

CRESST REPORT 824

EVALUATION OF GREEN DOT'S LOCKE TRANSFORMATION PROJECT: FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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on Evaluation, Standards, & Student Testing

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the fall of 2007, Alain Leroy Locke High School, historically one of California's lowest performing secondary schools, underwent a transformation. Suffering from a history of extremely low academic performance, student unrest and even violence, the nonprofit charter organization Green Dot Public Schools was charged to transition Locke into a set of smaller charter academies, in partnership with the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). With a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST), was charged with monitoring the progress and effects of Green Dot Public Schools' Locke transformation from 2007 to the present. Previous annual reports have presented findings related to the academic performance of Green Dot Locke (GDL) students. The primary focus of this current report, is to use both quantitative (including teachers' value-added data based on state test scores) and qualitative data (interviews with 13 teachers and four administrators across GDL academies) to explore potential teacher factors influencing students' academic progress since the transformation, particularly focusing on teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support.

Evaluation Questions and Analysis

Our study encompasses four broad evaluation questions. Specifically:

1. What are the background and demographic characteristics of GDL's 2010-2011 teaching staff? How do GDL teachers compare with those of teachers in LAUSD?
2. What distinguishes teachers who stayed at GDL from those who left? To what extent did these two groups of teachers differ in background characteristics, internal GDL evaluation scores, their student growth percentile (SGP) scores, student survey responses, and their students' passing rates in key courses?
3. What is the relationship between GDL's internal teacher evaluation scores, teachers' SGP scores, student survey responses, and students' success in key courses taught by core teachers?
4. How do teachers and administrators view GDL achievements and challenges related to the transformation thus far, particularly with regard to recruitment/selection, retention and support for teacher quality?

Quantitatively, we analyzed teacher data and student course data collected by Green Dot to examine the background and characteristics of GDL teaching staff in 2010-2011 and whether there were any differences between teachers who stayed and those who left in 2010-2011 in terms of background and multiple measures of teacher effectiveness. Our interest was at least two fold: opponents of charter schools have pointed to teacher turnover as an important problem. By comparing the effectiveness of teachers who left with those who

stayed across multiple indicators (quantitative value-added measures based on state test scores, qualitative indicators based on expert judgment, and indicators based on students' coursework success), we can provide concrete evidence to inform the current debate. Moreover, because multiple indicators of teacher effectiveness were available, we not only could provide multiple perspectives on those who stayed and those who left but also could look at the relationships among these measures.

Qualitatively, we conducted phone interviews with teachers and administrators who were at Locke prior, during, and subsequent to the Locke transformation. The interviews were intended to solicit teachers' views, along with those of administrators, on key aspects that affect teacher quality in the area of teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support at GDL. Drawing from interviews with teachers and administrators who were present at GDL during the 2010-2011 school year, we explored how aspects of teacher quality may relate to student gains that we have found in our previous research.

Summary of Findings

Green Dot Locke teachers in comparison to their peers. Compared to LAUSD teachers in 2010-2011, GDL teachers were more likely to be African American and Asian, and more likely to have a Master's Degree and beyond. In contrast, GDL teachers were less likely to be Hispanic and White and had fewer years of teaching experience (both overall years and years at the District). GDL teachers felt positively towards their experience at GDL on the whole, and 89% of the 86 teachers who responded to GDL's end-of-year survey responded that they would recommend GDPS as an employer. According to student responses to Tripod surveys, students overall also had positive experiences with their GDL teachers.

Movers vs. stayers. Based on the descriptive analysis of teacher demographics, we did not find any significant demographic differences between teachers who stayed and those who left as of the end of the 2010-2011 school year in terms of age, gender, or years of teaching at GD. White teachers and English teachers appeared to be slightly overrepresented among movers. In contrast, Hispanic or Latino teachers and mathematics teachers were slightly underrepresented in those who left. We did not observe any significant difference in either student growth percentile scores, student survey responses, or student course pass rates for movers versus stayers. Stayers were found to be more likely than movers to meet or exceed the evaluation standards.

GDL's one year retention rate of 79% (for the 2010-2011 school year) appeared to be relatively high in comparison to retention rates for LAUSD schools overall. However,

qualitatively speaking, about one-third of the 13 interview participants had negative views about GDL's ability to retain effective teachers. These reservations also were reflected in teacher survey responses from some of the GDL academies, specifically to the question of whether the teachers would recommend GDPS as an employer. We can only speculate about these findings. One possibility could be that losing even one or two teachers at a small academy may feel more devastating than double that number at a traditional high school. Relationships and trust play an important role in any workplace. Additionally, many participants spoke of how changes in teaching and administrative staff as well as school structure (i.e., merging academies) had been disruptive to their academy environment and staff cohesiveness.

Multiple measures of teacher quality. We found small to medium positive correlations between teacher evaluation scores and Tripod student survey results, with the majority of the relationships being statistically significant. Statistically significant positive relationships were found between student growth percentile scores and overall teacher evaluation scores and two area evaluation scores. Other areas, however, were not significantly related to student percentile scores. While the limited strength of these correlations is not surprising, they do indicate that one should be cautious in placing too much emphasis on one teacher measure within a larger evaluation system.

We also found no correlations between key course pass rates and the other three teacher measures (evaluation, student growth percentile [SGP], and Tripod student survey), or between the Tripod measure and SGP scores. The lack of relationship between course pass rates and the other three teacher measures may suggest that course pass rates are not an informative outcome variable by which to judge teacher quality. The lack of relationship between Tripod results and SGP scores, however, is not unexpected, as prior research reported correlation coefficients between teacher's Tripod scores and their value-added state mathematics test scores ranging from 0.14 to 0.22; and from 0.03 to 0.14 for ELA value-added scores (MET study, 2012).

In short, while teachers' evaluation scores, SGP scores, Tripod measures, and pass rates may provide some quantitative insight into teacher effectiveness, individually they may not serve as meaningful proxy measures for the overall construct. Our findings here underscore the difficulty of assessing teacher effectiveness, especially in the current context of GDL's evaluation system in pilot stage during 2010-2011. Moreover, it is important to note that there are no agreed upon methods or measures in the field as a whole for assessing *teacher effectiveness* as a whole, even though value-added measures are becoming more prominent. In any case, multiple sources of information, such as Tripod or similar student perception

data could be a valuable addition to an evaluation system. As the GDL's evaluation system becomes regularized, these findings may likely to change.

Benefits of GDL academies. Overall, participants felt that Green Dot-led Locke academies were better organized and more intentional in areas such as professional development and evaluation than was the previous Locke. Respondents also agreed that academies were safer and more functional than Locke before the transformation, although they noted that, issues in the surrounding community (e.g., violence, drugs) can never fully be separated from the school climate.

While we did not set out to compare academies at Green Dot Locke, according to survey responses, certain academies appeared to be stronger in areas associated with professional capacity (e.g., perceptions about principal leadership, quality of professional development opportunities). Interviews also echoed what appeared to be different Green Dot Locke experiences based on academy. We speculate that individual administrators may have played an important role in a particular academy's climate, structure, and culture.

Teachers expressed a desire for more collaboration across campuses and more creative ways (e.g., improvements to physical space, extra-curricular offerings) to make GDL a place that students wish to come on a daily basis. Many interviewees also acknowledged that "real work" will be required in the coming years to make Green Dot Locke a rigorous yet nurturing environment for all students. Nonetheless, it was clear from our interviews that Green Dot staff is dedicated to this goal. This commitment may be one of the most important, although non-quantifiable, changes at Locke since the transformation.

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EVALUATION OF GREEN DOT'S LOCKE TRANSFORMATION PROJECT: FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS

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Abstract

With funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, CRESST researchers conducted a multi-year evaluation of a major school reform project at Alain Leroy Locke High School, historically one of California's lowest performing secondary schools. We found the one-year teacher retention rate at GDL in 2010-2011 was 79%; Green Dot Locke teachers, overall, were more highly educated than their LAUSD counterpart (including their peers at neighboring high schools) in 2010-2011; and GDL teachers were more likely to be non-White and teacher staff were more racially diverse than LAUSD teachers. Comparing the teachers who stayed (i.e., "stayers") and those who left ("movers") as of the 2010-2011 school year, we did not detect any significant differences in age, gender, years of teaching at GDPS, student growth percentile scores or student course pass rates between movers and stayers. We did find a difference in the percentage of teachers meeting or exceeding the evaluation standards, in favor of stayers, and White and English teachers were more likely to be movers. Exploring the relationship between available multiple measures of teacher quality, we found small correlations, between three evaluation scores and student growth percentile (SGP) scores. We also found small to medium positive relationships between teacher evaluation scores with Tripod measures, and the majority of these were statistically significant. While these correlations are not surprising, they are also not robust. Additionally, there was considerable variation across academies on numerous measures (e.g., teacher survey results, interview accounts). While the purpose of this report was not to investigate or compare professional capacity across academies, this appears to be an important part of the Green Dot Locke story to be examined more closely in the future.

Introduction

In the fall of 2007, Alain Leroy Locke High School, historically one of California's lowest performing secondary schools began its transition into a set of smaller, Green Dot Charter High Schools. With a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST) was charged with monitoring the progress and effects of the Green Dot Public Schools' Locke transformation. This report constitutes the second part of our Year 3 evaluation.

The first part of the Year 3 evaluation examined the effects of the Green Dot Locke (GDL) transformation on student outcomes including graduation rates, school persistence,

key course taking and completion, and student achievement for students who started as 9th graders at GDL in 2007-08 and in 2008-09 (see Herman et al., 2012). Overall, we found statistically significant, positive effects for the GDL transformation including improved achievement, school persistence, and completion of college preparatory courses (A more detailed summary of results is presented in a later section).

This report builds upon these findings from a different perspective. Specifically, we explore how positive GDL effects we have found in our previous work may relate to teacher quality from the perspective of GDL's professional capacity or "a school's ability to recruit and retain capable staff, the efficacy of performance feedback and professional development, and the social resources within a staff to work together to solve local problems" (Bryk, 2010; p.24).

To provide some context for our work, the following paragraphs provide: a) a summary of the Year 3 evaluation findings on student outcomes, b) a brief review of the literature specific to professional capacity, and c) background on Green Dot Locke context. After this introduction, we describe our evaluation approach including: evaluation questions, available data utilized, interview participants and instruments, and analytic strategies. Finally, we share our evaluation results, organized by our research questions and present a summary of major findings, possible limitations of our study, recommendations, and future steps.

Summary of Year 3 Evaluation Findings on Student Outcomes

The Year 3 evaluation report on student outcomes, released in May, 2012, focused on two groups of students: 9th graders who entered GDL academies in 2007 and 2008 respectively. Matched analyses revealed consistent, positive effects for the GDL transformation. Specifically, results suggested that GDL students performed better on multiple indicators (school persistence, key course taking and completion, and standardized tests, etc.) than they would have if they had attended a demographically comparable LAUSD high school. Statistically significant, positive effects were generally more prevalent for Cohort 2 students, who started as 9th graders in 2008-2009, than for Cohort 1, who started in 2007-2008 prior to GDL's complete transition. For example, compared to control students, Cohort 2 students were more likely to:

- persist in school over time;
- take and pass key 9th, 10th, and 11th grade college preparatory courses;
- take and pass a total of eight or more key college preparatory courses;
- score higher on the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) on their first attempt;

- pass the English Language section of the CAHSEE on their first attempt; and
- pass both the English Language and Mathematics sections of the CAHSEE by the end of 11th grade.

Moreover, GDL students' performance on California Standards Tests (CST) was higher than their matched peers; virtually every descriptive comparison favored GDL students. Statistically significant differences were found for the GDL Cohort 2 students in CST mathematics.

GDL results were particularly impressive in light of GDL's Cohort 2 increased persistence rates¹. That is, the higher persistence rates may suggest that GDL was retaining more lower performing students who otherwise might have dropped out, yet still was maintaining an advantage in CST scores. In any case, even as GDL Cohort 2 demonstrated more statistically significant, positive effects than does Cohort 1, Cohort 1 graduation and college readiness rates, as judged by A-G completion, were impressive. For students who remained at their schools for four years, the GDL graduation rate was 24 percentage points higher than that for the comparison group. Further, the A-G completion rate was 34 percentage points higher for GDL graduates than for comparison group graduates (Cohort 2 students were in 11th grade and had not yet progressed to graduation at the time of the study). This report seeks to examine why students may have shown such dramatic gains over the past few years.

Brief Overview of the Literature on Aspects of Professional Capacity

Given our interest in investigating the intersection of the found positive GDL effects on student outcomes and teacher quality, we focused our study on exploring the notion of *professional capacity*² (Bryk, 2010), including teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support (professional development, evaluation, etc.). These factors also comprise a major focus of our interview investigations.

Teacher recruitment. There are a number of trends regarding those who become teachers in the literature. More women enter the teaching profession than men (Broughman & Rollefson, 2000), and White teachers outnumber teachers of color (Kirby, Berends, & Naftel, 1999). Overall, urban schools and schools in impoverished communities tend to have greater difficulty in finding and retaining qualified teachers (Stinebrickner, 1999), particularly in content areas such as math and science (Ingersoll & Perda, 2009; Arnold,

¹ The persistence rate measure the percentage of students staying at the same schools they started as 9th-graders.

² Professional capacity is defined as school's ability to recruit and retain capable staff, the efficacy of performance feedback and professional development, and the social resources within a staff to work together to solve local problems (p.24).

Choy, & Bobbitt, 1993). Due to these shortages, numerous districts and charter management organizations, including Green Dot, have sought recent college graduates, in particular *Teach for America* participants, to teach in their schools each year³.

There have been a small number of studies investigating the effectiveness of Teach For America participants. Xu, Hannaway, and Taylor (2011), for example, found that Teach For America teachers were more successful than their colleagues with more teaching experience in North Carolina high schools. However, other studies have found that Teach For America teachers (as well as other teachers who enter the classroom before receiving certification) produce lower test scores than students studying under certified teachers (see Darling-Hammond, Holtzman, Gatlin, & Heilig, 2005). According to Donaldson and Johnson (2010), nearly two-thirds of Teach For America participants continue to teach beyond their two-year commitment, and around 15% are still teaching 5 years after entering the classroom (although these numbers are lower for teachers placed in particularly challenging classrooms, such as those for students with special needs or low English language skills).

Teacher retention. The literature on teacher retention shows that there are consistently higher attrition rates for certain teacher demographics than others. Teachers with two years or less of classroom experience (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004), math and science teachers (Arnold, Choy, & Bobbitt, 1993), and White teachers in urban schools and schools with high percentages of minority students (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002) tend to leave the profession more than their peers. Interestingly, teachers of color are more likely than White teachers to go into and stay in low-SES and minority-dominant urban schools (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010).

Studies find that particular policies help to ameliorate problems with teacher retention. School-based mentoring programs have been found to have a strong positive effect (Liu, Johnson, & Peske, 2004), as does frequent and informal administrative support (Guarino, Santibanez, & Daley, 2006) and increased teacher autonomy (Weiss, 1999). Charter schools have been noted as experiencing large amounts of teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2001), as charters are able to hire and fire staff more easily. While this is often noted as a positive attribute (as it allows charters to easily dismiss ineffective faculty), Stuit and Smith's (2010) national study of teacher turnover in charter schools questions the assumption. Stuit and Smith (2010) assert that high rate of teacher firing (or what the authors call "involuntary attrition") create a revolving door of new, inexperienced teachers that often results in

³ Founded in 1990, Teach For America aims to place high-performing graduating college seniors from prominent universities as teachers in low-income urban and rural schools for a two-year commitment (though teachers may stay longer if they choose). For further information, please see <http://www.teachforamerica.org/>.

weakened organizational conditions for supporting effective instruction, such as pedagogical cohesion and trust among staff.

Professional development and support. Interestingly, despite the large number of publishers and training organizations offering various forms of professional development for teachers, little empirical work has been made available to school leaders regarding which forms of professional development have the strongest positive effect on teacher performance (Hansen, 2007). Generally speaking, however, several studies have found that professional development efforts seem to be most effective when they closely fit school and district expectations for teacher performance (Datnow, Park, & Wohlstetter, 2007) and when teachers feel that they play an active and contributing part within those efforts (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Studies have found that more frequent and possibly more informal supports such as mentoring or coaching provide an important venue for teacher professional growth.

A national study (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004) found that having a mentor from the same subject field made teachers less likely to move after first year. In another study of several charter schools in Missouri (Hill-Carter, 2010), mentoring was a significant factor in retaining new teachers. The extent to which such programs are functioning within charter schools and larger charter networks, or charter management organizations, however, is not fully clear.

Teacher evaluation. Traditional evaluation systems have had little to no impact on teaching and learning according to some researchers (Holland, 2004). Several studies of charter schools have found similar findings, with teachers viewing evaluation as a “perfunctory” activity (Hickey, 2006), done out of requirement without being meaningful (Berson, 2012). In order to be more effective, the literature suggests that evaluation should address teachers’ professional growth (Ellett & Teddlie, 2003) and be supported with sufficient resources (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). One study of charter school teachers found that teachers preferred a more collaborative, informal and frequent evaluative relationship with their supervisors to the biannual ritual most participants report (La Massa, 2005).

In recent years, districts and state education departments have sought new approaches to evaluating teachers, with value-added measures (that is, evaluation focused on the contribution of teachers to their students’ learning, typically as measured by standardized tests) becoming more common throughout the United States (Hershberg & Lea-Kruger, 2007). While some argue that value-added models can be useful in identifying the qualities

of effective teachers (Carey, 2004), others have questioned the fairness and validity of evaluating teachers strictly through quantitative achievement measures (Ballou, 2001). In 2010, the Economic Policy Institute published a report urging policymakers to use student standardized test scores with caution when making decisions related to teacher effectiveness, specifically recommending that “such scores should be only a part of an overall comprehensive evaluation” (see Baker et al., 2010, p. 2).

Having presented the literature related to professional capacity, now we turn to the unique context surrounding Green Dot Locke, its transformation, and what we know about GDL’s professional capacity.

Green Dot Context

To interpret our evaluation findings, it is important to grasp Green Dot’s philosophy as well as Green Dot Locke’s unique context. The following paragraphs therefore explore: a) Green Dot’s core tenets, b) Locke’s transformation timeline, and c) available information concerning GDL’s *professional capacity*.

Green Dot core tenets. Green Dot Public Schools (GDPS) is one of several Charter Management Organizations that operate in Los Angeles. GDPS currently operates 18 public schools within the city’s borders⁴ and undertook the challenge of transforming Locke into several small academies, starting in 2007. The effort was groundbreaking in many respects, from Green Dot’s alliance with LAUSD in this endeavor to the scale of the project. Prior to Locke, Green Dot had opened several “new” small charter high schools. In contrast, GDL’s transformation involved taking over a large existing public high school and its entire catchment area, rather than creating a small academy as an alternative to the existing public school as they had done in the past.

GD had several ambitious goals when beginning this project, specifically that:

- All Locke students will receive the education they deserve to be successful in college and life.
- Locke students will become true change agents and come back to transform South Los Angeles and Watts.
- Locke will become a successful urban public high school and will raise the bar for urban schools across the country.

Green Dot’s model for accomplishing these goals was and continues to be based on its six core tenets of high performing schools (see Table 1). Green Dot emphasizes a strong

⁴ Retrieved from Green Dot Public Schools website on April 11, 2012, <http://www.greendot.org/page.cfm?p=1>

partnership with diverse stakeholders—including parents, the community, and LAUSD—in order to implement its tenets. The core tenets to which all Green Dot schools must adhere, are as follows:

Table 1
Green Dot Public Schools’ Six Basic Tenets

#	Tenet
1.	Small, safe, personalized schools
2.	High expectations for all students
3.	Local control with extensive professional development and accountability
4.	Parent participation
5.	Maximize funding to the classroom
6.	Keep schools open later

Green Dot Locke’s transition timeline. A key element in GDL’s transformation approach was the creation of several “small, safe, personalized schools” or academies. According to their website, GD aims to keep school enrollment at 560 students per academy when fully developed⁵. GD originally set out to transform Locke into a set of nine “small, safe, personalized schools” (Herman et al., 2010) on Locke grounds and a nearby satellite campus.

The GDL transition began with two small, off-site schools in Fall 2007 and was completed in Fall, 2008, when Green Dot assumed full responsibility for the existing Locke campus, the total neighborhood catchment area, and the full student community, grades 9-12. Two of these academies—Launch to College Academies #1 and #2 (LLCA #1, #2)—which served students who had been at Locke prior to the transformation, were phased out after the 2010-2011 school year as originally planned. However, two additional academies were phased out after the 2010-2011 school year due to funding challenges. Namely, ACE and Locke #4 were merged into Locke #1 and #3 academies prior to the start of the 2010-2011 school year (see Figure 1). Five academies in total were in operation during the 2011-2012 school year (including Watts and Locke Tech, which are located on the satellite campus).

⁵ See www.greendot.org for further information about their “six tenets of high performing schools”.

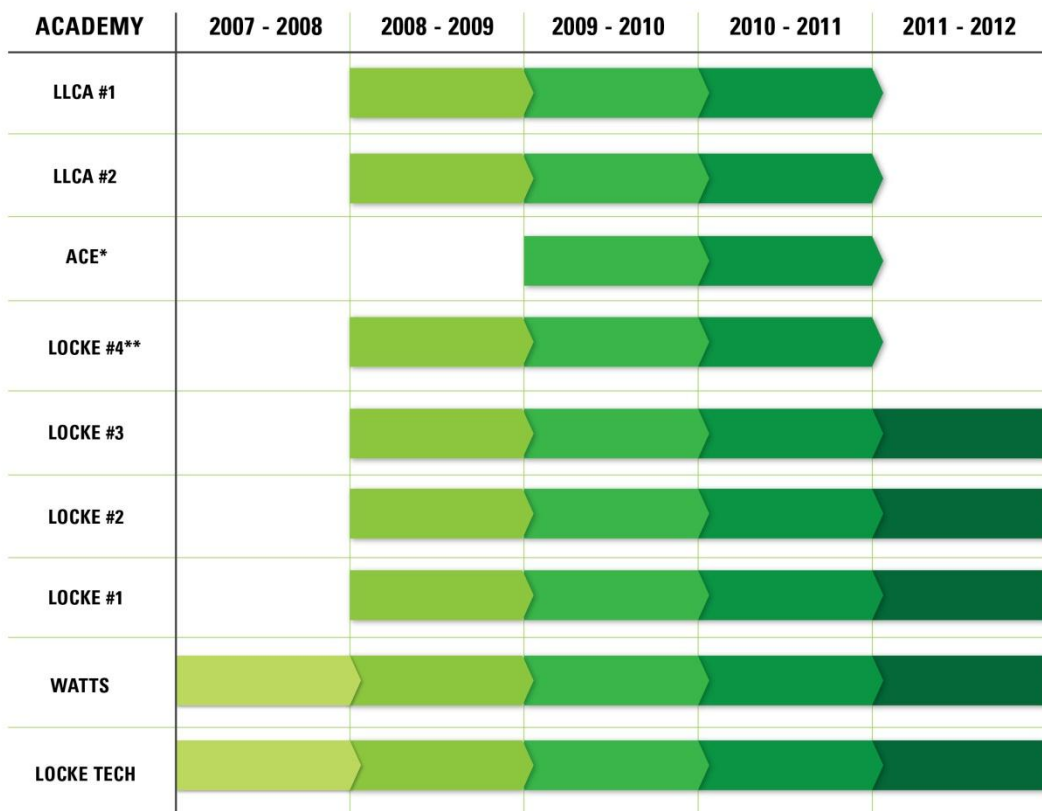


Figure 1. GDL transition timeline.

Note: LLCA 31 and LLCA#2 were phased out in 2011-2012. * ACE was merged into Locke #2.
 **Locke #4 was merged into Locke #1 and Locke #3.

Professional capacity at Green Dot Locke. Green Dot Public Schools network, on behalf of GDL and other GD campuses, actively recruit teachers from the greater Los Angeles area and across the country through several venues such as online job boards, recruitment fairs, and presentations made to students completing their degrees. According to Green Dot’s website, they search for the “most talented, dedicated individuals in the country to lead our classrooms, lead our schools, and build our network” and report hiring only credentialed teachers at their schools.

In comparison to many school districts, Green Dot’s hiring process is much more rigorous and comprehensive. While principals and academy staff are involved in the hiring process, the Green Dot “home office” has set procedures outlined in hiring new teachers. Specifically, the recruitment/selection process encompasses six broad steps⁶, including an 1)

⁶ Information provided via personal communication with Kelly Hurley, Vice President of Human Capital, April 25, 2012.

online application, 2) credential analysis, 3) phone interview/screening, 4) reference check, 5) in-person interview, and 6) interaction with academy principal and hiring panel (i.e., demonstration lesson, writing sample, scenario question interview, and lesson feedback session).

GDPS offers extensive professional development opportunities for teachers, including weekly professional development sessions, new teacher orientation and support meetings, “data” days and peer observation opportunities⁷. Principals and assistant principals also enjoy a range of professional development supports including coaching and monthly “95/5” sessions with their counterparts at other academies. In fact, GDPS administrators view their professional support system as a key factor in retaining teachers⁸. Other selling points highlighted in Green Dot promotional materials include the small school environment, higher pay⁹, and support staff (e.g., IT support) available to teachers.

There is limited information available regarding retention rates at GDPS and LAUSD overall. According to the Green Dot home office, teacher turnover during the 2010-2011 school year has been relatively low, with an expected teacher retention rate for 2011-2012 around 90%.¹⁰

Evaluation activities have changed considerably within the GD network and GDL specifically over the last few years in response to the growing literature on the benefits of multiple measures of teacher effectiveness. For example, during the 2010-11 school year GDL piloted the Tripod survey system developed by Cambridge Education¹¹ and a new teacher evaluation system named the College Ready Promise (TCRP) program with a handful of teachers at Locke #2 Academy. The TCRP program¹², which includes an evaluation component based on a combination of classroom observations, student/parent surveys and

⁷ To learn more, read *Green Dot Locke School Accountability Report Cards*, available online by academy.

⁸ Ibid (this is from Kelly Hurley).

⁹ Green Dot estimates that they pay 10-20% more than the local school district (see <http://www.greendot.org/page.cfm?p=2214>)

¹⁰ Internal communication, April 15, 2012.

¹¹ The Tripod Surveys, developed by Cambridge Education, are student surveys that measure multiple domains of classroom instructional practice and student engagement in seven dimensions: captivate, care, challenge, clarify, confer, consolidate, and control. For more detailed information, please see <http://www.camb-ed-us.com/QualityReviews/Tripodsurveypassments.aspx>.

¹² The College-Ready Promise (TCRP) is a set of policies (including reforms in evaluation procedures that are meant to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness) that four charter management organizations in California (including Green Dot) have agreed to follow (with financial support from the Gates Foundation) in order to increase the graduation rate and college preparedness of graduating seniors in participating schools (particularly in schools with low-income minority populations). A key component of TCRP is the aim to make evaluations much more thorough and extensive, requiring a significantly larger time commitment on the part of both teachers and administrators. For more information, see www.collegereadypromise.org.

value-added student growth percentiles¹³, was fully adopted in 2011-2012. Prior to this, GDPS utilized an evaluation rubric encompassing six categories:

- #1: Engaging & Supporting Students in Learning
- #2: Creating & Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning
- #3: Understanding & Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning
- #4: Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experiences for All Students
- #5: Assessing Student Learning
- #6: Developing as a Professional Educator

Teachers received a score of 1 (lowest), 2, 3, or 4 (highest), with 3 meaning that they met the standard in each area. The six scores were then averaged together for an overall rating and incorporated into GD organizational dashboards in a variety of ways¹⁴. This report utilizes these scores in our quantitative analyses.

Evaluation Methodology

Now that we have a sense not only of what the research says about professional capacity but some knowledge of Green Dot Locke's history and structure, we are able to describe our evaluation methodology for this study. In this section, we describe the evaluation questions that have guided our work, available data we have included in our analyses, descriptions of interview participants and instruments, and our analytic strategies for answering study questions.

Evaluation Questions

Our study encompasses four broad evaluation questions. Specifically:

1. What are the background and demographic characteristics of GDL's 2010-2011 teaching staff? How do GDL teachers compare with those of teachers in LAUSD?
2. What distinguishes teachers who stay at GDL from those who leave? To what extent did these two groups of teachers differ in background characteristics, internal GDL evaluation scores, their student growth percentile (SGP) scores, student survey responses, and their students' passing rates in key courses?
3. What is the relationship between GDL's internal teacher evaluation scores, teachers' SGP scores, student survey responses, and students' success in key courses taught by core teachers?
4. How do teachers and administrators view GDL achievements and challenges related to the transformation thus far, particularly with regard to recruitment/selection, retention and support for teacher quality?

¹³ See internal document, *Green Dot Public Schools: An Outline of Teacher and Leader Evaluation*.

¹⁴ Per email correspondence with GD senior staff.

Available Data

For our evaluation work, we received and analyzed the following data on teachers and students from GDPS:

- Teacher-level data: demographics, 2010-2011 end-of-year survey for teachers and counselors, 2010-2011 internal teacher evaluation scores, and 2010-2011 teacher-level student growth percentile scores.
- Student-level data: 2010-2011 student course data, by semester; and 2010-2011 student survey responses on the Tripod survey, with both linked to individual teachers.

Each of these sources of data is described below in Table 2. There were 174 teachers teaching at the Green Dot Locke in 2010-2011. However, the actual number of teachers analyzed was smaller due to teachers with missing information on the variables of interest and analyzed.

Table 2

Description of the Various Data Used in the Analysis

Data source	Data description
Human Resource File	Teacher demographic information including gender, ethnicity, age, education background, teaching credential, years of teaching at GDL, and overall years of teaching.
2010-2011 end-of-year survey for teachers and counselors	The 2010-2011 end-of year survey elicited teacher/counselor views and opinions on: (1) their principals and assistant principals on their instructional leadership, people management, resource management, problem solving, and community leadership skills; (2) school mission, vision, and culture; (3) professional development; and (4) the College-Ready Promise. The survey also asked teachers to identify the academy they worked at and whether they would recommend their friends to work at GDPS
2010-2011 internal teacher evaluation scores	The internal Green Dot teacher evaluation consisted of an overall rating score and six subscores. The six area scores were averaged and rounded down for an overall rating. For example, if a teacher scored 3 in five areas and 2 in one area, the overall score for the teacher would be 2. Please refer to p. 18 for the specific six areas.
Student Growth Percentile (SGP) Scores	Green Dot provided the CRESST team the teacher-level SGP scores, number of valid student scores per teacher, and standard deviations for the SGP scores.
2010-2011 Tripod Survey	The Tripod Surveys, developed by Cambridge Education, are student surveys that measure multiple domains of classroom instructional practice and student engagement in seven dimensions: captivate, care, challenge, clarify, confer, consolidate, and control. For more detailed information, please see http://www.camb-ed-us.com/QualityReviews/Tripodsurveyassessments.aspx .
2010-2011 Student Course Data	We constructed our own measures of teacher effectiveness based on their student course passing rates for core teachers teaching in four key subjects we analyzed in previous reports: English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science.

Interview Participants and Instruments

Thirteen teachers and four administrators (i.e., principals or assistant principals) who were present at Green Dot Locke academies during the 2010-2011 school year participated in the qualitative portion of this study. We interviewed at least one representative from each Green Dot Locke academy (with a maximum of five teachers from a particular academy). Given the small size of the sample and our assurances of confidentiality, we will provide only a broad overview of participant demographics.

Teachers and administrators reported from at least two to nearly twenty years of teaching experience. Participants taught a range of subjects from core content areas to

electives. Four of the participants reported having some knowledge of Alain Leroy Locke High School prior to the Green Dot transformation; four participants had worked at more than one Green Dot Locke academy.

CRESST researchers developed separate yet complementary interview protocols for teachers and administrators, asking for their impressions of teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support activities at Green Dot Locke as well as the role of Green Dot tenets in their work (see Appendix A and B). The aim of these semi-structured interviews was for participants to reflect on their GDL experience, particularly during the 2010-2011 school year, and to share what they felt was “working” in the areas mentioned.

Analytic Strategies

This study incorporates a mixed methods approach. We provide a detailed description of our analytic approach to answering the evaluation questions using both quantitative and qualitative methods in the following sections.

Quantitative component. Quantitatively, we analyzed teacher data and student course data collected by GDL to examine the characteristics of the GDL teaching staff in 2010-2011 and whether there were any differences between teachers who stayed and those who left in 2010-2011 in terms of background and multiple measures of teacher effectiveness. Our interest was at least two fold: opponents of charter schools have pointed to teacher turnover as an important problem. By comparing the effectiveness of teachers who leave with those who stay across multiple indicators (quantitative value-added measures based on state test scores, qualitative indicators based on expert judgment, and indicators based on students’ coursework success), we can provide concrete evidence to inform the current debate. Moreover, because multiple indicators of teacher effectiveness were available, we not only could provide multiple perspectives on those who stayed and those who left but also could look at the relationships among these four measures.

We analyzed teacher and student data collected by GDPS to answer Evaluation Questions 1 and 2. For Evaluation Question 3, the CRESST team employed correlational analysis to understand the relationship among the four multiple indicators of teacher quality. In 2010-2011, the GDL teaching staff consist of 174 teachers, and we define teachers as those with student course data¹⁵. While examining the characteristics of the GDL teaching staff (Evaluation Question 1), whenever possible, we compared the GDL teachers to the overall LAUSD teachers and the teachers at the three LAUSD comparison high schools

¹⁵ With our operational definition of teachers to be those with student course data, we included in the GDL teaching staff five Principals, four Assistant Principals, one Athletic Director, and one Dean.

identified in our previous reports. The three LAUSD comparison high schools are Fremont, Jordan, and Washington Preparatory High Schools, and they are identified as neighborhood schools serving the same set of feeder middle school students as GDL. Please refer to our previous reports for additional details about methodology in identifying these three schools.

The Tripod student survey data were based on 1,807 student responses for 142 teachers (82% of the 174 teachers). The Tripod survey contains 76 items about classroom conditions, 36 of which are designed to measure seven specific classroom condition constructs. Referred to as the "Seven C's", these constructs are described as "Captive" (4 items), "Care" (3 items), "Control" (7 items), "Challenge" (8 items), "Consolidate" (4 items), "Confer" (5 items) and "Clarify." (5 items). All items are on a 5 point Likert-type scale, with anchors ranging from "Totally Untrue" to "Totally True." For the correlational analysis in this report, construct scores were created for each student, and then aggregated to the teacher-level. Consistent with the results reporting from Cambridge Education, survey responses were also converted into a "percent positive" scale for each teacher. The "percent positive" scores are used for the mean comparisons across groups (e.g. movers and stayers). To compute percent positive scores, all items were recoded at a student level (1 indicating a response to an item was positive, 0 indicating otherwise¹⁶). Then, seven percent positive scores were created for every student--one for each construct-- by averaging across the recoded items. The student scores were then aggregated to the teacher level to generate the "percent positive" scores for each teacher.

Internal teacher evaluation data were available for 135 teachers¹⁷, 78% of the teaching staff. While data was provided for two cycles of evaluations in the 2010-2011 academic year, fall and spring evaluations, only data from the fall semester was used. This decision was made because spring evaluation information was only available for six of the 36 teachers classified as "movers" (i.e., Teachers who moved on or did not return to GDL in 2011-2012). In the fall evaluation, data was available for 27 of the 36 mover teachers, and 103 of the 134 "stayers" (teachers who returned to GDL in 2011-2012).

Green Dot provided the CRESST team the teacher-level student growth percentile scores, number of valid student scores per teacher, and standard deviations for the SGP

¹⁶ Positive item response was interpreted to mean that a student selected either 4 (Mostly true) or 5 (Totally true) for a specific item.

¹⁷ Only 130 out of the 135 teachers have the complete set of evaluation scores, namely the overall scores and scores on the six specific areas. The other five teachers have some specific area scores, but not the complete set of scores,

scores¹⁸ for 93 teachers (53% of the teaching staff). The SGP is another indicator of teacher effectiveness that is based on their students' individual progress on test scores from one year to the next. Specifically, student-level progress is measured by how much a student progress relative to other students with similar scores in previous years. To summarize student progress for a given teacher, the median student growth percentiles across all his/her students is typically used. An individual teacher's SGP scores were calculated by taking the median of a set of valid student scores. Valid student scores refer to the number of SGP scores per teacher that actually count. For a student score to be valid, a student needed to be enrolled from the date of CBEDS (the first Wednesday in October) to the date of CST testing, and attend school 85% of the time or more. If a student did not meet those criteria, his/her score would not count.

Of those 174 teachers, we identified 99 core teachers in four key subject areas¹⁹ (i.e., English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Science). To calculate pass rates for each core subject teacher, we first flagged each student assigned to that teacher as passing a core course (with a letter grade of "C" or better) or not and then aggregated those variables to the teacher level. For example, if a teacher taught two sections of English 9A, that teacher's pass rate was computed as the total number of students passing either of those two sessions divided by the total number of students in both classes. If a teacher taught both English 9A and English 10A, that teacher's pass rate was computed as the total number of students across those two courses passing divided by the total number of students in those two courses. This decision was made in order to enable meaningful comparisons between groups ("stayers" and "movers") with reasonable sample sizes.²⁰

Qualitative component. Our primary aim in conducting interviews with GDL teachers and administrators (principals and assistant principals) was to gain a clearer picture of the "Green Dot Locke experience," particularly in the areas of teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support and suggestions for improvement in these same areas. Support in this report encompasses formal professional development activities as well as more informal

¹⁸ The SGP scores provided are the combined scores from 2009-2010 and 2010-2011, the main reason to combine two years' data is to end up with a smaller confidence interval. Per trial, GDPS found that 100 valid scores produce a confidence interval of about +/- 5.5, and to get to 100 valid student scores, some teachers – especially in schools with higher transiency – it can take two years. Thus, GDPS reports SGP in terms of two-year calculations.

¹⁹ Because teacher evaluation data from fall semester were used, core course information was based on teaching assignments from that semester, as well.

²⁰ Cluster sizes at either the course or classroom level became very small, particularly in social science and science, where there were only 17 and 19 teachers, respectively.

scaffolds such as mentoring and collaboration with colleagues, as well as evaluative feedback.

To recruit interview participants, CRESST researchers were given a list of e-mails for all teachers and administrators working at Green Dot Locke academies during the 2010-2011 by the GDPS staff. Since these e-mails were primarily work addresses (i.e., green dot accounts), our recruitment efforts were limited to current Green Dot employees, including those who had moved to another Green Dot school. In other words, our interview sample may not necessarily represent GDL as an organization in 2010-11. Yet, as a group, interviewees provided detailed and highly reflective answers to our questions and offered us a glimpse of the Locke experience from a range of perspectives.

Two additional reminder e-mails with information about the study were sent within three weeks of our first recruitment e-mail, encouraging teachers to participate. Personalized e-mails sent by CRESST senior staff were also sent to all principals and assistant principals to encourage their participation in the study.

Teacher interviews, on average, lasted approximately 30 to 40 minutes; administrator interviews were designed to be much shorter—15 minutes—due to their hectic schedules. CRESST researchers, however, found that several participants were eager to spend more time than originally allotted to share their experiences. For logistical reasons (i.e., finding a private space to conduct interviews and maintain confidentiality), researchers conducted all except one of the interviews via telephone. Interviews were audio-taped and then transcribed.

The same researchers conducting the interviews developed a series of codes based on the core interview constructs detailed above after reading through several of the transcripts. In addition, researchers noted overarching themes that appeared across constructs such as resource issues, the desire for teacher input, and the role of relationships in their work. Each of the three researchers then coded roughly 6-8 transcripts. Approximately 35% of transcripts were double coded to provide a coder reliability check. The research team resolved any coding questions through consensus (see Carlson and McCaslin, 2003). Coded interviews were then analyzed for particular trends. Researchers utilized Excel and Atlas.ti software to assist in the coding and analysis of interviews. Researchers also reviewed the 2010-2011 End of Year Survey findings as a means to triangulate the data or see to what extent similar themes appeared in teacher responses across these two data sources.

Evaluation Results

In the following section, we investigate each evaluation question, one by one. We then summarize major findings and key themes that have emerged across these questions,

Evaluation Question 1

What are the background and demographic characteristics of GDL's 2010-11 teaching staff? How do GDL teachers compare with those of teachers in LAUSD?

We approached this question by examining teacher data from several sources, including: (1) GD data associated with teacher background, demographics and retention, (2) teacher opinion related to GDL experience and leadership expressed in GD End of Year survey, and (3) multiple measures of teacher quality such as GD internal evaluation scores and student growth percentile (SGP) estimates. The results presented in this section are mainly based on our analysis of GD data. Whenever possible, we have provided corresponding results from LAUSD or results found for other studies to provide some perspective.

Teacher Retention and Turnover. During the 2010-2011 school year, across all GDL academies, 36 out of the 174 original teachers left, giving GDL a retention rate of 79.3% or a turnover rate of 20.7%²¹. This turnover rate was considerably lower than the retention rates reported by Newton et al. (2011) for LAUSD teachers. Their report found the average teacher turnover rate in 2007-08 for secondary charter schools at LAUSD was 45%, with the rate ranging from 41% to 55%. Nonetheless, it is important to consider the current economic climate and the LAUSD data were based on 2007-08.

Teacher demographics. There were 174 teachers teaching at Green Dot Locke in 2010-2011. Among the 173 teachers who reported their ethnicity, 29% of them were White, 13% Asian, 29% African American, and 27% Hispanic/Latino (please see Table 3 for more details). Of the 168 teachers who reported their education degree achievement—93 had Bachelor degrees, and 75 had graduate degrees²².

²¹ It is not clear from the data provided why the 36 teachers left, namely whether they left on their own accord or were terminated by GDL.

²² The most frequently listed Bachelor degree majors were Biology, History, Mathematics, and Psychology. The most frequently listed major for graduate degrees was education (47 teachers reported majoring in education or an education-related specialty for their graduate studies).

Table 3

Teacher Demographic Information: Ethnicity, Education, and Experience

Demographic	GDL		LAUSD		3 comparison schools*	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Ethnicity						
American Indian or Alaskan	2	1.1%	193	0.6%	0	0.0%
Hispanic	22	13.2%	10,760	33.6%	103	26.6%
Asian	51	29.3%	3,882	12.1%	48	12.4%
African American	47	27.0%	3,656	11.4%	149	38.5%
White	50	28.7%	13,516	42.2%	87	22.5%
Other	0	0.0%	38	0.1%	0	0.0%
Subtotal	173	100.0%	32,045	100.0%	387	100.0%
Education						
Master's Degree and Plus	75	44.6%	13,487	40.9%	173	44.8%
Bachelor's Degree	93	55.4%	19,406	58.9%	213	55.2%
Associate Degree	0	0.0%	43	0.1%	0	0.0%
Subtotal	168	100.0%	32,936	100.0%	386	100.0%
Experience						
Overall Years of Teaching	172	5.38	33,188**	13.1	NA	NA
Years of Teaching at District	121	2.36	33,188**	12.6	NA	NA

Data Sources: Green Dot Public Schools and California Department Education's Data Quest website.

* The three comparison schools are Fremont, Jordan, and Washing Preparatory High Schools.

** The total number of teachers reporting their years of teaching could be fewer than the number provided here.

Among the 172 teachers who reported overall years of teaching, the mean years of teaching was 5.38 years, ranging from one to 19 years of teaching overall. Among the 121 teachers who reported their years of teaching with Green Dot, the range decreased to between one to seven years of teaching, and the mean was 2.36 years.

Table 3 also reported the corresponding information for the teachers at the LAUSD and at the three comparison high schools (Fremont, Jordan, and Washington Preparatory) we identified for the student outcome analysis, whenever possible, which were in the same general neighborhood and serving the same feeder middle schools as GDL (Please refer to our student outcome report for additional details about methodology in identifying these three schools). Compared to the teachers at LAUSD, GDL teachers were more likely to be African American and Asian, more likely to have a Master's Degree and beyond, less likely

to be Hispanic and White, and had fewer years of teaching experience, both overall and at the District. Relative to the teachers at the three comparison high schools, GDL teachers were more likely to be Asian and White, less likely to be African American and Hispanic, and more likely to have Master’s Degree and beyond. Nonetheless, these three comparison schools were identified as they serve the same neighborhood students as GDL.

Teacher responses on the End-of-School-Year survey. One hundred and two teachers and counselors responded to the 2010-2011 end-of-year survey, with representations from all GDL academies. Table 4 reports the teacher responses on five selected survey items as an example, the full set of survey results are reported in Appendix C. The five items are selected to illustrate teacher perceptions of GDPS as an employee, their principal’s instructional knowledge, level of teamwork at school, school performance goals, and support of new teachers. Eighty-nine percent of the 86 teachers indicated that they would recommend GDPS as an employer. As presented in Table 4, GDL teachers had highest level of agreement with the statement “Principal sets and tracks school-wide goals to improve school performance,” 89% of the 84 teachers either agree or strongly agree. 81% of the 86 teachers agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that their “Principal is knowledgeable of effective teaching;” and 76% of the 87 teachers agree or strongly agree with the statement that their “Principal builds a collaborative, well-functioning team.” Variation across academies was observed.

Table 4
Teacher Responses on Selected Survey Items, by Academy

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
I would recommend GDPS as an employer.					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	36%	64%	11
School C	5%	10%	52%	33%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	30%	10%	40%	20%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	30%	20%	20%	30%	10
School H	0%	18%	82%	0%	11
Overall	9%	12%	50%	29%	86

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
Principal Instructional Leadership-					
Principal is knowledgeable of effective teaching, including curriculum standards and curriculum design					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	20%	80%	10
School C	0%	30%	52%	17%	23
School D	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School E	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—
School G	0%	33%	58%	8%	12
School H	25%	17%	33%	25%	12
Overall	4%	16%	41%	40%	86
Principal builds a collaborative, well-functioning team					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	4%	13%	44%	39%	23
School D	9%	0%	55%	36%	11
School E	18%	0%	27%	55%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—
School G	17%	25%	42%	17%	12
School H	17%	42%	33%	8%	12
Overall	9%	15%	36%	40%	87
Principal sets and tracks school-wide goals to improve school performance					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	9%	68%	18%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	0%	46%	55%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—
School G	8%	0%	75%	17%	12
School H	8%	25%	67%	0%	12
Overall	4%	7%	57%	32%	84

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
New teachers at my school receive adequate support from leaders and experienced teachers					
School A	—	—	—	—	6
School B	0%	0%	90%	10%	10
School C	33%	29%	33%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	27%	18%	36%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	40%	30%	10%	10
School H	36%	55%	9%	0%	11
Overall	21%	33%	34%	12%	85

Note. For validity purposes, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Teacher responses to the statement on support for new teachers were a bit mixed. Out of the 85 teachers who responded, 21% strongly disagree, 33% disagree, 34% agree, and 12% strongly disagree. Examining the responses across academies, we observed a wider variation on this item, for example, all 10 teachers at School B either agree or strong agree with this statement while 96% of the 11 teachers at School H strongly disagree or disagree. As mentioned, variation across academies for the survey items is commonly observed, but typically not this extreme as observed for the item on support for new teachers.

Measures of teacher quality. There are many different ways to attempt to measure teacher quality. Districts and state education departments have sought evaluative alternatives besides the value-added scores that focused on the contribution of teachers to their students learning, typically as measured by standardized tests. In agreement with Baker et al., (2010, p. 2) that “such scores should be only a part of an overall comprehensive evaluation”, Green Dot has in place this comprehensive evaluation system that collects inputs from students (Tripod student survey) and principals (teacher evaluation scores) in addition to the student growth percentile measures based on student performance on standardized tests in 2010-2011 school year. The CRESST team also experimented with constructing a new measure of teacher quality based on student course pass rates.

Tripod student survey. Based on GDL students’ survey responses (the survey responses are for 142 teachers, based on 1,807 student survey responses²³), Cambridge Education shared the aggregated academy-level results with GDL staff. The following table, Table 5, reports the percent positive responses per each of the 7-C constructs for each of the seven academies. As presented, the majority of the students at the seven academies had positive perceptions of their teachers in all seven constructs, namely Captivate, Care, Challenge, Clarify, Confer, Consolidate, and Control. The construct that had the least positive response from students was “Control” (41% to 71%) and “Challenge” was the construct that students responded most positively (57% to 78%). As observed with teacher survey responses, we also observed variation across academies.

Table 5
2010-2011 Tripod Student Survey Construct Results (Percent Positive Responses), by Academy

School	Captivate	Care	Challenge	Clarify	Confer	Consolidate	Control
School A	50	53	67	55	52	62	45
School B	73	72	78	78	68	77	71
School C	51	55	68	57	54	64	54
School D	52	50	66	58	52	60	53
School E	50	62	69	62	56	67	42
School F	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
School G	58	58	73	68	56	71	55
School H	43	42	57	49	46	51	41

Note. For validity purposes, we don’t report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10. Data Source: Green Dot shared the Tripod reports they received from the Cambridge Education.

Internal evaluation scores. The overall internal evaluation scores were available for 130 teachers²⁴. Forty-seven percent of them scored 3 or 4 (meaning meeting or exceeding the standard) on the 1-4 scale, and 49% of the teachers received a score of 2 and two teachers received a score of 1. The overall score was averaged over the six area scores and rounded. Specifically, if a teacher scored 3 in five areas and 2 in one area, the average score was 2.83, and the overall score for the teacher would be 2. Table 6 also reports the distribution of the six area evaluation scores and the number of teachers with available scores. A higher proportion of teachers, compared to 47% for the overall evaluation, met or exceeded the

²³ For the Tripod surveys, students need to complete multiple surveys, one for each of his/her teachers.

²⁴ The number of teachers with available area evaluation scores varied by the specific area, ranging from 133 to 135 teachers.

standards in the six individual areas, ranging from 61% to 90%. Across the six areas, “Developing as a Professional Educator” is the area that had the largest proportion of teachers meeting or exceeding the standard, 90%; “Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning” is the area with the smallest proportion of teachers meeting or exceeding the standard, 61%.

Table 6
The Distribution of 2010-11 Teacher Evaluation Scores

	Evaluation Scores				# of Teachers
	1	2	3	4	
Overall*	3%	49%	42%	5%	130
Area 1	2%	27%	62%	10%	133
Area 2	5%	34%	51%	10%	135
Area 3	1%	27%	58%	14%	134
Area 4	2%	31%	53%	13%	134
Area 5	0%	37%	57%	7%	134
Area 6	0%	10%	70%	19%	135

Note. *The overall score was averaged over the six area scores and rounded. Specifically, if a teacher scored 3 in five areas and 2 in one area, the average score was 2.83, and the overall score for the teacher would be 2.

Area 1 = Engaging & Supporting Students in Learning

Area 2 = Creating & Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning

Area 3 = Understanding & Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning

Area 4 = Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experiences for All Students

Area 5 = Assessing Student Learning

Area 6 = Developing as a Professional Educator

Table 7 reports by academy the number and percentage of teachers who met the standard in each area by receiving a score of 3 or 4. As with the Tripod student survey data, there was a wide variation across academies, only 14% of the 21 teachers at School F received overall evaluation scores of meeting the standard, while 82% of the 22 teachers at School C were classified as meeting the standard. It was not clear whether the variation was due to differences in teacher quality or the rigor of individual principals’ evaluations.

Table 7

Percentage of Teachers Meeting the Standards on the Evaluation

	Overall*		Area 1		Area 2		Area 3		Area 4		Area 5		Area 6	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
School A	12	25%	12	50%	12	42%	12	58%	12	58%	12	42%	12	92%
School B	21	52%	21	76%	21	57%	21	67%	21	67%	21	62%	21	95%
School C	22	82%	22	91%	22	86%	22	91%	22	91%	22	91%	22	95%
School D	20	60%	20	80%	20	85%	20	75%	20	60%	20	85%	20	85%
School E	3	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA
School F	21	14%	20	35%	21	29%	20	40%	20	40%	21	38%	21	76%
School G	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	8	NA	7	NA	8	NA
School H	23	39%	22	82%	23	61%	23	83%	23	70%	23	43%	23	91%
Overall	130	47%	133	71%	135	61%	134	72%	134	66%	134	63%	135	90%

Note. For validity purposes, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

*The overall score was averaged over the six area scores and rounded. Specifically, if a teacher scored 3 in five areas and 2 in one area, the average score was 2.83, and the overall score for the teacher would be 2.

Student growth percentile scores. Among the 174 GDL teachers, 93 of them had valid student growth percentile (SGP) scores for the 2010-2011 school year, with a mean of 45.7 and standard deviation of 15.0. The median of the SGP scores is 46, with the scores ranging from 10 to 86. A median score of 46 suggests that, on average, the students of GDL teachers are keeping pace with their academic peers. The range of scores indicates that there are some teachers whose median growth percentiles are exceptionally high (a median SGP of 86 means that 86 percent of that teacher's students outperformed their academic peers), as well as some teachers whose growth percentiles are exceptionally low (a median SGP of 10 suggests that 90 percent of that teacher's students were outperformed by their academic peers). Examining the SGP scores by academy, as reported in Table 8, we did not observe significant differences in means and medians across academies, although the range of minimum and maximum scores varied somewhat across academies. School E has the second largest range of 64 points (from 22 to 86), with the range of 76 points when we examined the scores for all 93 teachers regardless of the academy.²⁵

²⁵ A State Report on Student Growth Percentiles prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education states that differences in medians of less than 10 points are not likely to be meaningful, and that medians above 60 or below 40 are relatively unusual (www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/growth/StateReport.doc)

Table 8
Teachers' Student Growth Percentile Scores by Academy

	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
School A	8	—	—	—	—
School B	13	44.46	46	30	62
School C	8	—	—	—	—
School D	16	51.44	50.5	31	73
School E	14	48.14	45	22	86
School F	17	46.53	46	26	74
School G	3	—	—	—	—
School H	14	44.93	49	19	67
Total	93	45.71	46	10	86

Note. For validity purposes, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Course pass rates. We calculated teachers' key course pass rates across their students, and Table 9 has the key course pass rates across all academies and by academy for the 99 core course teachers. The mean key course pass rate across all academies in 2010-2011 is 62%, ranging from 50% to 72% across academies.

Table 9
Teachers' Student Course Pass Rates by Academy

	N	Mean	Median	Minimum	Maximum
School A	8	—	—	—	—
School B	13	50%	49%	17%	80%
School C	14	67%	67%	38%	85%
School D	15	54%	48%	31%	100%
School E	14	72%	77%	25%	89%
School F	17	71%	70%	49%	100%
School G	3	—	—	—	—
School H	15	66%	70%	43%	81%
Total	99	62%	65%	17%	100%

Note. For validity purposes, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Summary Results for Evaluation Question 1. In summary, in 2010-2011, GDL had a teacher retention rate of 79.3% or turnover rate of 20.7%. Compared to LAUSD teachers, in

general, GDL teachers were more likely to be African American and Asian; more likely to have a Master's Degree and beyond; less likely to be Hispanic and White; and had fewer years of teaching experience, both overall years and years at the District. Based on GDPS survey data, GDL teachers were positive about their experience at GDL; 89% of the 86 teachers indicated in the end-of-year survey that they would recommend GDPS as an employer.

In terms of measures of teacher quality, 47% of the 130 teachers with overall evaluation scores were rated by their principals as meeting or exceeding standards on all six areas; the mean aggregated SGP scores was 46. The mean aggregated student course pass rate was 62%. Students overall also had positive experience at their schools as indicated by their responses on the Tripod surveys. Without some established norms to compare these scores, it was difficult to quantify whether GDL teachers were on track or exceeding the expected levels for a secondary charter school.

Evaluation Question 2

What distinguishes teachers who stayed at GDL from those who left? To what extent did these two groups of teachers differ in background characteristics, internal GDL evaluation scores, their student growth percentile (SGP) scores, student survey responses, and their students' passing rates in key courses?

During the 2010-2011 school year, across all GDL academies, 36 out of the 174 teachers left, giving GDL a retention rate of 79.3%.²⁶ The following tables display demographic (i.e., ethnicity, gender, age, years at GDL) information for those who stayed, those who moved, and all teachers. In ethnicity characteristics, stayers and movers were fairly similar, as shown in Table 10. This data suggests the possibility that White teachers were slightly overrepresented and Hispanic or Latino teachers were slightly underrepresented among the movers, although our sample sizes were relatively small.

²⁶ It is not clear from the data provided why these 36 teachers left, namely whether they left on their own accord or were terminated by GDL.

Table 10
Teacher Ethnicity Distribution, Overall and by Termination Status

Ethnicity	Overall	Stayers	Movers
	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)
American Indian or Alaskan	1% (2)	1% (2)	0% (0)
Asian	13% (23)	15% (21)	6% (2)
Black/ African American	29% (51)	28% (39)	33% (12)
Hispanic or Latino	27% (47)	29% (40)	19% (7)
White	29% (50)	25% (35)	42% (15)
Total	100% (173)	100% (138)	100% (36)

Note. One teacher has missing information on her/his ethnicity.

Teacher gender distribution in the stayer and mover teacher groups was consistent with the gender distribution in the overall teacher pool, as indicated in Table 11. In other words, male and female teachers had similar possibilities of staying and moving.

Table 11
Teacher Gender Distribution, Overall and by Termination Status

Gender	Overall	Stayers	Movers
	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)
Male	44% (77)	44% (60)	47% (17)
Female	56% (96)	56% (77)	53% (19)
Total	100% (174)	100% (138)	100% (36)

Table 12 presents cross-tabulated data about teacher age and teaching experience across groups. While stayers and movers were similar in terms of the amount of time teaching at GDL, stayers tended to have more experience in teaching overall (on average nearly one year more experience, 5.6 years vs. 4.5 years). A future area for investigation may be to explore whether movers were more likely to be Teach for America participants.

Table 12

Teacher Age and Years of Teaching Distribution, Overall and by Termination Status

Experience	Overall	Stayers	Movers
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)
Age	32.6 (8.5)	33.0 (8.7)	30.8 (7.2)
Years at GDPS	2.4 (1.5)	2.4 (1.6)	2.4 (1.4)
Total Years of Teaching	5.4 (3.8)	5.6 (4.1)	4.5 (2.4)

Examining the differences between stayers and movers across the four key subjects (English, math, science, and social science),²⁷ we observed that English teachers were more likely to be movers and mathematics teachers were less likely to be movers relative to their other peers (see Table 13).

Table 13

Teacher Subject Teaching Distribution, Overall and by Termination Status

Subject	Overall	Stayers	Movers
	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)	Percentage (number)
English	35% (35)	32%(25)	43%(10)
Math	31% (31)	34%(26)	NA (5)
Science	17% (17)	16%(12)	NA (5)
Social Science	17% (17)	18%(14)	NA (3)
All Four Core Subjects	100% (100)	77% (77)	23%(23)

Note. The sum of teachers across the four subject teachers is 100, and the number of core teachers is actually 99 because one teacher is listed as teaching multiple subjects. For confidentiality, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Tripod student survey. Tripod student survey data was available for 34 mover teachers, and 108 stayers. Figure 2 shows the average percent positive responses for each of the seven Tripod survey constructs, by termination status. In general, there is some evidence that

²⁷ One teachers is listed as teaching multiple subjects.

stayers scored higher on each of the seven Tripod survey constructs, about one to five percent points higher.

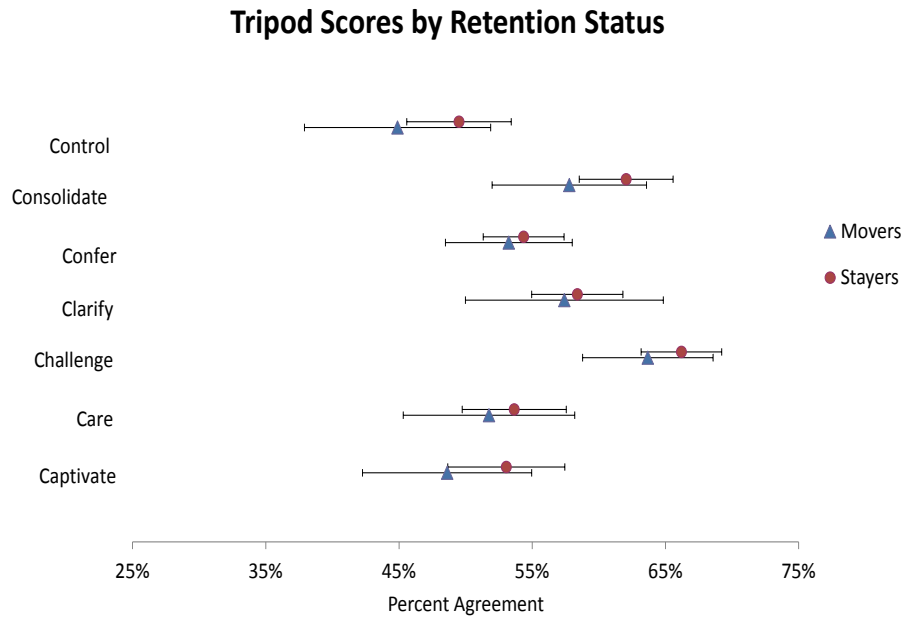


Figure 2. Teachers' Tripod Survey Scores by Retention Status (Percentage).

We explored the hypothesis that sizeable differences between these constructs may be found by comparing teachers' years of teaching,²⁸ specifically experienced teachers (those having three or more years of teaching experience) and novice teachers (having less than three years of experience). Consistent with the hypothesis, we found experienced teachers (N=111) to score higher than the novice teachers (N=31) with fewer than three years of teaching experience, on all seven Tripod survey constructs (Figure 3). In particular, in the Consolidate construct, differences between these two groups of teachers were about eight percentage points. There was, however, great variability in scores, particularly for novice teachers.

²⁸ These categorizations were formed because although the average experience in the teaching among GDL teachers was 5.5 years, the *modal* number of years was 2.

Tripod Scores by Experience

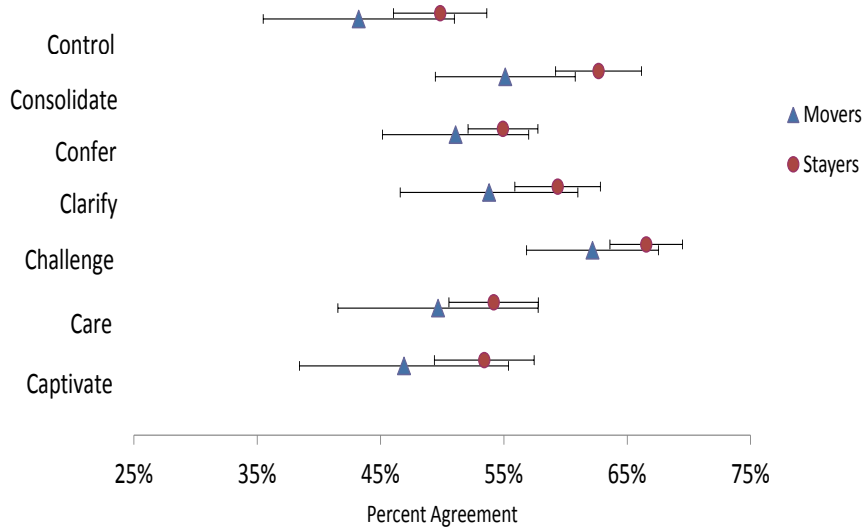


Figure 3. Teachers’ Tripod Survey Scores by Teaching Experience (Percentage).

Internal teacher evaluation scores. Table 14 reports the number of teachers with available evaluation scores and the percentages who met the evaluation standards by termination status. As shown, a higher percentage of stayers met the evaluation standards than movers, the difference ranged from one percentage point (Area 4 – “Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experience for All Students”) to 17-percentage points (Area 6 – “Developing as a Professional Educator”), and the difference was 9-percentage points for the overall evaluation scores between these two groups.²⁹ “Developing as a Professional Educator” was the only area where at least 80% of the stayers met the standard.

²⁹ A few teachers had either missing overall scores or missing area evaluation scores.

Table 14

Number of Teachers and Percentage of Teachers Meeting the Evaluation Standards by Termination Status

Standards	Movers		Stayers	
	<i>N</i>	%	<i>N</i>	%
Overall	27	41%	103	50%
Area 1	29	59%	104	75%
Area 2	29	59%	106	61%
Area 3	29	66%	105	74%
Area 4	29	66%	105	67%
Area 5	28	57%	106	65%
Area 6	29	76%	106	93%

Note. Area 1 = Engaging & Supporting Students in Learning. Area 2 = Creating & Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning. Area 3 = Understanding & Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning. Area 4 = Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experiences for All Students. Area 5 = Assessing Student Learning. Area 6 = Developing as a Professional Educator.

We explored the hypothesis that teachers should be able to move towards proficiency on the evaluation areas as they progressed in their careers by comparing teacher evaluation scores by their teaching experience. Consistent with our hypothesis, larger differences were found between the experienced and novice groups of teachers on the overall internal evaluation scores and in specific areas (see Table 15). In fact, at least 80% of the experienced teachers met the standards on two areas—“Developing as a Professional Educator” and “Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning.” “Developing as a Professional Educator” was the only area where at least 80% of the novices met the standards.

Table 15

Number of Teachers and Percentage of Teachers Meeting the Standard by Teaching Experience

Standards	Novice		Experienced	
	N	%	N	%
Overall	31	16%	99	58%
Area 1	33	52%	100	78%
Area 2	33	33%	102	70%
Area 3	33	48%	101	80%
Area 4	33	48%	101	72%
Area 5	33	39%	101	71%
Area 6	33	85%	102	91%

Note. Area 1 = Engaging & Supporting Students in Learning. Area 2 = Creating & Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning. Area 3 = Understanding & Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning. Area 4 = Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experiences for All Students. Area 5 = Assessing Student Learning. Area 6 = Developing as a Professional Educator.

Student growth percentile scores. Among the 174 GDL teachers, 93 of them (73 stayers and 20 movers) had a valid student growth percentile (SGP) score for the 2010-2011 school year, with a mean of 45.7 and a standard deviation of 15.0. Minor differences were observed when comparing teacher SGP scores by termination status; stayers (N=73) scored approximately 3 points higher. In general, both movers and stayers had students who were keeping pace with their academic peers. Because the sample mean for the movers was estimated using less information (groups with larger sample sizes have more precise estimates of the mean, all else being equal; see Figure 4), there was more uncertainty in the estimate of the mean SGP score for movers. As a result, the 95% confidence interval of the SGP score for movers was fairly wide. In fact, the 95% confidence interval overlaps the 37th percentile, which would indicate an exceptionally low average SGP score for that group.

Student Growth Percentiles by Retention Status

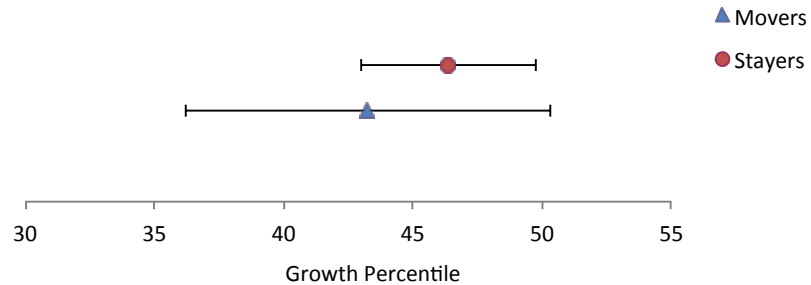


Figure 4. Teachers' Student Growth Percentile Scores by Retention Status.

We also compared teacher SGP scores by years of teaching (Figure 5). Experienced teachers (N=74) scored about six points higher than novice teachers (N=19) with fewer than three years of teaching experience, meaning experienced teachers generally earned higher SGP scores. In general, there was evidence that both movers and stayers had students who were keeping pace with their academic peers. There was, however a great deal of uncertainty in the estimate of the group means for novice teachers. For novice teachers, the lower end of the 95% confidence interval covers the 35th percentile, which indicates an exceptionally low average SGP score for that group.

Student Growth Percentiles by Experience

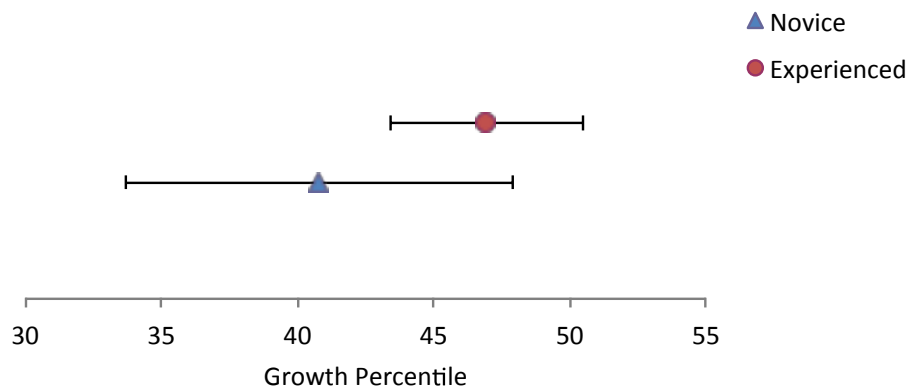


Figure 5. Teachers' Student Growth Percentile Scores by Teaching Experience.

Course pass rate. We calculated teachers' key course student pass rates by teacher termination status, overall and by subject. The course pass rates tended to be fairly similar for both stayers and movers across all core teachers, with stayers having a 4 percentage point lower course pass rate. The graph below (Figure 6) showed average pass rates for both groups (95% confidence intervals are indicated by the whiskers).

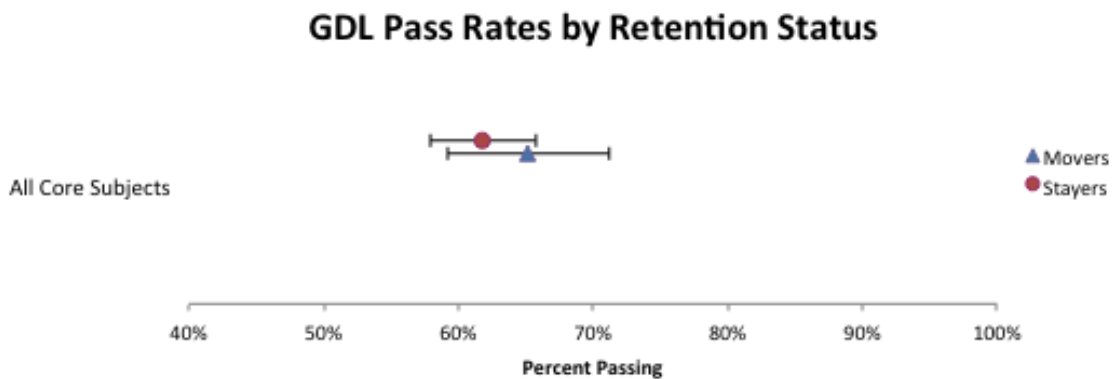


Figure 6. Teachers' Course Pass Rates by Retention Status.

When comparing teacher course pass rates by years of teaching, experienced teachers (N=77) were found to have course pass rates that were twelve percentage points higher than novice teachers (N=22) with fewer than three years of teaching experience (Figure 7).

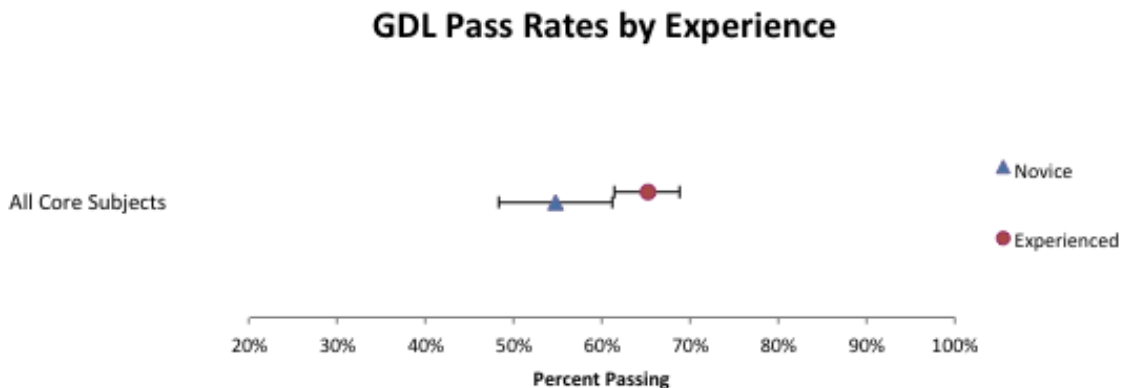


Figure 7. Teachers' Course Pass Rates by Teaching Experience.

Summary of results: Evaluation Question 2. In summary, based on our descriptive analysis, we did not find any significant demographic differences between the stayers and movers as of the 2010-2011 school year in terms of age, gender, or years of teaching at GDPS. We did notice, however, some differences that may indicate that White teachers and English teachers were slightly overrepresented among movers, and Hispanic or Latino

teachers and mathematics teacher were slightly underrepresented. We did not observe any significant differences in teachers' student growth percentile scores, Tripod student survey scores, and student course pass rates when comparing movers and stayers overall. However, we found some differences in the percentage of teachers meeting or exceeding the evaluation standards (in favor of stayers, ranging from one percentage point different to 17 percentage point difference). Clearer trends were found when comparing experienced vs. novice teachers in this data. Namely, experienced teachers tended to be more likely to meet and exceed the evaluation standards, and have higher student growth percentile scores and pass rates.

Again, we caution readers again that the small sample size and the lack of data to disentangle effective teachers who chose to leave voluntarily and weak teachers whose contracts were not renewed from the mover category make these findings highly tentative.

Evaluation Question 3

What is the relationship between GDL's internal teacher evaluation scores, teachers' SGP scores, Tripod student survey responses, and students' success in key courses taught by core teachers?

Small but statistically significant correlations were found between SGP scores and the overall teacher evaluation³⁰ and one evaluation subscore ("Assessing Students Learning"). No correlation was found between teacher SGP scores and overall course pass rates, and between teacher evaluation scores and overall course pass rates.

The lack of relationship between course pass rates and the other two measures of teacher quality was not unexpected. Many factors in addition to teacher quality influences pass rates, for example, teachers may well differ in their requirements for passing a course, and students may differ greatly in their entry knowledge for the course. A few teachers, when addressing questions about what "worked well" at GDL during the interview were concerned that the focus on data and Green Dot's data-driven culture may have possibly led to grade inflation and lower standards for some teachers and students (INT65). Considering the above, we felt that course pass rates were not an informative outcome variable by which to judge teacher quality.

We also examined the relationships between these three teacher measures and results of the Tripod teacher measures based on the 2010-2011 administration of the student Tripod

³⁰ Correlations among the overall and the six area teacher evaluation scores were all statistically significant, ranging from 0.35 to 0.77; and the correlations between the overall evaluation and each area evaluation score were also statistically significant, ranging from 0.57 to 0.77.

Survey³¹. Based on the Measures of Effective Teaching (MET) project report “Learning about Teaching” published in 2012, the correlation coefficients between teacher’s Tripod scores and their valued-added state mathematics test scores ranged from 0.14 to 0.22; and the coefficients ranged from 0.03 to 0.14 for ELA value-added scores. Both ELA and Mathematics data consisted of about 1,000 teachers.

³¹ Preliminary results from the MET project, as reported in “Gathering Feedback for Teaching: Combining High-Quality Observations with Student Surveys and Achievement Gains” published in 2012, demonstrated that the Tripod was useful in distinguishing between classroom environments, and that the aggregated domain scores correlated with other measures of student achievement, such as Teacher Value Added scores.

Captivate	0.071 (86)	0.162 (92)	0.284** (113)	0.362** (118)	0.257** (118)	0.200* (118)	0.090 (118)	0.144 (117)	0.276** (118)	1.000						
Care	-0.023 (86)	0.081 (92)	0.249* (113)	0.309** (118)	0.168 (118)	0.144 (118)	0.131 (118)	0.121 (117)	0.232* (118)	0.628** (142)	1.000					
Challenge	0.039 (86)	0.067 (92)	0.323** (113)	0.290** (118)	0.273** (118)	0.174 (118)	0.153 (118)	0.163 (117)	0.254** (118)	0.741** (142)	0.758** (142)	1.000				
Clarify	-0.016 (83)	0.176 (92)	0.327** (113)	0.370** (118)	0.283** (118)	0.278** (118)	0.246** (118)	0.215* (117)	0.319** (118)	0.743** (142)	0.830** (142)	0.797** (142)	1.000			
Confer	-0.034 (86)	0.130 (92)	0.241** (113)	0.297** (118)	0.170 (118)	0.143 (118)	0.053 (118)	0.092 (117)	0.196* (118)	0.772** (142)	0.693** (142)	0.769** (142)	0.719** (142)	1.000		
Consolidate	0.051 (86)	0.042 (92)	0.249** (113)	0.268** (118)	0.82* (118)	0.186* (118)	0.081 (118)	0.114 (117)	0.247** (118)	0.720** (142)	0.795** (142)	0.857** (142)	0.799** (142)	0.711* *(142)	1.000	
Control	.001 (86)	0.146 (92)	0.338** (113)	0.454** (118)	0.386** (118)	0.344** (118)	0.256** (118)	0.231* (117)	0.320** (118)	0.744** (142)	0.544** (142)	0.661** (142)	0.691** (142)	0.629* *(142)	0.658** (142)	1.000

Note. The tripod scores are the mean student scores.

Area 1 Engaging & Supporting Students in Learning.

Area 2 Creating & Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning.

Area 3 Understanding & Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning.

Area 4 Planning Instruction & Designing Learning Experiences for All Students.

Area 5 Assessing Student Learning.

Area 6 Developing as a Professional Educator.

* $P < 0.05$ (2-tailed), ** $P < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

Correlating Tripod scores with the other three teacher measures, we found no correlation between Tripod scores and SGP scores, no significant relationship correlations with course pass rates, and small to medium correlations with teacher evaluation scores (the majority were statistically significant). Reflecting on the found MET coefficients for the Tripod measures, we felt perhaps that SGP scores may not be as good a measure of teacher quality as a typical value-added measure, hence the weaker correlations with Tripod student survey measures. The teacher evaluation scores assigned by their principals were robust and correlate well with the Tripod measures.

Summary of results: Evaluation question 3. In summary, we found no significant relationship between course pass rates and teacher evaluation scores, Tripod scores, and student growth percentile scores based on students' achievement. Also, no significant correlation was found between teacher evaluation scores and SGP scores. We found small significant correlations between SGP scores and overall teacher evaluation scores and two area evaluation scores. We also found small to medium correlations between teacher evaluation scores with Tripod measures and a majority of the correlations were statistically significant. The lack of significant relationships between course pass rates and the other three measures of teacher quality may suggest that course pass rates were not an informative outcome variable by which to judge teacher quality.

Evaluation Question 4

How do teachers and administrators view GDL achievements and challenges related to the transformation thus far, particularly with regard to recruitment/ selection, retention, and support for teacher quality?

Although four years have passed since the transformation began, it is important to realize that GDL academies are still young institutions and that “*transformation isn't something that happens overnight*” (Participant 25). Green Dot Locke academies are working to thrive on a campus that has been long neglected and associated with failure. This section examines some of the achievements and growing pains that GDL faculty (i.e., teachers and administrators) have experienced in this process, particularly in areas commonly associated with teacher quality or professional capacity, including recruitment/selection, retention, and support (i.e., professional development, mentorship, collaboration, and evaluation).

Our original intent in interviewing GDL faculty was to shed light on potential reasons for the gains in student achievement, school persistence, and completion of college preparatory classes we found in our quantitative analyses for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012

cohorts. Yet, teachers and administrators found it hard to separate their experiences from one year to the next. Participants also tended to base their answers on their academy experience. While administrators generally knew more about what was happening across the Locke campus, teachers oftentimes reported knowing “*very little about other academies*” (Participant 72). Our interviews, therefore, capture faculty views on the Green Dot Locke transformation over time and from different vantage points.

In the following pages, we also explore several themes that emerged from our analysis of interview data such as the benefits and challenges associated with a small schools model. These themes are closely intertwined with the topics of teacher recruitment/selection, retention, and support as well as Green Dot’s core tenets. Survey results from the 2010-2011 *End of Year Survey* are also highlighted where relevant (see Appendix C for more detailed results from survey items). Finally, we examine perceived accomplishments as well as challenges related to the Green Dot Locke (GDL) transformation thus far.

Why Green Dot Locke? One of the first questions we asked teachers was why they had chosen to work at GDL. This question served as an icebreaker, but also provided some sense of teachers’ motivation. Teachers gave multiple reasons for choosing GDL, from feeling that GDL was a “good fit” professionally and/or personally to needing a job, having a desire to teach at a small school/charter school, in some way being recruited by GDL, and/or having an interest in being a “part of the change”. For example, one teacher explained that she was drawn not only by the offer of a full-time position in her content area, but by Green Dot’s approach to parent involvement.

I loved the philosophy of parents being involved in terms of the service hours. Having been a teacher four years at that point—that was like unheard of seeing parents actually contribute to the high school level education. (Participant 67)

Recruitment/selection. Overall, teachers tended to have fairly positive or mixed impressions of Green Dot Locke’s efforts “to recruit highly effective teachers.” Administrators also generally praised GD’s “*excellent job at recruitment*” (Participant 66). Several participants described the multi-step recruitment/selection process as intense and comprehensive.

I think it is the most intense recruitment that I’ve seen at any other district which is really competitive especially right now with the lack of job availability. I think that Green Dot is doing a real good job of recruiting some really highly skilled and qualified teachers. (Participant 26)

...You have to give mock lessons and you have to actually write a lesson plan and you have to go through an interview. It's like this very extensive process. (Participant 66)

While roughly half of teachers felt that GDL had been successful or even “*very successful*” (Participant 63) in recruiting/selecting teachers, others described this process as dependent upon factors such as school administration. One teacher described what she³² saw as extremes in the newly hired teaching pool.

I think that probably varies greatly by school...In terms of the people that were hired this year I think that it was a very--it was either hit it out of the park or a big, huge miss. So we hired a couple of teachers that are phenomenal and we hired teachers that I know I met them on day one and I was, like, they're not going to last and they didn't. (Participant 67)

Interestingly, while some teachers praised Green Dot's ability to select highly skilled and qualified teachers, many also spoke of the large numbers of new teachers hired – particularly through the Teach for America program – who had little or no classroom experience.

...These young, enthusiastic teachers don't have a lot of experience, so their effectiveness, I'm not really sure how effective these younger teachers are, because they don't have a lot of experience. (Participant 65)

An administrator further clarified that while most of her teachers arrive at Locke with a few years' of teaching experience, they were in many respects still new teachers.

...The average teacher that comes through--through LAUSD at three, they're not a three--they're not a four-year vet by the time they get here. They're not in that fourth year because they haven't had the proper professional development, they haven't had--they haven't had the right coaching. (Participant 77)

Retention. Overall, teachers' views on retention were less favorable than their views on GDL's recruitment/selection. Individual impressions on teacher turnover seemed to vary widely, possibly due to different academy experiences. Most teachers expressed mixed or negative impressions regarding Green Dot's efforts to retain effective teachers and administrators. Some cited challenges that were beyond the control of Green Dot, in particular, issues within the community which lead to high teacher turnover.

Now as far as retaining teachers that's a whole different story because even though we are still under the Green Dot system and a new charter style system you have problems

³² For the ease of the reader and to protect participants' anonymity, we will use the pronoun “she” consistently across this section to refer to teachers and administrators.

within the community and are endemic within the schools. So I mean we have very high violence you know drugs and just abuse within the school. (Participant 26)

Many participants also spoke of challenges associated with retaining new teachers, particularly *Teach for America* participants.

I would say that's the number one thing, of the teachers that I taught with in my first year at Locke, I would say that half of them are no longer teaching, because they were Teach for America and after two years they got out. (Participant 65)

Another participant described how their school had dealt (or not dealt) with persistent vacancies.

As far as retaining the teachers, I think they do a terrible job. I think that's proven. This year, within the first semester, several teachers quit; they have not hired full-time teachers to replace it. (Participant 18)

But why do teachers leave or stay? We asked teachers why they think their colleagues stay or leave GDL to gain a better picture of retention. Teachers cited several reasons why they (and their colleagues) chose to stay, most frequently because of their students, colleagues, level of support available for teachers and the important work they are involved in.

First and foremost I think it's the dedication to the students. I mean I have not yet met a teacher at Locke who doesn't--who has taught there just because it is a paycheck. And so they do so because they want to be the change that they want to help see in student's lives. So I think that is the primary reason, the intrinsic altruism of the people. (Participant 23)

Teachers cited personal reasons (i.e., life changes, commute times, family responsibilities), other opportunities as well as stress associated with teaching as reasons why teachers may leave. While teacher "burnout" may be a common occurrence in urban schools, roughly half of teachers expressed frustration with Green Dot in particular, feeling that their voice was not heard or having concerns about the pace/direction of transformation effects.

In my mind I haven't--the transformation and the changes haven't been everything they hyped--they especially hyped it up to be--just before they even came in here. So a lot of people get frustrated with that and decide this isn't the right fit for me. (Participant 71)

It is not clear whether teachers felt more frustration at particular academies. However, results from the 2010-2011 End-of-year Survey indicate that there was wide variation across academies in response to the question, "*I would recommend GD as an employer.*"

Support. We asked participants a series of questions about formal and informal types of support, mainly professional development activities, mentorship/collaboration and evaluative feedback. While each of these topics is explored independently in the paragraphs below, they are closely related and essential in supporting teachers' growth as intentional and reflective practitioners.

Professional development. Teachers discussed many of the same professional development activities as those cited in the online *School Accountability Report Card*, section XII, including: new hire orientation, weekly staff development sessions, and content-area staff development in their responses. A majority of teachers, for example, explicitly mentioned attending weekly Wednesday morning sessions within their academies. Some teachers spoke of how the quality of professional development, particularly the weekly sessions, had improved over time.

...Green Dot has made lots of effort to make it more beneficial and make it practical for teachers to incorporate into the classroom. I think that they've done a wonderful job with that in better preparing the teachers in what to expect. So I do see a big growth in that and even just as Green Dot has expanded over the years I've noticed that it has improved quite a bit. (Participant 26)

Others spoke about the important role that principals played in leading professional development activities and getting teachers involved. Teachers also praised professional development activities led by teachers as being some of the most effective.

They've gotten more teachers involved and you know there's some of the ones--they're more of the ones now who are doing the professional developments, which as an educator is for me, you know a strong teacher presenting information and you want to listen and you want to learn from them. (Participant 74)

The quality of professional development activities, however, appeared to vary somewhat by academy and academic year. As one teacher explained:

Over my 4 years at Green Dot it [Wednesday morning sessions] ranges from teachers sharing their instructional strategies, which I think has been the most useful thing, to viewing things about classroom management, working with special instruments, literature strategies, it's been a lot of different things, but it hasn't always been effective. (Participant 65)

Survey responses also seemed to echo this variation. For example, teacher responses to the statement "*Professional development at my school site has helped me improve instructional practice*" appeared to vary widely across academies (see Table 17).

Table 17

2010-2011 End of Year Survey: Professional development at my school site has helped me improve instructional practice

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School C	24%	24%	48%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	36%	46%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	60%	10%	10
School H	30%	30%	40%	0%	10
Overall	13%	22%	43%	22%	86

Note. For confidentiality, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Some teachers spoke of a change in focus within PD sessions over time. In particular, some participants spoke of the College Ready Promise (TCRP) as a growing focus in professional development activities.

Recently, more so this year, there is a lot of propaganda. There just seems like they're really trying to pitch to us the TCRP, The College Readiness Promise. (Participant 71)

Mentorship and collaboration. While there did not appear to be a formal cluster-wide mentoring program in place according to teachers, nearly half spoke of serving as a mentor – formally or informally - to others. One teacher speculated that TCRP activities may allow for a future “*pathway or avenue to either have other teachers work with each other in the way of facilitator or mentor and also try to build the younger teachers.*” (Participant 26)

Many teachers described their assistant vice principals or content coaches as mentors or the closest to what may be considered a mentor. However, their experiences appeared to differ, both in terms of interpersonal relationships between teachers and their administrators and actual time reportedly spent interacting in person, via e-mail, etc. Administrators' hectic schedules were often mentioned as a limitation. A teacher working at a “merged” academy explained:

I think my administrators are extremely competent and skilled in what they do but they can only do so much with and for me as a growing teacher when there are only two principals for a campus of 850 students and 40 something teachers. (Participant 19)

According to teachers, content area coaching was available in some but not all subject areas such as science and social science, due to financial constraints. Finally, teachers routinely spoke of the invaluable, informal support they received from colleagues both in planning their instruction and getting through the day.

(Speaking about their department)...We've had some very strong, competent, motivated and with-it teachers. I've had some phenomenal--phenomenal--phenomenal interactions, feedback, and discussions with them. And so I have really, really, really enjoyed working with some of my colleagues. (Participant 74)

Evaluation. Teachers spoke at length about the introduction (and piloting of) the College Ready Promise (TCRP) program,³³ starting at Locke 2 academy during the 2010-2011 school year and cluster-wide in 2011-2012. There appeared to be a clear line from participants' perspective between evaluation activities before and after the introduction of TCRP. Teachers appeared to have a wide range of experiences (both positive and negative) associated with evaluation prior to the introduction of TCRP. For some individuals, the utility of feedback provided as part of their evaluation varied substantially from year to year, administrator to administrator.

You know it really is dependent upon who has been evaluating me and who has been giving me feedback. My first two years my principal was phenomenal... I've had other you know feedback and critiques, which you know that have not always necessarily been as you know pertinent to my teaching and I--I've been somewhat skeptical of it. (Participant 74)

Teachers' actual evaluation experience, the frequency of evaluations and their timeliness also seemed to vary by participant. One teacher explains:

...In my experience, evaluation seems to be an afterthought on the part of administration. My second year, the 2009-2010 school year, even though I know you're not asking about that school year, my vice principal never set a foot in my classroom second semester. At the (cites academy) it has been a systemic issue of the vice principal not, basically, putting evaluations off until the last minute. (Participant 65)

It is therefore, perhaps, not surprising that four participants used the term "subjective" when describing evaluation activities prior to TCRP. In contrast, several teachers felt that TCRP

³³ The College-Ready Promise (TCRP) is a set of policies (including reforms in evaluation procedures that are meant to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness) that four charter management organizations in California (including Green Dot) have agreed to follow (with financial support from the Gates Foundation) in order to increase the graduation rate and college preparedness of graduating seniors in participating schools (particularly in schools with low-income minority populations). A key component of TCRP is the aim to make evaluations much more thorough and extensive, requiring a significantly larger time commitment on the part of both teachers and administrators. For more information, see www.collegereadypromise.org.

offered a more systematic approach to provide teachers with evaluative feedback, albeit not without challenges or demands. An administrator explained:

It (TCRP) is a pain for everybody and it is very difficult to struggle through the newness of it and learning it ... but that is so huge for an organization. I think it is huge for education as well...it's something that is more and more objective. It is something that is a lot more holistic. I think hands down that is our greatest achievement. (Participant 25)

This same administrator went on to describe the potential burden of doing it “right” which includes formally reviewing a teacher’s lesson plan, observing the lesson, transcribing the observation, and debriefing with the teacher.

If you do it right it literally takes your day. So our constant battle right now is trying to figure out how to effectively run the school and meet our deadlines and things like that and still do a halfway decent job with TCRP. (Participant 25)

Some participants also felt TCRP would provide a venue for more reflection and rigor.

... (The College Ready Promise) Grant has been really good because it is forcing or you know provoking a lot of teachers to actually intentionally reflect on their own practice. And it is causing the schools to reflect on whether their professional development works or not because now we have a motivating factor of knowing eventually this is going to lead to my salary. (Participant 19)

In any case, there proved to be a great deal of feeling (i.e., concern, confusion, anger, excitement) associated with TCRP. Survey data also reflect a wide range of viewpoints regarding TCRP (see Table 18).

Table 18

I think the College Ready Promise will be a good thing for my school.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree/ Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	30%	50%	20%	10
School C	15%	15%	40%	30%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	10%	0%	60%	20%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	10%	50%	20%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	46%	36%	11
Overall	10%	10%	41%	29%	12%	84

Note. For validity purposes, we don't report academy results when the applicable academy N is less than 10.

Green Dot achievements and challenges. At the end of our interviews, we asked participants to consider key achievements or what they felt was working at Green Dot Locke as well as challenges or what needed improving. If time permitted, we asked a similar question focusing specifically on Green Dot's core tenets. Their responses encompassed topics already covered in our interviews (i.e., teacher quality, support) as well as broader issues such as school structure.

While teachers and administrators shared a range of ideas regarding “achievements and challenges”, these ideas seemed to fall under three broad categories: 1) school structure (i.e., small schools) and organization, 2) teacher quality, and 3) school's focus on students and on providing a rigorous curriculum. We present the most commonly cited achievements and challenges in the paragraphs below. A more extensive chart with excerpts from individual teacher interviews regarding specific GD tenets is provided in Appendix D.

School structure and organization: Achievements. Teachers and administrators frequently spoke about the school structure and in particular about the small schools “model” when asked about GDL key achievements. A number of participants, for example, cited the benefits of working in a small-school environment including: “*unheard of*” (INT63) small class sizes, their ability to work more collaboratively with colleagues, develop more personal relationships with students, as well as have a greater voice in administrative decisions. As one teacher noted,

I'd say 95-percent of the students on campus know who I am ...if you're going to ditch class the odds that the teacher that sees you actually knows who you are a lot higher, and also that teacher cares enough to go and figure out why you tried to ditch. What's going on? (Participant 72)

Administrators tended to speak more explicitly about the small schools "model" when sharing what they thought worked well. As one administrator explained the small schools approach provided each student with "*more attention for their academics, social or mental health services and parents are able to also receive a little bit more attention as well*" (Participant 69).

At a structural level, small schools also were seen as instrumental in the schools' ability to become more systematic in their approach to professional development, evaluation, and accountability overall.

I would say just increased organization. Just being more organized about the way we do things....Like everything from like professional development down to evaluation down to accountability you know. (Participant 66)

Improved campus security and increased attendance were also mentioned as "working well" by some faculty in comparison to Locke under LAUSD. An administrator felt that this was due, in part, to the smaller emphasis of the school.

There's been such an increase in--in attendance at Locke since it was Green Dot and I think kids generally feel much safer there at--at the Locke main campus, in part because it's a smaller emphasis of the school so we're able to see more, hear more, and respond to needs quicker for students. (Participant 69)

Interestingly participants also attributed such improvements to being part of a larger network (i.e., GDPS) that provided structure and supports. A teacher explained, "*There is just a lot more functionality, accountability and support*" (Participant 19). She then described a recent incident in which GD's home office "*collaborate(d) with LAPD on the spot to handle the situation,*" in this case a bomb threat – something that may not have happened prior to Green Dot's presence at Locke. The *Safe & Civil Program* was also highlighted by some participants as something that's "working" at GDL.

School structure and organization: Challenges. The small schools approach, however, had a downside. Safety concerns were still present according to at least some teachers. Increased attendance, for example, had led to more behavioral issues according to at least one teacher. As a participant who has worked at Locke before and after the transformation explained:

...They're doing a better job of getting the kids in the classroom, for good or bad. For good we want kids in the classroom, for bad now the classroom dynamic has changed because we have more managerial problems with students. Kids that normally wouldn't go to school or come to class they're in the classroom now. (Participant 71)

Another teacher felt that the small school model seemed to promote divisions and rivalries between academies as well as physically segregate students by using gates to separate academies. This teacher went on to encourage Green Dot to think more creatively about the campus' environment.

I think that Green Dot, if all those great minds could be a little bit more creative in allowing a more free-flowing campus so it doesn't feel, quite frankly, as a prison. (Participant 23)

Others expressed a desire for more opportunities to collaborate with colleagues and get to know students across academies. Related to this, some teachers noted that the small school model potentially limited students' ability to take advanced courses and required the staff to wear multiple hats.

But again one of the downfalls of a small learning community is we don't offer as many classes. Again you have teachers that are wearing a lot more hats than they had to wear and multiple preps (preparation periods) teaching multiple different classes. (Participant 71)

Participants also expressed concerns related to working within the larger Green Dot network. Specifically they expressed a perceived loss of some academy autonomy in areas such as professional development and the importance of differentiating between Locke and other Green Dot campuses. Participants spoke of the difficulty of trying to implement the Green Dot model at Locke or Locke being a "different animal" (Participant 71) in comparison to other GD schools. Parents did not actively choose to send their children to Locke over the neighborhood school (as is the case for other GD schools), Locke *was* the neighborhood school. Some participants therefore felt that the network should be more sensitive of Locke's unique circumstances and challenges, particularly in the area of accountability. As a participant explained,

For me the organization at this point just needs to take a step back ... It's okay for us to set expectations. Okay we want Locke to be an 800 (API score) school but we have to set realistic goals of getting there. (Participant 66)

Teacher quality: Achievement. While many GDL teachers seemed to be relatively new to the teaching profession, participants tended to praise their dedication and enthusiasm. The teacher recruitment process also received high marks. Overall, as a veteran teacher explained:

I would say that I think one of the biggest things that I have seen as far as change and improvement from previous years that I've taught there when it was LA Unified is that just the quality of teachers and quality of instruction has improved. (Participant 26)

Related to this, teachers spoke of the relative opportunities and supports available for teachers at GDL as a strength, in essence *"teaching teachers how to be better teachers"* (Participant 75). While feelings regarding TCRP's implementation were decidedly mixed, some expressed excitement that such a system could serve as a mechanism for even further professional growth.

Teacher quality: Challenges. Like most schools, participants spoke of funding challenges. In particular, they spoke of GD staff being stretched thin, persistent vacancies, and the need for more resources. Teachers and administrators felt particularly stressed when academies were collapsed into one another, creating a situation in which resources had to be stretched and student-teacher ratios become higher, creating a "not so small school".

..with all these transitions with Locke from some schools have grown now above you know what they wanted to be with 550 students and part of that is the economic side of things, I would say the schools are still relatively personal but they're--they're in danger of growing from the Locke Academy to big right now. (Participant 74)

Leadership skills and individuals' ability to provide meaningful coaching/feedback also seemed to vary considerably. Finally, retention appeared to be a threat to teacher quality. Not only did the school lose some talented teachers each year, the remaining staff had to "rewind" or start over each year. As a teacher explained, *"losing teachers is starting all over. When we have returning teachers we can kind of pick up and we can grow instead of rewinding"* (Participant 67). Teacher turnover may also be more keenly felt in a small school environment than a traditional school.

School's focus on students and on providing a rigorous curriculum: Achievements. While there was some disagreement and dissenting opinion about issues such as how to

measure effective teaching, one thing was clear when looking across interviews. Green Dot staff and Locke faculty were dedicated to helping their students succeed.

No one is sitting back and kind of just twiddling their thumbs or you know messing around ... and I think that's some--something that many people may take for granted, but it's something under old Locke, which never existed. And I think that's great because you know just the fact that you know your teachers to you know your--basically your CEO are there for kids and they're working hard to try to improve; you know the outcomes of students is very, very important. (Participant 74)

GD also appeared dedicated to providing their students with a high quality education.

While Locke students have made great strides since the transformation, however, participants spoke of the need for greater rigor in the curriculum. Even devoting time and thought to the notion of rigor appeared to be an achievement in some ways in comparison to the "old Locke". An administrator explained,

I think that all the schools in the Locke cluster, including my own here, definitely need to improve rigor and--and the way we scaffold the material to get to that level of rigor, as indicated in the State standards for kids. I think that's the next bit piece of the puzzle here that's missing as we--to really capture full transformation. (Participant 69)

School's focus on students and on providing a rigorous curriculum: Challenges. Yet, some participants saw the need to strike a delicate balance between improving academic rigor and making Locke a place students want to come. A participant expressed concern in devoting too much energy strictly on improving academic achievement.

It's everything here now--everything is improving test scores this and improving test scores that. I know that's the goal. I know in my profession that is the overall goal but that's not how you get there. You get there by making school a place that kids want to come to....And I'm sorry your average black and Latino kid here in Locke doesn't want to come to two classes of math and two classes of English with a history class and a science class in between. (Participant 66)

The same participant and others suggested that the school provide more extracurricular activities to engage and motivate students.

Several participants discussed the role of data in fueling their instruction and professional development activities. Yet, some spoke of the counter-productive approach of passing students for the sake of "good data".

I can't speak for the other Locke schools, but I can say that at both the [academies I have worked at], there is a push at the end of every semester to pass students that have not

earned a passing grade for the sake of good data. So those of us that want to hold students to a high standard, hold students accountable for whether they do their work or not, we get pressure from them to lower our standards. (Participant 65)

Larger social issues, beyond the control of Green Dot Locke, were also viewed as challenges hampering student success and academic rigor. An administrator spoke of the need for more social services such as mental health services, parenting support:

...if you know anything about that area (Watts)--by the time say our students reach us they've seen a whole lot. And they've experienced a great deal of trauma in most cases. And it's never dealt with and so that's why I think those support services would be that thing that is needed. (Participant 77)

Related to this, individuals spoke of the challenge in finding ways (and time necessary) to meaningfully involve parents in their children's education. Another administrator explained:

With everything else on our plate that (parent involvement) takes a backseat...it is hard because you don't have the forward push. You don't have parents knocking on the door saying, how can I be involved? (Participant 25)

Green Dot Tenets

If time permitted, we asked participants to talk about the role that Green Dot tenets played in their work. Although most teachers could not recite the six core tenets, they spoke of them as "*goals that we aspire to*" (Participant 19), guiding their work and laying the foundation for Green Dot's mission. Some participants highlighted a particular tenet that had great meaning to them and their work:

I think, the one (tenet) that I try to keep in mind is the only one I truly remember, it's the unwavering belief in students' potential or ability...I just try to remember how everyone is once a teenager, how far people can come, and if I keep pushing my students, even if I might not see the results of that now, I'm instilling something in them that might come through later on. (Participant 65)

While difficult to quantify, this unwavering belief may be a key factor in student achievement gains we have seen. Appendix D reports abbreviated excerpts of participants' views on specific tenets.

Summary and Recommendations

Having had the opportunity to explore each evaluation question separately, we now turn to summarizing these findings across the questions. The following, we feel, are "headlines" or key findings that readers should take away from this report. Namely:

1. Green Dot Locke teachers, overall, were more highly educated than their LAUSD counterpart (including their peers at neighboring high schools) in 2010-2011. GDL teachers were more likely to be non-White and more diverse than LAUSD teachers.
2. We did not detect any significant differences in age, gender, years of teaching at GDPS, student growth percentile scores, Tripod student survey responses, and student course pass rates between movers and stayers, although stayers were more likely to meet or exceed the evaluation standards. White and English teachers were slightly more likely to be movers.
3. We found small positive relationships between evaluation scores and student growth percentile scores, with the coefficient being statistically significant for three out of the seven evaluation scores. We also found modest positive relationships between teacher evaluation scores and student Tripod results, and a majority of the correlations were statistically significant. While these correlations are not surprising, they are also not robust.
4. There was considerable variation across academies on numerous measures (e.g., teacher survey results, interview accounts). While the purpose of this report was not to investigate or compare professional capacity across academies, this appears to be an important part of the Green Dot Locke story to be examined more closely in the future.

We will briefly examine each of these headlines, study limitations, as well as recommendations for future evaluation studies and improvements within GDL internal data collection efforts in these final pages.

Summary of Findings

Green Dot Locke teachers in comparison to their peers. Compared to LAUSD teachers in 2010-2011, GDL teachers were more likely to be African American and Asian, and more likely to have a Master's Degree and beyond. In contrast, GDL teachers were less likely to be Hispanic and White and had fewer years of teaching experience (both overall years and years at the District). GDL teachers felt positively towards their experience at GDL on the whole, and 89% of the 86 teachers who responded to GDL's end-of-year survey responded that they would recommend GDPS as an employer. According to student responses to Tripod surveys, students overall also had positive experiences with their GDL teachers.

Movers vs. stayers. Based on the descriptive analysis of teacher demographics, we did not find any significant demographic differences between teachers who stayed and those who left as of the end of the 2010-2011 school year in terms of age, gender, or years of teaching at GD. White teachers and English teachers appeared to be slightly overrepresented among movers. In contrast, Hispanic or Latino teachers and mathematics teachers were slightly underrepresented to those who left. We did not observe any significant difference in either

student growth percentile scores or student course pass rates for movers versus stayers. Stayers were found to be more likely than movers to meet or exceed the evaluation standards.

GDL's one year retention rate of 79% (for the 2010-2011 school year) appeared to be relatively high in comparison to retention rates for LAUSD schools overall. However, qualitatively speaking, about one-third of the 13 interview participants had negative views about GDL's ability to retain effective teachers. These reservations also were reflected in teacher survey responses from some of the GDL academies, specifically to the question of whether the teachers would recommend GDPS as an employer. We can only speculate about these findings. One possibility could be that losing even one or two teachers at a small academy may feel more negative than double that number at a traditional high school. Relationships and trust play an important role in any workplace. Additionally, many participants spoke of how changes in teaching and administrative staff as well as school structure (i.e., merging academies) had been disruptive to their academy environment and staff cohesiveness.

Multiple measures of teacher quality. We found small to medium positive correlations between teacher evaluation scores and Tripod results, with majority of the relationships being statistically significant. Statistically significant positive relationships were found between student growth percentile scores and overall teacher evaluation scores and two area evaluation scores. Other areas, however, were not significantly related to student percentile scores. While the limited strength of these correlations is not surprising, they do indicate that one should be cautious in placing too much emphasis on one teacher measure within a larger evaluation system.

We also found no correlations between key course pass rates and the other three teacher measures (evaluation, SGP, and Tripod), or between the Tripod measure and SGP scores. The lack of relationship between course pass rates and the other three teacher measures may suggest that course pass rates are not an informative outcome variable by which to judge teacher quality. The lack of relationship between Tripod results and SGP scores, however, is not unexpected, as prior research reported correlation coefficients between teacher's Tripod scores and their valued-added state mathematics test scores ranging from 0.14 to 0.22; and from 0.03 to 0.14 for ELA value-added scores (MET study, 2012).

In short, while teachers' evaluation scores, SGP scores, Tripod measures, and pass rates may provide some quantitative insight into teacher effectiveness, individually they may not serve as meaningful proxy measures for the overall construct, especially in the current context of GDL's evaluation system in pilot phase during 2010-2011. Our findings here

underscore the difficulty of assessing teacher effectiveness. Moreover, it is important to note that there are no agreed upon methods or measures in the field as a whole for assessing *teacher effectiveness* as a whole, even though value-added measures are becoming more prominent. In any case, multiple sources of information, such as Tripod or similar student perception data could be a valuable addition to an evaluation system. As the GDL's evaluation system becomes regularized, these findings may likely to change.

Benefits of GDL academies. Overall, participants felt that Green Dot-led Locke academies were better organized and more intentional in areas such as professional development and evaluation than was the previous Locke. Respondents also agreed that academies were safer and more functional than Locke before the transformation, although they noted that, issues in the surrounding community (e.g., violence, drugs) can never fully be separated from the school climate.

While we did not set out to compare academies at Green Dot Locke, according to survey responses, certain academies appeared to be stronger in areas associated with professional capacity (e.g., perceptions about principal leadership, quality of professional development opportunities). Interviews also echoed what appeared to be different Green Dot Locke experiences based on academy. We speculate that individual administrators may have played an important role in a particular academy's climate, structure, and culture.

Teachers expressed a desire for more collaboration across campuses and more creative ways (e.g., improvements to physical space, extra-curricular offerings) to make GDL a place that students wish to come on a daily basis. Many interviewees also acknowledged that “real work” will be required in the coming years to make Green Dot Locke a rigorous yet nurturing environment for all students. Nonetheless, it was clear from our interviews that Green Dot staff is dedicated to this goal. This commitment may be one of the most important, although non-quantifiable, changes at Locke since the transformation.

Study Limitations

Like all studies, our evaluation study has limitations. First, we were constrained in our analysis by the available data. For example, all “movers” are currently coded the same way in GDPS' data system – “not returning”. Without separate codes for voluntary termination (a teacher quits or resigns from his or her position) and for non-voluntary termination (a teacher was asked to leave the GDL schools), we were not able to explore whether there were systematic differences between particular types of movers and stayers as of 2010-11. This made testing hypotheses about the relationship between retention and external variables difficult.

Interviews conducted as part of the present analysis were only able to capture part of the story, as they only brought in the voices of teachers and administrators within Green Dot Locke academies who had volunteered to participate. Much more could potentially be said if more resources were available, in particular if student and parent voices as well as GDPS “head office” staff were brought into this discussion. This study is therefore a starting point for further conversations among these stakeholders.

Recommendations and Future Steps

We would like to make the following suggestions to enable further analysis and follow up.

Improvement in database. We recommend that Green Dot consider more nuanced ways of recording individual teacher’s “entering pathway”. While licensure area, major, and conferred degrees were available in the records provided by GDPS, it was not possible to determine whether, say, an individual entered the teaching profession through a traditional certification program, an urban teacher residency, or an alternative pathway like *Teach for America*. Since pathway may be a determinant of both teacher practice and of teacher attrition, such an indicator may add some clarity to the analysis of who stays and who leaves.

Additionally, we recommend that GDPS collect and add additional codes to their teacher database to separate out voluntary termination (a teacher quits or resigns from his or her position) and for non-voluntary termination (a teacher was asked to leave the GDL schools). Among those who left voluntarily, it may still be interesting to note the reasons for leaving that could help to show relationships between teacher attrition and teacher quality, as manifested in both GDL internal evaluations and student growth percentile measures. For example, economists distinguish between “functional attrition” and “dysfunctional attrition,” with functional attrition describing a situation where those who, by some measure, should be leaving the profession and dysfunctional attrition describing a situation where individuals who have a positive impact leave, either to pursue teaching in another school, or leave the profession altogether. Therefore, we recommend that GDPS collect additional teacher data at both times of entry and exit.

Greater opportunities for teacher feedback. As the qualitative interviews we performed contained much more information than we could hope to include in a single report, much of which consisted of thoughtful yet context-specific feedback on local academy practices, we suggest that GDPS and GDL reflect upon what regular feedback mechanisms (such as the annual survey) are in place and how to provide more meaningful ways to encourage detailed input from its teaching staff.

While GDPS prides itself on promoting local control with extensive professional development accountability, numerous interviewees asked for even more opportunities for teacher voices and opinions to be heard regarding structural changes to Green Dot (e.g. TCRP) as well as local intra-academy issues. Providing more meaningful opportunities for teachers to share their experiences and suggestions for improvement may even promote higher retention, such as through town hall meetings, which have been found to be positively correlated with teacher retention (Shen, 1997; Weiss, 1999).

Reflection on GDL's unique needs and strength. Several interviewees suggested that it was necessary for the larger network to consider and openly discuss to what extent Green Dot Locke is similar but also different to sister programs in other parts of the city. Should network expectations, particularly in relation to evaluation and accountability activities, be considered in light of Green Dot Locke's unique circumstances? While this evaluation provides no answer to this question, our results demonstrate that each Green Dot Locke academy has, to some extent, a particular history and context. Future investigations, within the Green Dot organization as well as by outside evaluators must consider these "stories" when examining the broader picture of student achievement overall.

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Appendix A: Teacher Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule for speaking with me. Before we start, I wanted to give you a bit of background about the study as well as ask your permission to participate in this study and to audiotape our discussion. I am a researcher at UCLA's Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST). We are conducting an evaluation study for the Gates Foundation that investigates the Locke Transformation Project. In particular, we're investigating how Green Dot's core tenets are implemented and support teacher/student recruitment and retention, teacher selection, teacher support practices, and parent engagement at Green Dot's Locke academies. We are interested in learning more about Green Dot's approach to teacher recruitment, evaluation, retention, and support.

I anticipate that our conversation will take about 30 minutes. I will keep my eye on the clock so I don't take too much of your time. Do you have any questions about the study? Do you have any questions related to the study consent form I sent you when scheduling the interview? Do you wish to participate in our study?

- If no: Thank you for your time. Have a good day.
- If yes: Thank you. Do I also have your permission to audiotape our conversation? That way I don't have to try to write down everything that you say while you are speaking. (If/when interviewee gives permission)

Thank you. Tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet at CRESST. Access to the tapes and transcribed interviews will be limited to CRESST researchers working on this project. Tapes will be destroyed after the evaluation is completed. We will not share your interview with Green Dot administrators or other staff. We will not identify any individuals within our report and will whenever possible report information in aggregate form. Do you have any questions before we begin?

Teacher Background and Experience

First, I'd like to know a bit more about you and your work.

1. What grade(s) do you teach?
2. What subject(s)?
3. How long have you been at Green Dot Locke (GDL)?
4. Were you at Locke before the transformation (2007-2008 school year)?
 - When were you hired back?
5. How many years have you been teaching?

Potential prompts (if time permits)

- What is your average number of students per class?

Now I'd like to ask you a few questions about your Green Dot Locke experience:

6. Why did you choose to teach at GDL?

Potential Prompts:

- Did you know anything about Green Dot before you started teaching at GDL?
 - How much do you know about different Green Dot Locke academies?
7. How successful do you feel GDL is at recruiting and retaining effective teachers?
 8. How could the recruitment and retention process be improved?
 9. In your opinion, what are the primary reasons teachers stay at GDL?
 10. What are the primary reasons that teachers leave?

Teacher Professional Development and Support

Now I'd like to ask you about professional development opportunities at GDL. I've read a bit about PD opportunities on Locke's online Accountability Report Cards. Professional development includes formal training sessions (such as pupil-free day workshops), classroom observations, and mentoring/coaching assistance).

1. Can you tell me more about the professional development (PD) you received after being hired at GDL? Please specify.
2. What kinds of PD opportunities are available to continuing GDL teachers

Now I'd like to know a bit more about how colleagues support your teaching.

3. Let's start with administrators (such as your principal, AP)
 - What kind of support do administrators (your principal) offer you?
 - How much time do you spend/interact with them?
 - Do you feel that this support is sufficient, or is there room for improvement?
If so, what could be improved and how?
4. Mentors, coaches
 - What kind of support do mentors/coaches offer you?
 - How much time do you spend/interact with them?
 - Do you feel that this support is sufficient, or is there room for improvement?
If so, what could be improved and how?
5. Colleagues
 - What kind of support do colleagues offer you?
 - How much time do you spend/interact with them?
 - Do you feel that this support is sufficient, or is there room for improvement?
If so, what could be improved and how?

Teacher evaluation

1. What comprises your teacher evaluation process?
2. What weight do your evaluation scores/findings have on promotion and contract renewal decisions?

Concluding Questions:

1. In your opinion, what is working well at GDL?
2. What are areas that need improvement at GDL?
3. What role do GD's core tenets play in your work?
4. Thinking about these tenets specifically, what areas, in your opinion, are GDL doing well in, what areas need improvement?

[Can remind participant of tenets if necessary, but do not ask for each tenet specifically]

- Creating a small, safe, personalized atmosphere?
 - Maintaining high expectations for all students?
 - Maintaining local control with extensive PD and accountability?
 - Increasing parent participation?
 - Maximizing funding in the classroom?
 - Keeping schools open later?
5. Is there anything else that we haven't discussed related to Green Dot Locke's Transformation that you would like to share?

Thank you for your insight.

Additional questions (if time permits)

1. How involved are parents of students at GDL?
2. Is there is a structured approach to parent outreach?
3. Can you talk a bit about how you have tried to engage parents?
4. What do you know about the College Ready Promise program?
 - How has participation in the College Ready Promise changed your PD opportunities, if at all?
 - How has participation in the College Ready Promise changed evaluation, if at all?

Appendix B: Principal Interview Protocol

Introduction

Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to speak with me. Before we start, I want to give you a bit of background about the study as well as ask your permission to participate in this study and to audiotape our discussion. I am a researcher at UCLA's Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing (CRESST). We are conducting an evaluation study for the Gates Foundation that investigates Green Dot Locke's Transformation. In particular, we're investigating how Green Dot's core tenets (safe, personalized schools, high expectations, professional development and accountability, parent participation, funding to classroom, keep schools open later) are implemented and support the areas of teacher/student recruitment and retention, teacher selection, teacher support practices, and parent engagement at Green Dot's Locke academies.

Do you have any questions about the study? Do you have any questions related to the study consent form I sent you when scheduling the interview? Do you wish to participate in our study?

- If no: Thank you for your time. Have a good day.
- If yes: Thank you.

I anticipate that our conversation will take approximately 15 minutes. I will keep my eye on the clock. Do I have your permission to audiotape our conversation? That way I don't have to try to write down everything that you say while you are speaking. (If/when interviewee gives permission)

Thank you. Tapes will be kept in a locked cabinet at CRESST. Access to the tapes and transcribed interviews will be limited to CRESST researchers working on this project. Tapes will be destroyed after the evaluation is completed. We will not share your interview with Green Dot administrators or other staff. We will not identify any individuals within our report and will whenever possible report information in aggregate form.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

First, I'd like to know a bit more about you and your work.

1. How long have you been at Green Dot Locke?
2. Were you at Locke before the transformation (2007-2008 school year)?
 - When were you hired back?
3. In your opinion, what is working well at GDL? What are areas that need improvement at GDL?
4. What do you feel have been some of the GDL's key achievements in:
 - Recruiting/selecting teachers?
 - Retaining teachers?
 - Supporting teachers?
 - Evaluating teachers?
5. What are some of the biggest challenges in:
 - Recruiting/selecting teachers?
 - Retaining teachers?
 - Supporting teachers?
 - Evaluating teachers?
6. What role do GD's core tenets play in your work?
7. Thinking about these tenets specifically, what areas, in your opinion, is GDL doing well in, what areas need improvement? *[Note: Can remind participant of tenets if necessary, but do not ask for each tenet specifically]*
 - Creating a small, safe, personalized atmosphere?
 - Maintaining high expectations for all students?
 - Maintaining local control with extensive PD and accountability?
 - Increasing parent participation?
 - Maximizing funding in the classroom?
 - Keeping schools open later?
8. Is there anything else that we haven't discussed related to the Green Dot Locke Transformation that you would like to share?

If time permits:

9. What do you feel have been some of the GDL's key achievements in:
 - Engaging parents, getting them involved?
 - Supporting teachers in engaging parents, getting them involved?
 - Recruiting and retaining students?

10. What are some of the biggest challenges in this area?

11. What do you know about the College Ready Promise program?

Appendix C:
2010-2011 End Of Year Survey Results

Table C1

Professional Development Programs

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
Professional development at my school site has helped me improve instructional practice					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School C	24%	24%	48%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	36%	46%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	60%	10%	10
School H	30%	30%	40%	0%	10
Overall	13%	22%	43%	22%	86
The school uses data to identify strengths and weaknesses and makes plans for continuous improvement					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	55%	46%	11
School C	5%	14%	67%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	46%	46%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	20%	50%	30%	10
School H	0%	46%	55%	0%	11
Overall	1%	16%	58%	25%	87
ALS Benchmark Collaboration Days help me to use data to improve instruction					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	20%	60%	0%	20%	10
School C	19%	29%	48%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	27%	55%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	20%	80%	0%	10
School H	18%	0%	64%	18%	11
Overall	17%	26%	43%	14%	86
My teaching had benefited from the teacher collaboration time spent at ALS Benchmark Collaboration Days					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	—	—	—	—	9

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School C	19%	19%	48%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	36%	36%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	60%	10%	10
School H	9%	0%	73%	18%	11
Overall	15%	27%	42%	15%	85

The school provides opportunities for me to collaborate with peers during PD and conference periods

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	30%	60%	10
School C	5%	14%	62%	19%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	46%	46%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	50%	20%	10
School H	0%	18%	64%	18%	11
Overall	4%	17%	51%	28%	86

The school provides me with the training and support I need to effectively work with Special Education students

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	36%	55%	9%	11
School C	19%	29%	48%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	18%	46%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	60%	30%	0%	10
School H	9%	18%	46%	27%	11
Overall	10%	37%	43%	10%	87

The school provides me with the support and training I need to effectively work with EL students

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	50%	50%	0%	10
School C	10%	38%	48%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	10%	30%	40%	20%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	7

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School G	0%	60%	40%	0%	10
School H	9%	46%	36%	9%	11
Overall	9%	42%	44%	5%	85
The school provides me with the training and support I need to manage student conduct effectively					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School C	0%	24%	71%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	9%	55%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	70%	0%	10
School H	9%	55%	36%	0%	11
Overall	6%	25%	58%	12%	87
The school provides effective intervention programs for students achieving below grade level					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	82%	9%	11
School C	5%	24%	52%	19%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	27%	0%	46%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	60%	30%	0%	10
School H	9%	36%	55%	0%	11
Overall	12%	29%	48%	12%	87
New teachers at my school receive adequate support from leaders and experienced teachers					
School A	—	—	—	—	6
School B	0%	0%	90%	10%	10
School C	33%	29%	33%	5%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	27%	18%	36%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	40%	30%	10%	10
School H	36%	55%	9%	0%	11
Overall	21%	33%	34%	12%	85

Note. Schools with less than 10 teachers were excluded.

Table C2

Mission, Vision, Culture

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
Our community (staff, parents & students) understands the school's mission and vision					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	82%	9%	11
School C	0%	19%	71%	10%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	27%	64%	9%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	40%	40%	0%	10
School H	18%	36%	36%	9%	11
Overall	5%	25%	61%	9%	87
Plans, policies and decisions made at the school demonstrate a focus on mission					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	64%	36%	11
School C	10%	14%	62%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	18%	55%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	30%	50%	10%	10
School H	9%	9%	73%	9%	11
Overall	6%	15%	61%	18%	87
The school's mission is focused on high academic achievement for college and all students					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	46%	46%	11
School C	5%	29%	48%	19%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	0%	73%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	10%	70%	20%	10
School H	9%	18%	55%	18%	11
Overall	3%	16%	60%	21%	87
School spirit is evident among students, faculty and administrators					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	36%	64%	11

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School C	5%	24%	52%	19%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	18%	55%	9%	11
School F	0%	29%	71%	0%	7
School G	10%	10%	80%	0%	10
School H	27%	55%	18%	0%	11
Overall	8%	21%	52%	20%	87
The school offers opportunities for collaborative decision-making					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	10%	10%	52%	29%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	18%	36%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	20%	70%	0%	10
School H	9%	18%	55%	18%	11
Overall	9%	14%	44%	33%	87
The school climate reflects a college going culture					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	64%	36%	11
School C	0%	19%	62%	19%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	9%	46%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	40%	60%	0%	10
School H	18%	46%	27%	9%	11
Overall	6%	23%	55%	16%	87
Parents have opportunities to participate in decision-making					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	73%	27%	11
School C	0%	19%	71%	10%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	46%	36%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7

Items	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	# of Teachers
School G	10%	20%	60%	10%	10
School H	18%	9%	73%	0%	11
Overall	6%	16%	63%	15%	87
My school is preparing students for college					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	73%	27%	11
School C	10%	29%	48%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	18%	46%	27%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	50%	40%	0%	10
School H	27%	27%	46%	0%	11
Overall	10%	26%	52%	12%	87
My school is preparing students for leadership					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School C	5%	38%	48%	10%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	46%	36%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	30%	60%	0%	10
School H	27%	27%	46%	0%	11
Overall	12%	25%	49%	14%	87
My school is preparing students for life					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	9%	46%	46%	11
School C	14%	14%	62%	10%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	36%	46%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	20%	70%	0%	10
School H	18%	27%	55%	0%	11
Overall	12%	16%	53%	20%	87

Note. Schools with less than 10 teachers were excluded.

Table C3

Principal Instructional Leadership

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
Principal Instructional Leadership					
Principal maintains school-wide focus on high standards of student achievement					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	46%	55%	11
School C	0%	22%	48%	30%	23
School D	0%	0%	55%	46%	11
School E	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School G	0%	8%	42%	50%	12
School H	0%	33%	58%	8%	12
Overall	0%	12%	47%	41%	87
Principal is knowledgeable of effective teaching, including curriculum standards and curriculum design					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	20%	80%	10
School C	0%	30%	52%	17%	23
School D	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School E	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School G	0%	33%	58%	8%	12
Overall	4%	16%	41%	40%	86
School H	25%	17%	33%	25%	12
Principal uses data to increase student achievement					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	27%	73%	11
School C	0%	23%	50%	27%	22
School D	0%	0%	36%	64%	11
School E	0%	0%	30%	70%	10
School G	0%	33%	58%	8%	12
School H	17%	25%	42%	17%	12
Overall	2%	14%	41%	42%	85
Principal creates a learning culture that communicates "college for certain"					
School A	—	—	—	—	7

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School B	0%	0%	55%	46%	11
School C	0%	9%	74%	17%	23
School D	0%	18%	55%	27%	11
School E	9%	9%	36%	46%	11
School G	8%	42%	42%	8%	12
School H	17%	42%	42%	0%	12
Overall	5%	17%	53%	25%	87
Principal effectively coaches teachers to improve instruction					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	30%	60%	10
School C	13%	26%	48%	13%	23
School D	0%	36%	46%	18%	11
School E	9%	9%	18%	64%	11
School G	17%	33%	50%	0%	12
School H	17%	50%	33%	0%	12
Overall	9%	28%	40%	23%	86
Principal People Management					
Principal holds employees accountable for results					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	46%	55%	11
School C	9%	39%	39%	13%	23
School D	9%	0%	55%	36%	11
School E	0%	9%	27%	64%	11
School G	0%	8%	75%	17%	12
School H	17%	33%	42%	8%	12
Overall	6%	17%	49%	28%	87
Principal builds a collaborative, well-functioning team					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	4%	13%	44%	39%	23
School D	9%	0%	55%	36%	11
School E	18%	0%	27%	55%	11
School G	17%	25%	42%	17%	12
School H	17%	42%	33%	8%	12

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
Overall	9%	15%	36%	40%	87
Principal communicates well with staff					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	0%	100%	11
School C	9%	36%	36%	18%	22
School D	0%	9%	55%	36%	11
School E	9%	9%	18%	64%	11
School G	25%	8%	50%	17%	12
School H	25%	42%	25%	8%	12
Overall	11%	21%	33%	36%	86
Principal gathers input, collaborates, and provides leadership opportunities as appropriate					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	9%	0%	70%	22%	23
School D	0%	0%	64%	36%	11
School E	18%	0%	18%	64%	11
School G	17%	0%	50%	33%	12
School H	25%	25%	33%	17%	12
Overall	10%	6%	44%	40%	87
Principal recognizes and rewards individual and group behavior					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	0%	100%	11
School C	5%	9%	59%	27%	22
School D	0%	0%	55%	46%	11
School E	9%	18%	27%	46%	11
School G	8%	33%	42%	17%	12
School H	0%	33%	42%	25%	12
Overall	4%	15%	40%	42%	86
Principal Resource Management					
Principal works with staff and community to match priorities with spending					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	14%	23%	46%	18%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School E	0%	18%	46%	36%	11
School G	8%	33%	58%	0%	12
School H	17%	33%	50%	0%	12
Overall	7%	23%	44%	26%	84
Principal manages the school's resources effectively (textbooks, equipment)					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	9%	14%	50%	27%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	10%	0%	40%	50%	10
School G	0%	42%	50%	8%	12
School H	8%	25%	67%	0%	12
Overall	5%	17%	49%	29%	83
Principal facilitates meetings that align with goals, allow for input, and maintain focus					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	0%	100%	11
School C	14%	5%	68%	14%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	9%	73%	11
School G	25%	17%	50%	8%	12
School H	17%	42%	42%	0%	12
Overall	12%	14%	41%	33%	84
Principal establishes systems for effective school operations (e.g. field trip processes, facilities requests)					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	36%	64%	11
School C	9%	14%	68%	9%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	36%	46%	11
School G	17%	33%	42%	8%	12
School H	8%	58%	25%	8%	12
Overall	8%	20%	48%	24%	84
Principal adheres to federal, state, district, and Green Dot regulations, policies and procedures					
School A	—	—	—	—	--

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	5%	5%	59%	32%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	--
School E	0%	0%	10%	90%	10
School G	0%	0%	50%	50%	12
School H	8%	8%	67%	17%	12
Overall	2%	4%	41%	53%	83

Principal Problem Solving

Principal resolves conflict in a fair and consistent manner

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	14%	59%	23%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	18%	18%	55%	11
School G	8%	25%	42%	25%	12
School H	18%	36%	46%	0%	11
Overall	6%	17%	41%	36%	83

Principal is an effective decision-maker

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	23%	50%	23%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	36%	55%	11
School G	0%	33%	42%	25%	12
School H	17%	25%	50%	8%	12
Overall	4%	17%	43%	37%	84

Principal implements an effective Student Code of Conduct

School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	27%	73%	11
School C	9%	5%	73%	14%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	9%	27%	46%	11
School G	17%	17%	50%	17%	12
School H	33%	42%	25%	0%	12

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
Overall	12%	13%	49%	26%	84
Principal sets and tracks school-wide goals to improve school performance					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	9%	68%	18%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	0%	46%	55%	11
School G	8%	0%	75%	17%	12
School H	8%	25%	67%	0%	12
Overall	4%	7%	57%	32%	84
Principal anticipates obstacles and engages in short and long-term planning to minimize emergencies					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	27%	73%	11
School C	9%	27%	50%	14%	22
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	36%	55%	11
School G	8%	25%	50%	17%	12
School H	17%	33%	50%	0%	12
Overall	6%	20%	41%	33%	84
Principal Community Leadership					
Principal effectively communicates the school's mission and vision					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	0%	67%	29%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	18%	73%	11
School G	17%	33%	33%	17%	12
School H	8%	25%	67%	0%	12
Overall	5%	11%	46%	39%	83
Principal engages parents in their students' school experience					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	82%	11
School C	5%	5%	76%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9

Items	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School E	0%	9%	27%	64%	11
School G	8%	8%	50%	33%	12
School H	17%	17%	67%	0%	12
Overall	5%	7%	55%	33%	83
Principal works collaboratively with the community to ensure a safe school environment					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	36%	64%	11
School C	5%	10%	71%	14%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	18%	9%	73%	11
School G	17%	0%	50%	33%	12
School H	17%	17%	67%	0%	12
Overall	6%	10%	55%	29%	83
Principal promotes a positive school culture					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	5%	5%	52%	38%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	18%	0%	18%	64%	11
School G	17%	8%	42%	33%	12
School H	17%	33%	50%	0%	12
Overall	10%	8%	40%	42%	83
Principal is customer service oriented					
School A	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	9%	91%	11
School C	5%	10%	52%	33%	21
School D	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	9%	18%	64%	11
School G	8%	25%	58%	8%	12
School H	17%	25%	58%	0%	12
Overall	7%	13%	42%	37%	83

Note. Schools with less than 10 teachers were excluded.

Table C4

The purpose of The College-Ready Promise is the following

Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/ disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
The purpose and the mission of The College Ready Promise has been communicated to me.						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	0%	50%	40%	10
School C	0%	0%	16%	68%	16%	19
School D	—	—	—	—	—	8
School E	9%	0%	18%	55%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	10%	30%	50%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	46%	36%	11
Overall	2%	2%	16%	58%	22%	83
The College-Ready Promise aims primarily to develop and support teachers						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	0%	70%	20%	10
School C	10%	10%	40%	40%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	20%	40%	30%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	30%	40%	10%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	36%	36%	27%	11
Overall	6%	13%	36%	36%	10%	84
The College-Ready Promise aims to ensure that there is an effective teacher in every classroom and for them to stay in the classroom						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	20%	0%	50%	30%	10
School C	10%	5%	30%	50%	5%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	10%	40%	30%	20%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	30%	40%	20%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	46%	36%	11
Overall	5%	10%	25%	44%	17%	84

The College-Ready Promise aims to create an evaluation system as a means to differentiate

Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/ disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
teacher performance in order to better target teacher supports						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	10%	60%	20%	10
School C	10%	5%	35%	50%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	20%	50%	20%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	40%	10%	30%	10%	10
School H	0%	9%	18%	36%	36%	11
Overall	5%	13%	24%	44%	14%	84
The College-Ready Promise new teacher evaluation will be multifaceted and provide multiple measures of teacher practice						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	10%	60%	30%	10
School C	5%	0%	50%	40%	5%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	0%	70%	20%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	40%	20%	20%	10%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	55%	27%	11
Overall	4%	6%	33%	43%	14%	84
The College-Ready Promise work will foster collaboration among teachers						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	20%	0%	30%	30%	20%	10
School C	15%	15%	35%	35%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	10%	50%	30%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	30%	20%	30%	20%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	36%	46%	18%	11
Overall	12%	10%	39%	32%	7%	84
I understand the objectives of The College Ready Promise.						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	18%	36%	46%	11

Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School C	5%	5%	25%	55%	10%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	18%	36%	36%	9%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	20%	30%	40%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	64%	18%	11
Overall	2%	9%	23%	49%	16%	86

I have been given the opportunity to provide input on the design of The College Ready Promise initiative.

School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	0%	55%	46%	11
School C	0%	10%	25%	50%	15%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	0%	9%	27%	46%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	0%	30%	50%	10%	10%	10
School H	0%	9%	18%	27%	46%	11
Overall	0%	9%	24%	43%	23%	86

I think The College Ready Promise will be a good thing for me.

School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	0%	30%	50%	20%	10
School C	15%	15%	40%	30%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	10%	0%	60%	20%	10%	10
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	10%	50%	20%	0%	10
School H	0%	0%	18%	46%	36%	11
Overall	10%	10%	41%	29%	12%	84

I think the College Ready Promise will be a good thing for my school.

School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	20%	50%	20%	10
School C	15%	20%	30%	35%	0%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	10%	10%	60%	10%	10%	10

Item	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree/ disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	# of teachers
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	20%	20%	40%	20%	0%	10
School H	0%	9%	9%	46%	36%	11
Overall	10%	14%	30%	35%	12%	84
I receive enough information about The College Ready Promise.						
School A	—	—	—	—	—	7
School B	0%	10%	10%	40%	40%	10
School C	5%	15%	25%	50%	5%	20
School D	—	—	—	—	—	9
School E	9%	18%	36%	18%	18%	11
School F	—	—	—	—	—	7
School G	10%	50%	30%	10%	0%	10
School H	—	—	—	—	—	9
Overall	5%	16%	33%	31%	16%	83

Note. Schools with less than 10 teachers were excluded.

Appendix D: Interview Comments on Green Dot Core Tenets

When time permitted, we asked teachers and principals to comment on the Green Dot's core principles as a final question. Specifically, we asked them to comment on what areas they felt were working and what areas could be improved. While not all participants answered this question (or addressed every principle in their answers), the following excerpts provide a sense of participants' views and responses.

Small, Safe, Personalized Schools

They're keeping their classroom small; I think they're doing really well in keeping the schools small, so that you kind of know everybody in the school. (INT18)

I think our principals at our site will do an excellent job of creating that type of environment not only for staff--not only for students but for staff as well. (INT22)

I think on the most basic level one of the things wrong with urban public education is the fact that the schools are just so ... big. You hear studies point this out and people just anything from like common sense to many studies that are done that point that out but very few people have tried to deal with that issue. I think that this transformation project actually tackled that pretty well. (INT66)

One of the downfalls of a small learning community is we don't offer as many classes. Again you have teachers that are wearing a lot more hats than they had to wear. (INT71)

High Expectations for All Students

I used to think we did that...but if you're going to let a kid get a D, because he put his name and answered one question right, that's not high expectations. (INT18)

They absolutely do an amazing job in maintaining high expectations because they are data driven and data directed. (INT22)

...Our unwavering belief in the potential of all kids. I think we're continuing to be on the right track with that.... We're really on the right track with that as an organization. (INT25)

I think that overall in general we need to get our students to believe in that idea that they can go to college, that they can be successful in life and give them those opportunities to do that. (INT26-27)

I think the biggest thing that we constantly go back to is--[Green Dot] as an organization is closing the achievement gap. (INT69)

Local Control with Extensive Professional Development and Accountability

Our Wednesday PD's are held in high esteem. They are very important and the tools we get from those professional developments definitely hold all of those things that you mention in high regard. (INT22)

So there is still some local control and local autonomy in attempts to incorporate those things but it is my belief that those are kind of withering way currently. (INT23-24)

Principals are held more accountable than ever because we have all of these metrics also that we have to meet and you know there is going to be a new principal evaluation tool that is going to be much more intense than the ones of old. (INT25)

And there is--I feel like there is a stronger effort toward professional development and having the energy on professional development....Where we starting to drop the ball I felt over the past two years there has finally been a shift from autonomy to a lot more Green Dot mandated activities and access where it's not school site autonomy. (INT72-73).

Parent Participation

So [our principal] promised the parents that he would have parent focus groups and, you know, help them deal with how to get to college, where to go to college, how to pay for college, how to deal with drugs, and gangs. He's never done any of it. (INT18)

Well from my perspective dealing with the transformation schools and attendance area schools, parents aren't used to ... being required to do volunteer hours and to be involved and things like that. And frankly as a site level principal one of the struggles I had is providing meaningful ways for parents to be involved. (INT25)

I think that's--that's going well. I think giving different stakeholders an opportunity to have input with--with parents, students, and teachers in the development of the school is also an area that needs to--that's doing well. (INT69)

That's you know that was the only thing I would say we could do better. I mean we can do everything better but this is the one that really--an actual resources, like there are not enough resources just to--to increase parent participation....We have a parent coordinator but that parent coordinator--it's an impossible job to increase parent participation to the point where it needs to be. (INT77)

Maximize Funding to the Classroom

...I don't think that's Green Dot's fault. They just don't have funding; that's the state's fault. (INT18)

Oh funding. We use Donors Choose a lot. So lots of our teachers use Donors Choose and bring in lots of money. I have like 30 brand new books on my desk, which students can check out that I got from Donors Choose. (INT63)

The budgeting process is also improving. You know and I can honestly say it's gotten better every year. So you know--you know I think--I think we're pretty much on point. (INT77)

Keep Schools Open Later

We are actually mandated to hold at least two office hours per week. (INT22)

So it is rare in my two years have I seen a teacher who is leaving right when school is out. (INT23-24)

Here at the Locke clusters one of the core tenets is that our campuses stay open until 5:00, right. We have our security officers sometimes pushing kids out at 4:00-4:30. (INT66)

I think as I mentioned previously the personal relation of the schools, keeping schools open later for kids--to increase safety in the community and--and for kids; I think that's--that's going well. (INT69)

Well that's the one we haven't yet--we haven't really gotten to that one yet. I can say that--because I would like to see the building crawling with kids and--and parents until 5 o'clock. I would love to see that. But that--that's one we're still figuring out I think. (INT77)