predict whether candidates will stay. Oftentimes, personal circumstances, such as financial need and marriage, impact decisions about where to live, whether to remain in the program, and whether to continue in the teaching profession.

Key informants indicated that the partnership with BTR is beneficial. Principals discussed appreciating that the program continues to grow and learn. They also expressed that placing residents and teachers of record in their schools promotes high expectations and that staff are stronger because of the collaboration. They also discussed that the residency model is superior to a non-residency model. Furthermore, in addition to the professional development and mentor training provided directly by BTR, teachers placed through the program have provided professional development to other teachers by sharing what they learned through the program. Principals reported other teachers had become more reflective on their practice as a result of BTR's presence.

Finally, the partnership has benefitted students. One principal indicated that data and test scores were all moving in a positive direction. Having a resident placed in the classroom with the mentor teacher also means that students are exposed to different teaching styles and expectations, and students learn to become more adaptable. The students also have two adults in the room for the entire year, which results in more one-on-one attention and an improved student/teacher ratio for subjects like reading. According to one key informant:

“Students are able to have the benefits of instruction from two teachers for the entire year. This lends to more small-group intervention, and individual attention.” – Christy McBee, Principal

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

Principals noted few challenges to the placement process and model. In most cases, challenges were not mentioned in more than one interview, but two themes that multiple principals reported were:

- A lack of financial support from the program to residents placed in classrooms with mentor teachers. This is particularly difficult when districts are not able to pay a stipend.
- The difficulty in balancing program requirements with full-time placement in a classroom. Residents and teachers of record are working full-time, attending graduate school and professional development events, and trying to balance family and other personal commitments.

Additional challenges discussed by individual interviewees included:

- A lack of communication with the principal if a placement is not working,
- The impact Friday seminars have on attendance for teachers of record who must be absent from the classroom during those periods, and
- The lack of experience some candidates have had with teaching, which has led to some candidates feeling unprepared for classroom challenges.

For teachers of record who were required to be absent from the classroom on Fridays, some districts could not provide additional professional development time to support these absences, and at least one teacher was required to use paid leave. As reported earlier, BTR is taking steps to address these concerns.

REVISITING RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, PLACEMENT AND SUPPORT BASED ON LESSONS LEARNED

In the interviews, based on lessons learned, key informants suggested various ways in which residents and teachers of record can be further supported and the program can be strengthened.

Promoting residents' hiring and employment beyond the first year. BTR is working to expand residents' employment after the first year in the program by "creating a buzz" about the residents to principals and districts. This has not been needed in the program's urban partnerships, but the program has realized this strategy is necessary with the expansion into rural districts. The program also is working to expand the network of partner districts and adjust the program's service agreements to provide more opportunities for placement, particularly for those candidates who may have been attending Adams State University and would like to return to their home communities after graduation. The program also is working to formalize communication structures to learn what districts are looking for and to build those factors into the program as a way to support employment.

Providing residents financial supports. Principals suggested a few ways in which more financial compensation could be provided to residents and teachers of record, including the payment of incentives or bonuses to keep them in the program, increasing the pay offered to rural teachers, increasing the pay to math and science teachers, and the payment of a stipend to all candidates placed as residents.

Helping residents and teachers of record find balance between teaching and program requirements.

Program and field staff emphasized the importance of honoring candidates' experiences and struggles the first year in the classroom. Staff can better acknowledge that teaching in general is difficult and that the first year in the classroom is especially difficult for a resident:

"I still feel that if we can support the residents in that first-year, acknowledge it, name it, develop a strategy on how to deal with it, also place them with mentors who are good at handling the stresses of the job... it speaks volumes." –Jeb Holt, BTR Field Director

Principals, program and field staff identified additional ways to help residents and teachers of record find balance, including:

- "Not giving them a million different assignments that first year,"
- More support from the districts,
- Space to decompress and to talk with peers about successes and challenges,
- Regular communication to ensure that when issues arise mentors and residents feel comfortable seeking support,
- Prioritizing the need for teachers to build relationships with their students first,
- Soliciting feedback about seminars and trainings, and making changes based on feedback,
- Increasing the network of PEBC-trained educators so new residents and teachers of record have more support when placed, and
- Post-residency support in the second year of the program to ensure needs are met.

BTR also continues to explore how it can improve the mentor/resident matching process and how it can improve the way it prepares candidates for the classroom. One step the program is taking is to adjust the recruitment interview process to ensure candidates are better informed about the teaching profession and the challenges that may arise. For example, program staff are working to expand the questions and scenarios they use to better replicate what candidates will experience in the field. As noted earlier, BTR is also seeking to expand district placement agreements so there are more options for residents. As part of this process they are working to create training sites across the state, such as in Durango.

Additionally, from lessons learned, key informants indicated:

- There could be additional opportunities for residents to meet and observe potential mentor teachers to determine mentor/resident fit. However, it should be noted that this can be challenging because candidates may work full-time, live out of state, and/or mentor teachers may be unavailable during the summer months when candidates complete the summer institute.
- The program could conduct exit interviews with mentors, principals, and residents when a resident is removed from the classroom. This would provide the opportunity to learn more about the collaboration, as well as successes and challenges.
- One field staff noted principals, superintendents, and human resource directors in the region are thinking through future needs differently and are attempting to place residents strategically to fill those needs. For example, one district used the partnership as an opportunity to train a resident as an English teacher to fill a position they knew would be open in the next year. Another district with high turnover at mid-year is using the BTR program to recruit from within, and train residents from the community who will stay in their positions after the residency year.
- The partnership has also allowed the Adams State University Teacher Education Program to strengthen relationships and enhance the way they support teacher candidates. The three field directors initially observed residents together and compared their assessments to ensure they were consistent in how they evaluate before conducting independent observations more generally with those placed through the program, and they have monthly meetings to review resident observation data and make adjustments as needed.

TFA-Colorado – Key Findings

Below, we describe themes generated from key informant interviews with the institute of higher education partner, three TFA Teacher and Leadership Development staff, and four principals in partner schools. Based on the information gathered during the interviews, we describe 1) principals' perceptions of the partnership and placement of TFA corps members; 2) program, district and school supports provided to residents and teachers of record placed through the program; 3) strategies used to retain teachers, including retention challenges and strategies used when teachers are struggling; 4) perceptions of program strengths and challenges; and 5) lessons learned to help strengthen the program.

PARTNERING WITH TFA AND CORPS MEMBER PLACEMENT

Although the initial partnership with Teach For America-Colorado (TFA) is district-led, principals indicated that they ultimately choose to hire TFA corps members for two key reasons.

First, partnering with TFA has allowed principals to hire high-quality teachers for positions that would otherwise remain unfilled. For example, TFA is able to provide candidates who are “native-language speakers” to teach in rooms in which there are a large number of English Language Acquisition (ELA) students. Principals across districts noted the dearth of good bilingual candidates, and appreciated that TFA can help address this need.

Second, principals are looking for candidates to meet certain qualifications, and TFA candidates frequently meet those needs. Principals report they want someone who is:

- Motivated and driven: Principals look for someone who is hardworking, has a high level of commitment, and is willing to “put in 110%.”
- Aligned with the school’s mission and culture: Principals desire candidates who share the vision of the school and want to help. According to principal Kyle Gamba: “I would say first and foremost, are they going to fit culturally in the building? Are they philosophically aligned? Do they hold the same values that we do around what we’re trying to do here at the school? We have a mission or a vision – this idea of creating better world citizens and we focus a lot on character.”

Principals also look for candidates who are experienced, collaborative, willing to be coached, have a “heart” for teaching and children, and have strong content knowledge.

When asked how they determine if a placement has been successful, principals complete evaluations with TFA corps members in the same manner as other teachers, and look for the same indicators of success. Most principals consider the following:

- Available data: Principals look at achievement results, school benchmarks, and other outcomes to determine if a teacher is successful.
- Classroom management: Principals want to see that corps members can manage their classrooms and have established a positive classroom environment.
- Professional growth: Principals look for growth in professional practice and strong relationships with students after the first year. As Kyle Gamba notes: “...if after the first year I’ve seen some positive growth and really strong relationships with kids and a general growth mindset and desire to do better, to me that candidate was successful in year one and would be invited back for year two.”

Principals also wish to see teachers take on leadership in the building, a commitment to stay beyond the two-year program requirement, and embodiment of the schools’ vision and mission.

SUPPORTS TO CORPS MEMBERS

There are a variety of supports available to corps members, through the program. Districts and schools in which corps members teach also provide supports. Many of these supports are designed to address the common needs of first-year, and even second-year, teachers.

TFA and ASPIRE supports

Prior to entering the classroom, TFA provides a Summer Institute. Once in the classroom, TFA provides several primary supports to corps members. Supports include coaching provided to corps members by TFA Managers

of Teacher Leadership Development (MTLDs), the ASPIRE program, professional development opportunities, emotional support, and content teams or PLCs.

TFA requires a five-week Summer Institute of corps members before the start of the school year. During the Summer Institute, corps members will teach summer school and observe master teachers as they provide instruction. TFA staff report the Summer Institute, specifically the experience teaching summer school, can set expectations for corps members about the demands of teaching. TFA also prepares corps members for district expectations:

“Depending on specific corps member needs, support from Teach For America could be sessions about the district’s expectations and ...how to make their plans, how to do curriculum, how to do assessment, how to plan their objectives...” –Alexandra Snyder, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development, TFA-Colorado

TFA provides MTLD support to corps members. Each corps member is assigned an MTLD. MTLDs each work with about 30 corps members, and provide coaching, classroom observations and feedback between one and five times a month. In addition, MTLDs offer emotional support, collaborate with building administrators around corps member support, and field requests for additional support from corps members.

As TFA’s higher education partner, ASPIRE works with first-year corps members on licensure requirements. Each corps member is assigned an Alternative Licensing Instructor (ALI), who supports the corps member with weekly online modules and provides feedback. ALIs also coordinate with TFA staff when specific needs have been identified for a corps member and ALIs can provide additional coaching when needed. ASPIRE also offers PLCs to corps members. The first of these is a four-week session after the Summer Institute. The other is coordinated with TFA professional development offerings.

TFA offers professional development to corps members both in-person and on-line. TFA conducts two all-day professional development events for the entire corps during the year. Topics include sessions on specific content areas, improving student communication, collecting better data, and incorporating teachers’ vision into the classroom. The Beyond 2 initiative, to encourage corps members to stay in their positions beyond the two-year commitment, is also part of these events. TFA frequently invites guest speakers to these events, such as the Mayor. Additionally, TFA offers on-line professional development modules once a month. Early sessions focus on what corps members need at the start of the year, such as classroom management strategies, and later sessions are based on input from corps members as the year progresses.

TFA also provides emotional support to corps members. Key informants reported the importance of TFA support staff to be available by phone, text, and e-mail to corps members to provide timely help when needed. TFA field staff also reported recruiting fellow corps members to help support someone who may need more help.

PLCs in the form of content teams, grade-level teams, “affinity groups,” and community groups are supports provided by TFA. Corps members have the opportunity to improve content knowledge and practice through meetings with content and grade-level teams. Corps members also are given the opportunity to participate in what one field staff called “affinity groups” and community groups. These groups offer an opportunity for corps members from similar backgrounds and/or who are placed in the same community to discuss how to

bring community and identity into the classroom, and how race and socio-economic status can inform teaching.

Individual key informants also mentioned other supports:

- Leadership opportunities for corps members to “practice and refine how to better their future practice in the classrooms,”
- Support around data collection, lesson planning, and classroom management,
- Connecting corps members with alumni, and
- A mentor through the program to talk about topics such as relationship building and curriculum.

District and School Supports

In addition to supports provided through TFA, districts and schools where corps members teach also provide supports. Key informants indicated that supports offered by the district do not differ for TFA corps members from what other teachers in the district receive. Two key informants noted, however, that when a corps member is struggling, the district can contact TFA to provide extra support, which is not available to other teachers. TFA staff also report that district and school supports can vary widely. As one field staff noted:

“We have some schools that have a teacher effectiveness coach, peer observers are really active and that's a decent amount of coaching in any given week. And we have some schools where they are seen by their administration mainly for formal observations” –Ellen Mary Hickman, Vice President, Teacher Leadership Development, TFA-Colorado.

TFA field staff reported that they try to coordinate support for corps members with schools and districts. Specifically, field staff noted that given different district and school foci and strengths, some professional development and supports are tailored to trends specific to that area or district. For example, field staff reported that many charter schools have a strong focus on data collection and utilization. For these corps members, TFA will provide support that goes beyond basic data collection, and may focus on how to analyze and use data more effectively. Other corps members may be placed in schools where they are rarely in contact with or evaluated by the principal. In this situation, field staff may visit the corps member more frequently to conduct observations and provide feedback.

District supports mentioned by key informants include:

- The provision of **mentor teachers** to new corps members. Districts are required to provide induction support to all new teachers.¹¹
- A **district Summer Institute** for new teachers in which corps members teach summer school and participate in professional development provided by instruction coordinators.
- **Professional development opportunities**, including district specific trainings. For example, a field staff member reported that Denver Public Schools provides trainings on community engagement and restorative justice. The Colorado Springs area also has training unique to the community and district.

¹¹ <https://www.cde.state.co.us/educatoreffectiveness/induction>

Corps members also receive a number of supports through their schools, including more professional development opportunities, weekly coaching with observation and feedback, mentoring, and PLCs. One principal noted:

“We support them the way that we support any first-year teacher at our building. They’re coached weekly. There’s a new teacher professional learning community and then there’s lots of observations and feedback.” –Sara Gips, Principal

Schools provide professional development opportunities, and corps members are invited and expected to participate in all of them. These often involve trainings on building initiatives, unified improvement plans, and school-designed trainings on topics such as data-driven instruction, and relationship building.

Schools also provide weekly coaching, observation, and feedback. Two principals reported that a principal, assistant principal, or another designated support staff meets with new teachers weekly from the start of the school year. Some schools have teacher effectiveness coaches and peer observers.

Additionally, new teachers are assigned a mentor through the district. The mentor’s role is to assist the new teacher in learning the logistics of daily work, such as where to make copies and how to log into the different school and district systems. These mentors also help meet requirements placed on districts to provide induction support to new teachers.

Schools also offer PLCs with grade-level and content teams. For one school, the principal reported that grade-level, content, and English as a Second Language (ESL) teams meet daily. Another school has early release one day a week to facilitate these PLCs.

Key informants also reported that schools sometimes provide new teachers with stipends for classroom supplies.

STRATEGIES TO RETAIN CORPS MEMBERS IN THE FIRST YEAR

Providing corps members with adequate supports in the first year is critical to ensuring their success in the classroom and program. These supports include integrating corps members into the school community, providing emotional support and MTLTD support, and ensuring strong communication and partnerships.

The importance of integrating corps members into the school community, and ensuring that they feel valued, was cited most frequently by interviewees as a key strategy. Principal Kyle Gamba, of Denver Public Schools, noted: “At the end of the day the school is really responsible for the environment that the teacher would want to come back to.” Others highlighted the need to let corps members know when they are successful, to allow them to share opinions and expertise, and to let corps members know that the school needs them.

TFA MTLTDs and other members of the corps member support team meet at key times of year to review concerns. One MTLTD noted that long breaks, such as winter or spring break, are when they may lose a corps member. To avoid this, those who provide support to corps members meet prior to such breaks to review corps members who are a retention concern, and to devise strategies to strengthen relationships and ensure that corps members feels valued by the schools.

Key informants discussed a few other strategies utilized by TFA and the schools:

- TFA gathers feedback from corps members three times a year through surveys.
- TFA and schools provide time for teachers to talk and troubleshoot together to build community.
- TFA communicates with principals about the strengths of corps members, and highlights what corps members bring to the school. A TFA staff member reported that they encourage principals to discuss with corps members the possibility of staying at the school and what opportunities will be available to them in the future.
- TFA established a mentoring program in one of its regions to match new corps members with more experienced corps members with similar backgrounds or placement communities.

BEYOND THE FIRST YEAR

TFA sets specific retention goals each year. They also are engaging in a Teach Beyond 2 initiative to encourage corps members to stay in the classroom beyond the program agreement. This initiative was a focus at one of TFA's professional development events in the past year.

TFA staff and some principals reported feeling confident that most corps members will stay in their schools or districts, and in the field of teaching, beyond their tenures with the program. Key informants cited a few reasons they believe this to be the case. First, according to key informants, TFA corps members stay because they are social-justice oriented, have a commitment to education, and want to be part of the program's mission. Two principals noted that corps members have a love for teaching, and "they have a love for their students and for their community." Others indicated that the high-achieving, hard-working nature of corps members motivates them to stay in the profession so they can further improve their practice.

Second, key informants reported corps members stay because they feel valued by their schools. As Mark Somanader, a Manager of Teacher Leadership Development for TFA-Colorado, noted, "I think a lot of it comes from feeling valued by the school, feeling aligned with the mission, feeling that they are accomplishing something important." Key informants indicated that taking steps to ensure TFA corps members are part of the community and integrating them into the staff as they would any other teacher is important.

Other key informants reported less confidence that corps members will stay in their placements. One noted that there are several factors that can influence retention, and there is not one root cause to address. Another reported that although people would stay in the teaching profession for 30-40 years in past generations, this is no longer the case. Finally, one key informant expressed doubt that the corps member currently placed in the school would continue teaching in his or her position. This doubt was largely based on previous experience with corps members who did not stay very long at the school.

CHALLENGES WITH RETENTION

Despite the supports TFA, districts, and schools provide to new corps members, a small number do not remain in the program to complete their two-year service agreement. For this evaluation, only three of 69 candidates (6.8%) did not remain in the program after the first year. Key informants cited a few challenges in this area, including corps members becoming overwhelmed and 'burned out', challenges with relocation, corps

members' realization that teaching is not a good fit or that they would prefer another career path, or challenges with the placement.

The first few years of teaching are difficult, and corps members are also working full-time on licensure, which can lead to feeling overwhelmed and overworked. Key informants discussed that corps members can feel pulled in 'too many directions' and may struggle to foster their own well-being as they navigate teaching requirements. Additionally, as new teachers, corps members may not be prepared for the demands of teaching. Key informants also noted that teachers who are not part of TFA can also experience these challenges.

Many corps members relocated geographically to be a part of the program and may not choose to stay in Colorado. Key informants reported that some corps members have moved a great distance and are uncomfortable in their new environments, others feel homesick, and still others feel like they do not have an adequate support network. For some principals, the prospect of losing corps members after two years is not something that will work for the school. One principal reported she discusses this issue with candidates at the start:

“You have to just be honest. And that’s why I had that talk with candidates. If you know you’re just moving to Colorado for two years and then you’re going back to California, going back to the East Coast, going back home, than that’s just not what our school needs. I think that now I’ve gotten better at screening for that.” –Sara Gips, Principal

Another principal noted, however, that she believes it is a misperception that when corps members leave the corps, they also leave teaching. She reported that the corps members she has worked with in the past who have left the school are still either in teaching or in education.

Corps members may also leave because they realize that teaching is not the right career path for them. Key informants indicated that some corps members realize they are not a good fit for teaching, while others do not think they will earn enough financially in the profession. For these reasons, corps members may not stay beyond their two-year commitment.

Corps members may also experience challenges in their placements, which affects retention. Key informants reported that some corps members may be placed in schools with ideologies that do not align with corps member expectations. This may happen, in particular, with placements in charter schools where the approach to teaching may be different than the corps members' training. For other corps members there may be issues with teaching grade levels or subject matters that do not match their strengths. One principal provided the example of a corps member who was brought in to teach kindergarten, but who was much better suited to teach fifth grade.

Key informants reported a few other challenges, although these were not mentioned more than once:

- Difficulty retaining corps members in Colorado Springs/Harrison because candidates might prefer Denver, which is a bigger market and can offer more opportunities.
- Corps members may not let TFA or ASPIRE know they are struggling until they have already quit.

- Corps members may have unrealistic expectations about the amount of support the program can provide in the classroom.
- On rare occasions in the past, a corps member was already licensed and wanted to opt out of the ASPIRE requirements. TFA has now revised its policy so that ASPIRE is no longer a required component for previously licensed teachers.

SUPPORTING CORPS MEMBERS WHO ARE STRUGGLING

When TFA identifies that a corps member is struggling, there are specific strategies they will implement. TFA's initial approach to supporting a corps member will differ based on the situation.

If a corps member does not feel aligned with the school's mission or vision but is a good teacher, TFA staff reported two different approaches to address the situation. One is to work with the corps member to identify how he or she can make changes at the school that will benefit the students, and to try to identify ways the corps member can bring his or her values into the classroom. The other is to work with the corps member to find them a better placement.

“We try to find out the values of the teacher and how they can bring this to their classroom. We honestly believe that every content area has something for every teacher's values.” –Mark Somanader, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development, TFA-Colorado

If the corps member is struggling with content, TFA will work with school and building leaders to support him or her. In particular, TFA will provide the corps member with content support from TFA's content support team. In addition, other corps members teaching in the same content area will provide coaching and help with best practices. TFA sometimes will enlist other corps members to offer more general support to a struggling corps member, and work with ASPIRE to adjust deadlines and expectations.

If the corps member is struggling broadly or is not a good fit for the program, TFA will coach the corps member to think about whether teaching is the right profession for him or her. In these situations, TFA encourages a corps member to stay until the end of the year to minimize the impact on students, and assists the corps member with the transition out of the program.

Additionally, TFA has a specific process for addressing concerns. TFA MTLDs check in with corps members regularly, and when they identify a retention risk they will set up a meeting to identify the concerns. TFA then develops an action plan. In the first year of the program, when corps members are completing the ASPIRE licensing requirements, TFA may enlist ASPIRE to provide additional support. TFA also will work with the school to address concerns (pedagogical, personal, emotional or otherwise). TFA staff will identify strategic goals to help the corps member meet expectations, and include deadlines in the plan. According to Ellen Mary Hickman, Vice President, Teacher Leadership Development for TFA-Colorado, this “may include more observation and feedback, time for planning, more lessons with them, getting them access to additional resources ... having them observe other classrooms with their MTLD for them to get additional insight.”

When ASPIRE becomes involved with retention concerns, the ALI will work closely with the MTLD to coordinate support. ASPIRE also employs a few different strategies to address concerns. If the corps member is feeling overwhelmed, the program can provide free extensions on coursework requirements and prioritize what is assigned to the corps member to address what will be most currently useful. If the concern is a performance issue, ASPIRE can adjust the scope and sequence of the modules to prioritize those that are most pertinent to the needs. One key informant noted that most of the time, concerns with first-year corps members are around classroom management, and how they are working with students.

A few key informants noted that retention is a broader issue than just TFA and that districts overall struggle to retain first-year teachers. Retaining first-year teachers in historically underserved schools is challenging. Principals report challenges retaining new teachers in general, and when new teachers leave, it often negatively impacts students, other teachers, and the community. However, one principal hoped that despite the challenges, removing a struggling corps member from the classroom communicates to students and staff that the school has high expectations and is proactive in addressing concerns.

PROGRAM STRENGTHS

Principals reported various key strengths of the TFA program.

As mentioned above, TFA prepares high-quality teachers who can be hired for positions that would otherwise remain unfilled. Principals mentioned that TFA candidates frequently are hired for positions that are very difficult to fill through traditional recruitment methods. Corps members fill an important need in historically hard-to-serve schools. In particular, bilingual TFA candidates are able to serve children who are learning English and are thus able to meet an important school community need.

TFA provides ample resources to principals interested in hiring corps members, and principals can easily contact the program if needed. Principals appreciate that TFA corps members are already reference- and background-checked, and that they can contact TFA to discuss candidates, rather than simply picking someone off a list.

TFA recruits corps members with a history of high achievement and strong interpersonal and leadership skills. Candidates were described as smart, energetic, philosophically aligned with the schools in which they are placed, having leadership skills, and being ready to share new ideas. In addition, TFA corps members have strong academic qualifications, which position them well to serve as educators.

Principals report both teachers and students benefit from the partnership with TFA. Principals reported that partnering with TFA has been valuable to their schools, and feel the program has brought them high-quality teachers whose vision aligns with that of the school. Specifically:

- TFA provides strong professional development and tools to corps members.
- The program promotes high expectations from corps members, which carries over into the school. According to one principal, “I would say overall it’s improved the climate tremendously, the work ethic, the determination, the forward momentum that we have.”

The program brings diversity to “a very non-diverse candidate pool.” This is beneficial to students who have the opportunity to connect with a teacher from a similar background.

PROGRAM CHALLENGES

Program challenges noted by principals were that the program needs more preparation and program supports for corps members, the difficulties of balancing multiple demands, and retention concerns.

Corps members struggle to balance competing demands. Key informants discussed how difficult teaching is in the first year. Candidates have the additional challenge of trying to meet the requirements for licensure while fostering their own well-being. Due to these challenges, candidates may feel pulled in various directions and experience burnout as a result.

Some principals reported corps members lack experience, are not adequately prepared for teaching, and may not be as effective as desired in the classroom in the first year. Some principals reported corps members' expectations about the classroom and level of support that they will need may not be realistic, and some suggested that a five-week institute is not sufficient to prepare corps members. Two principals noted they would prefer to hire experienced teachers given the challenges of teaching in high-need schools, and one principal suggested a residency model might be a stronger option. Similarly, one principal suggested that corps members teach in schools with fewer needs for a few years before being placed in Title I schools. A relatively short time to train corps members, coupled with placement in a high-need schools, is a challenge for the program.

Other challenges key informants mentioned relate to retention, both with corps members themselves, and in the schools where corps members teach. Some corps members do not stay beyond the two-year commitment, which is difficult on schools. One principal noted that TFA's selection of corps members with high achievement is both a strength and a challenge because, although they are high quality, many do not stay in their placements. Instead, some candidates move on, and it can take a significant amount of school resources to bring on a new teacher every couple of years. Another principal noted that placing first-year teachers in schools with high turnover and vacancy rates can create stress and be challenging for corps members. This is especially true when corps members do not feel sufficiently supported in a school undergoing significant transitions.

REVISITING RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, AND PLACEMENT BASED ON LESSONS LEARNED

TFA continues to review its strategies and supports, and the program seeks to learn from those corps members it does not retain. Program staff and ASPIRE have identified a few ways in which TFA could modify the way they recruit, prepare, and place corps members. One TFA staff mentioned that it is important for them to think strategically about who they recruit and where they place corps members. This staff member reported that those who enter the program with a "social justice mindset" tend to be happiest. Another TFA staff member indicated that TFA needs to place corps members in schools with which the program has a history of success. Along these lines, a TFA staff member reported that the program has learned more about how to partner with school leadership around the school's vision:

"Also, we learned a lot about... how to better partner with school leadership in order to help propel school leadership's vision for the school and their students, to make sure that our partnership with them is as effective as possible both for the success

of our corps members and the success of the students.” –Alexandra Snyder, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development, TFA-Colorado

TFA’s licensing and higher education partner, ASPIRE, has also modified how they prepare and support teachers to establish more efficient timelines on the initial modules corps members complete before they start the Summer Institute. ASPIRE also has provided extensions on assignments, and a physical space for corps members to work.

Other lessons learned that key informants indicated include:

- Thinking about differences in how to prepare corps members when they have been recruited from the local community or when corps members have very different backgrounds from where they will be teaching.
- Setting realistic expectations for corps members about what teaching will be like.
- Working with TFA candidates to help them understand the mission and goals of the program and the school.

Key informants also identified a few ways that TFA is improving retention.

TFA provides a community-focused induction training to integrate corps members into the community in which they will teach. As Alexandra Snyder, Manager of Teacher Leadership Development for TFA-Colorado, described, “In Colorado Springs, for example, a significant portion of the induction weekend time was spent in community-centric learning spaces.”

TFA has begun utilizing district and school supports more effectively. In the past, TFA viewed corps member support as exclusively the purview of TFA. The program now recognizes that teachers must feel supported at the school:

“So that is one of the steps in our approach to change in the last year, to really thinking about our schools and our partners around us to ensure success for the teachers.” –Ellen Mary Hickman, Vice President, Teacher Leadership Development, TFA-Colorado

The program is also going to conduct an inventory of the supports corps members receive to identify gaps, and then tailor coaching and feedback around these gaps.

Key ingredients to a successful collaboration

Principals interviewed for both programs highlighted a few key ingredients for a successful collaboration among schools, districts, and teacher placement programs. These factors echo feedback provided by program and district representatives in year 1 of the evaluation, and include good communication and responsiveness, good fit, and trust in the partnership. Additional ingredients to successful collaboration mentioned by principals include consistency in support to candidates, financial compensation or incentives, and a proven track record for providing effective teachers.

Principals expressed that partnerships with **BTR** could be further strengthened in the future through a few modifications.

- One principal suggested that the program should schedule resident teachers' ASU Masters' classes so that residents are not "spread so thin."
- Another suggested it would be beneficial to gear professional development opportunities more toward first year teachers, and prioritize topics such as classroom management and engagement, and best practices in basic instruction.
- One principal indicated that the program will need to think "outside the box" to continue attracting high-quality teachers to rural areas.

Regarding **TFA**, principals suggested that the partnership could be strengthened in the future in a few ways.

- One principal would like to see corps members integrated into the community. Additionally, the principal suggested there could be a local training site for the Summer Institute in Denver so that corps members can get to the know the school, curriculum, and community before the school year.
- Another principal suggested that TFA could recruit more corps members from local communities or from nearby communities, so the teacher will have a support network in place.
- One principal would like to see TFA provide more opportunities for principals and corps members to conduct in-person interviews and meetings before placing teachers. The principal felt this might help avoid placement challenges.
- Finally, one principal would like more information about program evaluation criteria to ensure that school and TFA evaluation systems align.

SECTION 3: PROGRAM PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS AND SATISFACTION

OMNI developed and administered a participant survey to gather information directly from teachers and residents placed in high-need school districts through the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. To promote honest responses, the survey was administered anonymously (i.e., no identifying information was requested). Participants were invited to complete the survey in May 2015. Items were developed to capture the following types of information:

- Participant characteristics
- Participant satisfaction with the recruitment and placement process
- Participant perceptions of program, school, and district supports
- Participant overall satisfaction with the placement and the program
- Participant plans to continue to teach in a high-need school or district

The survey contained a mix of items with closed- and open-ended responses. For the most part, survey items were identical across programs; however, one item was added for the BTR program to capture whether the candidate was placed as a resident or teacher of record. Below, we present findings from the participant survey for BTR, and then for TFA. Appendix C provides summary tables for most survey items by program.

BTR Resident/Teacher of Record Survey Results

The survey link was sent to 54 BTR¹² participants placed through the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. In all, 42 individuals (77.8%) consented and completed the survey – 36 residents and six teachers of record.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

BTR respondents completed items on background and demographic characteristics. This information is summarized below.

- 61.9 % were female
- 69.0% identified as White; 16.7% indicated Hispanic ethnicity
- All respondents were pursuing an advanced degree, a BTR program requirement, and four had already obtained a Master’s degree
- In the year prior to joining BTR,
 - 31% graduated from college with a bachelor’s degree
 - 40% were working in an educational setting
 - 29% were working in a career other than education
- Most (76.2%) did not relocate to be a part of the program (11.9% relocated from out-of-state and 11.9% relocated to another community within Colorado)
- Respondents were informed about BTR’s program through a variety of methods
 - 26.2% through a friend, family member or other personal relationship
 - 19.0% internet search
 - 16.7% on campus
 - 14.3% current or previous BTR teacher
 - 9.5% school/district representative

Respondents also were asked why they decided to become a teacher. Some reported that they were drawn to teaching and that is was ‘in their nature’; several reported the love of working with children and serving as a mentor; and many mentioned the influence of previous job experiences or past teachers. In addition, several indicated the desire to make a difference in others’ lives and to make a positive impact in the community.

“...I saw what an impact education can make on every child’s life, regardless of race or income. Education was power and I wanted to be a part of that” –BTR candidate

¹² Questions in the survey referred to the program as PEBC, rather than BTR.

PARTICIPANT PLACEMENTS

BTR survey respondents also provided information on their 2014-15 placements, described below.

- 50% taught in a rural community; 50% taught in an urban/suburban community
- Just over half (52.3%) taught elementary school-aged children
- 88.1% were teaching in their area of endorsement
- 73.8% were teaching in a school in which at least one other BTR participant was placed
- Teachers taught a variety of subjects (see Appendix C for a complete list of subjects taught)

SATISFACTION WITH RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, AND PLACEMENT

Participants were asked how well they thought the program prepared them to be successful teachers. Overall, 81.0% of BTR survey respondents reported that the program prepared them extremely or very well to be a successful teacher (see Table 3.1)

Table 3.1. BTR Participant Perceptions of Teaching Preparedness

How well do you think PEBC's program prepared you to be a successful teacher prior to starting in your school?		
	n	%
Extremely well	11	26.2
Very well	23	54.8
Moderately well	6	14.3
Slightly well	1	2.4
Not at all well	1	2.4
Total	42	100%

Participants were asked how satisfied they were with the process BTR used to place them in their current schools and districts. As shown in Figure 3.1, on average, survey respondents reported a high level satisfaction with the BTR placement process.

Figure 3.1. BTR Participant Satisfaction with Placement Process

How satisfied are you with the process PEBC used to place you in...



NOTE. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied (n=41)

Participants also responded to open-ended items on what they liked best, and what they found most challenging, about the placement process. Several themes arose from participants' responses.

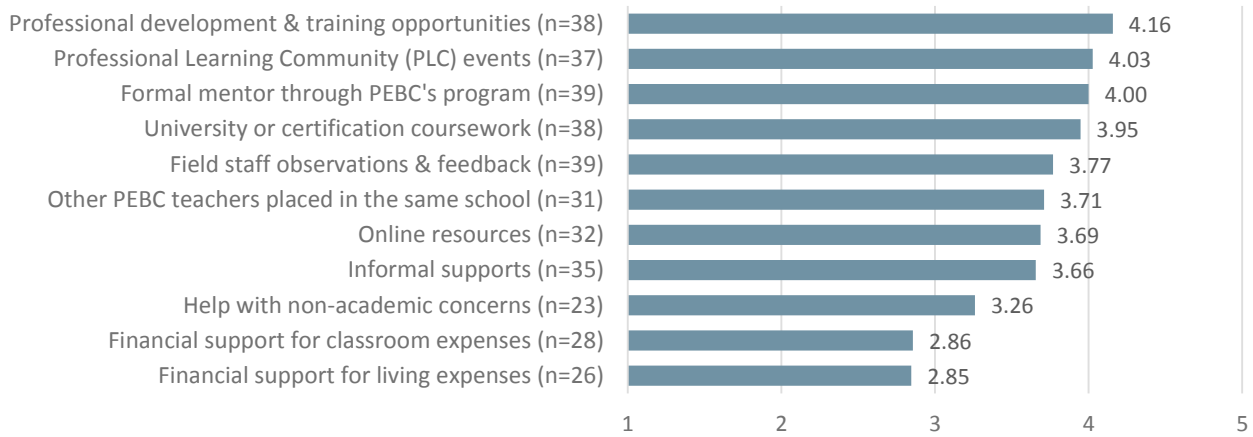
- **Engaging in a thoughtful, deliberate approach to matching residents to mentors is essential.** Participants mentioned the importance of placement efforts that facilitated strong and thoughtful matches between mentors and residents. Participants appreciated that they were able to observe and interview multiple mentors prior to matching, and that both mentor and resident preferences were considered in the matching process. Positive feedback was provided when residents were able to 1) observe and interview several potential mentor candidates; 2) spend adequate time with mentors prior to matching, and 3) provide input on and rate each potential mentor. Several mentioned a very positive and successful matching experience, in particular when the above conditions were met. However, critical feedback was provided when residents felt that 1) they did not have enough time with potential mentors prior to matching, 2) there was limited choice in available mentors, or 3) they were matched with someone who was ‘low on their list’.
- **Choice and flexibility in the matching process is valued.** Participants mentioned that they appreciated having a voice in the final placement. Some participants, teachers of record in particular, mentioned that they appreciated that they were able to choose or advocate for their placements.
- **Geography is an important consideration.** Some residents reported that being far away during the selection and matching phase limited their ability to spend adequate time with potential mentors. For example, one resident indicated that it was challenging and expensive to travel from out of town to meet with mentors. In addition, some final placements were ultimately far from the residents’ homes, which led to significant time commuting to the school each day.
- **More guidance on how to select a mentor and school would be helpful.** Some participants mentioned that they would have liked more information on how to research schools and more information on other factors to consider in decision-making. In particular, additional guidance on what questions to ask mentors during the observation/interview period would be beneficial, especially questions that provide information about mentors’ educational philosophy and approach to collaboration.

PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF BTR, DISTRICT AND SCHOOL SUPPORTS

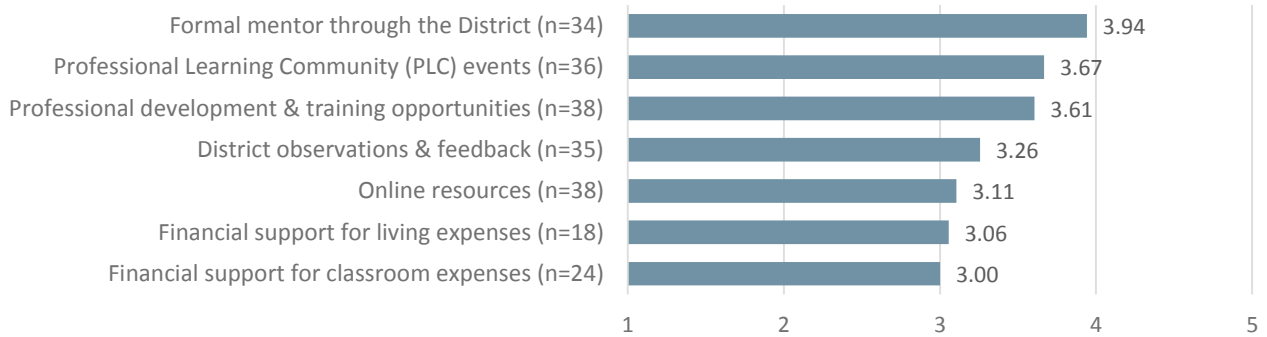
Participants were asked to rate the degree to which they were satisfied with BTR, district, and school supports. Average ratings for different areas of support by source are provided in Figure 3.2. Across all three providers of support (BTR, district, and school), respondents reported the highest satisfaction ratings for support from mentors, professional development and training, and professional learning community (PLC) events. Satisfaction with financial supports was lowest.

Figure 3.2. Participant Satisfaction with BTR, District, and School Supports

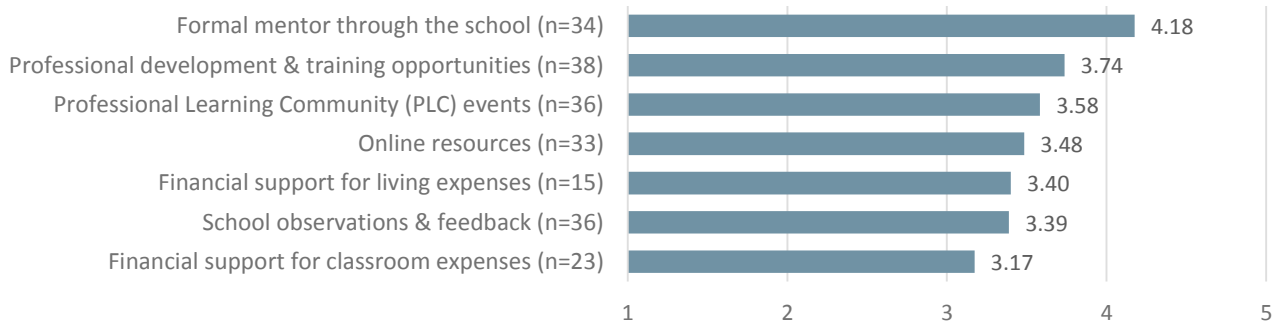
PEBC Participant Satisfaction with BTR Supports



BTR Participant Satisfaction with District Supports



BTR Participant Satisfaction with School Supports



Note. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied

Participants also were asked to identify what additional supports BTR, the district and the school should offer to candidates in the program. Participants identified several areas of support that they would find helpful to improve their experiences. Areas of requested support, as indicated by survey respondents, are described below.

- **Increased financial support.** Some residents indicated that it is difficult to live as a resident with limited income; others requested travel stipends or supported stays in hotels when traveling to classes that are significant distance from their homes; and still others mentioned that substitute pay from districts is appropriate when residents are asked to cover the classroom for significant amounts of time when the mentor teacher is out.
- **An increase in the number of field directors.** A few respondents mentioned that it would be helpful to increase the number of field directors available to the program. More field directors would allow time for more frequent observations/in-class visits to help support residents in developing their teaching skills.
- **More specific training opportunities.** The types of training opportunities that were mentioned varied across respondents. Examples of items stated include the following: more focus on classroom management during the summer institute; more background knowledge on special education; discussion of real-life examples and strategies, rather than having reflection on each practice; more specific information on the hiring process; and more development in STEM. Some also mentioned that mentors would benefit from attending lab visits to support mentor learning and skill development, and that school staff would benefit from training on the BTR model.
- **Other supports.** Other types of supports mentioned include more science mentors; options for health insurance; counseling/mental health support; more appreciation from school/district staff; and better resources such as books and school-issued computers.

PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATOR EVALUATIONS

Participants were asked about their understanding of the educator evaluation systems used by BTR and by the district, and how helpful those evaluations have been to them. In addition, participants were asked how well district and program feedback align. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 provide data on participants' responses.

Table 3.2. Participant Perception of Program and District Evaluations

How well do you understand the evaluation system [PEBC or DISTRICT] uses to evaluate your performance as a teacher?				
	PEBC		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely well	4	10	2	5.1
Very well	21	52.5	14	35.9
Moderately well	14	35.0	11	28.2
Slightly well	0	0.0	5	12.8
Not at all well	0	0.0	0	12.8
Do not know the evaluation/rating system	1	2.5	2	5.1
Total	40	100%	39	100%
Missing	2		3	

How helpful has feedback about your performance from [PEBC or DISTRICT] been to you in your teaching?				
	PEBC		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely helpful	14	35.9	3	7.7
Very helpful	14	35.9	11	28.2
Moderately helpful	7	17.9	9	23.1
Slightly helpful	2	5.1	2	5.1
Not at all helpful	1	5.1	2	5.1
I have not received feedback/ I have not been evaluated yet	1	2.6	12	30.8
Total	39	100%	39	100%
Missing	3		3	

Table 3.3. Participant Perception of Alignment between BTR and District feedback

How well does the feedback provided by the district match with feedback provided to you by PEBC?		
	n	%
Extremely well	7	17.9
Very well	11	28.2
Moderately well	3	7.7
Slightly well	3	7.7
Not at all well	1	2.6
I have not received feedback from both PEBC and my district	6	15.4
I have not been evaluated yet	8	20.5
Total	39	100%
Missing	3	

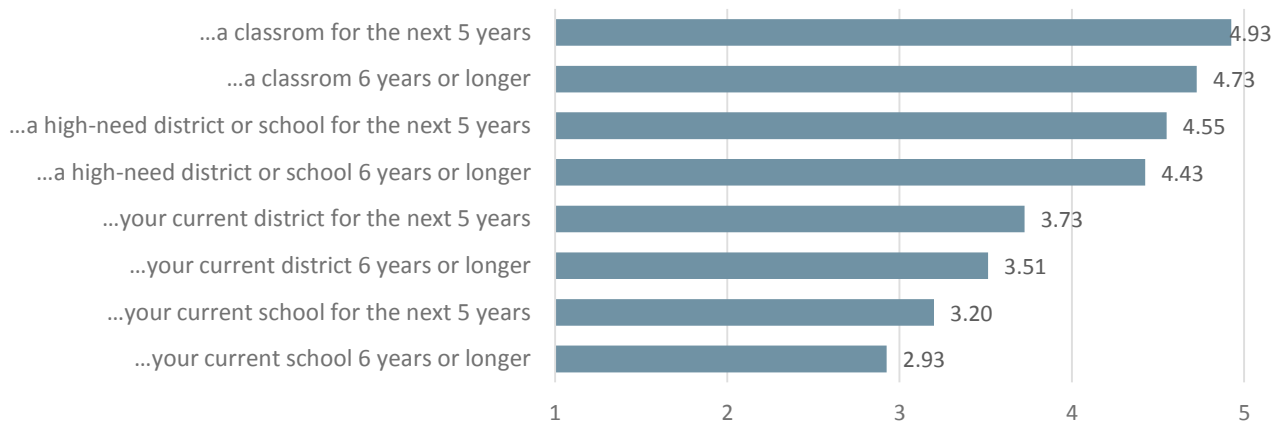
PARTICIPANT RETENTION

When asked about plans to continue teaching in the current school for the 2015-16 academic year, 55.0% indicated that they definitely will and 27.5% indicated that they definitely will not. An additional 12.5% were not sure if they would stay in the current school next year, and 5.0% said they probably will not. It is worth noting that after residents complete the residency year, they must obtain a position as a teacher of record. Often there are no open positions in the school in which the candidate completes the residency year. For this reason, the program does not expect residents to remain in their current schools and they typically apply for open positions in other partner districts and schools.

Participants also were asked how likely they are to continue teaching in a classroom in general, in a high-need school/district, and in their current schools and districts for the next five years or for six years or longer (see Figure 3.3). On average, residents were very likely to see themselves teaching in a classroom in a high-need school or district in the future.

Figure 3.3. BTR Participant Plans to Continue Teaching

How likely are you to continue teaching in...



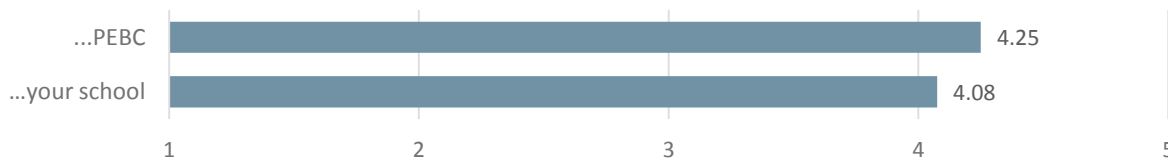
Note. 1=definitely won't, 2=probably won't, 3=might or might not, 4=probably will, 5=definitely will (n=39 or 40)

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Participants were asked to rate overall satisfaction with their schools and with BTR. Most were either extremely (45.0%), very (40.0%), or moderately (12.5%) satisfied with BTR; similarly, most were extremely (45.0%), very (30.0%), or moderately (15.0%) satisfied with the school. Figure 3.4 displays participant average satisfaction with BTR and with the school.

Figure 3.4. BTR Participant Satisfaction with the Program and School

Overall, how satisfied are you in your experience with...



Note. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied (n=40)

Finally, participants were asked to state the one factor that is most important in determining whether they will continue teaching in the current school. Responses were grouped into the following themes:

- **The availability of an open position at the school.** Several residents indicated that they would like to stay in their current school; however, remaining in the school is contingent on whether or not there is an open position for next year.
- **Administrative/staff support at the school.** Several respondents indicated that administrative support at the school is important in determining whether or not they will stay. Residents are looking for schools with strong, supportive administrations that value students and staff.
- **School culture.** Several residents also mentioned school culture as an important factor. Those who see the culture in the school as ‘toxic’ or who feel undervalued are unlikely to want to stay; those who see collaboration and positivity are likely to want to stay.
- **Other.** Other responses included location of the school, autonomy in the classroom, financial considerations, community partnerships, and classroom size.

TFA-Colorado Corps Member Survey Results

The survey link was sent to 118 corps members serving in high-need TFA-partner Colorado districts. The survey was designed to be completed by corps members placed in a partner district in 2014-15 as supported through the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. However, the link was inadvertently sent to corps members placed in partner districts in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 academic years. Thus, some teachers were in the first year of their positions, and others were in their second year. In all, 91 individuals (77.1%) completed the survey.

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

TFA respondents completed items on background and demographic characteristics. This information is summarized below.

- 69.2 % were female
- 68.1% identified as White; 20.9% indicated Hispanic ethnicity
- 14.3% had a Master’s or professional degree, and 36.3% were pursuing an advanced degree.

- In the year prior to joining TFA,
 - 48.9% graduated from college with a bachelor’s degree
 - 18.9% were working in an educational setting
 - 22.2% were working in a career other than education
 - 10.0% indicated ‘other’ situations, including graduating with a Master’s degree or serving in the Peace Corps.
- 71.1% relocated to be a part of the program - 58.9% from out-of-state and 12.2% from another community within Colorado.
- Most (83.5%) stayed in a similar type of community; however, 15.4% changed from a rural to an urban/suburban community
- Respondents were informed about TFA’s program through a variety of methods
 - 30.8% on campus
 - 26.4% through a friend, family member or other personal relationship
 - 19.8% from a current or previous TFA teacher
 - 7.7% internet search
 - 5.5% school/district representative

Respondents also were asked why they decided to become a teacher. Reasons for becoming a teacher included a desire to work with and mentor children; previous job experiences, such as working as a City Year corps member or other education-related volunteer or paid positions; the influence of previous teachers; family influence or history of teaching in the family; and the desire to make a difference, have a meaningful career, and to influence social justice and equal opportunity.

I wanted to ensure that all children, no matter their background, are able to receive a quality education. I wanted to do all that I could to help close the achievement and opportunity gap. –TFA Corps member

PARTICIPANT PLACEMENTS

TFA-Colorado survey respondents also provided information on their current placements, described below.

- Corps members were placed in a variety of school types
 - 36.7% were in an elementary school
 - 20.0% were in a middle school
 - 23.3 were in a high school
 - 14.4% were in a school that combines 6-12 grade levels
- 94.4% were teaching in their area of endorsement
- 83.5% were teaching in a school in which at least one other TFA candidate was placed
- Teachers taught a variety of subjects (see Appendix C for a complete list of subjects taught)

SATISFACTION WITH RECRUITMENT, PREPARATION, AND PLACEMENT

As shown in Table 3.4, survey respondents varied in how well they thought TFA’s program prepared them to be successful teachers prior to starting in their positions. The most frequent response option was moderately well.

Table 3.4. TFA Participant Perceptions of Preparedness

How well do you think TFA’s program prepared you to be a successful teacher prior to starting in your school?		
	n	%
Extremely well	3	3.3
Very well	10	11.1
Moderately well	37	41.1
Slightly well	30	33.3
Not at all well	10	11.1
Total	90	100%
Missing	1	

Participants were asked how satisfied they were with the process TFA used to place them in their current schools and districts. As shown in Figure 3.5, on average, survey respondents reported a moderate level of satisfaction with the process TFA used to place them in schools and districts.

Figure 3.5. TFA Participant Satisfaction with Hiring Process

How satisfied are you with the process TFA used to place you in...



Note. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied (n=89 or 90)

Participants also responded to open-ended items on what they liked best, and what they found most challenging, about the placement process. Several themes arose from participants’ responses.

- Participants were most positive about the process when they had options to choose from and when they had a say in their placement schools/districts.** Participants mentioned that they liked being able to interview with various schools and rank them according to preference. When individual preferences were taken into account, corps members frequently were pleased with the placements. In contrast, many described challenges with the placement process when they felt that their preferences were not considered. In particular, critical feedback was provided when corps members were hired into positions that did not match their desires or expectations (e.g., teaching in a different content area, region, or grade level than one had hoped). TFA’s requirement to accept the first position offered to a corps

member, and within five days, contributed to significant stress during the hiring period. Many indicated that the requirement to accept the first offer created challenges in obtaining the best position for them.

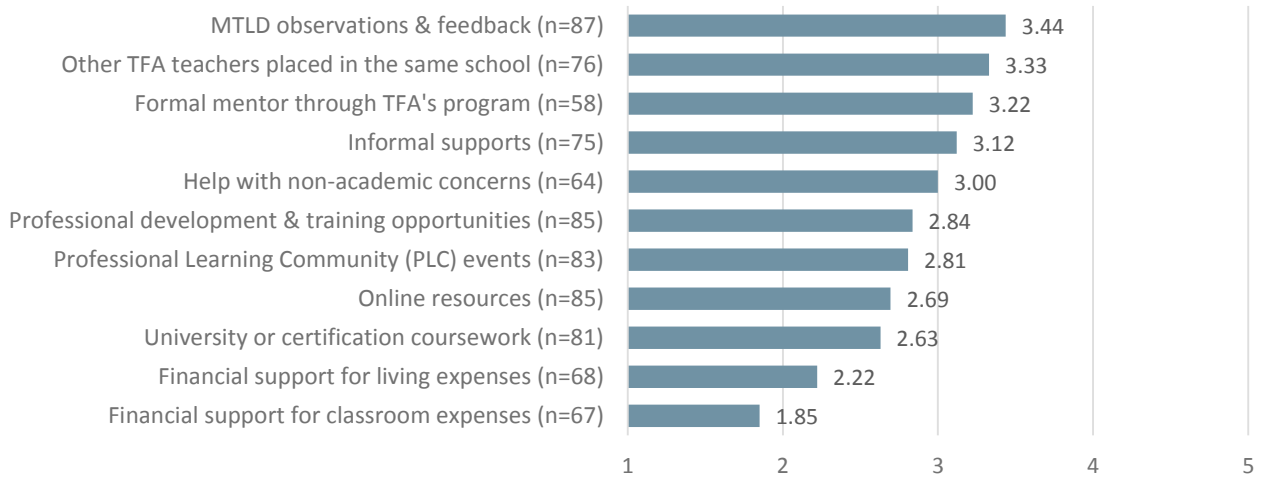
- **Participants appreciated when TFA provided support during the hiring process and helped them to assess 'fit'.** Respondents offered positive feedback when TFA supported them in the application and hiring process. For example, some corps members noted frequent communication and advice from the TFA team to help identify and achieve good positions. Direct support, frequent communication, and guidance during the hiring process were noted as positives. Several liked that TFA's connections and support allowed them to find positions quickly.
- **Participants noted challenges when there was a lack of information about the process and the schools.** For some respondents, there was a sense of confusion about the placement/hiring process. Some felt rushed, which led to anxiety about eventual placements. In addition, corps members expressed frustration when they discovered important information about their schools that was unknown to them before starting the position. Although several corps members noted that they received information about their schools prior to hiring, some mentioned that they would have benefited from more knowledge and information about potential challenges schools were facing such as leadership transitions or high rates of teacher turnover.
- **Hiring fairs and mock interviews were noted as helpful.** Hiring fairs, in particular, were mentioned as a way to get to know schools and reduce the amount of leg-work involved in the process. In addition, one corps member mentioned that the opportunity to meet the principals in Pueblo the night before the interview day was helpful.

PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF TFA, DISTRICT AND SCHOOL SUPPORTS

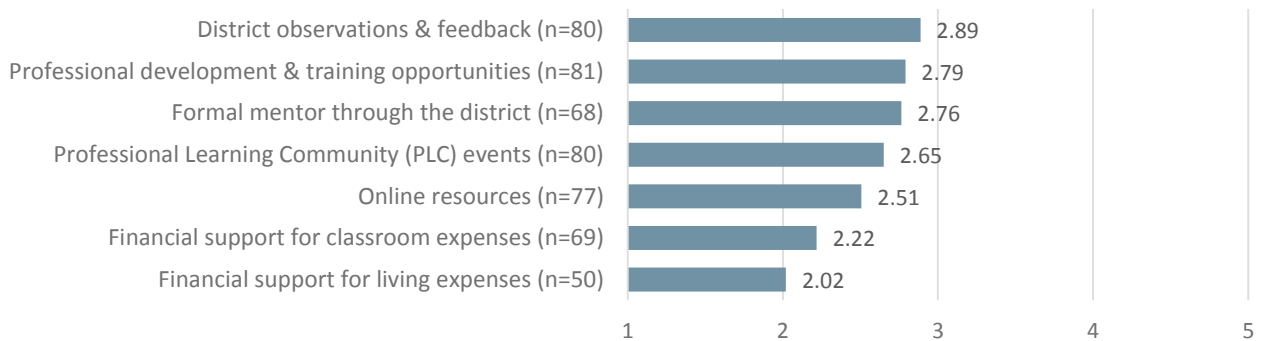
Teachers were asked to rate the degree to which they were satisfied with TFA, district, and school supports. Average ratings for different areas of support by source are provided in Figure 3.6. Overall, respondents reported the highest levels of satisfaction for observations and feedback from Manager of Teacher Leadership and Development (MTLD) staff, other TFA teachers placed in the school, and TFA mentors.

Figure 3.6. TFA Participant Satisfaction with TFA, District, and School Supports.

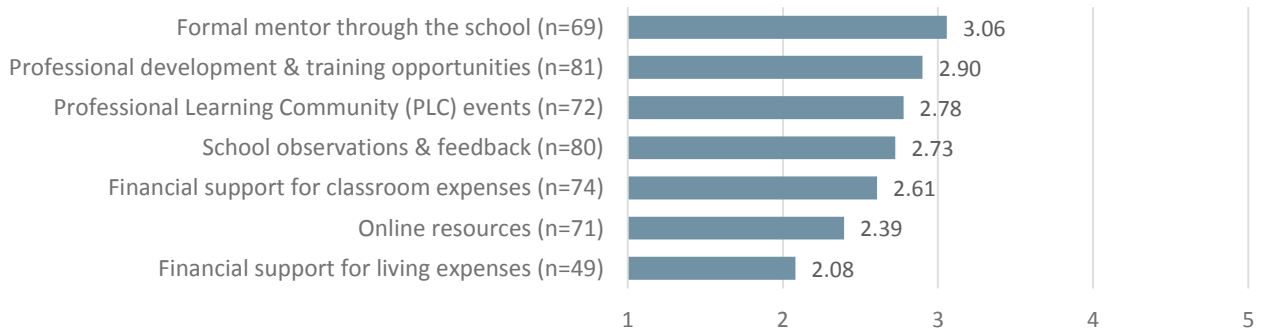
TFA Participant Satisfaction with TFA Supports



TFA Participant Satisfaction with District Supports



TFA Participant Satisfaction with School Supports



Note. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied.
 MTLD = Manager of Teacher Leadership and Development

Participants also were asked to identify what additional supports TFA, the district and the school should offer to corps members. Participants identified several areas of support that they believed would improve their experiences. Areas of requested support, as indicated by survey respondents, are described below.

- **Increased financial support.** Several respondents mentioned that more financial assistance from TFA and/or the district would be helpful. Specifically, in addition to requests for higher pay in general, specific requests for financial reimbursement for certification tests, licensing fees, and relocation expenses were noted. A few corps members also mentioned that more information and planning about gaps in income before receiving their first pay checks would help them to prepare financially for the transition, as well as more honest and up-front information on licensing and certification costs. Program staff noted that financial support is provided to corps members in the form of transitional funding and an interest-free loan to offset the cost of certification.
- **An increase in mentorship, feedback, and coaching opportunities.** Respondents highlighted the value of mentorship and its benefits to new teachers. Some indicated that they did not have mentors, and others indicated that although they had mentors, there was not enough time with them to provide the support needed (noting that ‘advisors were spread too thin’). One-on-one regular coaching from a mentor with experience teaching in a similar content area was underscored as a valuable support. Some noted that more experienced or 2nd year corps members, TFA alumni, or senior teachers can be used as mentors to support incoming corps members during the first year in the classroom. Frequent and effective feedback through regular classroom observations was requested by several corps members. According to one respondent, TFA has heard and is addressing these concerns in Colorado Springs by implementing a mentoring program and assigning mentors to new corps members based on affinity, content, and desired level of support.
- **Additional training and professional development opportunities.** Some respondents provided global responses to the questions on additional supports, simply stating ‘more professional development’ and ‘more training to increase preparedness’. Some mentioned that more school- and content-specific trainings and supports that are tailored to corps members’ individual assignments and school contexts would be beneficial. Others mentioned specific areas in which they would like more professional development opportunities, including curriculum development, special education, hands-on classroom management strategies, and stress management.
- **Increased school support for new teachers.** When asked specifically about school supports, several respondents mentioned a desire for better orientation/onboarding for new teachers at the school, as well as ongoing support for new teachers to help guide them in the first year at the school.
- **Other resources.** Respondents mentioned other supports: classroom supplies, such as more books, use of existing lesson plans, and ‘starter packs’ of classroom materials for students with financial need; relocation support, including assistance in finding affordable housing near one’s school; more planning time; and access to mental health or group supports.

PARTICIPANT PERCEPTIONS OF EDUCATOR EVALUATIONS

Participants were asked about their understanding of the educator evaluation systems used by TFA and by the district, and how helpful those evaluations have been to them. In addition, participants were asked how well district and program feedback align. Tables 3.5 and 3.6 provide data on participants' responses.

Table 3.5. Participant Perception of TFA and District Evaluations

How well do you understand the evaluation system [TFA or DISTRICT] uses to evaluate your performance as a teacher?				
	TFA		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely well	9	11.0	12	14.6
Very well	15	18.3	27	32.9
Moderately well	25	30.5	25	30.5
Slightly well	16	19.5	12	14.6
Not at all well	12	14.6	5	6.1
Do not know the evaluation/rating system	5	6.1	1	1.2
Total	82	100%	82	100%
Missing	9		9	

How helpful has feedback about your performance from [TFA or DISTRICT] been to you in your teaching?				
	TFA		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely helpful	12	14.6	4	4.8
Very helpful	19	23.2	18	21.7
Moderately helpful	27	32.9	31	37.3
Slightly helpful	18	22.0	13	15.7
Not at all helpful	3	3.7	14	16.9
I have not received feedback/ I have not been evaluated yet	3	3.6	3	3.6
Total	82	100%	83	100%
Missing	9		8	

Table 3.6. Participant Perception of Alignment between TFA and District feedback

How well does the feedback provided by the district match with feedback provided to you by TFA?		
	n	%
Extremely well	3	3.6
Very well	8	21.7
Moderately well	31	37.3
Slightly well	16	19.3
Not at all well	10	12.0
I have not received feedback from both TFA and my district	2	2.4
I have not been evaluated yet	3	3.6
Total	83	100%
Missing	8	

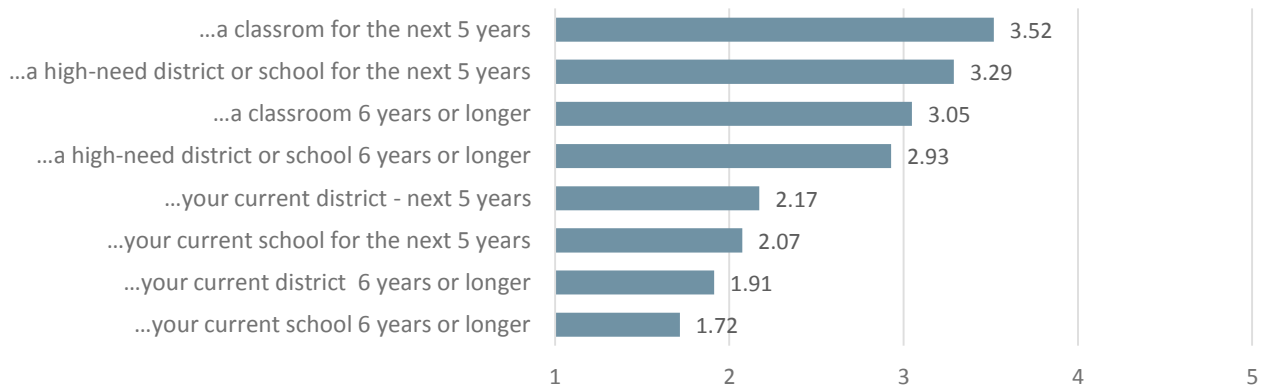
PARTICIPANT RETENTION

When asked about plans to continue teaching in the current school for the 2015-16 academic year, 54.3% indicated that they definitely will and 39.5% indicated that they definitely will not. The number of candidates indicating that they definitely will not teach in the same school next year is likely due, at least in part, to inclusion of corps members in the sample who were placed during the 2013-14 year. Corps members placed in 2013-14 will have completed the two-year commitment at the end of 2014-15.

Participants also were asked how likely they are to continue teaching in a classroom in general, in a high-need school/district, and in their current schools and districts for the next five years, and for six years or longer (see Figure 3.7). On average, participants were most likely to continue teaching in a classroom or high-need district or school for the next five years.

Figure 3.7. TFA Participant Plans to Continue Teaching

How likely are you to continue teaching in...



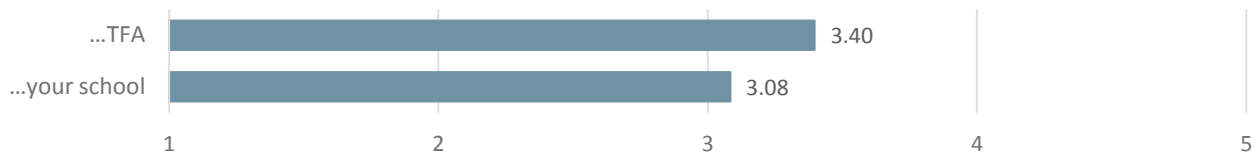
NOTE. 1=definitely won't, 2=probably won't, 3=might or might not, 4=probably will, 5=definitely will (n=81-83)

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Participants were asked to rate overall satisfaction with their schools and with TFA. Most participants were either extremely (12.0%), very (38.6%), or moderately (31.3%) satisfied with TFA; similarly, most were extremely (13.3%), very (31.3%), or moderately (22.9%) satisfied with their schools. Figure 3.8 presents respondents' average satisfaction with TFA and with the school.

Figure 3.8. TFA Participant Satisfaction with the Program and School

Overall, how satisfied are you in your experience with...



Note. 1=not at all satisfied, 2=slightly satisfied, 3=moderately satisfied, 4=very satisfied, 5=extremely satisfied (n=83)

Finally, participants were asked to state the one factor that is most important in determining whether they will continue teaching in the current school. Note that some respondents were placed in 2013-14 and were thus finished with the two-year commitment at the end of 2014-15. Responses were grouped into the following themes.

- **Effective and supportive school administrations.** Several respondents indicated that the quality of the school administration and the support it provides are key factors in determining whether or not they will stay. When corps members feel unsupported and unappreciated by school administration, they are unlikely to stay in the position. Having a voice and feeling valued was mentioned as important in the decision to stay. Strong, supportive relationships are key, as indicated by one corps member who responded that the most important factor in determining continuation in the school was "...support from the SpEd department, I couldn't leave them". In addition, corps members expressed concern when they felt that the school/district was not meeting the needs of its students (e.g., lack of an effective school-wide behavioral plan, limited access to math/reading interventionists, lack of sufficient services for students in special education).
- **School culture.** Several corps members reported school culture as the key factor in the decision to stay in or leave the school. The quality of the school community and a positive teaching environment is important to corps members. Respondents mentioned that they want to ensure that they are working in tandem with the administration to give the students the best education possible. Some felt that the current school culture was not positive; however, some indicated that improvements in school culture will increase the likelihood that they will stay in their positions, as evidenced by one respondent: "...and if the culture of the school changes, I would love to stay longer."
- **Geographic/other life considerations.** Several respondents mentioned location of the school and/or personal situations as the most important considerations for them. For example, some mentioned that they will not stay because they are moving locations for various reasons (e.g., not liking the current location, moving for partner/spouse employment opportunities, moving to be closer to family). Others mentioned family, work-life balance, and career ambitions as the most important considerations.

- **Other.** Other responses included money; planning time; growth opportunities; feeling qualified in the subject/grade placement; and passion for the kids.

SECTION 4: PRELIMINARY DATA ON COHORT 2 RECRUITMENT

In the fall of 2014, programs received supplemental funding to deepen and expand program activities. In particular, programs received funding to recruit and place a second cohort of teachers in high-need school districts. Specifically, TFA received funding to expand work in the three grant-partner districts (Denver, Harrison and Pueblo) to recruit, prepare and place an additional 58 first-year teachers in the 2015-16 academic year (26 in Denver, 16 in Harrison, and 16 in Pueblo). PEBC received funding to recruit, select, and place 65 resident candidates in 27 districts in urban and rural Colorado through its Boettcher Teacher Residency program. Table 4.1 provides information on early recruitment efforts towards placing teachers in fall 2015. As shown in the table, at the end of June, PEBC had placed 64 teachers in partner districts (98.5% of its target), and TFA had placed 80 teachers in partner districts (exceeding its target). Tables 4.2 and 4.3 provide information about the number teachers and residents preliminarily placed in each district.

Table 4.1. Number of Targeted, Recruited, and Placed Teachers as of June 29, 2015

	BTR	TFA- Coloardo	Total
Target Number	65	58	123
Total number recruited	69	101	170
Total number placed	64	80	144
Placed as Teachers of Record	7	80	87
Placed as Residents	57	N/A	57
Total number not yet placed	5	21	26

Table 4.2. Number of New Teachers Placed* in BTR Partner Districts for the 2015-16 Academic Year as of June 29, 2015

District	# placed
Adams 12 Five Star Schools	11
Alamosa School District RE-11J	6
Archuleta School District 50-JT	2
Aurora Public Schools	9
Brighton School District 27-J	3
Centennial School District	0
Center Consolidated School District 26JT	3
Crowley County School District RE-1J	0
Del Norte School District	0
Dolores Count School District RE-2J	1
Durango School District 9-R	4
East Otero R-1 School District	0
Englewood Public Schools	2
Huerfano RE-1 School District	0
Ignacio School District 11-JT	3
Jefferson County Public Schools	5
Moffat Consolidated School District 2	0
Monte Vista School District C-8	4
Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1	2
Montrose & Olath Schools	0
North Conejos School District RE-1J	1
Rocky Ford School District R-2	0
Sanford School District	0
Sangre de Cristo School District	0
Sargent School District	0
Sierra Grande School District	0
South Conejos School District	0
District unknown^	1
Total	57

*Placements are preliminary, and some may change before the start of the academic year. For one candidate, a school was listed, but no district was provided.

Table 4.3. Number of Teachers Hired in TFA-Colorado Partner Districts for the 2015-16 Academic Year as of June 29, 2015

District	# placed
Denver Public Schools	55
Harrison School District 2	17
Pueblo City Schools	8
Total	80

Teacher Demographics

Table 4.4 describes the available demographic characteristics of teachers with placement agreements, by program and overall.

Table 4.4. Gender, Race/Ethnicity, and Education Level of Teachers Preliminarily Placed for the 2015-16 Academic Year

	BTR		TFA-Colorado		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Gender						
Female	37	57.8	52	65.0	89	61.8
Male	27	42.2	28	35.0	55	38.2
Total	64	100%	80	100%	144	100%
Ethnicity/Race						
African American	4	6.3	2	5.1	6	5.8
Asian	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Hispanic of any race	12	18.8	10	25.6	22	21.4
Native American	1	1.6	1	2.6	2	1.9
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0	2	5.1	2	1.9
White	44	68.8	22	56.4	66	64.1
Other	2	3.1	1	2.6	3	2.9
Two or more races	1	1.6	1	2.6	2	1.9
Total	64	100%	39	100%	103	100%
Education						
Bachelor's Degree	64	100	76	95.0	140	97.2
Masters Degree	0	0.0	4	5.0	4	2.8
Total	64	100%	80	100%	144	100%

Note: there was some missing data on demographic characteristics of placed teachers. Percentages are based on the valid N. Two TFA corps members identified as "AsiaPacific" and have been coded as "Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander."

Conclusions

In December 2013, CDE awarded grant funds to PEBC and TFA-Colorado to place 65 and 95 teachers, respectively, in 17 Colorado school districts by fall 2014-15. CDE also provided funding to OMNI Institute to conduct an independent evaluation of the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant program. Using multiple data sources, including program-provided teacher data, key informant interviews, and teacher-perception surveys, OMNI conducted formative and summative evaluation activities to learn more about program efforts to place, support, and retain teachers in traditionally hard-to-serve schools. We conclude this report with 1) a brief overview of common themes and lessons learned from both teacher preparation programs, 2) evaluation limitations and considerations, and 3) opportunities for future evaluation efforts.

COMMON THEMES AND KEY FINDINGS

The Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant program was successful in placing high-quality teachers in schools and districts that have had historic difficulty retaining high-quality teachers. Although programs had trouble reaching initial placement targets, both reported success in ensuring teachers met highly qualified requirements and in retaining teachers in their positions in 2014-15. Furthermore, teachers placed by programs served over 9,000 students in 68 high-need schools in 15 districts in Colorado, teaching a variety of subject areas and grade-levels. Schools and districts reported benefits from their partnerships with programs, and that programs provided high-quality teachers to fill critical classroom needs that would otherwise remain unfilled.

Common evaluation findings across programs include 1) the value and pay-off that comes from engaging in a thoughtful and deliberate placement process, which preferably includes sufficient program support, informed options, and teacher input and choice; 2) the difficulties of balancing the demands of first-year teaching and program requirements that can create significant stressors for program participants, and requires a flexible program approach to support teachers in meeting all of the requirements; 3) the critical role of mentorship, and ongoing supports from programs, districts and schools, to help shepherd new teachers through their first year in the classroom; and 4) the importance of school culture and school administration in teacher decisions to stay in their positions – teachers who feel valued, appreciated, and supported, and who have the training to be effective in the classroom report positive experiences, which likely influences retention decisions.

In addition, both programs have adapted and refined their models based on feedback and learning from prior experiences. Each program strives to improve efforts to place high-quality teachers in Colorado and each continues to refine and strengthen its program based on what it has learned in past years.

LIMITATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS

The evaluation obtained rich, detailed information on program implementation, strengths, and challenges. Key informants and teachers provided thoughtful and specific information on their experiences that can be used to help refine and improve efforts to place and retain high-quality teachers in hard-to-serve schools. Nonetheless, there are limitations and factors to consider when interpreting evaluation findings presented in this report.

First, only a subset of program staff and principals were targeted for key informant interviews. In particular, principal perspectives come from those who were randomly selected and agreed to participate, and may not represent the experiences of all principals in partner schools. Similarly, not all teachers completed the survey, although participation rates were over 77% for both programs, which increases confidence that results generally reflect teachers' experiences.

Second, for TFA, the teacher survey was inadvertently administered to corps members placed in 2013-14 and 2014-15, which complicates interpretation of some of the findings because respondents varied in whether they were in the first or second year of teaching.

Third, educator effectiveness ratings are difficult to interpret considering differences in 1) program models (placing residents versus teachers of record); 2) systems used by districts to calculate effectiveness ratings; 3) the degree to which measures of student learning were factored into final 2014-15 ratings; and 4) missing

data. These variations make it difficult to draw conclusions about the effectiveness of teachers placed in 2014-15.

Finally, although the evaluation was able to calculate the number of teachers retained in 2014-15, retention rates for 2015-16 are not complete. At least 60 of the 69 TFA corps members (87%) renewed their positions or are under contract in a partner district for next year (seven were not renewed for 2015-16). However, because BTR's model does not expect residents to obtain positions in the residency school, many BTR residents were in the process of identifying and applying for open positions in partner districts for 2015-16. Thus, at the time of this report, it is unknown how many BTR residents will obtain employment in a partner district in 2015-16. Similarly, Cohort 2 data are very preliminary as candidates are in the process of identifying their placements and hiring for positions.

EVALUATION OPPORTUNITIES

There are several opportunities to enhance the evaluation of the Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. First, we recommend gathering longitudinal data on teachers from Cohorts 1 and 2. Second-year data, in particular, will provide important information on program implementation and impact. For example, Cohort 1 residents placed by BTR will become teachers of record next year. Gathering placement data to see how many obtained positions in partner districts, and then assessing teacher effectiveness will help ascertain the impact of the residency model when teachers become responsible for their own classrooms. In addition, TFA teachers will be completing the two-year program commitment next year, and it will be valuable to know how effective they were, and how many plan to stay in their current positions or remain teaching in Colorado. Subsequent data from year 3, and longer, will help track long-term retention rates and programs' ability to refine and strengthen their models to meet Colorado school and district needs.

Second, the evaluation could be strengthened by a deeper examination of educator effectiveness data. Specifically, programs were not able to obtain effectiveness ratings from districts until June 2015, and the final report was due shortly thereafter, which only allowed for a cursory examination of the ratings. In addition, some districts only provided aggregate data on teachers in the program, and data were not provided in a way to make comparisons across districts. Individual-level data will allow the evaluation to provide a closer look at program practices that lead to effectiveness in professional practice and/or student learning. Continuing to gather educator effectiveness data will allow time for districts to refine systems and provide data that may be more comparable in future years. Regardless, we might expect that effectiveness ratings will improve over time as teachers obtain more experience and skills.

Finally, we recommend developing and administering a survey for principals from schools in which teachers were placed or hired. The teacher survey data in the current evaluation provided valuable information on program participants' perceptions and a similar approach to principals will help target data from all partner schools. As we learned from teachers, school administrations are key to supporting and retaining teachers, and obtaining a breadth of perspectives will add insight into programs' strengths and challenges.

Appendix A: Number of Teachers Placed in Partner Schools and Districts

Table A.1: Number of Teachers Placed in PEBC Partner Districts

District	School	# placed
Adams 12 Five Star Schools (N = 9)	Coronado Hills Elementary School	2
	Leroy Elementary School	1
	McElwain Elementary School	2
	Northglenn Middle School	2
	Riverdale Elementary School	2
Alamosa School District RE-11J (N = 5)	Alamosa Elementary School	3
	Alamosa High School	2
Adams-Arapahoe 28-J School District/ Aurora Public Schools (N = 9)	Aurora Hills Middle School	2
	Aurora West College Preparatory Academy	2
	Crawford Elementary School	1
	Dalton Elementary School	1
	William Smith High School	3
Brighton School District 27-J (N = 7)	Northeast Elementary School	3
	Overland Trail Middle School	4
Center Consolidated School District 26JT (N = 2)	Haskin Elementary	1
	Center High School*	1
Durango School District 9-R (N = 2)	Durango High School	1
	Sunnyside Elementary School	2
	La Junta Junior/Senior High School	1
East Otero R-1 School District (N = 1)	La Junta Junior/Senior High School	1
Ignacio School District 11-JT (N = 3)	Ignacio Elementary School	3
Jefferson County Public Schools (N = 5)	Edgewater Elementary School	4
	Foster Elementary School	1
Monte Vista School District C-8 (N = 5)	Bell Metz Elementary School	1
	Monte Vista Middle School	3
	Monte Vista High School	1
Montezuma-Cortez School District RE-1 (N = 1)	Cortez Middle School	1
North Conejos School District RE-1J (N = 7)	Centauri Middle School	2
	Centauri High School	1
	La Jara Elementary School	3
	Manassa Elementary School	1
Total		56

*The teacher placed in Center High School provided instruction to all students in the district, but was supervised by the Center High School principal.

Table A.2: Number of Teachers Placed in TFA Partner Districts

District	School	# placed
Denver Public Schools No. 1 (N = 46)	Amesse Elementary	2
	Ashley Elementary	3
	College View Elementary	1
	Colorado High School Charter	2
	Columbian Elementary	1
	Contemporary Learning Academy	2
	Cowell Elementary	1
	DCIS Ford	2
	DCIS Montbello High School	1
	DCIS Montbello Middle School	5
	Denver School of Science and Technology – Green Valley Ranch	3
	Doull Elementary	1
	Girls Athletic Leadership School	1
	Green Valley Elementary	1
	Greenwood Academy	1
	High Tech Early College	2
	Hill Middle School	3
	Maxwell Elementary	2
	McGlone Elementary	3
	MLK Jr. Early College	2
	Newlon Elementary	1
	North High School	2
	Pioneer Charter School	1
	Smith Renaissance Elementary	1
Venture Prep	1	
West Generation Academy	1	
Harrison School District 2 (N = 17)	Harrison High School	3
	High School Prep Academy	4
	Mountain Vista K-8 School	2
	Panorama Middle School	4
	Sierra High School	4
Pueblo City Schools (N = 11)	Bessemer Elementary	1
	Franklin Elementary	2
	Heroes K-8 Academy	1
	Minnequa Elementary	1
	Pueblo Academy of Arts	2
	Risley Middle School	3
	Roncalli Stem Academy	1
Total		74

Appendix B: Key Informant Interviews

Key informants included:

BTR

- Belle Faust, Executive Director, Colorado Boettcher Teacher Residency
- Stephanie Hensley, Associate Director of Curriculum and Rural Operations, Boettcher Teacher Residency; Assistant Professor, Adams State University
- Jeb Holt, Field Director, Colorado Boettcher Teacher Residency
- Candice Pearcey, Field Director, Colorado Boettcher Teacher Residency
- Michael Clow, Principal, Northeast Elementary, School District 27J, Brighton, Colorado
- Christy McBee, Principal, Alamosa Elementary, Alamosa School District, Alamosa, Colorado
- Kevin Jones, Principal, Center High School, Center School District, Center Colorado
- Karl Herr, Principal¹³, Ignacio Elementary, Ignacio School District 11-JT, Ignacio, Colorado
- Celeste Sultze, Principal, Edgewater Elementary, Jefferson County Public Schools, Edgewater, Colorado

TFA

- Ellen Mary Hickman, Vice President, Teacher Leadership Development, Teach For America–Colorado
- Mark Somander, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development, Teach For America – Colorado
- Alexandra Snyder¹⁴, Manager, Teacher Leadership Development, Teach For America – Colorado
- Jennifer Fox, Alternative Licensure Instructor, ASPIRE to Teach, University of Colorado, Denver
- Kyle Gamba, College View Elementary, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado
- Marci Imes, Roncalli Stem Academy, Pueblo City Schools, Pueblo, Colorado
- Tina Vidovich, Mountain Vista K-8 School, Harrison School District 2, Colorado Springs, Colorado
- Sara Gips, McGlone Elementary School, Denver Public Schools, Denver, Colorado

¹³ Karl Herr retired as principal of Ignacio Elementary in June, 2015.

¹⁴ Alexandra Snyder has left her position with the Teach For America – Colorado program.

CDE Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Interview Guide Summary

JANUARY 2015 (Year 2)

INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

OMNI Institute is working with the Public Education and Business Coalition (PEBC), Teacher For America (TFA) and the Colorado Department of Education to evaluate the state's Quality Teacher Recruitment Grant Program. This is a two-year evaluation project looking at the placement of high quality teachers in high need schools in Colorado by PEBC and TFA. We are conducting interviews with school principals who are partnered with one of these teacher preparation programs to learn more about how you place and support teachers from the program in your school. Principals have been randomly selected for interviews from among all principals in the district who have placed PEBC or TFA teachers in their school.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We would like to share some important information with you about how the information that you share will be used and who to contact if you have questions or concerns.

- You have been selected to participate because you have expertise about the work of PEBC or TFA in Colorado, however, your participation in this interview is completely voluntary.
- We are interested in hearing your honest feedback and opinions, but you are not required to answer any question you don't feel comfortable answering. You may choose at any time to not answer a particular question or to discontinue the interview. You are also welcome to ask questions at any time during the interview.
- All feedback shared during this interview will be incorporated into a summary report for the Colorado Department of Education. Because this project is funded by the Colorado Legislature, the final report will be publicly available. We would like your permission to identify you as an interviewee and potentially include key quotes from you, if appropriate. We will notify you if we would like to use any direct quotes, and they will only be included with your consent.

Finally, we are hoping to record all interview discussions to ensure we can accurately document what is said. Recordings will not be shared beyond the research team working on this project, although we will provide a de-identified copy of the interview notes to the Colorado Department of Education.

On the following page we have outlined the overall questions we will explore through the interview process. Specific questions and follow-up questions will be tailored based on your responses and the nature of your school's partnership with PEBC or TFA.

TOPIC 1: TEACHER HIRING AND PLACEMENT

- How long have you been partnered with PEBC or TFA and how many candidates are placed in your school? Why did you decide to start placing PEBC or TFA teachers in your school?
- What factors do you consider when selecting a candidate to hire for your school.
- How are PEBC or TFA candidates hired, and then placed, in your school?
- What do you think are the strengths and challenges of PEBC or TFA's placement process?
- **PEBC ONLY:** What is the process for selecting mentor teachers? What have been the strengths of implementing the mentor/resident model? And what have been the challenges of this model?
- How do you assess whether a placement is successful in the first year of placement?
- What do you consider to be a successful placement in subsequent years?

TOPIC 2: TEACHER SUPPORT AND RETENTION

- What supports are provided to PEBC or TFA teachers placed in your school by PEBC or TFA, the district, and the school? What strategies and activities are being used to retain PEBC or TFA teachers once they are placed?
- What challenges have you encountered in retaining teachers placed through PEBC or TFA's program? What, if anything, has changed about your support and retention strategies as a result of your relationship with PEBC or TFA?
- Do you think teachers placed by PEBC or TFA will stay in your district or school beyond their tenure through PEBC or TFA? Do you think they will stay in the field of teaching in general? Why or why not?

TOPIC 3: PARTNERSHIPS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

- How does this partnership and the placement of PEBC or TFA candidates in your school affect the school-wide community and learning environment?
- How does your school benefit from this partnership? What have been the challenges?
- What is the impact on other teachers of having PEBC or TFA candidates placed in your school? What is the impact on students?
- What do you think are the key ingredients for a successful collaboration between schools, districts, and teacher preparation programs? What changes would you like to see in the partnership with PEBC or TFA over the next few years?

Please feel free to contact Kelly Marzano at the OMNI Institute, at 303.839.9422 ext. 131 or kmarzano@omni.org if you have questions or concerns about any of the information provided.

Appendix C: Teacher Survey Summary Tables

The following tables present aggregate responses to all items on the teacher survey for each program.

Tables C.1 (BTR) and C.20 (TFA) reflect demographic information for individuals who responded to the survey.

Tables C.2 – C.10 (BTR) and C.21 – C.29 (TFA) provide information about teacher placement, including:

- Grade levels taught,
- Type of placement school,
- Subjects taught,
- Whether participants were placed in their area of endorsement,
- Participants' situation prior to joining BTR or TFA,
- Whether participants relocated to join their respective program,
- Type of community where participants were placed,
- Whether there were changes in participants' community type as a result of placement, and
- How many other program participants were placed in the same school.

Tables C.11 (BTR) and C.30 (TFA) provide information about the primary method through which candidates and corps members learned about their respective programs.

Tables C.12 – C.19 (BTR) and Tables C.31 – C.38 (TFA) provide information about the following:

- How well participants felt the program prepared them for teaching,
- Participant satisfaction with the placement process,
- Participant satisfaction with the supports provided to them by the program, district, and school,
- Participant perception of program and district evaluations,
- How well feedback about performance from the program and the district aligned,
- Participants' plans to remain in teaching and education, and
- Overall satisfaction with the program.

PEBC SURVEY RESULTS

Table C.1. BTR Participant Characteristics

	n	%
Gender		
Female	26	61.9
Male	16	38.1
Transgender	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	42	100
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaska Native	1	2.4
Asian	1	2.4
Black or African American	1	2.4
Hispanic of any race	7	16.7
White	29	69.0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Two or more races	3	7.1
Total	42	100
Education		
Bachelor's	38	90.5
Master's	4	9.5
Professional Degree	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	42	100
Are you currently pursuing an advanced degree such as a Master's or a PhD?		
Yes	42	100
No	0	0.0
Total	42	100
Are you a resident placed in a classroom with a mentor teacher of record?		
Yes, I'm a resident	36	85.7
No, I'm a teacher of record in my own class	6	14.3
Total	42	100

Table C.2. Grade Levels BTR Participants Taught

What grade level do you teach?	
	n
K-5	22
6	9
7	8
8	8
9	6
10	5
11	6
12	6
Total	42

Table C.3. Type of Placement School

What type of school do you teach in?		
	n	%
Elementary only	20	47.6
Middle school only	12	28.6
High school only	5	11.9
School that combines K-8 grade levels	1	2.4
School that combines K-12 grade levels	1	2.4
School that combines 6-12 grade levels	3	7.1
Total	42	100

Table C.4. Subjects BTR Participants Taught

What subjects do you teach?	
	n
English, reading, or language arts	20
Mathematics	17
Science	19
Foreign language	1
Social studies	16
The arts (e.g., visual arts, music)	1
Elementary	15
Special education	1
Physical education	5
Other	2
Total	42

Table C.5. Whether Participants were Placed in their Area of Endorsement

Are you teaching in your area of endorsement?		
	n	%
Yes, teaching in my area of endorsement	37	88.1
No, teaching a subject different than my area of endorsement	5	11.9
Total	42	100

Table C.6. Participants' Situation Prior to Joining BTR

Please select the response below that best describes your situation in the past year prior to joining PEBC's program.		
	n	%
Graduated from college with a bachelor's degree	13	31.0
Working in an educational setting	17	40.5
Working in a career other than education	12	28.6
Other	0	0.0
Total	42	100

Table C.7. Whether Participants Relocated to be Part of BTR

Did you relocate to be part of PEBC's program?		
	n	%
Yes, from out of state	5	11.9
Yes, from a different community within Colorado	5	11.9
No, did not relocate	32	76.2
Total	42	100

Table C.8. Type of Community where BTR Participants were Placed

What kind of community do you teach in?		
	n	%
Urban/Suburban	21	50.0
Rural	21	50.0
Total	42	100

Table C.9. Changes in BTR Participants' Community

If you relocated, did the type of community you live in change?		
	n	%
Changed from urban/suburban to rural	2	4.8
Changed from rural to urban/suburban	2	4.8
Stayed in a similar type of community	8	19.0
Did not relocate	30	71.4
Total	42	100

Table C.10. How Many Other BTR Participants were Placed in the Same School

How many other PEBC teachers are placed in your school with you?		
	n	%
0	11	26.2
1	13	31.0
2	6	14.3
3	7	16.7
4	1	2.4
5 or more	4	9.5
I don't know how many other teachers	0	1.1
Total	42	100

Table C.11. Primary Method through which Participants Learned about BTR

Please select the primary method through which you learned about PEBC's program.		
	n	%
School or district representative	4	9.5
Current or previous PEBC teacher	6	14.3
Internet search, such as Google or Yahoo	8	19.0
Print media, radio, or television advertisement	1	2.4
Job posting website	1	2.4
On campus (e.g., PEBC recruiter, job posting, or faculty recommendation)	7	16.7
Friend, family member, or someone else in your network	11	26.2
Other	4	9.4
Total	42	100

Table C.12. BTR Participant Perceptions of Teaching Preparedness

How well do you think PEBC’s program prepared you to be a successful teacher prior to starting in your school?		
	n	%
Extremely well	11	26.2
Very well	23	54.8
Moderately well	6	14.3
Slightly well	1	2.4
Not at all well	1	2.4
Total	42	100%

Table C.13. BTR Participant Satisfaction with BTR’s placement Process

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied
How satisfied are you with the process PEBC used to place you in...						
...your current district?	41	46.3%	31.7%	14.6%	4.9%	2.4%
...your current school?	41	36.6%	36.6%	17.1%	4.9%	4.9%

Table C.14. BTR Participant Satisfaction with BTR Supports

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	N/A not offered by BTR
How satisfied are you with the support PEBC provided to you in each of the following areas?							
University or certification coursework	39	30.8%	41.0%	17.9%	5.1%	2.6%	2.6%
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	39	35.9%	35.9%	12.8%	10.3%	0.0%	5.1%
Professional development and training opportunities	39	41.0%	38.5%	12.8%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
Field staff operation and feedback	39	35.9%	28.2%	20.5%	7.7%	7.7%	0.0%
Online resources	39	23.1%	15.4%	41.0%	0.0%	2.6%	17.9%
Informal support such as monthly dinners or coffee meet-ups	39	23.1%	33.3%	15.4%	15.4%	2.6%	10.3%
Having other teachers from PEBC placed in the same school	37	27.0%	24.3%	18.9%	8.1%	5.4%	16.2%
Help with non-academic concerns, such as housing and transportation	38	13.2%	21.1%	7.9%	5.3%	13.2%	39.5%
Formal mentors assigned to you through PEBC's program	39	53.8%	17.9%	15.4%	0.0%	12.8%	0.0%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	38	10.5%	13.2%	18.4%	18.4%	13.2%	26.3%
Financial support for living expenses	39	10.3%	7.7%	20.5%	17.9%	10.3%	33.3%
Other	8	25.0%	12.5%	0.0%	0.0%	12.5%	50.0%

Table C.15. BTR Participant Satisfaction with District and School Supports

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	N/A not offered by the district or school
How satisfied are you with the support the district provided to you in each of the following areas?							
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	39	33.3%	17.9%	25.6%	7.7%	7.7%	7.7%
Professional development and training opportunities	39	25.6%	35.9%	12.8%	17.9%	5.1%	2.6%
District observation and feedback	38	18.4%	23.7%	21.1%	21.1%	7.9%	7.9%
Online resources	39	15.4%	20.5%	33.3%	15.4%	12.8%	2.6%
Formal mentor assigned to you through the district	39	43.6%	20.5%	7.7%	5.1%	10.3%	12.8%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	39	12.8%	12.8%	12.8%	7.7%	15.4%	38.5%
Financial support for living expenses	39	15.4%	5.1%	5.1%	7.7%	12.8%	53.8%
Other	7	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	57.1%
How satisfied are you with the support the school provided to you in each of the following areas?							
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	38	28.9%	23.7%	26.3%	5.3%	10.5%	5.3%
Professional development and training opportunities	38	31.6%	34.2%	21.1%	2.6%	10.5%	0.0%
District observation and feedback	38	23.7%	21.1%	26.3%	15.8%	7.9%	5.3%
Online resources	37	21.6%	29.7%	16.2%	13.5%	8.1%	10.8%
Formal mentor assigned to you through the school	38	52.6%	18.4%	7.9%	2.6%	7.9%	10.5%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	38	18.4%	5.3%	18.4%	5.3%	13.2%	39.5%
Financial support for living expenses	38	15.8%	5.3%	7.9%	0.0%	10.5%	60.5%
Other	7	14.3%	14.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	71.4%

Table C.16. Participant Perception of BTR and District Evaluations

How well do you understand the evaluation system [PEBC or DISTRICT] uses to evaluate your performance as a teacher?				
	PEBC		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely well	4	10	2	5.1
Very well	21	52.5	14	35.9
Moderately well	14	35.0	11	28.2
Slightly well	0	0.0	5	12.8
Not at all well	0	0.0	0	12.8
Do not the evaluation/rating system	1	2.5	2	5.1
Total	40	100%	39	100%
Missing	2		3	

How helpful has feedback about your performance from [PEBC or DISTRICT] been to you in your teaching?				
	PEBC		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely helpful	14	35.9	3	7.7
Very helpful	14	35.9	11	28.2
Moderately helpful	7	17.9	9	23.1
Slightly helpful	2	5.1	2	5.1
Not at all helpful	1	5.1	2	5.1
I have not received feedback/I have not been evaluated yet	1	2.6	12	30.8
Total	39	100%	39	100%
Missing	3		3	

Table C.17. Participant Perception of Alignment between BTR and District Feedback

How well does the feedback provided by the district match with feedback provided to you by PEBC?		
	n	%
Extremely well	7	17.9
Very well	11	28.2
Moderately well	3	7.7
Slightly well	3	7.7
Not at all well	1	2.6
I have not received feedback from both PEBC and my district	6	15.4
I have not been evaluated yet	8	20.5
Total	39	100%
Missing	3	

Table C.18. BTR Participant Plans to Continue Teaching

	N	Definitely will	Probably will	Might or might not	Probably won't	Definitely won't
How likely are you to continue teaching in...						
...your current school for the 2015-16 academic year?	40	55.0%	0.0%	12.5%	5.0%	27.5%
...your current school for the next 5 years?	40	30.0%	20.0%	15.0%	10.0%	25.0%
...your current school 6 years or longer?	40	17.5%	20.0%	25.0%	12.5%	25.0%
...your current district for the next 5 years?	40	45.0%	15.0%	17.5%	12.5%	10.0%
...your current district 6 years or longer?	39	30.8%	25.6%	17.9%	15.4%	10.3%
How likely are you to continue...						
...teaching in a classroom for the next 5 years?	40	92.5%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
...teaching in a classroom 6 years or longer?	40	72.5%	27.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
...teaching in a high-need district or school for the next 5 years?	40	57.5%	40.0%	2.5%	0.0%	0.0%
...teaching in a high-need district or school 6 years or longer?	40	50.0%	42.5%	7.5%	0.0%	0.0%

Table C.19. BTR Participant Satisfaction with the Program and School

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied
Overall, how satisfied are you in your experience with...						
...your school?	40	45.0%	30.0%	15.0%	7.5%	2.5%
...PEBC?	40	45.0%	40.0%	12.5%	0.0%	2.5%

TFA TEACHER SURVEY RESULTS

Table C.20. TFA Corps Member Characteristics

	n	%
Gender		
Female	63	69.2
Male	28	30.8
Transgender	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
Total	91	100
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0.0
Asian	2	2.2
Black or African American	2	2.2
Hispanic of any race	19	20.9
White	62	68.1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	1.1
Two or more races	5	5.5
Total	91	100
Education		
Bachelor's	78	85.7
Master's	9	9.9
Professional Degree	4	4.4
Other	0	0.0
Total	91	100
Are you currently pursuing an advanced degree such as a Master's or a PhD?		
Yes	33	36.3
No	58	63.7
Total	91	100

Table C.21. Grade Levels TFA Corps Members Taught

What type of school do you teach in?	
	n
K-5	36
6	14
7	19
8	17
9	22
10	17
11	17
12	11
Total	153

Table C.22. Type of Placement School

What type of school do you teach in?		
	n	%
Elementary only	33	36.7
Middle school only	18	20.0
High school only	21	36.7
School that combines K-8 grade levels	4	4.4
School that combines K-12 grade levels	1	1.1
School that combines 6-12 grade levels	13	14.4
Total	90	100

Table C.23. Subjects TFA Corps Members Taught

What subjects do you teach?	
	n
English, reading, or language arts	42
Mathematics	34
Science	25
Foreign language	2
Social studies	18
The arts (e.g., visual arts, music)	0
Elementary	26
Special education	13
Physical education	0
Other	6
Total	91

Table C.24. Whether Corps Members were Placed in their Area of Endorsement

Are you teaching in your area of endorsement?		
	n	%
Yes, teaching in my area of endorsement	85	94.4
No, teaching a subject different than my area of endorsement	5	5.6
Total	90	100

Table C.25. Corps Member’s Situation Prior to Joining TFA

Please select the response below that best describes your situation in the past year prior to joining TFA’s program.		
	n	%
Graduated from college with a bachelor’s degree	44	48.9
Working in an educational setting	17	18.9
Working in a career other than education	20	22.2
Other	9	10.0
Total	90	100

Table C.26. Whether Corps Members Relocated to be Part of TFA

Did you relocate to be part of TFA’s program?		
	n	%
Yes, from out of state	53	58.9
Yes, from a different community within Colorado	11	12.2
No, did not relocate	26	28.9
Total	90	100

Table C.27. Type of Community where TFA Corps Members were Placed

What kind of community do you teach in?		
	n	%
Urban/Suburban	86	95.6
Rural	4	4.4
Total	90	100

Table C.28. Changes in TFA Corps Members' Community

If you relocated, did the type of community you live in change?		
	n	%
Changed from urban/suburban to rural	1	1.1
Changed from rural to urban/suburban	14	15.4
Stayed in a similar type of community	49	53.8
Did not relocate	27	29.7
Total	91	100

Table C.29. How many other TFA Corps Members were Placed in the Same School

How many other TFA teachers are placed in your school with you?		
	n	%
0	15	16.5
1	16	17.6
2	18	19.8
3	10	11.0
4	4	4.4
5 or more	27	29.7
I don't know how many other teachers	1	1.1
Total	91	100

Table C.30. Primary Method through which Corps Members Learned about TFA

Please select the primary method through which you learned about TFA's program.		
	n	%
School or district representative	5	5.5
Current or previous TFA teacher	18	19.8
Internet search, such as Google or Yahoo	7	7.7
Social media such as Facebook or LinkedIn	1	1.1
Print media, radio, or television advertisement	1	1.1
Job posting website	1	1.1
On campus (TFA recruiter, job posting, or faculty recommendation)	28	30.8
Friend, family member, or someone else in your network	24	26.4
Other	6	6.6
Total	91	100

Table C.31. TFA Corps Member Perceptions of Teaching Preparedness

How well do you think TFA’s program prepared you to be a successful teacher prior to starting in your school?	
	n
Extremely well	3
Very well	10
Moderately well	37
Slightly well	30
Not at all well	10
Total	90

	n	%
Extremely well	3	3.3
Very well	10	11.1
Moderately well	37	41.1
Slightly well	30	33.3
Not at all well	10	11.1
Total	90	100

Table C.32. Corps Member Satisfaction with TFA’s Placement Process

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied
How satisfied are you with the process TFA used to place you in...						
...your current district?	90	14.4%	35.6%	28.9%	8.9%	12.2%
...your current school?	89	16.9%	25.8%	29.2%	14.6%	13.5%

Table C.33. Corps Member Satisfaction with TFA Supports

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	N/A not offered by TFA
How satisfied are you with the support TFA provided to you in each of the following areas?							
University or certification coursework	86	5.8%	17.4%	29.1%	19.8%	22.1%	5.8%
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	87	3.4%	20.7%	36.8%	23.0%	11.5%	4.6%
Professional development and training opportunities	87	2.3%	24.1%	37.9%	21.8%	11.5%	2.3%
Field staff operation and feedback	87	19.5%	35.6%	23.0%	12.6%	9.2%	0.0%
Online resources	87	4.6%	17.2%	32.2%	31.0%	12.6%	2.3%
Informal support such as monthly dinners or coffee meet-ups	87	11.5%	23.0%	26.4%	14.9%	10.3%	13.8%
Having other teachers from TFA placed in the same school	87	17.2%	26.4%	24.1%	6.9%	12.6%	12.6%
Help with non-academic concerns, such as housing and transportation	87	9.2%	16.1%	25.3%	11.5%	11.5%	26.4%
Formal mentors assigned to you through TFA's program	87	16.1%	16.1%	12.6%	10.3%	11.5%	33.3%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	87	6.9%	1.1%	10.3%	13.8%	44.8%	23.0%
Financial support for living expenses	87	6.9%	5.7%	17.2%	16.1%	32.2%	21.8%
Other	14	14.3%	7.1%	0.0%	0.0%	14.3%	64.3%

Table C.34. TFA Corps Member Satisfaction with District and School Supports

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied	N/A not offered by TFA
How satisfied are you with the support the district provided to you in each of the following areas?							
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	83	8.4%	10.8%	34.9%	22.9%	19.3%	3.6%
Professional development and training opportunities	83	10.8%	15.7%	31.3%	21.7%	18.1%	2.4%
District observation and feedback	83	12.0%	21.7%	25.3%	18.1%	19.3%	3.6%
Online resources	82	3.7%	18.3%	25.6%	20.7%	25.6%	6.1%
Formal mentor assigned to you through the district	83	13.3%	18.1%	15.5%	8.4%	27.7%	18.1%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	83	4.8%	7.2%	18.1%	24.1%	28.9%	16.9%
Financial support for living expenses	83	2.4%	1.2%	19.3%	9.6%	27.7%	39.8%
Other	18	5.6%	0.0%	5.6%	5.6%	22.2%	61.1%
How satisfied are you with the support the school provided to you in each of the following areas?							
Professional Learning Community (PLC) events	80	8.8%	15.0%	31.3%	17.5%	17.5%	10.0%
Professional development and training opportunities	82	9.8%	23.2%	32.9%	13.4%	19.5%	1.2%
District observation and feedback	81	9.9%	22.2%	23.5%	17.3%	25.9%	1.2%
Online resources	81	3.7%	11.1%	25.9%	22.2%	24.7%	12.3%
Formal mentor assigned to you through the school	82	18.3%	18.3%	15.9%	13.4%	18.3%	15.9%
Financial support for classroom materials and expenses	82	7.3%	19.5%	18.3%	20.7%	24.4%	9.8%
Financial support for living expenses	81	3.7%	3.7%	13.6%	12.3%	27.2%	39.5%
Other	23	8.7%	8.7%	13.0%	4.3%	26.1%	39.1%

Table C.35. Corps Member Perception of TFA and District Evaluations

How well do you understand the evaluation system [TFA or DISTRICT] uses to evaluate your performance as a teacher?				
	TFA		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely well	9	11.0	12	14.6
Very well	15	18.3	27	32.9
Moderately well	25	30.5	25	30.5
Slightly well	16	19.5	12	14.6
Not at all well	12	14.6	5	6.1
Do not know the evaluation system	5	6.1	1	1.2
Total	82	100	82	100
Missing	9		9	

How helpful has feedback about your performance from [TFA or DISTRICT] been to you in your teaching?				
	TFA		District	
	n	%	n	%
Extremely helpful	12	14.6	4	4.8
Very helpful	19	23.2	18	21.7
Moderately helpful	27	32.9	31	37.3
Slightly helpful	18	22.0	13	15.7
Not at all helpful	3	3.7	14	16.9
I have not received feedback/I have not been evaluated yet	2	2.4	3	3.6
Total	82	100	83	100
Missing	9		8	

Table C.36. Corps Member Perception of Alignment between TFA and District Feedback

How well does the feedback provided by the district match with feedback provided to you by TFA?		
	n	%
Extremely well	3	3.6
Very well	18	21.7
Moderately well	31	37.3
Slightly well	16	19.3
Not at all well	10	12.0
I have not received feedback from both PEBC and my district	2	2.4
I have not been evaluated yet	3	3.6
Total	83	100
Missing	8	

Table C.37. TFA Corps Member Plans to Continue Teaching

	N	Definitely will	Probably will	Might or might not	Probably won't	Definitely won't
How likely are you to continue teaching in...						
...your current school for the 2015-16 academic year?	81	54.3%	2.5%	3.7%	0.0%	39.5%
...your current school for the next 5 years?	81	1.2%	11.1%	27.2%	14.8%	45.7%
...your current school 6 years or longer?	81	1.2%	1.2%	21.0%	21.0%	55.6%
...your current district for the next 5 years?	81	3.7%	11.1%	28.4%	12.3%	44.4%
...your current district 6 years or longer?	81	1.2%	4.9%	25.9%	19.8%	48.1%
How likely are you to continue...						
...teaching in a classroom for the next 5 years?	83	24.1%	32.5%	25.3%	7.2%	10.8%
...teaching in a classroom 6 years or longer?	83	15.7%	18.1%	37.3%	13.3%	15.7%
...teaching in a high-need district or school for the next 5 years?	83	13.3%	39.8%	24.1%	8.4%	14.5%
...teaching in a high-need district or school 6 years or longer?	83	9.6%	21.7%	37.3%	14.5%	16.9%

Table C.38. TFA Participant Satisfaction with the Program and School

	N	Extremely satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not at all satisfied
Overall, how satisfied are you in your experience with...						
...your school?	83	13.3%	31.3%	22.9%	15.7%	16.9%
...TFA?	83	12.0%	38.6%	31.3%	13.3%	4.8%