

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report was to provide context and process evaluation information related to three federally funded Dallas Independent School District (Dallas ISD) Human Capital Management (HCM) workscopes: Teacher Residency Program, Teacher Recruitment and Retention, and Dallas ISD Alternative Certification program. The Teacher Residency program was funded through Title I, Part A at \$2,504,649. The amount of Title II, Part A funding the district budgeted for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in 2019-20 was \$1,822,147, an increase of \$128,157 from 2018-19's budget of \$1,693,990 (Watson, 2019). Alternative Certification was budgeted \$794,774 of Title II funding in 2019-20. This figure was unchanged from 2018-19 (Watson, 2019).

The focus of the 2019-20 evaluation was to determine the level of implementation of the grant-funded programs and to examine participant perceptions of the programs, as applicable. Data for this report were obtained from interviews with program staff members assigned to each grant component, a review of internal documents, and analyses of available survey data.

On March 13, 2020, in alignment with federal recommendations, the Governor of Texas issued a disaster proclamation certifying that the COVID-19 pandemic posed an imminent threat of disaster for all counties in the state of Texas. On March 19, 2020, all schools in the state were temporarily closed to slow the spread of the pandemic. Dallas ISD transitioned to at-home learning on March 23, 2020 following spring break and continued to the end of the school year. Since district employees worked remotely during this time, central office departments also transitioned to remote hiring and training practices.

EVALUATION QUESTIONS/OUTCOMES

How was the Teacher Residency program implemented?

Context of the Program

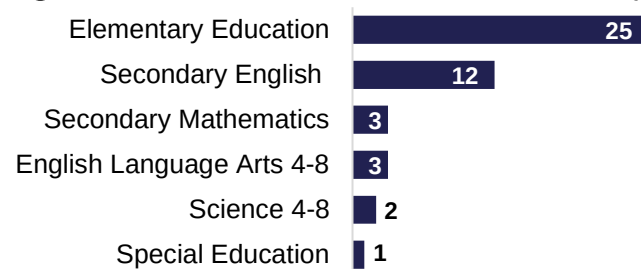
The primary purpose of the Teacher Residency Program was to increase student achievement by improving teacher and student support at campuses with the highest need. Resident Teachers provided a range of services to schools and students by providing co-teaching assistance, small group instruction, substitute teaching, help with formative assessments and diagnosis of student needs, along with support for classroom management.

Throughout the school year, a consistent need exists in Dallas ISD for certified teachers in critical shortage areas, especially at high needs campuses. Specifically, vacancies are highest in the areas of elementary bilingual, secondary math and science, and special education and English as a second language (ESL) at all levels. More pipelines are needed to help address this need and bring more teachers into the district. Resident Teachers are hired from Urban Teachers and Dallas Teacher Residency and serve in co-teaching roles in classrooms on high-needs campuses until they graduate and become full-time teachers of record. The goal is for resident teachers to complete all training on one campus so that they can transition into a teacher role at the same campus where they were trained. The hope is that this will help improve student outcomes because they are trained to meet the needs of their assigned campuses.

2019-20 Resident Teachers

By August 2019, HCM hired 46 resident teachers to serve in critical shortage roles (bilingual, math, science, Special Education, and ESL) (Figure 1). The departmental goal was to transition 90 percent of resident teachers into full-time teaching roles in high-needs campuses by August of 2020.

Figure 1: 2019-20 Number of Resident Teachers by Role



Number of Resident Teachers ($N = 46$)

Source: Human Capital Management internal records retrieved 03/06/20.

Of the 2018-19 resident teacher cohort ($n = 27$), 89 percent ($n = 24$) were hired for the 2019-20 school year as full-time teachers of record in Dallas ISD. The departmental goal was 90 percent.

Response to Impact of COVID-19

During at-home learning, resident teachers continued to support campuses' implementation of at home learning. Teacher training activities and meetings continued as planned through virtual learning platforms.

How was the Teacher Recruitment and Retention program implemented?

Recruitment

HCM staff members were responsible for recruiting and screening highly qualified teachers to meet the state certification and federal legislative requirements. HCM's Campus Staffing Team routinely recorded resignations in Oracle, which notified HCM's Talent Acquisition Team¹ of openings that needed to be filled. The Talent Acquisition Team was responsible for using the information to connect candidates with campus principals.

HCM staff members attended 66 recruitment events and visits between September 2019 and May 2020 (69 during the 2018-19 year, both in-person and virtual) (Watson, 2019), including student teacher events, university job fairs, the Texas Association for Bilingual Educators (TABE) Conference, Texas Alliance of Black School Educators (TABSE) Conference, National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), and national recruitment visits to Oklahoma, Georgia, and Puerto Rico. Beginning March 25, 2020 the department participated in 18 virtual job fairs after the district closure.

The department continued an initiative expanding the use of early contracts to attract and retain the most qualified candidates. As of May 1, 2020, HCM had issued 147 early contracts to applicants for 2020-21 teaching positions.

Screening and Hiring

The hiring process consisted of two components. The first component was the application process, which took place prior to a principal recommendation. The second component of the hiring process was the hiring and onboarding occurring after principal recommendation. The Campus Staffing Team managed the hiring process, ensuring that all candidates met district and state policies. As of May 2020, HCM employees hired 1,760 new teachers.² The total number of new 2018-19 hires as of May 2019 was 1,936 (Watson, 2019).

To recruit and retain international talent for critical-needs areas, in 2019-20, the district processed 293 new H1-B visas in addition to extending existing visas. HCM offered a permanent residence process, known as "PERM," to help teachers qualify to begin the permanent residence process and potentially provide sponsorship.³ HCM accepted 31 candidates to PERM in 2019-20, joining the 31 candidates added in 2018-19 for a total of 62 in the program.

¹ HCM's Talent Acquisition Team consisted of one student teacher coordinator, one data coordinator, seven recruitment coordinators, and the Talent Team Leader. Recruitment coordinators were primarily responsible for specific recruitment activities, such as marketing or special events.

² The data were collected in May 2020. This number only includes teachers new to the district. That is, it does not include internal transfers, in which a teacher moved from one campus to fill a vacancy at another campus.

For a sixth year, HCM partnered with the TechTeach Program, a Texas Tech University initiative⁴ that requires students to student-teach a full year, rather than a semester, before graduating. TechTeach participants student-teach four days a week and, then come together at a central Dallas facility to take classes together as a cohort for the remaining weekday each week. Many courses are online, supplementing the in-person classes⁵ led by Texas Tech faculty; this allows students to simultaneously complete courses and student-teach throughout the year. Dallas ISD's partnership enables TechTeach participants in the Dallas Fort Worth (DFW) area to student-teach in Dallas ISD. Many participants are bilingual candidates, creating a beneficial pipeline for one of the district's greatest needs. Currently, 32 district teachers were TechTeach alumni.

Response to Impact of COVID-19

The Teacher Recruitment and Retention team continued to increase the applicant pool and provide principals with highly effective teachers by attending and creating virtual events. From holding virtual job fairs to facilitate principals interviewing applicants to holding virtual interviews, HCM maintained this crucial function to ensure preparedness for the 2020-21 school year despite working remotely from March and into the summer.

How was the Dallas ISD Alternative Certification program implemented?

Context of the Program

The purpose of the Dallas ISD Alternative Certification program is to prepare and certify new teachers who have not completed traditional teacher certification. The program provides support and training to new teacher interns. Title II funds were used to supplement the recruitment, screening, and training efforts of the program. Intern candidate applications were first screened for program eligibility. If eligible, candidates were granted a phone interview. Upon passing the phone interview, candidates were invited to an on-site interview, which included a group interview and a one-on-one interview with an Alternative Certification staff member. The final pool attended a seven-week pre-service training program prior to program acceptance.

During the pre-service program, Alternative Certification staff members trained on teaching techniques and best practices; interns received field experience in classrooms. A new policy required interns to pass a content examination in the certification area before teaching in the program.

³ To qualify, teachers must have a standard Texas teacher certification, at least two years of teaching experience in Dallas ISD, and be rated Proficient I or higher under the Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI). Once selected, the district continued to pursue the teacher's permanent residence process if legal avenues were available.

⁴ More information about the TechTeach Program can be found in this Texas Tech article: <http://today.ttu.edu/2013/10/innovative-techteach-program-aims-to-better-prepare-teaching-candidates>.

⁵ In-person classes shifted to virtual instruction in March 2020.

After pre-service training, interns were assigned to a campus, a mentor, and a teacher effectiveness coordinator. Mentor teachers were required to observe and provide continual feedback. Teacher effectiveness coordinators observed interns at least three times. During observations, coordinators provided support and immediate feedback to allow interns to monitor progress and adjust performance.

Interns were fully certified as teachers after passing the *Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness (ACE)* and committee approval. The committee reviewed principal and mentor teacher recommendations and decided whether an intern should become certified, stay in the program for one more year, or be denied certification.

2019-20 Alternative Certification Interns

A total of 131 interns enrolled in the Alternative Certification program between summer 2019 and spring 2020 (see Table 1). For comparison, 93 interns enrolled between summer 2018 and spring 2019 (Watson, 2019).

Table 1: 2019-20 Enrolled Interns by Certification Area

Certification Area	Interns N
Art Early Childhood-12	7
Bilingual Core Subjects Early Childhood-6	3
Core Subjects 4-8	1
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6 & Science of Teaching Reading	15
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6	19
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6 with English as a Second Language	11
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6 with English as a Second Language/Special Education	1
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6 with Special Education	2
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6/Special Education & Science of Teaching Reading	5
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6/Bilingual & Science of Teaching Reading	11
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6/English as a Second Language & Science of Teaching Reading	3
Core Subjects Early Childhood-6/English as a Second Language & Science of Teaching Reading	3
English Language Arts and Reading 7-12 with English as a Second Language	15
Languages Other Than English: Spanish	3
Math 7-12	5
Music Early Childhood-12	2
Physical Education Early Childhood-12	5
Science 7-12	6
Social Studies 7-12	17
Total	131

Source: Alternative Certification internal records retrieved 05/19/20.

Of those who completed the Alternative Certification program in 2018-19, 82 percent ($n = 76$) continued to teach in Dallas ISD during the 2019-20 school year. As for those who completed the program in 2017-18, 67 percent ($n = 92$) continued to teach in Dallas ISD during the 2018-19 school year. Of those who finished in 2016-17, 84 percent ($n = 113$) continued to teach during the 2017-18 school year.

Response to Impact of COVID-19

All regularly scheduled meetings transitioned to Microsoft Teams Platform. AC staff meetings, field facilitator meetings, and teacher quality training meetings continued with no gap after spring break. Likewise, recruiting efforts went on as planned in exclusively online formats.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the key findings, along with the transition to remote work, the following recommendations are offered for stakeholders.

Consider soliciting teacher feedback. As district departments shifted to a remote work model during the spring and summer, teachers, candidates, and interns were asked to adjust to rapidly changing practices and policies. The departments should consider seeking feedback via survey from stakeholders for guidance about what worked well and what could be improved in the implementation of remote work.

Continue utilizing remote work tools to supplement recruitment and training efforts. Once the threat of COVID-19 eventually passes, all departments will resume functioning in their usual way. Departments should examine which practices that arose out of necessity during the remote work era should be permanently implemented due to their increased efficiency, cost effectiveness, or other benefits.

Determine whether teachers hired through alternative certification programs are successful. As more Dallas ISD teachers are being hired through alternative certification programs, it will be important to ascertain that the programs are producing high-quality teachers.

REFERENCE

Watson, C. E. (2019). 2018-19 Evaluation of Title II Programs. Dallas, TX. Dallas Independent School District.

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C. Elizabeth Watson, M.P.A., Evaluation Analyst II

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For more information, please contact Program Evaluation at evaluation@dallasisd.org.