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NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

TAP Research Summary

Examining the Evidence for the Impact of *TAP: The System for Teacher
and Student Advancement*

November 2016

Researchers at NIET and elsewhere have studied the effectiveness of *TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement* (TAP) in raising student achievement, improving the quality of instruction, and increasing the ability of high-need schools to recruit, retain and support effective teachers. This document describes some of the most recent results that have emerged from the research on the TAP System to date. Data collection and analysis efforts are ongoing, and the findings described here will be updated periodically as information becomes available.

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NIET Mission

Recognizing that an effective teacher is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Goldhaber, 2002; Hanushek, 2013; Headden, 2014; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Simon & Johnson, 2013; TNTP, 2012), NIET is committed to ensuring a highly skilled, strongly motivated, and competitively compensated teacher for every classroom in America. NIET supports states, districts and schools in recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining high-quality human capital in order to raise achievement levels for all students (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2015). NIET provides both on-site and online support across multiple aspects of educator effectiveness through educator evaluation, professional development and teacher leadership. This support is delivered both on-site and online through the comprehensive *TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement* (TAP) and customizable Educator Effectiveness Best Practices. As of the 2016-17 school year, NIET initiatives are impacting over 200,000 educators and more than 2.5 million students.

TAP: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement Description

Introduced in 1999, “the TAP System has grown significantly as a comprehensive educator evaluation and support model for increasing educator effectiveness” (National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 2015, p. 4). The TAP System creates multiple career paths for teachers, provides ongoing applied professional development using a rigorous rubric of evaluation, and provides performance-based compensation to teachers and administrators. Each of these core elements is discussed below. For more information, visit www.niet.org.

- Multiple career paths. In TAP schools, skilled teachers have the opportunity to serve as master and mentor teachers, receiving additional compensation for providing high levels of support to career teachers and increasing instructional effectiveness across the faculty. Master and mentor teachers form a leadership team, along with administrators, to deliver school-based professional support and conduct evaluations with a high level of expertise.
- Ongoing applied professional growth. Led by master and mentor teachers, TAP teachers participate in weekly meetings where they examine student data, engage in collaborative planning, and learn instructional strategies that have been field-tested in their own schools. Teachers benefit from a national TAP database of instructional strategies and their colleagues' experiences. Professional development continues in the classroom as master teachers model lessons, observe classroom instruction, and support teachers' pedagogical improvement.
- Instructionally focused accountability. TAP teachers are observed in classroom instruction several times a year by multiple trained observers, including principals and master and mentor teachers, using rubrics for several dimensions of instructional effectiveness. Evaluators are trained and certified, and leadership teams monitor the reliability and consistency of evaluations in their schools. These classroom evaluations are complemented by analyzing student achievement growth, rounding out a multi-measure system of teacher evaluation. Evaluation results are used as formative feedback in one-on-one mentoring sessions, and guide planning for individualized professional development.
- Performance-based compensation. TAP teachers have the opportunity to earn annual bonuses based on their observed skills, knowledge, and responsibilities, their students' average achievement growth, and school-wide achievement growth. Master and mentor teachers receive additional compensation based on their added roles and responsibilities, and principals can earn additional compensation based on school-wide achievement growth and other measures of effectiveness.

Educator Effectiveness Best Practices Center Description

The NIET Educator Effectiveness Best Practices Center provides innovative services, support, and solutions to schools, districts, and states to improve educator effectiveness. Based on more than a decade of experience in schools across the country, NIET works with its partners to redesign educator evaluation, deliver effective professional development, implement performance-based compensation systems, and train teacher leaders in schools. The BPC offers a network of expert trainers and access to a range of innovative Web-based resources and tools. For more information, visit www.niet.org/best-practices-center/services/.

NIET Initiative Comparisons and Results

Since 1999, the TAP System of comprehensive educator effectiveness has operated across multiple states in hundreds of schools. TAP has grown steadily in the number of schools participating, the majority of which are high-needs schools (over 90% of participating schools). In addition to schools and districts implementing the full TAP System, a number of states, districts, and schools are using TAP System core elements – in particular, the online portal which houses hundreds of hours of effective teaching across subjects and grade levels, the TAP teacher observational rubric, and the certification and recertification process for educator evaluators.

TAP System Evaluation Methods Compared to Traditional Evaluation Methods

To improve the quality of classroom instruction, the quality of each teacher’s instruction must be assessed. Traditional school systems have not been successful at measuring and assessing classroom instruction. The New Teacher Project (TNTP) published a revealing report in 2009 showing that schools fail to evaluate their teachers in any meaningful way (Weisberg, Sexton, Mulhern, & Keeling, 2009). As TNTP reported, most teachers were rated at the very highest levels (replicated as Figure 1 below), despite the fact that most schools were not performing at these highest levels on achievement indicators.

A 2014 report from the National Council on Teacher Quality (NCTQ, 2014) indicated that while improvements in educator evaluation have occurred since the 2009 report, still many of the same problems persist. Given that differences in teacher effectiveness represent the single most important school-related factor affecting student learning, accurately measuring differences in teacher performance is critical to the improvement of teaching and learning.

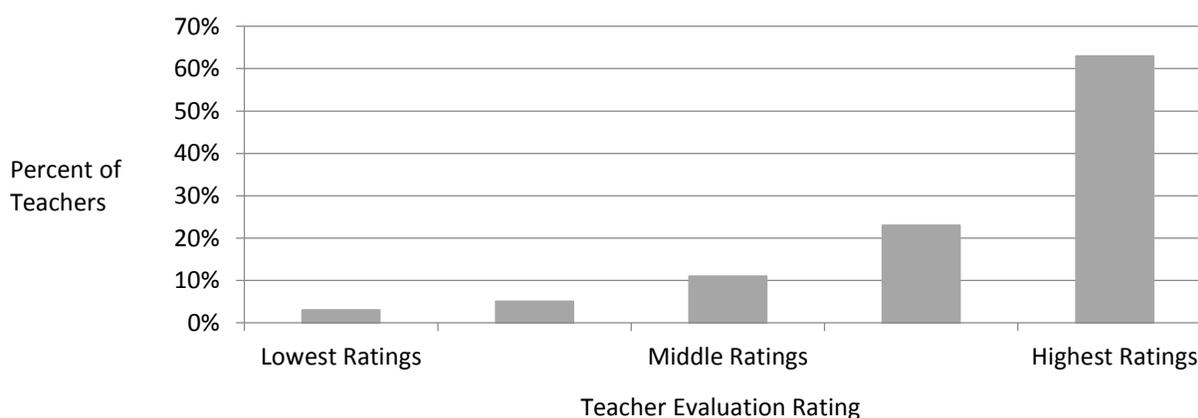
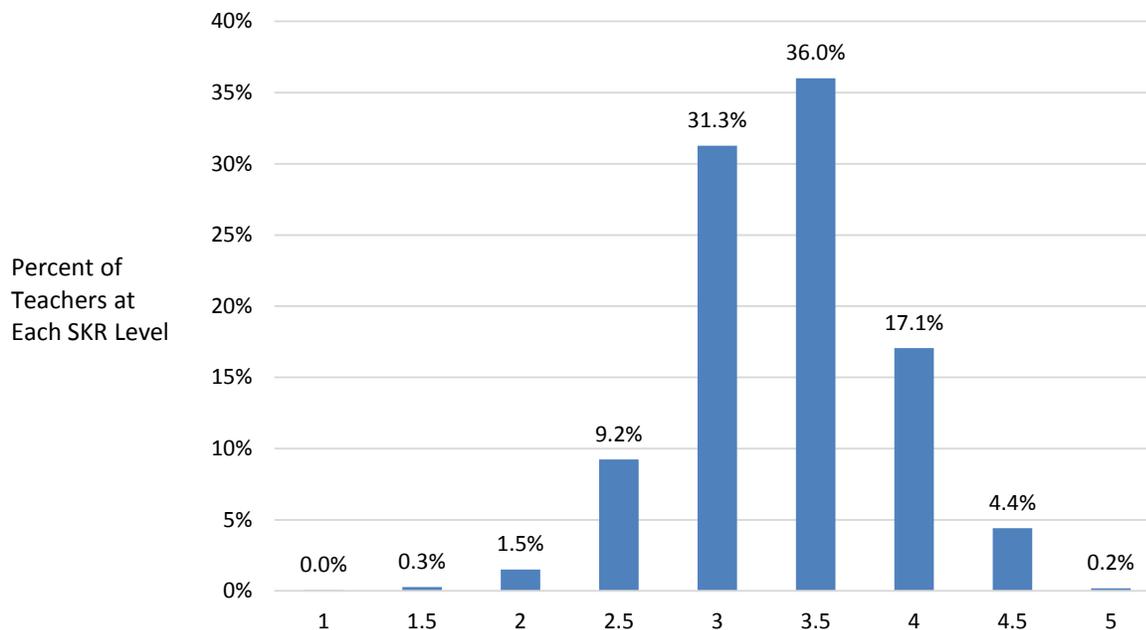


Figure 1. Traditional Teacher Evaluation Scores.¹

¹ Teacher evaluation in five urban school districts, based on data taken from <http://widgeteffect.org/downloads/TheWidgetEffect.pdf>. Scores on a 3-point and 4-point scale have been interpolated to a 5-point scale using a cumulative probability density function based on reported data.

In contrast to traditional evaluation methods noted previously in Figure 1, the TAP System has developed a comprehensive approach to teacher evaluation and incentives that depends on multiple measures of both teaching practice and teaching outcomes. This system provides differentiated feedback for teacher improvement, in contrast to the often found inflated ratings found in evaluation systems (see Figure 2).



Note: Teacher Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibilities distribution of TAP evaluations using 1-5 scale in half-point increments. Figure based on 10,281 teachers and approximately 41,124 observations, 2014-15

Figure 2. Observational Ratings of Teachers in TAP Schools.

The above ratings are based only on the classroom evaluation component of the TAP System, before considering student learning growth measures. Teachers are observed several times a year by multiple trained and certified raters who consider 19 areas of effective instructional practice. These observers use a multi-dimensional, research-based set of standards and rubrics that are fair, transparent, and curriculum-independent. Results are provided immediately as feedback to the teacher in post-observation mentoring sessions. The scores from all observations of these 19 classroom indicators are combined with seven responsibility indicators at the end of the school year to create an overall Skills, Knowledge, and Responsibilities (SKR) score for each teacher. On a scale of 1.0 to 5.0, 1 represents unsatisfactory performance on a certain standard, 3 represents proficiency on that standard, and 5 represents exemplary performance on that standard. Teachers earn scores in increments of 0.5.

TAP Teachers Demonstrate Consistent Improvement across Time

TAP results show a steady improvement in observed skills during the course of the school year. Figure 3 shows recent improvement for teachers in TAP nationally. This shows the improvement in instructional quality scores over a two-year period. In the data shown, despite a slight dip over the summer, teachers demonstrated an overall path of improvement that continued over both years. This graph is based on a sample including all TAP schools during the years 2012-2014.

We tracked a cohort of 5,469 teachers through observations grouped into six periods in fall, winter and spring of the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The cohort was composed of teachers working in TAP schools both years, with observations in each of the observation periods. Teachers present in only one school year or who lacked an observation in one of the quarters were excluded from the sample. Including teachers present in only some of the periods would have complicated efforts to compare the level of instructional quality at different time points, since each average could reflect substantially different groups of teachers.

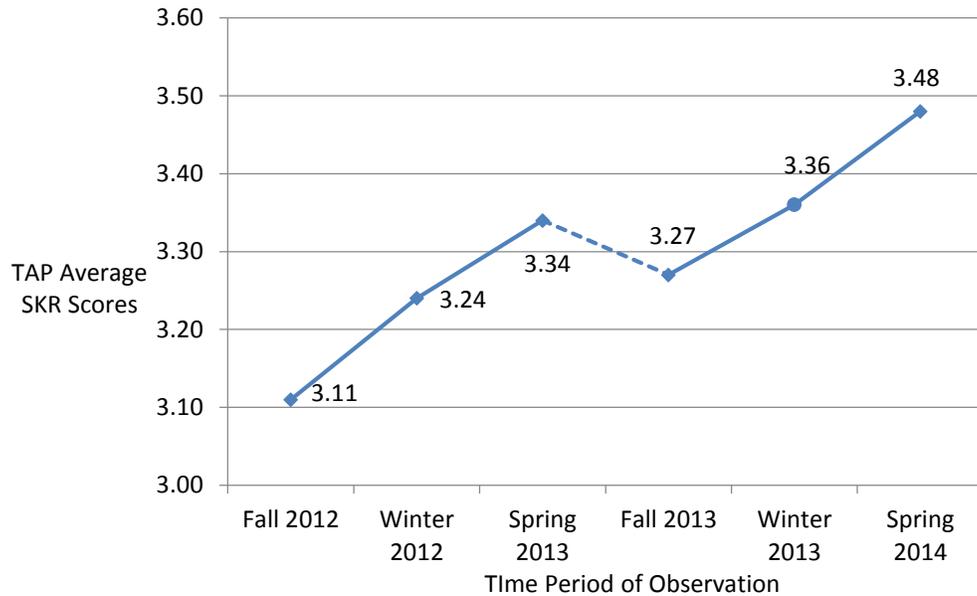
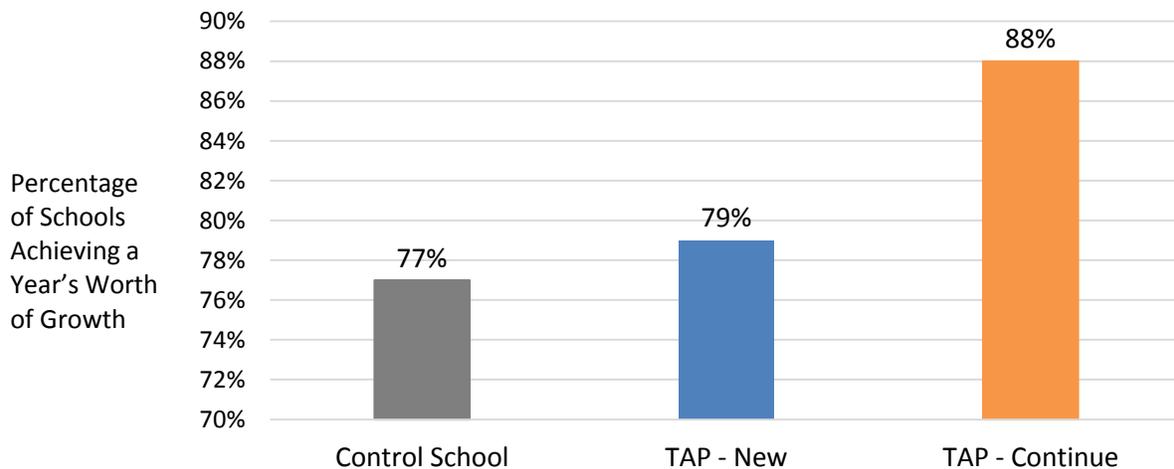


Figure 3. Teacher Instructional Improvement across Time.

Within the TAP System, improvements to teacher instructional practices translate into gains in student achievement. More importantly, these improvements increase over time.



Note: Figure created with raw school-level, composite math and reading score data provided by SAS® for control (n=3,870) and TAP schools (n=353).

Figure 4. Student Achievement Growth by TAP System Status.

TAP Impact in Schools and Districts

A notable success of the TAP System is the expanding preponderance of performance data that comes from examining the impact of the system across multiple locations and conducted by different researchers using varied methodological frameworks (Algiers Charter School Association, 2011; Barnett, Hudgens, & Alexander, 2016a; Barnett, Rinthapol, & Alexander, 2015; Barnett, Rinthapol, & Hudgens, 2014; Barnett, Wills, Hudgens, & Alexander, 2015; Buck & Coffelt, 2013; Daley & Kim, 2010; Hudson, 2010; Schacter & Thum, 2005; Schacter et al., 2002; Schacter, Thum, Reifsneider, & Schiff, 2004; Solmon, White, Cohen, & Woo, 2007). The next section discusses several of these studies demonstrating the impact of the TAP System. Following this general review, two new studies, a project spotlight, and results from the 2016 TAP Attitude Survey are presented.

Results from Prior Selected Studies of TAP's Impact

- Mann, Leutscher, and Reardon (2013) examined the impact of the TAP System across fifteen schools in Louisiana. In order to determine impact, a one-to-one nearest-neighbor matching algorithm with replacements was created to find a comparison school for each TAP school. Based on the propensity scores computed using the selection model, the algorithm chooses the non-TAP school with the propensity score closest to the propensity score of the TAP school. There was no significant difference between the TAP schools and their matched comparison schools in the pretreatment year, $t(26) = 0.080, p > 0.05$. However, results of the study indicate that in the four primary subjects assessed, there was a significant effect in favor of the TAP schools for ELA: $F(1, 6421) = 6.334, p = 0.012$; Mathematics: $F(1, 6421) = 86.386, p = 0.000$; Science: $F(1, 7084) = 31.792, p = 0.000$; and Social Studies: $F(1, 7085) = 87.411, p = 0.000$. Further, the study examined the impact of the TAP System across time to find that the TAP schools significantly outperform comparison schools, $F(1, 24) = 5.30, p = 0.031$. The study also found that 92% of teachers reported that TAP made a positive difference on student achievement in their school and 91% reported that the AYP status was improved as a result of the TAP System.
- In 2010, Hudson examined the effect of the TAP System on student achievement across 151 schools in 10 states. Hudson used a statistical control matching method to ensure that the TAP schools and the comparison schools were equivalent prior to the intervention being implemented. Hudson also used a differences-in-differences approach to further account for any differences between the groups and to ensure that the evaluation was able to isolate the impact of the program. Results of the study indicate that students in TAP schools outperformed students in comparison schools by approximately 0.15 standard deviations in mathematics, and smaller effects but in favor of the TAP schools in reading. Hudson explains these findings in context to other education interventions by noting that “the estimated effect of TAP on mathematics achievement is more than twice as large [as class size reduction effects]” (p. 28).
- In 2007, Solmon et al. analyzed the impacts of the TAP System in terms of value-added gain scores across 650 classrooms in six states, including 61 TAP schools and 285 control schools. Researchers analyzed the student achievement gains at two levels of comparison—teacher-to-teacher and school-to-school. To evaluate TAP teachers (and similarly in evaluating TAP schools), researchers calculated the effect of each teacher on student progress as assessed by the difference between the actual average scores of the teacher's students and the expected average scores of those students (as derived from previous scores). Through this process, researchers created a statistical control group for the TAP teachers based on performance. Results of the study indicate that in every state more TAP teachers demonstrated statistically significant at or above average amount of student achievement growth than control group teachers. Further, TAP schools outperformed their controls in 57% of the categories in math and in 67% of the categories in reading.

- In their 2002 study, Schacter et al. analyzed the growth in achievement of students (n=3,319) whose schools implemented the TAP System compared to the growth of achievement of students (n=7,055) from matched comparison schools. The schools were matched on achievement (percentile rank in Reading, Mathematics, and Language), school size, percent of students eligible for free lunch, school configuration, and location. A statewide cluster analysis was conducted to match the schools. Beyond the matched comparisons, the results in achievement were based on a multi-level value-added model utilizing prior test scores as covariates. Results of the analysis revealed that TAP schools made significantly higher improvements in student achievement gains. Further, this study found that those schools that implemented the TAP System with higher fidelity more significantly outperformed comparison schools.
- In their 2004 follow-up study, Schacter et al. examined the impact of the TAP System across 11 schools. The same cluster level analysis with multi-level multivariate analyses were employed using all available covariates to compare growth between the TAP and control schools. Results from the study indicate that 65% of the TAP schools outperformed their matched controls in reading, language, and mathematics achievement, with the magnitude of change ranging from 6% to 46%. The teacher satisfaction component of this study indicated strong support for the four core principles of the TAP System.
- In 2014, Barnett, Wills, and Kirby evaluated the impact of the TAP System across 66 schools in Louisiana using two rigorous analytic strategies. First, the authors employed a linear regression to compare 2012-13 Assessment Index (AI) performance of the 66 TAP schools and non-TAP schools statewide, controlling for prior (2010-11) achievement, percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunch, school configuration, school size (number of students), and percentage of English language learners. Controlling for the covariates, implementation of the TAP System showed a significant positive effect on 2012-13 achievement: the 66 TAP schools scored 3.7 points higher on average than non-TAP schools ($p < .01$). Second, the authors compared the 66 TAP schools with a propensity score matched group of non-TAP schools. The average 2012-13 AI for TAP schools (64.45) was 5.47 points greater than the average for the matched controls (58.98).
- In their 2014 study, Barnett and Hudgens drew upon a sample of 12,095 teacher-level records, representing 413 schools in 10 states, to examine teacher retention rates in schools that implemented the TAP System during the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years. Counter to national trends, the authors found that TAP System schools retain 14% more teachers than similar high-needs comparison schools and 10% more than the national average. Furthermore, the results indicate teachers retained in TAP schools become more effective over time as measured by observational and value-added scores.
- In 2016, Barnett, Wills, & Hudgens examined the impact of TAP implementation on teacher effectiveness and student achievement in Orangeburg Consolidated School District 3 (OGB3). Drawing from teacher observation scores the authors found that in 2014-15, 95% of teachers met the effectiveness criterion, an 8% increase from 2013-14 and an 11% increase from 2012-13. The authors also compared the student achievement of OGB3 TAP schools to: 1) other schools with similar student profiles, using the comparison information provided by the South Carolina Department of Education report cards, and 2) a comparison group of covariate matched schools. Results indicate that from 2011-12 to 2014-15, OGB3 elementary, middle, and high school students improved in the percentage of students meeting or exceeding standards in math and science, relative to comparison schools.
- Barnett and Wills (2016a) examined the impact of the TAP System on Black-White and Hispanic-White achievement gaps in Indiana schools. First, the authors compared achievement gaps in 32 TAP schools

that began implementing TAP in school year 2010-11 with other Indiana schools. Study results indicate TAP schools have narrowed the Black-White gap in ELA and Hispanic-White gap in ELA and math more than other Indiana schools have. Second, the authors selected propensity score matched control schools separately for 1) the 20 TAP schools reporting data for Black and White students in 2009-10 and 2013-14, 2) the 24 TAP schools reporting data for Hispanic and White students in 2009-10 and 2013-14. Study results indicate TAP schools outperformed their matched schools; while achievement gaps at the TAP schools narrowed, most gaps at the matched schools widened.

- Barnett and Wills (2016b) investigated the stability over time of classroom observation scores from the TAP System rubric, as well as the relationships between TAP observational scores and value-added measures. The correlations between average SKR scores in the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years were highly significant and large, particularly for consecutive school years. Further, the examination of correlations between average SKR scores and classroom value-added scores in the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years revealed highly significant correlations. To put these findings into context, the authors examined the reported correlations across other observational measures used in large-scale research studies and discovered these correlations exceed or match the range reported in recent literature – evidence that the TAP observation rubric measures aspects of teacher practice that contribute to improved student test performance.

Results from New Selected Studies of TAP’s Impact

The TAP System in Rural Tennessee

With support from a federal Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF-4) grant, NIET partnered with five rural Tennessee school districts to implement TAP in eleven 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. In both 2013-14 and 2014-15, 100% of teachers met the SKR effectiveness criteria. As shown in Figure 5, examination of the overall SKR mean indicates improvement in pedagogical practices over time; the overall SKR mean increased from 2013-14 ($M = 3.56, SD = 0.40$) to 2014-15 ($M = 3.76, SD = 0.44$). Figure 5 also shows that teachers who were retained from 2013-14 to 2014-15 and, therefore, had SKR scores at both time points, made significant improvements in instructional skills from 2013-14 ($M = 3.56; SD = 0.40$) to 2014-15 ($M = 3.81; SD = 0.41$), $t(272) = 12.76, p = .00, d = 0.61$.

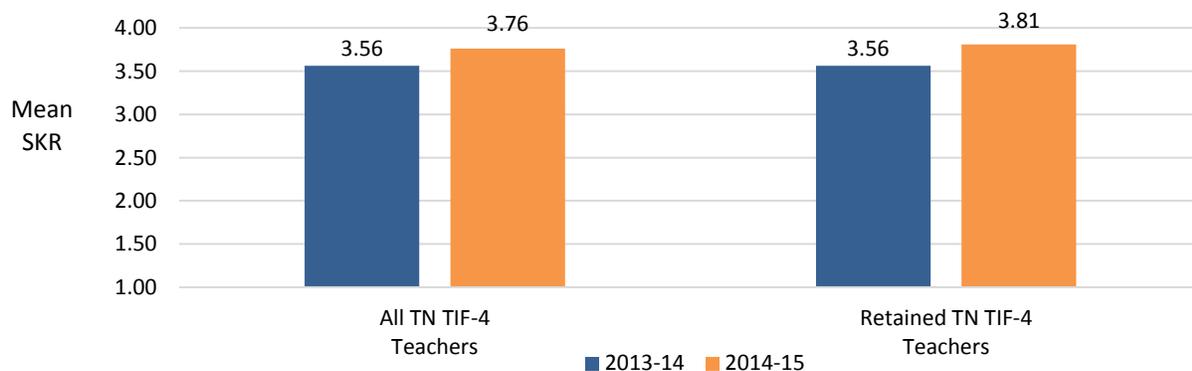


Figure 5. TN TIF-4 Mean SKR Scores, by Year.

The authors drew from school-wide student growth scores, performance on the Tennessee Instructional Leadership Standards (TILS), and scores on the TAP Leadership Team (TLT) Observation Rubric as measures of administrator effectiveness. From 2013-14 to 2014-15 there was a 6% increase in the percentage of principals achieving at least one year’s expected growth of students in their schools. Additionally, in 2014-15, 94% of administrators obtained TILS scores of at least 3, a 3% increase from the percentage meeting this criteria in 2013-14. Further, as shown in Figure 6 below, the average TLT score increased .50 from 2013-14 to 2014-15. Figure 6 also shows that administrators who were retained from 2013-14 to 2014-15, and, therefore, had TLT scores at both time points, made significant improvements from 2013-14 ($M = 2.94$; $SD = 0.54$) to 2014-15 ($M = 3.44$; $SD = 0.54$), $t(15) = 3.65$, $p = .002$, $d = 0.92$.

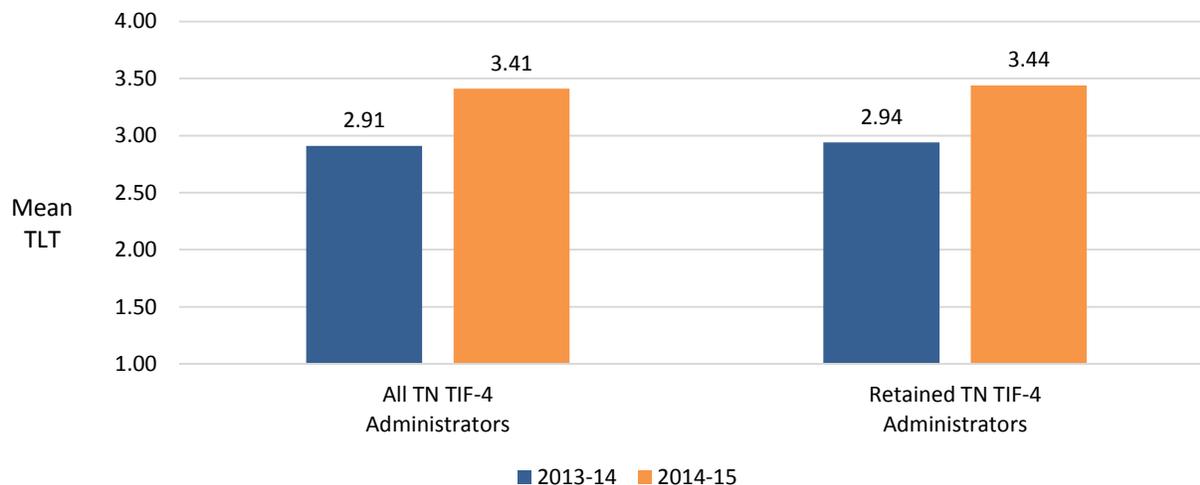


Figure 6. TN TIF-4 Mean TLT Scores, by Year.

As teacher and administrator effectiveness improved, the authors examined the impact on student achievement. Examining value-added scores across time, the authors found ten of the eleven schools remained stable or improved. Further, across 2013-14 to 2014-15, the overall school-wide value-added mean increased over time, from 2.55 ($SD = 1.86$) in 2013-14 to 3.09 ($SD = 1.87$) in 2014-15, a significant increase (see Figure 7).

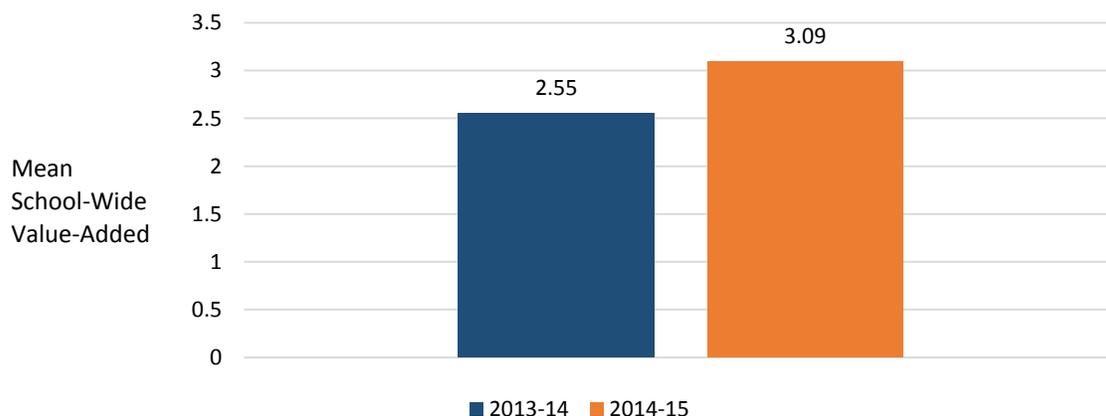


Figure 7. TN TIF-4 Mean School-wide Value-Added Score, by Year

TAP System Perspectives: Administrator Perceptions of the TAP System Across Time

Barnett, Hudgens, and Alexander (2016b) longitudinally explored administrators' perceptions of the TAP System and its impact. The authors drew from the TAP Attitude Survey data of 167 administrators, representing 119 schools in 11 states, who worked in TAP schools in both the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school years. Study results revealed administrators report favorable opinions of the elements of TAP. Additionally, administrators perceived positive TAP System impacts, and perceptions of these impacts have strengthened over the course of TAP System implementation.

The authors found that support for the TAP System is high and growing among administrators. Figure 8 demonstrates administrators' strong level of support for the four core elements of TAP², and further shows the sustained high level of support over time. Administrators consistently expressed the strongest support for the instructionally focused accountability component. At both examined time points, approximately 99% of administrators reported that they moderately or strongly supported this multi-measure system of teacher evaluation. As one administrator wrote, "TAP has provided a researched-based evaluation tool that helps teachers with professional development and strategies that they can use in their class immediately."

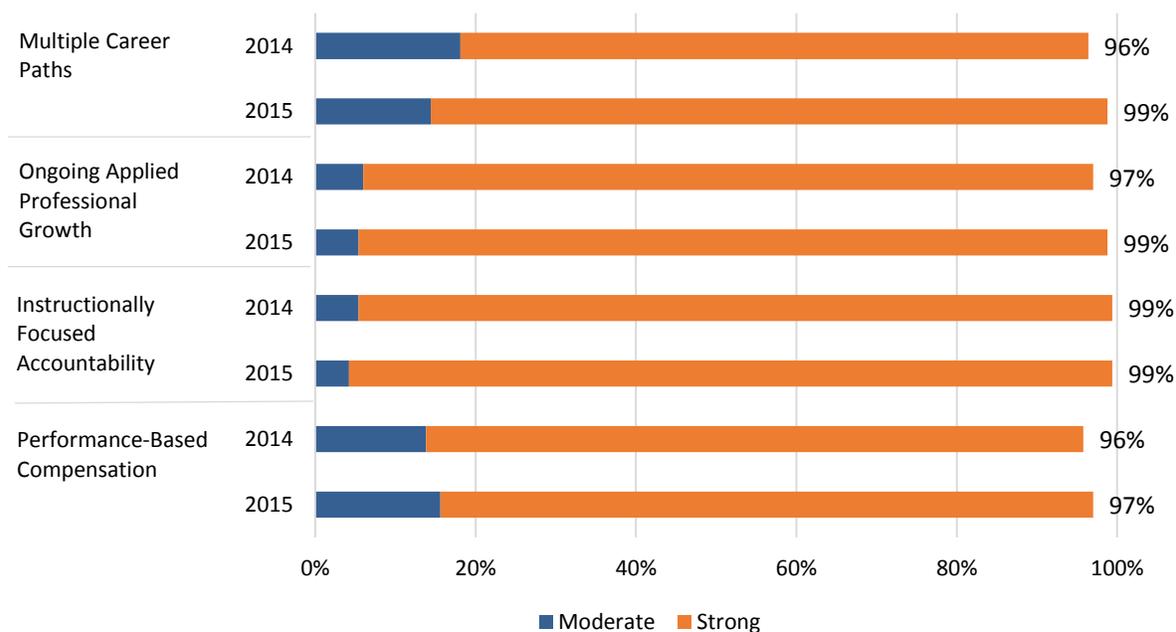


Figure 8. Level of Administrator Reported Support for TAP System Core Elements.

Critics of performance measures and incentives for teachers often indicate such policies will result in competitiveness and a loss of collegiality among teachers. Notwithstanding, the authors find evidence of a high degree of collegiality in TAP schools. In both 2013-14 and 2014-15, 100% of administrators reported that they moderately or strongly agreed with statements reporting a high level of collegiality in their schools. Further, as shown in Figure 9, the percentage of administrators reporting strong agreement increased over time, such that by 2014-15, 97% of administrators reported strong agreement.

² The five dimensions represented in this and the next figure are constructed from multiple administrator survey items using factor analysis. Most items in the survey are based on a 5-point Likert scale indicating agreement (1=Not at all and 5=Very Much). For reporting purposes on the four TAP elements and collegiality, the results are presented as Moderate (weighted average of 3 on the items for that factor) and Strong (weighted average of 4 or 5 on the items for that factor).

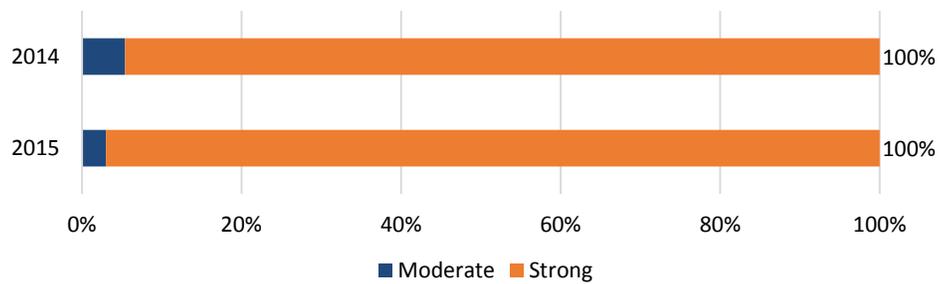


Figure 9. Level of Administrator Reported Support for Collegiality.

In addition to reporting support for the core elements of the TAP System, administrators reported multiple impacts of TAP. Administrators reported that implementation of the TAP System has impacted the effectiveness of their teachers. Administrator agreement with the statement that TAP has made their teachers more effective overall significantly increased from 2013-14 ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.86$) to 2014-15 ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.72$), $t(159) = 2.19$, $p = .03$, $d = 0.20$. One principal explained,

TAP has had a tremendous impact on our school. Teachers feel more confident in the classroom as a result of the professional development and understanding of the rubric. I have asked several teachers to compare their teaching now with how they taught prior to TAP. All of the teachers explained how their teaching is much more effective now than in previous years. None will go back to teaching the ‘old way’.

Further, administrators reported that the TAP System impacted teacher retention. The authors created a “retention” construct using five survey items. Over the course of TAP implementation, administrators report that their ability to recruit and retain teachers has significantly increased (2013-14: $M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.96$; 2014-15: $M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.97$, $t(164) = 2.53$, $p = .01$, $d = 0.16$). One administrator wrote,

TAP has had a profound impact on the culture shift occurring at my school. As ineffective teachers that have for many years been able to hide behind an inadequate system of evaluation are exposed, they have either seen the need for growth or have left the school. As each of them leaves, their replacements are better qualified.

Project Spotlight: Arizona Ready-for-Rigor

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 the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching, 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. Schools and districts joined the project at different phases of the five-year grant. The ASU College Research & Evaluation Services Team’s evaluation of its impact revealed successes in the following five areas:

1. **Increases in Teacher Effectiveness:** Teacher effectiveness was based on SKR scores, school-wide value-added, and classroom value-added (if applicable). The percentage of teachers deemed effective increased from 62% in 2011-12 to 74% in 2014-15 (Figure 10).
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% in 2011-12 to 67% in 2014-15 (Figure 10).

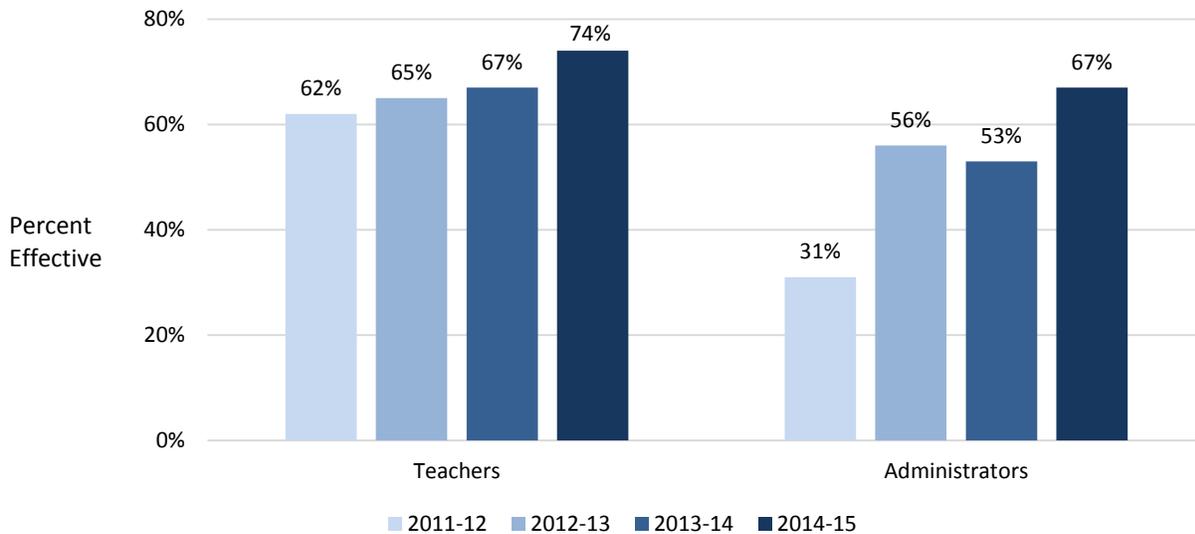


Figure 10. Arizona Ready-for-Rigor Teacher and Administrator Effectiveness.

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. As shown in Figure 11, the percentage of effective teachers who were retained increased each year.

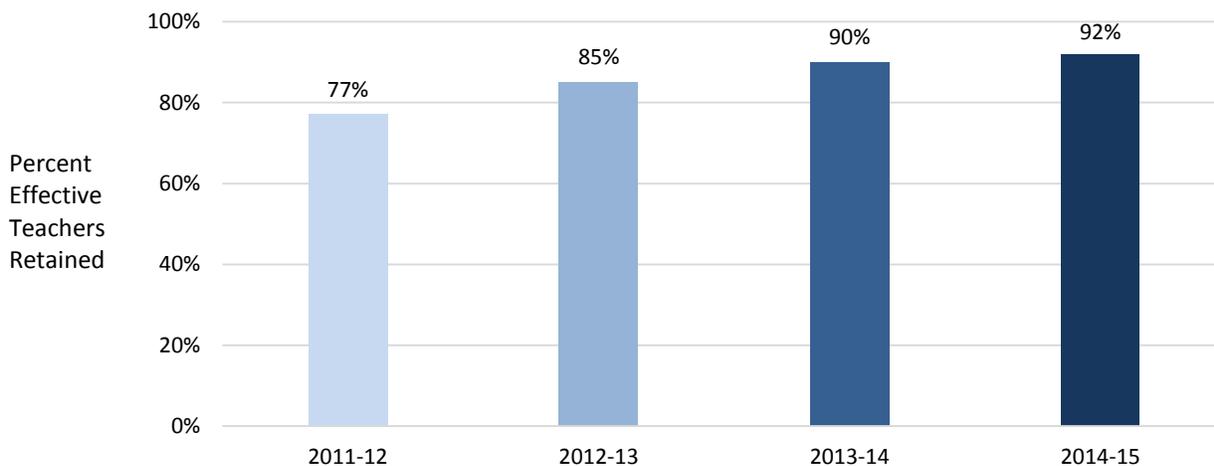


Figure 11. Arizona Ready-for-Rigor Retention of Highly Effective Teachers.

4. **Improvements in School Culture:** Teachers responded to a survey asking for opinions on aspects of working conditions, including time, facilities and resources, empowerment, and decision making. The percentage of teachers responding favorably on elements of school culture increased from 46% in 2011-12 to 78% 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.

National TAP Attitude Survey – 2016

Teacher Results – 2016 TAP Attitude Survey

We find evidence of a high degree of collegiality in TAP schools. In the 2016 TAP national survey of teacher attitudes, 94% of teachers in TAP schools agree with statements reporting a high level of collegiality in their schools, and over 70% report strong agreement. This evidence for collegiality has been remarkably high over the last decade, as shown in Figure 12³, which indicates that TAP System schools consistently have a collaborative and collegial environment.

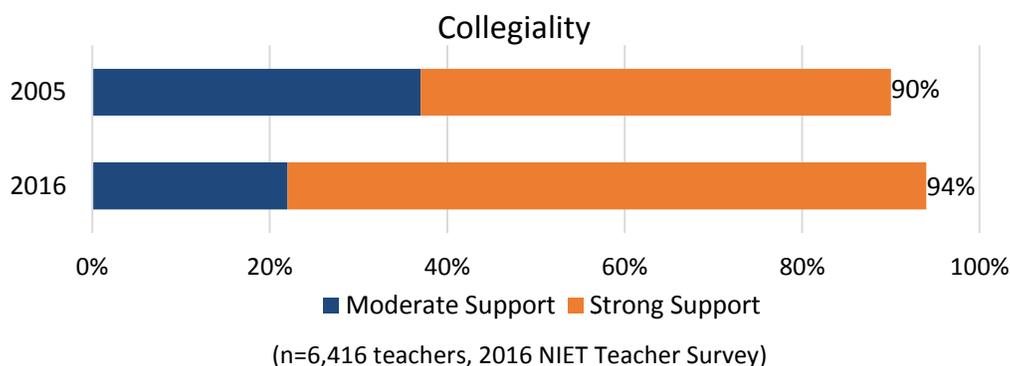


Figure 12. Level of Reported Support for Collegiality from Teachers Nationwide.

Beyond the overall high levels of reported collegiality within TAP schools, the levels of support for the specific elements of TAP including multiple career paths, ongoing professional growth, instructionally focused accountability and performance-based compensation are also high and growing, as shown in Figures 13-16.

A growing number of teachers report that the creation of teacher leader roles in their school has a positive impact on student achievement and school goals. Teacher leaders and administrators form a leadership team that articulates school goals and supports each teacher in developing and achieving their own instructional goals based on their skills and their students' needs. Teacher leadership roles also provide a pathway for teachers to make a greater contribution to the instructional excellence of a school without leaving the classroom.

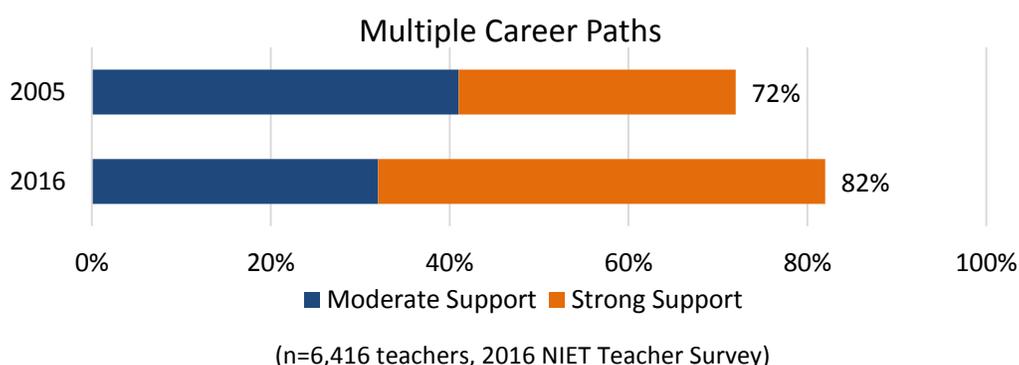


Figure 13. Level of Reported Support for Multiple Career Paths from Teachers Nationwide.

³ The five dimensions represented in this and the next four figures are constructed from multiple teacher survey items using factor analysis. Most items in the survey are based on a 5-point Likert scale indicating agreement (1=Not at all and 5=Very Much). For reporting purposes on the four TAP elements and collegiality, the results are presented as Moderate (weighted average of 3 on the items for that factor) and Strong (weighted average of 4 or 5 on the items for that factor).

In TAP schools, master and mentor teachers lead weekly cluster group meetings where they examine student data, engage in collaborative planning, and discuss instructional strategies that have been field-tested in their own schools. Teachers benefit from access to a national TAP database of instructional strategies and their colleagues' experiences. Professional development continues in the classroom as master teachers model lessons, observe classroom instruction, and support teachers' pedagogical improvement. Figure 14 demonstrates the strong level of support for the professional growth that occurs in TAP schools, and further shows the sustained high level of support.

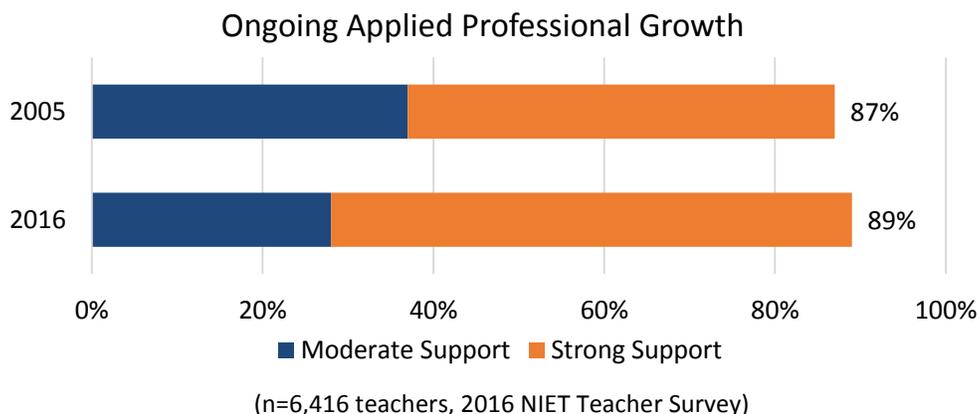


Figure 14. Level of Reported Support for Ongoing Applied Professional Growth from Teachers Nationwide.

TAP teachers are observed in classroom instruction multiple times a year by multiple trained observers, including principals and master and mentor teachers, using rubrics measuring indicators of instructional effectiveness. Evaluators are trained and certified, and leadership teams monitor the reliability and consistency of evaluations in their schools. These classroom evaluations are complemented by analyzing student achievement growth, rounding out a multi-measure system of teacher evaluation. Evaluation results are used as formative feedback in one-on-one mentoring sessions, and guide planning for cluster group meetings. Figure 15 illustrates the strong level of support reported by TAP teachers across the nation.

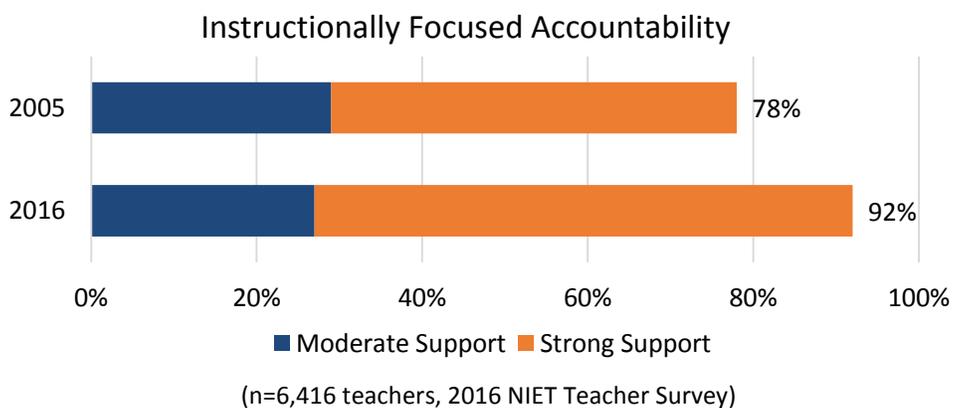


Figure 15. Level of Reported Support for Instructionally Focused Accountability from Teachers Nationwide.

TAP teachers have the opportunity to earn annual bonuses based on their observed skills, knowledge and responsibilities, their students' average achievement growth, and school-wide achievement growth. Master and mentor teachers receive additional compensation based on their added roles and responsibilities, and principals can earn additional compensation based on school-wide achievement

growth and other measures of effectiveness. Figure 16 demonstrates the level of support for the performance-based compensation system from TAP teachers. Levels of support for performance-based compensation in TAP schools has increased significantly over time, from 49% in 2005 to 79% in 2016.

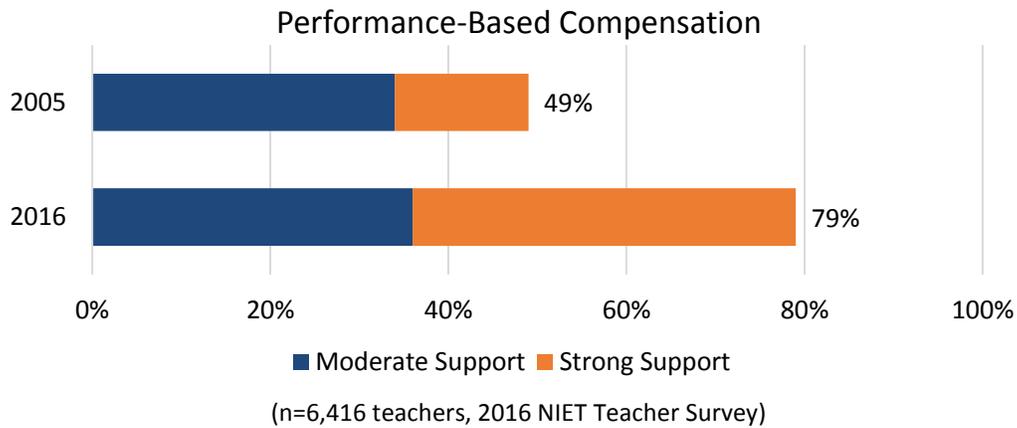


Figure 16. Level of Reported Support for Performance-Based Compensation from Teachers Nationwide.

Administrator Results – 2016 TAP Attitude Survey

The above substantially positive results from the TAP teacher survey are echoed by the 2016 TAP principal survey. As shown in Figure 17, principals have overwhelmingly reported that TAP has a positive effect on instructional practices, collegiality, student achievement, and teacher effectiveness. Further, as noted on Figure 18, a significant majority of principals (88%) agree that TAP helps retain effective teachers.

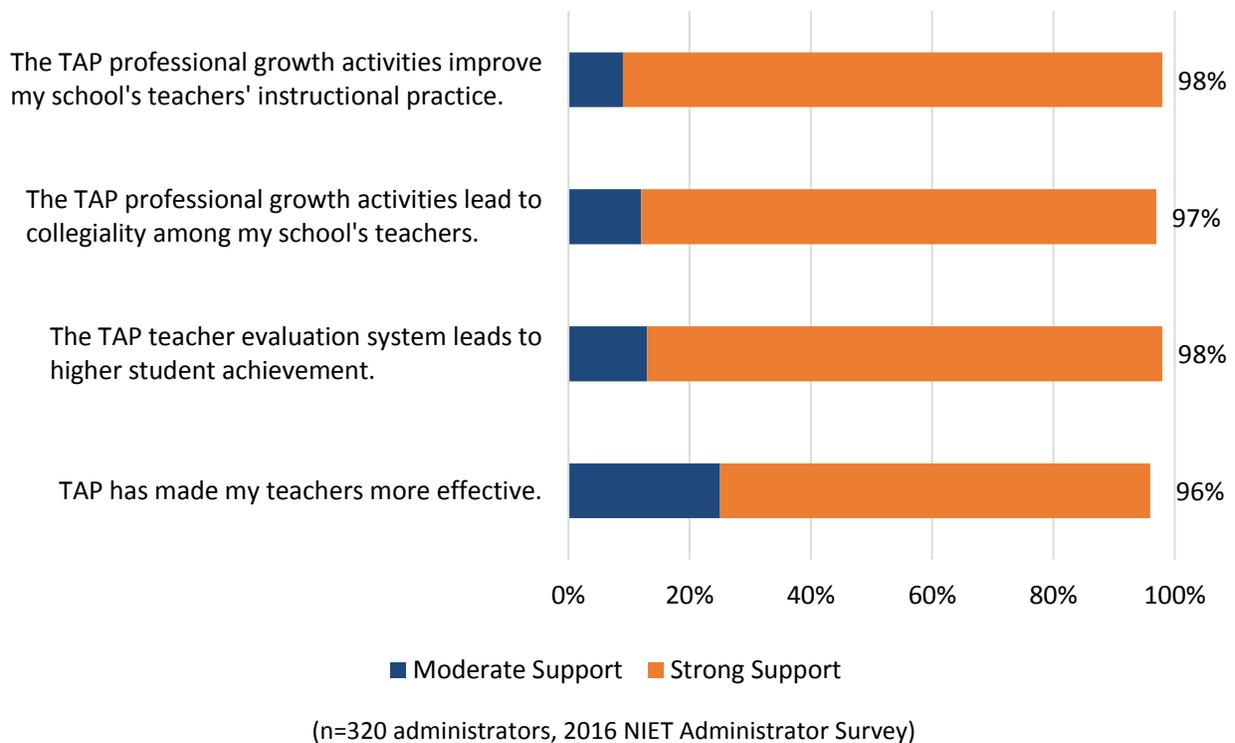
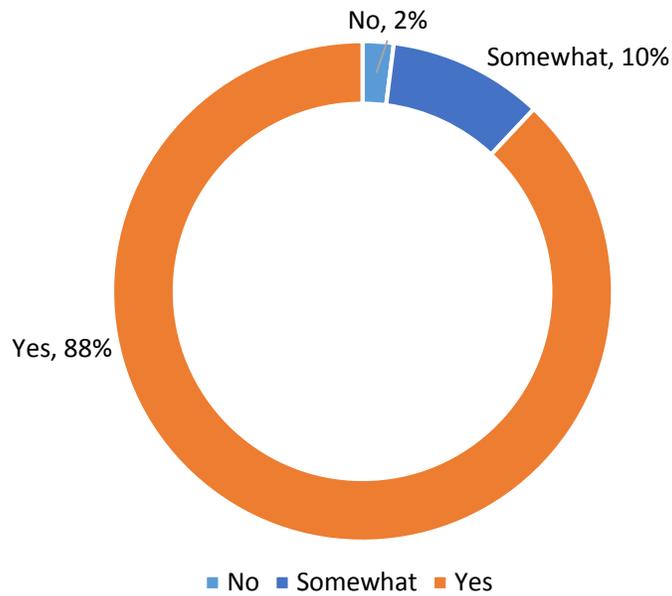


Figure 17. Administrator Survey Results on TAP Outcomes in their Schools



(n=320 administrators, 2016 NIET Administrator Survey)

Figure 18. *“The implementation of TAP has helped retain effective teachers at my school.”*

Recent Research Releases

Learning on the Job: How Evaluation Systems Can Support Teacher Growth

Ritter and Barnett (2016) released a paper describing how research-based standards can provide a focus for professional development and how effective evaluation can encourage self-reflection and meaningful conversations about classroom practice. The authors interviewed approximately 50 teachers, administrators, and policy makers engaged in teacher evaluation reform, such as the TAP System, to understand how involvement in these reform efforts can change teacher performance. The authors conclude that serious implementation of professional, rigorous, and comprehensive teacher evaluation systems represents a promising school improvement strategy. Read the full report [here](#).

A Document Analysis of Teacher Evaluation Systems Specific to Physical Education

Norris, van der Mars, Kulinna, Kwon, and Amrein-Beardsley (In Editing) conducted an interpretive document analysis of three teacher evaluation systems to determine the appropriateness of the instruments used in these systems in evaluating physical education teachers. The authors compared these instruments to the National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) tool, which served as the basis for the knowledge, skills, and behaviors to assess in physical education settings. Results showed that of the three evaluation systems examined, the TAP System had the highest percentage of NASPE tool key items, suggesting it is an appropriate tool for evaluating physical education teachers.

Upcoming Projects

Facilitating Dialogues – Voices from Teachers and Administrators

The annual TAP Teacher and Administrator Attitude Survey has collected responses from approximately 25,000 teachers over the last decade on teacher attitudes and job satisfaction. The survey contains questions that assess the perceptions of the implementation of TAP at the school and teachers' and administrators' overall job satisfaction. Past summaries have provided a glimpse into those responses aggregated across all respondents and comparing early adoption years to more current years. The next step in analysis of available data is to examine the changes across time and within each location, as well as examine additional questions reported throughout the survey, including the qualitative data and open-ended responses.

Overcoming Barriers in Traditional Higher Education Partnerships

An innovative collaboration between non-profit, university, and district partners is connecting the principles of a proven educator effectiveness model with initial teacher preparation. NIET has partnered with the College of Education at Texas Tech University, as well as local partner school districts across Texas to connect the pipeline of teacher preparation to NIET's educator effectiveness model *TAP™: The System for Teacher and Student Advancement*. The authors use transcripts, observations, interviews, and focus groups to examine barriers partners faced in this collaboration, as well as the solutions developed to overcome these barriers to create a systematic, structured pipeline of teacher evaluation from preparation program to in-service teacher.

Impact of an Educator Effectiveness System on Retaining Administrators Nationwide

In 2014, Barnett and Hudgens released a report examining teacher retention rates in schools that implemented the TAP System. Recognizing the role administrators play in the successful implementation of any reform effort, in a follow-up piece, the authors use school rosters, administrator effectiveness data, and school data to investigate the retention and impact of administrators who work in TAP System schools.

Conclusion

The TAP System stands out because of its more than a decade-long track record of growth and success in raising student achievement in high-need schools. The research evidence also reveals several key reasons for TAP's positive impact: an evaluation system capable of differentiating teacher performance levels and providing detailed feedback for improvement, ongoing professional growth in classroom practice using student and teacher data to guide improvement, recruitment and retention of effective teachers, and the creation of a challenging, rewarding, and collegial environment focused on high-quality instruction and student learning.

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