

List of Acronyms Used in the 2019-2020 Annual Report

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS)

Charter Management Organization (CMO)

U.S. Department of Education (ED)

English Learner (EL)

End-of-Course (EOC)

Ordinary Least Square (OLS)

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) or Professional Development (PD)

Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) Professional Learning

Community (PLC)

Propensity score matching (PSM)

Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)

Quasi-experimental design (QED)

State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC)

Special Education (SPED)

Executive Summary

Background

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded a five-year Public Charter School Program (PCS) grant to the T

- x Observations of classrooms at charter school start-up grantee campuses reveal that Emotional Support domain scores were higher at start-up grantee campuses than high-performing charter schools. Emotional Support domain scores at start-up grantee campuses may be indicative of teachers providing supports for students in at-risk situations
- x The Classroom Organization domain was significantly lower for teachers at start-up grantee campuses than it was for teachers at high-performing charter schools. This finding may be reflective of more experienced teachers working at high-performing charter schools and/or additional classroom management training or systems in place at high-performing charter schools.
- x The use of in-class small group, differentiated, and individualized instruction, as well as the development of strong teacher-student relationships, were ranked among the most impactful approaches for closing the achievement gap for educationally disadvantaged students. These same methods, in addition to targeted pull-out instruction by an interventionist, were rated as most impactful for closing the achievement gap for high-performing students

School Climate and Staff Morale

There is a wide array of factors that contribute to high staff morale and the development of a positive campus environment. The study examined the climate, staff morale, and teaching conditions at charter school start-up grantee campuses.

- x Half of the principals at charter school start-up grantee campuses “strongly agreed” that teachers trust each other and trust their principal, and that there is an inclusive work environment at their school, while less than half of the principals “strongly agreed” that there is a culture of professionalism and staff morale is high
- x Principals shared that the most important indicators of a positive school climate include
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traditional school campuses. For Algebra I and English I EOC exams for students enrolled in the high school grantee campus, after controlling for differences in student and school characteristics, students enrolled in the campus showed statistically higher Algebra I and English I EOC exam scores, compared with matched students enrolled in traditional public schools.

When comparing the overall performance of state grantee campuses to the performance of students in different student groups, in most cases, the STAAR results for each student group are very similar to the overall results. The consistency of results across student groups indicates that the overall results are not driven by the performance of any particular student group.

An additional descriptive analysis of early elementary data found that, of the 346,000 students, 6

- x Across all charter schools, using current teachers to recruit colleagues, word-of-mouth advertising about the school, and holding job fairs were identified as the most effective teacher recruitment strategies which should be considered best practices. Differentiating practices were apparent at high-performing charter schools include
 - ¾ Using online advertising to recruit high-quality teachers
 - ¾ Considering a teacher's fit with the educational philosophy of the school; and
 - ¾ Considering a teacher's fit with the mission of the charter school campus
- x Regardless of charter school classification, instructional effectiveness, classroom management, student engagement, student performance, and cultural fit with the campuses were identified as the most important aspects when deciding whether or not to retain a teacher. Principals at high-performing charter schools tended to rate student engagement as a more important teacher retention factor than principals at other charter school campuses
- x In assessing the most effective methods for retaining high-quality teachers, principals across

- x Across all charter schools, principals tended to rank some of the same teacher support approaches among the five most important (e.g., reviewing student performance data with

- x Principals at high performing and other charter school campuses were in agreement that developing strong teacher-student relationships, effectively engaging students in the classroom and having clear behavioral expectations were the three most impactful approaches t