

Appendix 6. Stakeholder Pre-Meeting Questionnaire Results

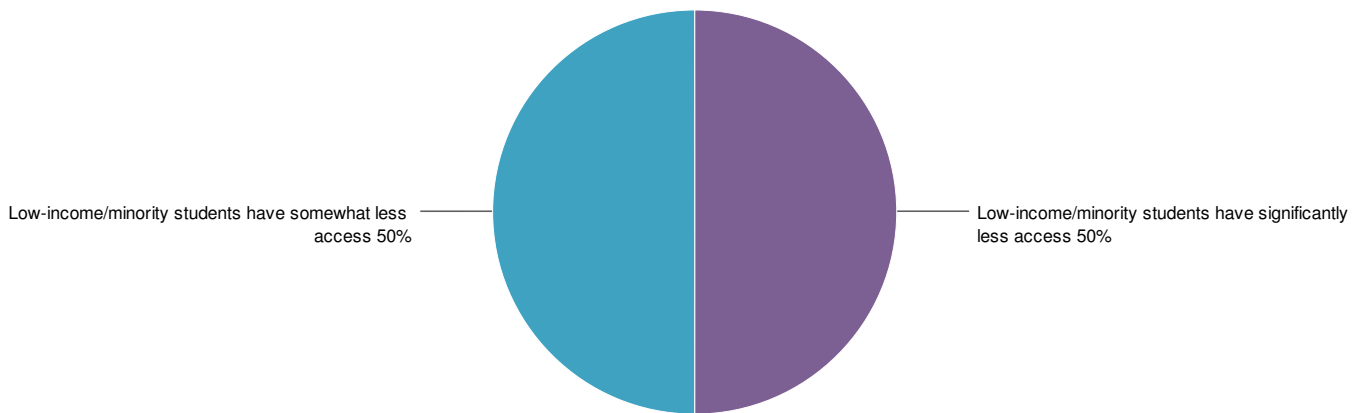
1. How would you define a “highly effective” teacher?

Count	Response
1	This is a teacher who can work competently with all kinds of diverse learners and move them to achievement of the standards. this teacher is culturally responsive in their style and approach to learning and provide appropriate instruction in culturally competent ways
1	A highly effective teacher positively contributes to the students achievement of targeted academic, social and cognitive outcomes.
1	First and foremost, we think it is important to distinguish a definition of effectiveness from the more commonly used frameworks, such as "highly qualified," "in-field" and "tenured" or "experienced". Our approach to teacher training, support and development holds that our most effective teachers are those that have a positive, meaningful impact in the immediate and longer term on students. Included in this approach are typically more easily measured outcomes like teacher impact on student growth and achievement or proficiency on externally validated measures/assessments as well as some of the harder to measure outcomes such as promoting and cultivating student habits of learning (i.e. time management, goal setting, organization) and values regarding education (i.e. strong sense of power of education, recognition of power in developing self-esteem, desire to work across lines of difference). Additionally, we see employer (principal) or other trained evaluator observations and surveys, as well as student and parent surveys as an emerging set of information that could significantly inform discussions and definitions of teacher effectiveness. In reviewing the definition of a teacher at Level 5 across all dimensions of the Texas Teacher and Evaluation support rubric, we believe that there is considerable information here that can serve as a foundation for a definition of a "highly effective" teacher. Lastly, given any definition of a "highly effective" teacher will rely heavily on formal and informal data sources, we recognize that teachers new to the profession will not yet have experience to inform these data sources. With this in mind, we think that this conversation regarding teacher effectiveness should also warrant a conversation about the overall effectiveness of teacher pipeline programs (IHE and alternative), as new teachers coming through effective or exceptional teacher preparation programs would have a higher likelihood of success than those being trained and supported by struggling programs. This dimension could be informed by the Title II reporting that the state already does, with an even greater degree of granularity to inform decisions about "highly effective" teacher pipelines such that school systems (LEAs) can have increasingly useful information about the average performance of teachers coming through the variety of pipelines in Texas.
1	A "highly effective" teacher is able to inspire motivated students and to motivate the students who are unmotivated.
1	Although unclear how this is related to the stated purpose of the Equitable Access Plan, for general discussion purposes, I would define a highly effective teacher as an appropriately certified, qualified, and experienced teacher who enables students to learn and apply the content and skills taught as determined by various methods which are designed for that purpose and closely proximate to the classroom.
1	Effective teachers are well prepared, well trained, and certified in the subject they teach. They are supported by their campus and district, have manageable class sizes, have time to collaborate with peers so they can meet the individual needs of every child. To be effective, teachers must have necessary resources, including a school climate that is conducive to the learning needs of the student population served. Effective teachers should be given appropriate time for curriculum planning and for opportunities for ongoing, relevant professional development that addresses the needs of the students they serve. Teacher effectiveness should be based on classroom observations of instructional practice and feedback from peers. Effectiveness should not be determined by student test scores and the flawed assumption that test scores are solely the result of what teachers do in their classrooms.
1	One who has the innate ability to love children, lead them to high standards of learning, and serve as examples of patriotism, life-long learning, and discipline.

Count Response

1 Although it's difficult to come up with a simple definition of what constitutes an effective teacher, ATPE has learned through our research that there is a positive association between measures of teacher quality and student achievement on state standardized tests, and that certain characteristics of high-quality teachers translate to higher levels of student achievement. Thus, teacher characteristics and qualifications are useful measures of teacher quality that should not be ignored when defining or assessing a highly effective teacher. While some argue that effectiveness of teachers must be measured exclusively through outcomes rather than through inputs, we disagree. Our research suggests the inputs that help to make a teacher highly qualified are just as useful in measuring teachers' effectiveness.

2. Based on your involvement with public education, to what extent do you think that low-income or minority students have less access to highly effective teachers than do high-income, non-minority students?

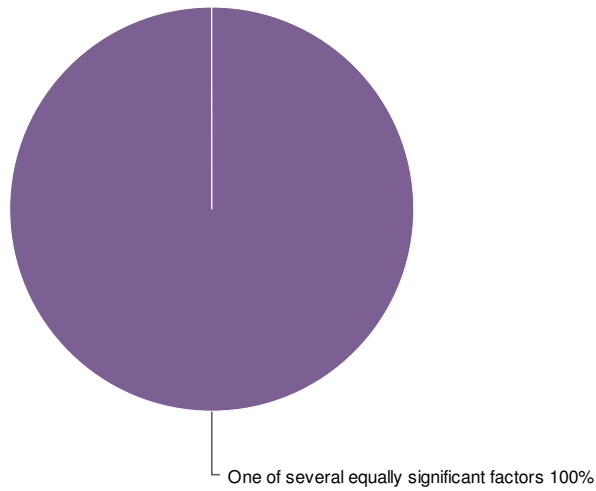


Low-income/minority students have significantly less access	50.0%		4
Low-income/minority students have somewhat less access	50.0%		4
Low-income/minority students have the same access	0.0%		0
Low-income/minority students have somewhat more access	0.0%		0
Low-income/minority students have significantly more access	0.0%		0
Other	0.0%		0
Total			8

Responses "Other"

	Count
Left Blank	8

3. Of all of the factors impacting academic performance of low-income, minority students, how significant do you believe that unequal access to highly effective teachers is for low-income, minority students' performance?



The most significant factor	0.0%	0
One of several equally significant factors	100.0%	8
One of many factors, but not significantly more serious than any other factors	0.0%	0
Not a very significant factor	0.0%	0
Not a factor	0.0%	0
Total		8

4. What factors do you think influence the level of access that students have to highly effective teachers?

Count	Response
1	There are structural, economic, political, social, and educational factors that influence access.
1	School district personnel assignment policies, the attractiveness of a given school (including quality of leadership, working conditions), the physical location of the school, school district student assignment policies, school district resource allocation policies.

Count Response

1	<p>Assuming that we can arrive at a common definition of a highly effective teacher, we think that the preliminary information that has been compiled in the 2011-2012 Texas Educator Equity Profile (http://www2.ed.gov/programs/titleiparta/equitable/txeep.pdf) regarding the distribution of teachers across high poverty and high minority districts (compared to low poverty and low minority districts) might illuminate a few potential sources of influence. While the 2011-2012 data referenced above seems to show little variation in average salary across the comparison groups (high/low poverty and high/low wealth), there could be valuable information in disaggregating this data even further by teacher experience level and possibly even by cost of living in the region, so as to better understand the extent to which there may be salary disparities at play. We believe that school systems serving a majority high poverty and/or high minority student population require teachers who are willing and able to effectively address the additional demands and challenges associated with education of these populations, which sometimes requires longer days, longer hours, and different demands—and we would hope to see compensation systems developed which reflect this.. Lacking any consistent, coordinated financial incentive systems to attract and retain "highly effective" teachers in these contexts could be contributing to the inequitable distribution of these teachers across the state and across communities. Additionally, we would look to the overall availability of teacher candidates from teacher pipeline programs (IHE or alternative certifications) that the state recognizes as "high performing." We believe that inequitable distributions of high performing teacher pipeline programs across the state of Texas would lead to inequitable distributions of highly effective teachers in certain geographies of Texas, and we encourage the state to consider helping highly effective teacher preparation programs grow and to focus additional efforts on preparing effective teachers for low-income communities in Texas.</p>
1	<p>My experience has been that school districts need to do a better job preparing principals and teachers to serve the need of students in lower economic situations. Then, they need to follow up by repeating those teachers who choose to remain in those types of schools. Supporting those teachers and principals with ongoing training and help in gaining respect of the community.</p>
1	<p>Location (i.e. whether that school is perceived as a desirable teaching site) Campus leadership (principal) Working conditions (Funds not always available to provide adequate facilities and equipment) Campus student demographics (challenging to teach)</p>
1	<p>Too often the assessment of highly effective teachers is focused on outcomes while inputs are largely ignored. Unfortunately, studies commissioned by ATPE revealed that teacher quality, measured by factors such as experience level, was much lower in high-poverty, high-minority, and struggling schools and also lower in the areas of math and science. ATPE's research also supported many experts' belief that novice teachers (those with fewer than three years of experience) are on average substantially less effective than teachers with more experience. In our most recent study, the researcher developed an index that could be used to measure the quality of the educator workforce at each school using factors such as the teachers' experience level, the quality of the preparation and training they had received, and whether they were teaching the subjects they were trained to teach or being assigned outside their field. Not surprisingly, our poorest schools and those with the highest minority populations scored much lower on teacher quality indexes than their wealthier, low-minority counterparts. This is not to suggest that educators in schools with a lower score on a teacher quality index are bad educators. Primarily, they are inexperienced and might not have been trained for or supported in the assignments they've been given.</p>
1	<p>1. The size of the community. Small towns have less success attracting quality teachers. 2. The quality of the campus leadership. 3. The positive involvement of parents.</p>
1	<p>Basic resources, like equitable and adequate funding, are necessary for schools to attract and keep highly qualified educators in the profession. In addition, district and school policies play a key role in how teachers are assigned to their students.</p>

5. What does your experience with public education suggest are the major reasons (or root causes) for an inequitable access to highly effective teachers?

Count	Response
1	See response #4 and a lack of will regarding certain Types of learners.
1	Schools with the highest need students, who are struggling to keep up or catch up with their peers, need the most experienced teachers to help them move forward, but the opposite usually occurs, as schools tend to assign brand-new teachers to some of the most challenging classrooms. That tendency, coupled with high teacher turnover, keeps struggling schools at the lower end of the teacher quality index. Retention of experienced teachers and principals at a school over several years promotes growth in student achievement. Regrettably, our accountability systems are not designed to foster longevity; to the contrary, state and federal accountability laws typically demand more frequent staffing changes at struggling schools that contribute to their poor teacher retention rates. As a result, we end up with a revolving door at schools with the highest numbers of poor and minority students.
1	Schools with high low-income student populations tend to not receive the kind of attention, allocation of resources from their school districts as other schools; poor leadership and working conditions at these schools tend to make them less desirable places to teach for teachers, district enrollment policies.
1	Any answer to this question would first require a common definition of highly effective teachers. Assuming that some elements of our definition from question #1 were included, we would project that the total number of "highly effective" teachers in Texas is a relatively small group compared to the total size of the teaching force. This, then, would by design mean that there were a limited number of these teachers available; combined with some of the factors identified in question #4, we think that the main cause of any inequitable distribution of highly effective teachers is rooted in the lack of a state wide strategy to ensure that our most effective teachers are leading students of the highest need.
1	In 2011, the Texas legislature made \$5.4 billion cuts to public education. In the Fall of 2014, a state district judge in Austin ruled that the state raised its standards of required academic achievement while depriving school districts of the resources needed to help students meet those standards. He cited the ongoing effects of deep budget cuts enacted in 2011—including layoffs of teachers and support personnel, inflated class sizes, and the elimination of pre-kindergarten expansion grants and extra services for struggling students. To this day, our schools are \$611 per pupil short in real, inflation-adjusted terms compared to fiscal year 2008 at a time when economically disadvantaged children make up 60 percent of the student population in Texas. Texas teachers serve an increasing number of children living in poverty and an increasingly diverse student population, which compounds the existing problems of chronically underfunded public schools.
1	Poverty dictates where a student lives and attends school. Apathy (Failure to insist and monitor that highly effective teachers are assigned equitably.)
1	See number 4. I have been in this type of situation and I've seen principals and teachers disrespected for remaining for years. Little training, little ongoing support, and little ongoing training. They also deserve an extra measure of respect.
1	1. The complex nature of teaching as a career. 2. Poor mentoring for new teachers. 3. Poor teacher evaluation system. 4. Ineffective motivators to attract quality teachers to the campus.

6. What strategies or policies already exist or could be proposed to address the root causes of inequitable access to highly effective teachers?

Count	Response
1	Leadership training, collection of data on teaching and learning conditions at high-need schools, along with research-based strategies to improve teaching/learning conditions in these schools, and state-level structures to ensure appropriate local allocation of resources and support to high-need schools.

Count Response

1 The Community School concept has already been used with demonstrable success by some districts in Texas and other states as an alternative to the state's sanctions schemes that punish but fail to improve low-performing schools. Services provided at Community Schools reflect the specific needs identified by parents, teachers, and community stakeholders and may include: academic programs like tutoring, enrichment activities, early college start programs; medical services like vision, dental, nutrition and mental health; and programs for parents like adult education, ESL classes, housing assistance and job training. This proven strategy should be funded and expanded to more districts in need of improvement throughout the state.

1 We must correct our course on accountability by paying as much attention to the characteristics of our teaching workforce (factors like the teachers' experience level, the quality of the preparation and training they received, and whether they teach the subjects they were trained to teach or assigned outside their field) as we do to the results they produce. Because a highly qualified teaching workforce raises the effectiveness of teachers, ATPE advocates for the following strategies aimed at preparing, supporting and maintaining high quality teachers. • States and LEAs should be held accountable for their teacher quality. Specifically, all taxpayer-funded schools should be required to assign fully certified educators to teach within their certification areas. ATPE has urged lawmakers to incorporate teacher quality measures into our accountability systems in such a way that would not penalize schools that are struggling but instead highlight their needs and funnel resources to assist them. Our goal is to require schools to work toward an educator quality target that consists of fully certified teachers being assigned to teach the subjects in which they are certified with a high level of teacher retention. An educator quality assessment should be structured in a manner that measures both absolute compliance and progress toward compliance, with a requirement that LEAs out of compliance submit an educator quality improvement plan. Such improvement plans would allow the state to analyze the reasons for out-of-field assignments and direct resources where they are needed to address those situations. For instance, if a district had teaching vacancies because its compensation range was not competitive with neighboring districts, the state could work with that district to secure additional incentive funds to boost compensation or offer signing bonuses to attract the teachers needed for those positions. Such interventions might also include the assignment of technical assistance teams to help an LEA improve the quality of its workforce. An educator quality assessment could also be used to examine other factors, such as the duration of the principal's employment at a campus. ATPE has also advocated for annual reporting on the distribution of teacher quality, which can be a valuable tool in improving the teaching profession but has been largely ignored. • Mentoring should be prioritized, as it has been proven to be one of the most efficient mechanisms to increase the effectiveness of beginning teachers in a way that translates to improvements in student achievement data and teacher retention rates. In Texas, it has been estimated that half of our teachers leave the profession within their first five years of teaching, and teacher turnover costs the state half a billion dollars each year. ATPE has advocated for a comprehensive, state-funded mentoring program that would be mandatory for new teachers in Texas. Although some LEAs in Texas have mentoring programs, there is no state statutory requirement for all new teachers to be mentored. Texas laws and regulations certainly recommend mentoring, and state lawmakers often assume that school districts or educator preparation programs will voluntarily bear the cost of providing mentors for novice teachers. However, our experience reveals that localizing the decision to prioritize or not to prioritize spending on mentoring programs has been an ineffective approach, particularly in a climate where education funds are scarce and needs are increasing. ATPE believes it is imperative for Texas to prioritize resources to implement a comprehensive mentoring program, which can produce long-term savings following a minimal upfront investment. The need is even more critical in schools with challenging populations, where mentoring would help improve the distribution of teacher quality across high-poverty and high minority schools. To be most effective, mentoring programs should set limits on the workload of mentors and provide them with training and a portable mentor certification. • ATPE believes the intense focus on tying evaluations to standardized test scores is misguided. We believe it causes the observational and interactive aspects of an evaluation, which we know to be of utmost importance based on our members' input, to be overlooked. Regardless of their experience level or their subject or grade level taught, teachers want and need frequent observations by multiple appraisers with face-to-face coaching interactions and direct, ongoing, timely feedback to help them quickly improve their practice in meaningful ways. Of course, financial investments are necessary to create opportunities for such interactions to occur throughout the school year, and policymakers too often abandon that highly effective approach to evaluation in favor of cheaper alternatives, such as focusing on formulaic growth measures and more "objective", but less reliable, data that can be run through computers and matrixes. • ATPE strongly supports initiatives to encourage more selective recruitment of educators by setting high standards for educator preparation and certification. Educator preparation and certification standards must be adopted at the state level to ensure that teachers are appropriately trained to handle the rigors of the classroom and provide a quality education for their students. Teachers who have completed the training that leads to certification are more effective than those who have not. High standards help ensure that prospective teachers acquire the background knowledge required to be successful in the classroom. This includes both knowledge of the subject matter to be taught and how to teach that content to a wide range of learners, along with the ability to manage a classroom, design and implement instruction, and work skillfully with students, parents, and other professionals. State and federal policymakers should consider offering financial incentives to

Count	Response
	<p>entice educator preparation programs to produce teachers who can fill shortage areas and reward those programs that succeed. All educator preparation programs—whether based in traditional university settings or provided through alternative means—must be held to minimum standards for admission, such as GPA requirements and proof of content knowledge. Making the education profession more selective would raise the prestige of teaching and entice more of our most talented youth to pursue education as a career. Unfortunately, Texas is not a role model for the nation in this area. Our admission standards fall well below national averages and beneath the thresholds recommended by researchers. • ATPE supports incentives for quality professional development programs for all school personnel. Such programs should be easily accessible and available to teachers at no cost. Our members consistently tell us that they want and need professional development covering a broad range of topics, such as utilizing technology; understanding education laws; individualizing instruction and educating special populations (especially students with disabilities, who are increasingly mainstreamed and taught by educators not specifically certified in special education); improving classroom discipline; ensuring school safety; identifying and helping students with mental health needs, including those at risk for suicide; and promoting cultural awareness. We also support flexibility. Texas teachers are required to complete a minimum number of continuing education hours for renewal of their teaching certificates. There have been proposals to limit teachers' flexibility in choosing how to fulfill this requirement, such as requiring teachers to select only continuing education courses that are directly linked to the subject they currently teach. Although we recognize the need for educators to use professional development opportunities as a tool for improving the skills critical to their current job assignments, ATPE believes this type of limitation would have the unintended consequence of discouraging teachers from pursuing additional certifications or taking courses to become highly qualified in additional subjects. For example, a social studies teacher might be disinclined to work toward becoming a math teacher if she were unable to count her math coursework toward the continuing education requirements.</p>
1	<p>1. Strong, structured mentoring for the first few years of teaching. 2. Administrators who use the evaluation system to improve instruction rather than to dismiss weak staff. 3. High quality benefits for "high quality" teachers who will serve on the campus.</p>
1	<p>the current civil rights laws and promulgated by OCR, DOJ by other civil rights-focused organizations</p>
1	<p>Our recommendations for improving any equitable distribution of highly effective teachers includes: · Define, conceptually, with strong data, "highly effective teacher" · Compensation reform, including loan forgiveness from the state for teachers in Title I schools · We do not think that "forced transfer" policies at state or local levels to require highly effective teachers to teach elsewhere are optimal, as we value the agency of teachers, and we instead orient around incentive programs to help highly effective teachers make the choice to teach in low-income, high minority schools · Creating significant incentive (including financial) for highly effective teachers to make a choice to teach in high poverty, high minority communities · Expand teacher programs with a proven track record of success in producing highly effective teachers who teach in high-poverty communities in Texas · Ensure that teachers who are identified as highly effective are not leaving the profession at rates higher than the average · Focusing on improving the working and learning conditions in low-income, high minority schools</p>
1	<p>I'd say that Title money helps if used to train teachers and principals in effective measures to help children and communities. And, really, more attention needs to be given to improving neighborhoods where these schools are located. There must be a community effort.</p>

7. What role do you think the state should have in addressing the issue of student access to highly effective teachers?

Count	Response
1	The state should provide funds to recruit and train teachers and principals who have a heart for students in low economic schools. Then, they should continue to support them with training and material. ...and technology.
1	Given the power of teacher effectiveness in closing achievement and opportunity gaps among students, we think that this topic is of critical importance to the State of Texas. That said, some of the strategies or policies that could address this issue may be best addressed at a state level, while some are more clearly the purview of local communities and school districts. The state could provide grant funding and resources to enable local districts and schools to innovate when it comes to compensation, could consider loan forgiveness programs and other incentive programs for highly effective teachers who work in low income and high minority schools, could fund and conduct a comprehensive review of all teacher pipeline programs in the state to determine their relative and absolute performance in teacher preparation outcomes, and could help expand teacher preparation programs in the state which produce highly effective teachers.
1	1. Require and monitor that highly effective teachers are assigned in equal numbers to campuses with high minority or poor students. 2. Providing monies and incentives to attract and retain highly effective teachers in campuses with low income and minority students
1	The state should play an active role in ensuring highly qualified, adequately supported, and highly effective teachers are in every classroom.
1	The state should provide the salary and other benefits to attract a quality professional staff, and it should provide a model teacher evaluation system that focuses on improved instruction.
1	The state must directly address the state district court's findings that formula weights are outdated and ineffective, and that per pupil funding is inequitable and inadequate. Evidence at trial showed a disparity of nearly \$2,000 per pupil between the high-wealth and low-wealth districts, despite legislative changes in 2013 intended to reduce such inequities. Even without the 2011 cuts, the judge said, a trend toward systematic underfunding has been evident over the past decade in Texas. The districts hit the hardest have been those with the highest concentrations of high-need students—the economically disadvantaged and English Language Learners especially. Overall, the judge found, credible expert testimony indicated a shortfall in state funding as high as \$1,000 per pupil. That would translate into more than \$5 billion a year that is needed but not being provided to meet state college-readiness targets. An update of formula funding weights and an overall increase in per pupil funding would allow districts to have the ability to provide an adequate salary and benefits package to attract the best trained and most experienced teachers to every district.
1	My understanding of the charge given to the state from USDE is that the state must, at a minimum, address how the state will ensure that students from low-income families and students of color are not taught at higher rates than other students by inexperienced, unqualified, or out-of-field teachers. Since in my view, much of the root cause for inequitable access to experienced, certified, and qualified teachers is due to factors at the local district level, the role of the state should be to establish structures to ensure appropriate local allocation of resources and support to high-need schools.
1	the states should demonstrate their commitment to the task by providing appropriate guidance, implementation, and accountability for the implementation of the plan.

8. Organization

Count	Response
1	Association of Texas Professional Educators (ATPE)
1	IDRA
1	TEPSA
1	Teach For America
1	Texas - American Federation of Teachers
1	Texas Association of Community Schools.
1	Texas Association of School Personnel Administrators
1	Texas Classroom Teachers Association

9. Educator Equity Contact at Your Organization

Count	Response
1	Annabel Peña
1	Barry Haenisch
1	Dr. Bradley Scott, Director IDRA SCCE
1	Holly Eaton, Director of Professional Development and Advocacy
1	Kate Kuhlmann or Jennifer Canaday
1	Mark Terry
1	Patty Quinzi
1	Robert Carreon

10. Person Completing Questionnaire

Count	Response
1	Annabel Peña
1	Barry Haenisch
1	Dr. Bradley Scott
1	Holly Eaton
1	Kate Kuhlmann
1	Mark Terry
1	Patty Quinzi
1	Robert Carreon

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