

2018-19 Evaluation of the Resident Teachers Program

Rosemary Garcia-Rincón, B.S.

EA19-625-4

At-a-Glance

The Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) School Leadership Department contracted Urban Teachers to train individuals to become highly effective Dallas ISD teachers. The program provided intensive training and support to those committed to a career in teaching. The Urban Teachers model ensures every teacher is highly qualified, well prepared, and ready for the challenges of an urban classroom. The purpose of the program is to:

- support urban schools struggling with recruiting and retaining strong teachers;
- address the challenge of on-the-job-training for new teachers (resident teachers or residents) by partnering them with teacher mentors (host teachers) in their classrooms for one full year;
- assign resident teachers as teachers of record (fellows) after the first year; and
- provide one-to-one coaching to resident teachers for three years through the Urban Teachers program.

The goal of the Dallas ISD Resident Teachers program is to retain strong teachers in the district. The program received \$981,109 in Title I funding for the 2018-19 school year for personnel (incoming residents only) and contracted services with the Urban Teachers vendor for recruitment, selection, and coaching services.

The purpose of this evaluation was to provide an overview of the implementation of the Resident Teachers program for the 2018-19 school year, including program staff member characteristics, and the perceptions and experiences of participants in the program. The evaluator used program documents, interviews, participant survey data, and classroom observations to support the evaluation. Even though the program served three cohorts of participants this year, outcomes in this evaluation focused on the Dallas ISD third cohort of resident teachers who were hired for the 2018-19 school year.

Program Overview

In its third year of partnership with the Dallas ISD, Urban Teachers recruited and selected candidates to participate in the program for the Dallas Fort Worth (DFW) area. Other district partners in DFW included Uplift Education and Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP). Other recruits interested in pursuing a teaching career included alumni from City Year, a non-profit

organization and a member of the AmeriCorps national service network.

Applicant requirements for the Urban Teachers program included:

- a bachelor's degree with a minimum 3.0 GPA;
- experience with children;
- a results-oriented, resilient, and reflective attitude; and
- a four-year commitment to the program.

The Dallas ISD hired selected candidates as full-time teacher assistants (residents), filling vacancies on Accelerating Campus Excellence (ACE) campuses. The premise was that they would receive the best training from highly qualified and experienced teachers, while working on low-performing campuses.

As part of the Urban Teachers program, participants enrolled in a master's degree program offered by the Johns Hopkins School of Education. The coursework was taught in person by School of Education faculty, using a curriculum specifically designed to give teachers the skills they need to empower students in urban schools. Participants attended evening classes Monday to Friday, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Ignite Middle School. Participants were required to earn certifications in a content area, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Special Education.

Year One, Residency: Residents gained real classroom experience by working in the classroom by day alongside a host teacher. Resident responsibilities included:

- providing one-on-one reading support to struggling students,
- conducting small group instruction with students needing additional support,
- administering formal assessments and using the data to diagnose student needs,
- facilitating family engagement and parental involvement,
- co-teaching with classroom teachers to help provide high-quality instruction,
- facilitating improved classroom management, and
- providing substitute teaching support.

Residents were held accountable at every stage of the program; they also were required to meet specific criteria at the end of their residency to advance to the second year of the program.

Year Two, Teaching: Residents became “fellows” and were placed in their own classrooms as first-year teachers. They continued with training as teacher of record by day and completed coursework at night. One-to-one coaching support was provided to ensure the continual improvement of teaching practice.

Coaches were hired and employed by Johns Hopkins and included former teachers, assistant principals, principals, and educational leaders. Coaches could also serve as instructors for program coursework. Fellows learned and practiced the strategies at night and applied them to their next class sessions. Coaches observed fellows applying the strategies in the classroom and provided feedback.

At the end of year two, fellows who met all requirements earned a Master of Science in Education degree.

Year Three, Teaching: Participants continued to teach in their own classrooms with continued coaching support. At the end of year three, participants who met all requirements received teaching certifications in the three areas mentioned previously (content area, ESL, and Special Education). Urban Teachers received a waiver from the state of Texas to delay certification until the third year. The waiver was issued in order to observe two years of demonstrated classroom teaching before issuing a teaching license. Cohort one was eligible to receive the three certifications at the end of 2018-19.

Year Four, Teaching: Participants will continue to teach in their own classrooms with continued coaching support. By the end of year four, it is anticipated that participants will become effective teachers who can provide students the skills they need to excel.

Program Outcomes

Demographics

The Dallas ISD hired 26 residents (cohort three) for 2018-19 and assigned them to one of 11 ACE schools (10 elementary and 1 middle school)¹. Of this total, four residents exited the program, leaving 22 residents who completed year one. Residents were mostly female (73%), 41 percent White, 36 percent Hispanic, and 14 percent African-American/Black. The highest number of residents selected the elementary education program of study ($n=15$), followed by secondary education ($n=6$), and secondary mathematics ($n=1$). Urban Teachers residents served approximately 1,100 students in 2018-19.

The program aimed to place two to three residents on an assigned campus to manage attrition. This goal did not always happen because of class leveling during the fall semester that resulted in some resident reassignment to other campuses.

Urban Teachers Program Surveys

Urban Teachers program staff members administered individual end-of-year online surveys to all residents in the cohort ($n=22$), host teachers ($n=29$), and principals ($n=11$) in May 2019. Participant feedback regarding program implementation was collected from each group. Survey summary data for each group in the Dallas ISD were provided by Urban Teachers staff members to the evaluator for this report.

Residents

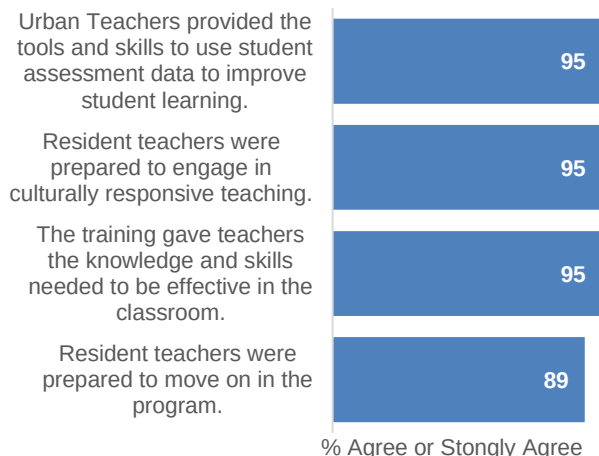
A total of 19 residents (86%) responded to the survey. Survey recipients were asked about their perceptions of program implementation. Responses from residents were generally positive. Residents agreed or strongly agreed that they understood 1) the Urban Teachers requirements (79%), 2) expectations for coursework performance (95%), and 3) expectations for teaching practice (100%).

Respondents also agreed or strongly agreed that 1) the training was aligned with the stated goals and objectives of the Urban Teachers program (89%), 2) the Urban Teachers training was high quality (89%), and 3) their clinical placement (classroom) gave them the knowledge and skills needed to be an effective teacher (74%).

High rates of residents consistently expressed confidence in their preparation to become effective teachers. Most residents agreed or strongly agreed with all statements (see Figure 1; 89% to 95%).

¹Elementary schools: C. F. Carr, Cesar Chavez, Edward Titcher, J.N. Ervin, Joseph J. Rhoads Learning Center, L. L. Hotchkiss, Maple Lawn, Martin Luther King Jr Learning Center, and Paul L. Dunbar: Middle school: Thomas J. Rusk

Figure 1: 2018-19 Resident Perceptions Regarding Confidence in Preparedness (N=19)

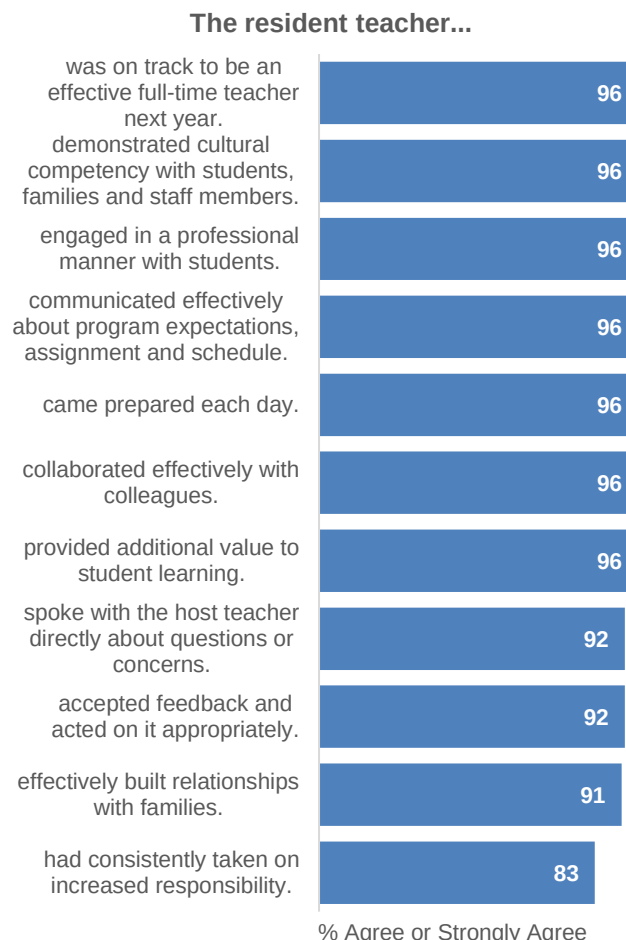


Source: 2018-19 Urban Teacher survey for residents.

Host Teachers

A total of 23 host teachers (79%) from 11 campuses completed the Urban Teacher Host Teacher survey. Host teachers were asked about their perceptions regarding their resident(s) teaching in their classrooms (some had more than 1 resident). Responses from host teachers were generally positive. A pattern of similar responses indicated that most host teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the residents were on track, demonstrated cultural competence, engaged in a professional manner, communicated effectively, came prepared daily, collaborated effectively, and provided additional value to student learning (see Figure 2; 96% each). The lowest rate (but nevertheless a high rate) of host teachers agreed that residents had consistently taken on increased responsibility (83%).

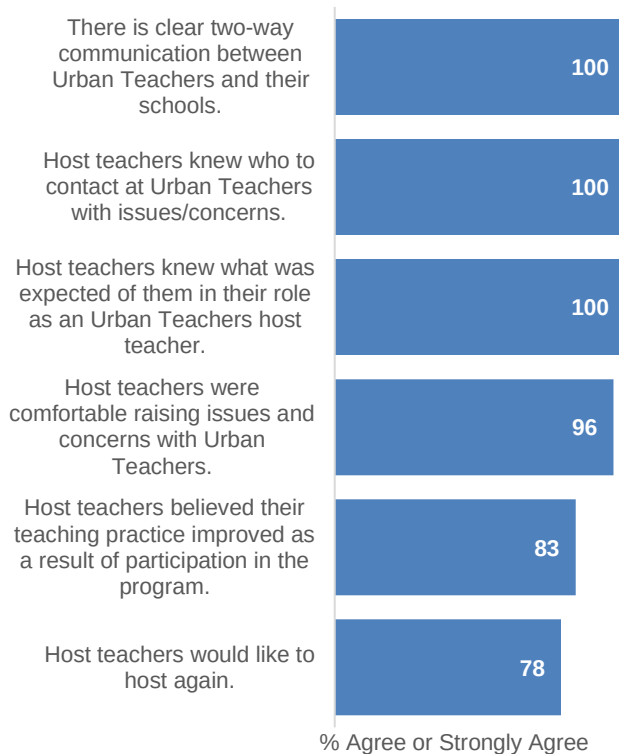
Figure 2: 2018-19 Host Teacher Perceptions Regarding Residents Teaching in Their Classrooms (N=23)



Source: 2018-19 Urban Teachers survey for host teachers.

Host teacher perceptions regarding communication and experiences with the Urban Teachers program also were positive (range: 78% to 100%). The highest rates of teachers (100%) agreed that there was clear two-way communication, they knew whom to contact, and they knew what was expected of them. The lowest rate of host teachers agreed that they would like to host again (78%), indicating that most teachers would agree to host again.

Figure 3: 2018-19 Host Teacher Perceptions Regarding Communication and Experiences with the Urban Teachers Program (N=23)



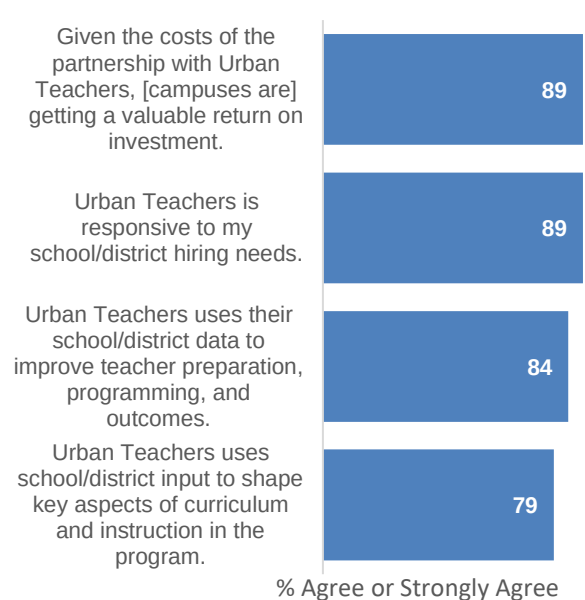
Source: 2018-19 Urban Teachers survey for host teachers.

Principals

Nine principals (82%) responded to the Urban Teachers Principal survey. Principals were asked about their perceptions of the residents teaching at their campuses. Responses from principals also were generally positive. Most principals felt that residents were extremely or well prepared (74%). Also, most principals were satisfied or very satisfied with the Urban Teachers program (94%).

Principals also were asked about their perceptions of communication and experiences with the Urban Teachers program. As shown in Figure 4, most principals agreed or strongly agreed that the program was a valuable return on investment (89%), was responsive to the needs of campuses and the district (89%), used data to improve the program and outcomes (84%), and used school and district input to shape key aspects of the curriculum and instruction (79%).

Figure 4: 2018-19 Principal Perceptions Regarding Communication and Experiences with the Urban Teachers Program (N=9)



Source: 2018-19 Urban Teachers survey for principals.

Recommendations

- Continue implementation of the Urban Teachers program for the 2019-20 school year.** Overall, perceptions regarding the implementation of the residents program were positive for all participants surveyed. Residents agreed that the Urban Teachers program was of high quality. In addition, host teachers agreed that resident teachers were on track to be effective full-time teachers the following year. Most principals also indicated their satisfaction with the program. Although long-term outcomes are needed to determine long-term value to the district, these strongly positive perceptions indicate that the program may result in a useful avenue for teacher recruitment, retention, and success.

An electronic version of this report can be found at www.dallasisd.org/Page/888. For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.

© 2019 Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD)

Mail a written "request for permission to use or reproduce any part of this document to:
 Dallas ISD
 Department of Evaluation and Assessment
 H. B. Bell School Support Service Center
 2909 N. Buckner Blvd.
 Box 10
 Dallas, TX 75228