

Professional Pathways for Teachers: 2018–2019 Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

Evaluation Overview

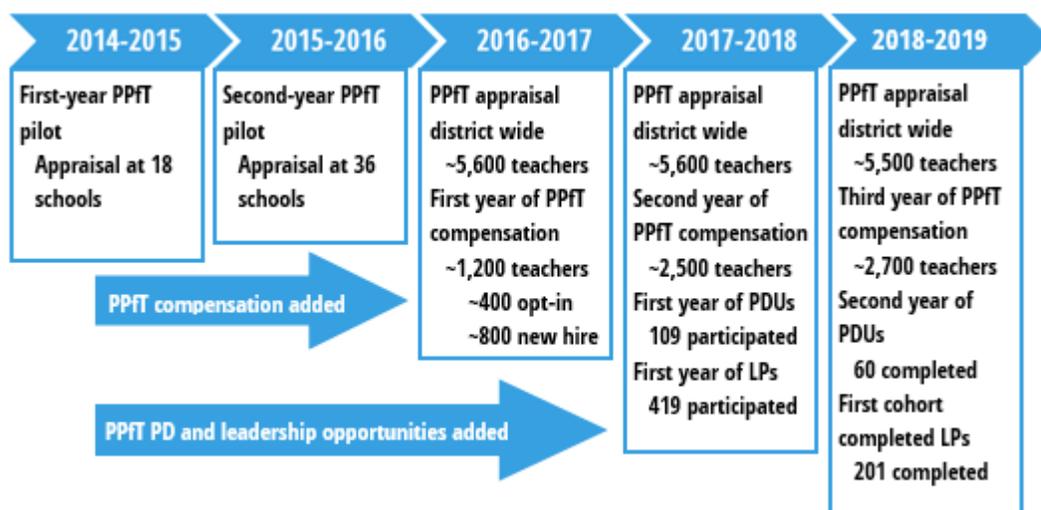
The Department of Research and Evaluation (DRE) provided evaluation and support for Professional Pathways for Teachers (PPFT) in 2018–2019. Support included data collection and retrieval, validation of appraisal methods, ongoing support for measurement of student outcomes, and education of stakeholders. Program evaluation activities included analyzing data and reporting of implementation, conceptualizing the theory of change and logic model, and summarizing implementation and measurement. PPFT evaluation reporting occurred in the fall and highlighted the prior school year’s progress toward program goals.

The purpose of the 2018–2019 PPFT evaluation was to (a) help program staff conceptualize the program’s implementation and goals; (b) refine and/or define measurable indicators of implementation, outputs, and outcomes; and (c) provide summative data on the third year of program implementation.

Program Overview

PPFT first launched district-wide in Austin Independent School District (AISD) in the 2016–2017 school year. Since then, the concept behind the program has focused on empowering teachers and improving the quality of teaching through a multi-measure appraisal and compensation system. PPFT also expected to retain quality teachers and improve student outcomes. New program components (i.e., compensation, leadership pathways [LPs], and professional development units [PDUs]) were added after the PPFT pilot was launched. Of note, the first LP cohorts graduated in 2018–2019 (Figure 1).

Figure 1.
Implementation History Timeline Graphic



Summary of Results

In terms of participation, about half of the 5,456 teachers ($n = 2,750$) opted into PPfT compensation in 2018–2019, while the remaining 2,706 were in PPfT appraisal only. Teachers who were on a new teacher PPfT plan or who were on a late-contract PPfT plan were less likely (10% and 26%, respectively) to opt in to PPfT compensation. Existing teachers, however, were more likely to opt in to PPfT compensation (57%).

PDU's are one way teachers can accumulate points that are later converted into salary increases and therefore contribute to the differentiated compensation component of PPfT. Teachers' completion of PDU's in 2018–2019 was slightly lower than it was in the 2017–2018 school year. In the 2018–2019 school year, 60 out of 69 compensation-eligible teachers (or 87% of PDU participants) met the PDU requirements and received their two compensation points, while in 2017–2018, 68 out of 69 compensation-eligible teachers (or 99% of PDU participants) met the PDU requirements and received their 2 compensation points.

The cohort of teachers who started LPs in the 2017–2018 school year completed the 2-year LP cycle in 2018–2019. Progress of teachers through 4 micro-credentials (MCs) over the last 2 years on three pathways (i.e., literacy, social and emotional learning [SEL], and transformative technology [TT]) was monitored and reported (Table 1). A majority of teachers chose the TT and SEL pathways, with fewer enrolled in literacy. Fifty-two out of 71 (73%) completed the literacy LP, 78 out of 97 (80%) completed SEL, and 71 out of 88 (80%) completed TT in 2017–2018.

Table 1.

Of the 201 LP graduates from the 2017–2018 cohort, 78 graduated from the SEL LP (39%), 71 (35%) graduated from the transformative technology LP, and 52 (26%) graduated from the literacy LP.

Content area	Year	MC 1	MC 2	MC 3	MC 4
Literacy	2017–2018	71	64	55	52
	2018–2019	35	27	*	*
SEL	2017–2018	97	89	80	78
	2018–2019	50	46	*	*
Transformative Technology	2017–2018	88	82	75	71
	2018–2019	48	44	*	*

Source. PPfT 2017–2018 and 2018–2019 data.

Note. Teachers who started an LP in 2018–2019 have not yet had the opportunity to complete MC 3 or MC 4. They will have the opportunity to complete these MCs in the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020.

Lastly, an evaluation of appraisal validity and reliability (e.g., how well and how consistently the PPfT appraisal system measured teaching quality) showed that despite strong evidence of content validity, stakeholders had mixed perceptions of how well teaching quality was measured. Appraisal procedures also underwent tests of concurrent, convergent, and discriminant validity, as well as dominance analysis and interrater reliability analyses. For more detail on the 2018–2019 PPfT evaluation, please see the full report (DRE Publication 18.46).

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