

# EVALUATION BRIEF

Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership | April 2011

## Teacher Induction Program Evaluation (2010-11)

*An evaluation of TIP for the Duval County Public Schools was conducted in the summer of 2010 to determine the extent to which the current program was accomplishing its goal.*

The goal of the *Teacher Induction Program* (TIP) for Duval County Public Schools is to provide supervised support services that enable novice teachers to meet beginning teacher requirements as defined by Florida Statute 1012.56(7)b. Although facilitating completion of these requirements within specified timelines is important, the effectiveness of program services delivered and the resulting positive impact on student achievement is crucial. These outcomes directly support the mission of the school district, and Goal 3 of the district's strategic plan which seeks to hire, develop, support, and retain the best teachers and principals in the nation. The evaluation considered the following questions:

- How successful was TIP at facilitating the process of completing beginning teacher requirements within the recommended timeframe of 180 days?
- What patterns of *Florida Accomplished Practices* were identified by principals as needs for improvement based on initial classroom observations of teachers in TIP?
- What feedback about program quality and services was received from the perspective of beginning teachers who participated in the 2009-10 TIP?
- How much and what kind of professional development was completed by beginning teachers who participated in TIP?
- What levels of student achievement were reported for novice teachers (1-3 years) in Duval County Public Schools as measured by the FCAT in the spring of 2010?

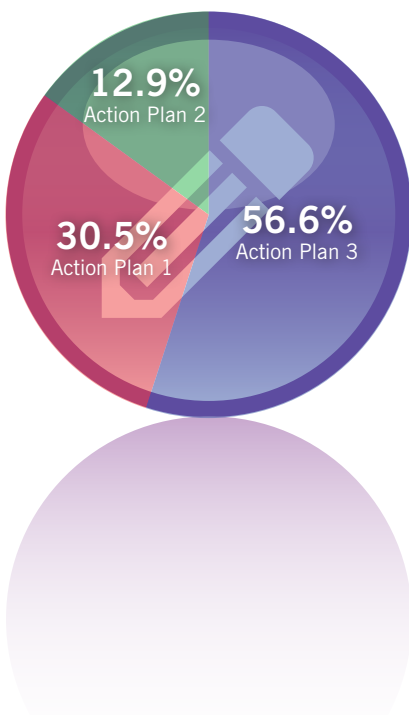
Supporting new teachers as they complete certification requirements is essential for assuring teacher quality and maintaining high levels of teacher retention in the district. Teaching quality is one of the most important factors in promoting student achievement\*, and there is general agreement that the first three years of experience for novice teachers are critical\*. A policy brief published by the *New Teacher Center*, a non-profit organization dedicated to strengthening the practice of beginning teachers, stated, "*The learning that takes place in a beginning teacher's first few years on the job is different from their preparation experience and their subsequent professional learning. There is no period as formational to a teacher's career as the initial years in the classroom.*" The demands on school districts are great to evaluate and strengthen the individual needs of novice teachers. Providing personnel and resources sufficient to the task, extends well beyond previous versions of "teacher orientation", to the current need for designing high quality "induction programs". These encompass a multi-year curriculum with a strong mentoring component, prescriptive use of professional development, and coaching to develop both instructional skills and classroom management.



This evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to determining the extent to which the current system of support services and resources is able to meet the demands of incoming groups of newly hired teachers. A cohort of beginning teachers being monitored by TIP during school year



**Figure 1:** *Beginning Teachers by Action Plan Types (2009-10)*



*“I am indebted to my father for living, but to my teacher for living well.”*

ALEXANDER THE GREAT

2009-10 was used to represent a typical cross-section. Quantitative data obtained by the TIP office was used as a means of determining how well the program was able to meet its goal of monitoring completion of certification requirements by beginning teachers. A random sample of 100 teachers from the entire group monitored (1,099) was used for a deeper analysis of records collected in the completion of this group’s Action Plans. This was to better understand the pattern of strengths and instructional needs that emerged, the type and number of hours of professional development completed by the group, and rates with which various groups completed requirements. Survey responses from the group were also used to determine the level of satisfaction participants expressed with the program. Open-ended comments were analyzed with qualitative methods for content, theme, and pattern agreement. Finally, student achievement data generated by novice teachers was analyzed to determine whether the performance of TIP participants was similar to those of teachers nationally. Highlights of these analyses include:

- **All beginning teachers** are assessed by principals and placed on one of three types of action plans to complete Florida certification requirements. The decision about which type of plan is made by principals (with support from district cadre and the TIP office) and will depend on certification the individual presents at the time of hire as well as results of an evaluation of the *Twelve Florida Accomplished Practices*. Among the group of 1,099 teachers found in the TIP database, over half (56.6%) were placed on an Action Plan 3, 30.5% were completing an Action Plan 1, and the remainder (12.9%) were working on an Action Plan 2. **Figure 1** illustrates the distribution of teachers to these action plans. Relative completion rates among the three plan types also helps to illustrate that the groups are distinct in terms of the needs they have for support. Action Plan 1 and 2 groups completed requirements within the school year at high levels (74% and 61%) with far fewer completing an Action Plan 3 within the same timeframe (33.8%). Coupled with the fact that the majority of novice teachers in the study cohort were working on type 3 Action Plans, it’s clear that this group requires a considerable amount of support and resources to assist them.
- **The evaluation of novice teachers** at the beginning of the year also highlighted areas of need identified by principals as requiring attention for novice teachers to be successful. The most commonly identified areas of need were: *Assessment, Critical Thinking, Learning Environments, Role of the Teacher, and Planning*.
- **TIP participants were generally positive and complimentary** about the quality and relevance of the content they received. However, the actual numbers of sessions attended by TIP participants as compared to the potential number in the total group was low. In addition to the well-attended TIP New Teacher Orientation, ten different course topics were offered, several in multiple versions (elementary/secondary, face-to-face/online). On average, the “new hires” completed 1.7 TIP course offerings through the year.
- **The levels of student achievement seen among students** of novice teachers in Duval County were consistent with national studies. There were dramatic increases noted between student achievement of first- and second-year teachers. A smaller increase was seen between second- and third-year teachers. Further analyses for groups of novice teachers were done to see whether subgroups of TIP teachers with characteristics in common seemed to experience different levels of student achievement. It was interesting to note that student achievement among teachers participating in Alternative Certification programs was significantly higher at the end of the first year than other TIP participants. There were also positive results seen in student achievement of those teachers participating in the pilot TIP Mentoring Project.

\* References documented in full report.

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