

The Quality Teacher and Education Act: First Year Report Executive Summary

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Overview of research

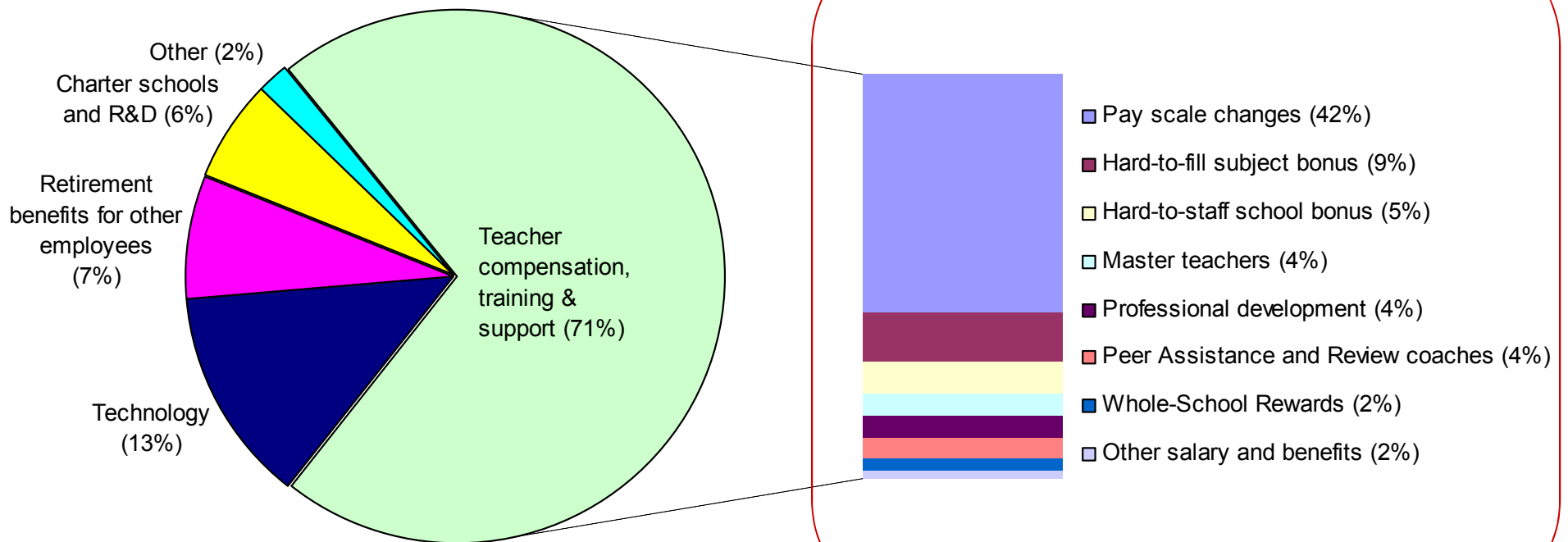
- This report presents findings from the first year of a three-year study on the implementation and effect of the Quality Teacher and Education Act (QTEA) in San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD).
- This study follows a 3-stage analytic process:
 - Document the passage of QTEA*
 - Research QTEA's implementation
 - Evaluate the effect of QTEA
- This report presents findings from the first year of implementation (2009-10).
 - The focus of the research featured in this report is first year implementation, but we also provide a brief overview of implementation in the 2010-11 and 2011-12 school years for reference.

*This phase of the work has been completed. For a case study narrative of the passage of QTEA, see <http://gse.berkeley.edu/research/pace/reports/WP.09-4.pdf>; for a policy brief on the lessons learned from the process, see <http://gse.berkeley.edu/research/pace/reports/PB.09-2.pdf>

The Quality Teacher & Education Act

Proposition A of 2008

- QTEA is a parcel tax passed by San Francisco voters in June 2008 by a 69.8% vote.
- QTEA authorizes the city to collect an annual tax of \$198 per parcel of taxable property for 20 years. **Focus of research**



QTEA changes in 2010-11 & 2011-12

- Some QTEA funds were reapportioned to protect teacher jobs:
 - Funds were used to help fill an estimated shortfall through 2011-12 of \$113 million.
 - Before the agreement to use QTEA funds to fill budget gaps, 811 initial staff layoff notices were sent. However, once the agreement was reached only 195 teachers received final notices.
- Most program elements remain intact:
 - Across-the-board salary increases, hard-to-staff school bonuses, and changes to Peer Assistance and Review were unchanged.
 - Retention and hard-to-fill subject bonuses, the Master Teacher program, and Whole-School Rewards were reduced by half.
 - PD hours were completely reapportioned to save PD cut by the state.
- Postponement of full implementation presents opportunity:
 - As designed, QTEA had no implementation year.
 - Postponement may allow for reflection and program improvement.
 - After being restored, 16 years of QTEA implementation remain.

QTEA implementation through 2011-12

QTEA Element	As Designed	2009-10	Program Changes for 2010-11 & 2011-12
Across-the-board salary increases	Step increases range from \$500 to \$6,300	(No change)	(No change)
Retention bonus	\$2,500 after 4 years \$3,000 after 8 years	(No change)	Reduced by half (\$1,500 after 4 years, \$1,500 after 8 years)
Bonus for teaching in hard-to-fill (HTF) subjects	\$1000 per year	Math, Science, Bilingual, SPED	Reduced by half (\$500 per year); SPED only for incoming teachers
Bonus for teaching in hard-to-staff (HTS) schools	\$2000 per year	25 schools	25 schools; 4 changed
Prop A Professional Development (PD) Hours	18 additional hours per year	(No change)	Reallocated funds to maintain 3 staff PD days
Master Teacher (MT) Program	50 teachers with 0.2 release time	3 full time, 12 "Demonstration", 8 with 0.2 release	Program reduced by half (only "Demonstration" MTs)
Whole-School Rewards	20 schools showing most improvement receive \$30,000	Program not implemented	Program reduced by half; not yet implemented
Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program	Easier entry, harder exit, no re-entry, voluntary participation (more coaches)	(No change)	(No change)

Primary study considerations

- District-level implementation:
 - How were policy elements refined after QTEA's passage?
 - In the first year of implementation, how was QTEA implemented at the district level?
 - Did first year policy implementation serve QTEA's intended goals?
- QTEA in schools:
 - How was QTEA operationalized in schools?
 - Were principals, teachers, and applicants aware of QTEA's changes?
 - Are they satisfied with QTEA's reforms?
- Effect on outcomes:
 - What was QTEA's effect on hypothesized outcomes in this first year of implementation?
- Lessons from first year implementation:
 - What are barriers to QTEA's successful implementation?
 - How can SFUSD improve implementation in upcoming years?

Hypothesized outcomes in the effect of QTEA

	Recruitment	Retention	Voluntary Transfer to HTS schools	Improvement of Entire Workforce	Rehabilitation and Removal of Low-Performing Teachers
I	Salary & Bonuses	X	X	X	
II	Increased PD		X		X
III	Master Teachers		X		X
IV	Whole-School Rewards		X		X
V	Changes to PAR				X

- In the first year, this study will focus on short-term indicators of effectiveness.
 - Teacher and principal reports
- In additional study years, we can investigate effect on long-term indicators.
 - Teacher retention, teacher quality, student achievement

Methodological approach

	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
Analysis of administrative data	X	X	X	X	X
Surveys	X*		X	X	X
Interviews with district staff and stakeholders		X	X	X	X
School case studies			X		

*This survey was conducted by The New Teacher Project (2009); we build on their results in our analyses.

Overall emerging themes

- In a very challenging policy climate, QTEA implementation is off to a good start.
- Despite areas of improvement, indicators are moving in the right direction:
 - Awareness
 - Buy-in and satisfaction
 - Responsiveness
- The salary and bonus elements of QTEA are the easiest to implement (and their effect is most visible).
- Policies designed to improve teaching and teacher quality are the most challenging, but have high potential.

Overview of findings

I. Compensation

- Retention
- Recruitment
- Voluntary Transfer

II. Additional PD hours

III. The Master Teacher Program

IV. Whole-School Rewards

V. Peer Assistance and Review

VI. Conclusions

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Compensation

I. Compensation: District-level policy implementation

- Salary changes were substantial and went into effect immediately and without problems (see table below).
 - For teachers with 1 and 10 years of service, respectively, 2009-10 increases were \$5,798 and \$2,028 (compared to 2007-08)
 - The table below shows how salaries compared to neighboring districts before and after QTEA.
- Hard-to-staff school bonuses (\$2,000), hard-to-fill subject bonuses (\$1,000), and retention bonuses (\$2,500-\$3,000) were more difficult to implement, as data and management systems were not initially well aligned for processing these targeted bonuses.
 - In addition, there was a lack of transparency and agreement on selection of hard-to-staff schools and hard-to-fill subjects.

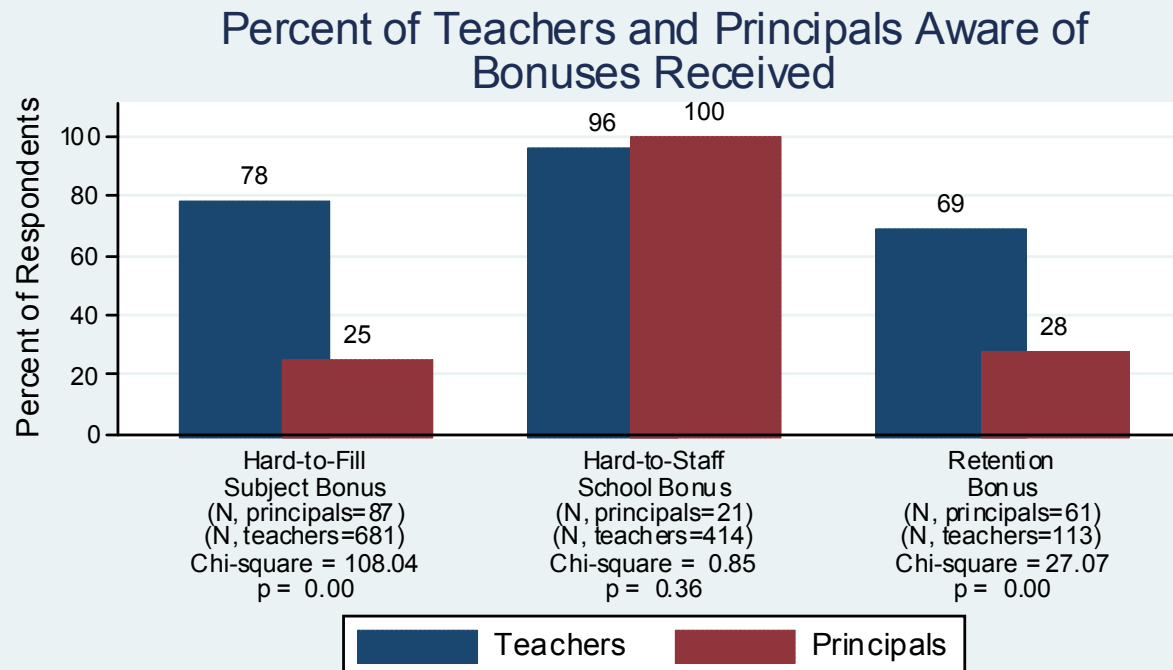
District Name	2007-08		2009-10		% Change	
	Step 1	Step 10	Step 1	Step 10	Step 1	Step 10
San Francisco Unified	\$46,202	\$63,272	\$52,000	\$65,300	13%	3%
Oakland Unified	\$40,733	\$54,328	\$40,733	\$54,328	0%	0%
San Jose Unified	\$48,847	\$71,772	\$48,847	\$71,772	0%	0%
Palo Alto Unified	\$53,683	\$79,863	\$55,025	\$81,860	2%	3%

Source: District Salary Schedules for 2007-08 and 2009-10.

Note: Salary information at both Step 1 and Step 10 is for teachers with a BA plus 60 units of continuing education.

I. Compensation → Retention: QTEA in schools

Reported awareness of QTEA's compensation elements was high, but actual awareness was lower. 74% of principals and 52% of teachers reported being “familiar” with QTEA's compensation elements. However, not all teachers were aware of bonuses *they received*, and awareness among principals was lower.



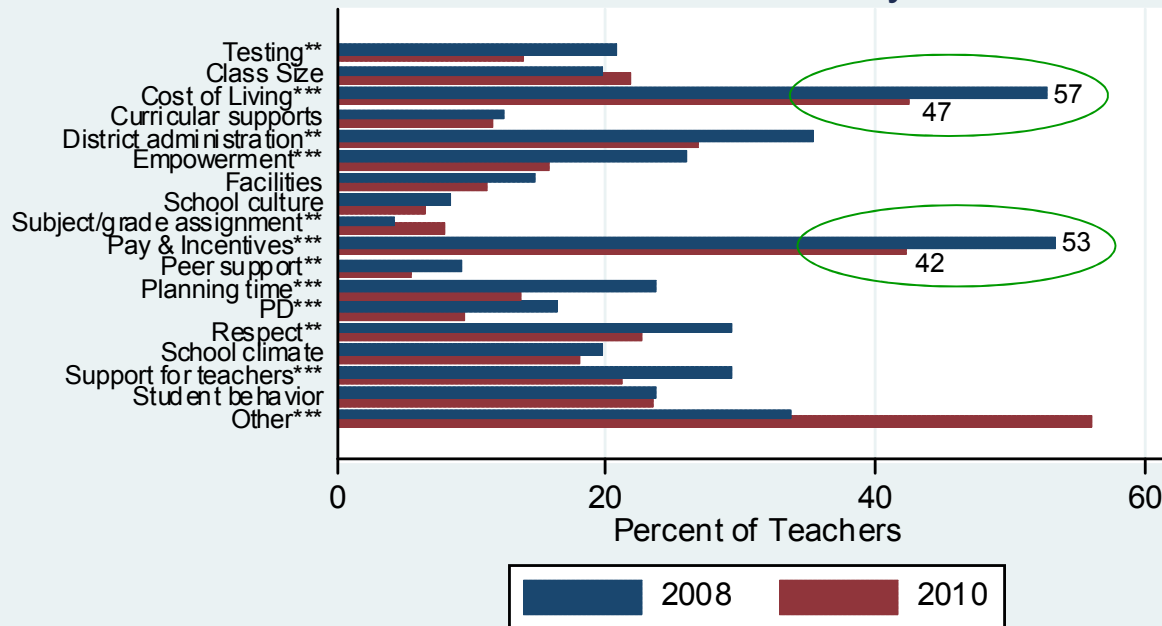
Source:
2010 Stanford Teacher Survey
2010 Stanford Principal Survey
Analysis of SFUSD Administrative Data 2009-10
Note: Only includes teachers who received bonuses and principals with teachers in the school who received bonuses.

Awareness of HTS school bonus was the highest for both principals and teachers (100% and 96%, respectively). Teachers were less aware of HTF subject and retention bonuses, and awareness among principals whose teachers received these bonuses was much lower.

I. Compensation → Retention: Effect on outcomes

In 2008, 40% of teachers reported that they planned to leave in 5 years or fewer; in 2010, this number had decreased to 37%. Of teachers planning to leave in 5 years or fewer, salary was less of a reason in 2010 than in 2008.

Reasons Why Teachers Plan to Leave in 5 Years or Fewer, by Year

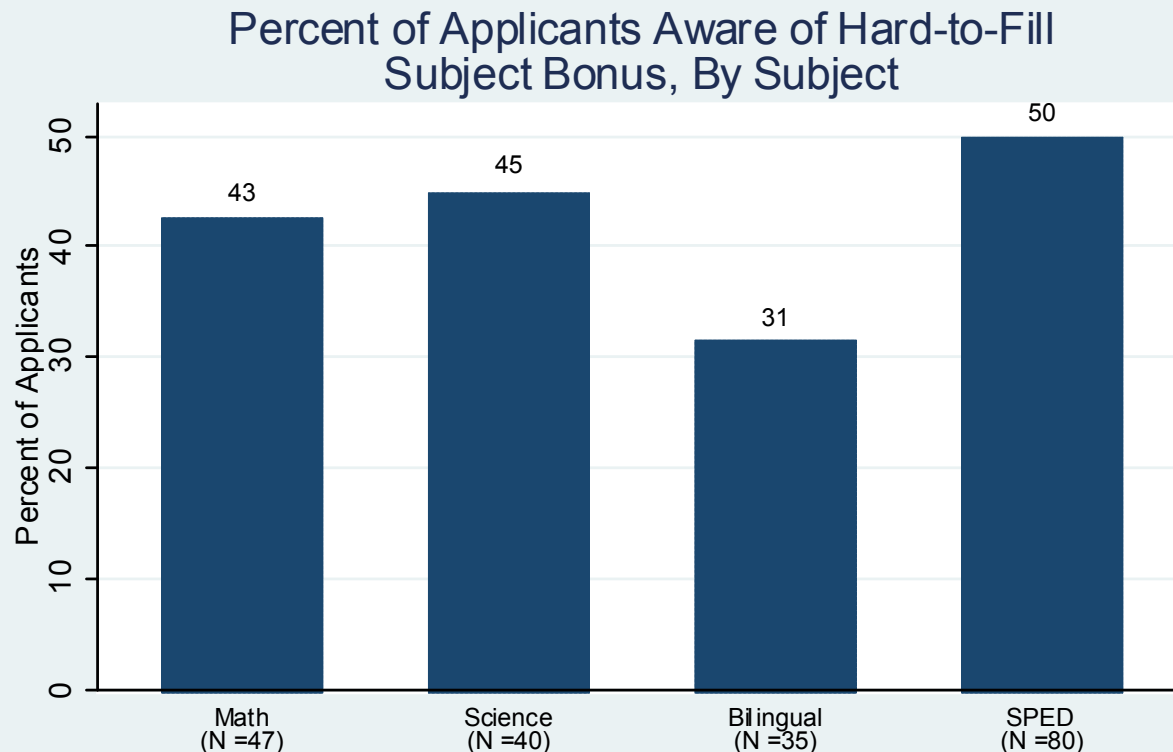


Source:
 2008 TNTP Teacher Survey (N=279)
 2010 Stanford Teacher Survey (N=498)
 ***p<0.01, **p<0.05, *p<0.1
 Note: See Appendix for detail on 'Other'

In 2008 and 2010, teachers planning to leave in five or fewer years were asked why. While “cost of living” and “pay & incentives” remain among the highest responses, fewer teachers in 2010 reported these reasons compared to 2008 (57% vs. 47% and 53% vs. 42%, respectively).

I. Compensation → Recruitment: QTEA in schools

Overall, applicants had limited awareness of QTEA as a policy that increased teacher compensation. Only 29% of applicants post-QTEA reported any familiarity with QTEA. However, applicants were moderately aware of hard-to-fill subject bonuses they *would have* received.

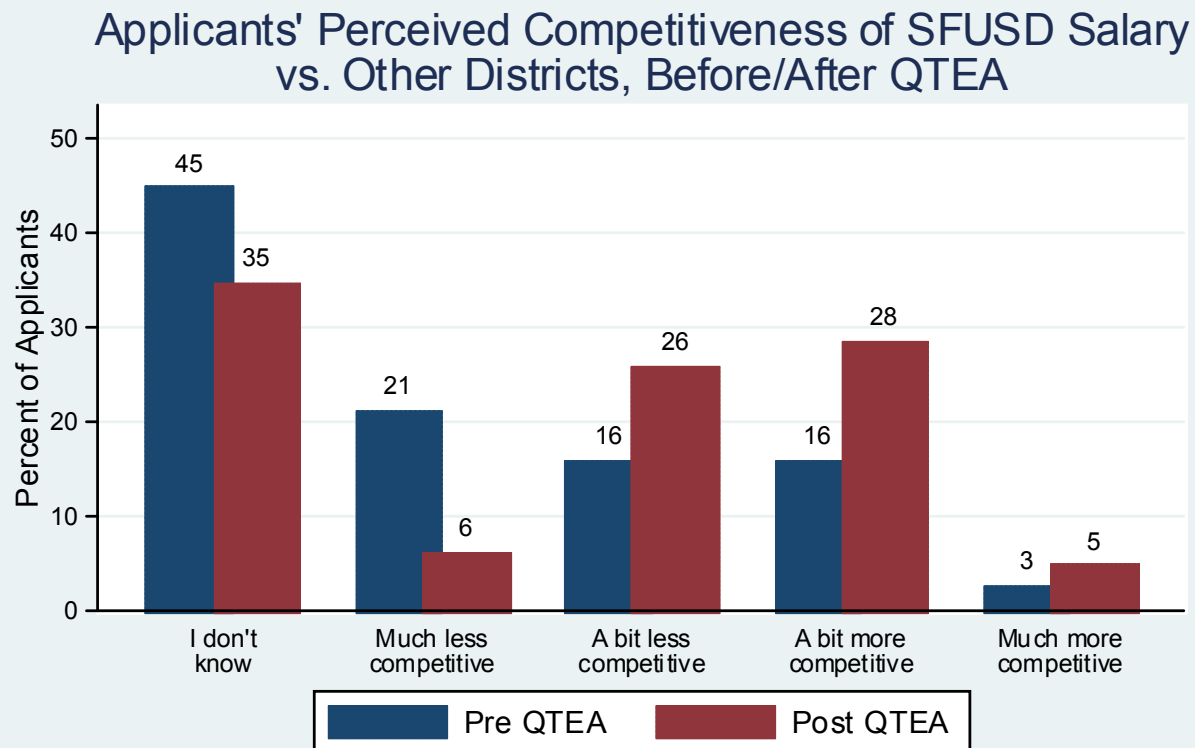


Source: 2010 Stanford Applicant Survey
Note: Only includes applicants post-QTEA in hard-to-fill areas.

44% of applicants in hard-to-fill subjects were aware of this bonus, but awareness varied by subject: 43% of math teachers, 45% of science teachers, 31% of bilingual teachers, and 50% of Special Education teachers were aware.

I. Compensation → Recruitment: Effect on outcomes

Despite their limited awareness of QTEA as a *policy*, prospective teachers who applied post-QTEA reported that salaries were more competitive. This indicates that applicants, while not aware of QTEA by name, are aware of the salary increases it provides.

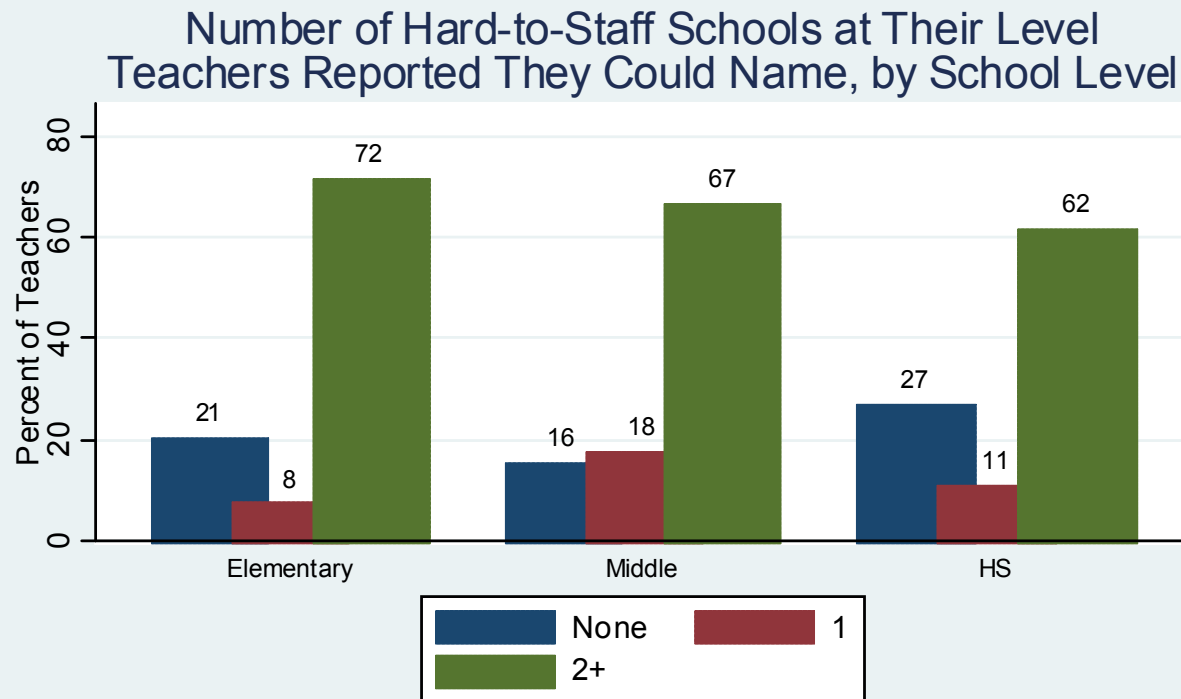


Source: 2010 Stanford Applicant Survey (N=511)
Chi-square = 15.59, p = 0.00

21% of applicants who applied before QTEA reported that salaries were less competitive than other districts, compared to 6% of post-QTEA applicants. Most importantly, only 16% of pre-QTEA applicants reported that salaries were more competitive, compared to 28% post-QTEA.

I. Compensation → Voluntary Transfer: QTEA in schools

One potential goal of QTEA is to encourage teachers in other schools to move to schools identified as “hard-to-staff.” Teachers who were not already in hard-to-staff schools had relatively high awareness of which schools are hard-to-staff.

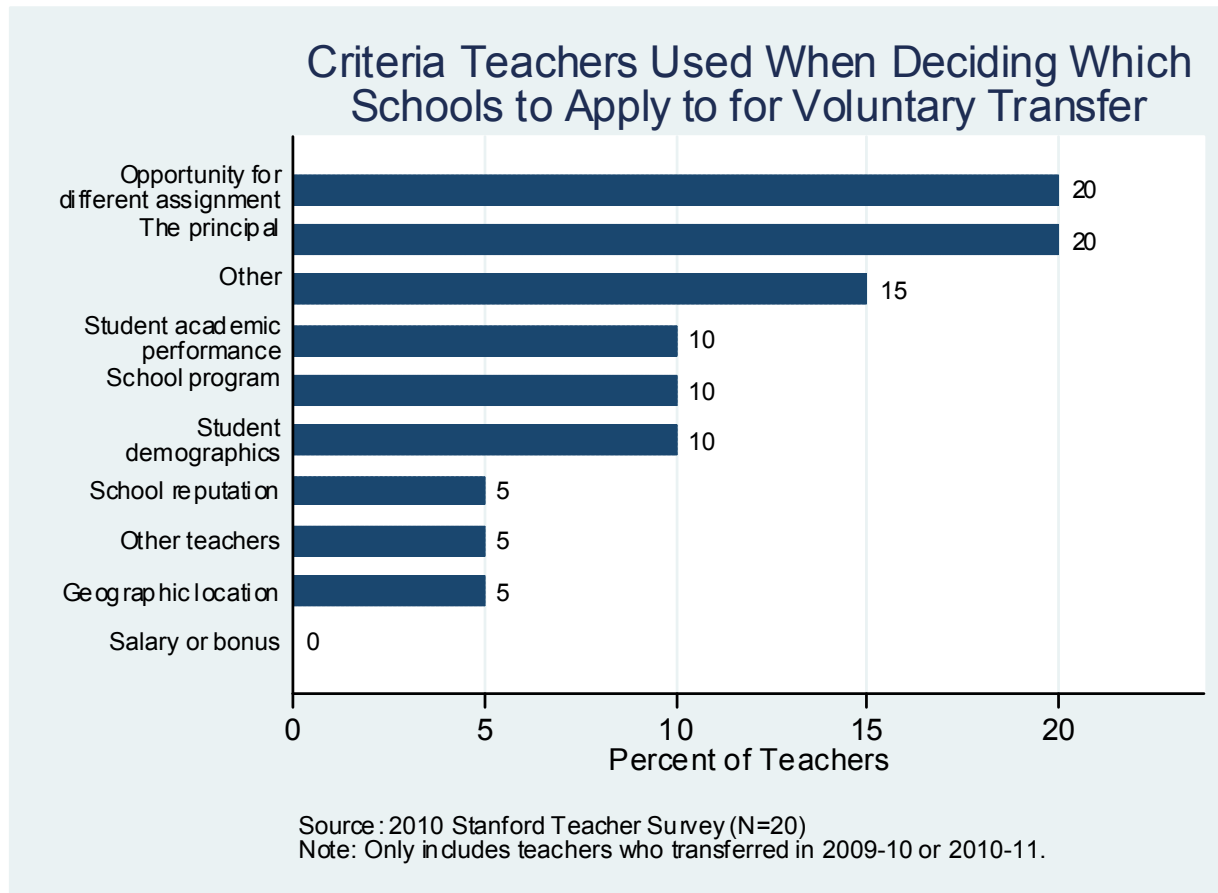


Source:
2010 Stanford Teacher Survey (N=911)
Analysis of SFUSD Administrative Data 2009-10
Chi-square = 20.58, $p = 0.00$

Overall, 22% of teachers could not name any HTS schools. Of the others, teachers in middle school were most familiar (85% could name one or more HTS school) and those in high school were least aware (73% could name one or more).

I. Compensation → Voluntary Transfer: Effect on outcomes

Despite teachers' awareness of hard-to-staff schools, it does not appear that the bonus encouraged transfer to such schools. Transfer to hard-to-staff schools post-QTEA (28%) was not significantly different from the average of the previous 5 years (19%). Of teachers who transferred in 2009-10, none responded that salary and bonus was a consideration in their move.



Of teachers who applied to transfer in the past three years, most report “the opportunity for a different assignment” (20%) and “the principal” (20%) as their top criteria when selecting a new school. Case study reports indicate that teachers are most likely to look for “fit.”

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Prop A Professional Development Hours

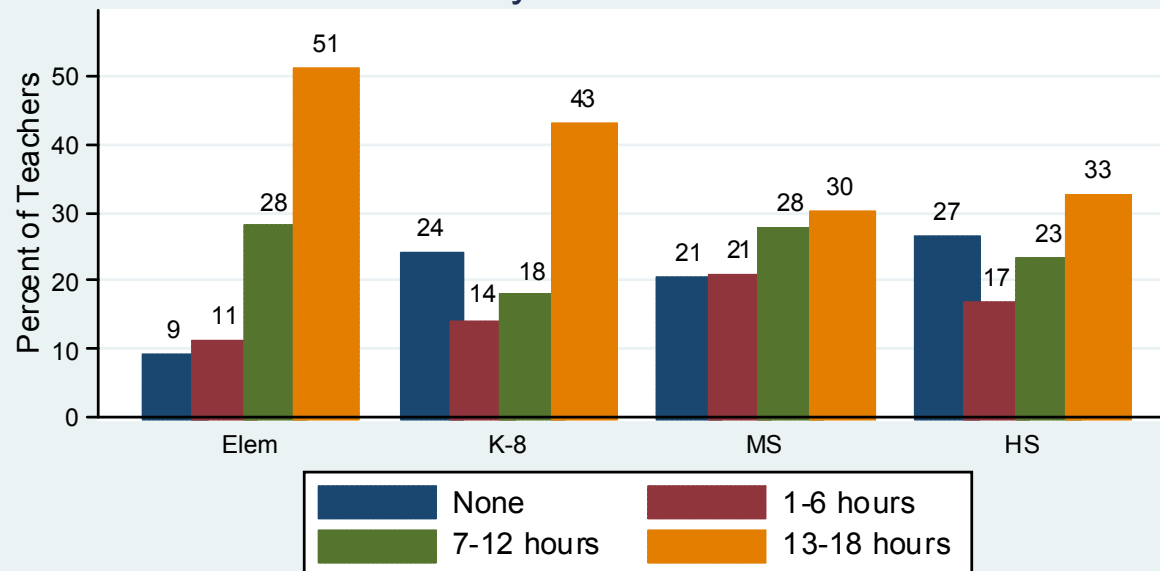
II. Prop A PD Hours: District-level policy implementation

- The original policy offered teachers 18 additional hours of professional development.
- The goal of the additional hours was to provide high-quality PD that was both job embedded and differentiated.
- To this end, as it was implemented, the 18 hours were broken up into three suggested six-hour categories:
 - Equity-Centered Professional Learning Communities (ECPLC)
 - Used at the teacher's discretion.
 - Supporting site's Balanced Scorecard implementation (BSC)
 - Used at the principal's discretion.
 - District initiatives supported by APD and Student Support Services (APD/SSS)
 - Used at the teacher's discretion, but only on district-level professional development.
- The hours were voluntary for teachers to pursue and the three categories were designed to be flexible (not rigid requirements).
- Overall, district stakeholders were positive about the program and believed it could be positive for school improvement.

II. Prop A PD Hours: QTEA in schools

Many principals and teachers were not familiar with the PD categories or which activities counted toward payment for the hours. Perhaps because of this confusion, there was variation in use of the hours. On the survey, 100% of principals and 87% of teachers reported that the Prop A PD hours were available to them, but not all used them.

Number of Prop A PD Hours Teachers Used in 2009-10, By School Level

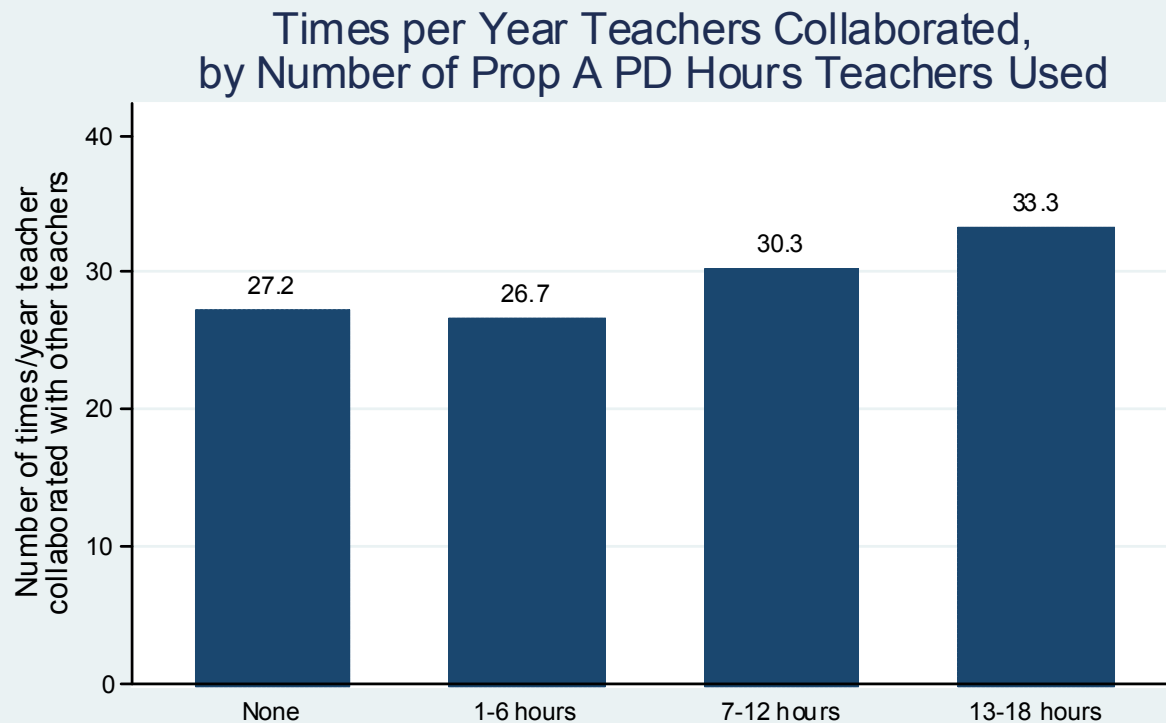


Source:
2010 Stanford Teacher Survey (N=1454)
Analysis of SFUSD Administrative Data 2009-10
Chi-square = 94.08, p = 0.00
Note: Teachers who were not aware of the hours are counted as using none.

Teachers in elementary school were most likely to use most of the hours (51%) compared to only 30% and 33% in middle school and high school (respectively). Overall, 19% of teachers used none of the hours.

II. Prop A PD Hours: Effect on outcomes

Many of the Prop A PD hours were used for offering or extending school-based collaboration activities, which may not have been available to teachers without QTEA. Perhaps as a result, teachers who used Prop A PD hours collaborated more frequently.



Source: 2010 Stanford Teacher Survey (N=1520)

F-test = 11.82, $p < 0.01$

Note: Teachers who were not aware of the hours are counted as using none.

Teachers were asked how frequently they engaged in various collaborative activities. When summing these, we see that teachers who used the majority of the hours collaborated more than those who used none. While we cannot show that this effect is causal, it points toward a possible effect of QTEA on teacher collaboration.

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Master Teacher Program

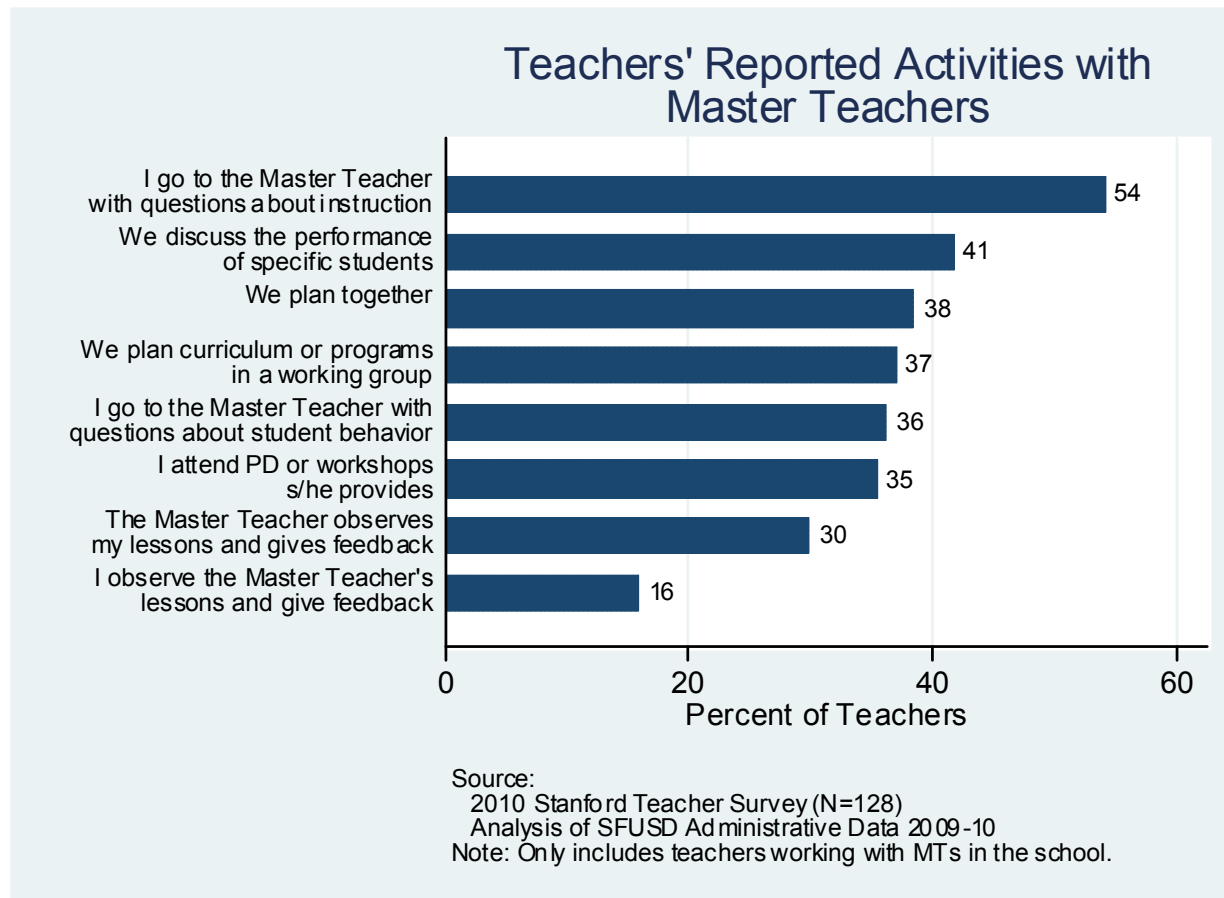
III. Master Teacher Program: District-level policy implementation

- As implemented in 2009-10, the program included full-time release teachers working at multiple sites, 0.2 release teachers, and demonstration teachers.
 - Master Teachers provided support to approximately 200 of their colleagues.
 - Although imagined as a broader program, in the first year, Master Teachers primarily supported new teachers.
- Because of problems with program rollout, selection of Master Teachers was not ideal.
 - Because of a push to roll out in 2009-10, implementation happened fast and late.
 - As a result, some principals resisted having a Master Teacher.
 - Due to a low number and qualifications of applicants, in some cases, the selection of the Master Teachers was not strategic.
 - The program administrators wanted Master Teachers to serve in the hardest-to-staff schools and subjects, but this did not happen.
- Final distribution of Master Teachers:

Type of MT	Hard-to-Staff Schools	Total
No MT	8	79
Full-time MT	11	11
Demonstration MT	2	7
0.2 Release MT	3	6
Demonstration & 0.2 Release MT	1	2
Total	25	105

III. Master Teacher Program: QTEA in schools

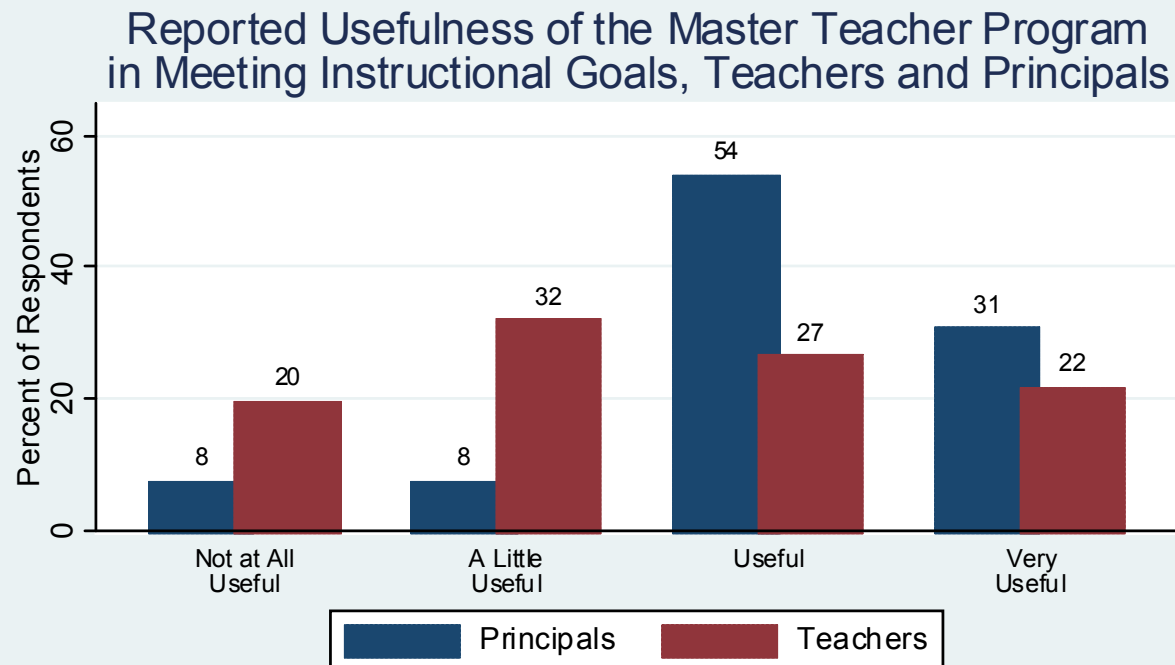
There were some challenges with the enactment of the Master Teacher role in schools. Not all principals were aware of the Master Teacher, the culture in schools was sometimes not welcoming of the Master Teacher role, and Master Teachers themselves struggled with what their new role entailed.



Teachers were asked to report what kinds of things they do with Master Teachers. 54% reported that they go to the MT with questions about instruction or discuss performance of particular students (41%). In fewer cases, teachers observed instruction (16%) or were observed (30%).

III. Master Teacher Program: Effect on outcomes

Most teachers and principals reported that Master Teachers' work was aligned with school goals (66% and 77%, respectively). However, reported usefulness was mixed, especially among teachers. The majority of principals and teachers reported that the Master Teacher was useful, but many teachers reported low usefulness.



Source:
2010 Stanford Teacher Survey (N=128)
2010 Stanford Principal Survey (N=13)
Analysis of SFUSD Administrative Data 2009-10
Chi-square = 6.68, p = 0.08
Note: Only includes teachers working with MTs and principals aware of MTs in the school.

The vast majority of principals (85%) think the Master Teacher was useful in meeting the schools' instructional goals, but fewer teachers reported that the Master Teacher they worked with was useful in helping them meet their *personal* instructional goals (49%).

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Whole-School Rewards

IV. Whole-School Rewards: District-level policy implementation

- The Whole-School Reward program was not implemented in 2009-10.
- There has been a lot of discussion about program design and implementation, but no decisions.
- This policy element lacks a champion:
 - The person responsible for implementation left the district and, due to more pressing priorities, his replacement did not take ownership immediately.
- There is a lack of agreement on program goals:
 - Which metrics should be used to determine the rewards:
 - Metrics discussed include value-added approaches, measures of student engagement and achievement, school climate, participation in clubs, improving the drop-out rate, grade point average, school-specific metrics.
 - Many of the discussed measures would require extensive development and testing to be available for use.
 - Whether rewards should vary by school size or level:
 - \$30,000 can be a lot of money or not very much depending on school size.
 - There was discussion about whether rewards should be decided within school level, or be provided only to targeted schools.
- Due to delayed implementation, there is no awareness of this program at the school sites.

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Peer Assistance and Review

V. Peer Assistance and Review: District-level policy implementation

- PAR is the district's existing mechanism for supporting and removing (if necessary) underperforming teachers.
- There is a general sense among stakeholders that PAR changes may be the most meaningful aspect of QTEA, by increasing teacher support and accountability:
 - Easier entry
 - Teachers can be referred to PAR through “needs improvement” ratings in addition to “unsatisfactory” ratings, enabling more teachers to get support (at a higher performance level).
 - Teachers receiving two “needs improvement” ratings were referred as early as Fall 2009.
 - Harder exit
 - The standard for successful completion after PAR participation was raised, meaning that underperforming teachers may be moved to dismissal more easily.
 - The harder exit provision was implemented starting in 2009-10.
 - No re-entry
 - Teachers who have participated in PAR before (and completed the program successfully) will be moved to dismissal if referred again.
 - This provision only affects teachers who participated in PAR for the first time in or after 2008-09.
 - Voluntary participation
 - Starting in 2009-10, teachers can voluntarily participate in PAR (without the evaluative aspect).
- To support these changes, 2 additional coaches were added (although QTEA provides funding for up to 5).

V. Peer Assistance and Review: QTEA in schools

- Principals report high familiarity with PAR in general, while teachers report lower familiarity (99% vs. 57% respectively report at least some familiarity).
- However, principals' awareness of the changes to PAR is relatively low.
 - Even amongst principals who had referred a teacher to PAR in the last three years, only 31% knew about easier entry, 33% knew about harder exit, and 18% knew about no re-entry.
- How principals and teachers perceive PAR could be related to how they use the program and the potential effect of QTEA's changes.
 - Overall, principals have a much better opinion of PAR than do teachers. However, a majority of both principals and teachers report that there is a stigma associated with participating in PAR (70% vs. 54%, respectively).
- Barriers to principals' effective use of PAR:
 - *Principals do not give low evaluation ratings.* Despite the fact that 89% of principals report having one or more tenured teacher who is not meeting expectations, in the 2008-09 school year, only 0.72% of teachers received an "unsatisfactory" rating, and only 1.90% received "needs improvement."
 - *Principals use PAR for teacher removal, not improvement.* Of principals who have sent teachers to PAR in the past three years, 51% did so primarily to remove this person from the school.
- Barriers to teachers' effective use of PAR:
 - *Teachers do not volunteer to participate in PAR.* Reasons cited include the stigma associated with PAR, fear of being evaluated, a feeling that they do not need additional help (due to consistent high evaluations), and a lack of familiarity with the program.
 - *Teachers are hesitant to refer other teachers.* 58% of teachers report that there are teachers in their school who are "not performing up to a high enough standard." Despite this, only 33% of teachers who report having low-performing teachers in their schools would refer other teachers to PAR, mainly because they feel that evaluating and monitoring other teachers is the administrator's job or because they fear retaliation.

V. Peer Assistance and Review: Effect on outcomes

- Due to PAR changes, more teachers were served in 2009-10.
 - 16 participants received support (as a result of QTEA) who would not have before, indicating a change in teacher and principal willingness to seek help (see circled numbers below).

	2008-09	2009-10
Total caseload (formal referrals)	14	20
Referral in Fall (2 consecutive "Needs Improvement" ratings)	N/A	7
Referral in Spring (2 consecutive "Needs Improvement" ratings)	N/A	2
UBC referral	0	3
Voluntary participation	N/A	7

- As an accountability tool, the effect of PAR remains to be seen.
 - No re-entry
 - In 2009-10, there were 3 participants who had already been in PAR, but they were not affected by QTEA's changes, since only teachers who participated *in or after 2008-09* will be denied reentry.
 - Harder exit
 - In 2009-10, fewer teachers exited meeting standards (10% in 2009-10 compared to 43% in 2008-09).
 - Of those teachers exiting not meeting standards, 60% of teachers in 2009-10 left the district voluntarily, compared to 50% in 2008-09).
 - However, in 2009-10, 15% of teachers exited not meeting standards and went back to the classroom, receiving a 90-day notice to improve (after which point they can be dismissed). As of the release of this report, it remains to be seen what the outcome will be for these three teachers.

	2008-09	2009-10
Repeaters (prior to 2008-09)	0 (0%)	3 (15%)
Successful completion (exited meeting standards)	6 (43%)	2 (10%)
Exited not meeting standards and left district voluntarily	7 (50%)	12 (60%)
Exited not meeting standards still teaching (served a 90-day notice)	1 (7%)	3 (15%)

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Conclusions

District-level implementation

1. Program design in the first year was dynamic.
 - As leaders learned, they made changes to implementation.
 - While this indicates capacity for adaptation, the changing program implementation led to a lack of clarity around some program elements.
2. Limited systems for implementation, alignment, and coordination impacted effectiveness.
 - Dedicated staff and resources could have eased the implementation burden.
3. Policy with “something for everyone” adds strain on the central office, as responsibility is widely distributed.
4. There has been a tension between using QTEA to promote reform vs. using funds to protect jobs and programs that had been cut.
5. Hard-to-implement policy elements are also useful in moving the discussion and behavior in the right direction.

QTEA in schools

1. Teacher and principal awareness

- Information about compensation elements has been the easiest to share.
- Elements aimed at improving teaching are less well understood:
 - Principals and teachers were more unclear about the purpose and use of the Master Teacher program, PD hours, and changes to PAR.

2. Satisfaction and buy-in

- Overall, there is broad support for QTEA's general provisions from school sites.

3. Resource use

- Complex interactions with existing resources and structures affects implementation.
 - For example, PD both supplants and supplements existing programs; 0.2 buy-out for Master Teachers is difficult to implement within school schedules.
- Training on resource use can help improve implementation, satisfaction and buy-in.
 - With more clarity on how to use school site programs (especially Master Teachers and PD hours), principals and teachers may use the resources more efficiently and be more satisfied with their use.

Effect on outcomes

1. QTEA's reforms seem to be moving in the direction of having an effect on the hypothesized outcomes.
 - Preliminary evidence of benefits of QTEA include improvement in applicant and new teacher perception of wages relative to other job opportunities.
2. However, QTEA may not have a *dramatic effect* as designed.
 - Changes to salary and bonus are relatively small.
 - Teaching improvement interventions are diffuse in nature.
 - Changes to teacher accountability via PAR is a slow process.
3. There are barriers that may interfere with QTEA effect:
 - School culture and norms oppose teacher support and accountability.
 - Principals have limited control over teacher staffing.
 - Shifting QTEA resources year-to-year limits potential effects.
4. QTEA can serve as the foundation for larger programmatic and cultural shifts.
 - This first year study has identified barriers to QTEA effects that can be addressed through larger human capital reforms.