TEACHING AS LEADERSHIP

The Highly Effective Teacher's Guide to Closing the Achievement Gap

DRAWN FROM 20 YEARS OF LEARNING FROM TEACH FOR AMERICA'S MOST SUCCESSFUL TEACHERS

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INTRODUCTION

IMAGINE YOU ARE JOINING US as we visit a school where a number of Teach For America teachers work. While we walk up the steps of the red-brick elementary school next to public housing in Baltimore City, we note that almost all of its students are living in poverty and only about half of its fifth graders are performing at the state’s minimal level of proficiency in reading and math. Stepping into the poorly lit hallway, we think about the fact that across the nation, fourth graders growing up in low-income communities are already two to three grade levels behind their peers in high-income communities.

Or perhaps, instead, we are visiting a middle school on the Texas-Mexico border that serves a large population of first-generation-American migrant children—children who, during the part of the year they are not working with their families in the fields, live in unincorporated colonias made up of half-built homes that sometimes lack water and electricity. Most of the students inside this school qualify for free and reduced-price lunch programs, and statistics suggest that only about half of those children will graduate from high school—a number that reflects national trends for children of color living in low-income communities. As we enter the school, we recall that in some wealthy (and usually almost exclusively white) communities, graduation rates are between 98 and 99 percent.

Or maybe today we are navigating a maze of chain-link fence on the campus of a massive high school in the Watts district of South Los Angeles, a school where students worry about the threats of gang violence every day. As we walk past security guards and metal detectors, we consider that this high school’s freshman class includes around a thousand students, and yet the graduating seniors number 240—only 30 of whom have the prerequisites on paper to even apply to college. As we walk into the building, we think about the harsh reality that on average, the African American and Latino students who do graduate from high school in America will read, write, and do math at about an eighth-grade level.

At Teach For America, we have trained and supported almost twenty-five thousand teachers in communities and schools where the achievement gap is most pronounced. Our teachers have worked with nearly 3 million children living at or near the poverty line, the vast majority of
whom are African American or Latino students who are performing well below their peers in higher-income neighborhoods. From this vantage point, we have the opportunity to learn about the distinguishing methods of teachers whose students are demonstrating dramatic academic achievement.

**Defining Teacher Effectiveness in Terms of Student Learning**

Imagine that you are joining us on this day to observe two particular first-year teachers. Both have come into the classroom with an impressive record of accomplishments in college. They seem to have similarly strong critical thinking, communication, and organizational skills. They teach the same grade and subject matter, right across the hall from each other. The first teacher, according to records from previous observations and data, is a solid new teacher. Struggling a little bit with classroom management, this teacher has a good rapport with the students, and the classroom has a generally productive atmosphere. According to the district’s midyear assessments, halfway through the school year, the students in this classroom are on pace to gain about a year’s worth of academic skills—a feat that many people view as admirable in light of all the challenges facing students and teachers in high-poverty schools.

Across the hall, however, something extraordinary is happening. According to the same previous observers and data, every student in this teacher’s classroom is on pace to gain almost three years of academic growth. This teacher is exceeding expectations for what any teacher—much less a new teacher—should be able to accomplish with her students. No one would suggest these dramatic results are “pretty good given all the challenges.” Student learning in this classroom is, on an absolute scale, phenomenal.

At Teach For America, we define and measure our teachers’ success in terms of how much their students learn. Our mission is to end educational inequity, to end the travesty that in our country where a child is born determines his or her educational outcomes and life prospects. We have seen that significant academic achievement is uniquely powerful in expanding life opportunities for our students. We therefore seek success on the same terms—measurable academic achievement—that define the disparities between children in low-income communities and their counterparts in higher-income communities.

By gathering and evaluating data on student achievement from thousands of teachers’ classrooms, we are able to view our teachers on a spectrum of effectiveness, from those who are struggling mightily to make any progress at all with their students, to those who are forging a path to dramatic academic progress. (An overview of our system of defining, measuring, and tracking students’ academic achievement is included as Appendix D.)
What the Most Effective Teachers in Low-Income Communities Are Doing Differently

As we walk down the hall, we think about the different academic trajectories of students in these two classrooms. We know that the students on one side of the hall may be getting on track for honors classes. Advanced Placement courses, additional education opportunities, and perhaps college. The other room of students, even with their solid efforts, will end the year just as far behind as they were when the school year began.

Knowing only that one teacher’s students are making decent academic gains and the other teacher’s students are making phenomenal academic progress, we stand between the two classrooms wondering what distinguishes these two teachers. What are extraordinarily successful teachers in our nation’s most challenging contexts doing differently? What does it take to erase the achievement gap for a classroom full of students?

Twenty years ago when Teach For America was just getting started, we heard of a few celebrated teachers in low-income communities who were ensuring that their students were achieving at the same levels as students in economically privileged communities. Many people assumed that those few teachers were “born to teach”—superstars whose success was a mysterious anomaly. However, as hundreds and then thousands of our teachers struggled for day-to-day progress with their students, at first a few and then more and more of them figured out how to lead their students to dramatic academic success in some of the nation’s most challenging contexts.

Our Ongoing Investigation

We first enter the classroom of the teacher with the good but not extraordinary results. The teacher is working hard, pushing through the lesson, trying to keep students focused on the subject matter. Some students seem a little distracted, but most of the time they are paying attention and following the teacher’s instructions. The teacher knows the material, clearly knows how to plan lessons and how to communicate instructions, and is positive and warm in tone and affect. Occasionally students misbehave, and the teacher addresses the problem, with some success. The overwhelming sense in the room is that the teacher is doing the right things and trying hard. We see indicators of student learning, but we also have the sense that the students may simply be going through the motions of being at school. After ten minutes, we leave.

Across the hall, we instantly sense a difference. Even as we cross the door’s threshold, without the teacher or other students seeming to notice or care, a student pops up and escorts us to an observer’s table at the back of the room, opens a notebook, and in a whisper shows us the learning goals for the day. He then hustle back to his seat, his hand shooting up to contribute to the class discussion. Even before we have figured out what the lesson is about,
we feel ourselves leaning forward with the students to hear the teacher’s hushed secrets. With some effort, we shift our focus from the teacher’s instruction to the room itself. We notice that the giant 2s all over the wall are also on the cover of the notebook in our hand. We see a banner above the chalkboard. The banner explains that the 2s signify the two years’ worth of academic growth that students are committed to making in this classroom. We watch the students and notice that every time the teacher asks a question, every child holds up some kind of hand signal. The teacher excitedly nods and asks another question. The teacher praises students’ efforts, and we wonder what is on the clipboard that she is frequently marking in her hand. Almost imperceptibly, subgroups of students shift from one exercise to another, and the teacher seamlessly moves among those groups. Now every student is working independently.

In the span of just four minutes, we see two different pairs of students lean together and help each other. Every action by every person in the room seems completely purposeful. The sense of urgency is thick. We hear the teacher double-checking with students about attending tutoring after school. After what we think is ten minutes, we realize fifty minutes have actually passed.

For two decades, Teach For America has been learning about what distinguishes highly effective teachers in low-income communities. We frequently observe teachers in person and on video, for example, to gather qualitative evidence of their actions in and around the classroom. We interview them and facilitate reflection about their processes, purposes, and beliefs. We review teachers’ planning materials, assessments, and student work. We survey teachers in our program at least four times a year about what training and support structures are most influential in their teaching practice. (A closer look at how we train and support our teachers is in Appendix C, and an overview of how we learn about our teachers’ actions is in Appendix D.)

When we put all this information about what teachers do, know, and believe alongside what we know about how much their students are learning, we see common patterns in the approach of the most effective teachers. We see highly effective teachers embodying the same principles employed by successful leaders in any challenging context—principles we call *Teaching As Leadership*.

**Teaching As Leadership**

Through observations, interviews, and surveys, we have literally and figuratively stood in thousands of halls between teachers who are getting merely good results from their students and teachers whose students are making dramatic, life-changing progress. This book describes what we are learning from the teachers whose students overcome inordinate challenges to achieve dramatic academic success.

Distilled to their essence, our findings indicate that six general principles distinguish the actions of highly effective teachers from those who are merely solid or struggling—principles one would find embodied by any successful leader in any challenging context. These are teachers who:
Set big goals that are ambitious, measurable, and meaningful for their students.

Invest students and their families through a variety of strategies to work hard to reach those ambitious goals.

Plan purposefully by focusing on where students are headed, how success will be defined, and what path to students' growth is most efficient.

Execute effectively by monitoring progress and adjusting course to ensure that every action contributes to student learning.

Continuously increase effectiveness by reflecting critically on their progress, identifying root causes of problems, and implementing solutions.

Work relentlessly in light of their conviction that they have the power to work past obstacles for student learning.

These six ideas make up Teaching As Leadership, a framework of principles and teacher actions distinguishing teachers whose students, despite starting behind and facing huge challenges, are demonstrating tremendous academic gains.

A Starting Premise: Teachers Can Close the Gap

In 1966, the U.S. Office of Education released a landmark government report (commonly known as the Coleman Report) contending that factors other than school (like children's socioeconomic background and home life) account for 90 percent of their achievement in school. According to many, this report fostered a perspective absolving teachers and schools from responsibility for students' success or failure, encouraging a disempowering tendency to look "outside their own sphere of influence for reasons why students are not succeeding." For four decades, this outlook has been a persistent element of our nation's collective consciousness. Some people continue to doubt the impact that schools and teachers can have in the quest for educational equity, and others doubt that goal can ever be reached.

The teachers you will meet in this book reject that view. With hard work, they declare their conviction that their students can make dramatic progress despite the burdens of poverty. Through their students' accomplishments, they prove that achievement gap statistics need not be destiny. Highly effective teachers in low-income communities are showing that teachers and schools can be a major force in the quest for educational equity in America.

Seeing firsthand evidence of this truth is one of the great privileges of our work and the impetus for writing this book. We share these teachers' rejection of the cynical ideology that was unintentionally created by the Coleman Report. Every day we see teachers disproving its conclusion with their students' success. We see the success of the teachers you will meet in this book, teachers like these exemplars:
• **Josh Biber**, whose fifth-grade students in Phoenix started the year with a host of challenges. Some had been chronically truant the previous year, missing over forty days of school. Some had just immigrated and spoke little English; others, because of their families' needs, had been to four schools in two years. They walked into his classroom reading, on average, over two years below grade level; only three were reading on grade level. In fact, some of his students were barely literate despite having received A's and B's the prior year. Mr. Biber realized his students had been ushered through a system of low expectations and even lower achievement. And yet by the end of Mr. Biber's first year of teaching, fifteen of his twenty-seven students were reading on grade level. On average, his class had achieved over two years of growth in literacy skills. In the last weeks of school, his students celebrated surpassing their goal of 80 percent mastery of fifth-grade math objectives. In his second year, nine of Mr. Biber's students started the year reading below the fifth-grade level, but by February, every one of those students had caught up, and all but six had moved ahead to tackle sixth-grade literacy objectives. In addition, in math, Mr. Biber's students were able to celebrate averaging 85 percent mastery of the fifth-grade math objectives on the District Quarterly Math Assessments that year. Over two years, Mr. Biber and his team of colleagues more than tripled the percentage of students passing the math test and more than doubled the percent of students passing the reading exam.

• **Felicia Cuesta**, whose seventh-grade remedial English students in Los Angeles were placed together in her class because they were so far behind. They started the year reading, on average, on a mid-third-grade level. The previous year, this group of students had had no permanent teacher, just a series of substitutes. Her students, on average, had scored below the fifteenth percentile on the state assessments. She was told that because they were so far behind, they would be exempt from the grade-level assessment. And yet Ms. Cuesta insisted that her students be held to seventh-grade standards. After a year of difficult work, she administered the assessments, and fifty-one of her fifty-nine students scored at the mastery or exemplary level for seventh grade. Two-thirds scored high enough on the district's reading fluency test to leave the remedial program for a mainstream English class.

• **Anjali Kulkarni**, whose second graders in New York City had a range of disabilities and entered her class between two and three years below grade level in literacy skills. An administrator called her class "the most challenging of the seventy-four classes in the school." Undeterred, Ms. Kulkarni decided that by the end of the year, her students would be "taken seriously not only in academic settings but also in social settings." In her first year, her students on average grew 1.6 years in reading skills.
according to the Fountas and Pinnell system of leveled readers and assessments. In math, according to school assessments, they demonstrated mastery of all twenty-eight second-grade math standards. They progressed in social situations as well. Ms. Kulkarni described to us with pride the moment in March when David, as line leader, turned to the rest of the class and announced, "Ladies and gentlemen, we will not be walking into the hallway until we can behave like second graders."

- **Jacob Lessem**, whose high school math and science students on the Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico struggled against the burdens of poverty. Some had significant work responsibilities to help their families make ends meet.

Some suffered from health and nutrition problems. Virtually all of his students came to his classes lagging behind academic expectations for their grade. And yet nine months later, Mr. Lessem’s “basic math” students had made, on average, two years’ worth of academic progress, and many of them were able to skip Basic Math II and get back on track. His physics students completed the first Advanced Placement science course in the school’s history. His robotics team, made up of students from all over the school and advised by a NASA scientist, completed a national competition.

Although the team’s robot did not win the competition, many of Mr. Lessem’s students altered their aspirations and chose to attend four-year colleges, some studying engineering.

As we consider the dramatically disparate academic performance of students in low-income versus higher-income neighborhoods, teachers like Mr. Biber, Ms. Cuesta, Ms. Kulkarni, and

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**OUR FOCUS ON THE IMPACT OF NEW TEACHERS**

**TEACH FOR AMERICA SUPPORTS** thousands of its alumni who continue to work on school campuses, but the primary focus of our training and support, and of the inquiries that fueled this book, has been first- and second-year teachers.

In focusing on the power of new teachers to lead students to dramatic academic gains, we do not dismiss the value of experience for educators in difficult contexts. Our data show more second-year teachers making dramatic gains with their students than first-year teachers and thus align with research suggesting that teachers improve with time and experience. While recent research is indicating that the learning curve for teachers may be shorter than we once thought, we have yet to meet a teacher who does not say he or she improved in his or her first day, month, year, or decade of teaching.

At the same time, [and external researchers performing rigorous research on our teachers] have seen that some new teachers like those featured in this book, even in their first and second years in the classroom, are having a profound impact on student learning.
Mr. Lessem deny us the rationalization that the achievement gap “is just the way it is.” Even before we ask what these highly effective teachers are doing differently, we see that whatever they are doing is changing the lives of their students, and that students’ success is not something predetermined by students’ socioeconomic conditions.

The highly effective teachers we work with inspire our conviction that educational inequity is a problem that can be solved. They demonstrate that teachers can be a powerful force for closing the achievement gap.

A growing body of research verifies this promising insight. Over the past decade, study after study has indicated that “the schools that are highly effective produce results that almost entirely overcome the effects of student background.” One study found that low-achieving students with least-effective teachers gained about fourteen points per year on state assessments while the same students with the most effective teachers gained more than fifty-three points. Another found that if the yearly differences in learning in the strongest classrooms were to accumulate, “having a top-quartile teacher rather than a bottom-quartile teacher four years in a row would be enough to close the black-white test score gap.”

In the words of analysts Kati Haycock and Heather Peske at Education Trust, “Differences of this magnitude—50 percentile points in just three years—are stunning. For an individual child, it means the difference between a ‘remedial’ label and placement in the accelerated or even gifted track. And the difference between entry into a selective college and a lifetime of low-paying, menial work.”

The belief that teachers can make that difference is deeply ingrained in the actions of highly effective teachers from which the Teaching As Leadership framework is derived. The teachers you will meet in this book begin with the conviction that we, as teachers, have enough influence in our students’ lives to put them on a different academic trajectory toward greater opportunities and options in life.

Race, Socioeconomic Status, Diversity and Teaching As Leadership

Issues of race, socioeconomic status, and diversity permeate this exploration of what it takes to close the achievement gap in our classrooms. Over 90 percent of the students our teachers work with are African American or Latino. In some of our classrooms, virtually all of our students are Native American or Native Hawaiian. Almost all of our students live at or near the poverty line and qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Not only are we all surrounded and affected by negative messages about our students and their potential to succeed, but we may also experience dynamics related to race and socioeconomic status in our work as teachers in low-income communities. If we share racial identity with our students or have grown up or worked in low-income communities previously, we may be surprised or unsettled by a mix of perceived and real dynamics of difference we experience with our students and their families. For teachers who are white, working to close the
achievement gap may be the first time some element of their identity makes them (in some sense) a member of a minority group, and they may experience a new and perhaps uncomfortable awareness of their own race and background as they work in their new community. Meanwhile, our students are developing their own sense of identity as we work to shape their confidence that they can succeed with hard work. All of these complex dynamics combine to suggest that how we think about who we are in relationship to our students matters to how and what they learn from us.

Because race and socioeconomic status, and the dynamics of difference they generate, are so integral to the quest for education equity, these issues are fundamental to the Teaching As Leadership framework. They undergird discussions of maintaining high expectations and investing students and families in working hard to achieve academic success. They arise as we build relationships and collaborate with students, families, and colleagues in our collective pursuit of building a welcoming environment for our students and making well-informed instructional decisions. At the same time, our own awareness of how we experience and respond to issues of race and socioeconomic status can have implications for our continuous improvement and persistence in the face of obstacles and failures. For all of these reasons, issues related to race and socioeconomic status are inextricable from the Teaching As Leadership framework and are discussed in this book.

As members of a society that perpetuates low expectations for the children in our schools, whatever our own race or socioeconomic background we may bring to our classrooms conscious and subconscious biases and prejudices about our students. Sometimes those perspectives can manifest as sympathetic, yet ultimately harmful, excuses for our students’ underperformance. Some teachers attempt to compensate for those hidden biases with figurative “color-blindness” (represented by the well-intentioned comment, “I don’t see color; I see children.”). In our experience, that approach is at best misguided. The most effective teachers are in fact aware of their students’ unique backgrounds and perspectives, and they capitalize on opportunities to acknowledge and celebrate those elements of their students’ identity in the natural course of their leadership. Whether working with families in the tobacco hills of North Carolina, or with stressed but determined colleagues in Oakland, or with tribal elders of the Navajo Nation, many of the teachers who are seeing the most dramatic achievements from their students are those who are respectfully engaging and aligning their actions with students’ background, community, and culture.

What we are learning about how those teachers work has been informed by a host of important diversity-related concepts, including racial identity theory, cultural learning styles, and notions of multicultural education. We also see, in the classrooms we visit, common approaches among teachers who build relationships and collaborate well across lines of difference like race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, experience, background, culture, or language. Through dozens of interviews with a diverse group of teachers, staff members, professors, principals, and researchers, and through hundreds of surveys with first- and second-year teachers, we have identified clusters of skills that seem to be critical to working across those lines of
difference. Certainly the full story of how and why some teachers work well across lines of difference is a complicated one, but part of that story seems to be that effective teachers share these qualities and abilities:

- **An ability to suspend judgment.** They have the ability to identify moments when they might be unfairly judging someone’s competence, commitment, effort level, or way of doing things and to suspend judgment so that they can check their biases and ensure their interpretation of tough situations is objective and productive.

- **Asset-based thinking.** These teachers have the ability to consciously search for and focus on the positive aspects of a person or situation, and build on an individual’s strengths, even when they are not immediately apparent.

- **A strong focus of control and growth mindset.** These teachers demonstrate the ability to identify and relentlessly attack the problems that are within their control and worth solving, to avoid obsessing about the ones that are not, and to conceive of setbacks as opportunities for personal learning.

- **Interpersonal awareness.** They build trust and deepen relationships with others by recognizing the limits of their own perspective and seeking to understand others’ point of view.

Because matters of diversity and working across lines of difference are such a fundamental part of highly effective teaching, we will invite you into discussions of these skills at various points in this book.

### The Purpose of Teaching As Leadership

An organizing framework for the knowledge, skills, and mindsets new teachers must possess, the six principles of Teaching As Leadership offer teachers a path to extraordinary academic achievement for students in low-income communities. By gathering and communicating the replicable actions of highly effective teachers in some of America’s most challenging contexts, we aspire to accelerate learning for students who are behind academically.

We are not the first to ask what we can learn from exceptional teachers. A number of researchers and scholars have contributed to the ongoing quest
to spread the practices of teachers whose students are succeeding even as they face great challenges. While most of what is contained in this book is distilled from our experiences working with teachers in low-income communities across the country, it is also built on and informed by those who are asking similar questions and sharing their findings. Not surprisingly, when we study our most effective teachers, we find some well-established elements of pedagogical theory. This book enters, rather than creates, a critically important conversation.

A painful reality is that too few teachers—both within the Teach For America community and in the broader population of teachers in high-poverty areas—are acting in ways that are transforming students’ life prospects through extraordinary academic achievement. Our purpose in sharing these findings is to accelerate our collective progress to a day when every child, regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status, has the opportunity to attain an excellent education.

This Book’s Structure and Organization

This book answers in six chapters the question, “What distinguishes highly effective teachers in low-income communities?” Each of the six chapters explores, with anecdote-driven and research-supported discussions, one of the six principles of leadership we see embodied by teachers who are leading their students to dramatic academic gains. Each chapter begins with a discussion of a general leadership principle demonstrated by highly effective teachers and then explores ways that principle manifests in teacher-specific actions in the classroom. (Throughout the text, students’ names have been changed. A master list of the highly effective teachers introduced in this book—and their students’ achievements—is included at the back of the book.)

The content of this book is also captured at a more granular level in a rubric, which is set out in Appendix A and available online. The Teaching As Leadership rubric offers both the specific actions that we see when teachers embody the principles in this book, as well as a grid of indicators we see as teachers grow and develop into highly effective classroom leaders.

The focus of this book is on a vision of excellent teaching that correlates with dramatic student achievement in low-income communities where the achievement gap is most severe. All of the many ways that new teachers develop into excellent teachers that produce dramatic student achievement is more than we can fit in this book (and more than we know). For readers who want to explore the details of “how,” this book’s companion Web site captures what we have learned so far about how to perform and improve on these teachers’ actions in your own classroom. The site offers some step-by-step guides, common pitfalls that new teachers who are attempting these actions encounter, and annotated video clips of teachers performing the actions.

Also on the companion Web site is the Ms. Lena Story—a fictionalized narrative based on the true story of one teacher as she strives to embody the Teaching As Leadership principles in her classroom in the Fifth Ward in Houston. This story covers essentially the same territory as the chapters of the text, but in a narrative format. Each chapter of this book concludes with an excerpt from that extended case study.
These various structures—the anecdote-driven text, the rubric, the online resources, the case study—are designed to translate what we are learning about what distinguishes highly effective teachers in low-income communities into actionable guidance for new teachers joining the fight for education equity.

This book is dedicated to those of you who are entering the classroom to fight educational inequity. By drawing on the proven insights of teachers across the country who are changing the academic trajectories of their students—teachers who are disproving the supposed inevitability of the achievement gap—you can maximize your own impact in the lives of your students. By focusing your hard work and leadership on ending the injustice of educational inequity, you can contribute to this conversation that, we are confident, will lead to a day when all children in this nation will have the opportunity to attain an excellent education.
An excerpt from Ms. Lora's Story, a case-study in Teaching As Leadership, available online at www.teachingasleadership.org.

Ms. Lora stepped back into the hall, her room key in hand.

Following the school secretary’s instructions, she walked right past the Cafeteria sign to the two-story wing. It was only her second stroll down this hall, but she was surprised by how quickly this tangle of motley-aged buildings went from primarily confusing to primarily small. Without children, the school felt cluttered but manageable, jumbled but cozy. And once inside Blair Elementary’s walls, she found that she didn’t think at all about the barbed wire outside them.

As Ms. Lora climbed the yellow, glossy-painted stairs of the classroom building, her bookbag rocking on her thighs with each step, she tried to imagine the school bustling with children and teachers.

Ms. Lora turned right, her only choice, at the top of the stairs. Her steps echoed off of the blue lockers and shiny black floor as she made her way down the hall, monitoring the descending room numbers. She felt the gnawing nervousness in her gut return: one more step. “There’s no turning back now,” she thought to herself as Room 210 came into view on her right.

There was actually no turning back months ago when she committed to teach in Houston, but Ms. Lora drew some amused comfort from mentally labeling each new landmark the point of no return. Accepting her assignment, then reading the teaching instruction books, then observing other teachers, then arriving at the summer training institute, then her first day of supervised teaching there—each was a major milestone. Each was a discrete step that helped her parse her trepidation into manageable pieces.

As it was happening, Ms. Lora knew that this first walk down the hall to Room 210 was one of those landmark events. She deliberately looked around in hopes of remembering the moment. Yet another point of no return.

Over the past few weeks, she had struggled and failed to hang on to fleeting flashes of confidence she had enjoyed on a few occasions during her intense preparations over the spring and summer. As the school year neared, she had been distancing herself from the Teach For America staff members who tried to reassure her that her “academic achievement and leadership” in college was going to translate into success for her students. She was positive that no fourth grader was going to care one bit that she got some scholarships for college or that she was a National Hispanic Scholar or led some student group. They would have no interest in the fact that she woke up at 5:30 AM and rarely slept before 1 AM to maintain both her grades and paycheck during the
last four years. She was proud of her varied college experiences, but she just couldn't believe that a few months after graduation, she would be responsible for real children.

What confidence Ms. Lora could muster came not from her past accomplishments but instead from the internal engine that had driven her to achieve them. She knew that she was going to make this work, somehow. Her pride would not let her quit, so she would do whatever it took to be successful. Thus, part of the trepidation she felt in the doorway of Room 210 was fear of failure, but most of it was anxiety about embarking on the most challenging adventure of her life—one that she was told by experienced teachers promised gratifying rewards and devastating failures.

As she stepped across the threshold into Room 210, she swallowed hard and mumbled to herself again, "There's no turning back now." It was louder than she had intended, but hearing her own voice made her smile.

To her surprise and relief, she felt a wash of calm as she surveyed her classroom for the first time. Her mind methodically filled this empty space with all of the many details of her imagined classroom. She set down her box and keys, and crossed her arms, savoring the room's reality.

A white-lined chalkboard dominated the room, wrapping around two of the four walls. One wall, the one she faced as she stood in the classroom doorway, was all windows, starting above the long, low air conditioner on the floor. The windows overlooked the small faculty parking lot, and she could see her own car parked on the street.

Curiously, several pairs of scissors stuck out from the metal frames of the windows. Aurora walked over and, with some effort, pulled out a pair. She brushed off the dust and stood the pair upright in the metal frame.

The window startled Aurora by jumping open. With even more effort, she pulled the spring-loaded window shut and crammed the pair of scissors back into its place to hold the window closed.

The street below the windows was quiet and gave the impression that it always was. Across the street in his yard, a man standing next to a shiny car shuffled back and forth as he talked on a cell phone.

The remaining wall of Room 210 was a series of tall, full-door cabinets flush against a wall of large, grid-set, painted bricks. Aurora imagined her desk with its back to those cabinets. She imagined team-inspired tables and chairs clustered around the room. She imagined herself standing in front of that chalkboard with a room full of children.

The nervousness returned with a rush.
**Teaching As Leadership Comprehensive Rubric**

**Set Big Goals**

- Work Relentlessly
- Continuously Increase Efficiencies
- Execute Effectively
- Plan Purposefully

**Invest Students & Others**

- Those who influence them in working hard to achieve Big Goals

**Plan Purposefully**

- Big Goals

**Execute Effectively**

- Big Goals

**Continuously Increase Efficiencies**

- Big Goals

**Relentlessly Work**

- Big Goals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Monitor's Individual Students</strong></th>
<th><strong>Effectively uses the same teacher-centered strategies in all situations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Regularly conveys messages and employs a series of integrated classroom strategies</strong></th>
<th><strong>Effectively uses the same teacher-centered strategies in all situations</strong></th>
<th><strong>Effectively uses the same teacher-centered strategies in all situations</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Beginning Proficiency</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively uses student-centered strategies (based on an understanding of students and depending on the situation) to reach a range of students to convey that students can achieve by working hard</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively uses student-centered strategies (based on an understanding of students and depending on the situation) to convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively uses student-centered strategies (based on an understanding of students and depending on the situation) to convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively uses student-centered strategies (based on an understanding of students and depending on the situation) to convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced Proficiency</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively considers individual students and situations when choosing strategies and messages that convey that students can achieve by working hard</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively considers individual students and situations when choosing strategies and messages that convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively considers individual students and situations when choosing strategies and messages that convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Effectively considers individual students and situations when choosing strategies and messages that convey that students benefit from academic achievement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exemplary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrates a strong understanding of students and how they can achieve by working hard.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monitors individual students' “I can” investment levels, effectively conveys messages and employs strategies as often as necessary, enables students to empower one another and initiates effective efforts to shape the larger school context.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrates a strong understanding of students and how they can achieve by working hard.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Demonstrates a strong understanding of students and how they can achieve by working hard.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Invest Students and Those Who Influence Them in Working Hard to Achieve Big Goals**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Action</th>
<th>Pre-Novice</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Beginning</th>
<th>Proficiency</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Big Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I-1 Monitor</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I-2 Establish</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I-3 Employ</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>I-4 Consistently</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Influences to invest students in working hard toward the big goals and to ensure that students are not working hard toward the big goals</td>
<td>Key Influences to invest students in working hard toward the big goals and to ensure that students are not working hard toward the big goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successfully informs students' families of basic information and shares positive news of students' progress</td>
<td>Successfully informs students' families of basic information and shares positive news of students' progress</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successfully involves students' key influencers</td>
<td>Successfully involves students' key influencers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Successfully invests students' key influencers</td>
<td>Successfully invests students' key influencers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectively responds to breaches, using them as opportunities to convey messages that support the welcoming environment</td>
<td>Effectively responds to breaches, using them as opportunities to convey messages that support the welcoming environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effectively sets expectations for a welcoming environment as necessary and consistently and effectively responds to breaches, using them as opportunities to convey messages that support the welcoming environment</td>
<td>Effectively sets expectations for a welcoming environment as necessary and effectively responds to breaches, using them as opportunities to convey messages that support the welcoming environment</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compellingly sets expectations for a welcoming environment as necessary and effectively empowers students to become leaders in sustaining a respectful, collaborative environment for all by teaching them to affirm and support their classmates and to resolve all conflicts in peaceful and enduring ways</td>
<td>Compellingly sets expectations for a welcoming environment as necessary and effectively empowers students to become leaders in sustaining a respectful, collaborative environment for all by teaching them to affirm and support their classmates and to resolve all conflicts in peaceful and enduring ways</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses a single, formal method to interact with every student's family</td>
<td>Uses a single, formal method to interact with every student's family</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses multiple methods and occasions to mobilize students' key influencers (e.g., parents, guardians, other relatives, coaches, pastors, etc.)</td>
<td>Uses multiple methods and occasions to mobilize students' key influencers (e.g., parents, guardians, other relatives, coaches, pastors, etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Based on an understanding of individual students and their key influencers, customizes interactions in order to mobilize each student's key influencers</td>
<td>Based on an understanding of individual students and their key influencers, customizes interactions in order to mobilize each student's key influencers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides basic information and respectfully requests help when students are not working hard toward the big goals</td>
<td>Provides basic information and respectfully requests help when students are not working hard toward the big goals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shares knowledge and skills on how the influencers and the teacher can accelerate students' progress</td>
<td>Shares knowledge and skills on how the influencers and the teacher can accelerate students' progress</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensures that students' influencers are equipped to invest and advocate for students beyond this school year, in addition to sharing knowledge and skills on how the influencers and the teacher can work together to support students in working hard toward the big goals</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Teacher Action

- **Pre-Novice**
  - Shows a lack of attempt or action in action...
  - Demonstrates attempt to create a welcoming environment in action...
  - Accurately explains key strategies for creating a welcoming environment in reflection...

- **Novice**
  - Shows a lack of attempt or action in action...
  - Demonstrates attempt to create a welcoming environment in action...
  - Accurately explains key strategies for creating a welcoming environment in reflection...

- **Beginning Proficiency**
  - Shows some attempt or action in action...
  - Demonstrates significant attempt to create a welcoming environment in action...
  - Accurately explains key strategies for creating a welcoming environment in reflection...

- **Advanced Proficiency**
  - Shows significant attempt or action in action...
  - Demonstrates exemplary attempt to create a welcoming environment in action...
  - Compellingly explains key strategies for creating a welcoming environment in reflection...

- **Exemplary**
  - Shows exemplary attempt or action in action...
  - Demonstrates exemplary attempt to create a welcoming environment in action...
  - Compellingly explains key strategies for creating a welcoming environment in reflection...
In the table, the document details the process of setting big goals and developing plans to achieve them. The table is structured with columns for different stages of the process: Plan, Purposefully, Continuously Increase Effectiveness, Execute Effectively, and Invest. Each column contains specific steps or considerations for each stage. For example, under Plan, the document mentions setting big goals and developing a plan purposefully, which includes creating instructional plans, behavioral expectations, and procedures. The table also includes sections for Pre-Novice, Novice, and Beginning Proficiency levels, indicating different levels of achievement or preparation. The document emphasizes the importance of assessing students' readiness, formative and summative assessments, and grading systems to ensure that all assessments are aligned to the objectives being taught and that the teacher can accurately articulate what different levels of student mastery look like. The goal is to help students master objectives and advance efficiently toward the big goal.
### Teacher Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Novice</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Beginning Proficiency</th>
<th>Advanced Proficiency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uses an appropriate external source to plan to class after engaging deeply with multiple sources (including diagnostic data; better aligned learning goals; mid-year assessment progress).</td>
<td>Effectively tailors plan to class after engaging deeply with multiple sources, including diagnostic data; better aligned learning goals; mid-year assessment progress.</td>
<td>Effectively tailors plan to class after engaging deeply with multiple sources, including diagnostic data; better aligned learning goals; mid-year assessment progress.</td>
<td>Effectively tailors plan to class after engaging deeply with multiple sources, including diagnostic data; better aligned learning goals; mid-year assessment progress.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Big Goals

- **Invest**
  - Big Goals
  - Continuously increase students & others
  - Purposefully execute
  - Effectively plan
  - Effectively work

### Continuous Improvement

- **Invest**
  - Big Goals
  - Continuously increase students & others
  - Purposefully execute
  - Effectively plan
  - Effectively work
### Teacher Action

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-Novice</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Beginning Proficiency</th>
<th>Advanced Proficiency</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher demonstrates mastery of building and delivering an efficient lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student demonstrates mastery to complete all components of the lesson.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portray examples of how instruction, tasks, and assessment are aligned.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs efficient plans and accountability systems to initiate, maintain, and support learning.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs content that is contextually relevant to students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs content, processes and products applicable to a general group of students, while complying with official accommodations and modifications, if applicable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs content, processes and products applicable to subgroups of students with different needs and interests.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs content, processes and products customized for individual students.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crafts plans based on student diagnostic data and/or goals of the IEPs, if applicable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crafts plans based on multiple sources of data (including ongoing assessments) and goals of the IEPs, if applicable.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uses multiple sources of data to inform plans, while consistently pushing for students to transcend past performance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiates plans for individual students based on their unique learning profiles (including ongoing performance data) so that all students are engaged and challenged.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Differentiates plans and programming for real-time feedback.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Designs inactivity, built-in opportunities for reflection, and mastery level activities.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Big Goals

- **Set Big Goals**
- **INVEST**
  - Students & Others
- **PLAN**
  - Purposefully
- **EXECUTE**
  - Effectively
- **CONTINUOUSLY INCREASE**
  - Effectiveness
- **WORK**
  - Relentlessly

### Key Points

1. Key points are accurately and appropriately derived from the objective. Components of the lesson generally align to the objective, to the key points, and to the way that students will be asked to demonstrate mastery.
2. Designs lessons that can be completed in time available.
3. Designs learning supports that are appropriate to the lesson.
4. Designs content that is contextually relevant to students.
5. Designs content, processes and products applicable to a general group of students, while complying with official accommodations and modifications, if applicable.
6. Designs content, processes and products applicable to subgroups of students with different needs and interests.
7. Designs content, processes and products customized for individual students.
8. Crafts plans based on student diagnostic data and/or goals of the IEPs, if applicable.
9. Crafts plans based on multiple sources of data (including ongoing assessments) and goals of the IEPs, if applicable.
10. Uses multiple sources of data to inform plans, while consistently pushing for students to transcend past performance.
11. Differentiates plans for individual students based on their unique learning profiles (including ongoing performance data) so that all students are engaged and challenged.
12. Designs efficient plans and accountability systems to initiate, maintain, and support learning.
13. Designs content that is contextually relevant to students.
14. Designs content, processes and products applicable to a general group of students, while complying with official accommodations and modifications, if applicable.
15. Designs content, processes and products applicable to subgroups of students with different needs and interests.
16. Designs content, processes and products customized for individual students.
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18. Crafts plans based on multiple sources of data (including ongoing assessments) and goals of the IEPs, if applicable.
19. Uses multiple sources of data to inform plans, while consistently pushing for students to transcend past performance.
20. Differentiates plans for individual students based on their unique learning profiles (including ongoing performance data) so that all students are engaged and challenged.

### Action Items

- **P-4 Complete**
  - 90% toward the big goals and all objectives and standard progress and achievement must be successful.
  - Teachers must begin class with a clear lesson plan that includes how students will be engaged.
  - 90% toward the big goals and all objectives and standard progress and achievement must be successful.

- **P-3 Create rigorous, objective-driven lesson plans so that students who complete class activities successfully will have mastered the objectives and made progress toward the big goals.

**In action…**

- Demonstrates attempt to create rigorous, objective-driven lesson plans.

**In reflection…**

- Accurately explains how to align lessons to objectives and strategies for fulfilling the steps of the lesson cycle.
- Explains in a compelling way why it is important to align lessons to both the objectives and the lesson cycle.
### Teacher: Action

**Pre-Novice**

- Understanding of individual students
- Exemplary procedures that address core needs in the classroom
- Crafts rules that are easily applied to any situation, as well as effective specialized rules based on an understanding of individual students
- Crafts rules that are technically clear and positively stated
- Crafts student-friendly rules, i.e., clear to all students once rules have been introduced, positively stated and manageable in number
- Crafts procedures that enable the class to run more smoothly
- Designs procedures that create additional instructional time and conserve the teacher's energy for instructional responsibilities

**Novice**

- Designs procedures for transitions, collecting and handing out papers, taking roll, etc.
- Designs procedures that create additional instructional time
- Designs procedures that create additional instructional time and conserve the teacher's energy for instructional responsibilities
- Designs procedures that enable the class to run more smoothly
- Designs procedures that address a core set of inefficiencies in the classroom
- Designs procedures that address most foreseeable inefficiencies in the classroom
- Designs procedures that address most foreseeable inefficiencies in the classroom
- Designs initial plan that clearly introduces rules and consequences to students
- Designs initial plan that requires all students to demonstrate their comprehension of the rules and consequences
- Designs ongoing plans to teach and invest students in the rules and consequences
- Designs initial plan that clearly introduces procedures to students
- Designs initial plan that requires all students to demonstrate their comprehension of the procedures
- Designs ongoing plans that teach students the procedures and invest them in the purpose

**Beginning Proficiency**

- Designs instructional strategies to introduce and accelerate the execution of procedures to students and provide instruction on core academic content
- Crafts rules that are easily applied to any situation, as well as effective specialized rules based on an understanding of individual students
- Crafts rules that are easily applied to any situation, as well as effective specialized rules based on an understanding of individual students
- Crafts rules that address most foreseeable needs in the classroom
- Crafts rules that address most foreseeable needs in the classroom
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**Advanced Proficiency**

- Designs instructional strategies to introduce and accelerate the execution of procedures to students and provide instruction on core academic content
- Crafts rules that address most foreseeable needs in the classroom
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**Exemplary**

- Designs instructional strategies to introduce and accelerate the execution of procedures to students and provide instruction on core academic content
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**Teacher: Action**

- Designs instructional strategies to introduce and accelerate the execution of procedures to students and provide instruction on core academic content
- Crafts rules that address most foreseeable needs in the classroom
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**Big Goals**

- **Set**
  - Continuously increase effectiveness
  - Execute purposefully
  - Plan
  - Invest

---

**Work**

- Effectively
**Execute Effectively**

Students glean the maximum benefit from instructional plans, behavioral expectations and procedures.

**E-1 Clearly present academic content (in differentiated ways, if necessary) so that students comprehend key information and ideas.**

- **In action:** Demonstrates attempt to clearly communicate content, with an emphasis on key points and rationale.
- **In reflection:** Clearly communicates basic instructions, which are conveyed in a clear, focused, expressive way that illuminates key points and rationale.
- **Seizes opportunities to purposefully transform lesson plans, as necessary, in order to move further toward goals.

**E-2 Facilitate, manage and coordinate student academic practice (in differentiated ways, if necessary) so that all students are participating and have the opportunity to gain mastery of the objectives.**

- **In action:** Demonstrates attempt to facilitate, manage and coordinate student practice.
- **In reflection:** Accurately explains key strategies for facilitating, managing and coordinating student practice.
- **Seizes opportunities to purposefully transform lesson plans, as necessary, in order to move further toward goals.**

---

**Big Goals**

**Set**

**Invest**

**Plan**

**Purposefully**

**Execute**

**CONTINUOUSLY INCREASE**

**Effectively**

**Efficiencies**

**Effectiveness**

**Excellency**

**Exemplary**

**Explanations are coherent, cohesive and correct with a focus on key ideas.**

- Follows content and pacing of lesson.
- Monitors student performance and engages with students to offer clarification and extend student understanding.
- Facilitates in ways that encourage students to self-monitor, cooperate and share.

---

**Teacher Action**

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**Pre-Notice**

**Notice**

**Beginning Planning**

**Advancing Planning**

**Exemplary**

---

**Students & Others**

---

**Big Goals**

---

**Set**

---

**Invest**

---

**Plan**

---

**Purposefully**

---

**Execute**

---

**CONTINUOUSLY INCREASE**

---

**Effectively**

---

**Efficiencies**

---

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**Explanations are coherent, cohesive and correct with a focus on key ideas.**

- Follows content and pacing of lesson.
- Monitors student performance and engages with students to offer clarification and extend student understanding.
- Facilitates in ways that encourage students to self-monitor, cooperate and share.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advanced Fidelity</th>
<th>Beginning Fidelity</th>
<th>Probe</th>
<th>Pre-Originate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Example</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Student Learning - Order to ensure students achieve learning goals (and teachers are assured of their ability to achieve student learning)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students receive instruction</td>
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<td>Check for understanding</td>
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<td>Show a lack of attempt or action</td>
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<td>Exemplify</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Communicates high expectations for behavior by teaching, practicing and reinforcing rules and consequences so that students are focused on working hard</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Show a lack of attempt or action</td>
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<td>In action…</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrates attempt to communicate instructions and directions and to respond to misbehaviors clearly and assertively</td>
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<td></td>
<td>In reflection…</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Accurately explains key strategies for communicating instructions and directions and for responding to misbehavior</td>
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<td>Explains in a compelling way the importance of each strategy</td>
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<td>E-3 Communicates high expectations for behavior by teaching, practicing and reinforcing rules and consequences so that students are focused on working hard</td>
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<td></td>
<td>E-4 Communicates high expectations for behavior by teaching, practicing and reinforcing rules and consequences so that students are focused on working hard</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Action</strong></td>
<td><strong>Novice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Pre-Novice</strong></td>
<td><strong>Beginning Proficiency</strong></td>
<td><strong>Advanced Proficiency</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Performance</strong></td>
<td>Shows a lack of attempt or action</td>
<td>Demonstrates attempt to perform action</td>
<td>Performs action when asked to do so</td>
<td>Performs action on regular occasions beyond staff-initiated, formal interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Interactions</strong></td>
<td>Performs action when asked</td>
<td>Performs action on regular occasions</td>
<td>Performs action when asked</td>
<td>Performs action on regular occasions</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Interactions</strong></td>
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<td>Performs action on regular occasions</td>
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**Big Goals**

- Continuously Increase Effectiveness
- Work Relentlessly on的梦想and goals
- Invest in student achievement and big goals
- Plan Purposefully and efficiently
- Execute Effectively and purposefully

Student achievement improves over time through deliberate data-driven reflection, analysis and meaningful changes to teacher performance.
### Teacher Action

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<th>Level</th>
<th>Performance Quality</th>
<th>In Reflected Practice</th>
<th>In Action Practice</th>
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**C-3 Isolate the teacher actions most contributing to key aspects of student performance by gathering data (e.g., using the TAL rubric) and reflecting on teacher performance**

**In action…**

- Identifies a teacher action that logically contributes to notable trends in student performance
- Determines a key teacher action that contributes to notable trends in student performance by using the TAL rubric and by prioritizing teacher actions based on the feasibility and importance of improving or capitalizing on them
- Efficiently determines the key teacher actions that explain definitive trends in student performance by using the TAL rubric, prioritizing teacher actions based on the feasibility and importance of improving or capitalizing on them and confirming the theory by examining all of the relevant aspects of student performance

**In reflection…**

- Accurately describes a process for considering teacher actions that could contribute to trends in student performance
- Explains in a compelling way the importance of considering teacher actions in this way
- Identifies potential root causes that could logically contribute to trends in student performance
- Determines a root cause that contributes to an identified teacher action by listing potential underlying factors, using data, reflecting honestly and prioritizing based on solid evidence
- Determines the root cause that explains an identified teacher action by using data, nuanced observation and honest reflection, by prioritizing based on strong evidence and by confirming the theory by examining all of the relevant teacher actions

**Performance**

- Demonstrates an understanding of the teacher actions that are critical to student success
- Considers the full range of causes that could explain identified aspects of teacher actions
- Considers a range of causes that could explain key aspects of teacher actions
- Considers causes that could explain teacher actions
- Performs action on regular occasions beyond staff-initiated, formal interactions

**Consistently**

- Performs action when asked to do so
- Performs action continuously

---

| Example | Efficiently Execute | Continuously Increase | Effectively Plan | Purposefully Invest | Students & Others | Work
|---------|---------------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|------|

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SET Big Goals
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Action</th>
<th>Novice</th>
<th>Pre-Novice</th>
<th>Beginning Proficiency</th>
<th>Advanced Proficiency</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C-5 Access meaningful learning experiences that direct and inform teacher improvement</td>
<td>Shows a lack of attempt or action</td>
<td>Demonstrates attempt to engage in learning experiences aligned with the root cause</td>
<td>Accurately describes a process for determining and accessing a resource or learning experience aligned with a root cause</td>
<td>Explains in a compelling way the importance of engaging in learning experiences aligned with a root cause</td>
<td>Performed the learning experience that improved the teacher's knowledge, skill or mindset to some degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-6 After a cycle of data collection, reflection and learning, adjust course (of big goals, investment strategies, planning, execution and/or relentlessness) as necessary to maximize effectiveness</td>
<td>Shows a lack of attempt or action</td>
<td>Demonstrates attempt to create and implement an action plan</td>
<td>Accurately describes a process for choosing strategies that align with identified problems and causes in the classroom</td>
<td>Explains in a compelling way the importance of adjusting course after cycle of collecting data, reflecting and learning</td>
<td>Performed the plan</td>
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</table>

Big Goals
- Set
- Invest
- Plan
- Execute
- Purposefully
- Continuously Increase
- Effectively
- Effectively
- Exemplary
- Pre-Novice
- Novice
- Beginning Proficiency
- Advanced Proficiency
- Exemplary

In action…
- Demonstrates attempt to engage in learning experiences aligned with the root cause
- Accurately describes a process for determining and accessing a resource or learning experience aligned with a root cause
- Explains in a compelling way the importance of engaging in learning experiences aligned with a root cause

In reflection…
- Accurately describes a process for choosing strategies that align with identified problems and causes in the classroom
- Explains in a compelling way the importance of adjusting course after cycle of collecting data, reflecting and learning
- Performed the learning experience that improved the teacher's knowledge, skill or mindset to some degree
- Maximizes a productive learning experience and masters the pursued knowledge, skill or mindset

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Plan</th>
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<th>Student 2 Others</th>
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### Work Relentlessly

**Time, energy and resources are maximized to reach the goal.**

<table>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Big Goals</strong></th>
<th><strong>INVEST</strong></th>
<th><strong>Students &amp; Others</strong></th>
<th><strong>PLAN</strong></th>
<th><strong>EXECUTE</strong></th>
<th><strong>CONTINUOUSLY INCREASE Effectiveness</strong></th>
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#### Work Relentlessly

- **Wisdoms:**
  -Students, schools, and teachers improve beyond their perceived limits when they receive a sustained impact on student achievement that has a substantial impact on their classroom's performance.
  -Teachers are aligned with the school's strategic plan.
  -Teachers are aligned with the aligned with their students' needs and resources.

- **Impact:**
  -In order to gain widespread approval and control, they need to focus on those who control the means to their ends.
  -They need to focus on those who control their time and resources.

- **Effectiveness:**
  -Teachers use a variety of strategies to improve their time management and resource allocation techniques.

- **In action:**
  -Teachers demonstrate strategies for increasing instructional time and/or resources.
  -They describe techniques for engaging additional stakeholders and resources.

- **In reflection:**
  -Teachers analyze the impact of their strategies.
  -They evaluate their effectiveness in increasing instructional time and/or resources.

- **Student Learning:**
  -Students are engaged in activities that increase student opportunities for learning.

- **Teacher Action:**
  -Teachers take action to ensure that they are continuously increasing effectiveness.

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<th>Teacher Action</th>
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### Pre-Novice

- Teachers generally avoid making excuses about challenges.

### Novice

- Consistently targets for resolution those challenges that will most move students closer to the goals.

### Beginning Proficiency

- Widens circle of what is in his/her control to target challenges that hold students back from meeting classroom goals.

### Advanced Proficiency

- Identifies time and/or resource constraints that impact student achievement.

### Exemplary

- Isolates key time and resource constraints that significantly impact student achievement.

- Targets the most feasibly addressed time and/or resource constraints that most urgently and substantially impact class performance.

- Considers and pursues a workable solution to address time and/or resource needs.

- Effectively uses a few persuasive techniques to sway those who control time and resources, when necessary.

- Builds purposeful, lasting alliances through compelling persuasive techniques most appealing to those who control time and resources, in order to gain widespread approval and control of those who control time and resources.

- Explains in a compelling way why such strategies are important.

- Demonstrates attempt to implement strategies of persistence.

- Maintains effort when faced with challenges (i.e., does not give up).

- Increases effort when faced with challenges.

- Prioritizes investment of time and effort to focus on the most pressing challenges.

- Ensures that the time and/or resources acquired have a sustained impact beyond the teacher, classroom, students and tenure at the school.
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The First Principles of Leaderships

Six Principles of Leadership

1. Set Big Goals: Reflecting on where their students are performing at the beginning of the year and holding high expectations for their true potential, highly effective teachers develop an ambitious and inspiring vision of students’ academic progress. They set measurable, standards-aligned goals informed by that vision—goals that when reached will make a meaningful impact on students’ academic trajectories and opportunities.

2. Plan Purposefully: In every endeavor—from lesson plans to long-term plans to classroom management systems—successful teachers develop an explicit path to success. They plan backward from the end result they envision in their students’ learning and behavior, then they plan backwards from that result to their starting point, creating an efficient path to success.

3. Execute Effectively: For highly effective teachers, every action, large and small, is taken because it contributes to the goal of student learning. For the sake of their students, these teachers are masters of the elemental tasks of teaching, constantly monitoring their progress and adjusting course in light of changing realities around them.

4. Continuously Increase Effectiveness: Reflecting constantly on the pace of student progress toward the goals, highly effective teachers seek to improve their instructional practices to maximize student learning.

5. Work Relentlessly: Recognizing the high stakes for their students, successful teachers assume personal responsibility for dramatic student learning, even when it means going beyond traditional expectations. These teachers think and act creatively to navigate and overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles, increase the time and resources available for student learning, and sustain their efforts over time.

6. Mobilize Students and Their Families/Influencers: Recognizing the high stakes for their students, successful teachers assume personal responsibility for dramatic student actions and outcomes.

Teaching As Leadership Framework

A dramatic increase in student achievement.

Set Big Goals

- Reflecting on where their students are performing at the beginning of the year and holding high expectations for their true potential, highly effective teachers develop an ambitious and inspiring vision of students’ academic progress. They set measurable, standards-aligned goals informed by that vision—goals that when reached will make a meaningful impact on students’ academic trajectories and opportunities.

Plan Purposefully

- In every endeavor—from lesson plans to long-term plans to classroom management systems—successful teachers develop an explicit path to success. They plan backward from the end result they envision in their students’ learning and behavior, then they plan backwards from that result to their starting point, creating an efficient path to success.

Execute Effectively

- For highly effective teachers, every action, large and small, is taken because it contributes to the goal of student learning. For the sake of their students, these teachers are masters of the elemental tasks of teaching, constantly monitoring their progress and adjusting course in light of changing realities around them.

Continuously Increase Effectiveness

- Reflecting constantly on the pace of student progress toward the goals, highly effective teachers seek to improve their instructional practices to maximize student learning.

Work Relentlessly

- Recognizing the high stakes for their students, successful teachers assume personal responsibility for dramatic student learning, even when it means going far beyond traditional expectations. These teachers think and act creatively to navigate and overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles, increase the time and resources available for student learning, and sustain their efforts over time.

Mobilize Students and Their Families/Influencers

- Recognizing the high stakes for their students, successful teachers assume personal responsibility for dramatic student actions and outcomes.
Appendix C: Our Approach to Recruiting and Selecting Teachers

Teacher Development

Respect for students and families in low-income communities

An understanding of Teach For America’s vision and the desire to work efficiently

Organizational ability: Planning well, meeting deadlines, and working

The ability to influence and motivate others

cause and effect and generating relevant solutions to problems

Show critical thinking skills: making accurate connections between

Perseverance in the face of challenges

A record of past achievement; achieving ambitious, measurable results

Through two decades of research and with the support of many people in the broader academic community, Teach For America has developed a set of selection criteria based on qualities found to be predictive of corps member success.

The selection process includes a review of candidates’ online application, telephone interviews, and day-long in-person final interviews that allow candidates to demonstrate their strengths in a five-minute sample teaching lesson, group discussions, and five-minute sample teaching lesson.

Recruiting and Selecting Teachers

Teach For America recruits on more than 350 college campuses, seeking seniors and recent graduates from all academic backgrounds who have demonstrated high academic achievement, strong leadership potential, and a commitment to expanding opportunities for children in low-income areas. Teach For America hires approximately 350 college graduates, seeking seniors and recent graduates from all academic backgrounds who have demonstrated outstanding achievement, a commitment to combining academic excellence with leadership potential, and a commitment to teaching in underserved communities.

Approximately thirty-five thousand individuals applied to Teach For America’s 2009 corps. At more than 130 colleges and universities, over 5 percent of the senior class applied. At Ivy League schools, 10 percent of all seniors applied, including nearly 20 percent of African American and Hispanic seniors.

Admission to Teach For America is highly selective, with 15 percent of applicants earning acceptance to the 2009 corps. Teach For America is the number one employer of graduating seniors at more than twenty schools, including Georgetown University, Spelman College, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Teach For America is the number one employer of graduating seniors at more than twenty schools, including Georgetown University, Spelman College, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.
that there are five key drivers of new teacher learning and performance.

This model of teacher preparation, support, and development rests on the premise of intensive pre-service training before corps members begin full time and includes regular mentoring and coaching. Teaching As Leadership framework as its intellectual centerpiece, the program consists of four-year programs. The 2009 corps represented more than five hundred colleges and universities in all states and the District of Columbia. Their academic majors span a wide spectrum: 34 percent from the social sciences, 12 percent from language and literature, and 12 percent from math, science, and engineering.

We make a particular effort to recruit members who share the racial or socioeconomic backgrounds of the students we serve, and our corps is more diverse than the campuses where we recruit. Among the 2009 corps, 30 percent are people of color, 25 percent are Pell Grant recipients, and 15 percent are mid-career professionals or graduate students.

Eighty-five percent of the new corps was made up of college seniors, and the remaining 15 percent were mid-career professionals or graduate students.

Percentage of corps members with leadership experience in college: 89 percent

Average SAT: 1341 (of those who reported it)

Average grade point average: 3.6

Impressive record of achievements:

In 2009, this process resulted in a corps of four thousand teachers with an average grade point average of 3.6.

Average SAT: 1341 (of those who reported it)

Impressive record of achievements:
Figure C.1 Key Drivers of Teacher Learning and Performance

At the center of this model is experiential learning—what teachers learn firsthand from their classroom experiences and the progress their students make. To maximize the value of their experiences, teachers need to reflect on their student learning data, instructional practices, and emotional experiences. This cyclical reflective process, grounded in student results, serves the dual purposes of fueling ongoing learning and solving real problems. This model leads teachers to analyze the relationship between their actions and student outcomes, a process that helps them understand what led to their actions, what new or different actions they can try next time, and what learning experiences will assist them in knowing how to take those actions. This cyclical reflective process will assist them in knowing how to increase their effectiveness.

Informed with feedback and reflection, teachers need to reflect on their student learning data, instructional practices, and emotional experiences. They must use data to identify progress and gaps in student learning and must use data to identify processes and gaps in student learning on the path to those goals. Data-driven teachers know whether their efforts are working and also feel their curiosity and intrinsic drive to continue working and also feel their curiosity and intrinsic drive to continue increasing their effectiveness.
Implemented in a spirit of accountability with support. Like their students, when teachers feel comfortable with and connected to each other, they are able to take risks, ask for help, and make mistakes, learn from them, and improve. Our approach begins with a welcoming and supportive environment of colleagues with shared purpose, values, and experiences. The benefits of these elements are magnified when new teachers are part of a community to help new teachers recognize how they are executing key actions.

Core Knowledge

Experiential learning must rest on a foundation of core knowledge. Teachers must acquire foundational knowledge about instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, content and content pedagogy, learning theory, and their own growth and development. Teachers must draw upon their experiences, and those of their mentors, to develop their own knowledge. New teachers need access to effective resources, ranging from student assessments to lesson plans and sample letters to parents. New teachers learn from building on strong resources in addition to creating their own resources.

Role Models

New teachers need opportunities to observe and learn from both strong and developing teachers. These role models help them envision effective teaching and build confidence that they are on a developmental path that will lead them to effective teaching.

Performance Support Tools

With students, families, and colleagues—open across lines of difference—teachers develop strategies to meet their students’ needs at home and in school. We also emphasize the need for teachers to build knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses, in particular at times when they lack confidence. These tools help them envision effective teaching and build confidence that they are on a developmental path that will lead them to effective teaching.

New teachers need opportunities to observe and learn from both strong and developing teachers. These role models help them envision effective teaching and build confidence that they are on a developmental path that will lead them to effective teaching.

Shared Purpose, Values, and Support

New teachers need opportunities to observe and learn from both strong and developing teachers. These role models help them envision effective teaching and build confidence that they are on a developmental path that will lead them to effective teaching. Models and observations are most effective when paired with guided development. These tools help them envision effective teaching.

New teachers need access to effective resources, ranging from student assessments to lesson plans and sample letters to parents. New teachers learn from building on strong resources in addition to creating their own resources.

Core Knowledge

Experiential learning must rest on a foundation of core knowledge. Teachers must acquire foundational knowledge about instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, content and content pedagogy, learning theory, and their own growth and development. Teachers must draw upon their experiences, and those of their mentors, to develop their own knowledge.
Incorporating these principles of teacher learning and performance, Teach For America has developed a comprehensive preservice and in-service program model for preparing, supporting, and developing teachers.

**Preservice Training System**

**Training Institute**

The training institute builds on the Donaldson-Hewitt and Beginning Teacher Education framework where corps members begin cultivating their teaching identities and adopting the mindsets of exemplary teachers. The goals of the training institute are to help corps members become familiar with the Teaching As Leadership framework, develop an understanding of their roles and responsibilities as teachers, and foster the habits of a beginning teacher.

**Regional Induction**

Regional induction occurs before corps members begin teaching, allowing them to develop a sense of community and understand the policies and practices of their teaching site.

**Independent Work**

Corps members engage in independent content-area learning and reflection assignments that require them to read curriculum texts, observe experienced teachers, and complete reflection assignments.

Before they begin their first year of teaching, all new teachers must complete a preservice training program that includes classroom-ready learning experiences designed to prepare them for the classroom.
The institute is focused on teaching corps members the daily skills they will need, regardless of the subject area or grade level they teach. These skills include:

- Lesson planning according to the principles of backward design
- Delivery of content
- Facilitating group practice
- Checking for understanding
- Investing students
- Classroom management
- Crafting daily assessments
- Assessing student performance
- Tracking student progress and adjusting course to ensure student mastery
- Engaging with students, families, and colleagues and administrators across lines of difference

Every day while at the institute, corps members attend training sessions where:

- Teachers observe one another’s teaching and sometimes evaluate videos of themselves to improve their methods to ensure that students meet summer school goals.
- Teachers engage in reflection and conversations about teaching their practice and identity.
- Teachers collaborate and provide feedback to each other.
- Teachers rotating in and out of the role of lead teachers.

The institute has two main components: summer school teaching and curriculum sessions. Corps members attend pre-service training institutes to learn about the following core subjects:

- Teaching as Leadership

Locations of Institutes:

- Phoenix, Arizona (Arizona State University)
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Temple University)
- New York, New York (Columbia University)
- Mississippi (Delta State University)
- Los Angeles, California ( Loyola Marymount University)
- Houston, Texas (University of Houston)
- Chicago, Illinois (Illinois Institute of Technology)
- Atlanta, Georgia (Georgia Institute of Technology)
- Los Angeles, California (Loyola Marymount University)

Among the locations that our teachers attend pre-service training institutes are:

- Atlanta, Georgia (Georgia Institute of Technology)
- Los Angeles, California (Loyola Marymount University)
- Chicago, Illinois (Illinois Institute of Technology)
- Houston, Texas (University of Houston)
- Phoenix, Arizona (Arizona State University)
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (Temple University)
- New York, New York (Columbia University)
At the institute, we aim to meet the needs of our summer school students as we meet the needs of our new teachers. We provide corps members with a set of performance support tools, the Student Achievement Toolkit, which helps them take what they have learned and apply it immediately in their summer school classrooms. The toolkit is designed to set objectives for summer school students, diagnose student needs, track student progress, and create effective lesson plans.

During each day, corps members work in small groups to set objectives for summer school students, diagnose student needs, track student progress, and create effective lesson plans. Each corps member has a block of time every day when he or she is the lead teacher of the classroom.

Each corps member has a block of time every day when he or she is the lead teacher of the classroom. Teaching, sessions/reflection, and rehearsal

**Mornings/Early Afternoons**

- **Instructional Planning and Delivery**
- **Classroom Management and Culture**
- **Elementary and Secondary Literacy**
- **Diversity, Community, and Achievement**
- **Learning Theory**

This table provides an overview of the daily structure of our summer training institutes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mornings/Early Afternoons</td>
<td>Corps members receive individual feedback and coaching from their advisors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Corps members participate in lesson planning clinics and attend seminars to learn content- and grade-level-specific pedagogy. They spend the evenings planning and rehearsing lessons for their summer school classroom. They have access to tools that will assist them in acquiring the key skills they will need to teach lessons for their students. These tools include long-term planning and rehearsal tools that will help them in organizing the lessons they will need to teach for their summer school classroom. They have access to lesson planning, classroom management, and student assessment tools. Each toolkit is designed to help corps members create data-driven, achievement-focused classrooms. It includes sample plans that match district curricula, models that corps members can imitate and adjust as needed, and curriculum-specific teaching environments for each grade level, subject, and region. The program focuses on building a strong foundation for the work corps members will do throughout the school year. During this phase, regional program teams work with corps members to ensure they are prepared to provide sound instruction to their students. They are required to complete an average of twenty-five hours of online course work during this time. The goal of the Regional Program is to help corps members set goals for their students, determine how to measure progress toward those goals, and develop their first units. To gain these skills, corps members receive a Student Achievement Toolkit, similar to the one they received during the institute. It is a collection of documents and resources that will help corps members develop their first units and assess the progress of their students. These tools also allow corps members to make use of best practices that have evolved over many years and with the input of many experts. The support tools include the following: models that corps members can imitate and adjust as needed, sample plans that match district curricula, and long-term planning and assessment tools. During this period, regional program teams work with corps members to ensure they are prepared to provide sound instruction to their students. They are required to complete an average of twenty-five hours of online course work during this time. The goal of the Regional Program is to help corps members set goals for their students, determine how to measure progress toward those goals, and develop their first units.
Also during this period, regional program teams help corps members establish strong relationships within their schools and districts, as well as with Teach For America staff members called program directors (typically they are former successful teachers who work with new corps members throughout the school year). We believe that these relationships are key to teachers’ success in the classroom. Based on the corps members’ completion of the online course work and one-on-one conversations with their program directors, the regional program teams determine what combination of support and professional development each teacher will receive during the school year by working with groups of other teachers or individually with a program director.

Observation and Coaching

Many schools and districts provide corps members with mentors—veteran teachers with years of experience and a wealth of knowledge. These relationships are extremely valuable for corps members as they take on the steep learning curve all teachers experience in their first year. In addition, each corps member is paired with a Teach For America program director, who provides feedback and support based on student data from and observations of the corps member’s class. Throughout the year, corps members and program directors engage in one-on-one coaching conversations, during which they reflect on student data to identify and find causes of and solutions to problems or gaps in student achievement. This coaching and professional development model is designed to support teachers in all grades and subject matters. We are working to develop and infuse more pedagogical content knowledge in training and support systems. For example, we have invested in expanding peer-to-peer coaching and mentoring. Corps members also engage with their peers in similar types of corps members, providing an opportunity for the education traditions and supports of our schools to influence the development of new corps members. We also recognize the value of content-specific pedagogical knowledge and are working to develop and support teachers in all content areas. Teaching a framework is a general model that supports teachers in all areas.

Building Content-Specific Pedagogical Knowledge

Teaching As Leadership framework is a general pedagogical model meant to support teachers in all grades and subject matters. We also recognize the value of content-specific pedagogy. As changes in the education landscape have improved our ability to predict corps members’ teaching assignments in their schools, we have been able to infuse more pedagogical content knowledge in training and support systems. We also want to develop and use online vehicles, such as the Resource Exchange, to increase corps members’ access to professional learning materials and resources specific to their placement areas, and curriculum-specific pedagogical support. We are working to supply corps members with high-quality diagnostic, summative, and formative assessments specific to their placement areas. We are developing training and ongoing support by building online communities and advice forums.

One-on-One Support System for Teachers in the Classroom

Throughout their two-year commitment, corps members face significant challenges in their schools and classrooms. We invest in building strong relationships with their schools and districts, as well as with their program directors. This coaching and professional development model is designed to support teachers in all grades and subject matters. We are working to develop and infuse more pedagogical content knowledge in training and support systems. For example, we have invested in expanding peer-to-peer coaching and mentoring. Corps members also engage with their peers in similar types of corps members, providing an opportunity for the education traditions and supports of our schools to influence the development of new corps members. We also recognize the value of content-specific pedagogical knowledge and are working to develop and support teachers in all content areas. Teaching a framework is a general model that supports teachers in all areas.
approach builds new teachers’ ability to independently evaluate student outcomes, identify causes of any problems, and seek solutions.

Program directors who monitor student learning in classrooms adjust their support according to corps members’ needs. Teach For America holds program directors accountable for the performance of their corps members’ students and tracks progress toward student achievement goals throughout the year.

Online Resources and Community

We have developed TFANet, an online support network. Within TFANet, the Teaching and Learning Center is a place where corps members and alumni have access to a searchable and browsable database of tens of thousands of instructional resources (lesson plans, classroom rules, photos, links, and so on), some of which have user reviews and ratings. Corps members and alumni can also share their knowledge with one another by uploading original resources or seeking advice and community support. Corps members and alumni have access to courses, workshops, and our curriculum texts that we are continuing to develop.

Self-directed online learning: Corps members have access to courses.

Video resources and models: Corps members can watch narrated videos of classroom observations of effective teachers at work. These videos illustrate particular aspects of excellent teacher practice in specific content areas and allow corps members to see how those practices are executed in a real classroom.

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Leadership framework at varying levels of teacher proficiency, as well as detailed how-to guides, common pitfalls, and useful strategies. Corps members access these resources independently and in consultation with their program directors, whose coaching directs them to pursue self-directed learning online.

Regional Learning Sessions

In most regions, teachers meet regularly in content- and grade-level specific learning teams led by experienced teachers to discuss ongoing challenges, share best practices, and work collaboratively on professional development activities. Members access these resources independently and in consultation with their program directors, whose coaching directs them to pursue self-directed learning online.

Certification and Master’s Programs Through University Partnerships

Supporting Alumni

With leaders in education, politics, policy, and many other sectors, Teach For America’s network of over twenty thousand corps members and alumni is a growing force for social change, bringing us closer to realizing our shared vision of educational equity and excellence.

Teach For America works to foster a dynamic network among alumni and to inspire and support their ongoing commitment to students and communities. We help them pursue career and civic choices that advance educational equity and excellence.

Teach For America alumni have access to resources such as career coaching, alumni networks to enhance their thinking on issues of educational reform, and forms to help them meaningfully connect with each other and Teach For America, and we provide ways to help them find meaningful work around their careers and civic choices and pursue career and civic choices professionally. We also offer opportunities to help them pursue career and civic choices professionally.

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Regional Learning Sessions

The approximate two-thirds of our alumni who remain in Teach For America work to foster a dynamic network among alumni and to inspire and support their ongoing commitment to students and communities. They help them pursue career and civic choices that advance educational equity and excellence.

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• Graduate school and employer partnerships: Hundreds of graduate school partners and employers offer special benefits to Teach for America corps members and alumni, such as two-year deferals.

• Regional alumni affairs team: Staff members meet one-on-one with alumni, host events, and mentors, resume drives, career webinars, and robust job board.

• Special initiatives: Initiatives in school and teacher leadership, political leadership, social entrepreneurship, and policy advocacy help alumni build skills, readiness, and networks to accelerate their impact in these fields.

• Regional alumni affairs team: Staff members meet one-on-one with alumni, host events, and mentors, resume drives, career webinars, and robust job board.
1

**PROGRAM DIRECTOR SESSION**

**How do I make my vision a reality?**

**Our vision:**

- **Short Term:** Students and CMs achieve...
- **Long Term:** Alumni lead...

**Our mission:**

- **Current Students & CMs**
  - The Organization
  - Movement
- **CMs**
  - Long Term: Alumni lead
  - Short Term: Students and children... One day all...

**Your Goals:**

- A leader who manages CMs towards outcomes
- Your Role:
  - Coach and Develop
  - Manage CM
  - Execute CM
  - Execute, Plan, and Motivate
  - Influence, Organize, Set Vision & Direction
- Your Actions:
  - Improve Learn & Continuously
  - Demonstrate Judgement Make Decisions & Strategically Reason & Think

**How do I make my vision a reality?**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National Benchmarks</th>
<th>Round Zero Benchmarks and Targets</th>
<th>National Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regions gauge corps strength in a Round 0 survey. Average score on a corps strength index which is part of the mid-year survey.</td>
<td>Round Zero</td>
<td>Corps Strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% of risk levels are accurately identified by the end of the 4th week of school.</td>
<td>Round Zero are retained at the end of Round Zero Unit 1 Ready.</td>
<td>CM Retention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Not tracked for inclusion classrooms.)</td>
<td>% of 1st and 2nd year CMs are Progress Known known by the end of Round education CMs are Progress % of 1st and 2nd Year special</td>
<td>CM Effectiveness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1 Ready</td>
<td>% of 1st and 2nd Year CMs are Progress Known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What</strong></td>
<td><strong>When</strong></td>
<td><strong>How</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She has turned in her tools but none of them meet the Good Enough Bar yet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prioritizing Big Goal Gap First - Lack of clarity for first unit; resulting in lack of vision for the year is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set Serena up to go through independent learning activities from the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Serena will explain the knowledge and skills readers and writers will learn this year and in the first unit.</strong></td>
<td><strong>1. Work through it together:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Specific parts of ELA Framework to first unit:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Check understanding of:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEANet Video, re-do Learning activities from the solution I developed (watch tutorial).</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone call with Serena:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What change do I want to see?</strong></td>
<td><strong>How am I going to make that happen?</strong></td>
<td><strong>By when?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Where is Serena now?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Program Director Session

**Tracking Round Zero Results:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>English Reading</th>
<th>English Writing</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>Science</th>
<th>Online Math</th>
<th>Computer</th>
<th>Physical Ed</th>
<th>Health Ed</th>
<th>Spanish Reading</th>
<th>Spanish Writing</th>
<th>Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Smith</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Jones</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Monitoring Progress to Adjust Course**

Trackling Round Zero Results:
## Monitoring Progress to Adjust Course

### Analyzing Round Zero Results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit 1</th>
<th>Ready</th>
<th>PDI/S PD</th>
<th>Corps Year</th>
<th>Region</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Performance Indicators:

- **Total CM:**
  - 70
  - 60
  - 50
  - 40
  - 30
  - 20
  - 10
  - 0
- **Annual Progress:**
  - Increase by 10%
  - Decrease by 10%

*Note: The table above includes various indicators and percentages for tracking progress. The specific numbers and categories are not detailed in the image.*
- What progress can I learn from? What gap should I prioritize?
  - Where am I now?
  - What’s the most recent benchmark?
  - What’s final target?
- For both Progress Known and Unit 1 Ready:
  • Reflect on outcomes:

How do I approach this data?

Monitoring Progress to Adjust Course
Common Pitfalls:

- Too much time planning, not enough time acting
- Working on only one goal area at a time
- Using time to do a lot of isolated things vs. drive towards results
Our (formal) Problem Solving Approach

- **Causes**
  - Why is this happening?

- **Outcomes**
  - Relative to our goal, what's the win?
  - What's the gap?

- **Solutions**
  - What will we do about it?

- **Teacher's actions**
  - Teacher's underlying knowledge, skills, and mindsets
  - Teacher's actions
  - Students' habits
  - Students' academic progress
Formal vs Formal Support

Informal Ongoing Learning Cycles

Informal Support

Formal Problem Solving Approach

Outcomes-Causes - Solutions

Theory Building

Connecting CMs with each other, alums and school staff

Connecting with online communities, such as virtual visits and blogs

Accessing online resources, such as Resource Exchange and TALon

Informal vs Formal Support

Source: Source
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book A: Introduction</th>
<th>Chapter A-1: Introduction</th>
<th>Welcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book B: Overview of Problem Solving in the Formal Cycle</td>
<td>Chapter B-1: What problem solving approaches will you take to meet your goals?</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter B-2: How will you communicate your problem solving approach to CMs?</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter C-1: Why must we maintain effective relationships with our CMs?</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chapter C-2: How will you maintain effective relationships with your CMs?</td>
<td>Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book D: Closing</td>
<td>Chapter D-1: Closing</td>
<td>Reflection and Next Steps</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Problem Solving Course**
Developing Classroom Theories: Outcomes, Causes, Solutions

BOOK 1: Course Overview

- Introduction
  - Welcome
  - Course Objectives

- What are classroom theories and why are they important?
  - Purpose
  - Desired outcomes

BOOK 2: Outcomes: What’s the win? What’s the problem?

- Introduction to Outcomes in the Formal Cycle
  - Objectives
  - Introduction to Outcomes in the Formal Cycle

- Student Data Outcomes
  - Student Data Outcomes
  - Samantha’s Student Data Outcomes
    - What’s the win?
    - What’s the problem?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?
  - Ed’s Student Data Outcomes
    - What’s the win?
    - What’s the problem?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?

- Student Habits Outcomes
  - Student Habits Outcomes
  - Samantha’s Student Habits Outcomes
    - What’s the win?
    - What’s the problem?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?
  - Ed’s Student Habits Outcomes
    - What’s the win?
    - What’s the problem?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?

- Conclusions in Outcomes

BOOK 3: Causes: Why is this happening?

- Introduction to Causes in the Formal Cycle
  - Objectives
  - Introduction to Causes in the Formal Cycle

- Teacher Action Causes
  - Teacher Action Causes
  - Samantha’s Teacher Action Causes
    - Why is this happening?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?
  - Ed’s Teacher Action Causes
    - Why is this happening?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?

- Determining Underlying Factors
  - Determining Underlying Factors
  - Samantha’s Underlying Factors
    - Why is the prioritized Teacher Action happening?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?
  - Ed’s Underlying Factors
    - Why is the prioritized Teacher Action happening?
    - Prioritization:
      - What will have the highest impact?
    - Alignment:
      - What do I do next based on my conclusions?

- Conclusions in Causes

BOOK 4: Solutions: How will we address it?

- Introduction to Solutions in the Formal Cycle
  - Objectives
  - Introduction to Solutions in the Formal Cycle

- Measures of Success
  - Measures of Success
  - Samantha’s Measures of Success
    - Checking the Logic
  - Ed’s Measures of Success
    - Checking the Logic

- Creating Meaningful Learning Experiences
  - Creating Meaningful Learning Experiences
  - Samantha’s Learning Experience
    - Checking alignment
  - Ed’s Learning Experience
    - Checking alignment

- Conclusions in Solutions

BOOK 5: Conclusions

- Samantha: Conclusions, Questions, and Next Steps
  - Conclusions
  - Questions
  - Next Steps

- Ed: Conclusions, Questions, and Next Steps
  - Conclusions
  - Questions
  - Next Steps

- Closing
  - Closing and Next Steps
Co-Investigation
Our (formal) Problem Solving Approach

**CAUSES**
- Why is this happening?
  - Teacher Underlying Factors
  - Teacher Actions

**SOLUTIONS**
- What will we do about it?
  - Measures of Success
  - Next Steps

**OUTCOMES**
- Relative to our goal, what’s the win?
  - Student data
  - Student habits
- What’s the gap?

Our (formal) Problem Solving Approach

**CAUSES**
- Why is this happening?
  - Teacher Underlying Factors
  - Teacher Actions

**SOLUTIONS**
- What will we do about it?
  - Measures of Success
  - Next Steps

**OUTCOMES**
- Relative to our goal, what’s the win?
  - Student data
  - Student habits
Talent Selection: Choosing Aspiring Teachers with the Greatest Potential to Impact Student Achievement

By Josh Griggs, Vice President of Admissions, Teach For America

At Teach For America, selecting the members of our teaching corps is a high-stakes endeavor. We believe that teaching successfully in high-poverty communities is one of the most important and challenging jobs in the country. Our corps members lead classrooms where the average student is two to three grade levels behind, and they are charged with producing the dramatic academic progress necessary to catch up. Given the weight of this responsibility and the immense number of applicants to our corps—35,000 in 2009—it is critical that we identify those who have the greatest potential to be effective teachers in this context and who are committed to our approach to teaching. As a result, we are extremely selective; our 15-percent acceptance rate in 2009 was lower than many top colleges.

The 4,100 members of our 2009 corps are certainly an impressive group: Their average undergraduate GPA was 3.6, and nearly 90 percent held an undergraduate leadership position. Yet we are looking for many qualities beyond those found on an applicant’s resume. Every one of our admissions decisions is grounded in nearly a decade of research into how we can best recruit the most effective teachers, and we have applied those lessons to each year of our selection process. We are developing the competencies that are most likely to lead to successful corps members. Building on our previous findings, we are systematically designing and refining our outcomes-driven selection model.

What We Look For and Why

Since 2001, we have analyzed student achievement data to refine our admissions process. Before each recruiting season, we consider what differentiates our most successful corps members, building on our previous findings to increase the chances that we’re selecting individuals who are likely to be successful.

Over time, we have learned several lessons about the mind-sets, skills, and abilities that our most effective teachers share. As we applied these lessons to our selection process, we identified the applicant characteristics, or competencies, that correlate with effective teaching in the school districts where we place corps members. Here are six examples of the competencies we seek:

1. Demonstrated leadership and achievement—achieving ambitious, measurable results in academic, professional, extracurricular, or volunteer arenas

Why we measure it: Corps members are required to set ambitious goals for their students and results in academic, professional, extracurricular, or volunteer arenas—achieving ambitious, measurable results

2. Perseverance in the face of challenges

Why we measure it: Teaching is a challenging and demanding profession, and teachers must persevere through the daily challenges that are part of the job.

3. Effective classroom management—maintaining order and focus in the classroom

Why we measure it: Our research has shown that effective classroom management is critical to student achievement.

4. Classroom leadership—fostering a sense of community in the classroom

Why we measure it: Teamwork is essential to effective teaching.

5. Positive attitude and emotional resilience

Why we measure it: Teaching can be a difficult and demanding profession, and teachers must be able to maintain a positive attitude and emotional resilience.

6. Commitment to students and families

Why we measure it: Teachers must be committed to their students and families in order to be successful.

We recognize the potential for strong performance as a teacher, but we are also looking for many qualities beyond those found on an applicant’s resume. Every one of our admissions decisions is grounded in nearly a decade of research into how we can best recruit the most effective teachers, and we have applied those lessons to each year of our selection process. We are developing the competencies that are most likely to lead to successful corps members.
Why we measure it: Corps members are taking on one of the greatest challenges of their lives. A small number of applicants are invited directly to final interviews without attending a phone interview. Evidence collected at all three stages is carefully considered to determine the ultimate admissions decision.

Why we measure it: Effective corps members gather and analyze data on their students’ performance, address areas of concern, solve problems quickly in tricky situations, and continuously improve their methods.

Why we measure it: Strong critical thinking skills

Our Selection Process

The admissions process begins when candidates submit online application materials, including a letter of intent, for review. The process is selective at all stages, and in each of the past few years, we have had to turn away several thousand applicants after reviewing their applications and interviews. Our mission—to build the movement to end educational inequity by enlisting our nation’s most promising future leaders in the effort—is extraordinarily challenging and requires tremendous dedication. An understanding of and a desire to work relentlessly in pursuit of Teach For America’s vision of educational equity and excellence

Why we measure it: Effective corps members plan well and use time efficiently with their students.

Why we measure it: Organization ability

Why we measure it: The ability to influence and motivate others

Why we measure it: Strong critical thinking skills

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Talent Selection: Lessons Learned

As our understanding of what makes an effective teacher has developed, so have our selection model, process, and tools. Throughout our admissions process, we are focused on finding those applicants with the most potential to impact students in underserved urban and rural schools. Over the years, regular data analysis, observation, and reflection has yielded several key lessons that enable us to base our selection decisions on the most important outcome: student achievement.

Lesson 1: Gather accurate data to inform long-term improvement.

We use data to drive the development of our selection process over the long term. Since 2005, we have been collecting and analyzing candidate ratings each year to identify which factors are associated with standout classroom performance. This enables us to base our selection decisions on empirical evidence, allowing us to continuously improve our selection process.

Lesson 2: Develop a standard rubric for each competency.

Applicant evaluations involve many nuances. At each stage of our admissions process, we use a standardized rubric and scoring system to ensure a common language and understanding of candidates' strengths and weaknesses. This enables us to make data-driven decisions based on standardized evaluation tools.

Lesson 3: Invest time and resources in training selectors and assessing their knowledge before they begin their duties.

Strong data lead to strong decisions. By investing in selector training and assessment as well as standardizing our rubrics, we increase the likelihood that our admissions process is fair and unbiased. We rely on the expertise of our selectors to make accurate and consistent decisions, and we work to ensure that they have the knowledge and skills needed to do so.

Lesson 4: Employ checks and balances in the selection process.

By gauging applicants' competencies through multiple stages with various selectors, we can identify patterns across assessments. This system of checks and balances helps to ensure that our selection process is fair and unbiased.

Lesson 5: Strive to continuously improve every element of the process.

As strong as we believe our admissions process is today, we are committed to further strengthening it through ongoing research and analysis. We work to ensure that our selection decisions are based on empirical evidence, allowing us to continuously improve our admissions process.

Teach For America's admissions model, process, and decision criteria will continue to evolve as we learn more. Through careful data collection and analysis, we aim to improve our selection efforts to better identify applicants with the most potential to impact student achievement. This focus is essential in our work to train and develop high-quality teachers who are committed to closing the achievement gap, and it is the focus of our selection process.

Teach For America