

INVESTING IN A PIPELINE OF EFFECTIVE EDUCATORS FOR HIGH-NEED STUDENTS: SUSTAINING AND BRINGING INNOVATION TO TEACH FOR AMERICA’S SUMMER TRAINING INSTITUTES

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Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Proposal

In this Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) proposal, Teach For America (TFA) addresses Absolute Priority 1: supporting practices and strategies for which there is moderate evidence of effectiveness, and Absolute Priority 2: teacher or principal recruitment, selection, and preparation. In addition, this proposal addresses Competitive Preference Priority 1: supporting practices and strategies for which there is strong evidence of effectiveness, Competitive Preference Priority 3: promoting science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, and Competitive Preference Priority 4: supporting high-need students. These preferences are addressed in sections A and B of the proposal.

A. Significance

TFA is a nationally significant, externally validated program that recruits, selects, and trains new teachers, whom we call corps members (CMs), for placement in high-need urban and rural communities across the country, with the expectation that they put their students on the path to college and life success. Since 1990, we have recruited, selected, and trained more than 47,000 new public school teachers for all subject areas and grade levels, and placed them in partner schools and districts serving the country's highest-need students. TFA requests a \$16 million SEED grant to:

- plan, implement, and evaluate TFA's 2015 and 2016 teacher pre-service training efforts, including the cornerstone of these efforts, our summer training institutes
- develop and pilot a scalable version of a next-generation institute model that could enable us to even more effectively prepare our teachers to be highly effective
- support the development and refinement of regional training institutes, in which individual TFA regions design and implement pre-service training grounded in their

local contexts (as opposed to having their corps members (CMs) trained at one of our centralized national institutes, which are designed and implemented by national staff)

- develop and implement pre-service training for our pre-kindergarten CMs that is more geared to the pre-K context than what we have historically provided

A SEED grant will help prepare 4,100 new CMs to begin teaching in Fall 2015 and 4,400 new CMs to begin teaching in Fall 2016, with at least 30% of each cohort teaching STEM subjects.

A.1 – National Significance This project is nationally significant because of its scale and scope, selectivity, diversity, and proven effectiveness.

Scale and scope. TFA is our nation’s largest producer of teachers for high-need schools, and this project will enable us to directly impact the 8,500 new CMs TFA will train in 2015 and 2016. Those CMs will go on to teach all P-12 grade levels and subject areas in high-need public schools in 52 communities in 36 states and Washington, DC—including eleven rural regions.¹ In the schools where we place teachers,² 78% of students receive free or reduced-price lunch.³ Such students are at least 50% more likely to not be proficient in math or reading than non-eligible students.⁴ Approximately 90% of the students in TFA placement schools are students of color.⁵

Selectivity. TFA employs a rigorous, highly selective, and research-based selection process to choose program participants from a large and diverse pool of candidates nationwide.

Rigorous. For almost 25 years, TFA has studied program participants with the greatest success in advancing student achievement. Working with experts from academia, education, and

¹ TFA’s rural regions are: Alabama, Appalachia, Arkansas, Eastern North Carolina, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina Piedmont Triad, Rio Grande Valley, South Carolina, South Dakota, and South Louisiana.

² In the 2013-14 school year, TFA placed teachers in more than 3,200 public schools in over 600 LEAs.

³ Demographic information obtained from greatschools.org and schoolmatters.com. Using these websites, we retrieved demographic information for each school in which we placed teachers during the 2008-09 school year.

⁴ U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Mathematics and Reading Assessments.

⁵ 49% African-American; 34% Hispanic; 3% Asian; 2% Native American; 1% Pacific Islander; 1% Multi-racial.

business, we developed a set of selection criteria based on qualities found to be predictive of successful teaching in low-income communities. To gain admission, applicants must successfully pass through multiple stages of evaluation: submit a written application, participate in a phone interview,⁶ complete an online activity, and engage in an all-day final evaluation comprised of sample teaching, a group activity, and an individual interview--during which TFA staff collect evidence pertaining to each applicant's proficiency level in each of the selection criteria. By linking historical CM scores on those selection criteria with student achievement results, we developed a predictive model that roots each selection decision in what we know about the likelihood of success based on the performance of past CMs. In order to ensure that we execute the model faithfully, we train selectors (differentiated for new and veteran selectors) and include many safeguards to ensure consistency in our admissions decisions--for example, teams of experts audit selection decisions to ensure consistent and fair application of the evaluation criteria. (For more detail on our selection criteria and processes, see Appendix A.)

Competitive. In 2014, 50,000 individuals from all 50 states and more than 850 colleges and universities applied to TFA. After our rigorous selection process, only 15% were accepted. 5,300 matriculated and subsequently completed training as part of our prior SEED project. The quality of the corps is remarkable: CMs have an average undergraduate GPA of 3.43 and the vast majority held leadership positions in their past endeavors.

Supported by Research. Recent third-party studies have found that TFA's selection model successfully identifies teachers who will have a positive impact on student achievement, even in

⁶ Some candidates bypass the phone interview and proceed to the subsequent admissions stages.

their first year of teaching.⁷ These findings are especially significant in light of limited evidence on the factors that predict teacher effectiveness.

Diversity. TFA teachers are diverse. 50% of our 2014 CMs identify as people of color, 47% received Pell Grants as undergraduates (a proxy for being from a low-income background), one-third were the first in their family to attend college, and one-third joined TFA from the professional ranks or from graduate school. Our corps is significantly more racially diverse than traditional teacher education programs, with 22% identifying as African American and 13% as Latino (compared to 6% and 4.2%, respectively, at colleges of education).⁸ While low-income students can be well-served by teachers of all racial backgrounds, increasing the number of CMs who share their students' racial and economic backgrounds can lead to additional impact.⁹

Furthermore, this project will provide high-quality preparation to over 2,500 teachers of STEM subjects, over 80% of whom will be from groups traditionally underrepresented in STEM. 36% of our 2014 CMs teach STEM subjects, and 86% of them identify as being from one or more underrepresented group(s).¹⁰ During the two corps years included in this grant, we aim to maintain a corps in which over 30% of our CMs teach STEM subjects and over 80% of those STEM CMs are from underrepresented groups.

A proven model. A substantial and growing body of research consistently shows that TFA CMs are effective teachers. This is detailed in the “Strong Evidence of Effectiveness” section.

⁷Dobbie, W. (2011). *Teacher Characteristics and Student Achievement: Evidence from Teach For America*. <http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/teachercharacteristicsjuly2011.pdf>

Bastian, Kevin. (2013). *Do Teachers' Non-Cognitive Skills and Traits Predict Effectiveness and Instructional Practice?* Unpublished paper presented at the American Education Finance Policy Conference, New Orleans, LA.

⁸2013 Professional Education Data System (PEDS) Report-American Association of Colleges for Education.

⁹Egalite, A.J., Kisida, B., & Winters, M.A. (2015) Representation in the Classroom: The Effect of Own-Race/Ethnicity Teacher Assignment on Student Achievement. *Economics of Education Review*.

¹⁰ 63% are female, 48% of them are people of color (including 20% African American, 11% Latino or Hispanic, 1% Alaska Native, American Indian or Native Hawaiian), and 43% are Pell Grant recipients.

A.2 – Development and Advancement of Theory, Knowledge, and Practices

By supporting the execution, evolution, and improvement of TFA’s teacher training program, this project will yield new insights, knowledge, and practices that will enrich TFA’s and the field’s understanding of how to prepare new teachers for success in high-need schools.

Institutes, as described in Section B, prepare CMs to teach effectively. As controlled settings where coaches frequently observe and provide significant feedback and instruction to CMs as they work to invest their students and rapidly improve their practice, they also offer a unique opportunity to deepen our understanding of teacher training and student learning. Institutes are a forum for testing and developing new theories, knowledge, and practices as we work to evolve our teacher development model. For example, our last SEED grant enabled us to pilot a major redesign of the institute model at our Chicago regional institute in close partnership with the University of Washington (see section B). Based on the potential we observed, we will use it as a template upon which we might evolve our overall institute model in the future. As part of this project, we will develop and test a scalable version of this approach at a centralized national institute in 2016. Lessons learned from this work will not only inform future TFA trainings and ongoing support structure, but will also be incorporated into future theory, frameworks, and resources that will be developed and shared publicly and across the TFA network.

A fundamental aspect of the redesign is that it will improve and expand the development and use of trainings and resources aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). While our student-facing curriculum across all institutes is aligned to appropriate rigorous standards (CCSS and NGSS in most cases, and state standards in Texas and Oklahoma, which have not adopted Common Core), we will evolve these resources in ways that we believe will make our training even stronger. As part of the redesign, we will

update curriculum (including Institute Student Achievement Toolkits), coaching frameworks, video exemplars, and training protocols for both coaches and teachers. As educators and administrators in states across the country align their curricula and assessments to the CCSS and NGSS, the products and the lessons learned from the scale-up of our pilot efforts would contribute significantly to practical advances in the field, especially for our many school district and university partners nationwide. For more detail about the redesign, see Sections B and C.

Finally, it is worth noting that TFA has a track record of innovative partnerships with schools of education to share, advance, and sometimes co-develop theory, knowledge, and practice related to teacher preparation. (For more about such partnerships, see “Regional Training Institutes” in Section B.1.) This collaborative work will be influenced and informed by the new resources and knowledge developed during this new SEED project.

A.3 – Magnitude of Outcomes

In addition to the scale, scope, selectivity, diversity, proven effectiveness, and capacity to advance the field (described in Sections A.1 and A.2), the magnitude and importance of TFA’s teacher preparation program are further evidenced by our success in meeting some of education’s most intractable challenges, including: (1) producing highly effective teachers for high-need classrooms nationwide; (2) developing our CMs into educational leaders oriented towards achieving dramatic student learning gains; and (3) addressing the effects of summer learning loss for thousands of students in high-need schools across the country through individualized summer school instruction, which is provided by CMs as part of their pre-service training.

Strong evidence of effectiveness. There is substantial literature speaking to the effectiveness, in terms of promoting student achievement, of teachers selected, trained, and supported by TFA—including two studies that meet What Works Clearinghouse standards for

strong evidence without reservations. In September 2013, Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) completed a randomized control trial study commissioned by the Institute for Education Sciences showing that students taught by secondary school math teachers from TFA scored 7.3% of a standard deviation higher than students of other teachers in the same schools who entered teaching via less selective programs, traditional or alternative.¹¹ A 2004 study, also by MPR, found students taught elementary math by novice TFA teachers scored 26% of a standard deviation higher than students of other comparably experienced teachers in the same schools.¹²

A number of additional studies also offer evidence suggesting TFA teachers have a statistically significant, positive impact on student achievement, in a variety of subject areas and grade levels. Notably, a 2015 national study featuring an experimental design found that corps members teaching math and reading in elementary grades, who averaged less than two years of experience, were as effective as other teachers in the same schools, who typically had nearly 14 years of experience. However, when the analysis was restricted to teachers in Pre-K through 2nd grade, students of corps members scored 12 percent of a standard deviation higher on tests of reading skills than their peers taught by other teachers.¹³ Two non-experimental studies using a particularly robust identification strategy (student fixed-effects) found evidence suggesting that TFA teachers are at least as effective, often more, than other teachers to whom their students

¹¹ Clark, Melissa A., Hanley S. Chiang, Tim Silva, Sheena McConnell, Kathy Sonnenfeld, Anastasia Erbe, and Michael Puma. (2013). *The Effectiveness of Secondary Math Teachers from Teach For America and the Teaching Fellows Programs* (NCEE 2013-4015). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education.

¹² Decker, P.T., Mayer, D. P., & Glazerman, S. (June 2004). *The Effects of TFA on Students: Findings from a National Evaluation*. *Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.* p 48

¹³ Clark, M.A., Isenberg, E., Liu, A.Y., Makowsky, L., & Zukiewicz, M. (2015). *Impacts of the Teach For America Investing in Innovation Scape-up*. Princeton, NJ: Mathematica Policy Research.

would likely be assigned in their absence.¹⁴ Numerous other studies have found that TFA teachers have a positive impact on student achievement, and TFA consistently ranks at or near the top (across a wide variety of grade levels and subject areas) among teacher preparation programs in states that compile rankings based on student achievement results.¹⁵

TFA's proven ability to produce teachers who are more likely to positively affect student achievement than other new teachers, and in some cases veteran teachers, indicates that investing in TFA's teacher training program will result in an increased number of effective and highly-effective teachers for high-need students, thus furthering the aims of the SEED program.

A lasting commitment to improving student achievement. TFA teachers have a demonstrated history of affecting student achievement gains in large part because TFA's teacher training program explicitly orients teachers towards achieving dramatic student gains with students in low-income schools each year they are in the classroom. The TFA CM experience, beginning with TFA's summer training institute, is designed to deeply influence the personal and professional lives of CMs during and after their commitment. Although historically only 15% of incoming CMs report that teaching was one of their top career options, nearly two-thirds of them stay in education after completing their commitments, with roughly 60% teaching at least a third year.¹⁶ A 2011 study found that participating in TFA significantly increases tolerance, makes individuals much more optimistic about the life chances of children living in poverty, and makes

¹⁴ Xu, Z., Hannaway, J., Taylor, C. 2011. Making a Difference?: The Effect of Teach for America on Student Performance in High School. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30(3), 447–469. Washington, DC; Ready, Douglas. D. (2014). *Teach For America teachers in Duval County Public Schools: An analysis of retention and performance*. New York, NY: Teachers College, Columbia University.

¹⁵ Patterson, K. M., & Bastian, K. C. (2014). *UNC teacher quality research: Teacher portals effectiveness report*. Chapel Hill, NC: Education Policy Initiative at Carolina; Tennessee Higher Education Commission and the State Board of Education. (2014). *2014 report card on the effectiveness of teacher training programs*. Nashville, TN; Noell, G.H., & Gansle, K.A. (2009). *Teach For America teachers' contribution to student achievement in Louisiana in grades 4-9: 2004-2005 to 2006-2007*. Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana Board of Regents.

¹⁶ Donaldson, M. L., & Johnson, S. M. (2011). *Teach For America teachers: How long do they teach? why do they leave?* *Phi Delta Kappan*, 93(2), 47-51.

them more likely to remain in education.¹⁷ TFA alumni teach, become school and district leaders, work in education-related non-profits, and take on other leadership roles in education. An investment of SEED funding will strengthen our teacher training program, thus better positioning these future leaders to advance our nation toward the day when all children have access to a high quality education. (See Sections B.2 and D.1 for additional information.)

Addressing summer learning loss. Summer learning loss is a well-documented occurrence, particularly for children from low-income backgrounds. A 1996 meta-analysis found that summer school programs characterized by individualized instruction for students and close monitoring of progress were associated with greater effectiveness.¹⁸ As a key component of their institute program, CMs receive intensive pedagogical and content instruction that they put into practice with summer school students. Institute is structured to provide students with individual instruction, close monitoring, and constant tracking of student academic progress.

B. Quality of the Project Design and Services

B.1 – Project Design, Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes

The proposed SEED project would enable TFA to plan, implement, and evaluate 15 summer training institutes in 2015 and an estimated 16 in 2016, preparing a total of 8,500 incoming CMs to enter high-need classrooms. This project also enables TFA to increase the rigor and relevance of CM training by supporting a fundamental redesign of our core national institute model, developing and refining regional institutes, and offering enhanced ECE training.

The following table summarizes the key objectives, measures, and quantitative goals associated with the project, including the percentage of teachers trained through this project who

¹⁷ Fryer, Roland G., Jr. and Dobbie, Will. Harvard University. “The Impact of Voluntary Service on Future Outcomes: Evidence from Teach For America.” September 2011.

¹⁸ Cooper, H., Nye, B., Charlton, K., Lindsay, J., & Greathouse, S. (1996). The effects of summer vacation on achievement test scores: A narrative and meta-analytic review. *Review of Educational Research*, 66, 227-268.

demonstrate evidence of being highly effective first year teachers during the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Below the table, we describe exactly what each of these initiatives will entail.

Table 1 – Project Objectives, Measures, and Goals

Plan, implement, and evaluate summer training institutes (both national and regional)		
Objective	Measures	Goals¹⁹
Implement summer institutes to prepare and retain first year corps members to teach in low-income communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● # of institutes ● # of first year corps members ● % of corps members that begin institute who become first year teachers ● % of trained CMs who teach STEM subjects ● % of STEM CMs who are from underrepresented groups -- i.e., who identify as female, African American, Latino, or being from a low-income background 	2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 15 institutes ● 4,100 corps members ● 95% retention rate ● 30% STEM CMs ● 80% of STEM CMs underrepresented 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 16 institutes ● 4,400 corps members ● 95% retention rate ● 30% STEM CMs ● 80% of STEM CMs underrepresented
Corps members develop the knowledge, skills, and mindsets needed to be effective beginning teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● % of corps members leading summer school classrooms with demonstrated cultures of achievement (CoA) ● % of corps members with summer school classrooms with demonstrated engagement with rigorous content (EwRC) during institute 	2015 Corps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 75% demonstrate CoA ● 75% demonstrate EwRC 2016 Corps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 76% demonstrate CoA ● 76% demonstrate EwRC
Evaluate teacher performance and identify the percentage of highly effective teachers, according to student growth ²⁰	% of trained CMs who serve concentrations of high-need students and are “highly effective” in their first year of teaching	2015-16: 30% 2016-17: 31%
	% of trained CMs who serve concentrations of high-need students & are highly effective or effective in their first year of teaching	2015-16: 70% 2016-17: 71%
	% of trained CMs who serve concentrations of high-need students and are highly effective in their second year of teaching	2016-17: 35%
	% of trained CMs who serve concentrations of high-need students & are highly effective or effective in their second year of teaching	2016-17: 75%

¹⁹ These goals are inclusive of all corps members; they do not distinguish between corps members trained at national or regional training institutes.

²⁰ Goals listed here represent the percent of highly effective and effective CMs out of the set of CMs for whom we are able to obtain sufficient student achievement data. Our goal is to have sufficient data for at least 85% of our corps. In 2010-11, analysis showed that the CMs for whom we had data were representative of the corps overall.

SEED program performance measures	% of teacher participants who serve concentrations of high-need students	2015: 100% 2016: 100%
	% of participants who serve concentrations of high-need students, are highly effective, and serve for at least two years	TBD pending guidance from ED in response to current TFA inquiry
	Cost per participant who serves concentrations of high-need students, is highly effective & serves for at least 2 years	TBD once definition for previous metric is clarified by ED
Design, plan, implement, and evaluate regional training institutes		
Objective	Measures	Goals
Support development and testing of regional institute pilots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of regions with regional training institute # of corps members participating in regional training institutes 	2015: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9 regional institutes 1,000 corps members 2016: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 10 regional institutes 1,100 corps members
Evaluate impact of regional institute pilots on corps strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> % average corps member and alumni learning index (CALI) score for regional institute pilots as compared with national institutes 	2015 - Regional institute CALI exceeds national institute CALI by 1% 2016 - Regional institute CALI exceeds national institute CALI by 2%
Pilot and refine scalable, redesigned national institute model		
Objective	Measures	Goals
Redesign our institute model to better prepare CMs to be effective teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of national institutes at which we pilot the redesigned model # of CMs trained in redesigned institute model 	2015 - 0 national institutes 2016 - 1 national institute 2015 - 0 CMs 2016 - 150 CMs
Rigorously evaluate impact of redesigned model	MDRC completes evaluation report (see Section E)	Report complete and publicly available in May 2018
Enhance pre-service early childhood education (ECE) training		
Support enhanced training for ECE teachers	% of ECE CMs who receive enhanced ECE training	2015 - 40% 2016 - 50%

Summer Training Institutes: After successfully completing a rigorous selection process, but before being placed as teachers in high-need schools across the country, TFA corps members (CMs) must complete an intensive, experiential, and outcome-oriented teacher training program. This program currently spans five to eight weeks (there is some variation between regional

institute pilots) and the majority of participants are on the path to becoming effective first year teachers at the end of the training program, as evidenced by the studies described in Section A.

TFA runs two types of institutes: (1) national institutes, where we bring together CMs from several different regions and provide centralized training and (2) regional institutes, where we train a single region's CMs. All 2015 regional and national institutes are listed in Appendix B.

The majority of our CMs attend one of six national institutes. Those CMs participate in four distinct components of TFA's training program: (1) Institute Pre-Work -- Once accepted into TFA, CMs receive over 40 hours of TFA-designed pre-work comprised of readings, classroom observations, reflection exercises, and practical skill mastery designed to ensure that CMs are able to maximize their upcoming training experience; (2) Induction - prior to attending a national institute, TFA CMs spend up to a week living in and learning about the communities in which they will teach; (3) Institute – CMs attend a rigorous, five-week, residential training institute to prepare them to teach in low-income schools; (4) Orientation – CMs return to their regions and, building on their institute training, prepare for the upcoming academic year and begin building relationships with colleagues, families, and students, with support from regional staff. With these elements established, TFA CMs are prepared to move their students forward on the first day of the school year. For CMs training at our regional institutes, induction, institute, and orientation are not discrete elements, but are woven into a cohesive seven or eight week training experience. This SEED grant focuses on the institute experience.

The two main components of institute are teaching summer school and participating in ongoing cycles of professional development.

Summer school teaching. Teaching in summer school classrooms provides CMs with an authentic teaching environment similar to the classrooms in which they will teach independently

in the fall. CMs work collaboratively in teams of two to four to lead an entire class to master academic content (taking turns teaching and engaging in team teaching), while building their own skills in implementing lessons that support rigorous student thinking, building trusting relationships with students, and developing a strong classroom culture.

All CMs receive an Institute Student Achievement Toolkit (ISAT) that contains a set of essential performance-support tools to help CMs prepare lessons that support students' academic growth during the summer. ISATs are aligned with appropriate standards; they are grade- and content-area specific; and they include goals for student achievement in summer school, a unit plan or guidance on creating a unit plan, diagnostic and final assessments with answer keys, tools to track student performance, and sample lesson plans or instructional activities.

CMs are closely supervised and regularly observed by TFA staff members (called Corps Member Advisors (CMAs) at national institutes and often simply called "coaches" at regional institutes). CMAs observe each CM several times a week and provide feedback to develop pedagogical knowledge and skills. Veteran teachers from local public schools monitor CMs working with students, and provide regular feedback throughout the summer.

CMs gain extensive practice in lesson preparation, and their plans are reviewed by TFA staff. Additionally, CMs meet in small groups to practice teaching lessons, problem-solve around classroom management dilemmas, discuss feedback they received, and analyze student progress. CMs leave these small group sessions with clear direction used to improve their teaching.

Observation and feedback is guided by TFA's Teaching As Leadership (TAL) Framework (Appendix C) and the TAL Impact Model. TAL distills 25 years of observation in thousands of classrooms into six general principles that characterize outstanding teachers: setting big goals, investing students and others, planning purposefully, executing effectively, continuously

increasing effectiveness, and working relentlessly. The TAL Impact Model outlines key teacher mindsets (see Table 2 and Appendix D) as well as student actions, behaviors, and outcomes that should be observable when CMs are embodying the TAL principles. CMAs observe CM and student actions and behaviors to determine CM impact and effectiveness. Some regional institutes also utilize local teacher evaluation frameworks as a way to ground feedback in the local context.

Teacher training sessions. The TAL Framework also shapes the teacher training sessions of institute. Institute coursework is designed to help CMs establish a vision for their summer school classes and learn essential teaching frameworks, curricula, and skills. Curriculum topics include instructional planning and delivery; classroom management and culture; literacy development; and strategies for promoting diversity, community, and achievement.

The entirety of our pre-service training is geared toward developing the following key mindsets, skills, and knowledge, which we believe prepare CMs to be successful teachers:

Table 2. Key Mindsets, Knowledge and Skills Developed by TFA Pre-service Training

Mindsets	Knowledge and Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Goal-oriented planning is critical to successful instruction ● Classroom culture in which students are passionate, urgent, and joyful is important to my students’ academic success ● Holding high expectations – academic and behavioral – for all students is critical ● I am responsible for my students’ success ● I feel a true connection with and caring for students and their families ● Examining the internalized archetypes and biases that influence my judgments is an important practice for effective teaching ● I cannot teach students content if I do not see them and their families and home cultures through an asset-based lens 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Able to design content, processes, and products to support student learning ● Able to use data to inform instruction ● Able to communicate and maintain high expectations for behavior ● Able to differentiate instruction ● Able to invest students in goals and vision for academic and personal growth, academic content, etc. ● Able to continuously improve through disciplined reflection based on data ● Pedagogical knowledge ● Understand how to help students develop strong belief in their own abilities (“I can”) and a strong desire to pursue academic and personal growth (“I want”)

While the primary framework and components of our pre-service training remain consistent year over year, we continuously strive to increase quality as we learn more about what is useful (through both qualitative and quantitative feedback), as we refine our understanding of effective teaching and learning, and as the external landscape changes. While this project primarily supports the design and implementation of our full ecosystem of institutes, we will also pursue three sub-priority initiatives as part of this SEED project: (1) piloting and refining a scalable national institute version of the redesign we piloted in our last SEED project, (2) supporting the development, implementation, and refinement of regional training institutes (both existing and new), and (3) enhancing training for early childhood educators.

Developing a Scalable, Redesigned Institute Model. The last major at-scale evolution of our national institutes happened in 2006, when we redesigned almost all Curriculum Specialist sessions, standardized the CMA role, structured and aligned the observation-debrief cycle to the coaching models used by regional staff during the school year, and developed mechanisms to allow for differentiated professional development to CMs based on individual need.

We later evolved the model in a few different ways. We overhauled classroom management training, increased the rigor of ISAT student curriculum, and revised the Diversity, Community, and Achievement (DCA) curriculum. We also piloted more substantial changes to the model, such as content-area pilots and changes to staffing structures. These pilots helped us learn promising lessons about what an even more effective institute might look like, and we are ready to commit to a substantial effort to begin a serious whole-scale evolution of our national institutes—to make our strong model even better.

With the support of SEED, our Design team, our Chicago region, and the University of Washington partnered to redesign our institute model and pilot a new approach in 2014. We

worked closely with the University of Washington to test their Learning Cycle in the institute context. The Learning Cycle (Appendix E) contains embedded scaffolds for teacher learning, so that CMs learn to teach a content-specific instructional activity by seeing it modeled, by acting as learners, or by watching video representations; by planning and rehearsing that activity with their peers in a supported context; by enacting it with students; and by reflecting upon their enactment through analysis of video footage or student work.²¹ This approach integrated all of the elements of teaching (classroom management, delivering instruction, etc.) rather than teaching each element discretely. The model also included more group learning and feedback than our traditional model. The following table describes the major differences between the models.

Table 3. How the 2014 Redesigned Institute Differed from Traditional Institute Model

Design Feature	How different from our traditional model?
Orientation to Content	Training teachers <i>through</i> their content and helping them incorporate general and content-specific knowledge and pedagogy.
Lesson Design	Teaching instructional activities, complete “plays” that maintain the intellectual rigor and complexity of the act of teaching--and make ambitious teaching feasible for novices. Instruction and classroom culture integrated.
Corps Member Scope & Sequence	The University of Washington’s (UW’s) Learning Cycle with embedded scaffolds for learning. Includes modeling, rehearsal, teaching, and reflection. As a result, CM learning takes place within the practice of their summer teaching, as opposed to learning best practices of teaching in sessions and then having to apply those to their summer teaching with independence.
Coaching	Primarily group-based. Teaching is a very public practice where CMs film themselves daily and CM groups study practice via video with a coach – focusing on areas of common need.
Social Justice & Equity	Focus on justice in practice via daily seminars. Provide space for reflection on diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice separate from practice.
Staffing Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Staff are trained as learners (e.g. they must go into classrooms and implement what they learn and then bring video back for group reflection) ● 100% of institute coaches were full-time Chicago staff who coach/professionally develop CMs during the academic year. ● 100% of Lead Teacher Educators (combination of curriculum and content specialists) were sourced from the UW or from TFA’s Teacher Preparation, Support and Development Design team.

²¹ McDonald, M., Kazemi, E., & Kavanagh, S. S. (2013). Core Practices and Pedagogies of Teacher Education A Call for a Common Language and Collective Activity. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 64(5), 378-386.

Curriculum	Less breadth, but more depth. Representative of pedagogical shifts required by Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards.
Technology	Features include video and lesson sharing tools.

The Chicago regional pilot showed tremendous promise.²² TFA staff conducting observations during the pilot noted that The Learning Cycle and training pedagogies resulted in significant “transfer”—i.e., CMs “taking up” what they learned and applying it to their classrooms, resulting in more effective teaching and stronger student engagement with more rigorous and meaningful content. The Chicago institute culture focused on putting CM practice and examination of student actions and learning at the center of the institute experience. This resulted in students spending more time on task, reporting a greater sense that what they were learning was relevant, and stronger classroom culture. Using content-specific instructional activities as the “vessel” through which CMs learned to teach in sufficiently complex ways allowed novices to implement more CCSS and NGSS aligned pedagogy (as opposed to practices like rote drill or direct instruction) with success. In addition, we infused into the training UW’s idea of “core practices”—bigger-picture, cross-content purposes behind any particular instructional activity—which allowed CMs to connect the small to the big. This better positioned them to apply what they know to other content areas or grades in the future.

This pilot relied heavily upon expert staffing from UW and our national TPSD Design team for key instructional positions, which renders scale-up unfeasible. Through this SEED grant, we will be able to take the valuable lessons we learned and apply them to the national institute context in order to test the degree to which we can build a model that gets results for CMs and is scalable—the key test being whether we can sustainably build the knowledge and skill of

²² TFA will publicly release the evaluation report for our previous SEED grant in September 2015. That evaluation, conducted by our TPSD Strategy team in collaboration with our TPSD Design team, includes an evaluation of the redesigned model piloted at our 2014 Chicago regional institute.

institute staff to educate and support CMs in this model. The grant will enable us to develop a scalable version of the redesigned institute over the next year and then pilot it with 150 CMs at one of our national institutes in 2016, and to rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of this pilot.

Although our student-facing and CM-facing curriculum at all institutes is aligned to rigorous standards, the redesigned institute model seeks to evolve teaching pedagogies in ways that will help CMs more quickly learn how to instruct students in ways that facilitate the student learning required by CCSS and NGSS. As part of our 2014 pilot in Chicago, we designed and piloted this next-generation training model for CMs assigned to teach grades 3-5 (both math and literacy), 7-10th grade ELA, Pre-Algebra, Algebra 1, Biology, and Chemistry. In all of these grade and subject areas, we overhauled ISATs, implemented new and/or revamped training sessions and learning experiences with staff who were experts in content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and teacher education pedagogies, and utilized video and lab classrooms (in which expert teachers modeled and co-taught) to facilitate CM learning.

As part of our 2016 national institute redesign pilot, we will refine and build upon the revamped CCSS- and NGSS-aligned trainings developed as part of our previous SEED grant. We will design and implement revamped CCSS- and NGSS-aligned training for 12-15 additional grades/subjects.²³ For each of these grade/subject combinations, we will develop:

- Overhauled ISATs: Improved CCSS- and NGSS-aligned ISAT resources (i.e. goals for student achievement in summer school, unit plans, assessments, tools to track student performance, and sample lesson plans). ISAT resources will be expanded to include CCSS- and NGSS-aligned lesson plans and materials for all objectives.

²³ Grades K-2 math and literacy, 4-6 additional secondary math and ELA grade levels/courses, 2-3 secondary science courses.

- New and Revamped Training Sessions and Learning Experiences: New content-specific training sessions will be designed around the revised and expanded ISAT resources. Additionally, our revamped content-specific training is rooted in The Learning Cycle. This approach includes research-based pedagogies such as modeling, planning/rehearsal, enactment and reflection. E.g., CMs are first led through the process of internalizing and successfully executing quality plans before being asked to create their own lesson plans.
- Live Expert Modeling and Video: In order to model exceptional teaching, demonstrate high expectations, and reinforce quality execution, we will use video and live modeling by experts steeped in CCSS and NGSS.
- A Scope and Sequence for Training Staff to Effectively Teach and Coach CMs Using the New Model. Teacher Leadership Development (TLD) staff from participating regions will participate in extensive professional development activities from fall 2015 through the end of the project period. In the early fall of 2015, they will begin to learn the new approach to teaching/coaching CMs by attending a teacher educator institute designed/delivered by experts on this approach. Throughout the 2015-16 school year, TLD teams will engage in an ongoing professional learning community (largely remote, and designed and led by experts on this approach) that will build their knowledge and skill in coaching/teacher education that aligns with the pedagogies that form the basis of the pilot model. Some of these regional staff members will then work as teacher educators at the 2016 institute where the redesign is piloted. During the 2016-17 school year, these trained teacher educators will use this framework/approach in their ongoing coaching of CMs, with attention to reinforcement of aspects of summer training deemed most crucial to effective early practice.

Regional Training Institutes. Until 2013, TFA institutes were designed and managed entirely by the national team, serving several cohorts of CMs trained to teach in low-income communities across multiple states and regions. With the support of our previous SEED grant, we piloted “regional institutes,” in which individual TFA regions trained only the CMs assigned to teach in their community. In 2013, two regions operated regional institutes. Based on the success and promise of those pilots, in 2014 seven regions trained over 1,000 CMs at regional institutes. We found that this model led to improvements in corps culture and cohesion, greater CM understanding of their placement community and teaching context earlier in their training experience (thereby accelerating their readiness for teaching), and stronger relationships with regional partners such as local LEAs, universities, and community organizations, all of which ultimately benefit students. Partnerships enabled by regional institutes include:

- The Nashville Regional Institute partners with Dr. Donna Ford at Vanderbilt University and with our national Design team to pilot a Leadership, Diversity, and Community Curriculum in which CMs engage in an experience that includes: 1) engagement with theory; 2) an experiential week-long “justice journey” that immerses CMs in Nashville’s history and civil rights experience; 3) recurring group discussions that center on race, class, identity, and on developing CMs’ self-reflection skills; and 4) ongoing support of specialists that enable CMs to connect theory and experiences to their classroom practice.
- The Massachusetts Regional Institute partners with Boston University (BU) on a training curriculum for CMs teaching local English language learners. The course was designed in alignment with state-specific credentialing/licensure requirements, enabling CMs to get an advanced start on their in-service coursework during pre-service. This partnership began in 2014 and will continue in 2015 and 2016.

- The Dallas-Fort Worth region partners with Momentous Institute to create classroom culture and management training for CMs grounded in Momentous Institute's years of research and development in social and emotional learning for students in low-income communities. In addition, the region partners with Southern Methodist University (SMU) to develop teacher reflective practice spaces facilitated by faculty members from their school of education. Working in partnership with TFA teacher coaches, SMU faculty will facilitate discussion of CMs' reflections on their summer teaching to link outcomes with classroom analysis of causes and solutions for improved teaching.

With the support of this SEED grant, we will continue to open regional institutes in 2015 and 2016, expanding to nine in 2015 (with new regional institutes launching in the Bay Area and Dallas-Fort Worth) and ten in 2016. By design, no two regional institutes will look the same, as one goal of this approach is to provide regions with the autonomy and flexibility to develop a model that is uniquely tailored to the local context. However, all regional institutes will share the following critical foundational elements that underpin our national teacher preparation model:

- At least 30-35 hours of pre-institute work, followed by a seven-to-eight week intensive teacher training institute;
- CMs teach summer school students under the supervision of TFA staff and a veteran local teacher, who provide feedback and coaching and help ensure quality performance;
- CMs attend course seminars and workshops to build and apply knowledge, and have time for reflecting, reviewing student work, planning, and practicing new skills; and
- Training curriculum is grounded in TAL and the rigorous standards that are most relevant locally (in most cases, CCSS and NGSS), and designed to integrate seamlessly into the overall TFA program model.

At the same time, regional institutes will differ from national institutes in the following ways:

Table 4. How Regional Institutes Differ from National Institutes

Participants	All participants in the regional institute will teach in that same region when the school year begins.
Partnerships	Regional leadership is responsible for developing and executing strong partnerships with the local host university and the school(s)/school district(s) where participants will teach summer school.
Vision and Design	Host regions are responsible for developing a clear vision for a regional summer training institute that is grounded in the local community context and aspirations for students and schools. Regions also ensure delivery of an instructional program that builds on proven practices while making adaptations that fully integrate training with the two years of ongoing support and equips CMs to teach and lead effectively in their schools and communities.
Staffing and Execution	Host regions are responsible for developing and executing a staffing model and operational plan to deliver the highest quality training experience.

Participating regions are responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating their regional training institute with significant guidance, support, and resources from the national Design and Institute Operations teams. The Regional Operations team will manage each region to ensure strong execution of regional institutes, as described in Section C.

Enhancing Training for Early Childhood Educators. Since 2011, we have tested strategies for improving pre-service training for TFA CMs assigned to teach pre-kindergarten, and we have developed a training model that has yielded promising results: students have shown growth in early writing skills, phonics, reading/listening comprehension, vocabulary, and math.

Our ECE student curriculum is aligned to Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives (which are aligned to rigorous state standards) and the pedagogy is based on prominent research in the ECE field and in collaboration with the Rollins Center for Language & Learning at Atlanta Speech School. Other key elements of our ECE-specific training include: (1) a focus on ECE content blocks: read aloud, opening & closing circle, small groups, phonological and phonemic awareness, centers, conversations; (2) CMs learn a differentiated approach to classroom

management using *How to Talk So Kids Will Listen* and Conscious Discipline approach; (3) CMs learn how to give performance assessments and take anecdotal records; and (4) CMs learn to teach in pairs to simulate the typical early childhood co-teaching relationship. Through this grant, we will offer this training to more early childhood educators at our institutes, offering it to 40% of our pre-K CMs in 2015 and 50% in 2016.

B.2 – Comprehensive Effort

TFA program as a comprehensive effort. Alongside many other organizations, TFA is growing the movement of effective teachers and leaders working to ensure that students growing up in poverty receive an excellent, academically rigorous education. We pursue this mission by recruiting and selecting outstanding college graduates and professionals who commit to teach at least two years in low-income schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to expand educational equity. We then train these CMs at our institutes, place them in full-time teaching positions in high-need schools, and provide intensive coaching, support, and professional development to CMs throughout their two years as CMs. After those two years, we offer additional resources and trainings to our alumni, including those who remain classroom teachers or pursue school and school systems leadership positions, in support of our mission. This comprehensive approach improves teaching and learning, and supports rigorous academic standards through the development and work of TFA CMs and alumni.

TFA expands the pipeline of teachers and leaders (at every level of the education system and within other sectors) who are committed to tackling educational inequity, improving teaching and learning, and supporting rigorous academic standards. We expand this pipeline by (1) recruiting and developing teachers who likely would not otherwise have entered the classroom,

and (2) orienting our program efforts toward developing leaders who have high expectations for high-need students and commit their lifetimes to addressing educational inequity.

In the short term, TFA CMs have a greater impact on student achievement than other new teachers (see Section A.3) and bring a sense of urgency to their classrooms and schools. In the long term, TFA alumni are a critical source of talent for schools, school systems, policy and advocacy organizations, nonprofits, the government, and other positions and organizations impacting P-12 education. Nearly two-thirds of alumni work full-time in the field of education (over half of those as teachers), and 84% of alumni work full-time in a job that impacts education and/or low-income communities. A recent study found that more founders and leaders of education organizations began their careers in TFA than in any other organization or program.²⁴

Shaped by their corps experience, alumni exert strong leadership across P-12 education to expand educational opportunity for all. Examples include: DC Public Schools Chancellor Kaya Henderson, who has led her district to historic gains on the NAEP; Chris Barbic, Superintendent of Tennessee’s Achievement School District and founder of the highly successful YES Prep Public Schools; Louisiana State Superintendent John White; and Dave Levin, Co-Founder of KIPP, one of the largest and highest impact charter networks in the country, and Character Lab, which develops, disseminates, and supports research-based approaches to character.

TFA’s approach is enduring and comprehensive in scope, producing teachers and leaders who influence educational practice and policy at all levels and create a context for P-12 education that fosters high expectations, effective teaching and learning, and academic rigor.

The SEED project’s role in TFA’s comprehensive approach. TFA’s teacher training efforts are a key component of our overall program continuum – from recruitment through

²⁴ Higgins, M., Hess, R. Wiender, J., & Robison, W. (2011). Creating a Corps of Change Agents – TFA Alumni Project. *Education Next*.

alumni development – that underpins our comprehensive approach to expanding educational opportunity. Without capacity to design and deliver high-quality pre-service training, we could not recruit the same profile and caliber of participants; nor would schools and school districts seek to hire our CMs. The summer institute is a critical foundation, necessary for instilling the key mindsets, knowledge, and skills that set CMs up to be effective in their classrooms. The first step in becoming a lifelong advocate for educational equity is being an effective teacher, and the institute experience is the critical first step in that process. Furthermore, our institute experiences provide valuable professional development to institute staff who are future and current school leaders (principals, instructional coaches, deans of students, etc.). Thus, the proposed SEED project is an essential piece of TFA’s comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students in high-need schools through the informed leadership, commitment, and instructional practice of TFA CMs and alumni.

B.3 – Sufficient Quality, Intensity, and Duration

TFA’s training institutes, which are the centerpiece of this SEED project, are foundational to TFA’s proven approach to developing effective teachers. Although we are deeply committed to continuously improving CM and staff training experiences, we have confidence in the quality, intensity, and duration of our institutes based on the proven effectiveness of our CMs. As mentioned in Section A, state studies of teacher preparation pathways consistently show that TFA is among the top teacher providers in terms of student achievement, signifying the effectiveness of TFA’s selection model and teacher training program across various school settings, grade levels, and subject areas. In addition, principals express strong satisfaction with TFA CMs and the program. In our most recent (2013) survey of the principals who hire and

work with CMs,²⁵ 95% reported that CMs make a positive difference in their schools. They reported that CMs are better prepared than other new teachers and that they would hire another CM if there were another vacancy, both of which speak to the quality of our training program.

All of this suggests that our core model is of sufficient quality, intensity and duration to enable CMs to become effective first year teachers. In addition, the newer efforts described in this project – piloting a next-generation institute model; developing, implementing, and refining regional training institutes; and providing enhanced training to more of our pre-K CMs – have significant potential to lead to additional improvements in practice among CM participants.

B.4 Preparing personnel for fields in which shortages have been demonstrated.

We work hard to meet the needs of our partner LEAs and schools, which means that we prepare a disproportionate number of our teachers for teaching placements with demonstrated shortages. Of the 8,500 teachers we will prepare through this project, the majority will be prepared to teach in shortage areas. Based on our historic corps demographics, we project that 20% will be prepared to teach secondary mathematics, 15% secondary science, 12% special education, 5% bilingual or ESL classes, and 3% foreign languages—with many of our other placements being in other shortage areas for our partner LEAs and schools.

B.5 Serving the needs of disadvantaged individuals.

The vast majority of students served by this project are disadvantaged. Specifically:

- **Students who are living in poverty and are served by schools with high concentrations of students living in poverty.** As mentioned in Section A.1., in the schools where TFA CMs teach, 78% receive free or reduced-price lunch.

²⁵ McCann, C. E., Turner, T. T., & White, R. N. (2013). Results from the Teach For America 2013 national principal survey. Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.

- **Students served by rural LEAs.** 9% of our CMs teach in rural LEAs²⁶ in 13 states,²⁷ and over 15% teach in the 10 TFA regions we consider predominantly rural.²⁸ CMs from 8 of these regions, comprising 10% of our total corps, will undergo institute training in rural areas. For example, in 2015, over 400 CMs will train at our Mississippi Delta National Institute, where they will teach summer school to students in rural schools.
- **English language learners.** Approximately 9.1% of the students taught by our CMs participate in programs for English language learners.²⁹
- **Students who are members of federally-recognized Indian tribes.** 2% of the students taught by TFA CMs identify as Native. Two of our regions, New Mexico and South Dakota, serve predominantly students who are members of federally-recognized Indian tribes. At our Phoenix summer institute, we partner with local tribal schools to have those CMs provide academic instruction to students, while also training the CMs on how to be effective, culturally responsive teachers to Native students.

C. Quality of the Management Plan and Personnel

C.1 – Qualifications of Key Project Personnel & Time Commitments

This project will be managed and executed primarily through the collaborative efforts of five National teams – the Teacher Preparation team (TPT); the Teacher Preparation, Support, and Development (TPSD) Operations team; the TPSD Design team; the TPSD Strategy team; and the Regional Operations team – working closely with institute staff and TFA regional leadership.

²⁶ LEAs that are eligible under the Small Rural Schools Achievement (SRSA) program or the Rural and Low-Income Schools (RLIS) program.

²⁷ Alabama, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, New Mexico, North Carolina, South Carolina, South Dakota, Texas, Washington--and, beginning in Fall 2015, Idaho.

²⁸ Alabama, Arkansas, Appalachia, Eastern North Carolina, New Mexico, North Carolina Piedmont Triad, Rio Grande Valley, South Carolina, South Dakota, South Louisiana, and--beginning in Fall 2015, Idaho.

²⁹ Estimate based on national NCES statistics: http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d13/tables/dt13_204.20.asp

The TPT team is the national team that is ultimately responsible for effective implementation of the SEED project. TPT provides guidance and oversight to all institutes to ensure they plan and execute effectively to create the institute experience and outcomes outlined in Section B. Each national institute has a full-time, four-person Institute Management Team (IMT) that sits on the TPT team, and is charged with: setting the vision for that institute, working with school partners and the TSPD Design team to design curriculum and sessions, working with the TSPD Operations team to ensure institute operations run smoothly and with strong financial compliance. The IMT oversees the hiring, management and professional development of approximately 80 full-time and seasonal staff members (per institute) to ensure that they are prepared and working effectively with corps members.

The TSPD Operations team supports IMTs in managing the logistics of running institutes, contracting with university partners for food and lodging services, and supports national vendor contracts related to procurement (rental cars, supplies, laptop/computer/copier rental, etc.). By developing systems, processes and tools, the TSPD Operations team optimizes organizational and financial efficiencies, facilitates effective communications across internal teams, and leverages technology to support our staff and CMs.

The TSPD Design team is responsible for: development of institute teacher training and staff professional development frameworks; CM development tools throughout the school year; and driving innovation. In this project, they are responsible for the design of the training structures and resources we use across all of our institutes, for the piloting and refinement of our institute redesign, and for our enhanced ECE training, all described in Section B.

The TPSD Strategy team gathers and analyzes data related to our performance metrics; this 15-person branch of the TPSD team provides the resources necessary to conduct a significant portion of the project evaluation (explained in more detail in Section E).

In addition to full-time staff, we also hire seasonal staff who work at and manage each summer school site. They are collectively responsible for training CMs and effectively running the summer school program. Seasonal staff members are recruited, selected, trained, and employed by TFA. They are directly managed by the IMT (for national institutes) or regional leadership (for regional institutes). Key positions include: School Directors (SDs) – the leaders of each school site that partner with district administrators on instruction, discipline, and operations (typically one SD per 50-60 CMs); Corps Member Advisors³⁰ – the primary coach and mentor for CMs; they observe CMs teaching, provide feedback, and conduct training sessions on instructional strategies (typically one CMA per 12 CMs, sometimes fewer); Curriculum Specialists– deliver high-impact content sessions to develop corps member knowledge base and facilitate large-group discussions (typically one CS per school site); School Operations Managers – ensure the school site runs smoothly; working partnership with the district administrator at the school site (typically one SOM per school site).

To ensure successful management and implementation of regional training institutes, national institute teams work closely with regional leadership, providing the following supports: access to design and execution resources; opportunity to participate in retreats and conferences that help regions share resources and insights with one another and to further develop their vision for pre-service; and individual consulting with national team experts. Each regional institute

³⁰ Nomenclature can vary at regional institutes, but teacher coaches are a key component of all institutes.

team is managed by the region’s Executive Director, who is managed by the Regional Operations team, which provides oversight to ensure the quality of training at regional institutes.

Regions interested in pursuing a new regional institute must submit a proposal in which they describe how such an institute would advance their vision for ensuring educational excellence and equity of all children, as well as evidence of strong partnerships with local a university and school/district partners. Regional Operations and TPT leaders review all such requests.

Key personnel for this project are listed in Table 5. They have a wealth of experience with TFA’s training program, curriculum development, and the design and management of large-scale projects (see Appendix F for resumes). (Note: time commitments in the table represent time dedicated to the planning, design, execution, and evaluation of institutes. These percentages do not necessarily match the percent of effort for each individual requested in the budget because the total costs of this project exceed the grant request (see Section D). The balance of project costs, including personnel’s dedicated time, will be supported by other funding sources.

Table 5. Key Project Personnel

Name & Title	Project Responsibilities & Time Commitment	Relevant experience
LaNiesha Cobb Sanders, Vice President, Institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Project Director ● TPT team co-leader – manages four IMTs ● 100% dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 9 years of experience with TFA’s training efforts, including head of ATL institute ● Founding board member for Atlanta charter school ● ‘03 corps member in Atlanta
Tim Hughes, Vice President, Institutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● TPT team co-leader – manages 2 IMTs, regional institute support, and institute innovations ● 100% effort on project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Founding head of IMT for the Mississippi Delta Institute ● Principal, KIPP SF Bay Academy ● ‘02 corps member in Baltimore
Min Kim, Senior Vice President, TPSD Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads TPSD Operations ● 30% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Led the reorganization of the NYC DOE’s HR department encompassing 150,000 employees ● Consultant with L.E.K. Consulting

Name & Title	Project Responsibilities & Time Commitment	Relevant experience
Annie Lewis O'Donnell, Senior Vice President, TPSD Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads the Design team ● 50% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 10 years with the Design team ● Leads 17 -person team that develops training materials and curriculum for CMs and strategies for building necessary capacity in the staff who support them ● Served on Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Commission on Standards and Performance Reporting ● '01 Baltimore corps member
Sharon Foley, Senior Managing Director, TPSD Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads institute and regional work related to content areas, classroom culture, and student responsiveness ● 50% effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 5 years with the Design team ● Led the 2014 pre-service redesign with University of Washington and the Chicago TFA region ● Supervised Secondary ELA and Early Childhood Education pilots in earlier years ● '00 corps member in Washington, DC
Ted Quinn, Senior Vice President, TPSD Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads the TPSD Strategy team ● 10% effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 7 years leading the Strategy team ● Associate Principal with McKinsey & Co. ● Ph.D. in Physics from the University of Chicago
Raegen Miller, Vice President, Research Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads TFA's Research Partnerships team ● Will manage research engagement with MDRC ● 5% of effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3 years leading Research Partnerships ● Former Associate Director of Education Research, Center for American Progress ● Ed.D., Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) ● National Board Certified teacher with 11 years of teaching experience
Kwame Griffith, Executive Vice President, Regional Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Co-leads Regional Operations team, which manages and supports all TFA regions, including those with regional institutes ● 5% effort dedicated to the project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manages 5 Senior Vice Presidents who manage Executive Directors of all 52 TFA regions ● 4 years as senior leader on Regional Operations team ● Executive Director of Atlanta region for 4 years ● '02 Houston corps member
Darcy Thompson, Managing Director, Federal Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Leads TFA's efforts to secure federal grant funding; ensures programmatic and fiscal grants management ● 20% effort on project 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Manages public grants for TFA, including previous SEED grant and i3 Scale-up grant ● Former Managing Director, Research for TPSD ● 11 years on national TFA staff ● '98 Mississippi Delta corps member

C.2 – Management Plan

Successful execution of this SEED project will achieve four key objectives: (1) design, plan, implement, and evaluate summer training institutes; (2) pilot, refine, and evaluate a scalable national institute redesign; (3) implement and evaluate regional training institutes (both existing and new); and (4) enhance and evaluate our pre-service training for pre-K teachers.

Table 6. Management Plan

Objective	TFA successfully designs, plans, implements, and evaluates summer training institutes in 2015 and 2016		
Owner	LaNiesha Cobb Sanders and Tim Hughes		
Successfully implement summer training institutes in 2015 and 2016, and evaluate its impact on teacher effectiveness during 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years			
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	
Ensure corps members are developing the key mindsets, skills, and habits of successful teachers	June – Aug 2015 June – Aug 2016	Regularly roll up CMA observational analyses of corps member classrooms throughout institute	
Ensure corps member satisfaction		Mid-institute and End-of-institute surveys	
Provide institute experience that is a critical component in CMs' becoming successful teachers		End-of-institute corps member survey	
Ensure desired retention rates throughout institute and through first day of school	June – Sept 2015 June – Sept 2016	Weekly retention reports	
Gather, synthesize, and share information from external stakeholders (districts, principals, veteran teachers, etc.) on their reflections about institute	June – Aug 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - End-of-institute principal and district teacher survey - Regular conversations with district staff 	
Gather, synthesize, and share information from internal stakeholders on their reflections of institute – staff, CMs	June – Aug 2015 June – Aug 2016 August 2015 August 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mid-institute and End-of-institute corps member surveys - End-of-institute seasonal staff survey 	
Facilitate knowledge sharing and cross-institutes learning	On-going	Quarterly TPT retreats	
Owner	Ted Quinn		
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	
Conduct on-going analysis of student achievement data/teacher effectiveness during first year	Sept 2015 – June 2016 Sept 2016 – June 2017	Ongoing reporting and review of student achievement data for corps members	

Owner(s)	LaNiesha Cobb Sanders and Tim Hughes		
Prepare to successfully implement 2016 institute, including design and operations planning			
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	
Determine vision for institute (curriculum, sessions, and structure)	Aug 2015 – Jan 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Institute-specific IMT conferences to conduct vision setting - National conferences and leadership journeys (TPT, TPSD Operations, and TPSD) to conduct vision setting 	
Train and prepare staff to provide effective training to CMs	Jan – June 2016	Institute-specific IMT training conferences for institute staff	
Prepare corps members to attend institute	November 2015 January 2016 March 2016 May 2016	Corps members assigned to institute and receive pre-work after each application/selection window	
Owner	LaNiesha Cobb Sanders, Tim Hughes, Min Kim		
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	
Hire staff	Oct 2015 – April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Launch applications (Oct) - Conduct interviews (Dec-March) - Hiring finalized (Feb-April) 	
Secure and execute University contracts (for food and lodging)	Oct 2015 – May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set strategy and begin negotiations (Oct-Feb) - Draft and finalize contracts (Jan-Apr) - Contract execution (May) 	
Objective	TFA successfully implements regional training institutes		
Owner	Kwame Griffith		
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>	
Implement 9 regional training institutes in 2015	May-Aug 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular observations of corps members teaching summer school - Corps members attend teacher training sessions 	
Facilitate regional leadership stepping back with Regional Operations and TPT to reflect on successes and challenges	Sept-Oct 2015	Analysis of regional training institutes by reviewing CMA analyses, surveying staff, and analyzing Corps Member and Alumni Learning Index (CALI)	
Provide guidance to regions who are considering proposing a regional training institute	Aug-Sept 2015	Regional Operations and TPT review proposals with region to determine viability	
Determine 2016 regional institutes, with input from Regional Operations, TPT and organizational leadership	Sept 2015		
Guide regions to work with TPT, TPSD Operations, and TPSD Design to flesh out vision for and plan for implementing institutes	Oct 2015 – Jan 2016	Regions attend national training conferences and IMT retreats to grow knowledge base	

Guide regions to work with TPSD Design to develop additional curriculum and staff training to realize their regional training institute vision; TPT to implement staff training; and TPSD Operations to finalize operations	Jan-May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attend planning and training conferences - Interview, hire and train staff - Determine and execute contracts with university partners - Determine placements with schools/districts - Communicate with corps members
Implement 11 regional training institutes in 2016 (using observational tools and methods described above)	May-Aug 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular observations of corps members teaching summer school - Corps members participate in teacher training sessions
Facilitate regional leadership stepping back with TPT to reflect on successes and challenges	Sept-Oct 2016	Analysis of regional training institutes by reviewing CMA analyses, surveying staff, and analyzing CALI
Objective	TFA successfully implements institute redesign	
Owner	Annie O'Donnell	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Recruit and select regions to participate in the 2016 pilot	June-Aug 2015	Regions commit to staff participation in professional development during 2015-16 (Aug)
Regional program staff participate in professional development activities to learn how to train and support CMs using the pedagogies of the pilot	Aug 2015 - May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional staff in participating regions attend teacher educator institute (Oct) - These staff participate in an ongoing professional learning community that builds their knowledge and skill in coaching/teacher education in ways that align with the pedagogies that form the basis of the pilot model (Oct-May)
Refine design for 2016	Oct 2015 - Jan 2016	Make adjustments to the model based on what we learn from the 2015 pilot
Plan for redesign	June 2015 - May 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Select, hire and onboard pilot staff, including some of the regional staff participating in year-long training (Jan-May) - Partner with school district to understand and plan for student learning needs (Jan-May) - Plan and lead staff training (Jul-May) - Revamp ISATs for selected grade levels/subject areas (June-Dec) - Develop training sessions to infuse content and context specific perspective (June-Dec)

Implement redesigned national institute model with 150 corps members at one of our national institutes	May-July 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMs regularly follow the steps of The Learning Cycle - CMs deliver CCSS- and NGSS-aligned instruction - Gather data for evaluation of the redesigned institute
Owner	Raegen Miller	
External evaluator (MDRC) completes the evaluation of the 2016 institute redesign	Aug 2015 - May 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Formative data available to TFA in time to inform 2017 planning (Oct 2016) - Full evaluation complete May 2018
Objective	Implement enhanced early childhood education training	
Owner	Annie O'Donnell, LaNiesha Cobb Sanders, Tim Hughes	
<i>Responsibilities</i>	<i>Timeline</i>	<i>Milestones</i>
Implement enhanced Early Childhood Education training with 40% of the pre-K teachers in the 2015 TFA corps	May-July 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMs participate in teacher training sessions geared specifically to ECE - Regular observations of corps members teaching summer school
Evaluate success of the enhanced ECE training and design and plan training for 2016	Aug 2015 - April 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Analysis of data from the enhanced ECE training to determine successes and challenges (by Oct 2015) - Development of revised plan for 2016 ECE hub based on findings from 2015 analysis
Implement refined ECE training with 50% of all pre-K CMs in 2016 corps	May-Aug 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - CMs participate in teacher training sessions geared specifically to ECE - Regular observations of corps members teaching summer school

C.3 – Sufficient and Reasonable Resources

We are confident that the proposed management plan includes the resources necessary to effectively carry out the proposed project, as it relies on existing staff structures and strategic engagement of contractors and partners. These efforts are grounded in an overall environment of cost effectiveness, efficiency, fiscal transparency, and reporting quality—Charity Navigator has given TFA a perfect 4-star rating for the twelve straight years. Less than 1% of all nonprofits nationwide have received this many consecutive 4-star ratings. Please note that information about adequacy of resources to evaluate the project is included in Section E.4.

Grounded in our nearly 25 years of experience planning, designing, and implementing training institutes, we developed a staffing structure for national institutes that utilizes full-time and seasonal staff in a way that ensures appropriate and adequate time commitments, sufficient and reasonable resources, and overall program effectiveness. Seasonal staff members (mostly TFA alumni) spend a finite amount of time on staff, every hour of which is maximized – they attend all-day, weekend trainings sessions and engage in independent pre-work in the Spring to prepare to hit the ground running at institute; they provide short-term, high-intensity training and coaching to CMs throughout the five weeks of institute. Our regional institutes are largely staffed by full-time regional staff who provide ongoing support to CMs throughout the school year. National teams like TPT and TPSD Operations are dedicated to ensuring effective institutes management. Staff members work throughout the year to improve institute by analyzing lessons learned year over year. Other national teams, such as TPSD, split their time between our teacher training efforts and the ongoing support structure to ensure a seamless integration of the training and support models, creating a cohesive program continuum.

Adjustments to our teacher training program – national institute redesign, new regional institutes, and enhanced pre-K training – are supported in large part by this existing framework. Any new expenses are thoroughly vetted by organizational leadership to ensure the most effective and efficient use of resources and their explicit link to increasing the impact of CMs.

Based on the above (including results outlined in Section A), we are confident that our plan includes sufficient and reasonable resources to effectively carry out the proposed SEED project.

D. Sustainability

This project develops and implements training institutes that have a demonstrable impact on CMs' ability to become effective and highly effective teachers in their first year in the

classroom. It has been designed to be both financially and programmatically sustainable – building long term capacity and results, yielding findings and products that are useful to others, and disseminating information about results and outcomes in ways that others will find useful.

D.1 – Designed to Build Capacity and Yield Results

This SEED project is designed to build capacity that will yield outcomes (for both TFA and the broader education community) that will endure beyond this grant project period.

Building long-term financial capacity. Throughout the project period, the total estimated cost of developing and implementing a planned 15 institutes in 2015 and 16 institutes in 2016 (including pre-institute work, new regional institute models, and efforts to align to Common Core) is approximately \$60 million. A \$16 million SEED grant will cover a meaningful portion of project costs while ensuring that we do not become too reliant on any one funding source.

Federal funding reduces TFA’s overall fundraising burden in two ways. First, federal funding is a critical source of support and key component of our diversified base of support – comprised of 65% private funding (27% individuals; 27% local and national foundations; 10% corporations) and 35% public dollars (9% public school partners; 26% local, state, and federal partners). We could not invest the same level of resources in teacher preparation and continuous improvement if we relied only on local funding sources. Second, receiving federal funding speaks to the health of our organization in a way that allows us to continue to leverage a substantial amount of private funding for every public dollar invested. SEED support will enable TFA to attract additional investors and supporters by helping us demonstrate that we are an innovative program engaged in recognized research.

Building long-term programmatic capacity. The learnings produced throughout this project will build long-term programmatic capacity for TFA. Evaluation methods (outlined in

Section E), provide ongoing feedback on the effectiveness of various aspects of institute. This feedback will provide insights into successful design and delivery of summer institutes, and enable each year to build upon lessons learned from the past. The rigorous external evaluation of our redesigned national institute pilot will inform what our institutes look like in the future.

Many tools and resources developed for institutes are versatile and can be used by staff and CMs in contexts beyond institute. Videos and online resources are especially scalable and flexible tools that increase overall program capacity – tools CMs and staff can access at any time and incorporate into independent study, group learning experiences, coaching and feedback sessions. This SEED project builds program capacity by testing and refining new approaches, and making the learnings, tools, and resources widely available.

Enduring results. As discussed in Sections A.3 and B.2, this project will yield enduring results for TFA and the broader education community. Institute is the first step in building the long-term capacity of TFA CMs, enabling them to become highly effective teachers and education leaders who, years after their institute experience, will continue to positively influence their fellow teachers, their schools, and their students. Over 11,000 alumni are classroom teachers, 930 are principals and school leaders, 247 are school systems leaders, and 120 are elected union leaders. Support for our institutes kick starts this critical leadership pipeline.

In addition, this project supports extensive training and professional development for institute staff, including over 350 teacher coaches per year, to help them effectively train and support new CMs. This staff training and the coaching they do at institute helps them improve their own teaching practices, coaching practices, and leadership skills as they continue their work in education following institute, ultimately translating to stronger outcomes for high-needs students.

The institute redesign work will set the stage for at-scale implementation of what promises to be a major step forward in the evolution of our approach to teacher preparation. It will specifically be designed to be scalable. Additionally, regional training institutes represent an opportunity to develop more robust, year-round partnerships with schools and districts that are more strategic, less transactional, and thus more sustainable, enduring, and high impact.

D.2– Yield Findings and Products Useful for Other Organizations

This SEED project will produce research findings and new tools and resources for teacher preparation, while also enabling us to deepen existing partnerships and foster new ones. This process will contribute new knowledge and products to the field. This will happen throughout this project through four key avenues: the redesign of our teacher training approach; the concomitant redesign of our approach to teacher educator/coach training; developing and sharing early childhood educator training resources with external partners; and deepening school and district partnerships via regional training institutes.

Institute Redesign. A rigorous external evaluation of the 2016 redesigned institute pilot will enable us to better understand the efficacy of this promising model. Formative and summative data and findings from this evaluation will inform whether or not TFA decides to scale the model up to more institutes in subsequent years, and MDRC will also publish the evaluation and (along with TFA) disseminate the evaluation across the national education ecosystem.

Regional training institutes strengthen local partnerships. District and charter faculty who serve as local advisors during institute function as knowledge bridges, bringing additional knowledge and practices to our local institutes and conveying the best practices, tools, and resources used at institute back to their home institutions. As our institutes expand and innovate with SEED funding, we expect these knowledge-sharing efforts to accelerate and deepen,

especially for the regional training institutes where local TFA leadership partners closely with host schools and district – jointly designing the summer training curriculum, co-developing resources, and more intentionally integrating the summer experience into local teacher development efforts, including those related to CCSS and NGSS instructional shifts.

D.3 – Disseminating Information about Outcomes

We envision two main paths for disseminating information – one aimed at the TFA network and the other directed toward partnering organizations and the broader field.

Internal network. We are intent on sharing information about outcomes of this project, and especially insights gained through institute redesign, regional training institute pilots, and enrichment of ECE training across our national network so that all 52 regions may benefit from the lessons learned in these pilot initiatives. TFA’s cross-regional knowledge sharing mechanisms include: Institute Innovations team – this new two-person team within the Office of Institutes is responsible for optimizing learning in the realm of teacher preparation. They provide support to teams that desire to implement innovations, helping them plan for measurement/insight gathering on the front end, and subsequently harvest and disseminate learnings from institute pilots across the country, ensuring that the most promising practices are replicated while less promising practices are improved upon or replaced with more proven practices; Innovation knowledge-sharing space – We will make information about innovative practices and resources about pilot design and evaluation easily accessible for all staff members on TFA’s internal team websites, communications channels, and organization-wide social media platforms; Innovative practices and metrics tracking – We will identify and catalogue regional, national, and external innovations, as well as gather and analyze survey results and other metrics to inform ongoing design and delivery of training innovations; Innovation sessions – Our

institute team will host innovation sessions that include sharing best practices, skills training, and regional roundtables during organization-wide summits and various staff retreats.

External network. Dissemination of best practices, resources, and insights primarily happens through partnership with universities, schools, and school districts (as outlined in Section D.2). For example, we will host learning visits to our 2016 redesigned institute pilot for interested people from our networks (including individuals from universities and other partners) to provide an opportunity for them to observe and learn. This is something we have historically done with other innovations. In addition to collaborating with LEA and university partners, TFA will harness its community outreach and marketing efforts to communicate learnings to the field and general public through traditional print vehicles and social media (e.g., through TFA’s magazine, *One Day*, which is widely distributed to our constituents; on our blog, Pass the Chalk; and at our 25th Anniversary Summit). Additionally, the external evaluator will proactively share their final report and seek to publish work based on it in peer-reviewed journals. Through our broad set of P-12 and higher education partnerships, and outreach to the broader field and general public, we are eager to share our learnings from our work in teacher preparation.

Evaluation

E.1 – Evaluation Methods, Outcomes, and Periodic Assessments

TFA will evaluate each of the four components of this project: planning and delivering institutes for all of our CMs (the primary initiative), and three sub-initiatives: institute redesign, expansion of regional training institutes, and enriching our teacher preparation efforts for early childhood educators. Highly-respected research firm MDRC will conduct a \$1.6 million evaluation of our institute redesign, and all other aspects of the project will be evaluated by TFA’s Teacher Preparation, Support and Development (TPSD) Strategy team.

External evaluation the Redesigned National Institute Training

There are currently 6 national summer institutes, each of which trains corps members (CMs) from 5-10 TFA regions. Of these 6 national institutes, one national institute will be selected to implement the redesigned training in summer 2016 (referred to as the Intervention Institute). Of the regions served by the Intervention Institute, all CMs from two of its regions (“program regions”) will take the redesigned training, while CMs from the other regions served by the Intervention Institute will continue to receive the existing training. In total, about 150 CMs will participate in the redesigned training.

An independent evaluation will examine both the implementation of the redesigned training and its effect on the outcomes of CMs and their students:

- How does the redesigned training at the Intervention Institute differ from the current training at national institutes?
- How do the instructional practices of CMs who take the redesigned training differ from those of CMs who take the current training?
- Does the redesigned training show promise for improving the outcomes of CMs (their preparedness, their attitudes and mindsets, and retention rates) and the test score gains of their students (value added)?

The evaluation will be carried out by MDRC, a leading third-party evaluator of educational interventions. (See Appendix L for CVs of key MDRC personnel who will be leading the evaluation work.) Because the evaluation is based on a quasi-experimental design, it will meet What Works Clearinghouse standards with reservations.³¹

³¹ Clearinghouse, What Works. 2014. WWC procedures and standards handbook (version 3.0). Washington DC: US Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences.

The methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives and outcomes of the proposed project.

Two types of analysis will be used to examine whether the redesigned national institute shows promise for improving the outcomes of CMs and their students: (1) a *region-level* analysis based on a comparative interrupted time series (CITS) design, and (2) a *CM-level* analysis based on propensity score matching. If well executed, these approaches can reproduce the results from an experimental design when sufficient pre-intervention data on the outcomes of interest are available for matching or for modeling,³² which they will be in this evaluation.

The CITS design is essentially an interrupted time series (ITS) design supplemented by a comparison series.³³ In an ITS design, time series data is used to look at whether – after a program is implemented – the average outcomes of the group affected by the program “deviated” from what would have been expected given their pre-program outcome trends. In a *comparative* ITS design, the effect of the intervention is evaluated by looking at whether “deviations from trend” for the program group are greater than deviations from trend for a similar group that did not receive the program. The CITS design is more rigorous than most other quasi-experimental designs, because it implicitly controls for differences in baseline trends between the treatment and comparison group, while most designs are only able to control for differences in baseline

³² Cook, T. D., W. R. Shadish, and V. C. Wong. 2008. "Three conditions under which experiments and observational studies produce comparable causal estimates: New findings from within-study comparisons." *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 27 (4):724-750; Clair, Travis St, Thomas D Cook, and Kelly Hallberg. 2014. "Examining the Internal Validity and Statistical Precision of the Comparative Interrupted Time Series Design by Comparison With a Randomized Experiment." *American Journal of Evaluation*:1098214014527337; Somers, Marie-Andree, Pei Zhu, Robin Tepper Jacob, and Howard S. Bloom. 2013. *The Validity and Precision of the Comparative Interrupted Time Series Design and the Difference-in-Difference Design in Educational Evaluation*. New York NY: MDRC Working Paper

³³ Bloom, Howard S. 2003. "Using "Short" Interrupted Time-Series Analysis To Measure The Impacts Of Whole-School Reforms: With Applications to a Study of Accelerated Schools." *Evaluation Review* 27 (3):3-49; Cook, Thomas D, Donald Thomas Campbell, and Arles Day. 1979. *Quasi-experimentation: Design & analysis issues for field settings*. Vol. 351: Houghton Mifflin Boston

levels. Adding a comparison group further strengthens the causal validity of the design, because it eliminates the possibility that deviations from baseline trend for the program group are due to another reform or policy that happened at the same time as the program and that affected all schools in the study.

To use a CITS design in this evaluation, region-level time series data will be constructed for each of the two program regions and several comparison regions. The data points in the time series will be the average outcomes of CMs by region and by cohort, for the cohorts of CMs inducted and trained from 2012 to 2016. The 2012 to 2015 cohorts will be the “baseline cohorts” (pre-dating the redesigned training) while the 2016 cohort will be the “follow-up cohort” (the year of the new training). To identify the effect of the redesigned institute on CM outcomes (for example, CMs’ self-report of whether they feel well prepared to teach), the first step will be to estimate the trend in average CM preparedness in the two program regions before 2016 (using data for the 2012 to 2015 baseline cohorts). The next step will be to estimate the amount by which the average preparedness of CMs trained in 2016 in the program regions deviates from this baseline trend (“deviation from trend”). Following a similar set of steps, the deviation from baseline trend will also be obtained for CMs in the comparison regions. The estimated effect of the redesigned training is the *difference* between the deviation from baseline trend for the program regions and the deviation for the comparison regions. If the program is effective, then the deviation from trend should be positive in the program regions, and greater for the program regions than the comparison regions. (See Appendix I for an illustration of the design.)

The comparison regions will be chosen from among the TFA regions served by the national summer institutes (expected to be 42 regions). For the purposes of selecting comparison regions, TFA will make available to MDRC a rich array of historical data on the cohorts of CMs who

were trained by TFA prior to 2016, including: the scores of CMs on 9 skill and character scales constructed during the application process (leadership skills, organizational ability, perseverance, etc.); CMs' scores on various attitudinal scales and their perceptions of the training and support they received from TFA (based on surveys completed throughout their tenure at TFA); their retention rates; their demographic characteristics, and their education and prior work experience. MDRC will also collect data on the characteristics and average test scores of the schools where CMs teach (school context), based on Common Core of Data and state websites.

Using these data, the goal will be to select 6 comparison regions that – in the four years prior to 2016 – were similar to the two program regions with respect to the outcomes, characteristics, and school contexts of their CMs, and that had similar policy regimes. A two-step process will be used to select the comparison regions. First, two *comparison institutes* will be chosen from among the five national institutes not offering the redesigned training in summer 2016. These comparison institutes will be chosen on the basis of having trained – from 2012 to 2015 – CMs with similar characteristics, outcomes, and school contexts as the Intervention Institute. (The two comparison institutes and the Intervention Institute are the three “study institutes.”) Second, among the regions served by the three study institutes, each of the two program regions will be matched to the 3 comparison regions with the most similar trends in the outcomes, characteristics, and school contexts of CMs trained prior to 2016. (The 6 comparison regions and the two program regions will be the 8 “study regions.”) In order to “validate” the chosen comparison regions, MDRC will use a CITS design to estimate the “effect” of the redesigned training on CMs' *pre-training* outcomes (skills, attitudes, etc.), which should be zero by definition. If the estimated effect is close to zero (within 0.25 SD), then this would confirm that

the comparison regions provide a credible counterfactual for the program regions. If the effect is larger, then the matching will be redone using a different set of matching criteria.

Because the CITS design uses time series data in combination with a comparison group, this analysis will provide the most cogent quasi-experimental estimates of the effect of the redesigned institute. However, because the analysis is at the region level and there are only two program regions, the effect would have to be large in magnitude to be statistically significant: the minimum detectable effect size (MDES) for the analysis will be about 0.45, which is about 23 percentage points on a dichotomous outcome (based on a 5 percent statistical significance level and power of 80 percent). Though an effect of this size may be feasible for more proximal teacher outcomes (like feelings of preparedness), it may not be for others.

Thus, the CITS analysis will be supplemented by a propensity score analysis of outcomes at the *CM level*, which will be able to statistically detect smaller effects.³⁴ For this analysis, propensity scores will be constructed for each CM trained in 2016 in the study regions, using CM-level application scores, background characteristics, baseline attitudes and other outcomes from the pre-training survey, grade and subject taught, and the average characteristics and test scores of the schools where a CM is working. Each of the 150 CMs in the program regions trained in 2016 will then be matched to the two CMs with the most similar propensity score in the comparison regions (these 450 CMs will be the “2016 propensity sample”). The effect of the redesigned training will then be estimated by comparing the outcomes of program and comparison CMs in the propensity sample, controlling for their baseline outcomes and characteristics. The MDES for this analysis is expected to be about 0.22 for CM outcomes (about 11 percentage points on a dichotomous outcome) and 0.12 on student gains or value added. (This

³⁴ Rosenbaum, Paul R., and Donald R. Rubin. 1983. "The central role of the propensity score in observational studies for causal effects." *Biometrika* 70:41-55

assumes that baseline data on CMs and students will explain 40 percent of outcomes variation and that the between-CM intraclass correlation in student gains will be 0.10, based on parameters in).³⁵ If the estimated effect on a given outcome is positive in direction in the CITS analysis – and the effect from the propensity sample is statistically positive – then this would suggest that the redesigned training shows promise for improving that outcome.

The evaluation of the redesigned training will also address these questions related to its implementation: (1) What were the key structures of the redesigned training? (2) What resources and materials were needed to implement the redesigned training? (3) Was the redesigned training implemented with reasonable fidelity to the model as planned by TFA? To answer these questions, experienced MDRC qualitative researchers will visit the Intervention Institute at key points during the five weeks of institute (beginning, middle and end) in summer 2016. During these visits, structured interviews will be conducted with the institute staff who provided the redesigned training and a sample of CMs who received the training, to understand their perspectives on the redesigned training and its implementation, the support they received, challenges that arose, and responses that were developed to address them. These interviews will be supplemented by data from CM surveys, which will provide information about CMs' expectations, and the training and support received. (These surveys are administered as part of TFA's monitoring activities; see Table 6). MDRC and TFA will also work together to develop an observation rubric to rate the extent to which TFA has implemented the key structures and instructional processes planned for the redesigned training and to guide ongoing efforts to

³⁵ Zhu, Pei, Robin Jacob, Howard Bloom, and Zeyu Xu. 2011. "Designing and analyzing studies that randomize schools to estimate intervention effects on student academic outcomes without classroom-level information." *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*:0162373711423786

improve the model. MDRC staff will use these data to identify key constructs that summarize the extent to which key structures of the redesigned training are implemented with fidelity.

To better understand the differences between the redesigned training and the existing training, MDRC will also interview staff and CMs at the Intervention Institute who did *not* receive the redesigned training, and conduct field research at the two comparison institutes. Interviews with these staff and CMs will be conducted at the same points in time as the interviews conducted with the staff and CMs in the redesigned training. In addition, interviews will be conducted again in spring 2017 by phone with the same sample of program and comparison CMs that were interviewed at the end of the institute, to learn about any additional training or support they have received, how prepared they felt to begin teaching, what barriers they have faced, and what has facilitated their year of teaching. To further gauge the differences in the two training models, the training observation protocols mentioned above will include items that capture whether the key structures of the redesigned training and the current training are in place at the study institutes.

To measure the difference in the instructional practice of CMs in program and comparison regions, including differences in the use of CCSS and NGSS aligned pedagogy, MDRC will field an adaptation of the teacher instructional logs developed by Brian Rowan and his colleagues at the University of Michigan for the Study of Instructional Improvement. The log is a close-ended instrument that has been shown in prior research to differentiate effectively between instruction in program classrooms, and classrooms where teachers did not receive the intervention. Additionally, MDRC will adapt an observation rubric currently used by TFA to observe a sample of 50 classrooms taught by the CMs in the program and comparison regions.

The evaluation includes the use of objective performance measures that are clearly related to the intended outcomes of the project and will produce quantitative and qualitative data.

The data for the evaluation will be collected at various points in a CM's training and teaching trajectory: (1) the type and amount of training provided to CMs; (2) CMs' instructional practice; (3) their perceptions of TFA, attitudes, and mindsets; (4) their value added based on the test score gains of their students; and (5) CM retention, with a particular focus on whether they teach in the fall after their summer training, and whether they teach a second year. These data will provide quantitative and qualitative information that will be useful to TFA as well as to practitioners, policymakers, and other researchers for decision-making purposes.

As explained in the previous section, qualitative data will be from observations and CM interviews. These data will be collected by MDRC, and will focus on understanding how well the redesigned training was implemented, and how it differs from the existing training. The quantitative data will be used to evaluate whether the redesigned training shows promise for improving key outcomes, and will come from three sources: teacher logs (instructional practice), TFA survey/program data (CMs' characteristics, skills, perceptions of TFA, attitudes and mindsets, and retention), and school districts (teacher value added).

For outcomes based on TFA surveys and program data, it will be possible to follow all CMs in the program and comparison regions who were trained in 2016 through to the fall of their second year of teaching. It will also be possible to obtain data on these outcomes for earlier cohorts (2012-2015), and to analyze outcomes using both a region-level CITS analysis and a propensity analysis approach. (See Table 7 for the key measures; the CSI and CALI survey indices will be analyzed as indices and by item.)

For value added measures (VAM), data collection and analysis will focus on CMs in the 2016 propensity sample who teach 4th-8th grade (about 40% of CMs in the sample, or 200 teachers) because VAM is only defined for these grades. Efforts will be made to obtain VAM data for as many CMs as possible, whether by requesting the VAM data used by districts, by calculating VAM based on student-level test scores. Given the time frame for the study, VAM data will only be available for students taught by the CMs in their *first year*. Similarly, teacher logs will be collected for CMs in the 2016 propensity sample who teach 4th-8th grade, in addition to two high school courses (to be determined). Logs will be collected in the fall and spring of CMs' first year of teaching, with an expected sample of approximately 16 logs per CM, which is sufficient to identify differences in instruction between the two groups of schools. Interviews with teachers – and classroom observations during the school year – will also focus on grades 4-8 and two high school courses.³⁶

Table 7. Key Quantitative Measures for the Evaluation

Measures	Data Source	Timing***	Sample
Instructional Practice (grades 4-8)	Teacher logs	FY1, SY1	CMs in the propensity sample
Retention	TFA program data	FY1, FY2	2012-2016 CMs in the study regions
Corps Strength Index (CSI)*	TFA CM survey data (11 items)	Baseline, end of institute, FY1&2, MY1, EY1	Same
Corps and Alumni Learning Index (CALI)**	TFA CM survey data (8 items)	Same	Same
Value added based on state tests (grades 4-8)	Student or teacher records from districts	EY1	Students of CMs in propensity sample

* Includes items about CM expectations, support and training received from TFA, perceptions of TFA; ** Includes items about CM mindsets and beliefs related to ensuring that all children will have the opportunity to learn; *** F: Fall, M: Mid-year, E: End-of-year; Y1 = 1st year of teaching; Y2 = 2nd year of teaching

³⁶ As explained earlier in this proposal, the 2014 pilot in Chicago redesigned the training for a subset of subjects and grade levels. In summer 2016, the range of grades/subjects for which the redesigned training will be offered will be further expanded, but the new training may not be available for some subjects/grades. CMs assigned to teach subjects/grades that are not part of the redesigned training will be excluded from the data collection and analyses.

The evaluation will provide performance feedback and permit periodic assessment of progress toward achieving intended outcomes.

MDRC will provide formative feedback documents and conduct virtual conferences with TFA leaders to assist in its assessment and planning during the course of the project. In October 2016, MDRC will produce a feedback memo documenting findings from its observations and interviews conducted during the summer training. In summer 2017, MDRC will provide a feedback memo focusing on classroom observations conducted during the school year and findings from phone interviews with CMs after their first year of teaching. In May 2018, MDRC will produce a final report that includes the results from both the implementation study and the analysis of CM and student outcomes in program and comparison regions. In addition, the report will look at which CM characteristics, attitudes and mindsets (at the end of the training) are predictors of whether a CM decides to teach after the summer institute and to stay on for a second year. Of particular interest is whether CMs with lower value added and instructional log scores are more likely to leave after their first year of teaching. In order to more broadly disseminate what is learned from the evaluation, this report will be made available to the public via MDRC's website.

Evaluating the overall effectiveness of TFA's 2015 and 2016 institutes. The TPSD Strategy team will conduct the evaluation of the overall effectiveness of our 2015 and 2016 institutes using end-of-school-year quantitative measures of teacher effectiveness and qualitative measures (during institute) of the effectiveness of institutes in preparing teachers.

Rigorous, Quantitative Measures of Teacher Effectiveness. We have developed a comprehensive system, grounded in student achievement data from rigorous assessments, to

measure the percentage of CMs trained at summer institutes who are highly effective or effective during their first and second years in the classroom. While factors beyond summer institute training, including the ongoing support provided by TFA, certainly contribute to first and second year CMs' effectiveness, we believe this measure is our best internal indicator of the impact of our teacher preparation program, of which summer institute is the cornerstone.

Our context is unique in that our CMs teach more than 40 subject areas in 52 regions across 36 states. Nevertheless, for the purposes of measuring effective and highly effective teachers, we must be able to aggregate results to evaluate CM impact over time and across regions.

We take several steps to ensure the quality of the assessments administered. We recommend, and in many cases provide, our CMs with access to rigorous and standardized assessments like the Northwest Evaluation Association's Measures of Academic Progress and Pearson's Developmental Reading Assessment. In addition, many CMs use their state standardized exams to measure impact, and we expect that number will grow as states utilize assessments aligned with CCSS. Program staff also review and audit assessments for rigor and alignment. Experts from our TPSD Strategy team offer training to regional staff and our CMs on the properties of rigorous and aligned assessments, and our regional staff recommend assessments to CMs for use in common subjects and grades.

Where CMs have access to assessments that measure student academic growth in terms of grade levels, we will define "effective" as at least one year of growth and "highly effective" as at least 1.5 years of growth. Where assessments are not explicitly measured in grade-level growth we will utilize guidance from test creators (e.g., vendors, states, districts) to determine the bar for "effective" and "highly effective" that is of similar rigor (e.g. by using scale score growth norms from assessment publisher). Table 1 lists our goals for CM effectiveness for this project. We will

calculate effectiveness data for all CMs. Because we are setting goals around the percentage of CMs who teach STEM subjects among our trainees, we will also calculate effectiveness data for STEM CMs as a way of gauging the effectiveness of our STEM-specific training efforts. CMs and staff use an online Program Tracker (PT) system to collect information on the effectiveness of CMs. This information is entered into PT by regional staff, then aggregated and analyzed by the TPSD Strategy team to determine the total number of effective and highly effective teachers.

Subjective Measures of Teacher Practice and Institute Impact. To gain additional insight into the impact of our institutes, and have some intermediate indicators of performance, we also use qualitative, observational methods of evaluation. Staff teacher coaches observe and analyze CM summer school classrooms to determine the extent to which they have created a culture of achievement highlighted by engagement in rigorous content. “Culture of achievement” (COA) refers to the extent to which students act in ways that suggest they are “on a mission” toward a destination that really matters to their futures. “Engagement with rigorous content” (EWRC) refers to the extent to which students are engaging deeply with the content and skills needed for success in their current course and beyond. Appendix D contains an overview of the TAL Impact Model, which outlines the role COA and EWRC play in creating a transformational learning experience for students, and the role teacher actions and mindsets play in creating COA and EWRC. We have found that the presence of these two factors result in students emerging from these classrooms on a path of expanded opportunities due to academic and personal growth.

Throughout institute, trained CM coaches regularly observe CMs’ classrooms and assess the extent to which they observe:

- CMs exhibiting an understanding and mastery of several key TAL teacher actions: delivering academic content, managing student practice, checking for understanding, maintaining high

expectations for behavior, implementing efficient procedures, assessing student understanding and using results to drive practice, building student self-efficacy, investing students in the class goals, creating effective lesson plans aligned to rigorous standards, etc.

- Students exhibiting behaviors and actions that signify a culture of achievement – these behaviors and actions range from being on-task, to being interested and hard-working, to being passionate, urgent, and joyful.
- Students exhibiting behaviors and actions that signify they are engaging with rigorous content – these behaviors range from displaying factual recall of content, to explaining, analyzing and applying content knowledge and skills to understand new information, to evaluating and synthesizing content to create new and deeper understandings.

Coaches are trained during the spring on effective observation and coaching. They learn how to analyze classrooms to determine progress toward a path-changing vision for students, including identifying COA and EWRC.

Observational data is rolled up to the IMT (or regional leadership, in the case of regional institutes) and used to inform institute teacher training in an ongoing way throughout institute. At the end of the summer, this data is further rolled up to TPT and Regional Operations leadership and used to inform the design and development of future institutes.

Input, Output, and Process Measures. TPSD Strategy will measure the retention of CMs through institute and into the classroom, both for institute overall and for participants in each of the sub-initiatives included in this project. They will do this by using TFA’s central Program Tracker (PT) system that contains information on all our CMs, including their region, attendance at institute, teaching placement (school, grade, subject), and retention throughout their two year TFA commitment. Institute and regional staff enter data into the PT on an ongoing basis.

PT data allow the TPT and others to efficiently monitor and report on how many CMs attend summer institutes, and the percentage that begin teaching each fall. It is also a key tool in linking participation in different institutes or institute pilots to performance data, observations, survey results, etc. Once a pilot is underway, participating CMs' records are flagged as being pilot participants to manage communication, appropriate survey dissemination, accurate reporting, and the ability to link their personal data to other datasets as needed for analysis.

Evaluating Regional Institute Impact. While retaining many of the core aspects of national institutes, the goal of regional institutes is to provide regions with the autonomy and flexibility to develop a model uniquely tailored to the local context. The anticipated outcomes are stronger relationships between TFA and community partners (school districts, charter networks, schools of education) that result in a training regimen that is more streamlined and increases CM understanding of and commitment to affecting change in specific communities.

We will evaluate the impact of regional institute pilots using TFA's corps member and alumni learning index (CALI), a set of eight survey questions designed to measure the extent to which we are develop and cultivate the mindsets/beliefs that we think are critical for CMs and alumni to acquire and/or strengthen in order to maximize their impact as CMs and alumni—such as conviction, self-efficacy, and sense of collaboration with students' families and community members. We believe comparing average CALI scores for CMs attending national institutes to the average scores of those CMs attending regional training institutes will show a measurable increase for CMs in regional institutes.

CMs in regional institutes will teach in the same community, with the same people (regional staff, other CMs, school and district partners, and area alumni) throughout their entire TFA experience. We believe this consistency and ability to tailor training to the local context will

result in a stronger corps, as evidenced by higher overall average CALI scores relative to CMs in national institutes. We have seen this to be the case with the two regional institutes we piloted in 2013 and the seven we conducted in 2014. (Appendix G details how CALI is computed.)

The TPSD Strategy team collects CM survey data and calculates CALI scores. National and regional institute staff will receive this data at the end of the summer, as they begin planning for the following year, thus providing ample time to analyze, understand, and act upon results.

Impact of Enhanced Training for Early Childhood Education (ECE). We will evaluate the enhanced pre-K training by having TFA ECE experts regularly observe CMs during institute to gauge their effectiveness on the priority teacher actions developed by our ECE Design team (see p. 2 of Appendix H). In addition, the TPSD Strategy team will analyze CM survey data about their satisfaction with their pre-service training and compare it to survey responses from pre-K CMs who did not receive enhanced training. Finally, trained ECE coaches will observe and evaluate a meaningful subset of pre-K CMs on the priority teacher actions during their first semester of teaching and our national Managing Director of Early Childhood Education Design will provide an additional review of videotaped teaching footage of a subset of evaluated CMs. This analysis will evaluate the extent to which CMs who received the enhanced training are able to enact effective pre-K teaching at the outset of the school year.

Conclusion. At the conclusion of this SEED grant, 8,500 CMs will have received the foundational teacher training needed to become effective and highly effective teachers working with high-need students in low-income communities throughout the country. The overwhelming majority of these CMs will remain in the classroom for at least two years and consistently advance their students' achievement. As alumni, informed by this training and subsequent classroom experience, they will provide critical leadership in classrooms, schools, districts, and

in the broader nonprofit, policy, and business community; they will drive innovations from inside and outside the education system – as political leaders and policymakers, social entrepreneurs, and civic leaders in all sectors – dedicated to expanding educational opportunity.

We will have new insights into how key adjustments to the structure of institute impact CM preparedness, and will share our insights across the TFA network and the education community.

As a result of these efforts, this project will have expanded the pipeline of effective teachers and leaders and created new resources and learnings for the broader community dedicated to improving outcomes for high-need students for many years to come.