

New Teachers' Appraisals of the Talent Development Middle School Training and Curriculum

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Interviews with 60 Middle School Teachers—February/March 2000

60 interviews were conducted during school hours with all of the teachers in the 7 TD middle schools who were new to the School District. Interviews lasted between 10 and 40 minutes and averaged 15 minutes. All of the teachers in the targeted group were interviewed (100% response rate). See **annotated overheads** for a review of answers to questions about their hiring, qualifications, and future plans.

Responses to questions on Talent Development training and curriculum:

Percentage of new teachers who received in-classroom coaching:

Science: 35%
Math: 23
RELA: 28

Overall: 63% had coaching in one or more subject areas

42% received coaching in 1 subject
20 “ “ “ “ 2 subjects
1 “ “ “ “ 3 subjects

Percentage of new teachers participating in workshops (after school and/or on Saturdays/summer/Skillful Talent Development Teacher course):

Science: 32%
Math: 22
RELA: 40

Skillfull Talent Development Teacher Course: 13% (all 8 people rated it “excellent”)

Overall: 68% participated in workshops in one or more curriculum areas (or in the Skillful TD Teacher course)

40% participated in workshops in one **curriculum** area
22 “ “ “ two “ “
3 “ “ “ three “ “

Only 3 new teachers participated in any of the summer training: in all 3 (5%) cases, the training was in RELA. Obviously, teachers need to be hired soon enough to participate in the August training.

Percentage of new teachers who participated either in coaching or in workshops in one or more curriculum areas or in the Skillful TD Teacher course: 80%

Variation in participation in coaching and workshops by school (variable created that totaled participation in the number of workshop series and coaching in curriculum areas). The scale ran from non-participation (0) to as many as 6 (i.e. 1 person was coached in several curriculum areas and attended several workshop series by curriculum area). The mean participation was 1.8—i.e. the average teacher probably had coaching in one curriculum area and attended one workshop series (or part of a series) or course. The distribution is as follows:

No. of Coaching/ Workshop Areas	% of Teachers
0.0	20%
1.0	22
2.0	22
3.0	17
4.0	18
5.0	0.0
6.0	2

n=60

These percentages varied by school. Using mean participation (again, the range is 0-6), the averages by school look like this:

Central East=3.20
Clemente=2.67
Shoemaker=2.00
Strawberry Mansion=1.67
Beeber=1.67
Roosevelt=1.55
Cooke=1.15

**Teachers' Ratings of the Coaching and Workshops
(Scale: Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor)**

	% Excellent	% Good or Excellent
Science Coaching	65	85
Science Workshops	65	76
Math Coaching	75	92
Math Workshops	54	91
RELA Coaching	47	82
RELA Workshops	35	85

**Teachers' Ratings of the Usefulness and Effectiveness of
the Talent Development Curriculum and Materials
(Scale: Excellent/Good/Fair/Poor)**

	% Excellent	% Good or Excellent
Science	22	56
Math	37	63
RELA	21	75
Social Studies	60	100 (5 people)

Note: percentages in the tables above reflect only those teachers teaching those subjects.

Response to open-ended question: In your view, how valuable is the Talent Development Program in supporting your growth as a new teacher?

Of those answering the question (49: (often ran out of time—or people had had no contact, especially teachers who came in during the last couple of months)

Very valuable:	63%
Somewhat valuable:	16
Not especially valuable:	20

Of all 60 teachers:

Very valuable:	52%
Somewhat valuable	13
Not especially valuable	17
Missing	18

Response to open-ended question: How valuable has the Talent Development Program been in supporting your students' learning?

Of those answering the question (37):

Very valuable:	32%
Somewhat valuable	41
Not especially valuable	27

Of all 60 teachers:

Very valuable:	20%
Somewhat valuable	25
Not especially valuable	17
Missing	23

[Quotes from teachers on all of the above coming in a separate document.]

Are Talent Development Middle School teachers new to the District more likely to report that they would like to stay in their current school (at least for the short term) if they have received in-class curriculum coaching and/or attended TD workshops?

Yes, they are far more likely to report wanting to stay. These data suggest that coaching is a good retention strategy. It is possible, of course, that teachers who arrive uncommitted to Philadelphia schools and see the job as short-term, or who just don't believe in further training

choose not to avail themselves of the coaching or workshops, so we need to be careful about causality. Still, the data below are impressive.

Of the 24 teachers who said they wanted to return to their current school, 21 (87.5%) had received curriculum coaching in one or more subject areas. Only 3 (12.5%) who wanted to stay had not received coaching. Of the 23 teachers who said they wanted to leave, 11 (47.8%) had had coaching and 12 (52.2%) had not. Those who said “maybe” were nearly equally divided. These differences were significant (Chi Square) at the .01 level.

Put another way, of the 38 teachers who have had coaching, 55.3% (21) said they wanted to stay in their school compared to only 13.6% (3) of those who had not had coaching (22). In other words, teachers with coaching were more than 4 times more likely to report wanting to return to their school next year or for the next few years. (These relationships held up even when Shoemaker was removed from the sample.)

The correlation coefficient between these two variables is 0.29, significant at the .02 level.

A similar relationship exists between participation in TD workshops (after school and/or Saturdays) in one or more curriculum areas or in the Skillful Talent Development Teacher course. The correlation is 0.29, significant at the .02 level.

Looking at the relationship between workshop attendance and desire to stay at the school, 51.2% of those who had attended said they wanted to return to the school compared to only 15.8% of those who had not attended any workshops (or had attended only once). Put another way, of those wanting to stay at the school, 87.5% had attended workshops compared to only 12.5% of those who had not. (The Chi Square value is significant at the .03 level).

Overall, the correlation between participation in coaching and participation in workshops/courses is 0.45 ($p=.01$). While the two are related, those who avail themselves of coaching don't necessarily participate in the workshops and vice versa.

When participation in coaching and workshops is aggregated into a “total participation” variable, the correlation between that variable and a desire to return to the school is 0.34 ($p=.01$). That is, the more intensive a teacher's participation in TD activities, the greater is his or her proclivity to return to that middle school.