
MEMORANDUM

TO: Tamara Azar, Policy Director
Urban Teacher Residency United

FROM: Phil Gleason

DATE: 1/7/11
TRP-028

SUBJECT: Response to Comments Received from UTRU

Thank you very much for the comments your organization submitted on October 14, 2010 on the Information Collection Request for the Teacher Residency Program (TRP) evaluation that Mathematica is conducting for the Institute of Education Sciences. We found the comments on the information collection request, including the addendum to the comments summarizing UTRU standards for urban teacher residencies, to be quite useful. In revising the data collection instruments, we have aimed to ensure that our instruments include questions that will allow us to collect information on program elements or dimensions covered by the UTRU standards, among other program elements or dimensions. We agree that having information on these program elements will help us distinguish between different program types. While there may be other useful ways of distinguishing among programs aside from those implicit in the UTRU standards, we feel that it is useful and important to collect enough information to allow us to have some flexibility in the ways we can define and analyze program types.

More specifically, the comments we received from you highlighted several areas you felt the TRP data collection effort should focus. These areas and our response to each are summarized below:

1. *Request for more information on the level and use of coursework:* In order to get some additional information on the level and use of coursework, including the degree to which the coursework and residency experiences are integrated, we added a few questions on the program director interview. These questions focus on logistical issues surrounding when residents take courses and are in the classroom as residents, but also gather more information on the content of the coursework. The director interview also includes a specific question about whether the program includes a course specifically designed to allow residents to reflect upon their experiences in their residency and discuss these in light of what they are learning in their courses.
2. *Information on level of responsibility for planning and lesson delivery:* We have modified questions to the resident survey on the level of responsibility residents have for various activities over the course of their residency. These activities include lesson planning and lesson delivery, and the questions distinguish between the first and second halves of the residency in order to assess changes over time. The survey also includes a question specifically asking how much time residents spend leading instruction during the first and second halves of the residency experience.

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FROM: Phil Gleason, Tim Silva, and Pat Nemeth

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3. *Collecting information on the level of commitment to teaching required of residents once they become teachers of record:* We have added a question to the program survey (C20) on the number of years that residents agreed to commit to teaching in the district in which they were placed when they began teaching.

4. *Information on the matching of residents to mentors:* Our instruments now include a question posed to the residents in our sample (C1 on the resident survey) about the number of mentors to whom they've been assigned as well as a question on the mentor survey (B3) about how many residents they have mentored in each semester (as well as whether they mentored these residents simultaneously or sequentially). The program survey also includes a question about the total number of classroom mentors (A4). In the case of each of these surveys, there are also related questions having to do with mentors or coaches other than a classroom mentor who are matched to residents.

5. *Concerns about matching first year TRP teachers to non-TRP teachers in their second or third year:* For various reasons the study design no longer includes the matching of TRP to non-TRP teachers as a basis for estimating impacts. Thus, we no longer are planning to match first-year TRP teachers to more experienced non-TRP teachers.

We appreciate the time and effort that went into reviewing the information collection package, and the careful comments that you provided. We hope we have revised our strategy for collecting data in the study in a way that addresses your comments, and would welcome additional feedback and discussion with you.

Cc: Melanie Ali
Tim Silva
Anissa Listak