



# EXAMINING THE EVIDENCE

## *NIET's Initiatives Improve Educator Effectiveness and Student Achievement*

**A**t the 2016 American Educational Research Association (AERA) national conference, the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) presented five research studies. These studies illustrate the impact of NIET's partnerships on student achievement, teacher and school leader effectiveness, retention of effective educators, new teacher preparation and school climate.

- Narrowing the Gap: Examining Achievement Gaps in Indiana TAP Schools
- Impact Evaluation of the TAP System in Orangeburg School District Three (South Carolina)
- Building Relationships With School Partners and University Faculty to Enhance Teacher Preparation
- Measuring and Assessing Classroom Instruction: Properties of TAP Observational Rubric Scores
- Voices from the Field: Teachers' Reported Experiences Amid Education Reforms

In addition to the research studies presented at AERA demonstrating the impact of TAP on educator effectiveness and student achievement growth, two additional research papers were released focusing on the impact of TAP in high-need schools in rural Tennessee and high-need urban schools in Phoenix, Arizona.

### *Increasing Student Learning Growth in Rural Tennessee Communities*

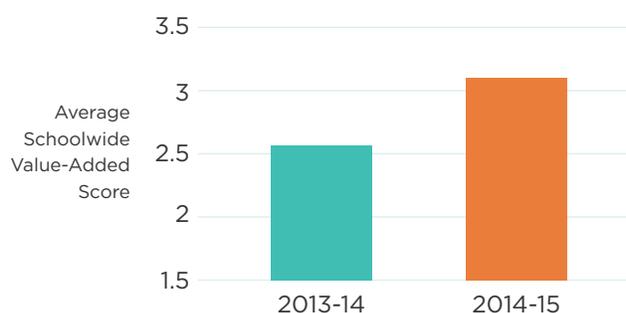
With support from a federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF-4) grant, NIET partnered with five rural

Tennessee school districts to implement TAP in 11 schools beginning in the 2012-13 school year. The first year (2012-13) was a planning year; implementation of the TAP System began during the 2013-14 school year. Barnett and Hudgens (2016) examined the impact of TAP implementation on teacher and administrator effectiveness and student achievement.

The authors drew from Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibility (SKR) scores as a measure of teacher effectiveness. To be considered effective, teachers must have received an SKR score of 2.5 or higher on a one to five scale. In 2013-14 and 2014-15, 100 percent of teachers met the SKR effectiveness criteria.

As teacher and administrator effectiveness improved, authors examined the impact on student achievement. Examining value-added scores across time, they found 10 of the 11 schools remained stable or improved. Further, across 2013-14 and 2014-15, the overall schoolwide value-added average increased from 2.55 to 3.09, as seen in Figure 1.

**FIGURE 1: TENNESSEE TAP SCHOOLS INCREASE STUDENT LEARNING GROWTH**



### *Increasing the Effectiveness of Teachers and School Leaders in High-Need Arizona Schools*

With support from a U.S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF-3) grant, the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College at Arizona State University (ASU) partnered with NIET, 10 Arizona public school districts, and the Arizona Department of Education to implement the TAP System in 58 schools. Titled the Arizona Ready-for-Rigor (AZRfR) Project, the grant provided the participating schools with continuous assistance and support from master and mentor teachers, professional development opportunities and competitive payouts based on effectiveness ratings generated through classroom observations and growth in student achievement.

The ASU College Research & Evaluation Services Team's assessment of the project's impact revealed successes in the following five areas:

1. **Increases in Teacher Effectiveness:** Teacher effectiveness was based on SKR scores, schoolwide value-added scores and classroom value-added scores (if applicable). The percentage of teachers deemed effective increased from 62 percent in 2011-12 to 74 percent in 2014-15, as seen in Figure 2.
2. **Increases in Administrator Effectiveness:** Administrator effectiveness was based on four measures for principals and three measures for assistant principals. The percentage of administrators deemed effective increased from 31 percent in 2011-12 to 67 percent in 2014-15, as seen in Figure 2.
3. **Increases in Retention of Highly Effective Educators:** The percentage of teachers who met effectiveness criteria in one school year and were retained into the next school year was examined. The percentage of effective teachers who were retained into the next school year increased each year.
4. **Improvements in School Culture:** Teachers responded to a survey on working conditions. The percentage of teachers responding favorably on elements of school culture increased from 46 percent in 2011-12 to 78 percent in 2014-15.
5. **Improvement in Student Achievement:** Arizona schools received A-F letter grades as part of the accountability grading system for all public charter and district schools. For schools that began implementing the TAP System in 2010-11, the number of schools earning an A increased from 0 (of 9) in 2010-11 to 3 (of 9) in 2014-15.

**FIGURE 2: ARIZONA READY-FOR-RIGOR TEACHER & ADMINISTRATOR EFFECTIVENESS**

