

To: Memphis T+ Network
 From: Tamala Boyd, Executive Director, Teach Plus
 Sarah Shepson, Network Coordinator, Teach Plus
 Re: Memphis T+ Network Event, "Teacher Leaders Building Teacher Effectiveness Through Peer Assistance and Review" February 2, 2012
 Date: February 15, 2012

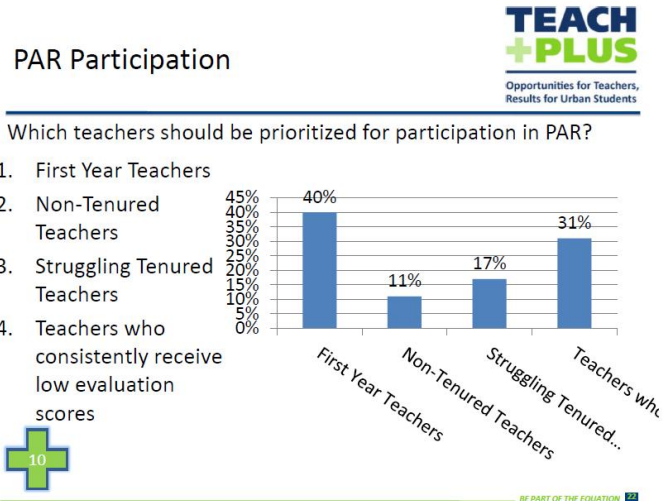
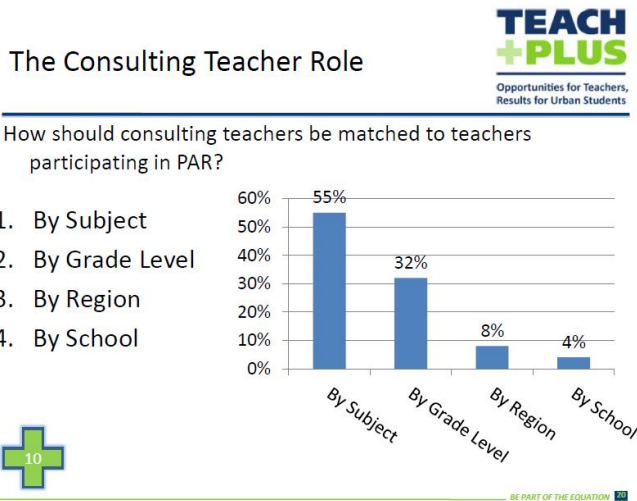
We appreciate your attendance at our most recent T+ Network Event. With 92 teachers in attendance, we received a wealth of recommendations for the PAR panel and additional questions to answer as MCS continues with the implementation of Peer Assistance and Review. We offer qualitative and quantitative data teacher feedback below.

Demographics of Teachers in the Audience

- 48% of teachers in attendance had 10 years of experience or less, including two first year teachers. Of the remaining teachers, 18% had 11-15 years of experience and 34% of teachers had 16+ years of experience.
- 46% of the audience teaches elementary, 25% middle school, 25% high school and 3% teach a combination of these options.

Teachers' Recommendations for Peer Assistance and Review

Teachers provided the below recommendations for PAR participating and consulting teachers through live polling technology.



Teachers also shared multiple items for consideration by the PAR Panel in their discussion notes. The following represents main themes from the notes teachers submitted to Teach Plus at the conclusion of the event.

- Teachers are eager to know the criteria to apply to serve as a consulting teacher and shared their own suggestions for application requirements. These include:
 - References from colleagues
 - Personality instruments to identify and gauge strong consulting attributes as it pertains their role as a CT
 - Be strategic in hiring of CTs: criteria should not necessarily or only be based on TEM scores – other teaching experiences, i.e. second-career teachers, can be valuable. High TEM scores do not necessarily mean an effective teacher will be a successful CT

- CTS should be knowledgeable of current district policies
- Audience members shared that CTs as a cohort should embody certain qualities:
 - CTs should have diverse teaching experiences and have expertise in certain subsets of students, i.e. gifted students, struggling students, special education
 - A variety of individuals classified as teachers should be represented in this group of CTs, i.e. librarians, counselors, instructional facilitators, school psychologists, etc.
 - There should be at least one CT that is an expert in his/her content area and grade level
 - CTs should be selected from a diverse sampling of MCS schools
- To ensure a fair hearing teachers recommend special education and pre-kindergarten to be represented on the PAR panel.
- CTs and PAR participants should network with local certification programs to help prepare incoming teachers for the reality of teaching.
- The needs of struggling new teachers compared to the needs of veteran teachers may be different. The CT training program should include strategies to support teachers in a variety of circumstances.

Teachers' Recommendations for Communication on PAR

Teachers shared a multitude of options for communication pathways regarding PAR. Teachers made clear that there should be differentiated ways to receive PAR information, but these options should be reliable and up-to-date with new information on the program.

- A newsletter sent via email and delivered in hard copy to teachers' school mailboxes – this information could also be added to "Teacher Talk"
- Use TEI Ambassadors to deliver initial information on the PAR program and continuous updates at school faculty meetings
- An informational video available on Avatar/Teachscape for teachers to view in their own time or can watch together as a staff
- A PAR website as part of www.mcstei.com with a link from www.mcsk12.net
- Mandatory professional development for all teachers in MCS (as was done for TEM implementation)
- PAR Panel Members and PAR experts should conduct school visits to each school in MCS to present information on PAR at staff meetings
- Creation of a Memphis PAR Handbook available to all teachers

MCS can choose any combination of these communication strategies to effectively communicate on the details of the Memphis PAR program. What is necessary is to choose and use consistent communication strategies for teachers to have reliable "go-to" sources when they have questions on PAR.

We thank you for your partnership with Teach Plus to engage teachers in discussion surrounding current education policy and help inform more teachers on PAR. Attached are remaining questions teachers noted during the pair/share discussion during the event. We are happy to provide a summary of the answers once you have an opportunity to review the questions. We look forward to continued efforts together to increase teacher effectiveness in Memphis through Peer Assistance and Review.

Attachment:

Transcript of Expert Panelist Answers to Q&A