

APPENDIX F
SCHOOL VISIT GUIDE

SCHOOL VISIT TALKING POINTS

This will most often be an informal meeting in the principal's office. Can be adapted for other settings.

Quick description of study (should be limited to 5 to 10 minutes; review and embellish description provided on phone)

- Study team:
 - Contracted by U.S. Department of Education
 - 1) Mathematica Policy Research
 - 2) Chesapeake Research Associates
 - 3) Branch Associates
 - experienced team: researchers, former teachers and administrators
 - have conducted similar school-based studies
- Basic policy issues and research question:
 - Alternative route teachers increasingly depended upon to address teacher shortages
 - Teach For America and Teaching Fellows among the most highly selective
 - Examine effectiveness of math teachers recruited through highly selective alternative routes (specifically, Teach For America and Teaching Fellows)
- Design approach:
 - Will contrast math teachers from Teach For America (and/or the district's Teaching Fellows program) with other teachers in your school next year
 - Making this contrast in enough schools across the country allows for broad scientific comparison of TFA and Teaching Fellows teachers with their counterparts from other certification routes
- Minimal burden:
 - Study will require very little time/effort by school staff and students
 - Study won't interfere with educational practices

Identifying classroom matches

- Who are the potential treatment teachers at school next year?
 - Verify TFA/Teaching Fellows teachers identified by programs and/or district

- Explore current staff for other possible treatment teachers
 - Include TFA/Teaching Fellows “alumni” or transfers from other schools
 - Treatment teachers need not have been recruited into current position through TFA/Teaching Fellows
- Discuss expectations of vacancies and hiring plans
- Which are potential experimental classrooms?
 - Use example of next year’s schedule; if unavailable, can demonstrate with current year schedule
 - Establish which are equivalent math classes (content, grade level, ability, language, etc.)
 - Determine which classes are going to be taught or could potentially be taught by TFA/Teaching Fellows teachers
- Find comparisons
 - Look for naturally occurring potential matches (same class, same period; simple family matches)
 - Is TFA/Teaching Fellows teacher already scheduled to teach part of match?
 - If not, could TFA/Teaching Fellows teacher be switched to teach part of match?
 - Can "misaligned" equivalent classes be moved to make match? (e.g. swap 2nd period math with 4th period English)
 - Would TFA/Teaching Fellows teacher be part of match?
 - If not, could TFA/Teaching Fellows teacher be switched to teach part of match?
 - Verify eligibility of control teachers in potential matches
- Establish comparability
 - How and when are students assigned to classes and/or families?
 - Probe for qualitative differences between classes (e.g. ability, electives, academic "major")
 - Explain and get buy-in for "reshuffling" of students in matched classes
 - Required for scientific validity
 - Neutralizes unintentional differences in student assignments

Discuss data collection once in study (briefly)

- Classroom rosters
 - Need them to send rosters of matched classrooms as soon as they are developed
 - Need them sent three more times for us to track how students move in and out of classes
- Student test scores and records
 - If high school, describe assessment
 - Late Spring 2010: computer-adaptive assessment
 - Lasts approximately 75 minutes
 - We provide the computers and proctors
 - Adaptability means all students tested at their own ability level
 - Mention district plan for providing records
- Teacher contact form
 - Completed by teachers in the study in Fall 2009
- Teacher survey
 - 30 minute online survey
 - \$30 compensation for completing
 - Teacher assessment still under consideration by ED; details to follow
- Verify consent process agreed to by district (if required)

Establish timeline for future contact with school

- Teacher background forms (complete and return)
- Finalize master schedule (share with study when complete)
- Verify matches
- Sign workplan
- Conduct random assignment

- Verify random assignment, staffing, and schedule
- Rolling random assignment and mobility updates
- Roster checks
- Data collection

Agree on who/how/when to complete teacher background forms (recruiter to label forms with teachers' names and keep list for follow-up)

THANK THEM FOR THEIR TIME.