

# What the Research Says

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Teach For America is one of the largest and most studied teacher-preparation and educational-leadership development organizations in the country. We welcome independent research efforts to assess our impact and inform the continuous improvement of our program. This document offers an overview and summary of existing research.

## Instructional impact

There is a substantial body of high-quality research on the instructional impact of Teach For America teachers. The most recent study, commissioned from Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. by the U.S. Department of Education's Institute for Education Sciences, found that students of Teach For America teachers learned 2.6 months more mathematics in a year than students in the same schools taught by teachers from traditional preparation programs or less selective alternative route programs. This study employed a random-assignment experimental design, considered the "gold standard" research methodology for impact evaluations, and its estimates are representative of what rigorous studies of Teach For America, experimental and otherwise, tend to find.

The literature spans multiple regions, subject areas and grade levels, and two points about it stand out. First, the evidence of our teachers' positive impact is clearest and most pronounced in math and science. A definitive explanation for this finding eludes researchers, but the fact that our teachers have a demonstrably stronger grip on these subjects than their counterparts is almost certainly part of the story. Second, the most methodologically compelling research finds that corps members outperform both novice and experienced teachers in the same schools. This is not to say that classroom experience is unrelated to student achievement. Our teachers and others must climb a well-documented learning curve during their initial years of teaching, but the body of research leads one to expect students in the classrooms of corps members—recruited, trained and supported by Teach For America—to learn as much or more than they would if assigned a more experienced teacher in the same school.

Two sources of evidence about the instructional efficacy of our teachers complement the impact literature. First, state-wide studies of the relative effectiveness of teacher education programs—in Louisiana, North Carolina, and Tennessee—consistently place Teach For America at or near the top in terms of participants' effects on student achievement. Consistency over time is important because the results of these studies include a good deal of statistical "noise." Second, over the past 18 years Teach For America has periodically commissioned an external study of principals' views on corps members. In the 2013 iteration of the National Principal Survey, principals overwhelmingly reported satisfaction with corps members. Eighty-four percent of principals said they would hire another corps member given the opportunity, and 91 percent reported it somewhat (14%), moderately (29%), or extremely (49%) likely that they would recommend hiring corps members to their colleagues.

## Alumni leadership and impact beyond the classroom

Teach For America works to ensure that corps members become lifelong leaders in expanding educational opportunity, whether in the classroom or in other roles. After more than 20 years, our network of more than 32,000 alumni includes some of the nation's most influential and effective advocates for students and families in low-income communities. A 2011 study by researchers from Harvard Graduate School of Education and the American Enterprise Institute concluded that more founders and top leaders of entrepreneurial education organizations started their careers with Teach For America than anywhere else. Another 2011 Harvard University

study found that Teach For America strengthens participants' conviction that children from low-income backgrounds can compete academically with children from more affluent backgrounds; intensifies their belief that the achievement gap is solvable; and increases the likelihood that they will pursue a career in the education sector, which two-thirds of them do, according to our own data.

## **Diversity matters**

Teach For America believes that a diverse teacher workforce, one that reflects the racial and socio-economic background of the nation's children, is crucial to our vision of eliminating educational inequity. For this reason we place particular emphasis on recruiting a diverse corps, and our 2013 cohort is our most diverse yet. Thirty-nine percent of new corps members are people of color, and African-Americans and Latinos account for 25 percent of the new corps, a rate markedly higher than the 14 percent of teachers nationally who identify themselves as such.

A small body of research underscores the importance of our initiatives around diversity. A 2013 study by Jason Irrizary and Morgaen Donaldson found that Latino corps members tend to remain teaching in their original, high-poverty placement school beyond their two-year commitment at higher rates than their white counterparts. The researchers tie this difference to a pronounced motivation among Latino teaching candidates "to combat the negative experiences they had as K-12 students."

Given the nation's demographic trends, more research around how and why a diverse teacher workforce matters is surely needed. Teach For America expects to be an important lens on these questions.

## Summary of major external research

Teach For America has received an enormous amount of attention from the research community, especially since test-driven accountability systems emblemized by No Child Left Behind began making relevant data on student achievement available at the beginning of the 2000s. What follows is a summary of notable research.

### *Criteria for selection of studies and reports*

The studies and reports reviewed below include those gleaned from academic databases, those produced by independent research organizations and scholars with whom Teach For America maintains an ongoing relationship, and those generated by public agencies that invest in Teach For America. The studies and reports can be characterized in these ways:

- They were completed during the last ten years.
- They feature systematic analyses of data, quantitative or qualitative.
- They are primarily focused on questions around Teach For America.
- Their authors are not Teach For America employees.
- They are *not* simply reviews of or commentaries on existing literature.
- They are *not* personal reflections or collections of anecdotes.

### *Organization and method*

The summaries of the research have been grouped into four broad categories based on the questions they address: instructional impact, alumni impact, the selection model, and retention in teaching. Each summary contains basic identifying information on the study or report (title, author, year); geographic scope (regional or national); and descriptors of the study or report's research design (descriptive, correlational, quasi-experimental, or experimental). Experimental studies provide the strongest evidence of causal relationships, offering the most cogent evidence speaking to a question such as this one: Does having a Teach For America teacher actually cause students to achieve at higher levels than they otherwise would have? A good quasi-experimental study uses statistical methods to create a case for causal interpretation of correlational relationships. Correlational studies can provide evidence suggestive of a causal relationship. Descriptive research dwells on the basic features of data to shed light on people, places, and phenomena of interest.

Each summary also indicates whether the piece in question has withstood the scrutiny of peer review. For the scholarly community, publication in peer-reviewed journals is the coin of the realm, but policymakers should take a broader view of evidence for two reasons. First, researchers working under contract or for public agencies have no stake in peer review, but they have incentives nonetheless to provide intellectually honest, high quality work. Second, there is considerable variation in the caliber of work acceptable to peer-reviewed research journals concerned with education. To wit, the education policy journal *Education Next* published in 2008 a "report card" on most frequently cited research studies on Teach For America<sup>1</sup>. The journal noted that the studies vary widely in both their central findings and the quality of their methodologies. The only study to earn an A grade for its methodology was a Mathematica Policy Research study from 2004, which found that corps members outperform

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<sup>1</sup> <http://bit.ly/ednxt04>

non-Teach For America teachers in math. For these reasons, each portrait below includes a brief commentary on the most salient aspects of a research product, peer-reviewed or not.

### *Instructional impact*

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Hammerness, K., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Ronfeldt, M., & Wyckoff, J. (2010). <i>Recruiting effective math teachers: How do math immersion teachers compare?: Evidence from New York City</i> . (No. 16017). Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	Math achievement records of 65,000 to 80,000 students in grades 3 through 8 matched with surveys completed by 603 New York City teachers (210 Teaching Fellows Math Immersion Teachers, 130 Teaching Fellows, 22 TFA teachers, 129 College Recommending teachers, and 112 teachers from "other" preparation routes)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The focus of this study was to determine the effectiveness of the New York City Teaching Fellows Math Immersion program. The study found that although the Math Immersion teachers have stronger academic qualifications than College Recommending teachers, they produce smaller student achievement in math. The Math Immersion teachers have weaker academic qualifications than TFA teachers and produce smaller gains for their students. Although the overall results are positive with regards to the performance of students taught by TFA teachers, it's important to keep in mind that students were not randomly assigned to the teachers and that the number of TFA teachers included in the sample is noticeably small compared to the number of non-TFA teachers in the sample.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/1gaLihJ">http://bit.ly/1gaLihJ</a>

Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2006). How changes in entry requirements alter the teacher workforce and affect student achievement. <i>Education Finance and Policy</i> , 1(2), 176-216. doi:10.1162/edfp.2006.1.2.176	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	Math and English Language Arts achievement scores of 65,000 to 80,000 students in grades 3 through 8 in New York City (unclear how many teachers and how many per each pathway were included in the study)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this study examined whether the initial pathway through which a teacher enters the teaching profession in New York City results in different student achievement outcomes. The authors found that teachers that enter the profession through alternative routes (e.g., TFA, Teaching Fellows) provide small initial gains in Math and ELA achievement for their students although experience tends to erase this difference among pathways. There is greater variation in effectiveness among teachers that came through the same pathway than the amount of variation between the average effectiveness across pathways. This was not a randomized experiment and the effects of student and school attributes were controlled for after the data was collected.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/18XlbHM">http://bit.ly/18XlbHM</a>

Dallas Independent School District Evaluation & Accountability. (2010). <i>Teach For America: Relative effectiveness and retention in the Dallas Independent School District, 2009-10</i> . Dallas, TX.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	116 language arts teachers (15 traditionally certified, 76 non-TFA alternatively certified, 25 TFA) and 125 math teachers (17 traditionally certified, 89 non-TFA alternatively certified, 19 TFA) in Dallas Independent School District
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	This study showed that TFA teachers are slightly more effective in math and language arts in comparison to traditionally certified and other alternatively certified teachers in the Dallas Independent School District in the 2009-2010 school year. However, the effects are not statistically significant. TFA teachers were also found to have higher retention from year one to year two of teaching but this difference in retention rate was not statistically significant. The sample size of this study is small and none of the results are statistically significant. It is also unclear if differences in student and school attributes were accounted for in analyzing the results.

Darling-Hammond, L., Holtzman, D. J., Gatlin, S. J., & Vasquez Heilig, J. (2005). Does teacher preparation matter? Evidence about teacher certification, Teach For America, and teacher effectiveness. <i>Education Policy Analysis Archives</i> , 13(42), 1-48.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	Records of 34,000 to 39,000 students in the Houston Independent School District in grades 4 to 5 and their 1,600 to 1,850 teachers (unclear how many teachers per pathway)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this study found that uncertified TFA teachers (i.e., corps members in their first year) are less effective than those who are certified. Once these teachers are certified (usually in second or third year of teaching), they perform about as well as other certified teachers. While the authors attribute effectiveness to certification status, it is debatable whether this is truly a result of certification rather than experience. This study did not use a randomized controlled design and the ambiguity in the number of teachers per pathway included in the sample make the authors' conclusion less than robust.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HW1uVK">http://bit.ly/HW1uVK</a>
Link to response to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/l2vWZT">http://bit.ly/l2vWZT</a>

Divine, K. (2011). <i>Case study of effectiveness</i> . Jacksonville, FL: The Schultz Center for Teaching and Leadership.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	About half of the 101 TFA corps members teaching in Duval County who were teaching grade levels and subject areas that had student performance data (math and reading for grades 2 to 10)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	For both math and reading, TFA teachers were found to be making positive gains in student achievement, although in certain grade levels the gains

	were below average or on par with other novice non-TFA teachers. Due to these mixed results by grade level and subject area, generalized conclusions about TFA teachers' effectiveness cannot be made. It is also important to note that students were not randomly assigned to TFA or non-TFA teachers and student and school characteristics were not controlled for in the sample.
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Henry, G. T., Thompson, C. L., Bastian, K. C., Campbell, S. L., Patterson, K. M., & Chapman, A. (2012). <i>UNC teacher quality research: Teacher portals effectiveness analysis</i> . Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Carolina Institute for Public Policy.	
Henry, G. T., Thompson, C. L., Bastian, K. C., Fortner, C. K., Kershaw, D. C., Marcus, J. V., & Zulli, R. A. (2011). <i>UNC teacher preparation program effectiveness report</i> . Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Carolina Institute for Public Policy.	
Henry, G. T., Thompson, C. L., Bastian, K. C., Fortner, C. K., Kershaw, D. C., Purtell, K. M., & Zulli, R. A. (2010). <i>Portal report: Teacher preparation and student test scores in North Carolina</i> . Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Carolina Institute for Public Policy.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	Achievement scores of roughly 30,000 novice teachers (teachers with less than 5 years of experience) in every school district in North Carolina
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	This yearly report produced by the University of North Carolina examines all pathways through which public school teachers in North Carolina enter the profession. Compared to other new teacher to North Carolina with less than 5 years of experience, TFA teachers were consistently found to be the most effective in terms of student gains. TFA teachers, however, had the lowest rate of retention among all teachers that entered the profession through various pathways. It is also important to note that each of the pathways have vastly different number of individuals with TFA teachers being the smallest group.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/159IGMm">http://bit.ly/159IGMm</a>
Link to PowerPoint Presentation to the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee of the North Carolina General Assembly	<a href="http://bit.ly/HmT9sl">http://bit.ly/HmT9sl</a>

Houston Independent School District Department of Research and Accountability. (2011). <i>Teach for America (TFA) 2009-2010</i> . Houston, TX.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	Study mentions that 647 new TFA teachers were hired since the 2005-2006 school year up until the 2009-2010 school year, but it's unclear how many of these teachers were included in the analysis of student performance in 2009-2010. Number of non-TFA teachers in the study is also unclear.
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	The study finds mixed results in the passing rate of state-mandated tests

	taken by students taught by TFA teachers compared to the passing rate of students taught by non-TFA teachers. The study also finds that non-TFA teachers remain in the Houston Independent School District at higher rates than TFA teachers. This study is not a randomized controlled experiment and it does not take care to control for student or school related factors in analyzing the results.
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Kane, T. J., Rockoff, J. E., & Staiger, D. O. (2008). What does certification tell us about teacher effectiveness? Evidence from New York City. <i>Economics of Education Review</i> , 27(6), 615-631. doi: <a href="http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2007.05.005">http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.econedurev.2007.05.005</a>	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	10,040 teachers in New York City teaching grades 4 to 8 (416 of which were TFA teachers)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this study conclude that certification does not determine the effectiveness of teachers. Rather, it's the experience that teachers have during their first few years of teaching that determine their effectiveness. TFA teachers in this sample were most effective in raising students' math achievement scores compared to other teachers. Although this study was not a randomized experiment, the study included a relatively large sample size and adjusted for differences in student and school-specific factors when performing the analysis.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/1fOobff">http://bit.ly/1fOobff</a>

Noell, G.H., & Gansle, K.A. (2009). <i>Teach For America teachers' contribution to student achievement in Louisiana in grades 4-9: 2004-2005 to 2006-2007</i> . Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana Board of Regents.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	Achievement records of 4 <sup>th</sup> to 9 <sup>th</sup> grade students in Louisiana taught by approximately 6000 to 7000 teachers (it is unclear how many are TFA teachers)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this study found that TFA teachers outperformed other new teachers in the content areas of math, science, reading, and language arts. When comparing TFA teachers to other experienced teachers, the TFA teachers neither out- nor under-performed. The authors also found that a very small percentage of TFA teachers remain in the classroom beyond three years of teaching. Student and school-level differences were adjusted for since the design was not a randomized experiment.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HvCRsl">http://bit.ly/HvCRsl</a>
Link to press coverage	<a href="http://nyti.ms/1gaP62p">http://nyti.ms/1gaP62p</a>

Schoeneberger, J. A. (2011). <i>Evaluation of Teach For America in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools</i> . Charlotte, NC: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Center for Research & Evaluation.	
Schoeneberger, J. A., Dever, K. A., & Tingle, L. (2009). <i>Evaluation of Teach For America in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools</i> . Charlotte, NC: Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Center for Research & Evaluation.	

Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	169 TFA teachers across math, reading, and science compared to non-TFA teachers (exact number unclear)
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The authors conclude that TFA teachers in Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools are just as effective when compared to other teachers that teach in schools that TFA teachers are placed in, but are less effective compared to teachers who teach in schools that do not have any TFA teacher placement. The impact of TFA teachers is positive in math and science but mixed in reading and social sciences. Although students have not been randomly assigned to TFA or non-TFA teachers, the authors make an effort to adjust for this difference by comparing TFA teachers to other non-TFA teachers in the same school building.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/l86964">http://bit.ly/l86964</a>

Strategic Data Project. (2012). <i>SDP human capital diagnostic: Los Angeles Unified School District</i> . Cambridge, MA.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	423 TFA teachers in Los Angeles Unified School District compared to 442 Career Ladder teachers (another alternative certification route) and 7,347 all other newly hired teachers in 2004-2005 and 2006-2007
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	Among many research questions regarding LAUSD's teachers, one of the questions the report aims to answer is the effectiveness of teachers who enter the district through alternative routes. Along with TFA, another alternative certification program called Career Ladder is examined for this study. The findings show that TFA and Career Ladder teachers outperform other novice teachers in math by an amount that is approximately equal to one to two months of additional learning for their students. TFA teachers outperform other novice teachers in language arts. TFA teachers' third year retention is lower than Career Ladder and all other new teachers' third year retention. Students were not randomly assigned to teachers for this study.
Link to study	<a href="http://hvr.me/15QqZPd">http://hvr.me/15QqZPd</a>

Tennessee State Board of Education. (2010). <i>Report card on the effectiveness of teacher training programs</i> . Nashville, TN.	
Tennessee State Board of Education. (2011). <i>2011 report card on the effectiveness of teacher training programs</i> . Nashville, TN.	
Tennessee State Board of Education. (2012). <i>2012 report card on the effectiveness of teacher training programs</i> . Nashville, TN.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	5,109 traditional and alternatively certified teachers from over 40 different preparation programs
Study Design:	Correlational



Summary and Commentary:	This series of reports consistently found that TFA Memphis and Nashville corps members are among the most effective math, science, and social science teachers for 4 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> graders in the state. TFA teachers were also found to outperform other high school Algebra I and English teachers. When comparing TFA teachers to veteran teachers, the results are mixed but TFA teachers outperform novice teachers. This was not a randomized experimental design and it's unclear what kinds of measures were taken to account for differences in student and school-specific characteristics.
Link to study	<a href="http://1.usa.gov/176TiJv">http://1.usa.gov/176TiJv</a>
Link to press coverage	<a href="http://bit.ly/GCy9Az">http://bit.ly/GCy9Az</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/19pKjDi">http://bit.ly/19pKjDi</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/18YQqjN">http://bit.ly/18YQqjN</a>

Turner, H. M., Goodman, D., Adachi, E., Brite, J., & Decker, L. E. (2012). <i>Evaluation of Teach For America in Texas schools</i> . San Antonio, TX: Edvance Research, Inc.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	493 campuses (94 TFA and 399 non-TFA) and 11,788 students (5,894 TFA and 5,894 non-TFA) in math sample and 483 campuses (108 TFA and 375 non-TFA) and 14,354 students (7,177 TFA and 7,177 non-TFA) in reading sample
Study Design:	Quasi-experimental
Summary and Commentary:	This study found that students of TFA corps members had higher larger gains in middle school math than students of non-TFA novices in schools without any TFA corps members. A similar finding held for TFA alumni relative to non-TFA veterans for math and reading in middle school. On the whole, the evidence suggests TFA teachers provide a net boost to student achievement in Texas. Although the study was not a randomized experimental design, it employed a method of matching and controlling the sample to account for the differences in characteristics of students and schools. The large sample size also adds to the robustness of the study.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/15MHbGx">http://bit.ly/15MHbGx</a>

Urdegar, S. M. (2011). <i>Teach For America: An analysis of placement and impact</i> . Miami, FL: Miami-Dade County Public Schools Office of Assessment, Research, and Data Analysis.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	89 to 141 TFA teachers in 21 to 48 schools in which TFA teachers were placed from 2008-2009 to 2010-2011 – however, of all TFA teachers in the district, only about half were included as the other half did not teach grades or subjects for which there were available student achievement data
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	The study finds no consistent impact of TFA teachers in their ability to raise math and reading scores of students. The study sample is small, however, and the analysis was not performed with student and school-level attributes in mind, which should have been controlled for due to non-random assignment of students to teachers. Furthermore, it is unclear what the characteristics of the non-TFA teachers were (e.g., novice or veteran) making the comparison difficult to validate.

Ware, A., LaTurner, R. J., Parsons, J., Okulicz-Kozaryn, A., Garland, M., & Klopfenstein, K. (2011). <i>Teacher preparation programs and Teach For America research study</i> . Dallas, TX: The University of Texas at Dallas Education Research Center.	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	15 traditionally certified, 76 other alternatively certified and 25 TFA teachers in language arts; 17 traditionally certified, 89 other alternatively certified and 19 TFA teachers in math
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	The authors found that TFA teachers are making a positive impact on high school students' math achievement and among those who are economically disadvantaged and minority (but not Hispanic students). They found that TFA teachers are making lower gains in English language arts and reading. While the authors recognize that TFA teachers teach in schools that have greater percentage of students that are economically disadvantaged compared to non-TFA teachers, the study design does not account for this difference.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HeRrXn">http://bit.ly/HeRrXn</a>
Link to press coverage	<a href="http://bit.ly/HnUv42">http://bit.ly/HnUv42</a>

Xu, Z., Hannaway, J., & Taylor, C. (2011). Making a difference? The effects of Teach For America in high school. <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> , 30(3), 447-469. doi:10.1002/pam.20585	
Geographic Scope	Regional
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	98 TFA teachers, 6,826 traditionally certified teachers, 2,411 traditionally certified novice teachers (less than 3 years of experience) in North Carolina
Study Design:	Quasi-experimental
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this study found that TFA teachers are more effective than traditionally certified novice as well as experienced teachers, especially in secondary math and science achievement. The authors took steps to control for student, classroom, and school-specific effects by applying models to account for these differences and only making appropriate comparisons. Although not a truly randomized experimental study, the methodology comes close.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/I2vkDJ">http://bit.ly/I2vkDJ</a>
Link to press coverage	<a href="http://nyti.ms/I2HUCC">http://nyti.ms/I2HUCC</a>

Antecol, H., Eren, O., & Ozbeklik, S. (2013). The effect of Teach for America on the <i>distribution of student achievement in primary school: Evidence from a randomized experiment</i> . (No. 7296). Bonn, Germany: IZA.	
Geographic Scope	National
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	17 schools, 100 classes grades 1 to 5 (44 taught by TFA teachers, 56 taught by control teachers), 1,765 students (785 taught by TFA teachers, 980 taught by control teachers)
Study Design:	Experimental
Summary and Commentary:	This study revisits the data collected by Mathematica in 2004 in assessing the effects of TFA teachers on elementary math and reading achievements. Using a method called fixed effect quantile regression, the authors found positive and statistically significant effects of TFA teachers over the entire

	math achievement distribution. They did not find any statistically significant results in reading achievement. They also found that TFA teachers' impact on math achievement is greater for girls and African American students. Additionally they concluded that the positive effect on math is not tied to certification type. This is a robust research study that used randomized experimental data and analysis.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/GADZCa">http://bit.ly/GADZCa</a>

Clark, M. A., Chiang, H. S., Silva, T., McConnell, S., Sonnenfeld, K., Erbe, A., & Puma, M. (2013). <i>The effectiveness of secondary math teachers from Teach For America and the Teaching Fellows programs</i> . (No. NCEE 2013-4015). Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences and Mathematica Policy Research.	
Geographic Scope	National
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	4,573 students, 136 math teachers, 45 schools in 11 districts and 8 states
Study Design:	Experimental
Summary and Commentary:	The authors found that regardless of teacher certification route and years of teaching experience, TFA math teachers had a greater impact than non-TFA math teachers in middle school and high school math. This impact amounted to about 2.6 months of additional math instruction. This study design is very robust in that students were randomly assigned to teachers and TFA-teachers were compared to other non-TFA teachers teaching in the same school. The large and multi-state sample also adds to the robustness of the study.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/176x2P8">http://bit.ly/176x2P8</a>
Press coverage	<a href="http://bit.ly/16nwHMb">http://bit.ly/16nwHMb</a> <a href="http://slate.me/1ga55rM">http://slate.me/1ga55rM</a> <a href="http://wapo.st/18Xt5AX">http://wapo.st/18Xt5AX</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/159LrgQ">http://bit.ly/159LrgQ</a>

Glazerman, S., Mayer, D., & Decker, P. (2006). Alternative routes to teaching: The impacts of Teach For America on student achievement and other outcomes. <i>Journal of Policy Analysis and Management</i> , 25(1), 75-96. doi:10.1002/pam.20157	
Geographic Scope	National
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	17 schools, 100 classes grades 1 to 5 (44 taught by TFA teachers, 56 taught by control teachers), 1,765 students (785 taught by TFA teachers, 980 taught by control teachers)
Study Design:	Experimental
Summary and Commentary:	The authors of this multi-state randomized research study found that the average math score of students taught by TFA teachers (corps members as well as alumni) was higher than the average math score of students taught by control teachers (traditionally certified teachers as well as non-TFA but alternatively certified teachers). Average reading gains of students taught by TFA teachers was comparable to average reading gains of students taught by control teachers. This study design is very robust as it involved random assignment of students to TFA or non-TFA teachers, used pre- and post-test scores of students, spans multiple schools in multiple states and has a large sample size.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HmW7x1">http://bit.ly/HmW7x1</a>

	<a href="http://bit.ly/v000iT">http://bit.ly/v000iT</a>
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McCann, C. E., Turner, T. T., & White, R. N. (2013). <i>Results from the Teach For America 2013 national principal survey</i> . Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.	
Turner, T. T., Romash, R. A., & White, R. N. (2011). <i>Results from the Teach For America 2011 national principal survey</i> . Washington, DC: Policy Studies Associates, Inc.	
Geographic Scope	National
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	Survey of 1,946 principals across all 46 TFA regions
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	Most principals who responded to this bi-annual survey reported being satisfied with corps members in their school, that they would hire another corps member given the opportunity, that corps members have stronger abilities than the typical beginning teacher, and that corps members have stronger abilities than the typical veteran teacher in some cases. Many principals were also satisfied with alumni teachers working in their schools. These results are descriptive and are based on survey responses.

### *Alumni Impact*

Dobbie, W., & Fryer, R. G., Jr. (2011). <i>The impact of voluntary youth service on future outcomes: Evidence from Teach For America</i> . (No. 17402). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University and The National Bureau of Economic Research.	
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	TFA provided over 60,000 e-mail addresses of applicant cohorts from 2003 to 2009; final response rate is unclear and researchers mention that they only used a small fraction of the data collected
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	The researchers found that those who have gone through the TFA experience are more likely to believe that poor children can compete with more advantaged children, that the achievement gap is solvable, and that teachers play an important role in students' success. They are also more likely to be working in the field of education, more likely to believe that service is an important part of their career, and more likely to be racially tolerant. Possible limitations to this study are that there was a low response rate to the surveys (30% or below), the results only reflect the responses from the 2007 cohort, and the timing of the survey was very close to the end of the 2007 cohort's corps member experience.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HsSbKL">http://bit.ly/HsSbKL</a>

Higgins, M., Hess, F. M., Weiner, J., & Robison, W. (2011). Creating a corps of change agents. <i>Education Next</i> , 11(3)	
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	71 founders and 320 top management team (TMT) members in 49 entrepreneurial education organizations
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	By examining the work history of founders and TMT members of 49

	entrepreneurial education organizations, the authors found that the originating organization that appeared most frequently is TFA. The authors also note that this is not simply due to the size of TFA as it is much smaller than other originating organizations (e.g. Chicago Public Schools, McKinsey & Company) and was smaller in past years when these alumni would have been part of the corps. This is a descriptive study that involved tracing the work histories of founders and TMT members so it does not rigorously establish a relationship between having TFA corps or work experience with the likelihood that someone would become a founder or TMT member. The reason why TFA may act as a spawning ground for future education leaders remains a question as well although the authors cite possible reasons such as selective recruitment and strong culture.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HW2IAAn">http://bit.ly/HW2IAAn</a>

McAdam, D., & Brandt, C. (2009). Assessing the effects of voluntary youth service: The case of Teach For America. <i>Social Forces</i> , 88(2), 945-969. doi:10.1353/sof.0.0279	
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	1,583 alumni, 324 dropouts, and 634 non-matriculants of those who were accepted to the TFA corps between 1993 and 1998 were contacted, 1,124 of those individuals responded
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	The researchers found that those who went through the TFA experience tend to have higher mean civic attitudes compared to dropouts and non-matriculants. However, alumni were found to have lower rates of civic and political involvement (e.g. voting, giving to charitable organizations) compared to dropouts and non-matriculants. While the authors make the case that the TFA experience actually decreases the likelihood of civic and political engagement, it's questionable whether the comparison group used by the authors is appropriate and whether the differences in the three groups are meaningful.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/I6hrXI">http://bit.ly/I6hrXI</a>
Link to press coverage	<a href="http://nyti.ms/I2wUFG">http://nyti.ms/I2wUFG</a>
Link to response to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HmiyUU">http://bit.ly/HmiyUU</a>

### *TFA Selection Model*

Dobbie, W. (2011). <i>Teacher characteristics and student achievement: Evidence from Teach For America</i> . Cambridge, MA: Harvard University.	
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	384 TFA teachers in New York City who teach 3 <sup>rd</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	Dobbie aims to answer the question of whether TFA's selection model is effectively predicting teachers that will produce results in student achievement even before the teachers enter the classroom. He found that teachers' academic achievement, leadership experience, and perseverance are predictive of student gains in math and leadership experience and commitment to TFA's mission are predictive of student gains in English. The author controls for differences in student and school characteristics. Note that Dobbie does not compare the effectiveness of TFA teachers to non-TFA teachers.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/HeRkLz">http://bit.ly/HeRkLz</a>

Link to review of study	<a href="http://bit.ly/lgybqZ">http://bit.ly/lgybqZ</a>
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Bastian, K. C. (2013). <i>Do teachers' non-cognitive skills and traits predict effectiveness and evaluation ratings?</i> . Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.	
Peer Reviewed:	No
Sample Size:	All TFA corps members in North Carolina between 2007-2008 through 2010-2011 teaching in a tested subject and grade(exact number unclear) and a second sample of 251 teachers evaluated by their principals within the first sample
Study Design:	Correlational
Summary and Commentary:	The author aims to replicate and build upon the 2011 study by Dobbie to investigate whether non-cognitive characteristics of teachers can predict the effectiveness of teachers. The author found that organizational ability of teachers is highly predictive of their effectiveness at the elementary level. At the secondary level, the author found that holding high expectations of students results in high teacher effectiveness. Bastian accounts for other factors that may result in different levels of teacher effectiveness.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/1bwM74O">http://bit.ly/1bwM74O</a>

### Retention

Donaldson, M. L. (2008). <i>Teach For America teachers' careers: Whether, when, and why they leave low-income schools and the teaching profession</i> . Cambridge, MA: Harvard Graduate School of Education, Project on the Next Generation of Teachers.	
Donaldson, M. L. (2012). The promise of older novices: Teach For America teachers' age of entry and subsequent retention in teaching and schools. <i>Teachers College Record</i> , 114(10), 1-37.	
Donaldson, M. L., & Johnson, S. M. (2010). The price of misassignment: The role of teaching assignments in Teach For America teachers' exit from low-income schools and the teaching profession. <i>Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis</i> , 32(2), 299-323. doi:10.3102/0162373710367680	
Donaldson, M. L., & Johnson, S. M. (2011). Teach For America teachers: How long do they teach? Why do they leave? <i>The Phi Delta Kappan</i> , 93(2), 47-51.	
Irizarry, J., & Donaldson, M. L. (2012). Teach For América: The Latinization of U.S. schools and the critical shortage of Latina/o teachers. <i>American Educational Research Journal</i> , 49(1), 155-194. doi:10.3102/0002831211434764	
Peer Reviewed:	Yes
Sample Size:	2,029 national alumni from 2000-2002 TFA cohorts
Study Design:	Descriptive
Summary and Commentary:	Donaldson and colleagues use the same set of data collected from surveying alumni to determine various factors and patterns in corps member retention. The main findings include a 60.5% retention rate in the teaching profession beyond the 2 year commitment and a 43.6% retention rate in the original placement school beyond 2 years. The analysis also revealed that out-of-field or multiple grade assignments are more likely to push teachers to leave the teaching profession, that initial intention about

	remaining in the teaching profession matters in determining who stays in the profession, that older novice teachers are more likely to remain in the profession, and that Latino/a teachers exhibit different patterns when it comes to initial attraction and retention in the teaching profession. While these set of analyses provide valuable insight into factors that are likely to lead to higher retention, it's important to note that the authors do not provide comparisons to other non-TFA teachers and their retention rate.
Link to study	<a href="http://bit.ly/1hqi7Fk">http://bit.ly/1hqi7Fk</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/GD2rn1">http://bit.ly/GD2rn1</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/HDCv2X">http://bit.ly/HDCv2X</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/159Rfql">http://bit.ly/159Rfql</a> <a href="http://bit.ly/18XEbpC">http://bit.ly/18XEbpC</a>

## Conclusion

The research base discussed above will grow as new reports and studies are completed. It's a certainty that there will be more straightforward impact studies, as evidence of the instructional impact of corps members weighs most heavily on the mind of policymakers and our placement partners. Yet we expect to see and we will encourage ambitious new research efforts to build knowledge around under-studied questions.