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NEW STUDY FINDS POSITIVE IMPACT OF TEACH FOR AMERICA CORPS MEMBERS AND ALUMNI TEACHERS ON STUDENT OUTCOMES

Researchers at Southern Methodist University Find Students of TFA-Affiliated Teachers More or As Likely to Pass Texas STAAR Assessment Than Students of Non-TFA Affiliated Teachers in Study of Six Academic Years

NEW YORK, February 20, 2019—Texas students taught by Teach For America (TFA) corps members and alumni outperform or perform as well as students taught by non-TFA teachers, according to a six-year impact evaluation conducted by The Center on Research & Evaluation (CORE) at Southern Methodist University.

The [evaluation report](#), released today, looked at the impact of Teach For America corps members and alumni teachers in Texas. The evaluation compared academic outcomes for students of TFA corps members and alumni teachers across five regions—Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, the Rio Grande Valley, and San Antonio—to those of non-TFA teachers with commensurate classroom experience. The evaluation spanned six academic years, ten grade levels and nine content areas.

The report found that overall, across all content areas, students of TFA-affiliated teachers were more or as likely to pass the rigorous State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) test than students of non-TFA affiliated teachers.

TFA teacher effectiveness was found for students in both traditional district public schools and public charter schools—but researchers found the advantage to having TFA teachers was even greater at traditional district schools.

Additionally, TFA-affiliated teachers are more effective than non-TFA affiliated teachers, on average, for all student populations, regardless of race, economic status or language proficiency, but there was a greater and more consistent advantage for Black and Hispanic students and for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) students if they were taught by TFA teachers.

When looking at TFA alumni teachers only, the study found the impact was more pronounced. TFA alumni were found to be generally more effective than other veteran non-TFA teachers across all regions, with Texas students of TFA alumni teachers on average over 7% more likely to meet standards on the STAAR assessment than students of comparable veteran non-TFA teachers.

TFA corps members make a two-year commitment to teach in schools in low-income communities; TFA alumni teachers choose to continue leading classrooms. Nationally, over 14,000 Teach For America alumni work as teachers, and in a recent survey, 85% of alumni indicated that they continue to work in fields that impact education and low-income communities.

“CORE is committed to conducting rigorous evaluations of educational initiatives, and to equip decision-makers with excellent information about what works, and why,” said Annie Wright, Ph.D., Director of Evaluation, Center on Research and Evaluation (CORE). “This impact report is the most comprehensive look to date at TFA’s effectiveness in Texas. We hope that the results can be used to replicate and refine effective strategies across the state.”

“TFA teachers have an outstanding impact on student achievement, and the results of this study are yet another externally validated confirmation of that,” said Cary Wright, executive director of Teach For America Dallas-Fort Worth, one of the regions included in the study. “TFA works to improve broader student outcomes, academic as well as non-cognitive outcomes that together lead to student success in life. This study is the latest in a growing body of research demonstrating Teach For America’s positive impact on multiple dimensions of student achievement, in Texas and across the country.”

“Teach For America corps members and alumni have a significant and positive impact in the classrooms they lead, and work inside and outside the classroom to achieve excellence and equity for all students,” said Teach For America CEO Elisa Villanueva Beard. TFA has 6,700 corps members teaching in 51 regions across the country, as well as 53,000 alumni leaders.

This study, commissioned by Teach For America, is the first in a series of regional impact evaluations that the organization is planning for the coming years, and its results are comparable to previous evaluations measuring TFA corps member and alumni teacher impact. “While we know through our own data that corps members and alumni teachers have a positive impact on their students’ success, we want to continually deepen our understanding of how students in TFA classrooms are achieving. Research studies of our impact prove what’s working and provide us with additional areas to lean into with our programming,” said Grant Van Eaton, Ph.D., managing director of research and insights at Teach For America. Teach For America is currently assembling a professional learning community with its Texas program leads to understand how the impact evaluation results can shape program design and execution for the upcoming school year and beyond.

About Teach For America

Teach For America works in partnership with urban and rural communities in more than 50 regions across the country to expand educational opportunity for children. Founded in 1990, Teach For America recruits and develops a diverse corps of outstanding leaders to make an initial two-year commitment to teach in high-need schools and become lifelong leaders in the effort to end educational inequity. Today Teach For America is a force of nearly 60,000 alumni and corps members committed to profound systemic change. From classrooms to districts to state houses across America, they’re reimagining education to realize the day when every child has an equal opportunity to learn, to grow, to influence and to lead. Teach For America is a proud member of the AmeriCorps national service network. For more information, visit www.teachforamerica.org and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

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