At-A-Glance

Bridges to Teaching: A Transition to Teaching project is in its fourth of a five-year $1.25M grant to the Dallas Independent School District’s (Dallas ISD) Alternative Certification Department. The grant was authorized in September, 2006, under Title II, Part C, Subpart 1, Chapter B of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. In 2006-07, the first year of the program, 146 participants were recruited for the 2007-08 school year (Cohort 1). The second cohort included 83 participants, who began teaching during the 2008-09 school year; the third cohort began teaching in 2009-10 and included 85 participants.

The primary purpose of this evaluation was to compare the effectiveness of groups of first-year teachers. Four groups were considered: Bridges to Teaching interns, other district-trained alternative certification (AC) interns, external AC interns, and certified teachers. All teachers were to have received district required support. A secondary purpose of the evaluation was to report the retention and certification rates for Bridges to Teaching interns.

Teacher Effectiveness

Scores on Classroom Effectiveness Indices (CEIs) for Bridges to Teaching interns were compared to the scores of other internal AC interns, external AC interns, and certified teachers from their first year in the Dallas ISD. At the district level, CEI scores range from zero to 100 with a normed mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. A series of analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted using CEI scores in Language Arts, Math, and Science. Results for teachers in bilingual classes were very similar to the overall results and are not presented.

Bridges to Teaching interns ($M = 44.2$) scored lower than other district interns ($M = 46.5$), external interns ($M = 49.8$), and certified teachers ($M = 46.2$). However, this difference was not significant. Group scores ranged from 18.2 to 74.5; Bridges to Teaching interns’ scores ranged widely from 25.7 to 74.5. Figure 1 illustrates the mean Language Arts CEI scores for first-year interns and teachers with the Dallas ISD.

CEI scores of first-year teachers in science ranged from 32.2 to 59.5. Bridges to teaching interns’ scores ranged from 42.0 to 58.0 with an average score of 49.5. This average was higher than other district interns ($M = 47.1$), external interns ($M = 45.6$), and certified teachers ($M = 46.4$). As with Language Arts, the differences among the groups were not statistically significant. A comparison of the group means for Math is shown in Figure 2.

![Figure 1. Mean Language Arts CEI scores for first-year teachers.](image1)

![Figure 2. Mean Math CEI scores for first-year teachers.](image2)
Retention and Certification

The terms of the Bridges to Teaching grant required that an intern provide three years of service to the Dallas ISD. During the first year of each cohort, Bridges to Teaching interns returned to teach a second year at 89, 95, and 93 percent rates, respectively (Figure 4). A contingency table analysis with follow-up pairwise comparisons was conducted for cohort 3 to compare the first-year retention rates of Bridges interns to the retention rates of other teacher types. While Bridges interns were not retained at significantly higher rate than other types of AC interns, the rate (93%) was significantly higher than the rate of teachers with prior certification (82%). Of the Bridges interns in cohort 3, 62 percent \( (n = 53) \) had received certification prior to beginning a second year of teaching.

Bridges interns in cohort 2 returned to teach a third year at higher rates than the other types of teachers. Returning was only significantly more likely for Bridges interns (83%) than for previously certified teachers (65%). The probability of a cohort 2 teacher starting a third year was about 1.27 times more likely if the teacher began teaching in the Dallas ISD as a Bridges intern rather than as an already certified teacher.

Summary

Using CEI scores in Language Arts, Math, and Science, the evaluator determined that Bridges to Teaching interns scored similarly, on average, to other types of first-year teachers. Analyses of retention indicated that, across all cohorts, Bridges interns were significantly more likely than previously certified teachers to return a second year. Bridges interns in cohorts 1 and 2 returned for a third year at significantly higher rates than teachers with prior certification. There were no differences between Bridges to Teaching interns and other AC interns in their likelihood to continue teaching with the Dallas ISD.

For more information contact Program Evaluation at (972) 925-6457.