

Aspire Public Schools

Transforming Teacher Talent (t3) System

DID THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE T3 SYSTEM IMPROVE TEACHER EFFICACY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN LOW-INCOME SCHOOLS?

Project Overview

THE PROBLEM: What Challenge Did the Program Try to Address?

Aspire set the goal to double the number of highly effective teachers by the end of the 2014-15 school year, as measured by classroom observations and walk-throughs that were structured by a protocol, the Aspire Instructional Rubric (AIR). Increasing the number of highly effective teachers supports the overarching mission of Aspire's work: to send every single Aspire student to college. To reach its teacher and student achievement goals, Aspire took on the task of building and implementing Transforming Teacher Talent (t3). Aspire aimed to double the number of highly effective teachers by 2015.

THE PROJECT: What Strategies Did the Program Employ?

To improve teacher efficacy, Aspire Public Schools (Aspire) developed an innovative technology-supported professional development (PD) system, t3, through an i3 development grant,¹ awarded from 2012-2015. The t3 system includes a set of tools, PD opportunities, and teacher support. The intervention uses a train-the-teacher model in which experienced Aspire teachers receive training on the use of three t3 tools and then provide PD and coaching to other Aspire teachers. The study sample of principals, teachers, and students, representing 34 of Aspire's 35 California schools, had distinguishing characteristics of low income, high-minority, high-achievement charter schools. The program was evaluated using a pre-post design, in which scores from assessments prior to and following the program were analyzed.

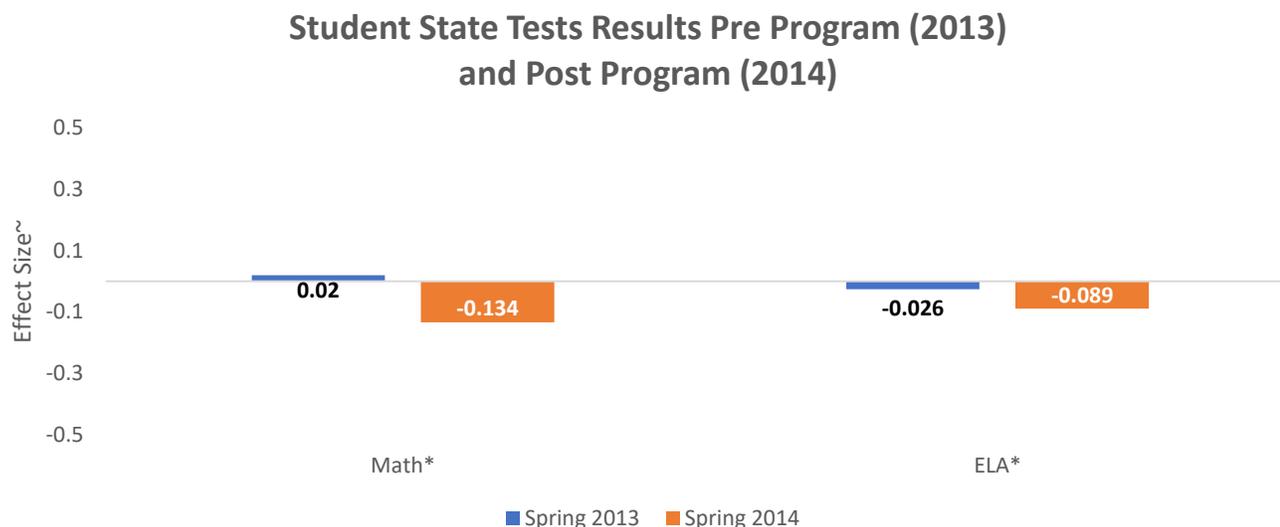
¹ Development grants provide funding to support the development or testing of novel or substantially more effective practices that address widely shared education challenges. All i3 grantees are required to conduct rigorous evaluations of their projects. The quality of evidence required to demonstrate a project's effectiveness depends on a project's level of scale or grant type. Aspire Public Schools received an i3 development grant supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Investing in Innovation program through Grant Number U411C110424.

THE T3 SYTEM MODEL

- **PD Content Library.** Teachers gain hands-on training on how to utilize the expanding components of Purple Planet, the PD content library. Experienced teachers provide teachers at their school sites with training on Purple Planet.
- **Peer Observation.** Teachers with low AIR scores, teachers who are new to the school site, and/or teachers who teach the same grade or content area as experienced teachers undergo peer observation. Experienced teachers provide frequent targeted informal classroom observations and walkthroughs.
- **Virtual collaboration leaders (VCLs).** Teachers participate in Virtual Communities (VCs), online professional learning groups in Google Hangout. Highly effective teachers facilitate the online professional learning communities.

Summary of Results

DID THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE T3 SYSTEM IMPROVE TEACHER EFFICACY AND STUDENT PERFORMANCE IN LOW-INCOME SCHOOLS?



*Differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level

~Education researchers generally interpret effect sizes as follows: 0.2 = small, 0.5 = medium, and 0.8 = large. If the impact does not have an effect size of 0.2 or greater, it is not meaningful, even if it is statistically significant.²

Overall, there is a positive correlation between the t3 system and teachers' AIR scores, but there is a negative correlation between the t3 system and student performance, as measured by student California Standards Tests (CST) math and English Language Arts (ELA) scores.

- **INCREASED TEACHER AIR SCORES.** The study focused on two key aspects of AIR – Classroom Learning Environment and Aspects of Teacher Instruction. In these areas, teachers' AIR scores had a statistically significant increase with exposure to the t3 system. In the learning environment domain, the mean AIR score saw an increase of 0.150 and of 0.175 in the teacher instructional domain.
- **DECREASED STUDENT MATH AND ELA SCORES.** The study found a statistically significant decrease in students' CST math and ELA scores with exposure to the t3 system. Students' relative percentile standing decreased 6.20% in math and 2.83% in ELA.

² Cohen, J. (1992). A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112, 155-159.

Please see Appendices A and B for information about the evaluation's design and the quality of the evidence, respectively.

SECONDARY FINDINGS

- The study found statistically significant differences across grades in the association between state test scores and t3, in both ELA and Math. The direction of those differences (positive or negative) varied by grade.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

T3 shows promise of a positive impact on its primary goal, quality of teaching practice, as measured by the AIR. Thresholds indicating fidelity of implementation were achieved on only one of the four components. Key takeaways are highlighted below:

- **ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR T3 LEADERS:** Aspire provided Purple Planet Drivers, Peer Observers, and VCLs with the support they needed to effectively interact with teachers at their school sites.
- **TEACHER RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION FOR VCS:** Recruiting and retaining teachers for VC sessions was a challenge. Recruitment efforts were more successful in the spring than fall, however, some teachers suggested that they had sufficient opportunities to collaborate with peers and did not need a VC.
- **PEER OBSERVERS:** Administrators and Peer Observers valued the Peer Observation component of the t3 system, which required the most face-to-face, direct, and targeted contact with teachers.
- **PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES:** The uptake and delivery of key program components (PD Content Library and Peer Observation/Walkthrough) using online, personalized PD tool BloomBoard and Virtual Communities in individual schools was lower than the thresholds identified as being important to observe impact of t3 on student achievement.

For More Information

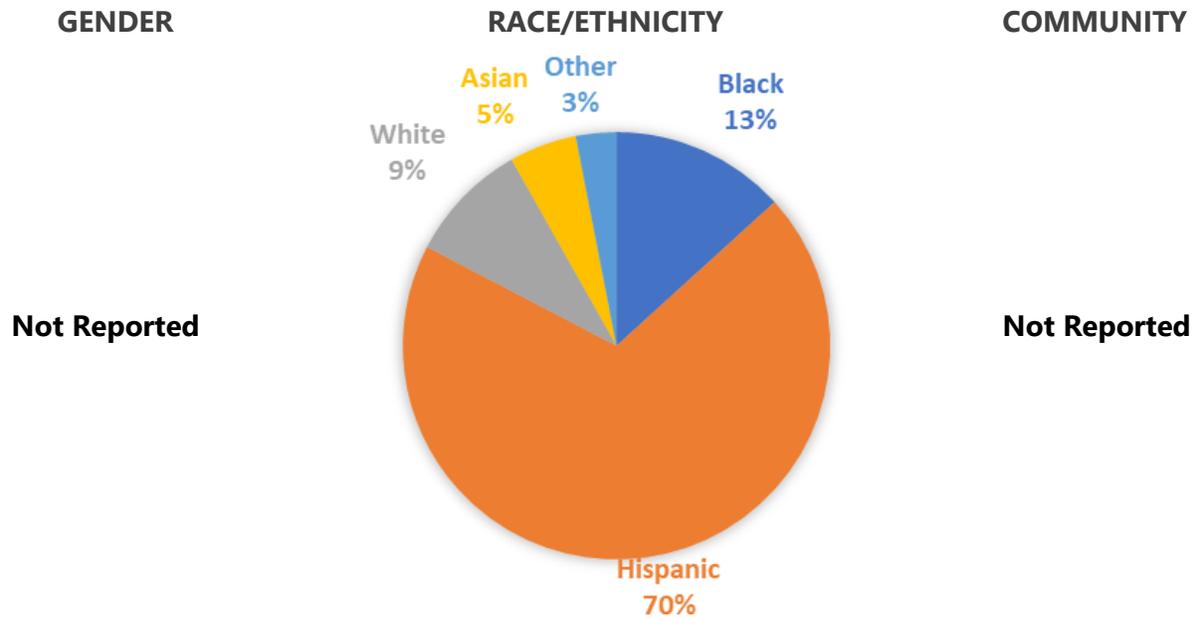
Evaluation Reports

[Measuring the Implementation and Impact of Aspire's Transforming Teacher Talent](#) (Empirical Education, 2016)³

³ The information and data for this result summary was collected from the most recent report as of 02/10/2020: Empirical Education. (2016, February). *Measuring the Implementation and Impact of Aspire's Transforming Teacher Talent FINAL REPORT ON THE EVALUATION OF AN I3 DEVELOPMENT PROJECT*. Retrieved from <https://www.empiricaeducation.com/pdfs/AspireFR.pdf>

Appendix A: Students Served by the Project⁴

GRADE(S)													
PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



HIGH-NEED STUDENTS ⁱ		
Free/Reduced-Price Lunch	English Learner	Students with Disabilities
Not Reported	27%	Not Reported

⁴ These data reflect the entire student population served by the intervention, not just the evaluation sample used in the impact study.

Appendix B: Impact Evaluation Methodology⁵

RESEARCH DESIGN:

Design:	Pre-post design
Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A pre-post design, comparing performance before and after usage of the intervention (the t3 technology tools and training). ▪ The first evaluation evaluated the implementation of the t3 system and provided formative feedback from the t3 leaders and school administrators. ▪ The second evaluation examined changes associated with the implementation of t3 in teacher performance, as measured through the Aspire Instructional Rubric (AIR) scores, and in student achievement, as measured through the California Standards Test (CSTs) in math and ELA.
Study Length:	Two years (school year 2012-2013 compared to 2013-2014)

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Study Setting:	Thirty-four of Aspire's 35 California schools
Student Sample:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>ELA Sample:</i> 4,066 students in eight schools ▪ <i>Math Sample:</i> 7,800 students in 28 schools
Subgroup Characteristics:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students with higher incoming achievement⁶ ▪ Socioeconomic status ▪ Gender ▪ Grade ▪ Association between level of t3 implementation and CST achievement (spring 2014)
Data Sources:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teacher background forms ▪ Attendance records ▪ Training observations ▪ T3 leader surveys ▪ Principal surveys ▪ BloomBoard device log ▪ Training observations ▪ Student demographic data ▪ Student assessments
Key Measures:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ AIR scores: teacher outcomes ▪ CST ELA scores: student outcomes ▪ CST math scores: student outcomes

⁵ These data reflect only the evaluation sample in the impact study, not the entire population served.

⁶ More specific data was not included in the report regarding student sample and characteristics.

Appendix C: Quality of the Evidence

Although an evaluation may not have been reviewed by the time of publication for this summary, it is possible that the study will be reviewed at a later date. Please visit the websites found in the footnotes on this page to check for updates.

WHAT WORKS CLEARINGHOUSE REVIEW⁷

STUDY	RATING
The Investing in Innovation Fund: Summary of 67 Evaluations, Final Report https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20184013/pdf/20184013.pdf	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Unofficially does not meet WWC standards for ELA and Math▪ Aspire t3 system was not implemented with adequate fidelity

EVIDENCE FOR ESSA REVIEW⁸

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 02/10/2020	N/A

NATIONAL CENTER ON INTENSIVE INTERVENTIONS REVIEW⁹

STUDY	RATING
Not reviewed as of 02/10/2020	N/A

⁷ <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/FWW>

⁸ <https://www.evidenceforessa.org/>

⁹ <https://intensiveintervention.org/>

Investing in Innovation (i3) Grantee Results Summary

Development, 2012-2015

The [*Investing in Innovation Fund \(i3\)*](#), established under section 14007 of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, is a Federal discretionary grant program at the U.S. Department of Education within the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education (OESE). i3 grants help schools and local education agencies work in partnership with the private sector and the philanthropic community to develop and expand innovative practices that improve student achievement or student growth, close achievement gaps, decrease dropout rates, increase high school graduation rates, and/or increase college enrollment and completion rates for high-need students.

This summary was prepared by the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Program Dissemination Project. The project is conducted by the [Manhattan Strategy Group](#), in partnership with [Westat](#) and [EdScale](#), with funding from the U.S. Department of Education, [Office of Elementary and Secondary Education](#), under Contract No. ED-ESE-15-A-0012/0004. The evaluation results presented herein do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.

ⁱ "High-need student" refers to a student at risk of academic failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, attend high-minority schools, are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, in foster care, have been incarcerated, have disabilities, or who are English learners. For more information see: [Applications for New Awards; Investing in Innovation Fund-Development Grants, 81 FR 24070 \(April 25, 2016\)](#).