

NIET

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR
EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING



NIET Research Summary

Examining the Evidence and Impact of NIET's Initiatives

Fall 2020

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National Institute for Excellence in Teaching

The National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Our vision is that every student in the United States is taught by an excellent teacher and supported by effective leaders every year. We believe intentional, sustained, and high-quality supports for educators directly result in success for all students and are essential to eliminating equity gaps. We have confidence in the capabilities of every teacher and student, and we see them rise to new levels of success every day. As a result, NIET is committed to raising achievement levels for all students by focusing on the most powerful lever for change – teachers and the leadership that supports them.

For 20 years, NIET has provided support to states, districts, schools, and universities in recruiting, developing, supporting, and retaining educators in order to raise achievement levels for all students. NIET provides both on-site and virtual support across multiple aspects of educator effectiveness, including coaching, mentoring, educator evaluation, and professional learning for aspiring teachers, classroom teachers, and teacher-, school-, and district leaders. As of the 2020-21 school year, NIET initiatives are impacting over 275,000 educators and more than 2.75 million students. For more information, visit www.niet.org.

Researchers at NIET and elsewhere have studied the effectiveness of NIET's initiatives. This document describes some of the most recent results that have emerged from research to date. Data collection and analysis efforts are ongoing, and the findings described here will be updated bi-annually.



NIET Services

NIET services are structured around a core belief that every child deserves an effective educator, in every classroom, every day. For more information, visit <https://www.niet.org/our-work/our-services>.

The TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement

The TAP System is an educator-led, comprehensive school reform solution focused on attracting, developing, motivating, and retaining high-quality educators. The TAP System creates opportunities for 1) career advancement, 2) professional growth, 3) instructionally focused accountability, and 4) competitive compensation for educators. Through the implementation of these four interrelated key elements, NIET supports teachers to improve their instruction and the achievement of their students.

School Improvement Solutions

Based on two decades of on-the-ground experience working with high-need schools and districts across the country, NIET offers School Improvement Solutions to accommodate local needs. NIET engages all partners on a needs assessment, then works shoulder to shoulder with them to develop a plan that incorporates key principles that lead to positive change in schools and student growth.

Teacher and Leader Development

By restructuring the typical career and advancement pathways, NIET helps create opportunities for educators to advance while having a direct impact on the classroom. NIET provides on-site and online coaching and support to help identify and develop instructional coaches, principals, district administrators, and teacher leaders.

Rubric and Observation Systems

Based on nationally normed, research-based standards, NIET's Teaching Standards Rubric clearly defines effective teaching and fosters collaboration around a common language and vision that correlates with student achievement. The rubric includes four key domains: Instruction, the Learning Environment, Designing and Planning Instruction, and Professionalism. NIET's Educator Effectiveness Preparation and Support System (EE PASS) provides access to professional development, training, and certification resources through a single port of entry, as well as a data dashboard to see real-time observation scores and reports.

Principal and District Support

To support principal growth and development, NIET has developed a Principal Standards Rubric and Principal Leadership Series. These services are designed to build essential mindsets and skills that help principals elevate their practice and create a culture to advance instructional practice and improve outcomes for all students. Additionally, NIET works alongside superintendents and district teams to build instructional leadership and identify high-impact action steps that will improve instruction.

Educator Preparation Partnerships

NIET works closely with universities to prepare a pipeline of exemplary next-generation educators. Specifically, NIET helps educator preparation programs with our Aspiring Teacher Rubric and Portal for Raising Educator Preparation (NIET PREP) to embed research-based, effective principles into coursework and clinical practices.

Impact of NIET Initiatives

NIET has a 20-year track record of success in improving educator, student, and school outcomes in high-need schools and educator preparation programs. The success of NIET’s work is evident in the positive findings from evaluations of impact across multiple locations, as conducted by different researchers employing a variety of methodological frameworks. In this section, we summarize findings from five new studies of recent partnerships and then highlight selected findings from studies of NIET partnerships over the past decade.

Results from Selected New Studies of NIET’s Impact

Mellichamp Elementary School’s Implementation of School Improvement Solutions

In summer 2018, an Orangeburg County School District (OCSD) district leader contacted NIET for support with Mellichamp Elementary School, which had received the Priority School designation for the 2017-18 school year from the South Carolina Department of Education. Priority Schools are defined by the department as a school that was performing at or below the 10th percentile among all schools in the state.

Mellichamp began a partnership with NIET to implement School Improvement Solutions (SIS) for the 2018-19 school year. Based on Mellichamp’s needs assessment, special supports were provided on standards alignment, rigor and assessments, and strengthening student engagement through thinking and problem-solving.

Hudgens and Hall (2020) examined early impacts of SIS implementation and found that SIS has helped to make positive changes in school performance and culture. Results highlight the importance of building supportive partnerships and aligning support services to the needs of individual schools. Key findings include:

Improved Student Achievement: Mellichamp increased the percentage of students meeting/exceeding expectations on state assessments from 2018 to 2019 for all subjects. As shown in Figure 1, the percentage of students passing the state assessment increased by 4 points in English/Language Arts and 7.6 points in Mathematics from 2018 to 2019. Gains were even larger in Science, with an increase of 8.4 points, and Social Studies, with an increase of 27.4 points. For these achievements, Mellichamp’s South Carolina Department of Education School Report Card ratings for student performance on state assessments moved up one level from “Unsatisfactory” (bottom 10th percentile statewide) in 2018 to “Below Average” (10th to 30th percentile) in 2019.

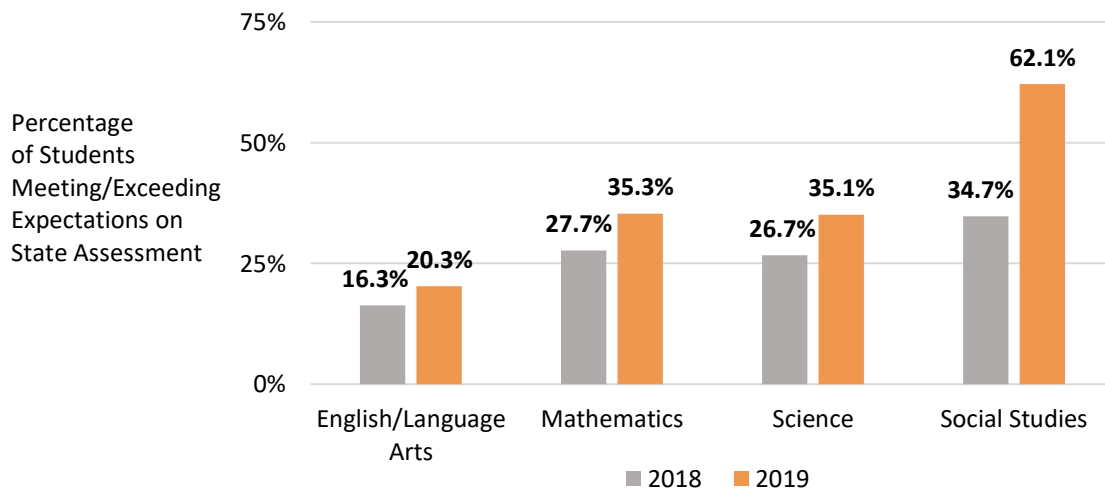


Figure 1. Mellichamp Elementary students improve performance on state assessments.

Increased Teacher Satisfaction with School Environment: Mellichamp teachers expressed increased satisfaction in their school environment from 2018 to 2019 (Figure 2) in a state-administered survey. In 2019, 95% of surveyed teachers reported satisfaction with the learning environment, and 100% reported that they were satisfied with the social and physical environment. Satisfaction in school-home relations doubled between 2018 and 2019.

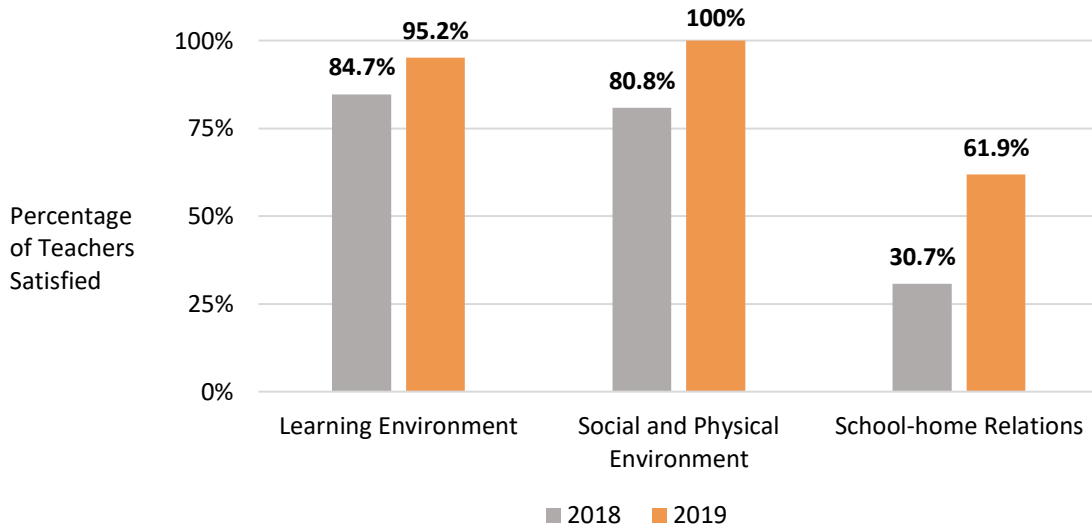


Figure 2. Mellichamp Elementary teachers report increased satisfaction with the school environment.

Mellichamp Elementary no longer has the Priority School designation, meaning that their performance has moved above the 10th percentile in the state. Inspired by Mellichamp’s success, district leadership requested NIET support services for other district schools.

*“I wish I knew about NIET in my first year as principal.
Our work with NIET has resulted in an instructional culture that is more
focused, reflective and purpose-driven. Teachers are delivering instruction
with more clarity, depth and enjoyment.”*

*Hayward R. Jean
Director of Student Services, Orangeburg County School District*

Cross County School District’s Implementation of the TAP System

Cross County School District in Arkansas serves a rural community of about 3,600 residents with about 1,550 total households (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). Cross County School District educates 600-700 students. Like many districts in rural communities, Cross County School District historically had difficulty attracting and retaining effective teachers. From 2010-11 to 2014-15, annual teacher turnover in the schools ranged from 10% to 26%, which is at or above the national annual turnover rate (Snyder et al., 2019). Cross County School District responded to the challenge by implementing practices to “grow their own” effective teachers. In 2016-17, as part of a Teacher Incentive Fund-Cycle 5 (TIF-5) grant, Cross County School District began a partnership with NIET designed to continuously raise educator excellence and student achievement through enhanced application of the TAP System.

Leutscher and Barnett (2020) examined the impact of TAP System implementation and found evidence that grants and partnerships have allowed Cross County School District to implement, maintain, and continuously improve the TAP System and leverage school, district, and NIET resources to overcome these challenges of maintaining an effective workforce. Key findings include:

Increased Teacher Effectiveness and Improved Teacher Retention: As shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4, Cross County School District has increased educator excellence, as measured by teacher observation scores (effectiveness ratings), as well as increasingly retained these teachers in the district. The percentage of effective teachers increased 19 points from 2015-16 to 2018-19 and the retention of these effective teachers rose 21 points from 2016-17 to 2019-20.

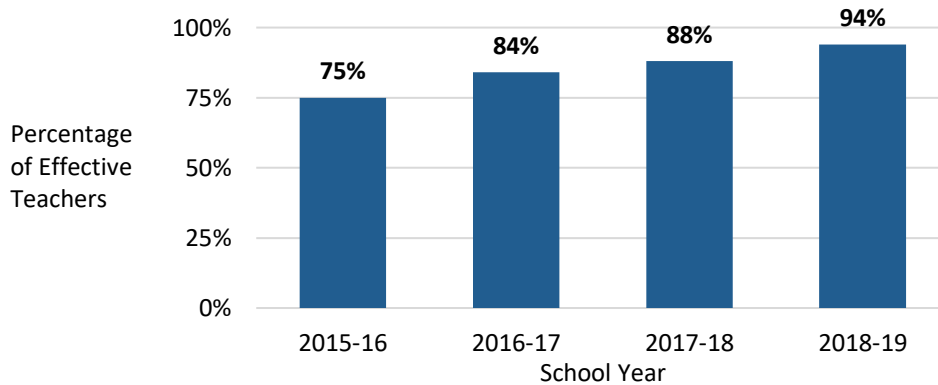


Figure 3. Cross County School District teachers improve instructional skills over time.

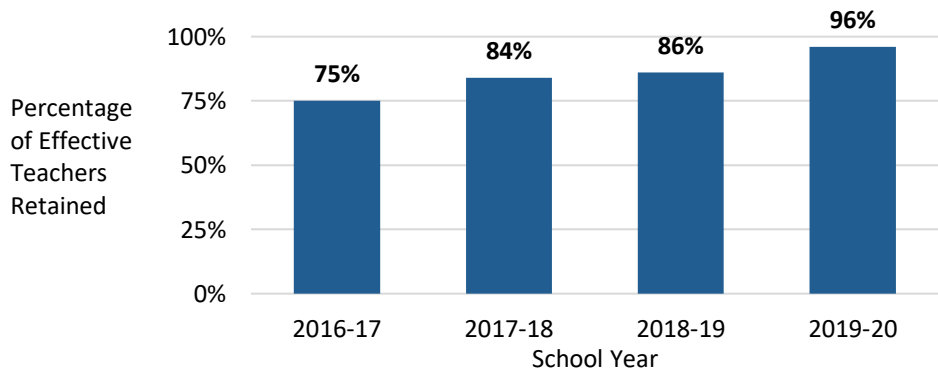


Figure 4. Cross County School District retains effective teachers over time.

Improved Student Achievement. As teachers became more effective and stayed in Cross County School District, student performance on the state assessment increased. From the year before grant implementation (2015-16¹) through the third year of the grant (2018-19), the percentage of Cross County School District students passing the state assessment increased for all tested subjects. Additionally, Figure 5 and Figure 6 compare Cross County School District with the average of comparison schools that had similar demographic characteristics and passing rates on the 2015-16 state assessment. Cross County School District began outperforming the comparison group in 2016-17 and increased or maintained the advantage over the comparison group in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

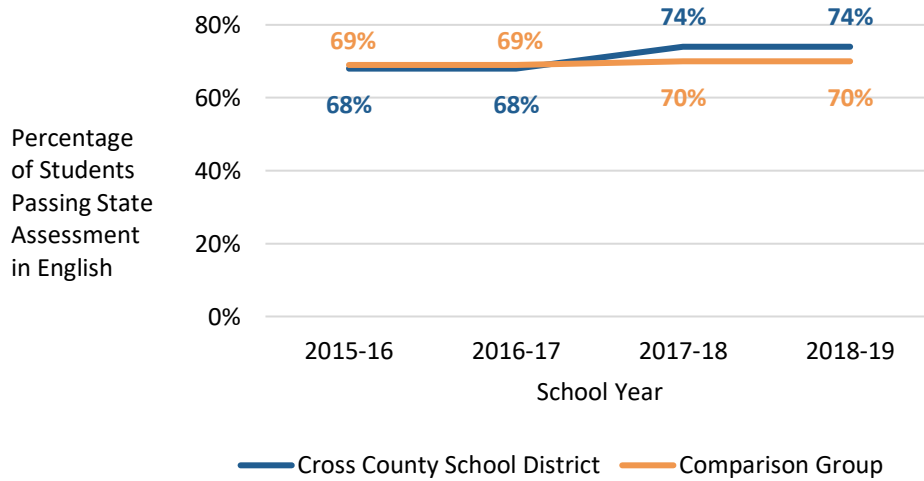


Figure 5. Cross County School District students improve performance on the English state assessment.

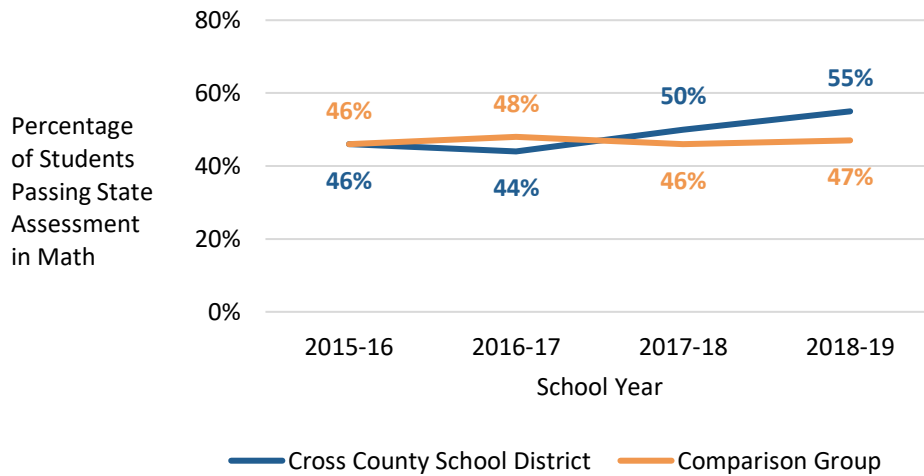


Figure 6. Cross County School District students improve performance on Math state assessment.

As a district serving a rural community, Cross County School District faces obstacles in the recruitment, development, and retention of effective educators. Through the TIF grant and partnership with NIET, Cross County School District has continuously improved to overcome these obstacles.

¹ In the 2015-16 school year, the Arkansas Board of Education adopted the ACT Aspire as the summative assessment statewide. The ACT Aspire is a series of end-of-year tests for grades 3-10 in the subject areas of English, reading, writing, math, and science.

LA BOLD’s Implementation of a Human Capital Management System
 A 2016 federal Teacher Incentive Fund-Cycle 5 grant enabled a partnership between NIET and 12 Louisiana local education agencies (LEAs). In an effort to improve student outcomes, this partnership, called Louisiana Building On Leadership Development (LA BOLD), enacted a plan to strengthen systems that supported ongoing, continuous improvement for educators and provided performance measurement as a key tool in describing and improving classroom instruction.

At the onset of the grant, 49 high-need schools (defined as having more than 50% of students eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunch) serving 1,490 teachers and over 23,900 students began receiving targeted support (Louisiana Department of Education, 2016). With the support of this grant, each partner LEA is working to increase the rigor and reach of their human capital management systems by working with NIET to strengthen the educator workforce through a coherent and integrated set of strategies rooted in a common vision for instructional improvement. Specifically, each school is working with NIET to implement opportunities for professional growth and advancement, rigorous instructional evaluation and feedback, and a multilayered performance-based compensation system.

Hudgens and Barnett (2020) examined educator perceptions of grant implementation and impact from the first years of this five-year grant. Key findings include:

Teacher Recruitment: Educator perception survey results indicate administrators overwhelmingly agree that the implementation of the grant initiatives has positively impacted teacher hiring. In 2017-18, less than three-fourths of responding administrators moderately or strongly agreed with the statement “grant initiatives have made it easier for me to hire good teachers,” and this percentage increased to 81% in 2018-19 (Figure 7). This finding is notable given that high-need schools, like the LA BOLD schools, have difficulty attracting and hiring high-quality teachers (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016).

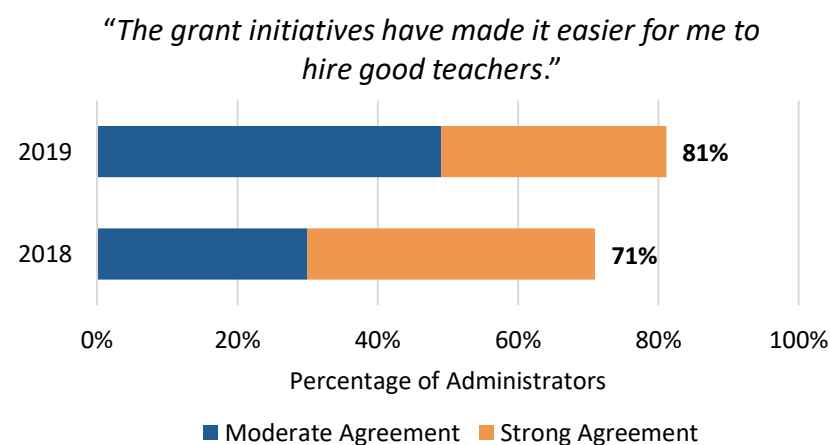


Figure 7. LA BOLD administrators report a positive impact on teacher hiring.

Voices from the Field

“This year I have witnessed a huge impact on retaining and recruiting teachers, especially new teachers who want and are seeking support.”

-LA BOLD Administrator

“Teachers are learning new strategies during our professional development meetings and are now more intentional with using student data to guide instruction and plan differentiated instruction to ensure that all students have academic success.”

-LA BOLD Master Teacher

“We now have dedicated time for teachers to work together to focus on ways to improve student achievement. This time for collaboration has made us more intentional with our instruction.”

-LA BOLD Mentor Teacher

“Teachers are receiving more support in their classrooms. Although it took time to become comfortable with having master and mentor teachers and administrators observe us, their help has been a huge benefit.”

-LA BOLD Career Teacher

“Teacher collaboration has improved. Teachers are expected to utilize student data to drive instruction and they engage in more conversations with each other about this. They ask each other questions about what has worked and what hasn’t worked. They troubleshoot together.”

-LA BOLD Administrator

Collegial Environments: A concern often noted for performance measures and incentives for teachers is that such policies will result in competitiveness and a loss of collegiality among teachers (American Federation of Teachers, 2001; Chamberlin et al., 2002; Goldhaber et al., 2011). However, survey results suggest that the TAP System’s interrelated elements of professional growth, advancement opportunities, evaluation and feedback, and performance-based compensation facilitate a collegial environment. Survey results indicate a high level of collegiality in LA BOLD schools. In both 2018 and 2019, 94% of LA BOLD teachers who responded to the survey agreed with statements about a high level of collegiality in their schools (Figure 8).

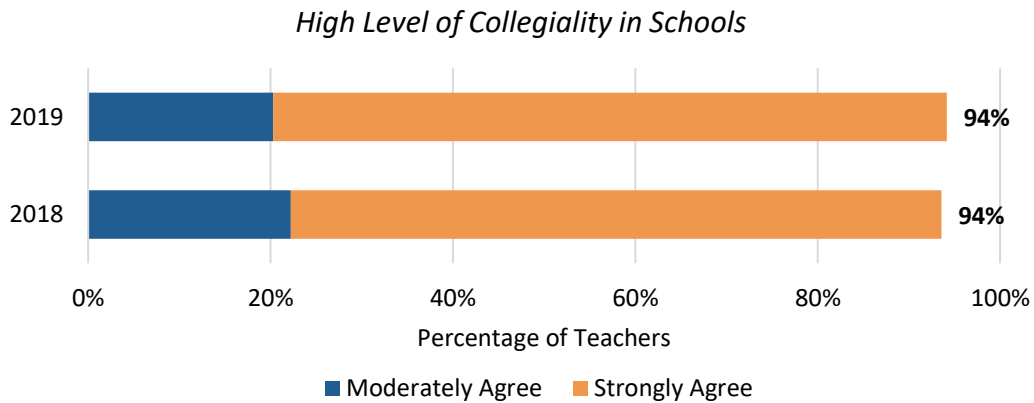


Figure 8. LA BOLD teachers report a high level of collegiality in their schools.

Student Achievement: Evaluations across multiple years, program sites, and evaluators document the positive impact NIET initiatives have on student achievement. LA BOLD teachers also perceive these impacts. A large and increasing proportion of LA BOLD teachers agreed that NIET’s professional growth activities lead to higher student achievement (Figure 9).

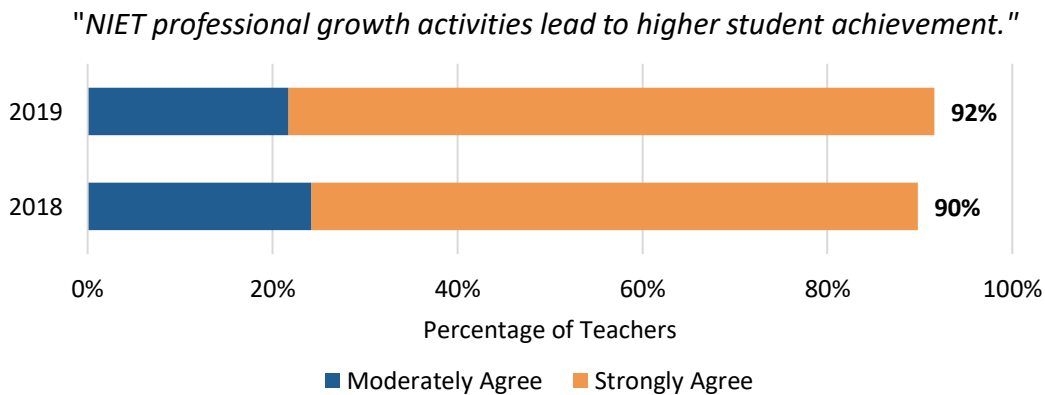


Figure 9. LA BOLD teachers report professional growth activities lead to higher student achievement.

Prior research on the effectiveness of U.S. Department of Education Teacher Incentive Fund grants indicates measurable increases in teacher and principal quality and student achievement growth (e.g., Glazerman et al., 2011; Wellington et al., 2016). Of equal importance are educators’ views of grant implementation and impacts. The above findings from the initial years of the LA BOLD grant indicate teachers and administrators perceive that the implementation of grant activities has positively impacted educators and students.

NIET’s Higher Education Partnerships: The LIFT Program

Facilitated through a federal Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant, NIET, Texas Tech University, and 12 high-need school districts across Texas and Louisiana collaborated to create the Leadership Instruction for Teachers (LIFT) program. To build local capacity, the LIFT program recruited teachers from partnering districts, placed them as principal fellows in a different school within their originating district, and trained them through a 15-month clinical experience and job-embedded coursework. Upon the completion of the program, each principal fellow earned a master’s degree in education leadership and principal certification.

Logis and Leckbee Chan (2020) evaluated the impact of the LIFT program and found evidence that the program successfully prepared candidates to become educational leaders. Key findings include:

Growth in Candidates’ Leadership and Coaching Skills: Principal fellows substantially improved their leadership skills as measured by the state-recommended principal evaluation system (Texas Principal Evaluation and Support System; T-PESS). As shown in Figure 10, there were statistically significant differences between average T-PESS scores for mid-year and end-of-year evaluations on all five standards.

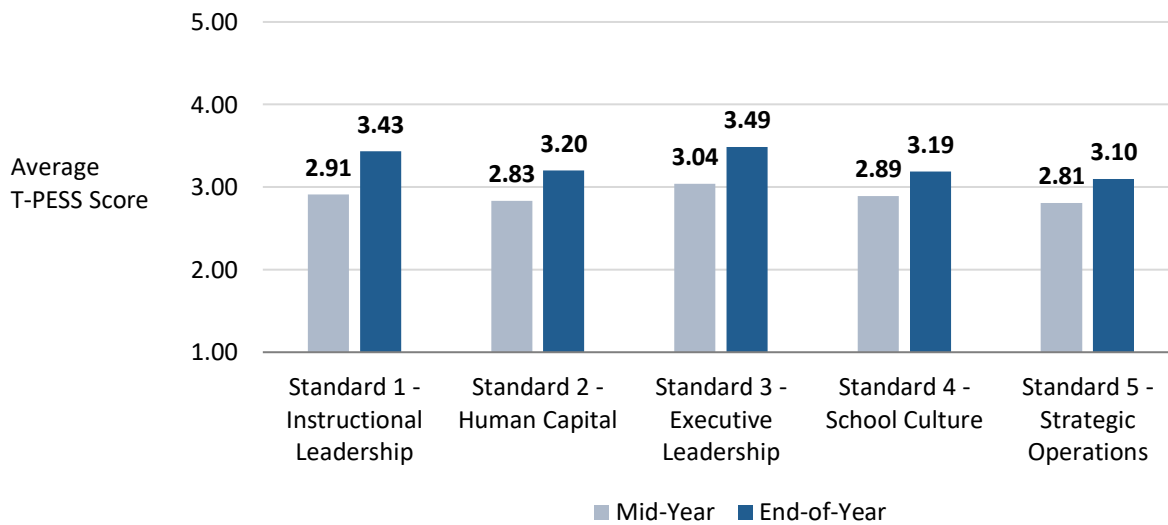


Figure 10. Average T-PESS scores among principal fellows improve during clinical experience.

Principal fellows’ ability to coach and provide feedback to teachers during pre- and post-conferences significantly improved as well. Across the cycles, principal fellows improved their coaching for both pre- and post-conferences (see Figure 11). Furthermore, the change from Cycle 1 to Cycle 4 showed statistically significant improvement, increasing about one full point on average for both types of conference sessions [$t(40) = 10.65, p < .001$ for pre-conferences and $t(40) = 9.13, p < .001$, for post-conferences].

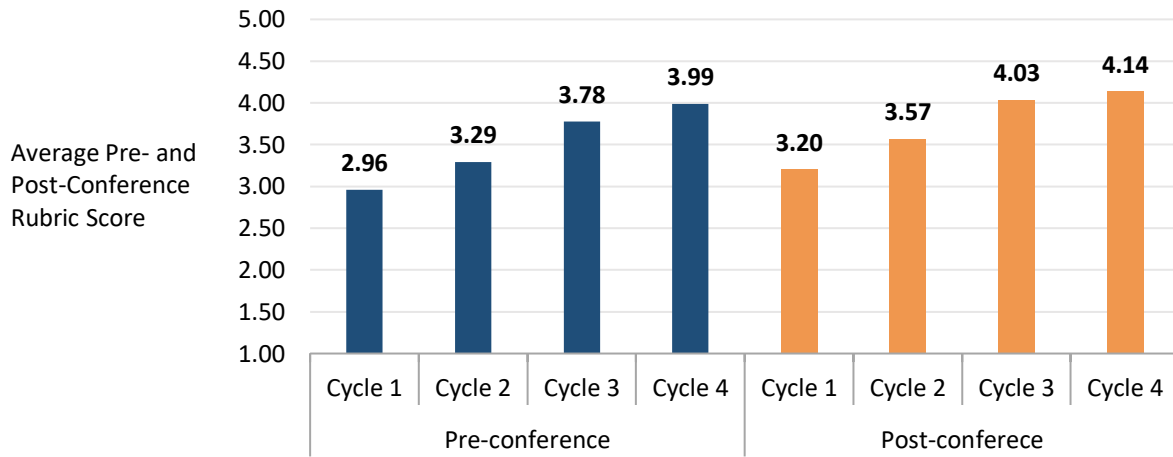


Figure 11. Principal fellows improve their ability to facilitate pre- and post-conferences.

Positive Perceptions of the LIFT Program: The overwhelming majority of principal fellows who responded to a follow-up survey reported feeling job-ready and having a positive experience during the program (Figure 12).

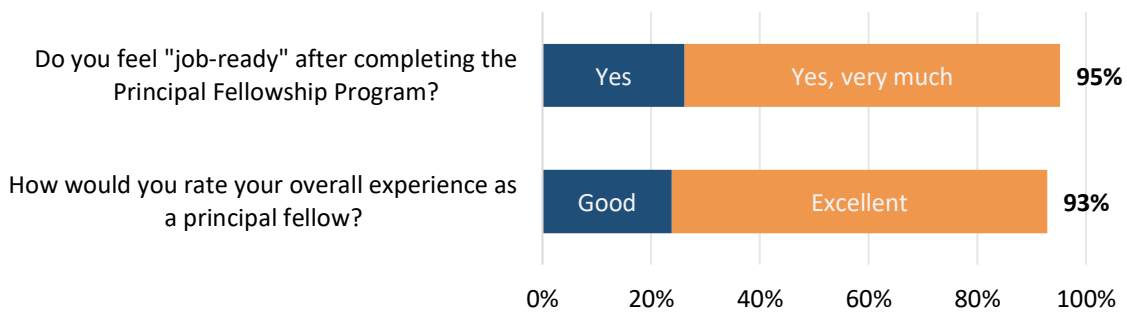


Figure 12. Principal fellows report positive overall experiences.

Principal Fellows Serve in Leadership Positions and High-Need Schools upon Graduation: Within a year of graduating, the majority of principal fellows obtained a leadership role and took positions in schools where the majority of students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch (Figure 13).

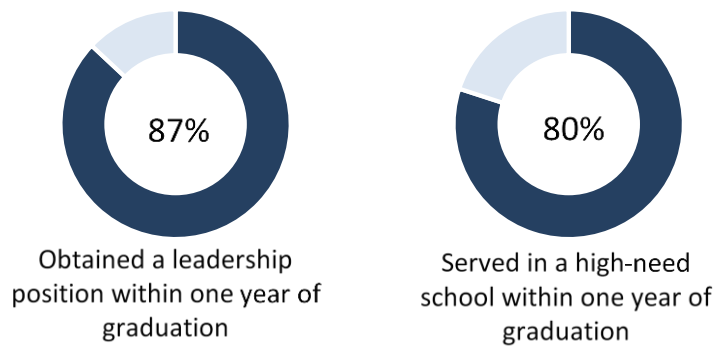


Figure 13. Principal fellow graduates obtain leadership roles and serve in high-need schools.

Learn more about the results of the LIFT Program [here](#).

National Partner Survey: The Importance of Collegial Working Environments

Helping schools to retain effective teachers is one of the primary strategies NIET employs to increase the overall effectiveness of a school’s instructional program. Collaborative and collegial school environments contribute to teachers’ satisfaction, well-being, and retention (e.g., Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018; Schaak, Le, & Stedron, 2020).

In spring 2020, NIET administered a survey to over 1,100 teachers who worked in partner schools in seven states. When asked about factors that most influence their decision to stay in education, teachers in NIET partner schools rank “collegial working environment” second, behind only “support from administration.” These results align with findings from other studies that collegiality and collaborative opportunities impact educators’ intent to stay in the profession (Newberry & Allsop, 2017; OECD, 2020).

Creating a collegial working environment not only contributes to teachers’ intent to stay in education, but also contributes to the continuous improvement of instruction across the school. More than four-fifths of teachers in NIET partner schools report participating in instructionally focused collaborative activities during the school year (see Figure 14).

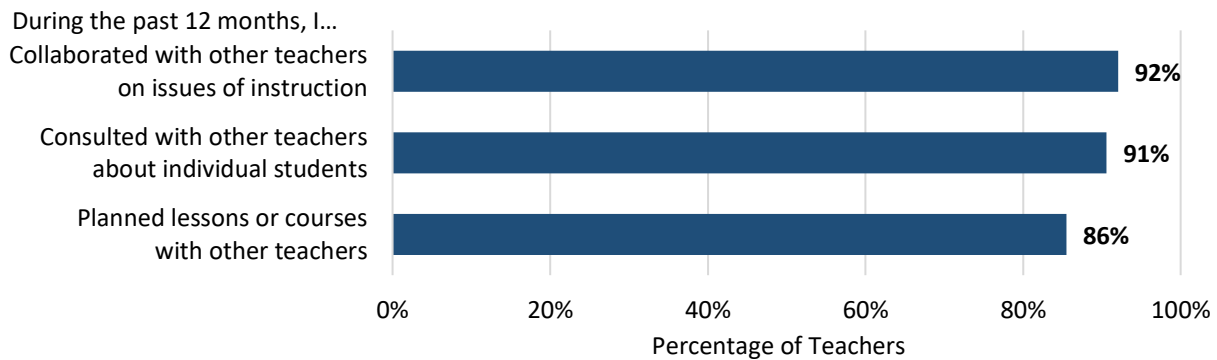


Figure 14. Teachers in NIET partner schools report participating in collegial activities.

The activities in which educators engage during their regular instructional practices set a foundation for the climate and culture of the school. When presented with statements about the collegial climate of their schools, more than four-fifths of teachers somewhat or strongly agree (see Figure 15).

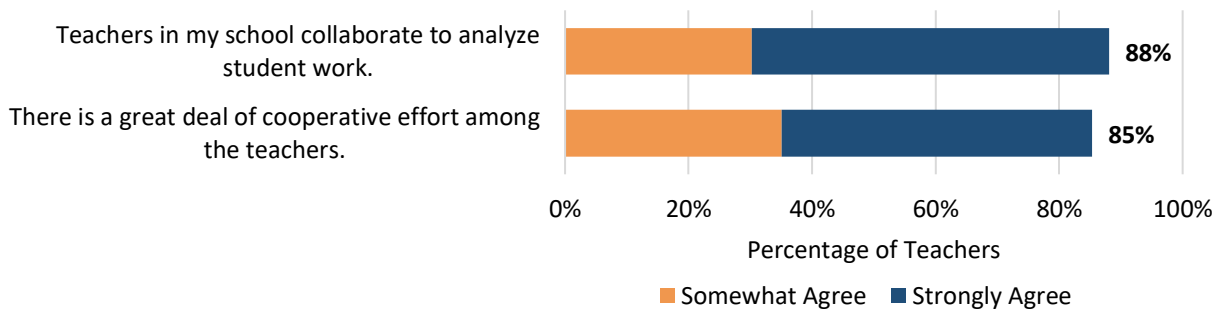


Figure 15. Teachers in NIET partner schools report collegial climates at their schools.

Results from Selected Prior Studies of NIET’s Impact

Student Outcomes

- **Eren (2019).** The author investigated the Louisiana TAP initiative from its inception in 2005-06 to 2010-11 principally as a performance-based compensation model. Twelve high-need schools that adopted TAP during the study period comprise the treatment group, and 21 future-adopter schools (adopted TAP in years after the study period) constitute a control group. After controlling for adoption year, grade, school, and student characteristics, Louisiana TAP produces a statistically significant and positive effect on math achievement during the second year and beyond after adoption. The study finds no evidence supporting alternative explanations (student mobility, teacher mobility, preadoption achievement trends) and finds tests of the robustness of results supportive of the findings. Overall the study presents “strong evidence that TAP increases student achievement, at least in math” (p. 886).
- **Barnett and Wills (2016).** The authors examined the impact of the TAP System on achievement gaps in Indiana schools between Black students and white students and Hispanic students and white students. First, the authors compared achievement gaps in 32 TAP schools that began implementing TAP in 2010-11 with other Indiana schools. Study results indicate TAP schools have narrowed the gap between Black students and white students in ELA and the gap between Hispanic students and white students 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, and (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 (Figure 16).

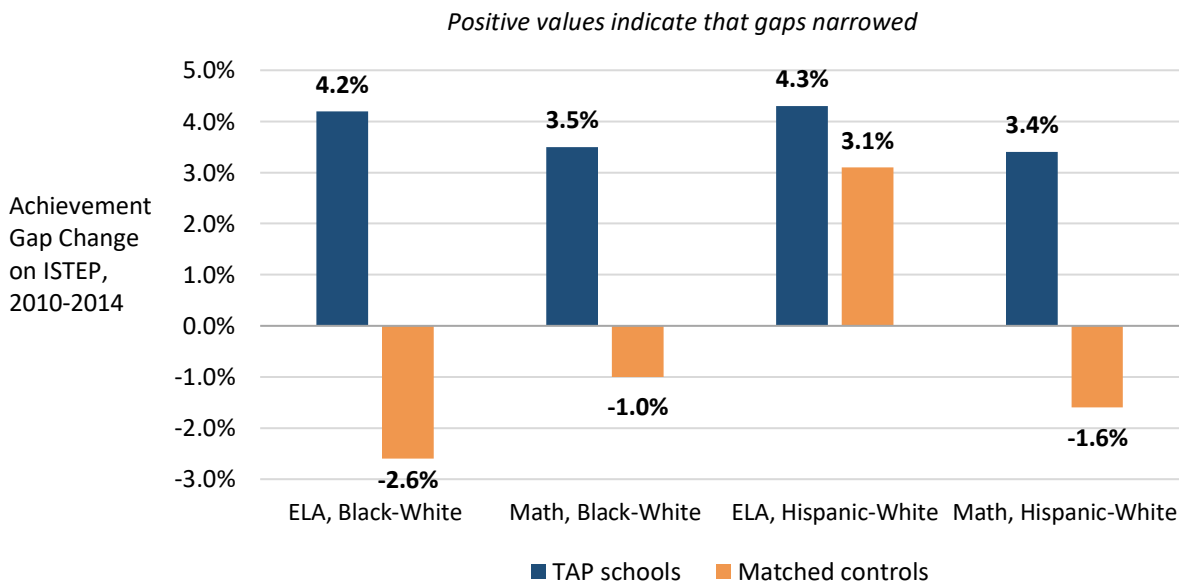


Figure 16. Achievement gaps in TAP schools narrow.

- **Barnett, Wills, & Kirby (2014).** The authors 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 performance of the 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, 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 Assessment Index for TAP schools (64.45) was 5.47 points greater than the average for the matched controls (58.98).

- Mann, Leutscher, & Reardon (2013). The authors examined the impact of the TAP System across 15 schools in Louisiana. To determine impact, a one-to-one nearest-neighbor matching algorithm with replacements was created to select a comparison school for each TAP school. There was no significant difference between the TAP schools and their matched comparison schools in the pretreatment year. However, results of the study indicate that in the four primary subjects assessed, TAP schools significantly outperformed their matched counterparts: ELA: $F(1, 6421) = 6.334, p = 0.012$; Mathematics: $F(1, 6421) = 86.386, p < 0.001$; Science: $F(1, 7084) = 31.792, p < 0.001$; and Social Studies: $F(1, 7085) = 87.411, p < 0.001$. Further, the TAP schools significantly outperformed comparison schools across time, $F(1, 24) = 5.30, p < 0.05$.
- Hudson (2010). The author examined the effect of the TAP System on student achievement 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, still 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).

Educator Retention

- Louisiana Department of Education (2018). An analysis conducted by the Louisiana Department of Education found that teacher retention rates were higher in schools that have implemented TAP for at least three years than in TAP schools in general or in other demographically similar schools (i.e., schools in which 80% or more of the students are classified as economically disadvantaged; see Figure 17).

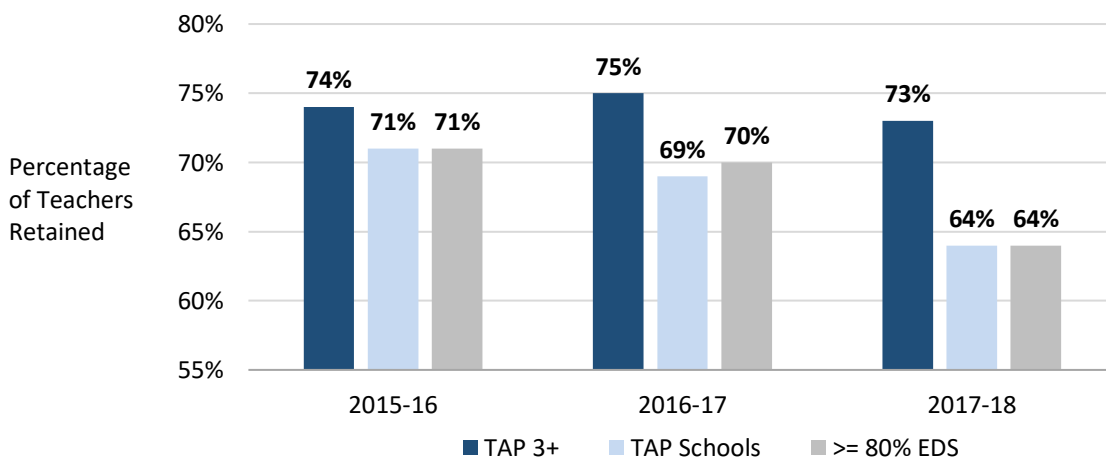


Figure 17. Long-Term Louisiana TAP schools retain more teachers.

- Hudgens and Barnett (2017). The authors examined administrator retention rates across nine states that implemented the TAP System. Specifically, retention rates were examined for the 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 school years. Findings demonstrate the average TAP school retained more

administrators than the average non-TAP school. Also, findings show that administrators who worked at TAP schools continuously, regardless of whether it was the same TAP school or a different TAP school, increased their effectiveness from one school year to the next.

- Barnett and Hudgens (2014). The authors examined teacher retention rates in schools that implemented the TAP System during the 2010-11, 2011-12, and 2012-13 school years. Contrary to national trends, the authors found that TAP System schools retained 14% more teachers than similar high-need 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.
- Algiers Charter School Association (2011). In this annual report, the Algiers Charter School Association (ACSA) reported the progress it has made since 2005. While each school had its own focus, all ACSA schools implemented the TAP System for Teacher and Student Advancement. Teacher turnover in these schools had historically been very high; in 2006-07 the turnover rate was over 20%. By 2010-11 turnover had dropped to 7%.

Educator Effectiveness

- Barnett, Hudgens, & Logis (2017). The authors tracked a cohort of 1,305 career teachers through observations grouped into six periods in fall, winter, and spring of the 2015-16 and 2016-17 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. Results indicate improvement in instructional quality scores over a two-year period. Despite a slight dip over the summer, teachers demonstrated an overall path of improvement over time (Figure 18).

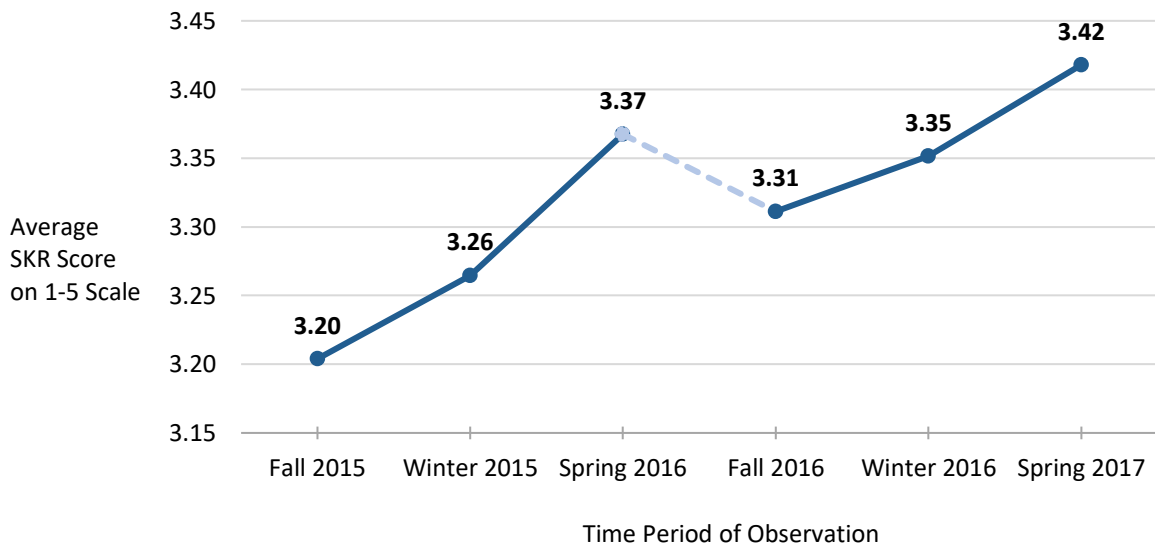


Figure 18. Teachers in NIET partner schools improve instructional skills over time.

- Arizona State University College Research & Evaluation Services Team (2016). 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. Results show the percentage of effective teachers increased from 62% in 2011-12 to 74% in 2014-15. Further, the evaluators examined the percentage of teachers who met effectiveness criteria in one school year

and were retained into the next school year. During the project period, the percentage of effective teachers retained increased from 77% to 92%.

Higher Education

- Barnett and Logis (2018). The authors examined the impact of partnerships among NIET, two university teacher preparation programs (Arizona State University and Texas Tech University), and 29 high-need school districts across Arizona and Texas. The authors discovered that as a result of the strategies implemented in these partnerships, teacher candidates with strong academic credentials were recruited into the program, trained to have strong instructional skills, and placed in high-need schools where highly effective teachers are needed the most. Specifically, on average, teacher candidates’ instructional skills improved over time, and they graduated with an average score above 3.0, demonstrating instructional skills above the proficient level (Figure 19).

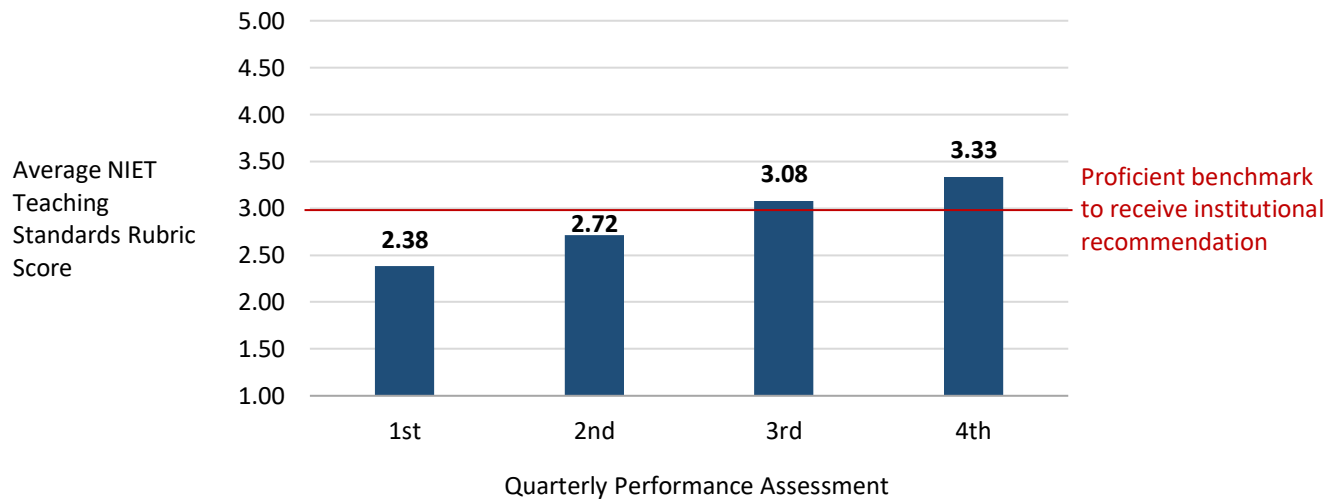


Figure 19. NIET-IHE teacher candidates’ average instructional effectiveness scores improve over time.

- Logis, Barnett, & Stark (2018). A 2018 study of a partnership among NIET, a university, and eight high-need school districts to improve a university principal preparation program found the strategies implemented within the program resulted in (1) successful recruitment of high-quality principal candidates into the program, (2) improved candidate leadership skills as measured by the state’s administrator evaluation instrument, (3) improved candidate coaching skills at pre- and post-conferences with teachers, (4) positive perceptions of the program, and (5) high employment rates upon graduation.

Conclusion

NIET's initiatives stand out because of the more than 20-year track record of growth and success in raising student achievement in high-need schools and educator preparation programs. The research evidence also reveals several key reasons for our 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.

Upcoming Projects

Growing Your Own: Revolutionizing Field-based Teacher Preparation to Generate Effective Teachers in High-Need Communities

This study uses a mixed-methods approach to examine the impact of a grow-your-own teacher preparation model developed through a partnership among NIET, a university teacher preparation program, and two school districts serving high proportions of students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. The NIET Teaching Standards Rubric was embedded in university coursework and used to evaluate teacher candidates during clinical training as a strategy to create a common language around instruction among teacher candidates, university faculty, and district partners. Findings demonstrate successful training of teacher candidates, who graduated with strong instructional skills, gained employment in schools within partnering districts, and received effective ratings as teachers of record, providing a model for preparation programs interested in strengthening their pipeline to practice.

Sustaining Success: The TAP System's Long-term Effects on Math Achievement in Arizona

Long-term sustainability of effects from educational and social programs have become increasingly important to policymakers and grant funding agencies. This study examines the long-term impact of the TAP System on the percentage of students passing Arizona's math achievement test after at least three years of TAP System implementation. Three related school-level, quasi-experimental studies are performed using propensity score-matching to generate comparison group and regression models controlling for school fixed effects. The results show that TAP does sustain effectiveness and that two years of accumulated effects are needed for statistically significant results to consistently occur.

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