RESEARCH

Report on an Educational Program

Department of Research and Accountability

ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program 2002–2003

Houston Independent School District

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Executive Summary

ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program 2002–03
Houston Independent School District

Program Description

The challenge of attracting and retaining quality teachers has been heightened by increased pressure for schools to meet accountability standards. These standards have been, most recently, fostered by high stakes testing and mandated curricula (Johnson, et al, 2001). Consequently, the nation's largest urban school districts have launched special recruitment efforts to attract qualified candidates and minorities to the classroom (Recruiting New Teachers Organization, 2000). Moreover, districts have been working harder on training their teachers to ensure teacher retention.

Through research efforts, the Urban Teacher Collaborative, which includes key stakeholders such as the Recruiting New Teachers organization (RNT), the Council of Great City Schools, and the Council of Great City Colleges of Education, have found that nearly two-thirds of urban school districts offer support programs to keep talented new teachers. Nearly as many urban school districts have provided alternative certification routes to attract professionals with backgrounds in shortage subject areas, such as mathematics and science. Further, almost as many school districts have hired teachers without the waiting periods that often resulted in teachers not taking jobs in urban schools. Urban districts have also been recruiting at historically black and Hispanic colleges to address minority teacher shortages. Additionally, they have been offering financial incentives for teaching in high-need areas (Recruiting New Teachers Organization, 2000).

The research also affirms that lower turnover rates in schools that provided administrative support to teachers, have lower levels of student discipline problems (Ingersoll, 2001). Teacher salaries also have been associated, to a lesser extent, with teacher turnover. Furthermore, the Texas Center for Educational Research (2000) has documented increased rates in student enrollment, particularly among special student populations, coupled with decreased rates of teacher retention, especially for minority teachers.

The literature also has emphasized the overwhelming impact of the first years of teaching. Subsequently, even experienced teachers in new assignments often have difficulties adjusting to the new school environment.

The movement to establish high-quality teacher induction programs has been endorsed by educational institutions, including the U.S. Department of Education. Consequently, research addressing the issue of teacher retention has been documented and has led to significant findings. Specifically, a good teacher induction program can have a positive impact on the quality of teachers produced and on students' learning experiences. Additionally, a strong support system for new teachers can mean the difference between a teacher staying in or leaving the profession, and the schools cultivating good or bad teachers in the classroom (National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse, 2002).

In response to the growing need for beginning teachers and to retain teachers entering the district for the first time, the Houston Independent School District (HISD) established the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program in the 2001–02 academic year as a three-year effort. ABRAZO ensured that beginning teachers had a clear understanding of the goals and structure of the district, the standards and expectations required to teach in HISD, received adequate training from experienced teachers, and were provided the essential mentoring support to successfully manage routine problems.

The ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program was based on the following principles:

- New employees enter the district with varying backgrounds in the teaching profession, knowledge, and experiences; and thus have very individualized needs;

- New employees need a differentiated program of induction and support;
- "Just-in-time" knowledge has greater meaning and use to an employee; therefore, knowledge and support will be provided when an employee is more likely to have a readiness for learning and be able to use the learning operationally;
- Adults learn in many different ways, thus the approaches to learn certain information need to be presented using different approaches, (e.g., group learning, tutoring, reading, and on-line); and
- Motivation of employees needs to be addressed with respect to the types of knowledge provided.

As part of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program, beginning teachers were given a list of competencies to demonstrate during the first three years in the program. Beginning teachers also were offered training through various program components. The competencies were based on the six routes into the program as well as the HISD Instructional Standards. The six routes into the program were Certified, Alternative Certification (HISD ACP), Region IV/University, Certification Plan, Deficiency Plan, and International Teacher. Simultaneously, the instructional standards took into consideration the teachers' knowledge and skills in providing structure, strategies, practices, and resources for effective teaching. Participation in the program components included mentoring, campus support, and completion of computer training modules to promote higher teacher quality and retention.

Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to identify program activities and track retention rates of teachers recruited in HISD beginning in the 2001–02 academic year (Cohort I) and in the 2002–03 academic year (Cohort II). Further, this evaluation compared the academic achievement of students whose teachers were in Cohort I and II. The following evaluation questions were addressed:

1. What was the profile of HISD teachers who participated in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program in 2001–02 and 2002–03?

2. How successful was HISD in addressing teacher shortages through the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

3. What were the distinctive components of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program relative to teacher training and retention activities?

4. What were the professional development topics addressed in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

5. How did the academic performance of HISD students of second-year (Cohort I) and first-year (Cohort II) ABRAZO teachers compare to the districtwide performance of HISD students?

6. Was there a difference in the academic performance for students of Certified, HISD ACP, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan Cohort I and Cohort II ABRAZO teachers?

7. What were the perceptions of ABRAZO teachers and their mentors regarding program delivery and benefits of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

Findings

- A total of 1,915 teachers were represented in the 2001–02 school year population (Cohort I) compared to 1,566 teachers in the 2002–03 school year population (Cohort II). This decrease of 349 first-year teachers was by 18% over the two-year period.

- First-year teachers in Cohort I compared to first-year teachers in Cohort II reflected a moderate decline in the percentage of bilingual teachers by 3.6 percentage points along with a slight increase in the percentage of regular teachers by 1.4 percentage points. The percentage of honors teachers nearly doubled, from .8% to 1.5% of the total first-year teacher populations.

- Among the 1,915 teachers who were first-year teachers in 2001–02, a total of 1,397 remained as teachers in 2002–03. Consequently, the retention rate for Cohort I was 73%. Comparatively, excluding Cohort I teachers, 10,100 teachers were in the district in 2001–02, and 8,524 remained as teachers in 2002–03. Thus, yielding a moderately higher retention rate than Cohort I of 84% for the district.

- When compared to the Cohort I teacher population in 2001–02, the first-year Cohort I teachers who were retained reflected a slightly higher proportion of females (73% versus 71%), whites (51% versus 47%), and teachers who had some teaching experience (25% versus 23%).

- The distinctive components of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program were the Mentor-New Teacher Partnership, eSchool On-line Modules, On-going Campus Level Support, and Just-in Time Training Seminars. Each component was successfully implemented during the 2001–02 and the 2002–03 academic years. However, teachers had been exposed to only four of ten eSchool On-line Modules since implementation. They were as follows: (1) Organizing Classrooms for Learning, (2) Classroom Rules and Procedures, (3) Planning Lessons that Align with the Curriculum, and (4) Establishing Appropriate Classroom Behavior.

- A comparison by group status of Cohort I and districtwide TAKS results reflected higher passing rates for Region IV/University students on the reading/English language arts subtest (83% versus 76%). Additionally, students of Certified and HISD ACP interns exceeded the districtwide passing rates with 79% versus 76% for Certified teachers and 78% versus 76% for HISD ACP interns. Further, the district passing rates equaled or surpassed those of all student/teacher groups on the mathematics and writing subtests. On the science subtest, students of HISD ACP interns exceeded the district passing rate by one percentage point (59% versus 58%). While on the social studies subtest, all student/teacher groups, except Deficiency Plan, exceeded the district total percent passing by at least one percentage point. However, comparable passing rates of 84% were attained by the Deficiency Plan group and districtwide on the social studies subtest.

- All Cohort II student/teacher groups, except the Deficiency Plan, surpassed the district in total passing rates on the TAKS reading/English language arts subtest. Results ranged from 77% to 82% passing rates for Cohort II and 76% passing for the district subgroups. However, the district passing rates exceeded the passing rates of all Cohort II student/teacher groups on the mathematics subtests. Further, students of Region IV/University and Deficiency Plan teachers exceeded the district on the writing subtest, while all student/teacher groups, except HISD ACP, exceeded the district on the social studies subtest.

- Cohort I Stanford 9 test results revealed that students of Region IV/University teachers had a higher total score on the reading subtest than Certified, HISD ACP interns, and Deficiency Plan student/teacher groups, having attained an average of 44 NCEs. Further, students of Certified and HISD ACP teachers achieved the highest total scores on the mathematics and social science subtests (46 and 42 NCEs, respectively), while students of Certified teachers attained the highest total score on the science subtest, which was an average of 43 NCEs.

- Cohort II Stanford 9 test results for students of Region IV/University teachers were the highest total scores on the reading subtest, as indicated by an average of 47 NCEs. Further, students of Region IV/University teachers had the highest total scores on mathematics, science, and social science subtests, having attained 50, 47, and 47 NCEs, respectively.

- Certified teachers in Cohort I had substantially higher mean scores than Region IV/University teachers on the mathematics, science, and social science subtests. The findings were significant at the $p<.05$ level. Further, a significant difference was found between the mean scores for students of Certified teachers compared to Deficiency Plan teachers. The results were significant at the $p<.05$ level.

- Cohort II analysis revealed significantly higher mean scores for students of Certified teachers compared to HISD ACP interns and Deficiency Plan teachers on all Stanford 9 subtests ($p<.05$ level). However, the Region IV/University student/teacher group had significantly higher mean scores on the reading, mathematics, science, and social science subtests.

- When the students of HISD ACP interns in Cohort were compared to students of Region IV/University Cohort I teachers, the findings reflected higher mean scores for the HISD ACP student/teacher group only on the social science subtest. The findings were significant at the $p<.05$ level in favor of students in Region IV Cohort II on the reading, mathematics, science, and social studies subtests.

- Using a rating scale of "1", not beneficial to "5", beneficial, the current first-year teachers rated "first-year teacher observing mentor" as the most beneficial component (4.60). Further, the eschool On-line Modules were rated higher in 2002–03 than in 2001–02, while being perceived as the least beneficial by first-year teachers in both years (3.32 and 3.77, respectively).

- "Mentor support" was perceived as the most beneficial component by second-year teachers having received the highest mean rating (4.59). "Post observation conference(s)" followed mentor support with a mean rating of 4.29. In addition, "administrative support from the principal and assistant principal" received a mean rating of 4.25.

- First-year mentors in the current year perceived the "observations of first-year teachers" as most beneficial (4.61). In addition, the largest positive change over the years tracked was noted on the item "orientation for mentors," with a mean rating difference of .45.

- The program components perceived by second-year mentors as most beneficial were, "year 2 mentor handbook" and "post observation conferences" (4.27).

Recommendations

1. In order to ensure high retention rates of beginning teachers, the district administration might consider continuing ABRAZO, which provides a supportive structure for teachers during their development years.

2. The instructional support staff should consider continuing to develop training modules to ensure that ABRAZO teachers are exposed to, as well as enhanced by, a variety of strategies and knowledge of research-based practices in areas such as classroom management, particularly during the years of induction into the program.

3. Due to the growing demand of mentors in the district, consider limiting the mentor-new teacher relationship to one-on-one to ensure adequate time for instructional feedback and meaningful interactions between the mentor and beginning teacher.

4. Survey responses of mentors and beginning teachers recognized the implementation of individualized, focused support provided through the mentor-new teacher relationship as a strong and valued component. Consequently, a campus-based program might be considered to further allow for critical professional development opportunities for the beginning teacher.

5. Based on the recurrent opinions of ABRAZO mentors and teachers, program administration should consider providing opportunities for informal networking sessions to address the individual challenges and issues for beginning teachers.

6. Based on TAKS and Stanford 9 results, Professional Development Services should continue to work with Curriculum to provide instructional strategies and assessment of student knowledge as well as content-related inservices, to further strengthen teacher's abilities to provide enhanced instruction, especially in the areas of mathematics and science.

ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program 2002–03
Houston Independent School District

Purpose: *To determine the impact of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program on teacher retention and academic achievement.*

Design: *A descriptive, group-comparison design.*

Population: *A cohort of first-year (Cohort I) and second-year (Cohort II) teachers and mentors of the teachers were targeted. Non-probability sampling was used to select survey participants among the targeted groups.*

Methods: *Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions were used to summarize survey data and test results for students of ABRAZO teachers. Analytical procedures were used to compare the student performance of Certified, HISD ACP, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan teachers.*

Findings: *Among the 1,915 teachers represented in Cohort I as first-year teachers in 2001-02, a total of 1,397 remained in the district as second-year teachers. When compared to the district, the retention rate for first-year teachers was 73% versus 84% for the district. Representation relative to demographic characteristics of the Cohort I teachers in year 2 compared to year 1, indicated that a slightly higher proportion of females (73% versus 71%), whites (51% versus 47%), and teachers who had some previous experience (25% versus 23%) remained as second-year teachers. In addition, Cohort II identified 1,566 teachers as first-year teachers in 2002–03, which was only 13% of the total teacher population compared to Cohort I, which contained 16% of the total teacher population during their first year as teachers. Total TAKS passing rates of Cohort I Certified, HISD ACP interns, and Region IV/University student/teacher groups exceeded the district on the reading/English language arts subtest; the HISD ACP student/teacher group exceeded the district on the science subtest; while all Cohort I student/teacher groups, except Deficiency Plan, exceeded the district on the social studies subtest. Cohort II TAKS results varied, with at least half of the subgroups outperforming the district on the reading/English language arts, writing, and social studies subtests.*

Conclusions: *Based on the positive student achievement results and feedback of teachers and mentors, efforts should be made to continue program implementation as designed.*

Introduction

Program Description

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7. What were the perceptions of ABRAZO teachers and their mentors regarding program delivery and benefits of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

Program Personnel/Resources

The ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program personnel included a manager and one clerical support staff. Additionally, collaborators through the HISD district offices and HISD ACP program staff were leveraged to provide feedback and address needs of ABRAZO teachers as well as provide training and support. The principals at each school facilitated program operations by identifying new teachers and assigning mentors.

Program Cost

Refer to **Figure 1** for number of ABRAZO mentors. As shown in Figure 1, during the 2001–02 academic year, HISD contracted 1,262 mentors to provide supportive services to first-year teachers in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program. Further, a total of 1,019 mentors (year-one non-HISD ACP mentors and year-two mentors) participated in the program during the 2002–03 academic year. The estimated budget for the 2001–02 academic year was $1,256,000, while the estimated budget from May 2002 to July 2003 was $907,375.00. An additional $627,000.00 was paid to interns by HISD-ACP, totaling $1,534,375 for the 2002–03 program.

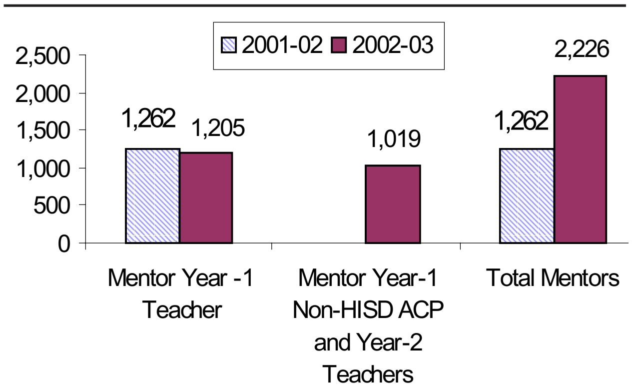

Figure: 1. Number of ABRAZO mentors, 2001–2003.

Methods

Data Collection

To obtain information on program implementation, meetings were held with the director of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program. Additional documentation of project activities was retrieved from the *Mentor Year 1 Handbook*, *Mentor Year 2 Handbook*, and the *Handbook for Principals on the Mentoring Program.* The manuals provided consistent and clear communication of program guidelines and responsibilities. Also, the ABRAZO website was accessed for program details (http://dept.houstonisd.org/professional dev).

Sample

A profile of teachers identified in the PEIMS teacher database as having one year or less of teaching experience in HISD during the 2001–02 academic year represented Cohort I. Further, teachers were tracked in the PEIMS teacher database in 2002–03 to establish retention rates. Teachers who were not listed in the 2001–02 as a year-one teacher and who were not listed in the 2002–03 PEIMS teacher database as a year-two teacher were not included in the study as Cohort I. In addition, Cohort II were teachers with one year or less of teaching experience during the 2002–03 academic year.

Demographic characteristics including gender, race/ethnicity, years of teaching experience, advanced degrees, teacher by program, and role (i.e., full-time teacher or substitute), were retrieved from the PEIMS Teacher data file and presented in the study. Further, the certification status of teachers profiled in the study was validated through HISD Human Resources. Teachers were classified as Certified, HISD ACP Intern, Region IV/University Intern, and Deficiency Plan.

Surveys were distributed to ABRAZO teachers and mentors at teacher orientation sessions. (See **Appendix A** for surveys). Additional surveys were distributed through the ABRAZO program manager and district representatives. Surveys addressed program components, professional development topics, program impact, and best practices for future program implementation. The survey also allowed teachers and mentors to provide background information, including years teaching, type of teacher, grade levels taught, ethnic group, total number of workshops attended, total number of hours attending workshops, and administrative district. Surveys were returned through the program manager, district representative, or directly to the researcher in the HISD mail. Teachers were allowed the entire 2002–03 academic year to return surveys.

Study Design

A descriptive, cross-sectional design was used in the study, while non-probability sampling procedures were used to select the target population.

Data Analysis

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS), a state-mandated, criterion-referenced assessment, was used to determine how students in grades 3–11 performed academically. The TAKS measures the statewide curriculum in reading at grades three through nine, in writing at grades four and seven, in English/language arts at grades ten and eleven, in mathematics at grades three through eleven, in science at grades five, ten, and eleven, and social studies at grades eight, ten, and eleven. The Spanish TAKS is administered at grades three through six. The results of all students reflect the combined performance on both the English and Spanish versions of the test.

The Stanford 9 reading, mathematics, science, and social studies achievement subtests were used to examine the Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs) and National Percentile Ranks (NPRs) for grades 1–11. The NCE scores ranged from 1 to 99 with a mean NCE score of 50, which corresponded to the 50th percentile on the NPR scales. The spring 2003 Stanford 9 results were based on 2000 norms.

Independent t-test analyses were conducted to determine if there was a significant difference between the academic performance for students of Certified teachers compared to HISD ACP interns, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan teachers in Cohort I and Cohort II. The criterion for acceptance was the $p<.05$ level (the probability that the results occurred by chance.)

Review of the Literature

According to the National Education Association (2002), the United States is facing the most critical teacher shortage ever. Of the teachers hired to be first-time teachers, 20% leave the job within three years. In urban districts, nearly 50% of new teachers leave the profession during their first five years of teaching, while only 6% of veteran teachers leave the profession (Wehrman, 2001). Increased student enrollments, class-size reductions, and a teacher workforce that is nearing retirement only exacerbates the teacher shortage problem. Moreover, the National Education Association (NEA) foresees that poor teacher induction programs and a growing salary gap between teachers and other college graduates will only exacerbate the teacher shortage. NEA calculates that within the next 10 years, half the teachers who will need to be in public school classrooms will not have been hired.

Teacher shortages seem to more prevalent among special populations. Specifically, the literature reveals that:

- The greatest teaching shortages are in bilingual, special education, mathematics, science (particularly, the physical sciences), computer science, English-as-a-Second-Language and foreign languages.
- Approximately 42 percent of all public schools in the United States have no minority teachers. This statistic is of particular concern since minority students make up 33 percent of enrollment in U.S. public schools, while the total of minority teachers reached just 13.5 percent. By the early 21st century, the percentage of minority teachers is expected to shrink to an all-time low of 5 percent, while 41 percent of American students will be minorities.
- Approximately 50,000 special education positions either remained vacant or were newly filled in 1997 by teachers who lacked full state certification.
- Less than half of the teachers hired during the last nine years participated in formal induction programs during their first teaching year.

The Texas Center for Educational Research (2000) estimates that given the current state teacher turnover rate of 15.5 percent, Texas is losing between $329 million and $2.1 billion per year, depending on the industry cost model that is used. The beginning teacher turnover rate is higher than the average rate for all teachers. Further, the Texas Center for Educational Research found that 19% of beginning teachers (about 4,100 individuals) leave at the end of their first year of teaching. In 1999, the annual cost of losing beginning teachers was between $36 and $216 million, depending on the turnover model. After three years, as many as

43% of new Texas teachers have left the profession, resulting in a three-year turnover cost of between $81 and $480 million. Consequently, the teacher turnover rate has represented a cost to public education that is beyond the expense of operating schools. The loss of teachers is perceived as a wasted expense that has not contributed to the education of Texas children. Furthermore, the high teacher turnover is believed to have negatively affected student performance, particularly in schools where the turnover rate has been consistently high.

The National Teacher Recruitment Clearinghouse (NTRC, 2002) maintains that new teachers are too often left behind with little or no initiation into the profession. NTRC stresses the importance of a new teacher induction program on supporting beginning teachers. Many researchers maintain that, depending on school size, student population, and the specific needs of new teachers, the goals and structure of an induction program may vary from school to school. Induction programs function to help beginners make the transition from "students of teaching to teachers of students" (Brewster and Railsback, 2001). They serve not only to introduce new teachers to teaching methods and school policies, but to introduce them to the "culture of teaching" as well. Through funding from the U.S. Department of Education, the NTRC outlined characteristics of a successful teacher induction program. They included the following:

- Orientation to familiarize teachers with paperwork and procedures, facilitate relationships, encourage development of knowledge and skills necessary for teaching, and integrate inductees into the culture.
- Training to assist with instructional methods, curricular requirements, classroom management, and assessment of students.
- Support from a mentor or other individual, via a one-on-one relationship. This attention and support from a veteran teacher can affect new teacher retention, attitudes, and instructional strategies. It also provides professional growth opportunities for the mentors.
- Assessment of inductees to track teaching performance, measured against district standards. Peer review and assessment is successful in some cases, but considered incompatible with mentoring in others.

Results

What was the profile of HISD teachers who participated in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program in 2001–02 and 2002–03?

A profile of HISD teachers who participated in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program is presented by gender, ethnicity, years of experience, advanced degrees, and program. Refer to **Table 1** for Cohort I results and **Table 2** for Cohort 2 results. As shown in Table 1, a total of 1,915 teachers were represented in the 2001–02 school year teacher population. The figure compares to 1,566 teachers in the 2002–03 school year teacher population, as referenced in Table 2. This decrease of 349 first-year teachers over the two-year period was by 18%.

Further, teachers in their first year of Cohort I and Cohort II were found to contain similar demographic characteristics. Specifically, both groups indicated in Tables 1 and 2, respectively, were more likely to be White (47% versus 40%), female (71% versus 70%), and had a bachelor's degree (84% versus 83%). Tables 1 and 2 also show that there was a decline in the number of first-year African American, White, and Hispanic teachers from year to year. Specifically, African American first-year teachers decreased by 14%, White first-year teachers decreased by 32%, and Hispanic first-year teachers decreased by 5%. At the same time, the percentage of Asian and Native American teachers increased by 51% and 300%, respectively. Moreover, the majority of Cohort I and Cohort II first-year teachers had no teaching experience; although, this finding was more prevalent in Cohort I than in Cohort II (77% versus 72%).

Furthermore, by the 2002–03 school year, there was a moderate decline in bilingual program teacher participants by 3.6 percentage points and a slight increase by 1.4 percentage points of regular program teacher participants for Cohort I compared to Cohort II first-year teachers. The percentage of honors teachers nearly doubled over the years tracked, from .8% to 1.6% of the total first-year teacher populations from year to year.

In comparison with the total districtwide teacher population, **Figure 2** shows that while there was a decline in the number of first-year teachers, there was an increase in the total teacher population from year to year. Notably, first-year teachers reflected 16% of the total teacher population in 2001–02 and only 13% of the

Table 1: Profile of Cohort I: ABRAZO Teachers First Year, 2001–02 and Second Year, 2002–03

Cohort I	Year I First-Year Teachers 2001–02		Teacher Retention Following First-Year 2002–03	
	N	%	N	%
Total	1,915	100.0	1,397	100.0
Gender				
Female	1,362	71.1	1,026	73.4
Male	553	28.9	371	26.6
Race/Ethnicity				
African American	533	27.8	354	25.3
Asian	61	3.2	42	3.0
Hispanic	413	21.6	287	20.5
Native American	1	0.1	0	0.0
White	907	47.4	714	51.1
Yrs. of Teaching Exp.				
0	1,467	76.6	1,051	75.2
1 - 5	278	14.5	215	15.4
6 – 10	86	4.5	63	4.5
≥ 10	84	4.4	68	4.9
Advanced Degrees				
No Degree	43	2.2	16	1.1
Bachelor's	1,609	84.0	1,180	84.5
Master's	230	12.0	176	12.6
Doctorate	33	1.7	25	1.8
Teacher by Program				
Regular	1,135	59.3	817	58.5
Bilingual	392	20.5	291	20.8
ESL	65	3.4	53	3.8
Career & Technology	15	0.8	11	0.8
Compensatory Education	11	0.6	9	0.6
Gifted & Talented	67	3.5	51	3.7
Special Education	215	11.2	153	11.0
Honors	15	0.8	12	0.9

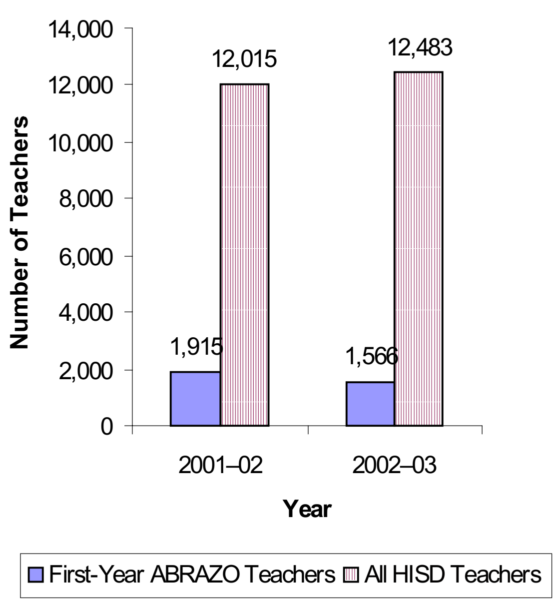

Figure 2. First-year and all teachers, past two years.

total teacher population in 2002–03.

How successful was HISD in addressing teacher shortages through the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

It is evident in **Figure 3** that, among the 1,915 teachers who were first-year teachers in 2001–02, a total of 1,397 remained as teachers in 2002–03. Consequently, the retention rate for Cohort I was 73%. Comparatively, excluding Cohort I teachers, 10,100 teachers were in the district in 2001–02, and 8,524 remained as teachers in 2002–03. Thus, yielding a moderately higher retention rate than Cohort I of 84% for the district.

According to Table 1, when compared to the initial Cohort I teacher population in 2001–02, the first-year teachers who were retained in 2002–03 reflected a slightly higher proportion of females (73% versus 71%), whites (51% versus 47%), and teachers who

Table 2: Profile of Cohort II: ABRAZO Teachers, First Year, 2002–03

Cohort II	Year I First-Year Teachers 2002–03 N	%
Total	1,566	100.0
Gender		
Female	1103	70.4
Male	463	29.6
Race/Ethnicity		0.0
African American	457	29.2
Asian	92	5.9
Hispanic	392	25.0
Native American	4	0.3
White	621	39.7
Yrs. of Teaching Exp.		
0	1,119	71.5
1 - 5	264	16.9
6 – 10	88	5.6
≥ 10	95	6.1
Advanced Degrees		
No Degree	30	1.9
Bachelor's	1,293	82.6
Master's	218	13.9
Doctorate	25	1.6
Teacher by Program		
Regular	951	60.7
Bilingual	265	16.9
ESL	57	3.6
Career & Technology	26	1.7
Compensatory Education	6	0.4
Gifted & Talented	57	3.6
Special Education	180	11.5
Honors	24	1.5

had some teaching experience (25% versus 23%).

Refer to **Table 3** when considering the district teachers in 2001–02 compared to the district teachers who were retained in 2002–03. As reflected in Table 3, a higher percentage of females (77%), African Americans than other ethnic groups (44%), and teachers who had six years or more of teaching experience (75%) were identified among the retained teachers.

What were the distinctive components of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program relative to teacher training and retention activities?

The distinctive components of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program consisted of the Mentor-New Teacher Partnership, eSchool On-line Modules, On-going Campus Level Support, and Just-in Time Training Seminars. A description of the components along with the implementation status follows.

Mentor-New Teacher Partnership

Observation and feedback in the instructional setting was an effective professional development strategy for teachers. Through this strategy and the opportunities for modeling; collaborative planning, on-going support, and the one-on-one relationship of peers enhanced both professionals. The induction program recognized the value of this professional development model by creating mentoring partnerships. Mentors were required to demonstrate a capacity for caring, listening, learning, teaching, coaching, and guiding the first-year teachers to facilitate their transition into the district.

All teachers new to the teaching profession, within the first three years of teaching, were assigned a mentor. Mentors were offered a stipend with payments over three years. Mentors were required to sign a stipend agreement for commitment to program requirements and the payment of the three-year stipend. In addition, all teachers who had previous teaching experience, but were new to the school district, were partnered with a colleague (buddy) for support with district policies, procedures, and resources. The buddy was a non-stipend position.

Mentor requirements included the following: (1) at least three years of teaching experience; (2) be a contract, Certified teacher in the same subject area or grade level to which the first-year teacher sought certification, and (3) have a rating of proficient or better on the Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS) instrument for the past consecutive three years.

Implementation Status

The progress of teachers who participated in the program was monitored to ensure operation in adher-

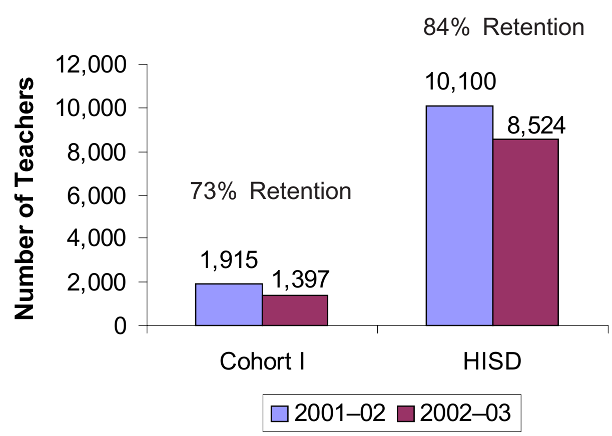

Figure 3. Retention of ABRAZO and HISD teachers.

Table 3: Retention Percentages of ABRAZO Teachers by Subgroup from 2001–02 to 2002–03

	District Teachers 2001–02		District Teacher Retention 2002–03	
	N	%	N	%
Number	10,100	100.0	8,524	100.0
Gender				
Female	7,735	76.6	6,562	77.0
Male	2,365	23.4	1,962	23.0
Race/Ethnicity		-		-
African American	4,318	42.8	3,765	44.2
Asian	220	2.2	200	2.3
Hispanic	1,731	17.1	1,510	17.7
Native American	4	0.0	3	0.0
White	3,827	37.9	3,046	35.7
Yrs. of Teaching Exp.		-		-
0	0	-	53	0.6
1 - 5	3,004	29.7	2,041	23.9
6 – 10	1,713	17.0	1,525	17.9
≥ 10	5,383	53.3	4,905	57.5
Advanced Degrees		-		-
No Degree	7	0.1	16	0.2
Bachelor’s	6,818	67.5	1,180	13.8
Master’s	3,113	30.8	176	2.1
Doctorate	162	1.6	25	0.3
Teacher by Program		-		-
Regular	5,892	58.3	4,954	58.1
Bilingual	1,356	13.4	1,176	13.8
ESL	513	5.1	427	5.0
Career & Technology	339	3.4	286	3.4
Compensatory Education	97	1.0	62	0.7
Gifted & Talented	658	6.5	524	6.1
Special Education	1,074	10.6	955	11.2
Honors	171	1.7	140	1.6

Note: Numbers exclude Cohort I teachers

ence to district and school policies and procedures. Currently, all ABRAZO teachers have been assigned a mentor. This was a three-year, phase-in program and mentors were required to participate in the program throughout the induction program.

eSchool On-line Modules

eSchool modules used the internet to deliver interactive training and on-line assessments. It provided a vehicle for quality and consistent training content, flexibility of location and time of training, and on-demand access to learning – anytime and anywhere. A database was maintained that contained user responses and performance data.

The ASK (Applying Skills and Knowledge) series of eSchool on-line professional development software was designed in collaboration with ACTV and HISD. The ten modules are as follows: (1) Organizing Classrooms for Learning; (2) Classroom Rules and Procedures; (3) Planning Lessons that Align with the Curriculum; (4) Establishing Appropriate Classroom Behavior; (5) A Balanced Approach to Reading; (6) The Admission, Review, Dismissal (ARD) Process and The Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC) Process; (7) The Parent-Teacher Partnership; (8) Dealing with an Angry Student; (9) Questioning Strategies, and (10) Assessment and Grading.

Implementation Status

During the first year, of implementation, which was 2001–02, new teachers were exposed to modules one through three. In the 2002–03 school year, teachers were exposed to modules one through four. Teachers who enter the program in 2003–04 will receive modules one through four, and the remaining modules will be completed and released.

On-going Campus Level Support

Monthly meetings were held for first-year teachers that included the principal, district office or alternative certification staff, lead teachers, and mentor teachers. Additionally, informal meetings were held based on the need of the teacher. After the first year, teachers had more flexibility in attendance requirements.

Implementation Status

District offices and principals organized the monthly meetings and were responsible for monitoring this component. It was the teachers' responsibility to attend the monthly meetings. New teachers were not evaluated on attendance; however, the monthly meetings were a vehicle for support and professional development.

Just-In Time Training Seminars

Formal and informal seminars on topics related to HISD practices and expectations were conducted by mentors and other support staff. Examples of training areas addressed during the first year were "Taking Attendance," "Preparing Lesson Plans," and "Holding Parent-Student-Teacher Conferences."

In year-two, beginning teachers were exposed to the Texas Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) observation model. This program was a case study of the mentee that, through set standards, developed evidence of teaching practices for reflection.

By year-three, the beginning teachers will be exposed to a five-day training on the Hunter/Resnick/ MCREL skills for effective teaching. This model was designed to impact teaching practices and student achievement by incorporating topics such as teaching to one objective at a time, using principles of learning, accountable talk, use of non-linguistic representations, practice strategies, and use of feedback.

Implementation Status

Training modules will be developed by the ABRAZO program director, teachers, and support staff, and will be presented "just-in time," before the teacher needs to know the information. The director of the ABRAZO New Teacher Program provided mentors with a calendar of relevant topics to share with new teachers during the month for the 2001–02 and the 2002–03 school years.

What were the professional development topics addressed in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

The professional development topics that were addressed in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction program were as follows.

Curriculum (CLEAR)

CLEAR (Clarifying Learning to Enhance Achievement Results) was an instructional planning tool for teachers that defined what was to be taught and assessed to ensure that every student had consistent access to a quality curriculum. Moreover, it encompassed all state curriculum requirements as outlined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Teachers were to focus their planning time and professional conversations on how best to teach the knowledge and skills so that all students master the objectives.

CLEAR provided teachers four basic categories of information for each objective.

1) Content specifications detailed what content should be taught in order to meet the intent of the objective. This section also included notes to the teacher regarding the concepts themselves.

2) Prerequisites and instructional considerations showed teachers how to plan lessons aligned to the content specifications. Teachers saw how knowledge and concepts were developed in prior grade levels. Students were able to study or review prerequisite learning. *Instructional considerations* contained strategies, activities, and ideas for effective instruction. Teachers did not have to use all of the suggestions; however, they represented practices that were proved successful in improving student achievement.

3) Assessment considerations featured several types of assessment that teachers used to determine whether or not students mastered the objective. Where applicable, alignment to standardized tests were provided.

4) *Connections to other objectives* facilitated an integrated instruction by providing linkages to other content areas and within the content area. The mathematics and science sections emphasized the process skills best linked to the objective to provide context for and application of learning. *(http://dept.houstonisd.org/curriculum/ProjectCLEAR/PCdefined.htm, 2002).*

Lesson Planning

Lesson planning provided the process for organizing the materials, activities, time, and content of a lesson. Lesson planning was based on the appropriate content standards, assessment outcome, students' needs, and resources.

Classroom Management

Classroom management incorporated strategies used to maintain a productive learning environment for planned teacher actions. These actions included establishing class rules, procedures, and/or routines; organizing materials and students; and managing teacher responses.

Professional Development

Professional development training opportunities fostered systemic change and focused on the needs of teachers as they grow in their profession. A variety of delivery systems (e.g., training, study groups, research, and observations) provided professional growth activities for teachers and administrators, enabling these professionals to maximize their effectiveness through quality support, interaction, and skills refinement designed to result in improved student achievement.

ExCET/TExES Reviews

ExCET/TExES Reviews were beneficial to teachers who sought educator certification. According to the Texas Administrative Code 230.5(b), in order to become certified, teachers had to successfully complete the appropriate ExCET exam. Study groups to review content and format of the exams were beneficial in preparation for the exam.

Instructional Strategies

The strategies contanied key knowledge of activities, processes, and resources to effectively deliver instructional content and learning strategies resulting in students' mastery of objectives and academic success.

Cooperative Learning

Engagement in learning experiences with others (in a group) occurred in various forms. Implementation of cooperative learning activities in the classroom comprised many dynamics for planning, such as identifying the roles of each member in the team, developing communication skills, teaching group decision-making skills, assessment, and accountability.

TAAS/TAKS

Review of the state test content and context and alignment with district curriculum (CLEAR) was provided through the leadership of the Department of Curriculum and Instructional Development and Lead Teacher Program. The significance of the training was based on evidence that students were most successful academically when the written, tested, and taught curricula were closely aligned.

Time Management

Time Management provided strategies to effectively use the time in a workday. In the classroom, instructional time should be maximized and custodial and management tasks minimized. Time management strategies helped teachers, through planning, to prioritize and organize tasks as well as find "extra" time in the work day. Effective time management skills reduced stress and ensured completion of critical tasks.

Grading and Assessment

Grading and Assessment included strategies to evaluate the mastery of objectives and attainment of concepts. Grading and assessment also provided feedback for student performance. Strategies helped determine when assessments were appropriate for the task, skill, or objective being evaluated.

Parent Conferencing

A meeting of two or more persons for discussing matters of common concern, usually a formal interchange of views. Planning is key to ensure a successful conference. In addition, other parent communication strategies may be employed throughout the year to establish and maintain a positive parent-teacher relationship.

Content Specific Topics

Outlining of specifics on content that should be taught in related grade-level appropriate subject areas in order to meet the intent of the content objectives outlined in CLEAR, TEKS, and/or state exams. Content-specific instruction were coupled with use of effective instructional strategies and assessment to ensure students' mastery of the content objective.

How did the academic performance of HISD students of second-year (Cohort I) and first-year (Cohort II) ABRAZO teachers compare to the districtwide performance of HISD students?

The Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) and the Stanford 9 were used to measure the academic performance of HISD students of first-year and second-year ABRAZO teachers. The data were compared to districtwide TAKS and Stanford 9 performance results. The findings, according to tests analyzed and cohort, are as follows.

Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills

Tables 4 and **5** present the districtwide TAKS results along with TAKS results by students of Cohort I (second-year ABRAZO teachers) and Cohort II (first-year ABRAZO teachers). Only results for students who were administered TAKS during the March 2003 test administration for grade 3 on the reading/language arts subtest and the April 2003 test administration for grade 3 through 11 on all other subtests are depicted. The findings are shown by teacher group status (i.e., Certified, HISD ACP, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan), grade level, and subtest. Significant findings were discussed in this report.

Cohort I - TAKS Reading/English Language Arts

Table 4, which depicts Cohort I TAKS results, shows that a total of 28,903 students of Certified teachers were tested. This figure represents slightly more than three times as many students as the second largest student group, the Deficiency Plan teachers (N=8,938). Further, there were 3,137 students tested of HISD ACP interns, and only 497 students tested of Region IV/University teachers.

A review of the data indicate that the students of Cohort I Certified teachers had a higher passing rate than the comparable district subgroup on the reading/English language arts subtest at the seventh through tenth grade levels, which represents 67% of the grade levels tested. Regarding the students of HISD ACP interns, a higher passing rate than the district was attained at the fifth, sixth, ninth, and tenth grade levels in reading/English language arts. This figure reflected 50% of the grade levels tested. Both groups exceeded the district in total percentage passing at 79% versus 76% for Certified teachers and 78% versus 76% for HISD ACP interns, possibly due to the lack of districtwide data at the third grade level.

Further, students of both Cohort I Region IV/University and Deficiency Plan teachers also exceeded the district's passing rate at the seventh, eighth, and ninth grade levels on the reading/English language arts subtests. Additionally, students of Region IV/University teachers achieved a passing rate at the ninth grade level of 78% compared to the district's 74%, while students of Deficiency Plan teachers achieved a passing rate of 75% compared to the district's 74% at the ninth grade level. Consequently, students of Region IV/University teachers attained a higher total passing rate than the district comparison group (83% versus 76%), while the students of Deficiency Plan teachers did not (74% versus 76%).

Cohort I - TAKS Mathematics

On the TAKS mathematics subtest, students of Certified teachers attained higher passing rates than the comparable district teacher subgroup at the third and the sixth through tenth grade levels, while students of HISD ACP interns attained higher passing rates at the fourth, fifth, ninth through eleventh grade levels. For both student/teacher groups, these findings represented higher passing rates than at least 56% of the grade levels tested. However, neither group had a higher total percentage passing rate than the district. For students of Certified teachers, the total comparison was 64% for Cohort I versus 68% for the district. Simultaneously, for HISD ACP interns, the total comparison was 65% for Cohort I versus 68% for the district.

The data also reveal that only the ninth grade students of Region IV/University teachers had a higher passing rate than the district on the mathematics subtest (57% versus 48%). At the same time, students of Deficiency Plan teachers had higher passing rates than the district's comparable group at the third, fourth, and tenth grade levels. Although both Cohort I and the district's Deficiency Plan groups achieved passing rates above 80% at the third and fourth grade levels, the tenth grade passing rates were only 60% for Cohort I and 59% for the district. Subsequently, the total percentage passing on the mathematics subtest for students of Cohort I Deficiency Plan teachers was exceeded by the district.

Cohort I - TAKS Writing

The TAKS writing subtest results for students of Certified teachers are indicated at the fourth and seventh grade levels as well as by total passing rates. For Certified teachers, students of Cohort I exceeded the district by only one percentage point at the seventh grade level (82% versus 81%). Moreover, students of Region IV/University teachers and Deficiency teachers exceeded the district by eleven and one percentage point, respectively at the fourth grade level (94% versus 83% and 84% versus 83%). None of the student/teacher groups exceeded the district in total passing rates.

Cohort I - TAKS Science

On the science subtest, only students of Certified

Table 4: TAKS Percent Passing Rates of the Cohort I (C-I) ABRAZO Student/Teacher Groups Compared to the Districtwide Student/Teacher Groups, Spring 2003

	N Tested		Percent Passing: Reading/ELA		Math		Writing		Science		Social Studies	
	HISD	C-I	HISD	C-I	HISD	C-I	HISD	C-I	HISD	C-I	HISD	C-I
Certified												
Gr. 3	*	1,482	*	85	84	88						
4	16,125	1,577	81	79	82	82	83	80				
5	15,144	1,374	72	66	79	75			62	56		
6	13,665	4,859	79	78	65	66						
7	12,387	5,134	85	87	59	60	81	82				
8	11,747	4,228	85	87	62	64					89	90
9	15,433	5,362	74	78	48	52						
10	10,524	3,177	62	64	59	63			52	56	79	80
11	7,785	1,670	60	58	61	61			57	57	84	83
Total	102,810	28,903	76	79	68	64	82	82	58	56	84	85
HISD ACP												
Gr. 3	*	310	*	81	84	74						
4	16,125	188	81	78	82	85	83	69				
5	15,144	216	72	81	79	83			62	65		
6	13,665	435	79	82	65	64						
7	12,387	460	85	82	59	51	81	74				
8	11,747	439	85	83	62	56					89	90
9	15,433	363	74	84	48	58						
10	10,524	391	62	73	59	70			52	65	79	85
11	7,785	324	60	51	61	65			57	49	84	86
Total	102,810	3,137	76	78	68	65	82	73	58	59	84	87
Reg. IV/Univ.												
Gr. 3	*	12	*	18	84	33						
4	16,125	20	81	90	82	75	83	94				
5	15,144	0	72		79				62			
6	13,665	124	79	78	65	59						
7	12,387	44	85	86	59	37	81	76				
8	11,747	242	85	91	62	61					89	91
9	15,433	11	74	78	48	57						
10	10,524	24	62	62	59	33			52	33	79	94
11	7,785	20	60	50	61	53			57	38	84	63
Total	102,810	497	76	83	68	57	82	82	58	36	84	90
Defic. Plan												
Gr. 3	*	111	*	68	84	87						
4	16,125	90	81	77	82	83	83	84				
5	15,144	49	72	36	79	61			62	30		
6	13,665	1,277	79	71	65	56						
7	12,387	1,900	85	86	59	55	81	81				
8	11,747	978	85	86	62	59					89	91
9	15,433	2,365	74	75	48	44						
10	10,524	1,228	62	61	59	60			52	50	79	77
11	7,785	935	60	57	61	57			57	53	84	85
Total	102,810	8,938	76	74	68	54	82	81	58	51	84	84

Note: Cohort I - Second Year ABRAZO Teachers, 2002-03.
Third Grade Reading Results - March Test Administration.

and HISD ACP interns achieved higher passing rates than the district at specific grade levels. The findings reflected that both student/teacher groups had higher passing rates at the tenth grade level, 56% compared to 52% for students of Certified teachers, and 65% versus 52% for students of HISD ACP interns. Additionally, HISD ACP interns had a higher total passing rate than the district by one percentage point (59% versus 58%).

Cohort I - TAKS Social Studies

The social studies TAKS results revealed that at the eighth grade level, all Cohort I student/teacher groups attained passing rates of at least 90% and that were higher than the district passing rates. Further, higher passing rates were also evident for students of Certified, HISD ACP interns, and Region IV/University teachers at the tenth grade level, exceeding the district's passing rate by at least one percentage point. The students of HISD ACP interns and Deficiency Plan teachers outperformed the district at the eleventh grade level by at least one percentage point. Consequently, all groups, except Deficiency Plan exceeded the total percentage passing of the district by at least one percentage point. For students of Deficiency Plan teachers, an 84% passing rate was achieved by both Cohort I and the district.

Cohort II - TAKS Reading/English Language Arts

Table 5, which depicts Cohort II TAKS results, shows that a total of 24,138 students of Certified teachers were tested. This figure represents slightly more than twice as many students as the second largest group, which were students of the Deficiency Plan teachers (N=11,117). Further, there were 9,492 students tested of HISD ACP interns, and 2,470 students tested of Region IV/University teachers. The findings indicated that the Cohort II Certified student/teacher group had higher passing rates than the district at the sixth, seventh, eighth, and ninth grade levels, which represented 50% of the grade levels tested. At the same time, students in the district exceeded the HISD ACP interns at all grade levels tested. Fifth, through the ninth, and eleventh grade level students of Region IV/University teachers had higher passing rates than the district, which was 67% of the grade levels tested. Further, the Deficiency Plan student/teacher group had higher passing rates at the seventh through the eleventh grade levels, representing 56% of the grade levels tested.

Cohort II - TAKS Mathematics

The findings on the mathematics subtest for the Cohort II student/teacher group revealed a higher passing rate at the sixth and ninth through the eleventh grade levels, with differences of one to three percentage points. The district student group exceeded the HISD ACP intern student group in passing rates at all grade levels. At the same time, the students of Region IV/University teachers achieved higher percentage passing rates at the sixth, seventh, and tenth grade levels, with differences of up to ten percentage points at the sixth grade (75% versus 65%). For students of Deficiency Plan teachers, grades five through eight as well as grade eleven had higher percentage passing rates. The largest difference was at the fifth grade level by fourteen percentage points (93% versus 79%).

Cohort II - TAKS Writing

On the TAKS writing subtest, students of all teacher groups attained passing rates that exceeded the district at the seventh grade level, except HISD ACP interns. The largest difference in passing percentage was achieved by the students of Region IV/University teachers (86% versus 81%), followed by students of Deficiency Plan teachers (85% versus 81%). In addition, only the previously mentioned subgroups attained total passing rates that were higher than the district's passing rate by one and two percentage points, respectively.

Cohort II - TAKS Science

Cohort II results on the science subtest revealed that both the Certified and the Region IV/University student/teacher groups attained higher passing rates than the district at the tenth and eleventh grade levels, while the students of the district exceeded the HISD ACP interns on all grade levels. Only the Region IV/University student/teacher group had a higher passing rate at the fifth grade level (65% versus 62%).

Cohort II - TAKS Social Studies

Findings on the social studies subtest for Cohort II showed that Certified, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan student/teacher groups exceeded the district in the total passing rates by one to three percentage points. Specifically, the results were 86% versus 84% for students of Certified teachers, 87% versus 84% for students of Region IV/University teachers, and 85% versus 84% for students of Deficiency Plan teachers. These figures were reflective of higher passing rates at the tenth and eleventh grade levels for the Certified student/teacher groups, at the eighth grade for the Region IV/University student/teacher group, and at the eighth and eleventh grades for the Deficiency Plan student/teacher group.

Stanford 9 Achievement Test

Table 6 shows the Stanford 9 performance of the Cohort I student/teacher groups and **Table 7** shows the Stanford 9 performance of the Cohort II student/teacher groups who were tested in the spring 2003. Normal Curve Equivalents (NCEs) as well as National Percentile Ranks (NPRs) are presented for the reading, math, science, and social students subtests. The analysis of the findings were based on the number of subtests in which the students attained NCEs that were within the below average (35–44 NCEs), average (45–55 NCEs), and above average (at or above 56 NCEs) ranges of performance. A comparison was conducted using the findings for the ABRAZO student/teacher groups with districtwide findings. (See **Appendix B** for “all students” districtwide results).

Cohort I- Stanford 9 Reading

Table 6 shows that first grade students of Certified, HISD ACP, and Deficiency Plan teachers attained NCEs that were within the average range on the reading subtest. However, students of Certified teachers outperformed the other student/teacher groups, having attained 53 NCEs. In addition, at the second grade level, the Region IV/University student/teacher group attained 52 NCEs, while the Certified and HISD ACP student/teacher groups attained comparable results of 46 NCEs. Students of Certified teachers also attained NCEs that were within the average range at the third grade level, with 49 NCEs; while students of HISD ACP interns also attained NCEs that were within the average range at the tenth grade level (47 NCEs). Further, students of Region IV/University teachers had the highest average total NCEs on the reading subtest than other student/teacher groups, having attained 44 NCEs. They were closely followed by students of Certified and HISD/ACP teachers with 43 NCEs.

The districtwide findings for all students in Appendix B revealed that only students at the first through fourth grade levels attained NCEs that were average. When compared to the district, Certified students outperformed the district at grade ten (42 versus 39 NCEs); HISD ACP interns outperformed the district at grades eight (44 versus 42 NCEs), nine (43 versus 37 NCEs), and ten (47 versus 39 NCEs). Moreover, Region IV/University outperformed the district at grades two (52 versus 49 NCEs), five (50 versus 44 NCEs), eight (48 versus 42 NCEs), nine (40 versus 37 NCEs), and ten (47 versus 39 NCEs). Deficiency Plan students did not outperformed the district at any grade levels.

Cohort I- Stanford 9 Mathematics

On the Stanford mathematics subtest, students of Certified teachers in Cohort I had NCEs that were within the average range at all grade levels, except grade eight. Average findings ranged from 45 NCEs at grades 10 and 11 to 52 NCEs at grade three. At the same time, students of HISD ACP interns had NCEs that were within the average range at all grade levels except four, eight, and eleven. The average findings ranged from 45 NCEs at grade three to 50 NCEs at grade ten. Students of the Deficiency Plan teachers outperformed students of Region IV/University teachers having attained average NCEs at grades one through four as well as at grades six and seven; while students of Region IV/University teachers, only had average NCEs at grades five and eight, with 49 and 47 NCEs, respectively. Moreover, students of Certified teachers and HISD ACP interns had the highest total NCEs on the mathematics subtest, which was 46 NCEs for both groups.

Differentiation of Cohort I results and districtwide results reveals that students of Certified teachers outperformed the district at the third grade (52 versus 51), the ninth grade (46 versus 45), and the tenth grade (45 versus 43). In addition, HISD ACP interns outperformed the district at the ninth (49 versus 45) and the tenth grades (50 versus 43). Students of Region IV/University teachers outperformed the district at the eight grade (47 versus 43). Students of Deficiency Plan teachers did not outperform the district at any grade level.

Cohort I- Stanford 9 Environment/Science

On the Stanford science subtest, students of Certified teachers achieved NCEs that were within the average range at the first and third grade levels (45 and 51 NCEs, respectively); while, students of HISD ACP teachers achieved NCEs that were within the average range at the third and tenth grade levels (45 and 47 NCEs, respectively). The Region IV/University first grade student/teacher group had 47 NCEs, while none of the grade levels of students in the Deficiency Plan group had average NCEs. In addition, students of Certified teachers achieved the highest total NCEs on the science subtest (43 NCEs).

Table 5: TAKS Percent Passing Rates of the Cohort II (C-II) ABRAZO Student/Teacher Group Compared to the Districtwide Student/Teacher Group, Spring 2003

	N Tested		Percent Passing: Reading/ELA		Math		Writing		Science		Social Studies	
	HISD	C-II	HISD	C-II	HISD	C-II	HISD	C-II	HISD	C-II	HISD	C-II
Certified												
Gr. 3	*	1,175	*	82	84	80						
4	16,125	1,051	81	78	82	77	83	79				
5	15,144	1,158	72	70	79	75			62	60		
6	13,665	4,510	79	81	65	68						
7	12,387	4,190	85	87	59	58	81	82				
8	11,747	3,492	85	86	62	62					89	89
9	15,433	4,017	74	75	48	51						
10	10,524	2,822	62	62	59	61			52	56	79	82
11	7,785	1,723	60	58	61	62			57	59	84	85
Total	102,810	24,138	76	78	68	63	82	81	58	58	84	86
HISD ACP												
Gr. 3	*	704	*	79	84	77						
4	16,125	710	81	75	82	77	83	78				
5	15,144	544	72	65	79	73			62	54		
6	13,665	2,049	79	78	65	62						
7	12,387	2,472	85	84	59	57	81	79				
8	11,747	1,143	85	83	62	62					89	89
9	15,433	964	74	68	48	39						
10	10,524	583	62	56	59	47			52	39	79	66
11	7,785	311	60	58	61	54			57	45	84	81
Total	102,810	9,492	76	77	68	60	82	78	58	46	84	82
Reg. IV/Univ.												
Gr. 3	*	42	*	73	84	74						
4	16,125	106	81	66	82	68	83	68				
5	15,144	21	72	89	79	75			62	65		
6	13,665	600	79	87	65	75						
7	12,387	530	85	90	59	64	81	86				
8	11,747	474	85	86	62	50					89	91
9	15,433	389	74	76	48	45						
10	10,524	207	62	58	59	65			52	53	79	79
11	7,785	98	60	71	61	59			57	64	84	80
Total	102,810	2,470	76	82	68	62	82	83	58	57	84	87
Defic. Plan												
Gr. 3	*	269	*	76	84	74						
4	16,125	155	81	79	82	75	83	79				
5	15,144	47	72	65	79	93			62	57		
6	13,665	1,353	79	78	65	66						
7	12,387	1,689	85	89	59	63	81	85				
8	11,747	1,127	85	87	62	64					89	90
9	15,433	3,479	74	76	48	48						
10	10,524	1,782	62	63	59	57			52	52	79	79
11	7,785	1,208	60	63	61	66			57	62	84	88
Total	102,810	11,117	76	76	68	59	82	84	58	56	84	85

Note: Cohort II - First Year ABRAZO Teachers, 2002-03.
Third Grade Reading Results - March Test Administration.

In contrast to districwide findings, the Cohort I Certified student/teacher group outperformed the district at the third grade (51 versus 50 NCEs), sixth grade (44 versus 43 NCEs), ninth grade (42 versus 40 NCEs), and at the tenth grade levels (43 versus 41 NCEs). The data also show that students of HISD ACP interns outperformed the district at the eighth grade (42 versus 41 NCEs), ninth grade (44 versus 40 NCEs), and tenth grade levels (47 versus 41 NCEs). In addition, students of Region IV/University teachers outperformed the district at the second grade (47 versus 45 NCEs) and at the eighth grade level (44 versus 41 NCEs). Students of Deficiency Plan teachers did not outperform students of the district at any grade level.

Cohort I- Stanford 9 Social Science

The Stanford 9 social science subtest results revealed that average scores were attained by third grade students of Certified and Deficiency Plan teachers (49 and 50 NCEs, respectively). In addition, students of HISD ACP interns attained an average score at the ninth grade level (45 NCEs). Further, students of Certified teachers and HISD ACP interns attained the highest total average score on the social science subtest, which was 42 NCEs.

Districtwide results compared to Cohort I results indicated that the Certified, HISD ACP intern, and Region IV/University student/teacher groups did not outperform the district at any grade levels. The Deficiency Plan student/teacher group outperformed the district at only the third grade (50 versus 49 NCEs).

Cohort II- Stanford 9 Reading

As shown in Table 7, first through third grade students of Certified and Region IV/University teachers had NCEs that within the average range on the reading subtest. The findings ranged from 48 to 52 NCEs for students of Certified teachers and 45 to 46 NCEs for students of Region IV/University teachers. In addition, students of Certified teachers had average NCEs at grade six, with 45 NCEs. Table 7 also shows that first and third grade students of HISD ACP interns attained an average NCE of 49 and 45, respectively on the reading subtest. At the same time, students of Region IV/University teachers had average NCEs from grade five to grade eight on the reading subtest, ranging from 46 to 53 NCEs, and also at grade eleven with 45 NCEs. The students of Deficiency Plan teachers had average NCEs at grade one as well as grades four through seven, and eleven. The results ranged from 45 to 50 NCEs. Moreover, students of Region IV/University teachers had the highest total score on the reading subtest, with 47 NCEs.

When compared to districtwide results, the Certified student/teacher group outperformed the district at the second grade (50 versus 49 NCEs), the sixth grade (45 versus 44 NCEs), the eighth grade (43 versus 42 NCEs), the ninth grade (39 versus 37 NCEs), and the tenth grade levels (41 versus 39 NCEs). Students of HISD ACP interns did not outperform the district at any grade level. Moreover, the Region IV/University student/teacher group outperformed the district at the fifth through the eleventh grade levels. The scores ranged from 38 versus 37 NCEs at the ninth grade level to 53 versus 44 NCEs at the sixth grade level. Meanwhile, the Deficiency Plan student/teacher group outperformed the district at the fifth through ninth and the eleventh grade levels. The scores ranged from 38 versus 37 NCEs at the ninth grade to 46 versus 44 NCEs seventh grade levels.

Cohort II- Stanford 9 Mathematics

Table 7 also shows the mathematics subtest results of Cohort II on the Stanford 9. As indicated in Table 7, students of Certified teachers had average NCEs at all grade levels, with the exception of grades eight and ten, with 44 NCEs. The remaining results ranged from 46 NCEs to 52 NCEs. Further, HISD ACP students had average NCEs on grades one through six, ranging from 45 to 49 NCEs. A review of Region IV/ University findings reveal average NCEs at all grade levels, except grades one, three, and ten, with the results ranging from 45 NCEs to an above average, 57 NCEs. Simultaneously, students of Deficiency Plan teachers attained average NCEs at the first, fourth through seventh, ninth and eleventh grade levels, ranging from 45 to 52 NCEs. In addition, students of Region IV/University teachers had the highest total score on the mathematics subtest, with 50 NCEs.

Districtwide comparisons with Cohort II on the mathematics subtest revealed that the Certified student/teacher group outperformed the district at the second (52 versus 51 NCEs), the sixth (50 versus 49 NCEs), the eighth (44 versus 43 NCEs), the ninth (46 versus 45 NCEs), and the tenth grade levels (44 versus 43 NCEs). At the same time, the HISD ACP student/ teacher group did not outperformed the district at any grade level. The Region IV/University student/teacher group outperformed the district at the sixth (57 versus 49 NCEs), the seventh (49 versus 46 NCEs), the eighth (51 versus 43 NCEs) and the eleventh grade levels (48 versus 46 NCEs). Further, the Deficiency Plan stu-

Table 6: Stanford 9 Performance for the Cohort I (Second-Year) ABRAZO Student/Teacher Groups, Spring 2003

			Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE)				National Percentile Ranks (NPR)			
Group	Grade	N Tested	Read NCE	Math NCE	Enviro./ Science NCE	Social Science NCE	Read NPR	Math NPR	Enviro./ Science NPR	Social Science NPR
Certified	1	901	53	50	45		55	50	41	
	2	903	46	47	39		42	44	30	
	3	1,069	49	52	51	49	49	54	52	47
	4	1,263	43	50	40	39	37	50	32	30
	5	1,228	41	50	43	41	34	50	36	33
	6	5,452	43	49	44	41	37	48	39	33
	7	5,727	43	45	43	42	37	41	37	35
	8	4,776	42	42	41	41	35	35	33	33
	9	5,780	39	46	42	42	30	42	35	34
	10	3,361	42	45	43	42	35	41	37	35
	11	1,801	42	45	43	46	36	40	36	43
	Total	32,261	43	46	43	42				
HISD ACP	1	94	47	47	40		44	44	32	
	2	113	46	49	43		42	49	37	
	3	205	41	45	45	43	33	40	40	37
	4	158	36	43	36	40	26	36	25	32
	5	223	44	49	43	42	38	48	37	36
	6	476	42	47	41	39	36	45	34	31
	7	519	41	46	42	42	33	43	35	35
	8	472	44	42	42	41	39	35	36	34
	9	403	43	49	44	45	38	49	38	41
	10	403	47	50	47	44	44	50	44	39
	11	336	39	40	38	41	30	32	28	33
	Total	3,402	43	46	42	42				
Reg IV/Univ.	1									
	2	8	52	43	47		54	36	44	
	4	13	34	35	38	40	23	24	29	31
	5	21	50	49	42	41	49	49	35	33
	6	136	39	43	39	36	29	36	30	25
	7	47	38	43	35	37	29	37	24	26
	8	252	48	47	44	43	46	45	38	37
	9	13	40	42	40	34	31	34	31	22
	10	24	41	32	41	28	33	19	33	15
	11	19	37	30	27	30	26	17	13	18
	Total	533	44	44	41	39				
Defic. Plan	1	97	49	47	38		49	45	28	
	2	49	42	45	35		36	41	24	
	3	61	40	48	44	50	32	46	39	50
	4	98	41	48	39	38	34	46	30	28
	5	54	29	37	32	35	16	26	20	24
	6	1,402	41	46	41	38	33	42	33	28
	7	2,087	43	46	43	43	38	42	37	36
	8	1,156	39	38	38	38	30	28	28	28
	9	2,502	37	43	40	38	27	37	31	29
	10	1,289	39	41	40	37	30	34	31	27
	11	989	41	41	40	42	33	34	31	36
	Total	9,784	40	43	40	39				

dent/teacher group outperformed the district at the sixth (50 versus 49) and the ninth grade levels (46 versus 45 NCEs).

Cohort II- Stanford 9 Environment/Science

Stanford 9 environment/science subtest results revealed that Certified teachers had average NCEs at the second, third, and sixth grade levels (47, 49, and 46 NCEs, respectively). However, only the third grade students of HISD ACP interns attained an average NCE on the science subtest, which was 45 NCEs. Further, students of Region IV/University teachers at the third, fifth through eighth, and the eleventh grade levels attained average NCEs on the science subtest (between 45 and 53 NCEs). In addition, students of Deficiency Plan teachers attained average NCEs at the fifth through seventh grade levels, ranging from 45 to 48 NCEs. Moreover, students of Region IV/University teachers attained the highest total score on the environment/science subtest, as indicated by an average score of 47 NCEs.

Results compared to the district showed that students of Certified teachers outperformed the district at the second, sixth, as well as the eighth through eleventh grade levels. Some specific findings were, second grade students had 47 NCEs compared to the district's 45 NCEs on the science subtest; while sixth grade students had 46 NCEs compared to the district's 43 NCEs on the science subtest. HISD ACP interns did not outperform the district at any grade level on the test. Students of Region IV/University teachers outperformed the district at the sixth through ninth grade levels. The sixth grade performance was 53 versus 41 NCEs and the ninth grade performance was 41 versus 40 NCEs. Further, students of Deficiency Plan teachers outperformed the district at the fifth through the ninth grade levels. The fifth grade performance was 48 versus 45 NCEs and the ninth grade performance was 42 versus 40 NCEs.

Cohort II- Stanford 9 Social Science

Social science results of Cohort II depicted Certified teachers with average NCEs at the third and eleventh grade levels (46 NCE for both groups). None of the grade levels of HISD ACP interns achieved scores that fell within the average range. At the same time, Region IV/University teachers had average NCEs at grades three, five through eight, and eleven, ranging from 45 to 54 NCEs. For the Deficiency Plan student/teacher group, students at the fifth and eleventh grade levels attained NCEs that were within the average range (53 and 47 NCEs, respectively). Further, students of Region IV/University teachers attained the highest total score on the social sciences subtest, as indicated by an average score of 47 NCEs.

A comparison of Cohort II findings to districtwide findings revealed that students of Certified teachers outperformed the district at the sixth grade (42 versus 41 NCEs), the eighth grade (43 versus 42 NCEs), and the ninth grade levels (41 versus 40 NCEs). HISD ACP interns did not outperformed the district at any grade level on the social studies subtest. Moreover, students of Region IV/University teachers outperformed the district at the fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, and eleventh grade levels. The sixth grade performance was 50 versus 41 NCEs and the eleventh grade performance was 48 versus 46 NCEs.

Was there a difference in the academic performance for students of Certified, HISD ACP, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan Cohort I and Cohort II ABRAZO teachers?

An independent t-test analysis determined if there was a difference in the academic performance of Cohort I and Cohort II teachers using the Stanford 9 test. The results for students of Certified teachers were compared to students of HISD ACP, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan teachers on all subtests. **Tables 8** depicts Cohort I results and **Table 9** depicts Cohort II results. According to Table 8, students of Certified teachers compared to HISD ACP interns had slightly higher mean scores on all subtests, except social science. The data did not indicate a significant difference between the mean scores of the two groups. However, a comparison of the mean scores for students of Certified teachers and Region IV/University teachers, revealed a substantially higher mean score for Certified teachers on the mathematics, science, and social science subtests. The findings were significant at the $p<.05$ level. Further, a significant difference was found between the mean scores for students of Certified teachers compared to Deficiency Plan teachers on all subtests. The results were significant at the $p<.05$ level.

Cohort II analysis, reflected in Table 9, revealed a substantial difference between the mean scores for students of Certified teachers compared to HISD ACP interns, Region IV/University, and Deficiency Plan teachers on all Stanford 9 subtests. However, the

Table 7: Stanford 9 Performance for Students of First-Year ABRAZO Teachers Using Spring 2003 Test Results (Cohort II)

			Normal Curve Equivalents (NCE)				National Percentile Ranks (NPR)			
Group	Grade	N Tested	Read NCE	Math NCE	Enviro./ Science NCE	Social Science NCE	Read NPR	Math NPR	Enviro./ Science NPR	Social Science NPR
Certified	1	547	52	48	44		54	45	40	
	2	640	50	52	47		51	54	43	
	3	889	48	48	49	46	45	46	47	43
	4	913	43	48	40	40	38	47	32	32
	5	1082	43	51	44	42	37	52	38	35
	6	4,851	45	50	46	42	41	51	41	36
	7	4,623	44	46	44	43	40	43	39	37
	8	3,877	43	44	42	43	38	38	36	37
	9	4,219	39	46	42	41	31	43	35	34
	10	2,959	41	44	42	39	34	38	36	31
	11	1,822	44	46	44	46	40	43	38	43
	Total	26,422	44	47	44	42				
HISD ACP	1	569	49	45	40		48	40	31	
	2	305	44	47	39		38	44	31	
	3	459	45	46	45	43	40	42	41	36
	4	539	43	48	40	39	36	47	32	31
	5	497	41	49	40	39	33	48	32	30
	6	2,391	40	46	39	37	31	42	31	27
	7	2,837	41	44	42	41	34	39	36	34
	8	1,423	38	40	38	39	29	31	28	30
	9	1,104	31	40	36	36	19	32	26	25
	10	654	32	37	35	32	20	27	23	20
	11	343	33	37	35	37	21	27	24	27
	Total	11,121	39	44	40	39				
Reg IV/Univ.	1	23	46	44	32		43	38	20	
	2	25	45	45	38		40	41	28	
	3	31	45	43	48	45	41	37	45	40
	4	72	36	45	35	35	24	41	23	24
	5	21	46	50	45	45	43	50	40	40
	6	615	53	57	53	50	55	62	56	50
	7	548	50	49	48	49	51	47	47	47
	8	519	47	51	48	54	45	52	46	57
	9	397	38	45	41	39	29	41	34	30
	10	223	40	43	39	37	31	36	30	26
	11	105	45	48	46	48	41	45	43	47
	Total	2,579	47	50	47	47				
Defic. Plan	1	207	50	47	39		50	43	29	
	2	124	37	38	32		27	29	20	
	3	114	39	37	39	38	29	27	30	28
	4	118	46	52	43	44	42	53	37	39
	5	42	45	52	48	53	40	53	46	56
	6	1,498	45	50	45	42	41	51	41	35
	7	1,865	46	45	45	44	42	41	40	39
	8	1,273	43	42	42	42	37	34	36	35
	9	3,714	38	46	42	40	29	42	34	31
	10	1,871	39	41	40	38	31	34	32	29
	11	1,251	45	46	43	47	40	43	37	44
	Total	12,077	42	45	42	42				

Table 8: Stanford 9 Performance of the Cohort I Student Group for Certified ABRAZO Teachers Compared to Other Student/Teacher Groups, Spring 2003

	Certified			HISD ACP				
Subtest	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Reading	31,745	42.61	20.46	3,344	42.56	19.15	-.151	.880
Math	31,728	46.19	18.98	3,338	46.02	19.08	.499	.618
Environment	1,787	42.00	20.12	203	41.76	16.37	.165	.869
Science	29,806	42.69	19.13	3,120	42.24	18.53	1.236	.216
Soc. Science	29,812	41.77	18.88	3,113	42.06	18.85	-.836	.403
	Certified			Reg. IV/Univ				
Reading	31,745	42.61	20.46	517	43.63	16.78	-1.119	.263
Math	31,728	46.19	18.98	516	44.37	16.59	2.169	.030*
Environment	1,787	42.00	20.12	8	46.55	9.89	-.638	.523
Science	29,806	42.69	19.13	507	40.62	17.08	2.423	.015*
Soc. Science	29,812	41.77	18.88	506	39.35	16.02	2.867	.004*
	Certified			Deficiency Plan				
Reading	31,745	42.61	20.46	9,574	40.01	18.647	11.117	.000*
Math	31,728	46.19	18.98	9,560	43.08	17.54	14.294	.000*
Environment	1,787	42.00	20.12	145	36.80	14.20	3.050	.002*
Science	29,806	42.69	19.13	9,378	40.28	17.22	10.883	.000*
Soc. Science	29,812	41.77	18.88	9,383	39.44	17.68	10.568	.000*

Region IV/University student/teacher group had higher mean scores on the reading, mathematics, science, and social science subtests. The findings were significant at the p<.05 level.

As shown in **Table 10**, when the students of HISD ACP interns in Cohort I were compared to students of Region IV/University Cohort I teachers, the findings revealed significantly higher mean scores for the HISD ACP student/teacher group only on the social science subtest (p<.05). In addition, the findings were significant at the p<.05 level in favor of students in Region IV Cohort II on the reading, mathematics, science, and

Table 9: Stanford 9 Performance for the Cohort II Student Group of Certified ABRAZO Teachers Compared to Other Student/Teacher Groups, Spring 2003

	Certified			HISD ACP				
Subtest	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Reading	25,981	43.64	20.18	10,946	39.47	19.749	18.251	.000*
Math	25,969	46.87	18.90	10,936	43.60	18.318	15.299	.000*
Environment	1,177	45.58	21.21	864	39.59	16.788	6.865	.000*
Science	24,691	43.55	19.02	10,044	39.60	18.464	17.662	.000*
Soc. Science	24,675	42.40	19.14	10,027	38.63	18.088	16.892	.000*
	Certified			Reg. IV/Univer				
Reading	25,981	43.64	20.18	2,526	46.81	20.185	-7.524	.000*
Math	25,969	46.87	18.90	2,528	49.78	17.877	-7.781	.000*
Environment	1,177	45.58	21.21	47	35.11	13.221	3.356	.001*
Science	24,691	43.55	19.02	2,481	47.06	19.639	-8.736	.000*
Soc. Science	24,675	42.40	19.14	2,473	46.99	20.493	-11.280	.000*
	Certified			Deficiency Plan				
Reading	25,981	43.64	20.18	11,819	41.94	19.244	7.691	.000*
Math	25,969	46.87	18.90	11,808	45.13	17.942	8.443	.000*
Environment	1,177	45.58	21.21	329	36.24	17.071	7.343	.000*
Science	24,691	43.55	19.02	11,373	42.60	17.687	4.496	.000*
Soc. Science	24,675	42.40	19.14	11,367	41.60	18.185	3.772	.000*

Table 10: Stanford 9 Performance for the Student Groups of Cohort I and Cohort II HISD ACP ABRAZO Teachers Compared to Region IV/University Student/Teacher Groups, Spring 2003

	Cohort I							
	HISD ACP			Reg. IV/Univ.				
Subtest	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	N Tested	NCE Mean	Std. Dev.	t	p
Reading	3,344	42.56	19.15	517	43.63	16.78	-1.199	.231
Math	3,338	46.02	19.08	516	44.37	16.59	1.860	.063
Environment	203	41.76	16.37	8	46.55	9.89	.820	.413
Science	3,120	42.24	18.53	507	40.62	17.08	1.855	.064
Soc. Science	3,113	42.06	18.85	506	39.35	16.02	3.068	.002*
	Cohort II							
	HISD ACP			**Reg. IV/Univ.**				
Reading	10,946	39.47	19.749	2,526	46.81	20.185	-16.771	.000*
Math	10,936	43.60	18.318	2,528	49.78	17.877	15.357	.000*
Environment	864	39.59	16.788	47	35.11	13.221	1.800	.072
Science	10,044	39.60	18.464	2,481	47.06	19.639	17.774	.000*
Soc. Science	10,027	38.63	18.088	2,473	46.99	20.493	-20.017	.000*

social science subtests.

What were the perceptions of first-year teachers and their mentors regarding program delivery and benefits of the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program?

The perceptions of first-year teachers and mentors who participated in the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program were captured through surveys. The results can be found in **Tables 11**, **12**, **13**, and **14**. Additional perceptions were captured using an open-ended format. Prevalent responses can be found in **Tables 15 16**, **17** and **18**.

Background Information on Respondents

Survey respondents included 223 first-year and 354 second-year ABRAZO teachers. In addition, 234 first-year and 366 second-year ABRAZO mentors responded to the mentor survey. The highest percentage of first and second-year teachers were Hispanic (34% and 36%, respectively). At the same time, the highest percentage of mentor respondents were African-American for first and second-year teachers (36% and 38%, respectively). Most of the first and second-year teachers as well as the first and second-year mentor respondents were from the Southeast, North, and South districts. Moreover, the current year was the first year of teaching for 73% of the first-year ABRAZO teachers, while the current year was the second year of teaching for 79% of the second-year ABRAZO teachers. Regarding first-year mentors, the highest percentage indicated that they were teachers for 4-7 years (22%) , and 21% indicated that they were teachers for more than 25 years. Second-year mentors were primarily teachers for 11-15 years (19%) and more than 25 years (19%).

When asked the total number of hours spent attending workshops, seminars, and inservices during the 2002–03 academic year, the highest percentage of first-year teachers (48%) indicated greater than nine hours and the highest percentage of second-year teachers (27%) indicated 1-3 hours. Additionally, 58% of first-year teachers and 28% of second-year teachers estimated that they had greater than 32 hours of training related to new teachers. Further, mentors of first and second-year teachers identified having attended 1-3 trainings related to mentoring (60% and 57%, respectively), totaling 1-8 hours of training (50% and 38%, respectively).

Perceptions of Program Components

First-Year ABRAZO Teachers

The perceptions of first-year ABRAZO teachers in 2001–02 and in 2002–03 can be seen in Table 11. The findings are presented by the number of teachers who rated the item, the mean rating, the standard deviation, and the difference between the 2001–02 and the 2002–03 mean ratings. The items were rated using a Likert-type scale ranging from “1” - not beneficial to “5” - very beneficial.

According to Table 11, all of the items rated by first-year teachers in 2001–02 and in 2002–03 fell above the midpoint of "3". Further, for first-year teachers in 2001–02, the program component that was perceived as the most beneficial was "post-observation conference with mentor" (4.35). Although, the mean rating was higher than the former year, this item received the second highest rating by first-year teachers in 2002–03 (4.58). The current first-year teachers rated "first-year teacher observing mentor" as the most beneficial component (4.60). Further, the eschool On-line Modules were rated higher in 2002–03 than in 2001–02, while being perceived as the least beneficial by first-year teachers in both years (3.32 and 3.77, respectively). Change in perceptions about a component over the two years was positive for all items as indicated by positive mean score differences. The largest positive changes, 5.4 or greater, was indicated on the items, "ABRAZO orientation," "student discipline," and "other technical support".

Second-Year ABRAZO Teachers

Perceptions of second-year ABRAZO teachers can be seen in Table 12. Table 12 indicates that the mean rating on all of the items rated by second-year ABRAZO teachers fell above the midpoint of "3." Further, the item related to technical support for first-year teachers was perceived as the most beneficial. Specifically, "mentor support" received the highest mean rating (4.59). "Post observation conference(s)" followed mentor support with a mean rating of 4.29. In addition, "administrative support from the principal and assistant principal" received a mean rating of 4.25.

First-Year ABRAZO Mentors

The perceptions of first-year mentors in 2001–02 and 2002–03 can be seen in Table 13. As shown in Table 13, the mean rating of all of the items rated by the first-year mentors in 2001–02 and all of the items rated by first-year mentors in 2002–03 fell above the midpoint of "3". The findings also revealed that the program component perceived by first-year mentors in 2001–02 as most beneficial was, "first-year teacher observing mentor teacher" (4.43). This same item received the third highest mean rating in 2002–03 (4.51), although the mean rating was higher than in 2001–02. First-year mentors in the current year perceived the "observations of first-year teachers" as most beneficial (4.61). In addition, the largest positive change over the years tracked was noted on the item "orientation for mentors," with a mean rating difference of .45. Further, there was a negative mean rating difference on the items "paperwork" and "overall technical support," reflecting a slight decline of -.18 and -.11 points, respectively.

Second-Year ABRAZO Mentors

The perceptions of second-year mentors in 2002–

Table 11: Perceptions of ABRAZO Teachers as First-Year Teachers, 2001–02 and 2002–03

	2001–02			2002–03			02–03
Teacher Components	**N**	**Mean Rating**	**Std. Dev.**	**N**	**Mean Rating**	**Std. Dev.**	**Mean Rating Diff.**
ABRAZO Orientation	186	3.52	1.14	181	4.06	0.91	0.54
eschool On-line Modules	158	3.32	1.11	173	3.77	1.05	0.45
Curriculum Overview Modules	181	3.72	.99	180	4.01	0.93	0.29
Overall Support from Mentor	206	4.15	1.06	145	4.17	0.94	0.02
Post-Observation Conference with Mentor	134	4.35	.91	206	4.58	0.71	0.23
First-Year Teacher Observing Mentor	200	4.31	.96	209	4.60	0.75	0.29
Technical Support for First-Year Teachers	203	3.87	.93	*	*	*	*
Instructional Strategies	204	3.87	.95	202	4.18	0.86	0.31
Classroom Organization	203	3.67	1.09	199	4.16	0.95	0.49
Student Discipline	198	3.51	1.08	201	4.05	1.00	0.54
Paperwork	195	3.58	1.06	197	3.85	1.10	0.27
Parent Conferences	197	3.73	.99	193	4.08	0.97	0.35
Instructional Content	28	3.75	1.14	195	4.14	0.91	0.39
District/ACP/CPP provided	*	*	*	159	4.14	0.95	*
Support from Administrators	*	*	*	205	4.38	0.94	*
Other Technical Support	126	3.78	.96	19	4.37	1.07	0.59

Note: 5- Very Beneficial to 1-Not Beneficial
***Not applicable**

Table 12: Perceptions of ABRAZO Teachers in Year Two, 2002–03

	2002–03		
	N	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.
Teacher Components			
ABRAZO Workday with Mentor (Aug. 7)	270	4.02	1.04
ABRAZO Workshops (Aug. 8)	268	3.79	1.14
Observations(s) of 2nd-Year Teacher	330	4.20	0.99
Post Observation Conference(s)	332	4.29	0.87
Class Background Study (TxBESS)	317	3.84	1.11
Learning Reflection (completed after obsv.)	332	4.00	1.07
Statement of Professional Responsibility	329	3.96	1.06
Action Plan	327	4.07	1.04
Technical Support for Teachers			
Administrative Support (Principal, AP)	305	4.25	.097
District/ACP/CPP	283	4.01	1.07
Mentor Support	311	4.59	0.78
Instructional Strategies/Content	303	4.19	0.92
Other	47	4.34	1.11
Overall Technical Support	279	4.09	0.96

Note: 5- Very Beneficial to 1-Not Beneficial

03 can be seen in Table 14. As shown in Table 14, the mean rating for less than half of the items fell above the midpoint of “3” (47%). Further, the program components perceived by second-year mentors as most beneficial were, “year 2 mentor handbook” and “post observation conferences” (4.27). The item: “observations of second-year teachers” closely followed with a mean rating of 4.19.

Open-Ended Survey Items

Additional perceptions of first and second-year teachers were captured using an open-ended format.

Table 13: Mentor Perceptions of ABRAZO Program Components for First-Year Teachers, 2001–02 and 2002–03

	2001–02			2002–03			03–02
	N	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.	N	Mean Rating	Std. Dev.	Mean Rating Diff.
Mentor Components							
Orientation for Mentors	131	3.90	1.11	222	4.35	0.84	0.45
Mentor Handbook (Year One)	132	4.17	.92	224	4.57	0.71	0.40
Observations of First-Year Teachers	130	4.36	.73	228	4.61	0.61	0.25
Post Observation Conference	132	4.27	.80	228	4.56	0.63	0.29
Curriculum Overview Module	113	4.02	.91	213	4.26	0.83	0.24
First-Year Teacher Observing Mentor Teacher	125	4.43	.75	225	4.51	0.70	0.08
Support for Mentors	123	3.93	1.08	*	*	*	*
Technical Support to First-Year Teachers	126	4.23	.84	*	*	*	*
Instructional Strategies	126	4.28	.83	215	4.37	0.76	0.09
Classroom Organization	126	4.24	.82	220	4.43	0.76	0.19
Student Discipline	126	3.94	.95	219	4.40	0.79	0.46
Paperwork	124	4.16	.88	222	3.98	1.06	-0.18
Parent Conference/Conferencing Techniq.	125	4.20	.85	220	4.35	0.78	0.15
Instructional Content	87	4.18	.86	215	4.37	0.76	0.19
Administrative Support (Principal, AP)	*	*	*	222	4.38	0.80	*
District/ACP/CPP	*	*	*	205	4.21	0.88	*
Overall Technical Support	14	4.35	.84	145	4.24	0.87	-0.11

Note: 5-Beneficial to 1-Not Beneficial

Examples of comments are presented in Tables 15 and 16, respectively. The comments of mentors of first and second-year teachers are presented in Tables 17 and 18, respectively.

As indicated in Tables 15 and 16, similar challenges were faced by first and second-year teachers. Some challenges were related to managing discipline problems in the classroom, educating students on different instructional levels, staying abreast of mandated test requirements, and working with parents of students. Further, first-year teachers were asked to make recommendations for improving ABRAZO. The recommendations included having "sessions to vent problems to other teachers and brainstorm," "connect teachers of the same content" for support, and "more observations with my mentor." Second-year teachers were also asked to provide feedback on the mentee requirements, TXBESS framework, and program for year-two. Overall, impressions were positive. Teachers commented that the program provided a "good foundation for the new teacher." An additional comment was that "the requirements have been challenging, but not impossible, and have helped me to grow academically." Several teachers also pointed out that "paperwork" was excessive.

When asked to provide feedback on the requirements of the program, mentors of first and second-year teachers identified the need for more observation time with the mentee on and off campus. (See Tables 17 and 18.) The need for more training of unexperienced teachers was also highlighted; however, the appropriate time for training remained an issue. Comments on critical areas that mentors of continuing teachers faced included more "modeling and monitoring" and "administrative support." Mentors supporting second-year teachers stressed areas such as "time management," "instructional strategies," as well as "planning" for the next year. Mentors supporting third-year teachers indicated that mentors should be "more as a resource," particularly if the teacher has problems and "more opportunities to help connect teachers with the community."

Discussion

Over the past academic year, the ABRAZO New Teacher Induction Program has supported first and second-year teachers in HISD to promote the retention of high-quality teachers. The support has included orientation to familiarize teachers with paperwork and procedures as well as efforts to facilitate relationships, encourage development of knowledge and skills necessary for teaching, and integrate inductees into the culture. Moreover, training was provided to assist beginning teachers with instructional methods, curricular requirements, classroom management, and assessment of students. Technological support improved access to teaching materials through on-line training modules. Additional support was given from

Table 14: Mentor Perceptions of ABRAZO Program Components for Second-Year Teachers, 2002–03

	2002–03		
	N	Mean Score	Std. Dev.
Mentor Components			
Orientation Training for Year 2 Mentors	343	4.02	1.02
Year 2 Mentor Handbook	347	4.27	0.91
Observations of Second-Year Teachers	349	4.19	0.86
Post Observation Conference (s)	347	4.27	0.82
Class Background Study (TxBESS)	344	3.91	1.05
Data Collection Forms for Mentor	346	3.77	1.10
Statement of Professional Responsibility/Mentor Questionnaire	339	3.77	1.04
Action Plan	341	3.99	1.00
Technical Support to Mentor			
Administrative Support (Principal, AP)	344	4.10	1.00
District/ACP/CPP	329	3.90	1.10
Instructional Strategies/Content	340	4.04	1.00
ABRAZO Website	314	3.49	1.17
Completing Requirements	334	3.85	1.08
Other	46	4.13	1.00
Overall Technical Support	246	3.93	1.02

Note: 5-Beneficial to 1-Not Beneficial

Table 15: Examples of Year-One Teacher Comments of ABRAZO Program Components

Most challenging areas faced during first year of teaching:	Recommendations for improving ABRAZO:
• Positive reinforcement; • To get adjusted to the school environment and requirements; • Students with home issues; • Becoming more organized with paperwork; • Discipline; • Time management; • Diversity issues, the culture difference; • Administrative backing; • Grading efficiently; • Classroom management; • Students unorganized, unfocused; • New ideas for my content area; • All the standardized or mandated testing; • Parent conferences; • Center organization; and • Having students on different levels in the same class.	• Workshops for writing in low grade level; • Maybe have sessions to vent problems to other new teachers and brainstorm; • Assistance to new teachers to get college credit to complete HISD requirements; • Teamwork with co-workers to educate students with disabilities; • Tips on time management, controlling classes over 35 students, parents, and home calls; • Providing supplemental resources; • Connect teachers of the same content so they can support each other- I don't know any experienced teachers in my field; • Very good program; • Perhaps a very intensive orientation for 1-2 weeks before classes begin; • More "idea" workshops for new teachers in all subject areas; and • I'd like to have more observations with my mentors or other teachers.

mentors, principals, and other administrative staff in the district. The methods of assistance provided to HISD new teachers has been well-documented through research. Ultimately, the program was designed to, not only improve teacher skills and attitudes, but student achievement.

Recruitment efforts resulted in 16% of HISD teachers as first-year teachers in the 2001–02 school year and 13% of the first-year teachers as beginning teachers in the 2002–03 school year. Furthermore, a consequence of the positive reten-

Table 16: Examples of Year-Two Teacher Comments of ABRAZO Program Components

Most challenging areas faced during second year of teaching:	Feedback on the mentee requirements, TXBESS framework, and program for year 2:
• New Reading Program; • Communication with and support from administration; • Discipline, behavior; • Low academic performance; • Challenging support materials, resource information; • Classroom management, keeping group focused; • Communicating with parents, parent conferences; • Tailoring lessons to individual needs, i.e., ESL, GT, Special Education, learning disabilities, multi-level, prekindergarten; • Correlating TEKS to ClEAR; • Incorporating technology into the classroom; • Collaborative planning; • Keeping current with TAKS; • Student diversity; • Time management, meeting deadlines; and • Attendance.	• Productive; • Helpful, but too much paperwork; • All of the information was very supportive; • The clusters were useful throughout the school year; • Portfolio, video of students working, more technology classes; • TXBESS framework is an excellent program offered more structure to set goals and timelines; • My ability to see other teachers in action is too limited; • I loved having the ability to grow with supervision and independence; • I think it is a great idea that keeps the new teachers in the right track to success in this career; • The requirements have been challenging, but not impossible and have helped me to grow academically; • I would like more observation time; • Good foundation for the new teacher; • Good programs that need to be continued; and • The program was well-planned.

Table 17: Mentor Comments of Year-One ABRAZO Teachers

Feedback on the mentor requirements and program for year 1:	Critical areas that you would like to see addressed in supporting second year teachers:
• More observations for first year teachers; • The requirements for the program are very well thought of, easy to complete; appropriate for the program; • More information on instructional materials; • Use of technology in the classroom; • The program is wonderful, I wish it had been there 28 years ago when I started teaching; the requirements are great; • I would like to see the mentors meet as a support group; • Everything was organized and went smoothly; • Too much paperwork; • Would like to see some events/training organized for mentor/mentee to attend together; • Handbook is helpful; • It was very difficult to find even one hour to observe; and • Lots of additional work expected on both teacher parts-if teacher (mentee) is performing well suggest cut down on number of observations.	• Organization of curriculum, more training of curriculum projects; • Provide workshop for mentor/mentee; • Provide stress management record keeping; • Centers activities for student individual needs; • Classroom management techniques, discipline; • Immediate identification of mentee status; • District vs. school paperwork; • Model lessons; • Common planning period so that you can always meet to conference; • New student orientation; • Time management; • Instructional inservices; • Project CLEAR; • Observing other teachers; • Planning for the next year; • Teacher burn-out; • ESL strategies; and • Training for ARD meetings, parent conferences.

Table 18: Mentor Comments of Year-Two ABRAZO Teachers

Feedback on the mentor/mentee requirements and program for year 2:	Critical areas that you would like to see addressed in supporting third-year teachers:
• Mentor training should be less than a full day; mentee requirements appropriate; • Too much paperwork; • Mentee should have an opportunity to meet at least once every two months with other mentees; • Time scheduling for class observations mandated for specific days; • I think that it is a good program; • Mentee should attend more workshops; • Mentee requirement are keeping us knowledgeable about the program, especially when we review the four clusters; • Excellent program because you develop a one on one relationship with your mentee; • Quite easy to understand-If you attend the inservice, then all of you questions are answered; • Too many requirements for an experienced teacher and mentor; • I think that we should be able to do more than two formal observations per semester of the mentee; • I think the mentee needs to go and observe teachers at another campus also; and • New teachers have a lot that they must learn during their first two years, it would be helpful if inservices were held when teachers are not suppose to be with the students.	• Help organize classroom environments that promote equity, excellence, and learning; • Plan time for teacher to observe other schools and master teachers in their grade level; • Teaching strategies; • Continue modeling and monitoring; delivery of instruction; • I would like to have more instructional workshops actually showing how to implement some of the strategies; • Testing strategies; • Documentation procedures; • Training online any area related to mentoring; • How to address gifted and talented, bilingual students; • Handling paperwork/organization; • Model lessons for more learner-centered instruction; • More opportunities to help connect teachers with the community; • Workstations, assessment of student learning; • More administrative support to schedule observations; • We should be used more as a resource if teacher has problems; • Positive parent-teacher communication; and • Time management.

tion rates was a larger pool of HISD teachers to serve the general student population. These teachers, through professional development, were well-trained to fully meet the demands of the position.

Improvements in the academic performance of students whose teachers participated in the program were evident on norm-referenced as well as criterion-referenced tests. ABRAZO students outperformed students in the district at various grade levels in areas including reading/English language arts and science. Positive outcomes occurred in spite of the fact that critical components such as the e-modules were not fully implemented and a substantial proportion of students with ABRAZO teachers were not certified. Additional training and support methods as well as communication among departments were implemented to ensure the success of beginning teachers and their students.

Recommendations

1. In order to ensure high retention rates of beginning teachers, the district administration might consider continuing ABRAZO, which provides a supportive structure for teachers during their development years.

2. The instructional support staff should consider continuing to develop training modules to ensure that ABRAZO teachers are exposed to as well as enhanced by a variety of strategies and knowledge of research-based practices in areas such as classroom management, particularly during the years of induction into the program.

3. Due to the growing demand of mentors in the district, consider limiting the mentor-new teacher relationship to one-on-one to ensure adequate time for instructional feedback and to ensure meaningful interactions between the mentor and beginning teacher.

4. Survey responses of mentors and beginning teachers recognized the implementation of individualized, focused support provided through the mentor-new teacher relationship as a strong and valued component. Consequently, a campus-based program might be considered to further allow for critical professional development opportunities of the beginning teacher.

5. Based on the recurrent opinions of ABRAZO mentors and teachers, program administration should consider providing opportunities for informal networking sessions to address the individual challenges and issues for beginning teachers.

6. Based on TAKS and Stanford 9 results, Professional Development Services should continue to work with Curriculum to provide instructional strategies and assessment of student knowledge as well as content-related inservices, to further strengthen teacher's abilities to provide enhanced instruction, especially in the areas of mathematics and science.

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