Strengthening the Transition from Pre-Service to In-Service Training for New Teachers

Findings from a Study of Teach For America's Handoff Program

Shelley Rappaport
Andrea Shane
Kelly Granito
Lauren Scarola

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Overview

Teach For America (TFA), founded in 1989, has grown to become one of the largest providers of educators in the country for high-needs, under-resourced schools. TFA recruits high-performing college graduates and professionals and prepares them for teaching during five to seven weeks of intensive pre-service training at one of its regional or national summer "institutes" before their first teaching job. During their first year in the classroom, the new teachers (called "corps members") then receive ongoing in-service training from regional TFA teams. About 43 percent of TFA's corps members receive their pre-service training at a national institute, followed by in-service training from a regional team. The rest of the corps members receive both their pre-service and in-service training regionally.

As TFA has grown, and in particular with its introduction of a redesigned national training model in 2016, the regional in-service training has not always aligned well with the pre-service training offered at the national institutes. In 2017, TFA was awarded a Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant from the U.S. Department of Education to create and implement what it called the "Handoff," intended to strengthen the alignment between the national pre-service training and the regional in-service training. The project emphasized three aspects of the in-service training:

- Providing continued programming for new teachers (called "corps members") focused on creating and maintaining a *productive learning environment*

- Deepening corps members' knowledge, skills, and mindsets with regard to *diversity, equity, and inclusiveness*

- Tying these two ideas together to strengthen their practice as aspiring *culturally relevant practitioners*

MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization, was chosen to be the independent evaluator of the Handoff, as part of TFA's SEED grant. The study of the Handoff had two objectives: (1) to examine how it was implemented and how well it succeeded in aligning the in-service and pre-service training, and (2) to examine the effects of the Handoff on the short-term outcomes of the first cohort of corps members to participate in it.

This report explains that there was quite a bit of variation in the implementation of the Handoff among and within the TFA regions, and it suggests that receiving more training on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness and on maintaining a productive learning environment is associated with better practices by corps members in those areas.

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Executive Summary

Founded in 1989, Teach For America (TFA) has grown to become one of the largest providers of educators for high-needs schools in the country. Since its inception, TFA has trained over 60,000 teachers, also known as corps members (CMs), who are placed in high-needs schools.[1] CMs commit to teach in under-resourced schools for at least two years. The majority of CMs have never taught and have no background in education before their service with TFA; however, they receive pre-service intensive training during the summer before beginning to teach, at what is familiarly known as an "institute," which includes teaching summer school students. CMs also receive in-service training and professional development from TFA during their first two years of teaching.

The majority of CMs (57 percent) receive both their pre-service training and in-service training from their TFA regional teams. The remaining 43 percent receive pre-service training at a national institute (developed and run by the TFA national team) and their in-service training from their regional teams.[2] As TFA has grown over the years from 6 regions to more than 50, regional autonomy has increased and regional teams have offered more location-specific programming. As a result, aligning pre-service and in-service training for CMs who receive pre-service training at a national institute and in-service training from their regional TFA team has become increasingly complex.

In summer 2016, a redesigned pre-service training model was piloted at the national institute in Tulsa, which trained CMs from eight TFA regions. The goal of the new training was to better address the needs of low-income students by enhancing the rigor and relevance of the pre-service summer training. TFA's traditional summer training was offered at the other five national institutes. MDRC — a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization — evaluated and reported on the redesigned national institute model as part of a Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant.[3] The evaluation examined TFA's efforts to implement its redesigned training model and its effect on CMs' outcomes.

In 2017, TFA expanded its redesigned national institute model to all of its national institutes. An unintended consequence of the rapid scale-up of the redesign was that most of the regional staff who provided in-service training to CMs were former CMs themselves and had received the traditional summer training. They were thus less able than they had been in the past to

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1   Teach For America, "The History of Teach For America" (2020), website: https://www.teachforamerica.org/what-we-do/history.

2   These percentages are for CMs attending a national or regional institute in 2018.

3   Shelley Rappaport, Marie-Andrée Somers, and Kelly Granito, *A Redesigned Training Program for New Teachers: Findings from a Study of Teach For America's Summer Institutes* (New York: MDRC, 2019). The SEED grant program seeks to increase the number of highly effective educators by supporting the implementation of evidence-based preparation, development, and enhancement opportunities for educators. It is funded by the Office of Innovation and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education.

rely on their own training experiences to guide CMs who received their pre-service training at a redesigned national institute. This incongruity, combined with regional teams' increased autonomy, contributed to some misalignment between the pre-service and in-service training.

In 2017, TFA won a second SEED grant to create and implement what it calls the "Handoff," programming intended to strengthen the alignment between the redesigned pre-service summer training at the national institutes and the regional in-service training and professional development. SEED grants require that an independent evaluator study the funded programming. MDRC is playing that role for TFA for this grant. This report presents the results of that study. It covers some of the challenges that arose and potential innovations that became available when TFA implemented the Handoff. This report also presents the results from a follow-up evaluation that examined TFA's efforts to implement its redesigned training model in its third year, in 2018.

Although this study began as a random assignment experiment,[4] several challenges to using this design arose. There was not sufficient contrast between the original program regions and the control regions as some program and control regions were already implementing Handoff-like activities while other regions in both groups were not ready to strongly implement the Handoff activities. Therefore, the study team chose two different designs to explore the relationship between the training CMs received and study outcomes. The findings from this report are associative rather than causal.

Teach For America's National Institute Training Model and Strategies for Implementing the Handoff

Given the increased autonomy of TFA regional teams and the redesign of the national institute training model, the TFA national team sought in 2018 to help CMs who received their pre-service training at a national institute better make the transition to their in-service training and professional development. The Handoff was designed to strengthen the alignment between the training and professional development offered by regional teams and the redesigned national institute model with respect to the following three key components:

1. **Provide continued programming for CMs focused on creating and maintaining a productive learning environment (LE).** To create this kind of learning environment, CMs learn strategies for building relationships with students, giving directions that are student-centered and easy for students to understand, redirecting unengaged learners, creating positive expectations of students, recognizing and reinforcing positive student behaviors, building excitement, and so on.

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4   Random assignment involves a lottery-like process that places individuals, or in this case TFA regions, into either a program group, which is offered the services being tested, or into a comparison group, which is not offered those services.

2. **Deepen CMs' knowledge and skills and strengthen their mindsets with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI).** DEI is learning centered on understanding one's own identity and power in society, increasing social consciousness and attending to inclusiveness as teachers and leaders, and recognizing that educational equity requires thinking and acting both inside and outside of the classroom.

3. **Tie these two components together to orient CMs to becoming culturally relevant practitioners.** Culturally relevant pedagogy, or CRP, supports academic achievement by setting high expectations for students and providing ample opportunities for them to succeed; embraces cultural competence, including a curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge and cultural experience; and encourages sociopolitical consciousness by fostering students' critical consciousness — that is, developing in students the knowledge and skills to critically engage with their learning and the world.[5]

Implementing the Handoff

The Handoff was rolled out in the TFA regions in March 2018, when members of the national team met with regional leaders and program team members implementing the Handoff. The objective of the meeting was to discuss and improve understanding of the redesigned national institute training model and to identify the components (namely, productive learning environment and diversity, equity, and inclusiveness) on which the Handoff would focus in the 2018-2019 school year. Following the meeting, the national team held a series of calls with regional leaders through the end of 2018 to support the Handoff's implementation. It also offered regional teams the following to support implementation:

*   **March institute overview session.** This two-day training program taught regional teams about the redesigned national institute model and its expected outcomes for CMs in order to help them better align their regional in-service training during the school year with what CMs learn at national institute. It also gave regional teams an opportunity to give input on the components of the national institute model they believed should be a part of the Handoff. They discussed several major components of the national institute model (including public practice, learning environment; diversity, equity, and inclusiveness; and culturally relevant pedagogy) and collectively decided that the Handoff would focus on learning environment and diversity, equity, and inclusiveness.[6]

*   **Institute site visits.** Although it is not uncommon for regional team members to visit national institutes, representatives of select regional teams participating in the study were invited to visit the national institute serving their region in 2018 to give them a better understanding of the redesigned training model with an emphasis on the components of the institute that

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5   Gloria Ladson-Billings, "What We Can Learn from Multicultural Education Research," *Educational Leadership* 51, 8 (1994): 22-26.

6   Public practice is an important component of the national institute model's approach. It involves CMs rehearsing segments of their lesson in front of their trainers and peers and could also include sharing videos of their teaching to be used for group reflection.

could be addressed in the Handoff. These representatives were given specific guidance on how to observe activities associated with the components of the Handoff to better prepare them to align their regional school year programming with the national institute training.

- **Materials and guides.**

  o *First 8 Weeks of School (F8W) Sessions.* In partnership with regional teams, the national team developed two learning experiences on productive learning environment for regional teams to use with CMs during the first eight weeks of school to help them make the transition from the national institute in the summer to the regional in-service training in the fall.[7] These lessons build on what CMs learned about LE at the national institute and help them apply these skills to their classrooms and more easily anticipate how their regional context might influence their plans for promoting a productive learning environment. At the end of July 2018, the national team provided representatives of regional teams one to three hours of training to help them deliver the two lessons on learning environment for CMs.[8]

  o *DEI Design Book — Kickoff 2018.* The national team developed this manual for regional teams, which included DEI objectives, ideas for supporting CMs in reaching those objectives, the anticipated DEI outcomes, and a required debriefing exercise in which regional teams were expected to meet with CMs to reflect on their DEI-related experiences and learning at the national institute.[9]

  o *DEI Outcomes.* The national team developed this guide for regional teams, which contained specific DEI goals for CMs and examples of how CMs can be expected to reach those goals incrementally throughout the year.

- **Ongoing DEI Design Support and DEI Facilitation Training.** Representatives of regional teams were offered the opportunity to consult with the national team to create a set of DEI goals for CMs to achieve and develop DEI learning experiences. They also received DEI facilitation training on how to foster conversations with CMs around DEI.

- **Handoff Retreat.** In October 2018, the national team invited representatives of regional teams to a day-and-a-half-long retreat in which participants assessed the Handoff's implementation thus far, proposed adjustments, planned for the Handoff's continued implementation, and nurtured supportive relationships across regions.

The regional staff members who were expected to implement the Handoff's activities included the regional director, who oversees CM programming and training, as well as instructors and

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7   Regional teams gave input throughout the design of these sessions, including on how many sessions there should be and what the sessions should accomplish.

8   There was some variation across regions regarding whether or not the same regional representatives attended different handoff activities.

9   The national team provided regional teams with an outline to use during the CM debrief exercise.

coaches. Most of the guidance and training that the national team provided was designed for the regional directors whose responsibility was to prepare the instructors and coaches to implement the Handoff's activities. Instructors provided professional development to CMs. Coaches worked one-on-one with CMs, helping them plan their lessons with the Handoff components in mind as well as observing and offering critical feedback on their teaching in the classroom.

Evaluation Design

The evaluation of the redesigned training had two objectives: (1) to examine how the Handoff was implemented and how well it succeeded in aligning the in-service and pre-service training, and (2) to examine the effects of the Handoff on the short-term outcomes of the first cohort of CMs to participate in it.

To assess whether the Handoff led to improved outcomes for CMs, the study team undertook an experimental evaluation of the initiative in which 10 regional teams participated. Each of the 10 regional teams was randomly assigned either to a program group (comprising five regions), which would implement the Handoff, or to a control group (comprising five regions), which would continue with their business-as-usual training models. It proved challenging, however, to rigorously evaluate the impact of TFA's Handoff activities over the school year. The regional teams' use of the Handoff's strategies varied substantially, with some regional teams in the control group independently implementing Handoff-like strategies and some regional teams in the program group not implementing any such strategies. Moreover, some regional teams in both the program and control groups had already been offering robust DEI programming and, to some extent, LE programming before the introduction of the Handoff. That is to say, early findings revealed very little difference between the two research groups with respect to the Handoff-related in-service training and professional development that CMs received. The resulting lack of contrast between the groups compromised the value of the experimental evaluation in assessing the Handoff's effects on CM outcomes.[10]

The study team collected several types of data to evaluate the implementation and outcomes for this study. In summer 2018, the study team visited two of the national institute sites to understand the components of the redesigned training model that the Handoff would carry over. During the visits, the study team observed the training CMs received and the CMs' summer school teaching. The team conducted focus groups with CMs, trainers (or lead instructors), and coaches. To learn about CMs' experience teaching in the classroom, the study team sent open-ended logs to CMs who were in the study regions and in their first year of teaching with TFA and had volunteered to participate in the data collection activities, which they completed and returned to the team, every month during their first year of teaching. The questions in the log captured

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10 Although implementation of the Handoff was inconsistent, the results from the experimental impact study are included in Appendix Tables A.2 through A.6. As expected, there were no discernible differences in outcomes for CMs in the program and comparison regions.

the CMs' use of the strategies that were a focus of the Handoff. In late fall 2018, the study team conducted site visits to all 10 study regions to conduct interviews with regional coaches and to observe professional development focused on learning environment and diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. Finally, the study team conducted follow-up phone or in-person interviews with a sample of CMs at the end of their first year of teaching, as well as interviews with the regional director and members of regional teams overseeing training relative to learning environment and diversity, equity, and inclusiveness. To measure outcomes for CMs, the study team leveraged TFA's administrative records, teacher surveys that TFA administered regularly, a survey on culturally relevant pedagogy, and biweekly closed-ended teacher instructional logs that the study team administered during CMs' first year of teaching.

Since the study team observed very little difference between the two research groups with respect to the Handoff-related in-service training that CMs received, an experimental study was no longer an appropriate study design. However, the observed variation in the implementation of the Handoff among and within the 10 participating regions made it possible to explore more nuanced questions about the association between DEI- and LE-focused professional development and CMs' outcomes. The study team examined this association using two different analytical approaches. The first approach included a set of CM-level correlational analyses that assessed whether CMs who received more DEI- or LE-focused professional development had better outcomes in three domains: CMs' self-perceptions of their cultural awareness; their practices related to DEI, LE, and their development toward becoming culturally relevant practitioners; and their retention in TFA. These analyses leveraged the fact that professional development varied *within regions*, meaning that CMs in the same region received different types and amounts of professional development.

In contrast, the second analytical approach included a set of region-level analyses that leveraged the variation in professional development *among regions*. Using this approach, the study team explored whether CMs in regions whose TFA teams provided more professional development on average had better outcomes than CMs in regions whose TFA teams provided less professional development on average.

While these analyses could not determine whether the Handoff itself improved CM outcomes, they were able to shed light on whether DEI- and LE-focused professional development, which TFA aimed to provide through the Handoff, has the potential to change CMs' perceptions and behaviors. Any effects on CM outcomes described in the findings of this report cannot be interpreted as causal — that is, the direct result of the Handoff's professional development; other unobserved factors, such as differences in teaching context among CMs, could have affected the association between the professional development and teacher outcomes. However, the findings may still be useful for developing hypotheses for further research and may inform the design of professional development programming focused on DEI and LE.

Key Findings

Implementation of the 2018 Redesigned National Institute Training

As indicated above, this report presents the results from a follow-up evaluation that examined TFA's efforts to implement its redesigned training model in its third year, the model on which the Handoff was based. The redesigned training that CMs received at the national institute in 2018 was clearer about what it means to create and maintain a productive learning environment and was more specific about the necessary strategies and routines needed to do so compared with the redesigned training provided to CMs at the national institute in 2016.

- CMs who received the redesigned national institute training in 2018 were more likely (1) to report being prepared to use and (2) to be observed using instructional strategies on which the redesigned national institute model focused, compared with CMs who attended the redesigned institute when it was piloted in 2016.

Implementation of the Handoff

The implementation findings suggest that adjusting the pace of implementation of a complex and long-term initiative such as the Handoff in a manner that meets each region's unique level of readiness might help all regional teams to plan and deliver effective, national institute-aligned training focused on DEI and LE throughout CMs' first year of teaching. The main findings suggest the following:

- Regional teams found it helpful to learn the LE and DEI terminology used at the national institutes as this made the transition from pre-service to in-service training smoother. However, regional teams needed more time to learn from and with the national team and each other about implementing the Handoff.

- Regional teams demonstrated varying levels of readiness to align their in-service training with key components from the redesigned national institute training model (pre-service training), and the short timeline (fewer than six months) for implementing the Handoff was a barrier to consistently doing it successfully, especially for regional staff who were newer to the concepts of LE and DEI.

- Regional staff members who had longer histories (generally at least two years) of incorporating DEI approaches on their own before the Handoff was rolled out felt better prepared to implement the Handoff's DEI training components, particularly with regard to hiring and training coaches and training CMs to be attuned to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness most relevant in their local contexts.

- Across the 10 regions that participated in the study, regional directors — those who oversee CM programming and training — generally found the guidance on LE alignment particularly

useful. However, many of them struggled to implement it, among their staff members and in their CM training plans, since the national team provided it after they had developed their regional training plans, which is where the guidance could have been most easily incorporated. This may have had particularly strong implications for coaches' readiness to support CMs with the LE component, which in turn affected how CMs described LE in their reports on the training they received during the school year.

CM Outcomes

- The findings suggest that, for the CM-level analyses only, there is an association between DEI-focused professional development and some DEI-specific outcomes such as self-perceived cultural awareness and DEI instructional practices. There is also an association between DEI-focused professional development and rates of retention in TFA.

- There is an association between LE-focused professional development and CMs' more frequent use of LE instructional practices. This association is consistent between the CM- and region-level analyses. For the CM-level analyses only, there are also associations between LE-focused professional development and CMs' use of practices grounded in CRP and retention rates in TFA. For the region-level analysis, there was a difference between CMs' reported confidence in their ability to use CRP practices in regions where CMs received high amounts of LE-focused professional development and those where they received low amounts.

Conclusion

The findings from this study are consistent with what is known about the challenges of implementing new teacher training programs. TFA's Handoff — which aimed to guide and support regional teams as they provided CMs with national institute-aligned professional development focused on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness; a productive learning environment; and culturally relevant pedagogy throughout the school year — was ambitious in scope and introduced without the benefit of a pilot. The challenges that arose in rolling out the Handoff and the inconsistent associations between professional development and CM outcomes are not entirely surprising given that the Handoff's complexity and the attempt to implement it within a short timeframe and evaluate it quickly afterward. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that when regional teams, particularly those staff members who support CMs directly, are given adequate time to internalize the Handoff's concepts and practices and refine their approach to them, they may succeed in providing relevant support that is aligned TFA's redesigned national institute training.

1

Introduction

Novice teachers enter the classroom with a wide variety of pre-service training. Some receive support and training from universities where they studied education and from the schools where they did their student teaching. A growing number of others receive their training through alternative teacher certification programs, such as Teach For America (TFA), which has become one of the largest providers of educators in the country. TFA teachers receive their pre-service training in one of two ways. They either attend a summer national institute where they are trained with other new TFA teachers who will be teaching in schools across various TFA regions in the country, or they attend a summer regional institute in which they are trained with other new TFA teachers who will all be teaching in that same region. All TFA teachers receive ongoing training from regional TFA staff in the regions to which they are assigned to teach during the school year. For those teachers who receive pre-service training at the national institute and ongoing training from regional staff, determining how best to align the two types of trainings is especially challenging. TFA seeks to address this challenge.[1]

As an alternative teacher training program, TFA recruits outstanding and diverse individuals with leadership potential and a desire to teach and provides them with intensive pre-service teacher training at one of its "institutes" in the summer before their first teaching job. Following this pre-service training, TFA provides ongoing in-service support and training in the regions across the United States where these teachers are placed. While the majority of TFA teachers (57 percent) receive both their pre-service and in-service training from their regional teams, the remaining 43 percent receive pre-service training at a national institute and their in-service training from their regional teams.[2] As TFA has grown over the years from 6 regions to more than 50, regional autonomy has increased. As a result, aligning pre-service and in-service training for teachers who receive pre-service training at a national institute (developed and run by the TFA national team) and in-service training from their regional TFA team has become increasingly complex.

In 2017, TFA won a Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant to create and implement what they call the "Handoff," an initiative intended to strengthen the alignment between the pre-service training provided at the national institutes in the summer and the in-service training offered by TFA regional teams throughout the school year for the 43 percent of new

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1   Fraser and Lefty (2018).

2   These percentages are for new teachers attending a national or regional institute in 2018.

TFA teachers who received their training in this way.[3] SEED grants require that an independent evaluator study the funded programming. MDRC, a nonprofit, nonpartisan education and social policy research organization, is playing that role for TFA for this grant.

This report presents the results of that study. It describes the challenges that result from misalignment between the pre-service and in-service training and support that CMs who attend a national institute receive, as well as TFA's innovations to address those challenges. It also covers the challenges that arose and potential solutions that became available when implementing the Handoff.

The overall findings of this research are that (1) large-scale innovation is improved through iteration, (2) placing staff members with expertise throughout an organization helps ensure that organization fulfills its mission, and (3) efforts to align programming across an organization's multiple satellite locations benefit from collaboration at two levels — between the central organization and the satellite locations (called regions by TFA) and among satellite locations.

Box 1.1 defines the relevant terms introduced in this chapter.

BOX 1.1 Relevant Terms in Chapter 1

CORPS MEMBER (CM) TFA's recruited teachers, many of whom are recent college graduates.

REGIONS The geographical areas across the country that TFA serves (including large metropolitan cities and rural communities).

(REGIONAL OR NATIONAL) INSTITUTE Five to seven weeks of intensive pre-service training that CMs receive before beginning their classroom placements. Most regional institutes are led by the regional team and attended by CMs assigned to that region. National institutes are led by the national team and are attended by CMs from several regions.

INDUCTION Up to one week of pre-service training that CMs receive from their regional team before institute.

THE HANDOFF Programming and materials designed to help CMs who received their pre-service training at a national institute better make the transition to their first teaching jobs in one of the regions and ensure that the training and support offered by regional staff throughout the year aligns with what they learned at the national institute.

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3   The SEED grant seeks to increase the number of highly effective educators by supporting the implementation of evidence-based preparation, development, and enhancement opportunities for educators. It is funded by the Office of Innovation and Improvement at the U.S. Department of Education.

TFA and the Training and Support It Offers to New Teachers

Founded by Wendy Kopp in 1989 and launched in 1990, TFA describes itself as "a diverse network of leaders working to confront educational inequity through teaching and at every sector of society to create a country free from this injustice."[4] It envisions a society where all children have access to an excellent education. To make this vision a reality, TFA seeks to cultivate leaders who understand the issues facing the nation's schools and who will advance educational equity. To this end, TFA (1) recruits outstanding college graduates, who demonstrate leadership potential and come from diverse backgrounds, to become teachers (known as "corps members," or "CMs," once they begin teaching), (2) nurtures leadership qualities and skills in the CMs to help them develop and promote needed systemic change, and (3) fosters collective leadership — leadership that is collaborative and coordinated across a system — in the CMs and TFA alumni. CMs commit to teaching for two years in a low-income community, where they are employed by local schools. After two years, they become part of the TFA alumni network, and most continue pursuing opportunities to reduce educational inequities. Since its founding, TFA has grown from 489 CMs in 1990 to more than 60,000 CMs and alumni in 2020.[5]

Training and Support

The majority of CMs have never taught and have no background in education.[6] Once selected, CMs are assigned to one of more than 50 TFA regions throughout the United States.[7] CMs, with assistance from TFA regional staff, then look for teaching positions within their assigned regions.[8] In the summer before their first year of teaching, CMs receive five to seven weeks of intensive pre-service training from TFA that includes teaching summer school students.[9] As discussed above and shown in Figure 1.1, CMs are trained either at a regional institute or at a national institute. Whether a CM is trained at a regional institute or at a national institute depends on the region to which the CM is assigned. TFA continues to support CMs with coaching and professional development within their regions throughout their first two years of teaching.

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4   Teach For America (2020c).

5   See Teach For America (2020a). All CMs who fulfill their two-year teaching commitment are considered alumni whether or not they stay in teaching.

6   Teach For America (2020b).

7   The number of regions has changed from 53 in 2016 to 51 in 2018. Over time, CMs have been given more say in selecting the regions to which they are assigned. CMs thus can choose to live and work in an area where they will want to stay, increasing the likelihood that CMs will continue to teach beyond their two-year commitment and in a community where they can more easily advance educational equity and serve as leaders.

8   TFA supports CMs in their search for teaching positions through its partnerships with school districts and by helping them with their résumés and connecting them to job fairs.

9   National institutes are held in regions where partnering districts have agreed to allow CMs to teach summer school. CMs are responsible for teaching their own classes, but a teacher of record, who works for the school district (and not for TFA), is often present in the classroom and may support CMs.

As shown in Figure 1.1, CMs attend their pre-service training in several phases. Typically, before CMs begin their pre-service training at a regional or national institute, they receive a week or so of programming — often called "induction" — from regional staff. Following induction, they attend either a regional institute, if one is offered in their region, or the national institute associated with their region for five to seven weeks of pre-service training. After attending an institute, CMs go through a regional orientation process, or the "kickoff," to get ready for the beginning of the school year. For CMs who attend a regional institute, the induction and kickoff also take place within their regions, while CMs who attend a national institute must travel from their region to the national institute and then back to their region.

Figure 1.1 presents the types of in-service training that CMs receive in their regions. During the school year, all CMs receive training from TFA in several formats. TFA regional staff provides the bulk of its in-service training to CMs via one-on-one sessions with TFA coaches. Similar to the staff at national institutes, many of the coaches are experienced educators, and the majority of them are TFA alumni. CMs also attend weekend trainings as well as weekday workshops led by coaches or other TFA regional staff. In addition, CMs may receive support and training from their schools, districts, or university-based teacher certification programs.[10]

The Evolution of TFA's Training Model

When TFA was first launched in 1990, it had fewer than 50 staff members. While these staff members were spread across six regions, they worked closely together. All CMs attended the same national institute, and TFA leaders met or called one another on an as-needed basis, thereby achieving a common vision across TFA regions.

By 2000, TFA was operating in 15 regions. To manage this growth, TFA began systemizing tasks and activities that had previously been carried out on an ad hoc basis. The resulting consistency in programming across regions helped TFA "build credibility with potential district partners, funders, and other stakeholders." To achieve this consistency, chief operating officers from TFA's national team set goals with regional executive directors and made sure that the executive directors had the resources they needed. By 2005, TFA began to put in place a "highly centralized" operating model across its then 23 regions, in which a robust national team provided intensive support and supervision to regional staff, and "a high level of quality and consistency" across regions was maintained.[11]

As TFA continued to expand (to 42 regions by 2010), differences in local needs across the regions became more apparent, and regional executive directors grew more adept at responding to these needs as well as leading their teams. Meanwhile, operating TFA's highly centralized institutional model was becoming costly. In this context, regional executive directors increasingly sought greater autonomy in decision making related to programming and other important matters. In

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10 The certification programs may be through public or private universities or through alternative institutions. In some regions, TFA partners with certification programs to train CMs.

11 Mead, Chuong, and Goodson (2015).

FIGURE 1.1 Corps Members' Pre-Service and In-Service Training Paths

Corps Member (CM)

Pre-service training

Regional induction
(a week of programming)

Five weeks of
pre-service training

national
institute

or

regional
institute

Regional orientation process
called the "kickoff"

School year
begins

CM starts teaching in
a regional placement

In-service training

Ongoing training throughout
school year

One-on-one sessions with
TFA coaches

TFA-led weekend trainings
and weekday workshops

School- or district-led
workshops and professional
development

Teacher certification
programs

an effort to respond to the directors' requests and address differing local needs, in 2013, TFA began to give its regional teams greater flexibility and freedom to adapt their programmatic approach to their local contexts.[12]

This move to a more decentralized operating model led to greater variation in programming across regions. As a result of this variation, it became more complex to align what CMs learned at the national institutes with the continuing support they received while teaching in their regions.

In summer 2016, TFA piloted a redesigned national institute training model at one of its six national institutes.[13] The redesigned training model included several distinct components that differentiated it from earlier training models, the most notable of which was the method of delivering training to CMs. MDRC evaluated and reported on that pilot as part of a prior SEED grant.[14] The study examined TFA's implementation of the redesigned training model and the effects on CMs' outcomes.

Although, TFA worked to enhance its training in the years before the 2016 redesign, the primary focus of the content and the methods used to deliver the training had remained relatively unchanged since the early 2000s. A benefit of this consistency over the years was that regional team members generally had a good sense of what their incoming CMs had learned at the national institute and what they needed to do to build on that learning. In fact, many of these regional team members, as well as members of the national team for that matter, were former CMs who themselves underwent the national institute training or were otherwise directly exposed to it. However, when the model was redesigned in 2016, these same regional team members were less able than they had been in the past to rely on their own experiences with the training model to guide the CMs returning from national institutes. This incongruence contributed to some misalignment between the pre-service and in-service trainings for the affected CMs.

Focus of the Handoff: Alignment Between Pre-Service and In-Service Training

Given the increased autonomy of regional teams and the redesign of the national institute model, the national team sought in 2018 to help CMs who received their pre-service training at a national institute better make the transition to their first teaching jobs in their assigned regions. The Handoff was designed to strengthen the alignment between the training and support offered by regional team members and the redesigned national institute model with respect to the following three key components:

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12 Mead, Chuong, and Goodson (2015).

13 In 2018, TFA operated four national institutes.

14 Rappaport, Somers, and Granito (2019).

- Provide continued programming for CMs focused on creating and maintaining a productive learning environment.

- Deepen CMs' knowledge and skills and strengthen their mindsets with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness.

- Orient CMs to the work of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Chapter 2 looks at how TFA implemented the learning environment component at the national institute and how the training evolved over time. Chapter 3 describes the in-service training that CMs received in their regions and the extent to which it was aligned with the national institute training. Chapter 4 examines the association between professional development focused on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness and on learning environment and CM outcomes in three domains: (1) CMs' self-perceptions of their cultural awareness, (2) their use of instructional and social practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness; creating a productive learning environment; and their orientation to culturally relevant pedagogy, and (3) their retention in TFA. The concluding chapter summarizes the study's findings and offers recommendations for strengthening the alignment between TFA's pre-service and in-service teacher training.

2

Learning Through Iteration: The Redesigned National Institute Training Model

The redesigned national institute model (pre-service training) that TFA piloted in 2016, scaled up in 2017, and further refined in 2018 was intended to better address the needs of students in under-resourced schools by enhancing the rigor and the relevance of the summer training provided to corps members (CMs). As described in Chapter 1, the redesigned training model differs in several ways from the traditional training model, the most notable of which is the method of delivering training to CMs. CMs who receive the redesigned training experience teaching in all its complexity and practice making decisions that lead to student success. In contrast, TFA's traditional national institutes provided training on discrete, content-neutral topics, such as classroom management and lesson planning, largely through lecture format.

The redesigned training emphasizes that teaching is a complex activity that demands both planned and in-the-moment decision making. It focuses on *how* to teach. To this end, CMs are provided with rigorous lesson plans so they can concentrate on learning how to deliver lessons rather than spend time developing those lesson plans. TFA groups these CMs together by the content area and grade level they teach during summer school and provides them with lesson plans that it has developed with the relevant content and grade level in mind. CMs who receive the redesigned national institute training create their own lesson plans only in the last week of the summer training. In contrast, the CMs who attended TFA's traditional national institute would develop all of their own daily lesson plans for their summer school teaching assignments using the discrete skills they learned and the materials they received in the training. TFA also did not systematically group the CMs by content and grade level, and the training it offered was content neutral.

This chapter includes a discussion of the redesigned national institute training model for two reasons. First, it is essential to understand the redesigned model in order to evaluate the Handoff, which was developed to better align the support and training offered by TFA's regional teams throughout the school year with this model. Second, the lessons learned from the 2016 pilot and how those lessons helped guide its implementation in 2018 can shed light on how the Handoff and other similar programs can be put into place most successfully. The remainder of this chapter describes the redesigned training, particularly as it relates to the Handoff, and the lessons learned from its implementation.

The following research questions guide this chapter:

- What did implementation of the redesigned national institute training model look like and how did it change from 2016 to 2018?

- What contributed to any changes in the model's implementation from 2016 to 2018?

- Did the instructional practices that CMs used and their level of confidence change from 2016 to 2018?

Box 2.1 defines the relevant terms introduced in this chapter.

The MDRC study team conducted focus groups with TFA staff and CMs and observed teacher training activities during the redesigned national institutes in 2016 and 2018. (Table 2.1 presents the various qualitative data that the team collected as part of its evaluation of the redesigned

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BOX 2.1 Relevant Terms in Chapter 2

THE LEARNING CYCLE A four-step process in which teachers observe, practice, teach, and then receive feedback and reflect on how they implemented different types of content-based instructional activities.

CORE PRACTICES The big ideas that successful teachers keep in mind in the classroom in order to make the instructional judgments that will prime their students for success.

LEAD INSTRUCTOR An institute staff member who leads the Learning Cycle sessions.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT (LE) TRAINING The strategies focused on in the training that include building relationships with students, giving directions that are student-centered and easy to understand, creating a classroom layout conducive to learning, and so on.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSIVENESS (DEI) TRAINING DEI learning is centered on understanding one's own identity and power in society, increasing social consciousness, attending to inclusiveness, and recognizing that educational equity requires thinking and acting both inside and outside of the classroom.

CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY (CRP) Teaching practice that (1) supports academic success by setting high expectations for students and providing ample opportunities for them to succeed; (2) embraces cultural competence, including a curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge and cultural experiences; and (3) encourages sociopolitical consciousness by providing students with the tools to critique and challenge institutions that perpetuate inequality.

TABLE 2.1 Qualitative Data Collected on the Redesigned National Institute Training Model, 2016 and 2018

DATA SOURCE	TIMING OF COLLECTION	DOMAIN	SAMPLE
Observations of the training provided to lead instructors and coaches for the redesigned national institute	Winter of 2016 and 2018	Fidelity of implementation of the training focused on the Learning Cycle and core practices	A sample of the training provided to lead instructors and coaches
Observations of lead instructors and coaches	During the redesigned national institute in 2016 and 2018	Fidelity of implementation of the Learning Cycle focused on how core practices were embedded in the model	A sample of lead instructors and coaches
Observations of CMs teaching summer school	During the redesigned national institute in 2016 and 2018	Use of core practices	A sample of summer classes taught by CMs
Focus groups with lead instructors, coaches, and CMs	Last week of the redesigned national institute in 2016 and 2018	Whether and how CMs were prepared for their first year of teaching	A sample of lead instructors, coaches, and CMs teaching English language arts, math, or general education

training model.) Among the findings, the team concluded that, while it took time to refine the redesigned model, the resulting improvements could eventually lead to better training for CMs. Other key findings include the following:

- The training provided to the instructional staff at the redesigned national institute in 2018 was clearer and more specific about how to help CMs create and maintain a productive learning environment in the classrooms than the training provided to the instructional staff in 2016.

- The redesigned training that CMs received at the 2018 national institute was clearer about what it means to create and maintain a productive learning environment and was more specific about the strategies and routines needed to do so, compared with the redesigned training provided to CMs at the 2016 national institute.

- CMs who received the redesigned national institute training in 2018 were more likely (1) to report being prepared to use and (2) to be observed using instructional strategies on which the redesigned national institute training model focused, compared with CMs who attended the redesigned institute in 2016.

MDRC observed that the implementation of the 2016 pilot was somewhat uneven. However, the process helped to identify challenges and spark innovative ideas to address these challenges, which in turn led to programmatic improvements and a stronger redesigned national institute training model in 2018.

The Redesigned National Institute Training Model

Research indicates that learning accompanied by practice has the most impact on individuals' performance.[1] Accordingly, TFA developed the redesigned national institute training model to help CMs grasp and eventually master the complexities of teaching by contextualizing the skills they are learning and focusing on critical reflection and decision making. The redesigned training provides each CM the opportunity to try out decisions through practice that is observed by their peers and trainers, who together with the CM then consider the potential impact of those decisions on students. This supportive environment allows CMs to weigh the benefits and drawbacks of their decisions in the classroom alongside their peers. In this way, the redesigned training aims not to simply teach CMs discrete skills (such as how to get students' attention), isolated from the complexities of teaching, but rather to help them develop these skills as they practice teaching specific content in the classroom and improve their judgment as teachers. To allow CMs to concentrate on the "how" of teaching, rigorous lesson plans, which serve as a foundation of "what" to teach, are provided throughout most of their training. CMs can then more easily internalize effective teaching techniques and strategies while learning rigorous content to teach their students.

Learning Cycle

The method used to deliver CM training is a key feature of the redesigned national institute model. Referred to as the Learning Cycle, the method, which was developed at the University of Washington's Teacher Education by Design program, is informed by research.[2] It is a four-step process in which teachers observe, practice, teach (in this case summer school students), and then reflect and receive feedback on their teaching. For instance, CMs and their peers may consider how one of them has engaged students in a discussion about a book or guided students as they counted out loud according to a pattern.[3] Through the cycle, CMs are introduced to rigorous, content-specific lessons with predictable outcomes that are both appropriate for their summer school students and manageable for novice teachers to use while learning how to teach. For instance, while practicing how to teach a lesson on counting according to a pattern, CMs may be asked to consider strategies to get students' attention, to make sure that directions were clear, to include all students, to get students engaged in meaningful discussion with each other,

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1   Ericsson, Krampe, and Tesch-Römer (1993); Grossman et al. (2009).

2   See Teacher Education by Design (2014).

3   While not the focus of this study, the Learning Cycle is covered in greater detail in MDRC's prior TFA study report; see Rappaport, Somers, and Granito (2019).

and so on. Taken together, the strategies that CMs are asked to consider make up the "core practices" (described in more detail below) they would need to incorporate into their teaching for it to be successful.

Core Practices and Creating and Maintaining a Productive Learning Environment

Core practices are the big ideas that successful teachers keep in mind in the classroom in order to make the instructional judgments that will prime their students for success. They are based on the research and findings of the Core Practice Consortium — a collaboration of teacher educators working to improve the training of novice teachers.[4] The core practices include creating and maintaining a productive learning environment, positioning students so they can make sense of what is being taught, teaching toward an instructional goal, and making use of all these practices with equity in mind.

Creating and maintaining a productive learning environment (LE) is one of the core practices on which the redesigned national institute focuses, and is also a main focus of the Handoff. CMs who attend the national institutes learn to how to use "teacher moves" to promote LE. These teacher moves include building relationships with students, giving directions that are student-centered and easy for students to understand, responding to unengaged learners, recognizing and reinforcing positive student behaviors, creating a classroom layout conducive to learning (for example, allowing students to switch between working independently and working in groups), building excitement, and so on.

Data Collection Activities

To better understand the evolution of the redesigned national institute training model from 2016 to 2018, the study team engaged in two types of data collection activities: observations and focus groups.

Observations

In the winter of 2016 and 2018, the study team observed some of the redesigned training provided to the national institute lead instructors (who provide pre-service training to the CMs using the Learning Cycle) and coaches to learn about the focus of the training and how it was delivered. In the summer of 2016 and 2018, the study team observed lead instructors and coaches delivering the redesigned training at the national institute to assess the fidelity of implementation of the Learning Cycle and how core practices were embedded in the training. The team also observed CMs as they taught their summer school classes to identify their use of the core practices.

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4   See Core Practice Consortium (2020).

Focus Groups

At the conclusion of the redesigned national institute in both 2016 and 2018, the study team conducted focus groups with CMs to learn more about the key ideas, practices, or experiences that CMs gained from their training and how prepared they felt to teach. The study team also conducted focus groups with English language arts, mathematics, and elementary school teacher educators (lead instructors and coaches) to learn about CMs' readiness to teach from the perspective of their trainers, as well as the trainers' own readiness to train CMs. Table 2.1 provides more information on the data collection activities.

Differences Between the 2016 and 2018 National Institute Training Models

Differences in the Training Provided to Lead Instructors, Coaches, and Corps Members in 2016 and 2018

While the core practice of creating and maintaining a productive learning environment (LE) was a focus of the redesigned national institute model in both 2016 and 2018, it was implemented differently in those two years. For example, in 2016, lead instructors, who lead the Learning Cycle sessions, and coaches, who provide support to lead instructors and CMs, were not explicitly trained in how to embed LE and other core practices into content-based Learning Cycle sessions.[5] When and how lead instructors would train CMs in the core practices was left to up to their judgment. This led to variation in how and when CMs learned LE. Since 2016, however, TFA has taken a more intentional approach to training lead instructors and coaches, giving them more thorough guidance on how to instruct core practices. For instance, TFA introduced national institute staff members to LE and LE strategies during a training conference in spring 2018, in preparation for the 2018 summer institute. TFA also provided them with comprehensive written guides focused specifically on LE and how to use LE strategies, such as giving student-centered directions, giving sincere and authentic praise, building relationships with students, responding to unengaged learners, and so on. Additionally, at the national institute in 2018, the scripted lesson plans for the Learning Cycle sessions delineated the content, core practice to be covered in each session, objectives, outputs, expected CM and student outcomes, and ideas for customizing sessions to build CMs' knowledge and skills and improve their judgment. For example, lead instructors knew from the plans the sessions in which they were expected to introduce or reinforce how to give student-centered directions or respond to unengaged learners. TFA had two years to refine the redesigned model, and, when the study team returned in 2018, lead instructors were receiving explicit guidance on how to train CMs in LE.

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5   Diversity, equity, and inclusiveness training was not a focus of the evaluation of the 2016 redesigned national institute model. Therefore, comparisons are not made here related to this training between the national institutes in Tulsa in 2016 and 2018.

Differences in Corps Members, Instructional Practices, and Confidence Between 2016 and 2018

CMs in the 2018 cohort observed by the study team showed clearer indications that they were attempting to embed LE strategies into their summer school teaching than did CMs in the 2016 cohort. CMs in 2018 were more often observed giving student-centered directions, responding to unengaged students, and noticing what students were doing and naming them as a way to enforce positive behaviors. CMs also did not generally report, as they had in 2016, that they felt unprepared to apply effective classroom management strategies (many of which are integral to LE strategies). For the most part, they felt that the national institute training had prepared them for that. This increased use of LE strategies and confidence among CMs may be a result of TFA's refinement of its delivery of the Learning Cycle over two years and the embedding LE training into each session.

National Institute and Its Relationship to the Handoff

By 2018, the redesigned national institute was helping CMs establish a firm foundation in LE. To build on this learning and the resulting gains made by CMs, the TFA national team sought to work with regional teams to better align the continued support and in-service training they provide to CMs during the school year with the redesigned national institute training. The Handoff was the result of this effort. It focused on aligning the support regional teams offer CMs with the training in LE and other key concepts — namely, diversity, equity, and inclusiveness and culturally relevant pedagogy (discussed below) — that CMs receive at the redesign national institute. A goal of the Handoff was thus to train regional staff in how to build on what CMs learned at the national institute.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness

The 2018 redesigned national institute training and the Handoff also aimed to expand CMs' mindsets with regard to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI) and develop related skills and teaching practices. First, the training prompted CMs to think critically about and better understand their own identity (that is, how their race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and so forth shape their assumptions and beliefs), as well as the broader relationships between power and identity in society. Second, it encouraged CMs to develop their social consciousness and focus on inclusiveness, particularly as they relate to their roles as teachers and emerging leaders in the field of education. The training emphasized that to achieve educational equity CMs must think and act in ways that advance this goal both inside and outside of what takes place in their classrooms. For example, just as CMs should engage their students in dialogue about issues of race, gender, and ethnicity as they pertain to the instructional content and to real life, they should also have similar conversations with colleagues and administrators about issues and tensions related to inequity within their schools and how to address them and dismantle institutional barriers to student success. CMs attended seven main learning sessions on DEI during their national institute training, as well as three additional sessions intended to reinforce

the lessons from those learning sessions. They were also were required to attend four race-based affinity (that is, people with shared racial identities) support group meetings over the course of national institute.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The 2018 redesigned national institute model and the Handoff also focused on culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). CRP lies at the intersection of LE and DEI and aims to help CMs become culturally relevant practitioners. It (1) supports academic achievement by setting high expectations for students and providing ample opportunities for them to succeed; (2) embraces cultural competence, including a curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge and cultural experience; and (3) encourages sociopolitical consciousness by instilling in students the knowledge and skills to critically engage with their learning, others, and the world.[6]

By approaching LE through the lens of DEI, CMs can begin orienting themselves to the work of CRP and toward becoming culturally relevant practitioners. For example, CMs can improve their cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness, which inform and strengthen their practice as teachers, through LE- and DEI-focused professional development and opportunities to engage with the communities is which they teach. This could mean, for example, attending community meetings related to important civil or social justice issues facing the community, and then strategically bringing those issues into their classroom through lessons, activities, and group discussion. In this way, the CM builds relationships with students and bridges classroom learning to the real world and the community. Similarly, CMs can progressively better navigate and address issues related to inequity in their instructional content and in classroom set-ups through available LE-focused professional development. For example, CMs could use what they know about their students' lives to identify content that would be meaningful to them and integrate it into the curriculum.

At the 2016 and 2018 redesigned national institutes, culturally relevant pedagogy was built into the rigorous, content-specific lesson plans that were provided to CMs to help them concentrate on learning how to teach. However, in 2016, the trainers did not regularly or explicitly call out and emphasize CRP in Learning Cycle sessions. By 2018, the national staff and trainers had been more thoroughly trained in CRP, and the scripted lessons trainers received for the Learning Cycle sessions indicated the principles of CRP and called for discussions about them. The addition of DEI-focused training also contributed an increased focus on CRP in 2018.

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6   Ladson-Billings (1994).

Learning from Early Implementation

Findings from MDRC's earlier TFA study show that the implementation of the redesigned national institute was a complex undertaking and more difficult to accomplish than anticipated.[7] It required preparing staff members to train CMs in the use of methods that were radically different than those emphasized in TFA's traditional training. In 2016, some of the national institute trainers were themselves not sufficiently trained in the new approach and reported that they felt inadequately prepared to support CMs. However, lessons learned from the first year of implementing the redesigned training were invaluable for helping TFA move forward.

TFA responded to the findings from the 2016 redesigned national institute by adjusting and strengthening the model. As the study team observed in 2018, TFA has since taken a much more intentional approach to training lead instructors and coaches on how to teach CMs about the core practices. Lead instructors and coaches now have more detailed materials that help them make explicit to CMs how core practices can be incorporated into and guide their instruction, how they can engage with their students, and how they can create more equitable classrooms. Lead instructors must also follow a scripted lesson for each Learning Cycle session to ensure CMs will develop the knowledge, skills, and judgment needed to apply the core practices in their classrooms.

At the 2018 national institute, the study team observed more instances of CMs creating and maintaining a productive learning environment than it had at the 2016 national institute. The team more often observed CMs giving student-centered directions, redirecting unengaged students, and noticing and naming positive behaviors. CMs in the 2018 cohort also did not report, as did those in the 2016 cohort, that they felt unprepared to implement effective LE strategies. For the most part, they reported that the national institute training had prepared them for that.

There were other striking differences between the 2016 and 2018 national institutes. Redesigning the national institute training model required TFA to rethink many aspects of implementation, from how to staff the national institute, to how to train the coaches, to how CMs would be grouped. As noted earlier, TFA learned a great deal from the challenges that arose during the 2016 pilot and addressed those challenges in a manner that improved the model. Over two years, TFA developed rigorous, detailed materials and helped staff internalize the new content and training method. By 2018, the national institute staff demonstrated experience with and proficiency in implementing the redesigned model at the instructor, coach, and CM levels.

These findings were most pronounced at the national institute that had piloted the redesigned model in 2016. The other national institutes began implementing the redesign training model a year later during the 2017 scale-up. Based on site visits to one of these other national institutes, the study team noted several differences between it and the national institute that piloted the

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7   Rappaport, Somers, and Granito (2019).

redesign model, including in the amount of time CMs spent in the Learning Cycle sessions, the training methods that were used, and the CMs' summer school teaching experiences.

These findings, are in line with the research showing that it can take two to three years to observe significant change when implementing educational innovations. They also serve as a reminder of the importance of learning through iteration — finding out what and how different practices work and perfecting them through practice.

The next chapter looks at the training and support that the CMs in the 2018 cohort received from their regional teams and examines the degree to which it aligns with the LE- and DEI-focused training they received at the national institute.

3

The Handoff Experience

As described earlier, the Handoff was designed to strengthen the alignment between the regional TFA in-service support offered to corps members (CMs) during the school year and the pre-service training provided at the national institute focused on the core practice of creating a productive learning environment (LE) and on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI).

The following research questions guide this chapter:

- What were the learning environment (LE) and diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI) Handoff activities?

- How did the regional teams perceive the LE- and DEI-focused training provided by the national team? How did CMs perceive the ongoing LE- and DEI-focused support and training they received in their regions?

- What led to variation in the LE- and DEI-focused training and support that regional teams provided to CMs?

The implementation findings suggest that adjusting the pace of the Handoff's implementation in a manner that meets each region's unique level of readiness might help regional teams to plan and deliver effective, national institute-aligned training that is focused on DEI and LE throughout CMs' first year of teaching. The main findings include the following:

- Regional teams found it helpful to learn the LE and DEI terminology used at the national institutes as this made the transition from pre-service to in-service training smoother. However, regional teams needed more time to learn from and with the national team and each other about implementing the Handoff.

- Regional teams demonstrated varying levels of readiness to include key components from the redesigned national institute training model (pre-service training) in their training, and the short timeline (fewer than six months) for implementing the training was a barrier, especially for regional staff who were newer to the concepts of LE and DEI.

- Regional staff who had longer histories (generally at least two years) of using DEI approaches on their own before the Handoff was rolled out felt better prepared to implement the Handoff's

DEI-focused training components, particularly with regard to hiring and training coaches and training CMs to be attuned to issues of diversity, equity, and inclusiveness most relevant in their local contexts.

- Across the regions that participated in the study, regional directors — those who oversee CM programming and training — generally found the guidance on LE particularly useful. However, many of them struggled to implement it, among their staff members and in their CM training plans, since the national team supplied this guidance after they had developed their regional training plans, which is where the guidance could have been most easily incorporated. This may have had particularly strong implications for coaches' readiness to support CMs with the LE component, which in turn affected how CMs described LE in their reports on the training they received during the school year.

Handoff Activities

The Handoff program was rolled out in the TFA regions in March 2018, when members of the national team met with regional leaders and others implementing the initiative to discuss and improve understanding of the redesigned national institute model and to identify the components (namely, LE and DEI) on which the Handoff would focus in the 2018-2019 school year. The national team held a series of calls with regional leaders through the end of 2018 to support the Handoff's implementation. It also provided the regional teams with the following activities and guidance:

March Institute Overview Session

This two-day training in mid-March 2018 taught leaders from select study regions about the redesigned institute training model and its expected outcomes for CMs in order to help them better align their regional in-service training during the school year with what CMs learn at national institute. It also gave regional leaders an opportunity to give input on the components of institute on which they wanted to focus and that should be a part of the Handoff. They discussed several major components of the national institute model (including public practice, LE, DEI, and culturally relevant pedagogy) and collectively decided that the Handoff would focus on DEI and LE.[1] As a follow-up to this session, national team members held a series of calls with regional leaders to finalize the components, to better understand the regional teams' existing DEI- and LE-focused training, and to solicit input for TFA's Handoff materials. These follow-up calls led to the development of the guides, *First 8 Weeks of School (F8W) Sessions* and *DEI Design Book — Kickoff 2018*, discussed below.

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1   Public practice is an important component of the Learning Cycle. It involves CMs rehearsing segments of their lesson in front of their trainers and peers and could also include sharing videos of their teaching to be used for group reflection.

Institute Site Visits

Although it is not uncommon for regional team members to visit national institutes, representatives of select regional teams were invited to visit the national institute serving their region in 2018 to give them a better understanding of the redesigned training model in general, with an emphasis on the components of the institute that could be addressed in the Handoff. particular. These representatives were given specific guidance on how to observe activities associated with the components of the Handoff to better prepare them to align their regional school year programming with the national institute training. For example, they were given the opportunity to attend a training session in which LE teaching practices were sometimes featured and to observe teachers executing LE strategies in classrooms. Some representatives were also able to observe DEI-focused training sessions, when it was possible to do so without compromising the confidentiality of the participants.

Materials and Guides

- *First 8 Weeks of School (F8W) Sessions:* In partnership with regional teams, the national team developed two LE lessons for the regions to use with CMs during the first eight weeks of school to help them make the transition from the national institute in the summer to the regional in-service training.[2] These lessons build on what CMs learned about LE at the national institute and help them apply these skills to their classrooms and more easily anticipate how their regional context might influence their plans for LE. At the end of July 2018, the national team provided representatives of regional teams one to three hours of training to help them deliver the two LE lessons for CMs.[3]

- *DEI Design Book — Kickoff 2018:* The national team developed this manual for regional teams, which included DEI objectives, ideas for supporting CMs in reaching those objectives, the anticipated DEI-related outcomes, and a required debriefing exercise in which regional teams were expected to meet with CMs to reflect on their DEI-related experiences and learning at the national institute.[4]

- *DEI Outcomes:* The national team developed a guide, which contains specific DEI goals for CMs and examples of how CMs can be expected to reach those goals incrementally throughout the year.

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2   Regions gave input throughout the design of these sessions, including on how many sessions there should be and what the sessions should accomplish.

3   It is not clear which regional representatives attended different Handoff activities or whether the same representative attended all activities.

4   The national team provided regional teams with an outline to use during the CM debrief exercise.

Ongoing DEI Design Support and DEI Facilitation Training

Regional representatives were offered the opportunity to consult with the national team to create a set of DEI-focused goals for CMs to achieve and develop DEI learning experiences. They could also receive DEI facilitation training on how to foster conversations with CMs around DEI.

Handoff Retreat

In October 2018, the national team invited representatives of regional teams to a day-and-a-half-long retreat in which participants assessed the Handoff's implementation thus far, proposed adjustments, planned for the Handoff's continued implementation, and nurtured supportive relationships across regions.

Data Collection Activities

To better understand how regional teams made use of the Handoff activities and perceived the LE- and DEI-focused training and support during the school year, the study team collected data in two ways: phone or in-person interviews and open-ended teacher logs.

Phone or In-Person Interviews

In the fall of the CMs' first year of teaching, the study team conducted interviews with their TFA coaches to learn about the types and intensity of the LE- and DEI-focused training and support that CMs were receiving from them or through other professional development. In the spring, the study team conducted follow-up interviews with a subsample of CMs who participated in the national institute focus groups, the logs, or both to learn about any such training or support they received during the school year and to help explain any findings related to CMs' perceptions of TFA and the summer training; their confidence in using DEI- and LE-based practices; their orientation to the work of CRP; and their retention in the TFA program. During the same period, interviews were also conducted with TFA regional directors and lead regional staff — whose responsibilities included developing LE- or DEI-focused training for CMs — to learn about the training, its focus, and how it was developed, as well as any support they received from the national team to help them provide it.

Open-Ended Teacher Logs

Every month during the CMs' first year of teaching, the study team sent an open-ended teacher log to CMs in the 2018 cohort who consented to participate in this data collection activity. The purpose of the open-ended logs was to capture how CMs used LE and DEI practices and behaviors in their classrooms. Each open-ended log focused on particular practices or behaviors, and asked CMs to describe the ones they used in their classrooms during the previous week.

Table 3.1 provides more information on the data collection activities.

TABLE 3.1 Qualitative Data Collected from the Handoff Study Regions, 2018-2019 School Year

DATA SOURCES	TIMING	DOMAINS	RESPONDENTS
Professional development activity, observation, and interviews with coaches	Winter 2018	Whether and how CMs received support related to LE and DEI in their regions	Coaches
Interviews with CMs, coaches, and regional directors	Spring 2019	Whether and how CMs received support related to LE and DEI in their regions	CMs, coaches, and regional directors
Open-ended teacher logs	Once a month during the 2018-2019 school year	CMs' use of LE and DEI practices	CMs

Implementation Findings

Readiness to Execute Robust DEI Strategies

Interviews with regional leaders and coaches revealed that some regional teams had already spent several years developing and refining their approach to DEI prior to and independent of the Handoff's rollout. As a result, by the time the Handoff was introduced, these regional teams were better positioned to put in place strategies they knew would strengthen the DEI-focused training and support that they would provide to CMs. See Box 3.1 for a brief case study of one such region demonstrating "greater readiness" to implement the DEI-focused training.

In some cases, these strategies had to do with hiring and training staff. For example, before the Handoff was introduced, one regional team held a staff retreat on DEI and hired external consultants to assist the staff with facilitating DEI-focused training for teachers from diverse racial backgrounds. Another regional team reported only hiring coaches with strong skills in facilitating DEI-focused training (for example, hiring coaches who previously worked as DEI-focused training facilitators at national institute). Since these more ready regional teams had relatively significant histories of incorporating DEI into their approach to CM training and support, by the time the Handoff was introduced, staff members — especially those who worked directly with CMs — were ready to "hit the ground running." (For example, in at least one of these regions, coaches accompanied CMs on brief, informal visits to students' homes at the start of the year as a way of to help CMs begin to build strong relationships with students' families.) To that end, a director from one of these regions commented:

> It's hard not to have a strong DEI orientation when you're [bringing in an external DEI expert] to help you design it, as we did a few years ago. So, yeah, I think maybe that's a

CASE STUDY 3.1   Region X

Greater Readiness for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness

Region X had been committed to providing consistent, intentional, and local context-specific DEI-focused training and support to CMs for several years before the Handoff was introduced. For example, the regional team had already made some strategic decisions about training and onboarding staff with DEI in mind. To support CMs, the team hired at least one coach who had worked previously as a DEI facilitator during the redesigned national institute training. In addition, as had been done in years past, this regional team made it a point to hire coaches who possessed a DEI mindset and strong DEI-related skills and who had a demonstrated history of "acting on their beliefs" to support students and communities. (For example, one coach had started a club for eighth-grade girls about what it means to be a woman of color in society.)

In addition to hiring staff with strong skills and backgrounds in DEI, Region X also made a strategic decision to focus on DEI within its own community. The region's director of DEI said:

> Why do we care about diversity and equity in particular in Region X? Well, for us, there's this very important historical record that shows how we've intentionally and systematically in the city made choices to be inequitable, when we could have made other choices. And so, it serves as a real foundation. It's an example of one of the things that we try to make regionally contextualized.

These decisions ultimately shaped the training and support staff members provided to CMs. Because the coaches had relevant DEI experience and skills, they were able to help CMs integrate DEI-focused classroom practices into their teaching practices and bring a knowledge of identity, history, and community into their classrooms. CMs also attended monthly professional development sessions on Saturdays that focused on helping CMs learn how to connect with and support the needs of their communities, as well as champion their communities and students' strengths in and outside of the classroom.

During interviews conducted in the spring, staff members from Region X said that they received three different sets of materials from the national team intended to help them better align their in-service training with the pre-service training CMs received at the national institute. These materials included information about DEI, CRP, and the programmatic structure of and support offered at the national institute. The regional staff also reported that at the time they received these materials, their plans for their regional training had already been in place for a month and they had concerns about whether they could integrate the materials they received. However, upon reviewing the materials closely, they found there was a lot of overlap with what they had already planned.

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hidden piece …having great teams where there is this undercurrent of expertise, that we've either [gotten from an external source] or that is on our staff. That, I think, does prop up a lot of what we're doing.

At the same time, some regional teams were less ready to jump into these kinds of staffing and training strategies. (See Box 3.2 for a brief case study on one of the regions that demonstrated "lesser readiness" to implement the DEI-focused training.) Sometimes, this lack of readiness was related to region-specific timing issues. For example, a director from one of these regions said

CASE STUDY 3.2   Region Y

Lesser Readiness for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusiveness

Region Y had not incorporated as much DEI-focused content and strategy into its training and onboarding of staff as did Region X. That said, the regional team had been providing some more general DEI-focused training, that is DEI training that was not rooted in the local context of the region, to CMs for several years before the Handoff was introduced.

Similar to staff in Region X, staff in Region Y reported that they received materials intended to help them implement the Handoff from the national team well after they had developed plans for their regional training for CMs. They said that upon receiving these materials, they struggled to integrate them into their plans for DEI-focused raining and were uncertain about how to ensure everyone understood these materials who needed to in the short period of time. One director suggested that even after receiving and reviewing materials, staff members still did not have a good sense of the DEI-focused training that CMs received at the national institute. The director said:

> I don't know enough about the DEI programming [at national institute] to be [able to compare it with the DEI programming we offer]… I don't have a ton of expectations [for what CMs should have received at national institute] because I've seen [DEI plans from the national team] that made me think, "Oh this is what CMs are gonna get," and then finding out that, yes, that was the case or, no, that was not.

The contrast in the responses between staff members from Region X and those from Region Y suggest that, without carefully timed guidance and support from the national team, regions with lesser readiness were less equipped to align the DEI-focused training they had initially planned to provide with the national institute training. Reflecting on this challenge, a director from Region Y recommended that the national team work more closely with regional teams to determine what works best in the regions before establishing programming priorities. The director shared:

> I personally think we have the Handoff wrong. We're doing it backwards. We see that with the new national institute model, our CMs are [still struggling] in the classroom. And then we're spending a lot of our resources and our time trying to take the strategies and the techniques that they're using at [national] institute [and help CMs apply those techniques in their classrooms during the school year]…So, I almost feel like we should be doing it the opposite way. Like thinking about what strategies…work in [the] region, and how do we change [national] institute to better match up?

While staff from Region Y struggled to implement the Handoff, they did find the DEI Regional Worktables valuable.* In these working groups, they learned best practices from their counterparts in regions more ready to implement the Handoff. One staff member said:

> [On the Work Tables I ended up learning a lot from a staff member in a greater-readiness region because] she has taken the materials and modified them, made them very applicable for her people. But it's because she's studied this stuff and she knows it. And she cares about it. So, we would always be making the same comments on the calls [and we really got to] learn from each other…so I bet in [that region] they are doing a really good job of [DEI] because of [the woman who is leading it].

NOTE: *DEI Regional Work Tables were groups made up of representatives from TFA regional teams and led by the national team that would meet periodically to share promising practices and collaborate on various projects related to DEI.

that integrating DEI guidelines from the national team was challenging because they received initial guidance at a time when they were onboarding a lot of new staff members, and even if those new staff members had DEI-related expertise, they were still acclimating to the local region and to TFA's vision and methods and did not have the bandwidth to design DEI-focused training and support materials for use with CMs during the year. Another director from a less ready region suggested that the quality of the DEI-focused training and support is only as good as the staff members who are leading it, and that their regional team and others may not have had the staff with the skill level needed for something as complicated as DEI at the time of the Handoff:

> How can [my region's] ED [executive director] cultivate a culture that really [translates to robust DEI support] if he doesn't [have that background]? I think [it can happen] if [regions] have someone who's super strong in doing that DEI curriculum and leading those spaces, or training staff to lead those spaces…So, it depends on who is leading the program. I would guess that it varies [from] region to region.

Regional teams whose staff members had more extensive experience working in their own regions and that placed greater emphasis on familiarizing CMs with the local context may have demonstrated greater readiness. It is crucial for both regional staff and the incoming CMs to understand the region's unique culture and challenges when implementing a place-based approach to DEI training. Staff members from more ready regions, for instance, were more likely to describe grounding their training for CMs in the local context. For example, one director described "community-based grounding to commit the corps members to the place" that happens during the region's induction and how the CMs work with local nonprofits on community projects. (One such project involved creating a community garden to help address local food scarcity.)

Some of these community-based activities may have been aligned with the national team's guidance on DEI, and these regional teams may have been more adept at providing DEI-focused training and support throughout the year. CMs in these regions were more likely to say that coaches helped them make their lessons and materials more responsive to their students' backgrounds and lives. One such CM described teaching a lesson on endangered species. Instead of focusing on sea turtles, as the textbook suggested, the CM instead chose to teach about bison, because bison are "closer to home" and more indicative of the region and local community. CMs in these regions were also more likely to report receiving support related to engaging with students' families and the local community. For example, they reported conducting home visits together with their coaches, having opportunities to interact with members of the community at training sessions and events focused on local issues, and going on organized field trips to learn about the local history, identity, and education system.

These findings suggest that the DEI-focused supports that CMs receive are more robust and salient in regions that have ample time and are more ready to develop a vision for their DEI-focused training and implement region-specific DEI-focused training strategies that reflect this vision.

The Timeline for Implementing LE Strategies

In most regions, regional directors reported that the guidance on the Handoff they received in March helped them consider the language used in their own training, particularly when it came to learning environment, and align it with the language used at the redesigned national institute. For example, one director said:

> Often the regional team and national team are talking about the same elements of learning environments…but we're not always using the same words. And because of that, [CMs are] actually hearing the same thing [at national institute and in regions] but they don't know that they're hearing the same thing…And so, [aligning on the language] was really helpful because we could then just align our language to the way in which [national] institute is describing it.… I think…[the transition from national institute] was smoother, overall, again, because of…the shared language. We were able to speak to [specific training CMs received at national institute], which we've never been able to do before because we just didn't know exactly what the language was. I think it was much smoother in terms of their learning experience and how we were designing cohesively with [national] institute to welcome them back.

At the same time, regional directors also generally reported that they did not always receive the Handoff materials in a timely enough manner to take advantage of key activities on the regions' calendars, such as staff onboarding or CM induction. The same director quoted above also said that the region needed materials by April to be able to use them at the CM induction in May, but "the Handoff wasn't up and running enough to do that." Similarly, another staff member in a different region said:

> What [the Handoff] has taught me is if our national team could move their cadence up a quarter, so if it's something they normally [provide regions] in quarter two, do it in quarter one. If they could [shift the timeline in this way], regions would be able to partner so much better with the national team.

Thus, while regional leaders and other staff found the content of the Handoff materials useful, they also reported that challenges associated with not receiving those materials in a timely manner. As a result, the conceptual nuances of the Handoff's components (for instance, the specific language associated with the LE strategies such as "noticing and naming," "check-ins," "show and tell," and so on) may not have fully reached CMs or the coaches who directly support the CMs. Since coaches regularly meet with their assigned CMs throughout the school year to help them develop their lesson plans, hone their pedagogical skills, and address any teaching-related challenges, they must themselves possess a deep conceptual understanding of the Handoff's strategies in order to reinforce them in their work with CMs. Indeed, in interviews conducted at the end of their first year of teaching, CMs across regions described using some of the LE strategies, but few described those strategies with the national institute's terminology.

The lessons learned from implementing the redesigned national institute are particularly relevant to the Handoff's implementation. To achieve the desired outcomes, everyone involved must have

a common understanding of the innovation's goals and the specific steps that must be taken to attain them. In the case of the Handoff, a desired outcome was for all CMs to use LE strategies in their teaching. However, there was not enough time to ensure that all the specific steps to achieve this outcome were taken. Early on in the Handoff's implementation, many coaches were not yet trained in how to reinforce and build on the LE strategies that CMs had learned at the national institute, and they had little time to digest the guidance materials provided by the national team. In the absence of a coaching model tailored to the Handoff's LE and DEI strategies, coaches may have simply relied on their previous experience and training when making decisions about the coaching they offered CMs.[5]

Of course, aligning the pre-service and in-service training does not necessarily guarantee that CMs will be encouraged to use the strategies they learned once they begin teaching. Indeed, staff in some regions said that the national institute training model may not adequately address the realities that CMs face when they begin teaching in their regions, since a school's climate may differ greatly from the one at the national institute, where TFA has control over the set of instructional practices that CMs bring to classrooms. To this point, one regional staff member said:

> I think we have taken the guidance of the national team on what makes a strong learning environment [and] our team is pretty aligned… I think where it gets disjointed is the [national] institute context is so heavily controlled…[In our regions] the principal may [say], "That will never [work in this school]"…[or] "I'll never allow for this type of consequence hierarchy to exist" or "You'll implement exactly what our school does and there will be no choice in it…" The reconciling of what they heard at [national] institute and what they experience in schools, I think that's one of the hardest things. Learning environment should be an expansive enough concept that it can apply anywhere.

Increasing a regional team's readiness to implement the Handoff will not necessarily lead to greater alignment between the national institute and a regional context over which TFA has little control. However, it may give a regional team more time to identify potentially challenging contextual factors and develop tools to help CMs implement LE strategies that take those factors into account. Taking steps to implement the Handoff earlier may help ensure regional teams, and especially those who directly support CMs, have a deeper conceptual understanding of the components and key strategies and use the specific terminology associated with them. In turn, staff members can better provide support to CMs that looks and sounds like the training they received at national institute.

The next chapter examines the effects of the Handoff on CMs' perceptions of TFA and the summer training; their use of and confidence using DEI- and LE-based practices; their orientation to the work of CRP; and their retention in the TFA program.

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5   Quantitative data that the study team collected supports this finding. Statistical analyses suggest that receiving more frequent coaching was not associated with CMs using DEI or LE instructional practices more frequently in their teaching.

4

The Association Between Professional Development and Corps Member Outcomes

The Handoff was designed to strengthen the alignment of the in-service professional development that corps members (CMs) received during the 2018-2019 school year with the training they had received at the redesigned national institute during the preceding summer. Better alignment between the pre-service and in-service training and support that CMs received was expected to lead to better outcomes in the following domains: (1) CMs' self-perceptions of their cultural awareness; (2) their use of practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI); a productive learning environment (LE); and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP); and (3) their retention in TFA. To assess whether the Handoff led to improved outcomes for CMs, the study team undertook an experimental evaluation of it, in which 10 TFA regions participated. Each of the 10 regions was randomly assigned either to a program group (comprising five regions), which would implement the Handoff, or to a control group (comprising five regions), which would continue with their business-as-usual training.

It proved challenging, however, to rigorously evaluate the impact of TFA's Handoff activities over the school year. As reported in the previous chapter, the regional teams' use of the Handoff's guidance and materials varied substantially. Moreover, some regional teams had already been offering robust programming aligned with the DEI component and, to some extent, aligned with the LE component before the Handoff was introduced. That is to say, early implementation research findings showed there to be very little difference between the two research groups with respect to the Handoff-related professional development that CMs received. The resulting lack of contrast between the groups compromised the value of using a randomized study design to evaluate the Handoff's effects on CM outcomes.[1]

Nonetheless, the observed variation in how the Handoff was implemented among and within the 10 participating regions made it possible to explore more nuanced questions about the association between DEI- and LE-focused professional development and CM outcomes. The study team examined this association using two different analytical approaches. The first approach included a set of CM-level correlational analyses that assessed whether CMs who received more

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1 Although implementation of the Handoff was inconsistent, the results from the experimental impact study are included in Appendix B. As expected, there were no discernible differences in outcomes between CMs in regions in the program group and those in regions in the comparison group.

DEI- or LE-focused professional development had better outcomes. These analyses leveraged the variation in professional development *within regions*, meaning that CMs in the same region received different amounts of professional development.

In contrast, the second analytical approach included a set of region-level analyses that leveraged variation in professional development *among regions*. Using this approach, the study team explored whether CMs in regions where more professional development related to the Handoff components was provided on average had better outcomes than CMs in regions where less professional development was provided on average.

While these analyses could not determine whether the Handoff itself improved CM outcomes, they were able to shed light on whether DEI- and LE-focused professional development, which TFA aimed to provide through the Handoff, has the potential to change CMs' perceptions and behaviors. Any associations with CM outcomes described in this chapter's findings should not be interpreted as causal, that is, the direct result of the Handoff's professional development. Other unobserved factors, such as differences among the CMs' teaching contexts, could have affected the associations between the professional development and CM outcomes. However, the findings may still be useful for developing hypotheses for further research and may inform the design of professional development programming focused on DEI and LE.

Data Sources and Measures

The analyses in this chapter explore the relationship between the professional development that CMs received and CM outcomes in three domains: CMs' self-perceptions of their cultural awareness; their use of practices related to DEI, LE, and CRP; and their retention in TFA.

Table 4.1 provides an overview of the quantitative data sources used to measure the professional development that CMs received and the associations with CM outcomes. The key data sources included surveys administered by TFA at the end of CMs' first year of teaching, administrative records maintained by TFA, a CRP survey administered by the study team at the end of the CMs' first year of teaching, semimonthly instructional practice logs that the study team sent to CMs 12 times over six months, and seven monthly professional development logs administered by the study team.[2] The study team obtained characteristics about CMs' school placements from publicly available datasets.

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2 TFA administrative data were available for all CMs. The TFA survey data were available for 81 percent of CMs who responded to the surveys at the end of their first year of teaching. The instructional log data were available for CMs who consented to be part of this data collection and completed at least one log (40 percent of CMs). The CRP survey data were available for CMs who consented to be part of this data collection and completed the CRP survey administered at the end of their first year of teaching (33 percent of CMs). The professional development data were available for CMs who consented to be part of this data collection and completed at least one professional development log (40 percent).

TABLE 4.1 Quantitative Data Collected from the Handoff Study Regions, 2018-2019 School Year

DATA SOURCE	TIMING OF COLLECTION	SAMPLE	MEASURES USED
Teacher instructional logs administered by MDRC	Twice monthly over six months (12 total logs distributed)	CMs in the 2018 cohort who consented to the instructional logs	Outcome measures of instructional practices related to DEI, LE, and CRP
CRP survey administered by MDRC	End of first year of teaching	CMs in the 2018 cohort who consented to the CRP survey	Outcome measures of CMs' self-confidence related to DEI and CRP
CM surveys administered by TFA	End of first year of teaching; data from end of institute (before the CM started teaching) were included as a baseline measure in analyses	All CMs in the 2018 TFA teaching cohort who completed the survey	Outcome measure of CMs' self-confidence related to DEI
TFA administrative records (retention data)	Retention data collected at end of first year of teaching and beginning of second year of teaching	All CMs in the 2018 TFA cohort[a]	Outcome measure of CMs' retention in TFA
Professional development logs administered by MDRC	Administered once a month for seven months	CMs in the 2018 cohort who consented to the professional development logs	DEI- and LE-focused professional development the CMs received were used as a predictive measure in CM-level analyses and used to create "high" and "low" groups for the region-level analyses
TFA administrative records (CM demographic and placement characteristics)	Data on CMs' characteristics were collected during the application process; data on teaching placement were collected during CMs' first year of teaching	All CMs in the 2018 TFA cohort	Characteristics of CMs (e.g., race, gender, and education) and their teaching placement (e.g., grade and subject taught) were included as covariates
Common Core of Data (CCD) and Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (OCRDC)	These public data sources were collected annually or every two years[b]	All CMs in the 2018 TFA cohort	Characteristics of schools where CMs taught were included as covariates in analyses

NOTES: [a]Average region-level retention rates for the 2016 TFA cohort were used as a baseline measure in the retention analyses.
[b]Data from the 2016-2017 school year were used for the CCD, and data from the 2015-2016 school year were used for the OCRDC.

The two key predictors in the analyses were the amount of DEI-focused professional development and the amount of LE-focused professional development that CMs received. Information about professional development came from the professional development logs, in which CMs were asked to separately document the DEI- and LE-focused training and support that they had received over the previous month. Because the logs asked CMs to report the DEI- and LE-focused professional development separately, each CM received two scores: one for the amount of DEI-focused training and support received, and one for the amount of LE-focused training and support received. The study team sent professional development logs to CMs once a month for seven months and averaged the CMs' individual responses over the school year to determine the average percentage of months each CM received each type of training and support. Both professional development variables were on a continuous scale from 0 percent to 100 percent.[3] These measures were only a rough proxy of the amount of professional development that CMs received. They did not capture the frequency or quantity of professional development received, only whether they received any DEI or LE professional development in the month prior to completing the log. Moreover, these variables captured the training and support that CMs received from any source (TFA, the school, the school district, or the certification program), not only from TFA.[4]

The study team also collected information on characteristics of the CMs and the schools in which they were teaching. This information came from administrative records that TFA provided and two publicly available datasets about the characteristics of schools in the United States.[5] The team used these data to describe the sample of CMs and included them as control variables in the analyses.

Analytical Approaches

The study team examined the associations between the DEI- and LE-focused professional development that CMs received from TFA, the school, the school district, or the certification program using two different approaches described below. (Appendix Table A.1 summarizes the two approaches.)

CM-level correlational analyses (within region): The first approach took advantage of the fact that there was variation in the amount of professional development that CMs received within

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3   This percentage was based on the number of times the CMs completed the professional development logs. For example, if a CM submitted five logs over the course of the school year and indicated in three of those logs receipt of DEI-focused professional development from TFA, a certification program, or a school or school district in the prior month, this CM's average percentage for DEI-focused professional development would have been 60 percent. A CM who submitted two logs and indicated receipt of DEI-focused professional development from TFA, a certification program, or a school or school district both times would have had an average percentage of 100 percent.

4   Appendix Table A.2 shows how the amount of professional development CMs received was calculated.

5   See Appendix Tables B.1 and B.2 for a list of baseline characteristics.

each of the TFA regions participating in the study. These analyses examined whether the amount of DEI- or LE-focused professional development that CMs received was associated with CM outcomes. The study team conducted the analyses using a regression-based approach to control for differences in the characteristics of CMs, their assigned schools, and their regions.[6] The analyses were based on the sample of CMs who completed at least one professional development log.

Region-level difference analyses (among regions): The second approach leveraged the variation in the amount of professional development that CMs received across the regions participating in the study. The study team aggregated the professional development measures from the logs up to the region level to determine the average amount of DEI- and LE-focused professional development that CMs received in each region. The team then used these regional averages to categorize regions into two groups: regions where CMs received a "high" amount of professional development on average (higher than the sample average) and regions where CMs received a "low" amount of professional development on average (lower than the sample average). The team categorized the regions in this way for both types of professional development. Appendix Table A.2 illustrates how this was done for DEI-focused professional development. In the analyses, the study team compared the outcomes in the regions where CMs received high amounts of DEI professional development with the outcomes in the regions where CMs received low amounts. Similarly, the study team compared the outcomes in the regions where CMs received high amounts of LE professional development with the outcomes in the regions where CMs received low amounts. The team conducted the analyses using a regression-based approach to control for regional differences in the characteristics of CMs and their assigned schools.[7] The region-level analyses were based on the sample of CMs for whom there were data on the outcomes of interest.[8]

The findings from these analyses should not be interpreted as causal effects of the professional development. While the analyses controlled for the measurable characteristics of CMs and their schools, there might have been unobserved factors, such as differences in teaching contexts among CMs for which the analyses did not account. These unobserved differences could have affected the findings from both the CM-level and region-level analyses. Unobserved differences among the regions, such as those related to TFA regional leadership, could have also affected the findings from the region-level analyses.

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6   For CM-level outcomes based on the logs, a two-level model was used to account for the clustering of logs.

7   For region-level analyses involving outcomes derived from the logs, the study team used a three-level model to account for the clustering of logs at the individual level and among CMs within regions. For other outcomes, the team used a two-level model (clustering of logs at the CM level).

8   For analyses involving outcomes derived from TFA surveys or administrative data, the sample used in the region-level analyses was larger than the one used in the CM-level analyses. The study team conducted a sensitivity test of the region-level analyses with the same sample of CMs it used in the CM-level analyses. The regional-level analyses based on this smaller sample yielded similar results to the region-level analyses based on the larger one, with statistical significance remaining consistent across all outcomes studied.

The following section presents the findings that are supported by relatively strong evidence, as indicated by consistency in the results across the two sets of analyses. Differences between the two sets of analyses are also noted where relevant.

The Association Between DEI- and LE-Focused Professional Development and CM Outcomes

Table 4.2 summarizes the findings from the CM-level and the region-level analyses. To make it easier to discern the pattern of findings, the table does not show the magnitude of estimated associations and focuses instead on the statistical significance of the results. (Statistical significance refers to the probability that associations between predictors and outcomes are not the result of chance alone.) For the CM-level analyses, the table indicates whether the association between the DEI- and LE-focused professional development CMs received and their outcomes is statistically significant. For the region-level analyses, the table shows whether the difference between CM outcomes in regions where they received high amounts of the DEI- or LE-focused professional development and those outcomes in regions where they received low amounts is statistically significant. Appendix C presents the full set of results from the CM-level analyses, and Appendix D presents the full set of results from the region-level analyses.

DEI-Focused Professional Development

- The pattern of findings for the CM-level analyses suggests that there was an association between DEI-focused professional development and some DEI-related CM outcomes such as self-perceived cultural awareness and use of DEI instructional practices. There was also an association between DEI-focused professional development and retention rates in the TFA program.

The findings from the CM-level analyses suggest that receiving more DEI-focused professional development was positively associated with several DEI-related outcomes including CMs' (1) confidence in their ability to ensure that all children receive an excellent education, (2) self-reported work with families and community members to ensure that all children can attain an excellent education, and (3) use of DEI instructional practices in their teaching. Additionally, receiving more DEI professional development was associated with CMs' retention in TFA at the beginning of their second year of teaching. However, the region-level analyses did not yield any positive, statistically significant differences between CM outcomes in regions where they received high amounts of DEI professional development and those outcomes in regions where they received low amounts. (See Table 4.2.)

LE-Focused Professional Development

- There was an association between receiving more LE-focused professional development and CMs' more frequent use of LE instructional practices. This association was consistent across the CM- and region-level analyses. For the CM-level analyses only, there were associations

TABLE 4.2 Overview of Findings from the CM- and Region-Level Analyses

Outcomes	CM-Level Analyses[a]		Region-Level Analyses[b]	
	DEI	**LE**	**DEI**	**LE**
CMs' Self-Perceptions of Their Cultural Awareness				
Confidence in DEI				
1. CM confidence in ability to learn about students' backgrounds and revise instructional material based on that information		NA		NA
2. CM is growing capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills) to play a valuable role in assuring all children receive an excellent education	▲	NA		NA
Confidence as a culturally relevant practitioner				
3. CM confidence in ability to become a culturally relevant practitioner				▲
CMs' Self-Reported Practices				
DEI practices				
4. CM works with families and community members to ensure all children can attain an excellent education	▲	NA		NA
5. CM commitment to DEI over past week	▲	NA		NA
LE practices				
6. LE Strategies used over past week	NA		NA	▲
7. Average rate of lessons in which CM gave clear directions and engaged students	NA	▲	NA	▲
Practices grounded in CRP				
8. CM incorporated cultural competence in lessons over past week		▲		
9. CM enacted a lesson plan that develops socio-political consciousness		▲	▼	
Retention in TFA				
10. End of the first year of teaching		▲		
11. Fall of second year of teaching	▲	▲		

NOTES: ▲ indicates a positive statistically significant association between professional development and the outcome at the 10 percent level or lower.

▼ indicates a negative statistically significant association between professional development and the outcome at the 10 percent level or lower.

"na" indicates an incongruence in the type of professional development and the outcome type; therefore, no analysis was conducted (e.g., LE-related outcomes and DEI-focused professional development).

Blank cells indicate no statistical significance.

[a]The DEI and LE columns refer to the professional development predictor used to determine the association between the professional development that CMs received and their outcomes.

[b]The DEI and LE columns refer to the difference between regions where CMs received "high" versus "low" amounts of professional development.

between LE-focused professional development and CMs' orientation to the work of CRP and retention rates in TFA. For the region-level analysis, there was a difference between CMs' reported confidence in their ability to become culturally relevant practitioners in regions where CMs received high amounts of LE-focused professional development and those where they received low amounts.

The findings from the CM-level analyses (Table 4.2) suggest that receiving more LE-focused professional development was associated with CMs using LE instructional practices more frequently in their lessons and demonstrating an orientation to CRP based on their teaching materials. However, LE-focused professional development was not associated with CMs' confidence in their ability to become culturally relevant practitioners. Additionally, more LE-focused professional development was associated with higher retention rates at the end of CMs' first year of teaching and at the beginning of their second year of teaching.

The region-level analyses (Table 4.2) yielded similar results for some CM outcome domains, but not others. Similar to the finding from the CM-level analyses, there is a statistically significant difference in the frequency with which CMs used LE instructional practices between regions where CMs received high amounts of LE-focused professional development and those where they received low amounts. Unlike the CM-level analyses findings, however, CMs in the regions with high amounts of LE-focused training reported greater confidence in their ability to become culturally relevant practitioners than CMs in the regions with low amounts of the training. However, these CMs did not report using CRP-related materials more often in their teaching. CMs in the two groups of regions also did not differ with respect to their retention rates.

In both the CM-level and region-level analyses, the association between receiving more LE-focused professional development and CMs' increased use of LE instructional practices in their classroom is statistically significant. In the CM-level analyses only, the associations between the amounts of DEI- or LE-focused professional development and CMs' self-perceptions of their cultural awareness; use of instructional practices related to DEI, LE, and CRP; and retention in TFA are also statistically significant. Although not conclusive, these findings can help inform the design of professional development for teachers and define the focus of their programming.

Conclusion

The findings from this study are consistent with what is known about the challenges of implementing new teacher training programs. TFA's Handoff — which attempted to guide and support regional teams as they provided corps members (CMs) with national institute-aligned professional development and support focused on diversity, equity, and inclusiveness (DEI); a productive learning environment (LE); and culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) during the school year — was ambitious in scope and introduced to regions without the benefit of a pilot, time to practice implementation, or robust opportunities for cross learning between the national and regional teams or between regional teams. The challenges that arose and the inconsistent associations between the professional development provided and CM outcomes are not entirely surprising given the Handoff's complexity and the attempt to implement it in a short timeframe and evaluate it quickly afterward. Nonetheless, the findings suggest that when TFA regional teams, particularly those staff members who support CMs directly, are given adequate time to internalize the concepts and practices related to LE, DEI, and CRP and refine their approach to them, they may succeed in providing relevant support that is aligned with TFA's national institute training.

TFA has always been committed to continuous learning and innovation. The organization has a track record of developing and quickly implementing promising, large-scale programs aimed at benefiting a large number of CMs at once. One such initiative is the Handoff, which involved the efforts of many staff members across all the national institutes offering redesigned training and five TFA regions, as well as the CMs in those regions. Although innovation is essential for organizations to meet the needs of those they serve, in the future TFA may want to think more about the implications of implementing untried programs at scale. Doing so will allow TFA to continue to innovate while supporting CMs at the highest level.

Summary of the Findings and Recommendations

Learning from Experience

TFA learned from the challenges it came up against when piloting the redesigned national institute model in 2016, and was able to refine and ultimately strengthen its national training model and associated materials by 2018. Similar to the evaluation of the 2016 pilot, the evaluation of the 2018 Handoff coincided with its first year of implementation. The rollout of the Handoff

was quick, and some key regional staff, such as coaches, were not trained to help implement it. However, even if they had been trained, they would likely run into challenges that often arise when a new program is introduced.

In order to minimize the potential difficulties that can arise when launching a large-scale, untried, and untested program, it is important to carefully consider the prior knowledge and experiences of the staff who will be involved — such as the staff members who support CMs, in the case of the TFA Handoff — before asking them to implement innovations. DEI, LE, and CRP are complex concepts on their own, and trying to train new teachers to incorporate them into their teaching is a huge undertaking. DEI involves understanding one's own identity and how that identity shapes one's assumptions and beliefs. Similarly, creating a productive learning environment is bigger than creating rules and expectations in the classroom. It requires building relationships with students and engaging them in meaningful content and having a plan for how to do that while making thoughtful decisions to sustain their interest. Finally, CRP involves bringing these two complex ideas together to ensure students achieve academically and develop cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness. Creating this kind of classroom environment is a challenge for even the most experienced teachers. It takes thoughtfulness, careful planning, and practice. While TFA has always prioritized classroom management, lesson planning, and a commitment to diversity, the redesigned national institute model introduces these concepts in a more nuanced way by including an improved DEI-focused training component and by emphasizing LE and CRP. Although these concepts were not completely novel to regional team members, for many of them, the new approach to them represented a significant shift in thinking about what it takes to teach well. For instance, instead of teaching CMs a set of rules related to classroom management on which they rely to make decisions, the redesigned national institute model trains CMs to make decisions about classroom management based on the specific makeup and dynamic of their classrooms and any other challenges that come up throughout the teaching day. For regional staff who had not taught in this way before, as experienced as they may be, it would be expected to take more time and effort for them to internalize and practice these more nuanced concepts, as well as adapt them to the local context, before being able to train CMs in them well.

Moreover, staff involved in the Handoff's implementation could benefit from tempering their expectations and recognizing the challenges that arise as opportunities to make improvements — as TFA did following the redesigned national institute pilot in 2016. For example, during interviews, regional staff shared that some CMs had difficulty setting up a productive learning environment in their classrooms while keeping DEI in mind. These CMs were hesitant to ask students to adjust behavior, for example by calling it out in class, when they perceived that such behavior might be culturally determined. A number of regional staff members felt that as a consequence of this perceived conflict between the concepts taught in the training, more CMs struggled to manage their classrooms than in the past — when DEI and LE were not as heavily emphasized, or not emphasized together. Central to CRP is having high expectations of students both in terms of academics and behavior. However, in attempting to teach with cultural competence, some CMs misconstrued having certain expectations of students with imposing one's own values on them. The regional staff members who were somewhat familiar with the Handoff had to grapple with how to adapt the training and support they offered to address this

issue. No doubt, the lesson learned from this experience will lead to stronger implementation in the coming years.

Leveraging Resources

Regional staff members with longer histories of incorporating DEI approaches in their coaching before the Handoff was introduced felt better prepared to implement its DEI-focused training strategies. One way that a large organization with multiple satellite locations, such as TFA, can build capacity and align operations across locations is to integrate the unique skills and experiences of staff in the satellite locations into the organization as a whole. For example, the organization might conduct trainings, roundtables, or TED talk-like events in which staff members from satellite locations share their experiences, train others, or learn new skills. Along these lines, TFA's national team trained a coach from one of the regions participating in the study to facilitate the DEI sessions at the national institute during the summer. As a result, this coach had a much easier time incorporating the Handoff's DEI components into CMs' professional development during the school year compared with other coaches. As a way to build the regional teams' capacity to implement the Handoff, the national team might consider strategically hiring regional coaches for positions at national institutes during the summer. Regional staff also reported that they benefited from the DEI Work Tables, in which staff from different regions shared promising practices related to DEI.[1] This positive feedback suggests that offering more such opportunities for staff from different regions to collaborate could help implement the Handoff and align the training and support CMs receive across TFA locations.

The collaboration between the national and regional teams appeared to contribute to better implementation of the Handoff and greater alignment of the training than did the guidance and materials that the national team provided. Regional teams struggled to fully incorporate the guidance and materials into their training approach, in part because of region-specific factors but also because of issues related to the timing of the receipt of the materials and guidance. However, when the national team worked directly with regional staff, more alignment in the training was observed. For instance, the regional coaches who were given the opportunity to work at the redesigned national institute in the summer had a firmer grasp of the nuanced concepts associated with DEI, LE, and CRP, and were better able to provide national institute-aligned training and support to CMs. Regional staff who visited the redesigned national institute during the summer were also more familiar with the terminology used to define various classroom practices. Some regional leaders shared that although they and their staff sometimes used terminology that differed from that used in the redesigned training, the concepts and ideas conveyed were often the same. These similarities allowed regional staff to more quickly adopt the new terminology and, in the process, make the transition from pre-service to in-service support smoother for CMs.

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1   DEI Regional Work Tables were groups made up of representatives from regional teams and led by the national team that would meet periodically to share promising practices and collaborate on various projects related to DEI.

Working at Scale

Before scaling up a new program or initiative, practitioners consider it ideal to first implement multiple iterations of it — with each new iteration incorporating improvements based on lessons learned from the one before it — in order to make sure the innovation is as strong as it can be.[2] As mentioned above, the Handoff was a large-scale and complex innovation that involved staff members and CMs across several TFA regions. Implementation at this scale can be risky for stakeholders, who stand to gain (or lose) the most from the innovation itself. For instance, in the case of the 2016 pilot of the redesigned national institute model, coaches did not receive the training they needed to prepare CMs to use strategies for creating a productive learning environment in their teaching. Yet, these strategies were a critical component of the redesigned training. Piloting parts of an initiative at a smaller scale could offer important lessons learned without as much risk. For example, TFA could have piloted only the Handoff's DEI component or only the LE component in a handful of regions. TFA could have then used these lessons learned to improve the Handoff before bringing it to scale. CMs would then have received and benefited from innovative training that had already demonstrated positive results.

Alignment

TFA's struggle to align its training across locations is not unique. There are many schools of thought about what makes for good teaching, and novice teachers are often exposed to any number of them. TFA developed the Handoff to strengthen the alignment between the pre-service training provided at the national institutes in the summer and in-service training offered by regional teams throughout the school year for those CMs who receive their training in this way. However, CMs receive their trainings in other ways and at different points while participating in TFA, such as through the individual schools where CMs are placed, the school districts, and certification programs. For an even stronger alignment in the training CMs receive, TFA will have to assess these different learning pathways and improve them as needed.

The Handoff was designed to align the pre- and in-service training by facilitating collaboration between the national and regional teams. Together, the teams would decide on the key components from the redesigned national institute training model that would make up the Handoff. In implementing the Handoff, the regional teams would then adapt these components to their local contexts and build them into the training and support they provide CMs. This did happen to some extent. Regional staff weighed in on what components of the national institute to include in the Handoff. They also helped with the development of some Handoff materials, such as the two LE lessons for the beginning of the school year. Regional staff participated in training sessions and regular cross-regional phone calls with the national team, as well as a day-and-a-half-long conference for regional staff organized by the national team. However, the Handoff was complex, and it was rolled out at a rapid pace. The national and regional teams had only limited time to meet and learn about and address each region's needs as they related to DEI, LE, and CRP. Not only did the regions have different context-specific needs but they were already implementing

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2   Polly, Putman, Petty, and Good (2017).

DEI, LE, and CRP programming at different levels when the Handoff was introduced. As a large organization with multiple locations, TFA may want to consider implementing an initiative to align training across its operations in smaller stages — for example, piloting such an initiative in one or two regions at a time and learning from each experience to improve the next. This approach would progressively strengthen the initiative and build the capacity of staff in the regions implementing it, who could then help other regional teams when they introduce it.

The Handoff presupposed that the redesigned training at the various national institutes was aligned. However, the study team observed differences in the training at the two national institutes it visited. These differences suggest that the work of aligning the training across the organization could be divided into stages. For example, teams who run a national institute could involve regional staff whose CMs' attend that institute in their planning and operations. These regional staff might teach the DEI or LE sessions at the national institute, for instance. An institute team, made up of some these national and regional staff members, could be assembled that would work with teams at other national institutes to ensure the training is aligned across institutes.

The findings from the present study illustrate the challenges of aligning programming across a large organization with multiple satellite locations. A top-down approach ignores the importance of local context, while a bottom-up approach alone carries with it a risk that a satellite location might drift from an organization's vision. The experiences from the Handoff underscore the merit of a collaborative approach, in which the national team and regional teams learn from each other and work together to improve and align programming. In addition, the findings suggest that an innovation is strengthened when it is scaled up iteratively, with each iteration improving on the one before it. These findings bode well for organizations such as TFA that value continuous improvement.

Comparison of CM- and
Region-Level Analyses and
Region-Level DEI Professional
Development Percentage Scores

APPENDIX TABLE A.1 Comparison of CM- and Region-Level Analyses

QUESTIONS FOR COMPARISON	CM-LEVEL ANALYSIS	REGION-LEVEL ANALYSIS
At what level were analyses conducted?	CMs' data were analyzed at the individual level	CMs' data were analyzed within regions, which were assigned to either a high" group or "low" group depending on how much professional development the average CM in the region received
What did the analyses assess?	Associations between the amount of professional development each CM received and the CM outcomes of interest	Differences between the CM outcomes of interest in regions that provided a high amount of professional development versus regions that provided a low amount
How were the samples defined?	Any CM who completed at least one professional development log	Any CM for whom there were data for each outcome of interest regardless of whether the CM completed a professional development log
At what levels were possible confounders present?[a]	CM-level confounders such as differences in teaching context may have been present	CM- and region-level confounders may have been present. Region-level confounders may have included differences in regional leadership

NOTE: [a]Confounders are factors that influence the analyses but cannot be accounted for in the statistical model.

APPENDIX TABLE A.2 Calculation of Region-Level DEI Professional Development Percentage Scores

Corp Member (CM)	Log 1	Log 2	Log 3	Log 4	Log 5	Log 6	Log 7	Calculation	Percentage Score
CM 1	—	—	—	—	√	—	—	CM submitted one log and indicated receipt of DEI-focused professional development (PD) that month	100
CM 2	X	√	—	—	—	—	X	CM submitted three logs and indicated receipt of DEI-focused PD in one month	33
CM 3	√	—	X	√	X	—	√	CM submitted five logs and indicated receipt of DEI-focused PD in three months	60
CM 4	—	—	—	—	X	—	—	CM submitted one log and indicated no receipt of DEI-focused PD that month	0
Region-level mean[a]									48.25

Notes: "—" = CM did not submit log during that month.
  "√" = CM submitted log and indicated receipt of DEI PD during that month.
  "X" = CM submitted log and indicated no receipt of DEI PD during that month.
  [a]Region-level mean was calculated by averaging DEI PD percentages across all CMs within a given region.

Impact Analyses

APPENDIX TABLE B.1 Baseline Equivalence, CM Characteristics

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Preparation and skills					
Composite application score (1-5)	3.74	3.71	0.03	0.10	0.229
Educational attainment (%)					
Bachelor's	90.52	89.61	0.91	0.03	0.783
Master's	8.29	9.28	-0.99	-0.04	0.752
Doctorate	0.47	0.84	-0.37	-0.05	0.652
Other graduate degree	0.71	0.40	0.32	0.04	0.619
Major or minor in Education (%)	6.16	6.67	-0.51	-0.02	0.826
Prospect type (%)					
Undergraduate	70.62	72.40	-1.78	-0.04	0.691
Graduate	4.74	3.16	1.58	0.08	0.349
Professional	24.64	24.77	-0.12	0.00	0.973
Demographic					
Age at entry into TFA	23.95	24.39	-0.44	-0.10	0.429
First in family to attend college (%)	36.73	35.03	1.70	0.04	0.765
Received a Pell grant (%)	48.58	45.55	3.02	0.06	0.558
Race and ethnicity (%)					
Hispanic	10.43	17.85	-7.42	-0.21	0.371
Black	22.04	15.60	6.44	0.16	0.257
White	50.24	51.08	-0.85	-0.02	0.897
Asian	7.35	3.45	3.89	0.16	0.156
Other	9.95	10.87	-0.92	-0.03	0.787
Person of color (%)	48.82	47.83	0.99	0.02	0.887
Gender (%)					
Female	76.61	72.59	4.02	0.09	0.444
Male	21.96	26.56	-4.60	-0.11	0.380
Other	1.43	1.20	0.23	0.02	0.808
Retention in study regions 2016 (%)					
End of first year of teaching	85.11	84.28	0.83	0.02	0.868
Fall of second year of teaching	79.49	78.88	0.61	0.02	0.897
Number of regions	5	5			
Number of CMs	422	253			

SOURCE: Teach For America administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE B.2 Baseline Equivalence, School Characteristics

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Grade and subject (%)					
Grade level					
Pre-K and kindergarten	6.64	5.69	0.95	0.04	0.816
Lower elementary school	10.19	9.93	0.26	0.01	0.944
Upper elementary school	26.07	35.12	-9.05	-0.20	0.503
Middle school	31.28	26.83	4.45	0.10	0.483
High school	25.83	23.29	2.54	0.06	0.740
Subject taught					
General education	26.30	31.94	-5.64	-0.12	0.659
English language arts	21.80	26.84	-5.04	-0.12	0.584
Mathematics	19.19	14.60	4.59	0.12	0.247
Science	22.99	11.89	11.09*	0.29	0.062
Social studies	4.03	7.98	-3.95	-0.17	0.269
World languages	5.45	1.40	4.05*	0.21	0.097
Other	0.24	6.27	-6.03	-0.44	0.349
School					
School size and type					
Total enrollment	711.58	735.27	-23.70	-0.06	0.882
Title I school (%)	93.41	98.41	-5.01	-0.23	0.377
Charter school (%)	22.80	29.98	-7.18	-0.16	0.672
Staffing (%)					
First-year teachers at the school	12.71	16.56	-3.86	-0.25	0.395
Teacher absences (10 or more per year)	28.66	23.89	4.77	0.26	0.400
Certified	91.63	97.01	-5.38	-0.33	0.303
School location (%)					
Urban	82.97	87.67	-4.71	-0.13	0.858
Suburban	5.22	1.84	3.38	0.17	0.527
Town	1.65	5.22	-3.57	-0.25	0.504
Rural	10.16	5.04	5.13	0.17	0.834

(continued)

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Students (%)					
Chronically absent	25.19	17.49	7.70	0.38	0.395
Retained	5.56	4.32	1.24	0.25	0.327
One or more in-school suspensions	10.17	7.37	2.80	0.27	0.387
One or more out-of-school suspensions	14.66	16.38	-1.72	-0.14	0.625
English as a second language	15.65	22.54	-6.88	-0.45	0.207
Individualized education plan	12.17	12.76	-0.59	-0.10	0.712
Gender					
Female	48.47	49.28	-0.81	-0.15	0.173
Male	51.67	50.95	0.72	0.13	0.218
Race and ethnicity					
Hispanic	32.05	43.72	-11.67	-0.40	0.494
Black	47.51	35.62	11.89	0.38	0.480
White	9.92	10.72	-0.80	-0.07	0.841
Asian	2.90	3.45	-0.55	-0.12	0.817
Other	13.97	11.08	2.89	0.10	0.913
Number of regions	5	5			
Number of CMs	422	253			

SOURCES: Teach For America administrative records for corps members, Common Core of Data (school year 2016-2017), and Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (2015-2016).

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE B.3 Impact Analyses for CMs' Self-Perceptions of Cultural Awareness

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	PROGRAM SAMPLE	COMPARISON SAMPLE
Confidence in DEI							
CM confidence in ability to learn about students' backgrounds and revise instructional material based on that information (0-100)[a]	66.09	70.49	-4.40	-0.20	0.375	150	74
CM is growing capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills) to play a valuable role in assuring all children receive an excellent education (1-7)[b]	6.13	6.22	-0.09	-0.10	0.377	344	201
Confidence as a culturally relevant practitioner							
CM confidence in ability to become a culturally relevant practitioner (0-100)[c]	69.43	79.87	-10.44	-0.50 *	0.090	150	74
Number of regions[c]	5	5					

SOURCES: MDRC-administered CRP survey, end of first year; and TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.

[a]Item is a composite of four CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).
[b]Scale 1 to 7 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
[c]Item is a composite of 14 CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).

APPENDIX TABLE B.4 Impact Analyses for CMs' Self-Reported Practices

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	PROGRAM SAMPLE	COMPARISON SAMPLE
DEI practices							
CM works with families and community members to ensure all children can attain an excellent education (1-7)[a]	5.65	5.51	0.14	0.12	0.312	344	201
CM commitment to DEI over past week[b] (%)	60.22	56.31	3.92	0.13	0.451	1,641	776
LE practices							
LE strategies used over past week[c] (%)	55.31	54.45	0.86	0.04	0.819	1,641	776
Average rate of lessons in which CM gave clear directions and engaged students (0-3)[d]	2.49	2.57	-0.08	-0.16	0.522	1,641	776
Practices grounded in CRP							
CM incorporated cultural competence in lessons over past week (1-10)[e]	6.13	6.19	-0.06	-0.03	0.856	1,641	776
CM enacted a lesson plan that develops socio-political consciousness (1-10)[f]	5.92	6.23	-0.31	-0.12	0.568	1,641	776
Number of regions	5	5					

SOURCES: TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year; monthly instructional logs distributed by MDRC.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.

[a]Scale 1 to 7 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

[b]Item is a composite of four log questions.

[c]Item is a composite of nine log questions.

[d]Item is a composite of 10 log questions (scale of 0 to 3 with 0 = none, 1 = a few, 2 = half, and 3 = the majority).

[e]Item is a composite of two log questions (scale 1 to 10 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree).

[f]Scale 1 to 10 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

APPENDIX TABLE B.5 **Impact Analyses for CMs' Retention Outcomes**

OUTCOME	PROGRAM GROUP	COMPARISON GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	PROGRAM SAMPLE	COMPARISON SAMPLE
End of first year of teaching (%)	85.07	86.73	-1.66	-0.05	0.774	422	253
Fall of second year of teaching (%)	79.86	82.03	-2.18	-0.05	0.753	422	253
Number of regions	5	5					

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using TFA administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

CM-Level Analyses

APPENDIX TABLE C.1 CM-Level Analyses for CMs' Self-Perception of Cultural Awareness

OUTCOME	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	SAMPLE SIZE
Confidence in DEI			
CM confidence in ability to learn about students' backgrounds and revise instructional material based on that information[a]			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.08	0.438	218
CM is growing capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills) to play a valuable role in assuring all children receive an excellent education			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.19**	0.031	248
Confidence as a culturally relevant practitioner			
CM confidence in ability to become a culturally relevant practitioner[b]			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.14	0.184	218
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.05	0.660	218
Number of CMs (total = 267)			

SOURCES: MDRC-administered CRP survey, end of first year; TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year.

NOTES: PD = professional development.

Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The effect sizes were standardized to allow comparisons among the various outcomes and represent the effect of a one standard deviation increase in professional development.

Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.

[a]Item is a composite of four CRP survey questions.
[b]Item is a composite of 14 CRP survey questions.

APPENDIX TABLE C.2 CM-Level Analyses for CMs' Self-Reported Practices

OUTCOME	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	SAMPLE SIZE
DEI practices			
CM works with families and community members to ensure all children can attain an excellent education			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.18 **	0.020	248
CM commitment to DEI over past week[a]			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.17 ***	0.001	2,403
LE practices			
LE strategies used over past week[b]			
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.04	0.356	2,403
Average rate of lessons in which CM gave clear directions and engaged students[c]			
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.11 *	0.086	2,403
Practices grounded in CRP			
CM incorporated cultural competence in lessons over past week[d]			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.09	0.136	2,403
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.11 *	0.057	2,403
CM enacted a lesson plan that develops socio-political consciousness			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.08	0.171	2,403
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.09 *	0.098	2,403
Number of CMs (total = 267)			

SOURCES: TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year; and monthly instructional logs distributed by MDRC.

NOTES: PD = professional development.
   Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
   The effect sizes were standardized to allow comparisons among the various outcomes and represent the effect of a one standard deviation increase in professional development.
   Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.
   [a]Item is a composite of four log questions.
   [b]Item is a composite of nine log questions.
   [c]Item is a composite of 10 log questions.
   [d]Item is a composite of two log questions.

APPENDIX TABLE C.3 CM-Level Analyses for CMs' Retention Outcomes

OUTCOME	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	SAMPLE SIZE
End of first year of teaching			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.07	0.349	267
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.32 ***	0.000	267
Fall of second year of teaching			
Analysis using DEI-focused PD as predictor	0.15 *	0.052	267
Analysis using LE-focused PD as predictor	0.15 *	0.052	267
Number of CMs (total = 267)			

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using TFA administrative records for corps members.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

The effect sizes were standardized to allow comparisons among the various outcomes and represent the effect of a one standard deviation increase in professional development.

Region-Level Analyses

APPENDIX TABLE D.1 Baseline Equivalence for DEI Group, CM Characteristics

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Preparation and skills					
Composite application score (1-5)	3.71	3.74	-0.03	-0.08	0.317
Educational attainment (%)					
Bachelor's	86.99	92.11	-5.12*	-0.17	0.095
Master's	11.90	6.65	5.25*	0.19	0.058
Doctorate	0.74	0.40	0.34	0.04	0.677
Other graduate degree	0.37	0.74	-0.37	-0.05	0.560
Major or minor in Education (%)	8.92	4.93	4.00*	0.16	0.073
Prospect type (%)					
Undergraduate	67.66	73.36	-5.70	-0.13	0.159
Graduate	4.83	3.69	1.14	0.06	0.489
Professional	27.51	22.91	4.60	0.11	0.212
Demographic					
Age at entry into TFA	24.56	23.80	0.76	0.17	0.175
First in family to attend college (%)	41.26	34.16	7.11	0.15	0.166
Received a Pell grant (%)	46.10	49.03	-2.94	-0.06	0.580
Race and ethnicity (%)					
Hispanic	22.30	10.38	11.93	0.34	0.132
Black	13.75	19.41	-5.66	-0.14	0.318
White	50.56	52.03	-1.48	-0.03	0.822
Asian	3.35	7.49	-4.15	-0.18	0.105
Other	10.04	11.01	-0.97	-0.03	0.776
Person of color (%)	48.70	46.49	2.21	0.04	0.750
Gender (%)					
Female	71.91	76.87	-4.96	-0.11	0.362
Male	26.97	21.63	5.34	0.12	0.324
Other	1.12	1.49	-0.37	-0.03	0.696
Retention in study regions 2016 (%)					
End of first year	91.82	80.72	11.11***	0.31	0.004
Fall of second year	85.13	75.76	9.37**	0.23	0.019
Number of regions	5	5			
Number of CMs	269	406			

SOURCE: Teach For America administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Grade and subject (%)					
Grade level					
Pre-K and kindergarten	10.41	6.08	4.33	0.17	0.261
Lower elementary school	10.41	12.42	-2.01	-0.07	0.597
Upper elementary school	37.92	16.16	21.76 *	0.48	0.078
Middle school	23.42	32.72	-9.30	-0.20	0.114
High school	17.84	30.62	-12.77 *	-0.29	0.063
Subject taught					
General education	40.15	24.46	15.69	0.35	0.195
English language arts	20.07	27.07	-6.99	-0.16	0.441
Mathematics	14.50	19.70	-5.21	-0.14	0.120
Science	13.38	21.23	-7.84	-0.20	0.220
Social studies	6.69	5.31	1.38	0.06	0.711
World languages	0.74	6.16	-5.41 ***	-0.28	0.008
Other	4.46	-2.50	6.96	0.51	0.275
School					
School size and type					
Total enrollment	617.04	678.90	-61.86	-0.15	0.698
Title I school (%)	98.77	93.01	5.76	0.27	0.304
Charter school (%)	21.31	35.82	-14.51	-0.32	0.383
Staffing (%)					
First-year teachers at the school	20.91	13.95	6.96	0.46	0.101
Teacher absences (10 or more per year)	28.25	21.18	7.07	0.39	0.204
Certified	98.20	89.77	8.42 *	0.52	0.088
School location (%)					
Urban	80.74	81.39	-0.65	-0.02	0.980
Suburban	2.05	5.51	-3.46	-0.17	0.516
Town	2.05	6.08	-4.03	-0.28	0.450
Rural	15.16	6.80	8.36	0.27	0.732

(continued)

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Students (%)					
Chronically absent	23.12	20.82	2.31	0.11	0.803
Retained	6.43	4.66	1.77	0.36	0.139
One or more in-school suspensions	10.11	8.57	1.54	0.15	0.639
One or more out-of-school suspensions	15.89	15.17	0.73	0.06	0.838
English as a second language	20.93	17.97	2.95	0.19	0.598
Individualized education plan	12.73	12.46	0.26	0.04	0.872
Gender					
Female	48.88	48.55	0.33	0.06	0.618
Male	51.12	51.75	-0.63	-0.12	0.318
Race and ethnicity					
Hispanic	48.04	30.80	17.24	0.59	0.301
Black	24.71	49.36	-24.65	-0.80	0.119
White	10.90	9.93	0.97	0.08	0.807
Asian	2.45	1.64	0.82	0.18	0.733
Other	20.15	14.46	5.70	0.21	0.829
Number of regions	5	5			
Number of CMs	269	406			

SOURCES: Teach For America administrative records for corps members, Common Core of Data (school year 2016-2017), and Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (2015-2016).

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE D.3 DEI Group, CMs' Self-Perception of Cultural Awareness

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
Confidence in DEI							
CM confidence in ability to learn about students' backgrounds and revise instructional material based on that information (0-100)[a]	71.51	68.58	2.93	0.13	0.609	102	122
CM is growing capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills) to play a valuable role in assuring all children receive an excellent education (1-7)[b]	6.17	6.27	-0.10	-0.11	0.441	236	309
Confidence as a culturally relevant practitioner							
CM confidence in ability to become a culturally relevant practitioner (0-100)[c]	77.18	72.48	4.70	0.22	0.492	102	122
Number of regions[c]	5	5					

SOURCES: MDRC-administered CRP survey, end of first year; and TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
   Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.
   [a]Item is composite of four CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).
   [b]Scale 1 to 7 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
   [c]Item is a composite of 14 CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).

APPENDIX TABLE D.4 DEI Group, CMs' Self-Reported Practices

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
DEI practices							
CM works with families and community members to ensure all children can attain an excellent education (1-7)[a]	5.68	5.45	0.23	0.20	0.191	236	309
CM commitment to DEI over past week[b] (%)	62.13	67.72	-5.59	-0.19	0.258	1,115	1,302
LE practices							
LE strategies used over past week[c] (%)	55.49	53.67	1.81	0.08	0.661	1,115	1,302
Average rate of lessons in which CM gave clear directions and engaged students (0-3)[d]	2.51	2.46	0.05	0.10	0.703	1,115	1,302
Practices grounded in CRP							
CM incorporated cultural competence in lessons over past week (1-10)[e]	6.28	6.72	-0.44	-0.19	0.274	1,115	1,302
CM enacted a lesson plan that develops socio-political consciousness (1-10)[f]	6.10	7.02	-0.93	-0.35 *	0.056	1,115	1,302
Number of regions	5	5					

SOURCES: TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year; and monthly instructional logs distributed by MDRC.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
   Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.
   [a]Scale 1 to 7 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
   [b]Item is a composite of four log questions.
   [c]Item is a composite of nine log questions.
   [d]Item is a composite of 10 log questions (scale of 0 to 3 with 0 = none, 1 = a few, 2 = half, and 3 = the majority).
   [e]Item is a composite of two log questions (scale 1 to 10 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree).
   [f]Scale 1 to 10 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

APPENDIX TABLE D.5 DEI Group, CMs' Retention Outcomes

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
End of first year of teaching (%)	90.33	84.76	5.57	0.15	0.543	269	406
Fall of second year of teaching (%)	84.76	77.30	7.46	0.18	0.465	269	406
Number of regions	5	5					

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using TFA administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE D.6 Baseline Equivalence for LE Group, CM Characteristics

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Preparation and skills					
Composite application score (1-5)	3.72	3.74	-0.02	-0.05	0.533
Educational attainment (%)					
Bachelor's	89.34	90.28	-0.94	-0.03	0.779
Master's	9.93	8.09	1.84	0.07	0.558
Doctorate	0.00	1.01	-1.01	-0.13	0.159
Other graduate degree	0.74	0.50	0.24	0.03	0.702
Major or minor in Education (%)	8.82	4.96	3.86*	0.16	0.081
Prospect type (%)					
Undergraduate	68.75	72.49	-3.74	-0.08	0.379
Graduate	4.41	3.99	0.42	0.02	0.802
Professional	26.84	23.33	3.51	0.08	0.330
Demographic					
Age at entry into TFA	24.20	24.21	-0.01	0.00	0.987
First in family to attend college (%)	41.18	33.84	7.34	0.15	0.163
Received a Pell grant (%)	48.90	46.67	2.23	0.04	0.666
Race and ethnicity (%)					
Hispanic	20.37	10.98	9.39	0.27	0.261
Black	14.07	18.54	-4.47	-0.11	0.441
White	51.85	52.90	-1.05	-0.02	0.876
Asian	3.70	7.05	-3.35	-0.14	0.207
Other	10.00	10.66	-0.66	-0.02	0.847
Person of color (%)	47.06	45.83	1.23	0.02	0.862
Gender (%)					
Female	71.64	76.87	-5.23	-0.12	0.340
Male	27.24	21.34	5.90	0.14	0.280
Other	1.12	1.50	-0.38	-0.03	0.690
Retention in study regions 2016 (%)					
End of first year of teaching	89.45	83.12	6.33	0.18	0.166
Fall of second year of teaching	84.36	76.22	8.15**	0.20	0.039
Number of regions	4	6			
Number of CMs	272	403			

SOURCE: Teach For America administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE D.7 Baseline Equivalence for LE Group, School Characteristics

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Grade and subject					
Grade level (%)					
Pre-K and kindergarten	11.40	5.16	6.23*	0.25	0.088
Lower elementary school	10.29	12.81	-2.52	-0.08	0.515
Upper elementary school	33.09	19.66	13.43	0.30	0.322
Middle school	23.16	32.61	-9.45	-0.21	0.102
High school	22.06	27.27	-5.21	-0.12	0.497
Subject taught (%)					
General education	36.40	32.30	4.10	0.09	0.753
English language arts	20.59	23.87	-3.28	-0.08	0.726
Mathematics	15.81	18.84	-3.03	-0.08	0.442
Science	12.50	20.60	-8.10	-0.21	0.205
Social studies	8.46	3.30	5.16	0.22	0.144
World languages	1.84	4.99	-3.15	-0.16	0.195
Other	4.41	-3.34	7.75	0.56	0.230
School					
School size and type					
Total enrollment	582.06	590.10	-8.04	-0.02	0.961
Title I school (%)	98.26	94.52	3.74	0.17	0.521
Charter school (%)	38.70	19.40	19.29	0.43	0.247
Staffing (%)					
First-year teachers at the school	20.97	13.76	7.21*	0.47	0.095
Teacher absences (10 or more per year)	23.00	26.85	-3.85	-0.21	0.505
Certified	97.09	91.90	5.19	0.32	0.329
School location (%)					
Urban	94.35	58.68	35.67	0.96	0.157
Suburban	2.17	4.34	-2.17	-0.11	0.692
Town	2.17	5.12	-2.94	-0.21	0.591
Rural	1.30	31.94	-30.63	-1.00	0.195

(continued)

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	ESTIMATED DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE
Students (%)					
Chronically absent	21.67	28.51	-6.84	-0.34	0.460
Retained	5.99	5.40	0.59	0.12	0.649
One or more in-school suspensions	7.53	11.84	-4.30	-0.41	0.176
One or more out-of-school suspensions	16.26	14.03	2.24	0.18	0.532
English as a second language	17.48	16.26	1.22	0.08	0.834
Individualized education plan	13.10	12.58	0.52	0.09	0.751
Gender					
Female	49.18	48.37	0.81	0.15	0.217
Male	51.05	51.77	-0.72	-0.13	0.255
Race and ethnicity					
Hispanic	41.28	23.68	17.59	0.60	0.303
Black	34.94	34.53	0.41	0.01	0.981
White	12.87	6.82	6.05	0.51	0.106
Asian	2.54	0.76	1.78	0.39	0.458
Other	8.62	36.19	-27.57	-0.99	0.288
Number of regions	4	6			
Number of CMs	272	403			

SOURCES: Teach For America administrative records for corps members, Common Core of Data (school year 2016-2017), and Office of Civil Rights Data Collection (2015-2016).

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

APPENDIX TABLE D.8 LE Group, CMs' Self-Perception of Cultural Awareness

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
Confidence in DEI							
CM confidence in ability to learn about students' backgrounds and revise instructional material based on that information (0-100)[a]	72.46	64.53	7.93	0.36	0.184	97	127
CM is growing capabilities (e.g., knowledge and skills) to play a valuable role in assuring all children receive an excellent education (1-7)[b]	6.21	6.12	0.08	0.09	0.527	224	321
Confidence as a culturally relevant practitioner							
CM confidence in ability to become a culturally relevant practitioner (0-100)[c]	78.64	65.53	13.10	0.62 **	0.035	97	127
Number of regions[c]	4	6					

SOURCES: MDRC-administered CRP survey, end of first year; and TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
   Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.
   [a]Item is a composite of four CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).
   [b]Scale 1 to 7 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
   [c]Item is a composite of 14 CRP survey questions (scale 0 to 100 with 0 indicating no confidence at all and 100 indicating complete confidence).

APPENDIX TABLE D.9 LE Group, CMs' Self-Reported Practices

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE		P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
DEI Practices								
CM works with families and community members to ensure all children can attain an excellent education (1-7)[a]	5.63	5.58	0.04	0.04		0.821	224	321
CM commitment to DEI over past week[b] (%)	63.15	61.50	1.65	0.06		0.789	1,023	1,394
LE Practices								
LE strategies used over past week[c] (%)	58.56	49.82	8.74	0.37	**	0.023	1,023	1,394
Average rate of lessons in which CM gave clear directions and engaged students (0-3)[d]	2.53	2.34	0.18	0.38	*	0.069	1,023	1,394
Practices Grounded in CRP								
CM incorporated cultural competence in lessons over past week (1-10)[e]	6.28	6.32	-0.04	-0.02		0.919	1,023	1,394
CM enacted a lesson plan that develops socio-political consciousness (1-10)[f]	6.17	6.25	-0.08	-0.03		0.899	1,023	1,394
Number of regions	4	6						

SOURCES: TFA-administered corps member survey, end of first year; and monthly instructional logs distributed by MDRC.

NOTES: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.
Please email MDRC at information@mdrc.org to obtain a copy of the full surveys used.
[a]Scale 1-7 indicating strongly disagree to strongly agree.
[b]Item is a composite of four log questions.
[c]Item is a composite of nine log questions.
[d]Item is a composite of 10 log questions (scale of 0 to 3 with 0 = none, 1 = a few, 2 = half, and 3 = the majority).
[e]Item is a composite of two log questions (scale 1 to 10 ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree).
[f]Scale 1 to 10 ranges from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

APPENDIX TABLE D.10 LE Group, CMs' Retention Outcomes

OUTCOME	HIGH GROUP	LOW GROUP	DIFFERENCE	EFFECT SIZE	P-VALUE	HIGH GROUP SAMPLE	LOW GROUP SAMPLE
End of first year of teaching (%)	85.66	76.18	9.48	0.26	0.142	272	403
Fall of second year of teaching (%)	80.51	67.62	12.89	0.32	0.112	272	403
Number of regions	4	6					

SOURCE: MDRC calculations using TFA administrative records for corps members.

NOTE: Statistical significance levels are indicated as follows: *** = 1 percent; ** = 5 percent; * = 10 percent.

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A Redesigned Training Program for New Teachers
Findings from a Study of Teach For America's Summer Institutes
2019. Shelley Rappaport, Marie-Andree Somers, Kelly Granito

NOTE: All MDRC publications are available for free download at www.mdrc.org.

ABOUT MDRC

MDRC IS A NONPROFIT, NONPARTISAN SOCIAL AND EDU-CATION POLICY RESEARCH ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO learning what works to improve the well-being of low-income people. Through its research and the active communication of its findings, MDRC seeks to enhance the effectiveness of social and education policies and programs.

Founded in 1974 and located in New York; Oakland, California; Washington, DC; and Los Angeles, MDRC is best known for mounting rigorous, large-scale, real-world tests of new and existing policies and programs. Its projects are a mix of demonstrations (field tests of promising new program approaches) and evaluations of ongoing government and community initiatives. MDRC's staff members bring an unusual combination of research and organizational experience to their work, providing expertise on the latest in qualitative and quantitative methods and on program design, development, implementation, and management. MDRC seeks to learn not just whether a program is effective but also how and why the program's effects occur. In addition, it tries to place each project's findings in the broader context of related research — in order to build knowledge about what works across the social and education policy fields. MDRC's findings, lessons, and best practices are shared with a broad audience in the policy and practitioner community as well as with the general public and the media.

Over the years, MDRC has brought its unique approach to an ever-growing range of policy areas and target populations. Once known primarily for evaluations of state welfare-to-work programs, today MDRC is also studying public school reforms, employment programs for ex-prisoners, and programs to help low-income students succeed in college. MDRC's projects are organized into five areas:

• Promoting Family Well-Being and Children's Development

• Improving Public Education

• Raising Academic Achievement and Persistence in College

• Supporting Low-Wage Workers and Communities

• Overcoming Barriers to Employment

Working in almost every state, all of the nation's largest cities, and Canada and the United Kingdom, MDRC conducts its projects in partnership with national, state, and local governments, public school systems, community organizations, and numerous private philanthropies.