

QTEL: Teacher Focus Group Discussion Guide

Introduction:

Thank you for meeting with us today. The purpose of our visit is to learn more about your experiences with the QTEL professional development program. Your point of view as teacher participants is extremely valuable to us. We are especially interested in learning more about how you feel the training and coaching sessions are going so far, and how you feel about your progress in implementing key components of the QTEL model in your classroom.

Please keep in mind:

- There are no right or wrong answers to the questions we have prepared. Our questions are designed to stimulate discussion about your experiences with QTEL.
- We will audio record our discussion for our internal use only. We will not share recordings with anyone outside of the BPA evaluation team. Your comments will be kept anonymous and will not be traceable to you, your school, or your district.
- Please remember to be respectful of everyone's opinion. Speak one at a time so that everyone's comments are heard.
- Your specific comments will not be shared with your coach or any of the WestEd professional developers.
- Your participation in this focus group is completely voluntary and you don't have to answer any questions that you don't want to answer.
- Upon completion of this discussion session, a \$45 gift certificate will be provided to you as a way of showing our appreciation for your participation.
- If you agree to participate, we have a consent form for each of you to sign, (Distribute consent forms to participants and collect signed forms before moving on to the discussion questions.)

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a data collection activity unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. The time required to complete this discussion session should be about 90 minutes, including the time to review instructions. If you have any comments about the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this discussion session, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns about your individual responses to this discussion, write directly to: Rafael Valdivieso, U.S. Department of Education, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Room 506E, Washington, D.C. 20208.

This collection of information is authorized by Public Law 107-279 Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part C, Sec. 151(b) and Sec. 153(a). Participation is voluntary. Your responses are protected from disclosure by federal statute (PL 107-279 Title I, Part C. Sec. 183). All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose, unless otherwise compelled by law. Data will be combined to produce statistical reports. No individual data that links your name, address, telephone number, or identification number with your responses will be included in the statistical reports.

Discussion Questions:

1. ICE BREAKER

- o Now, let's start by everyone sharing their name, the Language Arts/ELD classes you currently teach, how long you've been teaching, and a little bit about your experience with working with ELL's.

2. NEED FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- o Prior to the start of the QTEL program, had you had any training specific to working with ELLs?
- o Did you feel you had a need for this kind of professional development?

Probe: *Why or why not?*

- o Now that you have some experience with the QTEL model, how do you think it will impact/has impacted your ability to work with ELLs?

Probes: *Do you feel more/less confident about meeting the needs of ELLs? Do you enjoy working with ELLs any more/less than before?*

3. QTEL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS

- o What was your experience with the *Building the Base* professional development like?

Probe: *How well did those group sessions meet your needs/expectations?*

- o Have you participated in any other QTEL program activities? Coaching? Lesson planning sessions? Peer observations?
- o What were the coaching/lesson planning/video club sessions like for you?

Probe: *How well did they meet your needs? (Try to identify strengths as well as unmet needs/areas for improvement.)*

4. COACHING SESSIONS

- o How have the coaching sessions been going so far?

Probes: *What are some of the benefits you feel you have received from having a coach? Are there any aspects of the coaching that you would like to see improved?*

- o Is there anything that you feel you need from your coach that you're not yet getting?

Probe: *Communication with coach regarding flexibility, content of coaching sessions, frequency of coaching sessions, etc.?*

5. TEACHER COLLABORATION

- Tell us about your participation in the collaboration activities related to QTEL. How often are collaboration meetings held at your school? How often do you attend these meetings?
- How useful do you find these collaboration sessions?

Probes: *What is the best part about your collaboration efforts? Is there anything you'd like to see more/less of in these sessions?*

6. ENACTMENT OF THE QTEL PRINCIPLES

- Now that you have had some experience with the QTEL model, how well do you feel you are able to enact the QTEL principles in your classroom? We're interested in understanding how you feel your skills are developing over time.

Probe: *Can you give us some specific examples that demonstrate how well you are enacting the QTEL principles?*

- How have your students responded to the QTEL activities?

Probe: *Can you give some specific examples of how your students have responded to the activities?*

- What would you say are the greatest barriers to enacting QTEL principals in your classroom?

7. SCHOOL AND DISTRICT LEVEL SUPPORT

- How well do you feel your school and district level administrators support the QTEL program?

Probes: *How well does your principal understand and support the role of the coaches? Does participation mean extra duty for you?*

- Can you think of other ways that your principal or other administrators currently support the coaching process?

Probe: *Release from other duties, incentives or rewards?*

- How well do your principal or other administrators support teacher collaboration?

Probes: *Are you provided with time during the school day for collaboration? If you have to schedule collaboration meetings outside the regular school day, are teachers compensated for that time? Does collaboration mean extra duty for you?*

- Can you think of other ways in which your principal or district currently supports your collaboration efforts?

Probe: *Release from other duties, incentives or rewards?*

- o Do you have any suggestions for improvement in school and district level support for QTEL coaching and/or teacher collaboration?

8. SATISFACTION WITH QTEL

- o Looking back at your experience with QTEL so far, how would you describe your overall level of satisfaction with the program?

Probes: *Do you feel you are making progress? Do you feel that your coach is responsive to your needs? Do you feel the program is helping you meet the needs of your students?*

(For year 2 focus groups: Do you plan to continue with the collaborative sessions at your school? Do you feel that you will continue to enact the QTEL principals after the coaching sessions have ended?)

We have reached the end of our list of questions. Is there anything else that any of you would like to add? Is there anything you think we should know about your experience with the QTEL program that we have not already discussed?

We know how busy you are with teaching and other school duties. We sincerely appreciate your taking the time to meet with us today. Before you leave, please be sure to sign for the receipt of your gift card. It is a token of our appreciation for your time.

THANK YOU!