The Teacher Excellence Initiative (TEI) certification training was made up of three components: system knowledge, rater accuracy, and an observation and coaching field experience. There were training sessions on system knowledge and rater accuracy, with an exam for each. Trainees began their field experience after completing the first two certification exams. Principals and assistant principals were required to complete their certification – all other district staff could participate in training, but were not required to complete the certification. Conducting spot observations was one of the covered subjects. Summative evaluations represent 50 percent of the new TEI evaluation rubric scoring system. Evidence from spot observations throughout the year are reflected in the summative evaluation scores, though actual spot observations scores are not used in the summative evaluation score calculations. Student achievement and student surveys results made up the remaining 50 percent.

Training Survey Results

Respondents to TEI training survey were highly satisfied with the training they received. They rated all five closed-ended items in the survey highly and comments suggested the training provided a deeper understanding of the TEI process and how to coach teachers towards excellence in the classroom. Suggestions for improvement included follow-up training, more time and opportunities for practice, and more timely distribution of training materials.

Certification Training

There were 1,292 Dallas ISD staff members trained on the TEI system between summer of 2014 and June 2015. Of those, 1,256 received certifications. The majority of principals and assistant principals were trained in the summer, while other staff such as instructional coaches and central staff were trained throughout the year. There were seven trainers hired to conduct TEI training during the 2014-15 school year. They trained individually and in teams. A One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) indicated that there were some trainer differences when it came to the number of times it took participants to pass the certification exam. Participants who were trained by Trainers E and A were less likely than participants trained by Trainers F, G, and the Team-Led Training to pass the certification exam on the first attempt. Trainees attempted the certification exam between one and five times in order to pass. The percentage of trainees who passed on the first attempt was 74.6 percent and 79.2 percent, respectively for trainers E and A. The percentage of trainees who passed on the first attempt for Trainer’s F, G, and the Team-Led Training were 100 percent, 97.7 percent, and 100 percent, respectively.

Passing rates over time increased slightly over the course of the school year. An ANOVA indicated there were some statistically significant differences between groups. Over time, it took participants fewer attempts on average to pass the certification exam. From summer, fall, to spring, the percentage of trainees who passed the exam on the first attempt increased from 79.5 percent, to 85.7 percent, to 100 percent, respectively.

Spot Observation Scoring

There were 96,516 spot observations conducted during the 2014-15 school year for 10,587 teachers. A lack of comparison data prevented the use of inter-rater reliability (a test of the degree of agreement among raters) for 2014-15 spot observation data to determine calibration levels over time. Instead, the evaluator conducted a descriptive analysis to look at average spot observation scores over time. In spring 2015, administrators were no longer required to score spot observations. They were able to give an “N/A” and then provide qualitative feedback to teachers. These “N/A” scores were translated into zeros in the SchoolNet data. The spot observation scoring system ranged from 0 to 3 with half-point increments. Because “N/A” was also coded as a zero, comparing fall and spring scores was difficult. An analysis of fall and spring data showed that scores did improve over
time, with DTR-eligible teachers performing at a higher level.

**Figure 2: Fall 2014 – Average Spot Observation Scores by Teacher Category**

![Graph showing average spot observation scores by teacher category for Fall 2014.](image)

Average scores by feeder pattern were relatively similar with Division 4 having the highest average scores for fall and spring and Division 2 having the lowest average scores for fall and spring.

**Figure 3: Spring 2015 – Average Spot Observation Scores by Teacher Category**

![Graph showing average spot observation scores by teacher category for Spring 2015.](image)

**Recommendations**

There were six recommendations resulting from the 2013-14 evaluation. TEI program staff have already begun addressing these recommendations.

1. Results of the fall trainee survey and spot observation data suggest that conducting follow-up training and calibration with administrators throughout the year would be beneficial.
   a. This training should include additional time for practice and calibration (as suggested by training participants).
   b. The program should investigate methods to track calibration results so that evaluators can run inter-rater reliability tests to determine whether raters are maintaining the expected levels of rigor throughout the year.

2. Results of the trainee survey suggested that providing training materials to training participants at the beginning of each training would benefit training participants. This would allow for better time management and greater processing of information.

3. Results of the training data analyses indicated that a review of trainer characteristics to determine if additional training on the TEI system would be beneficial for them was in order. Trainers showed some differences in participant outcomes; this could be due to the way materials were covered in different training sessions.

4. In order for training data to be better analyzed, more detailed tracking of training information is needed. This includes who trained each participant and what dates each participant attended training. Tracking information about the supervising administrator for the observation and coaching field experience would allow for evaluation of that process.

5. Based on the analyses of Schoolnet data it is recommended that Schoolnet data be adjusted so that scores of “N/A” are not coded as zero. This will allow for valid comparisons of data over time.

6. The TEI department should investigate the rationale for the spot observation rule change and determine if it is appropriate (this could include gathering data from teachers and administrators.)

Additional information may be obtained by consulting the TEI Training Report, EA15-537-2, at: [http://www.dallasisd.org/Page/888](http://www.dallasisd.org/Page/888).