

# **Final Report of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA)**

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **Task 1 Report**

### **Expanded Evaluation Design**



## **EVALUATION OF THE BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM: EXPANDED RESEARCH DESIGN**

This paper presents the design for the evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (BTSA), building on the evaluation design originally included in the WestEd/SRI proposal to conduct the study. The evaluation will address the following questions, as delineated in the Request for Proposals for the BTSA evaluation:

- What is the effect of BTSA on employment retention rates of participating teachers?
- What is the impact of BTSA's statewide expansion on the quality of the program?
- What is the effect of BTSA on program participants' knowledge and skills?
- What is the organizational structure of the program at state and local levels?

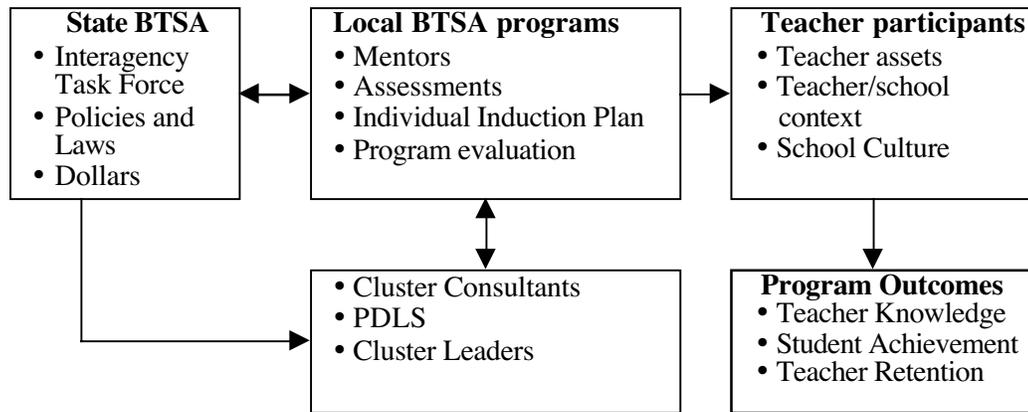
For the most part, the questions match the tasks outlined in the RFP, but our approach addresses some questions in more than one task. Table 1 indicates the questions, the tasks in which they will be addressed, and the methods used to address them.

**Table 1**  
*Questions, tasks, and methods*

Evaluation Question	Task	Methods
What is the effect of BTSA on employment retention rates of participating teacher?	2	Review of BTSA program reports and databases; Design of statewide database; Exploration of building teacher quality database.
What has been the impact of expansion on the quality of the BTSA program?	3 4	8 Task 3 case studies (different from the Task 5 case studies) Survey of 400 teachers (Task 4); SRI survey of 1000 current teachers; Possible SRI survey of 300 newly credentialed teachers.
What is the effect of participating in BTSA on increasing teachers' knowledge and skills?	2 4	Survey of 400 teachers; Observations of 40 teachers.
How does the organizational structure of BTSA influence its implementation and quality?	5	10 Task 5 case studies.

The conceptual framework that guides the study is depicted in Figure 1

**Figure 1**  
*Conceptual Framework*



The framework provides a second way to describe the evaluation design. As indicated in Table 2, each box in the conceptual framework is addressed through one or more tasks.

**Table 2**  
*Conceptual framework and RFP tasks.*

<b>Framework element</b>	<b>Task</b>
State BTSA	3, 5
Cluster consultants, PDLs, Cluster Leaders	5
Local BTSA programs	2, 3, 4
Teacher participants	3, 4, 5
Program outcomes	2, 3, 4

The presentation of the expanded design is organized by the task structure of the RFP, but refers to the evaluation questions addressed in each task. In addition, as we discuss particular methods and data-gathering approaches, we will highlight the evaluation questions addressed. For each broad evaluation question, we plan to use multiple data-gathering methods, and, as indicated in Tables 1 and 2, the methods cross tasks.

### **Task 2: Retention Rates for BTSA Participants**

Task 2 provides information to address the questions:

- What are the effects on teacher retention of participation in BTSA?

- What is the effect of participating in BTSA on increasing teachers' knowledge and skills?

The majority of Task 2 focuses on retention rates for BTSA participants, using two different approaches to tracking the rates. In addition, the task calls for exploring the possibility of building a state database related to the knowledge and skills of participants. We are employing two broad approaches to analyzing the effects of BTSA on retention and skills. First, we build from existing BTSA data to report effects on retention and skills (Tasks 2a and 2c). This inductive approach will provide insight into the challenges that local projects face--and are likely to continue to face--in data collection. It will also enable us to identify "best practices" that can be shared with the BTSA task force, Cluster Consultants, local project directors, and others with an interest in the induction of new teachers. The other approach (Task 2b) proposes to build a system using statewide databases for annual analysis of new teacher retention, in order to overcome the problems associated with collecting data from individual programs.

In the following sections, we provide additional information about our approaches to building the inductively derived databases, designing a system for annual data collection, and reporting on our findings.

### ***Examine the Effects of BTSA on Employment Retention***

WestEd has begun using the files of the BTSA program to examine the effects of BTSA on employment retention. Our approach is to analyze annual reports from BTSA programs on retention and the CTC database that includes required data from projects, building a database of the information gleaned. At this point, we have examined approximately 40 BTSA files, and find that only about half contain information about retention. Another group of files includes explanations of why such information is difficult to gather, even within the district. And a third group includes no information about retention. We have requested the CTC files and will reconcile the information.

The database we are now in the process of building notes the project, the number of new teachers served, and three data points related to retention--those retained in the district, those the district chose not to retain, and those who elected to leave. We are not able to include information about where the third group of teachers went or whether they remained in teaching. Further, given the problems BTSA programs have in reporting retention data, we do not think local BTSA staff will be consistently able to supply answers about teachers who voluntarily leave.

Our original plan was to contact BTSA directors to fill in missing information related to retention. However, given the large number of programs without such information, we now believe that such contact will be both burdensome and futile. Consequently, we plan to continue

the analysis of files, and then talk with Cluster Consultants and BTSA Task Force about alternative approaches to gathering extant retention data.

In addition, we will contact up to five BTSA project directors whose reports contain complete information related to retention and up to five directors whose reports are lacking such information. BTSA project directors who have reported information will be asked about the processes they used to do so, barriers they encountered, and how they overcame them. In contrast, the directors who did not report retention will be queried about the barriers they faced. To the extent possible, we will identify directors of both reporting and non-reporting projects in rural, urban, and suburban settings and in single district and consortium projects.

When the database is as complete as possible, we will analyze the data in a number of ways. First, we will determine whether BTSA projects that collect retention data have common characteristics--either the size of the district or the structure and activities of the projects. Second, we will analyze retention by:

- District characteristics (urban, rural, suburban; student demography);
- Teacher characteristics (the number of new teachers as compared to experienced teachers); and
- Project characteristics (support provider ratios; role of Institutions of Higher Education (IHE); time commitment and organizational role of local project leaders; and maturity of the program).

To summarize, WestEd will implement the following steps to examine the effects of BTSA on employment retention:

1. Develop a database that includes the information held by CTC and in the BTSA files related to numbers of teachers served and retention at the program level.
2. Meet with Cluster Consultants to identify additional sources of information, challenges experienced by projects as they attempted to collect retention information, and promising practices in use in local BTSA projects.
3. Interview up to five BTSA project directors who had successfully collected and reported retention data and five who were less successful. To the extent possible the group interviewed will include representatives of rural, urban, and suburban projects, as well as individual district and consortium projects.
4. Analyze existing data related to retention.
5. Prepare report that summarizes findings and identifies promising practices as well as perceived barriers to consistent collection of retention data.

The analysis of retention data, along with appropriate caveats and comparisons to statewide retention data as well as data from other states, will be submitted in draft by November 1, 2000, with a revision based on CTC and CDE comments submitted by December 1, 2000.

### ***Design a Statewide System for Retention Data***

SRI has major responsibility for designing a statewide system for retention data. WestEd will share its findings about barriers and promising approaches with SRI. Although these findings will be useful to the CTC as it plans to collect data from local projects, we believe that the most rigorous and robust approach would use and improve existing statewide databases rather than collect and compile data from dozens of local programs. As part of SRI's larger study of the teacher development system, SRI is pursuing the development of a large database to inform our research on teacher supply and demand and labor flow patterns. In particular, SRI is working with databases from CTC and California State Teacher Retirement System (STRS). Both of these agencies collect key information for the entire statewide universe of teachers and schools: CTC has information on the credentials of every teacher in the state, and STRS has information on whether they are working and contributing to the teacher retirement fund.

Unfortunately, neither agency has all the data needed to answer critical questions about workforce participation, attrition, reentry, and retirement rates of California teachers. For example, CTC knows whether a credential has been issued to an individual, but not whether they are actually teaching. STRS knows if a person is contributing to the retirement system (a proxy for employment as a teacher) but does not know what credentials they hold. We believe that data from CTC and STRS can potentially be merged and analyzed in combination to yield significant empirical findings for the entire California teacher workforce. Previously, workforce participation, attrition, reentry, and retirement rates have only been estimated.

Recently, SRI completed a request to combine databases from CTC and STRS to create a more accurate and complete picture of the dynamics of the teacher workforce. The analysis began with a pilot examination of the individuals who received a multiple- or single-subject credential for the first time in 1993-94 to assess how many have stayed in teaching and how many have left after 5 years. Using the common identifier of teacher Social Security Numbers (SSN), we tracked when credential holders began contributing to the teacher retirement system (the proxy for employment as a teacher), when they left, and if they ever returned to teaching (indicated by renewed contribution to STRS). In addition, using CTC data, SRI disaggregated the data by whether the newly credentialed teacher previously taught on an emergency credential, by the higher education institution that recommended the credential, and, for single-subject credential holders, by subject area. Findings from this analysis are the most accurate empirical evidence of

participation, retention, and attrition of newly credentialed teachers, information that was hitherto unavailable because researchers and other policymakers have not had access to STRS data.

The initial analysis can be considered a pilot test of whether such analyses, requiring coordination with STRS and CTC, are feasible. While we have met our short-term objective of merging and analyzing one year's data, we are replicating the analysis for other cohorts to find, among other analyses, the participation and attrition rates of newly credentialed teachers and any variation by preparation program type or sector or credential path (e.g., previous emergency teachers).

We believe that merging CTC and STRS data can yield important information. However, we also believe that the best source of detailed information about the retention of newly credentialed teachers is not STRS, but rather CDE.

Currently, a large database of all teachers is maintained by CDE through the Personnel Assignment Information Form (PAIF). The PAIF holds over 300,000 records of currently employed teachers, their credential status, their school, their years of teaching experience, and their teaching assignment, among other items. With the addition of SSN to this database it would be possible to merge the PAIF with CTC and STRS databases to complete the analysis of exactly where teachers move to after completing the BTSA program. To preserve confidentiality, SSNs should be held only at CDE and not included in the publicly available version of the PAIF.

If CDE consistently included teacher SSN in the PAIF, a teacher labor tracking system could be developed to provide ongoing data for use by many state agencies and programs, including the BTSA program. The data system we are proposing would essentially replicate SRI's current analysis of the 1993/94 cohort of new time/first type credential recipients and expand the database to include each new cohort annually. Because each teacher record in this database would have a unique identifier, the SSN, the BTSA Program could track the employment status of BTSA participants and graduates by collecting their SSNs.

CTC has already taken on the collection of much these data for current BTSA participants. In the program retention database, we understand, programs record the SSNs of participants and track the number of teachers who stay at their school or district, leave to teach elsewhere, and those who leave the profession. This is an impressive undertaking, but a statewide system offers greater returns than does a program-specific system.

The first step in designing a statewide retention data system will involve interviews of CTC management information system and program managers about the proposed capabilities and data collection of the MIS improvements funded in the 2000-01 budget. In addition, we will interview CTC program officers responsible for the current database of program retention data to ensure that our proposed system incorporates and builds on current practices wherever

advantageous. We will interview CDE managers to understand the current data collection practices for the PAIF and explore the feasibility of collecting SSNs.

The system we design will specify what and how data would be collected or compiled by CTC, CDE, and local BTSA programs, the parameters of the database, and how data would best be merged for analysis. In addition to designing the data management and collection procedures, we will produce an analysis plan to track retention, including disaggregation of retention rates by available data on teacher characteristics (e.g. credentialing route).

A retention tracking system that uses statewide databases will have several strengths. First, the data will be complete for all BTSA participants, and likely more accurate than program reports. Tracking teacher retention is a complex and time-consuming task, particularly if one is trying to determine whether teachers switched schools within a district, transferred to another district, or left teaching altogether. Systems that rely on individual districts and consortia to collect this kind of information are likely to suffer from missing or spotty data. A system that uses statewide data is likely to have more complete information on the entire population.

A second advantage is the minimal data collection burden for local programs. Rather than administer a complicated instrument to track the retention of each teacher after he or she has completed the program, programs can instead collect SSNs of teachers at the outset of the program. This way, data collection efforts at the program level can be limited to shorter surveys of current participants only. SSNs should be relatively easy to obtain from local human resources departments, particularly for programs that are managed through district offices. Importantly, CDE is already collecting a significant amount of data on teachers, their assignments, and their credentials. The statewide system should leverage current practice and reduce redundant data collection efforts.

Third, such a tracking system will yield long-term data. Even if districts and consortia do have the capacity to track teachers accurately, they probably cannot track them beyond one or two years after participating in a BTSA project. A statewide system can follow teachers for several years determine whether teachers have stayed, left the profession, or left and returned in later years.

Finally, a database that uses CTC data will enable policymakers and others to disaggregate retention rates not only by BTSA participation, but also in other important policy-relevant ways. For example, data can be disaggregated by the credentialing route of teachers. Different retention rates can be determined for teachers who previously held emergency credentials or internship certificates compared to teachers who took a traditional route of full-time preparation and received a preliminary credential. The most rigorous design would distinguish between these groups when tracking retention.

The statewide database could also facilitate examination of retention at the school level. The perennial concentration of novice teachers in high poverty schools and low-performing schools (Shields et al., 2000) implies that these schools suffer disproportionately the cost of teacher turnover. A statewide system that tracks teachers beyond their years as BTSA participants will shed light on whether BTSA assists in retaining teachers in historically high turnover schools.

The proposed system will have the capability to address these various facets of teacher retention. Further, the proposed system would allow program officers to identify a sample of BTSA participants who have left the profession and survey them to better understand their reasons for doing so.

To summarize, the steps we will take to design the statewide retention database are:

1. Interview appropriate CTC managers about the proposed capabilities of and data collection for the management information system improvements funded in the 2000-01 budget.
2. Interview CTC program officers responsible for the current data collected on retention data so the proposed system builds on current best practice.
3. Interview CDE managers about the current data collection practices for the PAIF and to explore the feasibility of collecting SSNs.
4. Identify what data should be collected by CTC, CDE, and local BTSA programs.
5. Identify barriers to the approaches and recommend policies and procedures that might overcome them, including methods of maintaining teacher confidentiality while still using the SSN as an identifier.
6. Identify how data can best be merged for analysis.
7. Develop an analysis plan to track retention, including disaggregation of retention rates by teacher credentialing route and other policy-relevant concerns.

SRI will prepare a draft report by February 1, 2001 and revise it based on CTC/CDE comments, with a final report submitted by March 1, 2001.

### *Database on Knowledge and Skills of Participants*

WestEd will build a database on the knowledge and skills of BTSA participants. As a first step, we are analyzing program files to determine the extent to which they contain information about new teacher knowledge and skills that is amenable to inclusion in a database. Such information must be easily quantifiable and available to local programs without excessive additional data collection.

Our early analysis of information in the files indicates that Individual Induction Plans (IIPs) and CFASST results are the two sources of information about new teacher knowledge and skills that are collected by multiple projects. However, even these sources pose problems for inclusion in a database. The challenges associated with each will be discussed in turn.

IIPs are required for all new teachers involved in a BTSA project. Consequently, they are likely to be readily available within BTSA projects, although the projects do not consistently include them in their reports. The first challenge to using the IIPs, then, is the inconsistency with which projects report on them. In our early review of the files, for example, few projects explicitly referred to new teacher IIPs in the aggregate. In only rare instances were there references to the IIPs in designing and delivering professional development workshops. The greatest documented use of IIPs was by support providers, who might reference an IIP in notes preceding or following a meeting with a new teacher. However, few programs systematically collect such notes. Further, many of the elements included in the IIPs that are part of the files are generic, e.g., "work on classroom management," so it will be difficult to track changes in knowledge and skill over time. Perhaps equally important, new teachers and their support providers operate in the context of a confidential relationship, and tying knowledge and skills to individual teachers violates such a relationship.

Using CFASST presents equally great challenges. The first, of course, is the issue of confidentiality. One of the marks of California's approach to support and assessment of new teachers is the formative nature of teacher assessment, and CFASST as a tool. So, although it measures important teacher knowledge and skill, creating a database that allows individual records to be included raises important policy and ethical issues.

As with our design of a retention database, the database for new teacher knowledge and skills cannot present undue burdens to a BTSA program or school district. Consequently, an important design consideration is whether data related to knowledge and skill are in forms that are either already included in some sort of electronic file or are easily amenable to inclusion. If they are not, it is unlikely that BTSA projects or local personnel units will maintain databases.

As we continue to review the BTSA files, we will note those that contain relevant information. In addition, we plan to conduct an early focus group with Cluster Consultants and

will ask them about the feasibility of developing a database of teacher knowledge and skills. Further, working with a database design consultant, WestEd staff will develop file formats that could be used by local BTSA programs, both as electronic files and on a password-protected Web site. We will seek volunteers among the BTSA programs, identifying likely participants in conjunction with the BTSA task force and cluster consultants. Then, we will run a trial of the database. WestEd will integrate the information on the files or Web, and report the aggregate information.

Perhaps most important, WestEd will hold a focus group of participating BTSA programs to assess their views of the strengths, weaknesses, and utility of the database.

The steps in the study of the feasibility of creating and maintaining a statewide database of new teacher knowledge and skills are:

1. Analyze BTSA program files to determine information currently collected related to new teacher knowledge and skills.
2. Identify performance indicators of teacher knowledge and skill, as well as sources of information about them.
3. Determine the feasibility of using indicators based on IIPs and CFASST.
4. Design file format and a secure password-protected World Wide Web-based data entry system.
5. Solicit volunteers from among BTSA projects to pilot test the system.
6. Gather feedback on the system.

The findings from the analysis of entries, as well as a report on the feasibility of instituting a statewide system will be presented on February 1, 2001, and then revised based on CTC/CDE response and resubmitted by March 1, 2001. The report will contain the recommended database design, protocols for data entry, discussion of potential problems, and a recommendation of whether to proceed with a more extensive field test.

### **Task 3: Impact of the Statewide Expansion on the Quality of the BTSA Program**

Since its inception in 1992, BTSA has moved toward the goal of providing support to all new teachers with preliminary credentials. The growth has been in the number of BTSA projects (from 15 in 1992-93 to over 100 in 1999-2000) and new teachers served (from approximately 1,100 in 1992 to an estimated 26,500 in 2000-01). The expansion raises a fundamental question, which is addressed in Task 3:

- What has been the impact of expansion on the quality of the BTSA program?

In 1998-99, SRI conducted case studies of eight local systems of teacher development (defined as a district, its schools, and related teacher development institutions, such as IHEs). The case study districts were at different stages of working with BTSA--some had a long history with BTSA and were expanding to include more beginning teachers, others were in the first year of offering BTSA to a limited number of eligible teachers, while still others were merely planning the program.

The BTSA expansion presented various challenges to districts. For example, some districts experienced problems in enlisting sufficient numbers of support providers. In others, BTSA programs became increasingly regimented as they moved beyond serving volunteer beginning teachers to those who are required to enter the program. In addition, the increased number of new teachers served exacerbated the challenge of matching support providers and beginning teachers by grade level, subject matter, school building, and track in year-round schools. Such challenges may affect the quality of the program and have impacts beyond the program itself.

Understanding the impact of BTSA expansion, then, requires attention to the following issues:

- Numbers and workload of available support providers;
- Appropriate matches between support provider and beginning teacher teaching assignment;
- Frequency and intensity of support provider/beginning teacher interaction;
- Effect of expansion on other state, school, and district efforts to develop high performing learning communities.

## ***Data Collection***

This evaluation will use multiple data collection methods to address the issues associated with the various impacts of BTSA expansion. Further, the evaluation of the effects of expansion build on and take advantage of SRI's ongoing work for the Teaching and California's Future initiative, thereby enhancing the information available. Specifically, SRI will carry out eight case studies, a survey of current teachers, and a survey of principals, all of which are components of the initiative. SRI will also draw on WestEd's survey of 400 second- and third-year teachers (see Task 4) for the study. An additional survey, of new credential recipients, is a potential source of data for this evaluation, pending feasibility as parts of the larger initiative. SRI will draw on these sources of data in carrying out the analysis of the effects of expansion on BTSA quality and outside the program.

### **Case Studies**

SRI will conduct eight in-depth case studies, involving interviews and focus groups (when feasible), to comprehensively examine local BTSA programs. The case studies expand on research that is part of SRI's extensive examination of the Status of Teaching in California, which will provide important contextual data for the BTSA evaluation. In this section, we describe the criteria for selecting the case study districts, preparations for site visits, and the evaluation activities at each site.

### **Site Selection**

The eight case study sites will be selected based on criteria related both to the geographic and socio-cultural diversity of California and BTSA program considerations. The eight case studies will include four urban, two rural, and two suburban sites.

Across the sites, we will include both districts/consortia with a long history of participation in BTSA (with a particular focus on ones that have expanded the number of beginning teachers served), and sites that represent the expansion of BTSA into new districts or consortia.

## **Preparation for Site Visits**

To prepare for the site visits, SRI will develop interview and focus group protocols to be used by all site visitors. A separate protocol will be prepared for each type of respondent and include the questions that they are most likely to answer. However, we think it is important to ask similar questions of some groups of respondents to gain understanding from various perspectives. For example, both beginning teachers and support providers will be asked about the frequency and intensity of interactions, as well as their satisfaction with them. Figure 2 illustrates the case study respondents and the topics to be included in protocols for them.

**Figure 2***Task Three Case Studies**Interview Topics by Type of Respondent*

<b>Interview Topics</b>	<b>Beginning Teacher</b>	<b>Recent Participants</b>	<b>Support Provider</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>District BTSA Administrator</b>	<b>District Professional Development Administrator</b>	<b>Local BTSA Consortium Director or Trainer</b>
<b>Incidence</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Types of BTSA activities engaged in</li> <li>• Frequency of activities</li> </ul>	X X	X X	X X		X X		X X
<b>Quality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectiveness of various kinds of activities</li> <li>• Barriers to achieving high quality activities</li> <li>• Strategies for achieving high quality activities</li> </ul>	X X X	X X X	X X X	X	X X	X X	X X
<b>Impact</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On beginning teacher's practice</li> <li>• On support provider's teaching practice</li> </ul>	X	X	X X	X X	X X		

**Figure 2 (continued)**

*Task Three Case Studies*

*Interview Topics by Type of Respondent*

<b>Interview Topics</b>	<b>Beginning Teacher</b>	<b>Recent Participants</b>	<b>Support Provider</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>District BTSA Administrator</b>	<b>District Professional Development Administrator</b>	<b>Local BTSA Consortium Director or Trainer</b>
Program expansion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evolution of local BTSA program, activities, and supporting structure</li> <li>• Changes in numbers and types of teachers served</li> <li>• Ability to engage non-volunteer beginning teachers</li> <li>• Changes in quality of local BTSA program and activities</li> </ul>				X	X	X	X
Capacity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges in attaining adequate number of support providers</li> <li>• Incentives and supports necessary for support providers</li> <li>• Ability to maintain support provider to beginning teacher ratio</li> </ul>			X	X	X	X	X
Local coordination and integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services for all new teachers</li> <li>• Fit with local professional strategy and evaluation practices</li> </ul>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Prior to entering the field, SRI will train site visitors to ensure that they all have a common understanding of the questions, issues, and goals for the visit. For example, they will share understanding of the importance of providing detailed descriptions of program activities, as well as gaining understanding of how the program evolved during the period of expansion. Site visitors will note questions on the protocols that are designed to identify impacts on the quality of the program due to expansion as well as those that focus on other impacts of BTSA at the site. Further, they will note strategies for addressing program quality.

### **Site Visit Processes**

The eight case studies will be components of SRI's ongoing Teaching and California's Future initiative (2000-01). For the initiative, site visitors will spend between 10 and 20 days on site, with an additional 3 days focused exclusively on BTSA-related issues. By leveraging work on the initiative, we will have a deeper understanding of the local context for teacher development and be able to place the BTSA expansion effort and its implications within that context. For example, we will have a grasp of supply and demand issues, particularly the district's ability to attract qualified novice teachers compared to experienced or emergency teachers among its new hires. The nature of the teaching force a district can attract influences the relative size and complexity of the induction task for that district.

For the BTSA evaluation, we will interview the following number (on average) and types of individuals:

- beginning teachers currently participating in BTSA (N=4-8)
- past BTSA participants and non-participants (N=2-4)
- support providers (N=4-8)
- principals (N=5)
- district-level BTSA administrator (N=1)
- related district-level professional development coordinators (N=1-2)
- individuals representing related partnerships with local higher education programs (N=1-2)
- any BTSA consortium director or trainers (N=1)

Interviews with support providers, principals, local BTSA directors, and any local BTSA consortium trainer or director will provide historical perspectives on how the BTSA program has evolved since its inception in the district, the challenges the local program faces in expansion, and strategies for addressing their challenges. SRI plans to conduct these site visits beginning in Fall 2000 through Winter 2001.

#### Survey of Second- and Third-Year Teachers

When appropriate, SRI will draw on WestEd's survey of 400 second- and third-year teachers as a source of information about the support received by teachers who participated in BTSA as compared to those who did not. WestEd will administer the survey within Task 4, with data collection in the Spring, 2001. The survey is more fully described in Task 4.

#### Survey of Current Teachers

SRI is conducting a survey of 1,000 current teachers, comprising a representative sample of California's teachers, as part of the broader study of teacher development in the state. Similar to SRI's 1999 survey for *the Status of the Teaching Profession*, it will ask teachers about their preparation, induction, and professional development. For the purposes of this evaluation, we will create a special section to isolate those teachers who were support providers in the BTSA program. We will ask them why they chose to serve as support providers, what other leadership roles they have and the amount of time these roles require, how much time they spend on their BTSA duties, and the number of beginning teachers they support. In addition, the survey section will ask questions about whether their experiences as a support provider enhance their own teaching, and whether they intend to continue to be a support provider in future years. We will field this survey in the fall of 2000.

#### Principal Survey

In addition, the Teaching and California's Future initiative (2000-01) includes a survey of 1000 principals focused on recruitment, teacher preparation, and workplace conditions. It will ask principals about its impact on any staff members, whether beginning teachers or support providers, and on the school.

## **Other Potential Data Collection Methods**

SRI's ongoing Teaching and California's Future initiative (2000-01) offers two other potential sources of data. Pending funding and exploration of logistics, SRI has proposed to conduct a survey of approximately 300 newly credential 300 teachers. The survey would primarily focus on issues of supply and demand and recruiting. However, it is possible to include items on BTSA experiences for those who currently are participating in a BTSA program.

### *Analysis*

In this section we briefly describe the analytical process to answer the research questions of this task.

After conducting the case study site visits, site visitors will review interview notes and write a detailed summary according to a common debriefing form. The debriefing form will be organized by analytic categories, roughly following the outlines for interview protocols. Site visitors will use the forms to provide specific evidence that supports or rejects assertions about the expansion of the BTSA program and the impact on program quality. The debriefing reports serve as the first stage of case study analysis, requiring site visitors to summarize and marshal data to form a coherent story about BTSA implementation in each site. Team members read all case study reports, and then perform cross-case analysis collaboratively. Although SRI will be primarily responsible for the analysis under this task, SRI will work closely with WestEd to integrate data from SRI's teacher development system case studies with data from WestEd's case studies of BTSA program vertical "slices" (See Task 5). When appropriate, SRI and WestEd will collaborate in analysis meetings and exchange documents for review. We anticipate that we will have at least one full-day cross-case analysis meeting for all site visitors.

During cross-case analysis, researchers look for consistent trends across cases, assessing whether preliminary assertions used in the case study debriefing form are accurate based on data from each site. We modify the assertions as necessary, noting both examples and counter-examples and their explanations. We proceed systematically through each analytic topic in the debriefing form, matching the topics of the interview protocols, i.e., incidence of BTSA activities, quality of BTSA activities, impact of BTSA activities, program expansion, capacity, and local coordination and integration.

To complement case study data, quantitative data from the survey of second- and third-year teachers will yield a more generalizable description of local BTSA programs and their activities. Integrating the case study data will provide explanations for changes in program

quality, how districts and schools are managing the expansion of BTSA, and suggest promising practices to improve the quality.

To examine the effects of BTSA expansion beyond the program, SRI will again analyze a combination of case study and survey data. A review of BTSA program data will give us the most accurate number of new teachers being served by BTSA. The data can be compared with previous statewide data from CERC to show the exact size of the expansion. In addition, our current teacher survey will indicate the number of new teachers served by induction programs other than BTSA. These data, collected in Fall 2000, can be compared with data from SRI's previous survey that asked teachers about the induction they received in 1997-98. Using these two methods, we can describe the overall scope of the expansion and determine not only how many teachers are participating in BTSA, but also how many more are receiving any sort of induction support.

During the cross-site analysis meetings, site visitors will also examine qualitative data using different units of analyses. Specifically, researchers will analyze impacts on beginning teachers, support providers, schools, and districts separately, drawing on all of the available qualitative and quantitative data. For example, we will use evidence from beginning teachers, support providers, and principals, as well as relevant survey and observation data to assess the impact of BTSA activities on beginning teacher practices. Similarly, we will use multiple perspectives to inform an analysis of the impact on support providers' teaching. Auxiliary analyses such as impacts on school communities will rely on evidence from all teachers, principals, and perhaps professional development administrators who can inform whether discourse about practice is different beyond the immediate group of BTSA participants. The district will be the final unit of analysis, for which researchers will present mainly case study data from teachers, principals, and district administrators to examine issues such as improved coordination between professional development services and teacher evaluation.

### ***Reporting***

SRI International, with input from WestEd, will prepare and submit a draft report for Tasks 3 A and B by April 1, 2001. Based on timely CCTC/CDE feedback, SRI will make revisions and submit a final report by May 1, 2001. The final report for Task 3 will contain data from the case studies, survey of current teachers and principals, and of newly credentialed teachers proposed by SRI, if available. As appropriate, information from the survey of 400 teachers fielded in Task 4 and the Task 5 case studies will be integrated into the Final Report for the evaluation, delivered in draft form December 1, 2001.

## **Task 4: Effect of Program Participation on Increasing the Knowledge and Skills of Beginning Teachers**

New teachers entering the classroom for the first time frequently believe they lack all the necessary knowledge and skills for success. Data from past studies indicate that induction support can lead to improved practice and comfort with the teaching role. Consequently, the evaluation will examine the effect of participation in the expanded BTSA on new teachers' knowledge and skills. Task 4 focuses on the question:

- What is the effect of participating in BTSA on increasing teachers' knowledge and skills?

In order to answer the questions, WestEd will use three major sources of data, a survey of 400 second and third year teachers who participated in BTSA programs and observations of a subset of 40 of those teachers. In addition, we will administer a short survey of student attitudes toward school, their teachers, and learning in the classrooms of the BTSA teachers we observe and seek SAT 9 data, when available, for the schools and teachers involved in BTSA programs. Each of the approaches is discussed below.

### *Survey of BTSA and Comparison Teachers*

WestEd proposes to survey 400 teachers who began teaching in the academic years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000, and who at the time of the survey will have been in the classroom for two or three years. This section presents our plans for the survey of BTSA and comparison teachers.

### **Drawing the Sample**

The sample will be drawn using the following steps:

1. Using a matrix developed to record information from project files, we will sample BTSA projects according to some key characteristics. These include:
  - a. Project maturity--including at least two from the early BTSA funding, one from the special urban funding cycle, and the remainder from later projects;
  - b. Elementary and secondary school-focused projects--with more elementary school projects, reflecting the composition of BTSA projects in the state;
  - c. Projects that have support providers on site and those that use providers from other venues; and

2. Single-district and multiple district or consortium projects.
3. Selecting rural, urban, and suburban projects from within each program type, with the exception of the special funding group in the project maturity category.
4. Using a database of Consent forms, randomly sampling 200 BTSA teachers according to the district-by-type matrix.

Drawing the sample of comparison teachers will also involve multiple steps in order to ensure that the two groups of teachers face similar contexts. We know that school context, including the demographics of the student body, number of new teachers in the school, and prior school achievement have a major influence on whether new teachers find the challenges of the first year overwhelming or feel supported in their work. Consequently, we will seek non-BTSA new teachers from schools that are similar to the ones in which BTSA teachers work. To do so, we will identify similar districts as comparisons, recognizing that there are real differences in LEAs that chose to create BTSA projects (at least in the early years) and those that have not yet elected to do so. Using API school-level data from the schools in which the BTSA teachers work, we will identify similar schools in the comparison districts.

### **Designing the Survey Instrument**

WestEd will build the survey instrument based on the existing California Educational Research Cooperative (CERC) survey and the survey developed by SWRL for the California New Teacher Project (CNTP). The questions will focus primarily on outcomes, and will refer to types of support in a generic way. Although the questions will be asked without specific reference to BTSA, to enable non-participants to respond, a large number will replicate those included in the CERC survey, thereby facilitating comparison with statewide BTSA data.

### **Structure of the Survey Instrument**

1. Personal background
  - a. Gender
  - b. Age group
  - c. Highest level of education
  - d. Ethnicity
  - e. Teaching assignment (for each of three years, mark all that are applicable)

- f. Number of classes taught each year (for secondary teachers)
  - g. Years of teaching experience
  - h. Type of teaching credential
2. School context
- a. Grades included in the school
  - b. Student ethnicity
  - c. Percent of students who are English Language Learners
  - d. API
  - e. Students on free or reduced price lunch
3. Type of support received
- a. Individual support provider: formal, informal; similarity of teaching assignment; on site or from other venue; frequency of interaction
  - b. Special professional development opportunities for new teachers: Topics listed
  - c. Participation in general professional development opportunities: Topics listed
  - d. Opportunity to observe other teachers
4. Self-assessment of current knowledge and skill
- a. Classroom organization and management
  - b. Design instruction
  - c. Deliver instruction
  - d. Use subject matter knowledge
  - e. Diagnose and evaluate students
  - f. Engage with colleagues, parents, and students
  - g. Understand how the school and administration work
  - h. Teach successfully
5. Self-assessment of probable classroom longevity

## 6. General comments about teaching and support

We will compare the responses of BTSA participants with those from non-participating new teachers. The analyses will enable us to identify the types of support new teachers associate with positive outcomes, whether provided through BTSA or through other means, including informally. As we note below, we will code questionnaires so that the analysis can compare BTSA and non-BTSA teachers, and also analyze all new teacher responses.

WestEd will develop the survey instrument in Fall, 2000 and receive feedback from CTC/CDE in November, 2000. The revised instrument will be field tested in late November, 2000. After further revision, we will administer the survey in late January, 2001 to allow sufficient time for two follow-up reminders in the Spring.

### **Distributing the Questionnaire**

WestEd will mail the questionnaire directly to respondents at their schools, with a cover letter that emphasizes the value of the responses, the uses to which the analyses will be put, and a date for return. Further, we will offer to share the survey results with all participants who desire a report. The cover letter will include assurances of confidentiality. We will enclose a stamped envelope so the questionnaire can be returned to WestEd in Los Alamitos.

Each questionnaire will include an identifier, which indicates whether the respondent is a BTSA participant or not, as well as a unique code to facilitate follow up. Two weeks following the date indicated in the letter, we will send a postcard reminder to non-respondents, with one additional follow-up, with a clean copy of the survey attached, after two more weeks. The second follow-up will include a letter indicating that we understand that teachers are busy and have lots of paper, so we are sending another copy to facilitate completion.

As responses are received, WestEd will log the returns and immediately begin data entry into SPSS files for analysis.

### ***Teacher Observations***

Forty of the teachers included in the survey sample will also be observed, using an instrument that addresses the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Although we have not made a final selection of an instrument, pending a conversation with the Advisory Committee we proposed (Gary Estes, Beatrice Ward, and Larry Picus), we have narrowed the selection to two. The first is the ETS PATHWISE Classroom Observation system, which is part of its PRAXIS system, and the second is the adaptation of the Horizon Research, Inc. observation instruments that WestEd developed for the California Academic Partnership Program.

Both systems come with training materials, including tapes of classroom vignettes, so WestEd can train sufficient numbers of observers to a high level of reliability. Further, both approaches address the capacities identified in the *Framework of Knowledge, Skills and Abilities for Beginning Teachers*:

- Engage and support all students in learning;
- Understand and organize subject matter knowledge for student learning;
- Assess student learning;
- Create and maintain an effective learning environment; and
- Plan instruction and design learning experiences for all students.

(The *Framework* includes an additional capacity, to develop as a professional educator, but this cannot be assessed in a classroom observation.)

The HRI instrument, as adapted by WestEd, is organized around the following concepts:

- Classroom demographics, including number of students, classroom resources, space, and room arrangement;
- Classroom characteristics, including publicly posted rubrics, student self-evaluation, other evaluation indicators;
- Teacher role, including role as assister, explainer, monitor, and manager;
- Indicators of student involvement, knowledge of standards, and persistence;
- Student/teacher structure within task, including demonstrations, scaffolding, independent student work;
- Activity structure, including teacher led, small group collaborative activities, student choice, meaningful hands-on activities; and
- Assessment, including informal questioning, performance task, student self-assessment, student assessment of other students, formal testing.

The PATHWISE instrument assesses teacher knowledge and skills in four domains:

- Organizing content knowledge for student learning;
- Creating an environment for student learning;
- Teaching for student learning; and

- Teacher professionalism.

We will meet with the Advisory Committee in October and present the strengths and weaknesses of the two systems as they apply to this evaluation. Following the meeting, we will select the instrument and arrange for training for WestEd staff. During November we will recruit observers from IHEs, retired teachers, and others throughout the state, with training scheduled for January, 2001 so we can schedule classroom observations during the Spring (February through April, 2001).

In addition to gathering reliability data during training, we will further assure reliability during the observations by pairing an observer with a WestEd staff member during a sample of observations. If there are differences in how the two rate the teacher, we will ask the observer to return for further training, and, if necessary, replace him or her with a more reliable observer.

The subset of teachers will be randomly sampled, and we will telephone the school principal to explain whom we wish to approach and why they were selected, seeking administrative support for our efforts. We will then telephone the teachers to explain the purposes of the two observations and how long they will take (for secondary schools, a class period; for elementary schools, approximately 45 minutes). In addition, we will show them the brief student survey and ask them to allow us to administer it. The observation schedule takes into account the time of year in which teachers may be preparing students for the SAT9 so we can see how the teachers actually carry out instruction. Nonetheless, we anticipate that some number of teachers will refuse our request because they are over-burdened with observations and other perceived intrusions. We will use random sampling to replace teachers who do not want to be observed.

### ***Other Data Collection***

In addition to survey and observation data, WestEd proposes to collect data from students. As teachers agree to be observed, we will ask them to distribute parent permissions for students to engage in a survey. WestEd has developed a consent form for the California Healthy Kids survey, which will be adapted for this study. The observer will visit the classroom a week prior to the second observation to distribute the consent forms, and request that they be returned within 5 days. Then, at the end of the second observation, the survey will be distributed to those students who have returned the consent forms, and they will complete them.

WestEd has developed a survey of student attitudes that it is using in another study, which takes approximately five minutes for students in grades three through eight to complete. We plan to adapt that instrument for the BTSA evaluation. The questionnaire asks students to assess:

- Their own engagement in content
- Their knowledge of standards by which they will be evaluated
- Their learning of important concepts and skills
- The variety of activities in which they are engaged

In addition, we will explore whether CDE or school administrators will provide classroom-level SAT9 data for the teachers in the survey. We will promise confidentiality and report data only in the aggregate, BTSA teachers at elementary levels compared to non-BTSA teachers; secondary level BTSA teachers as compared to non-BTSA teachers. If we receive the information, we will analyze differences in student achievement.

### ***Data Analysis and Report Writing***

The data from the surveys and observations will be analyzed beginning in early May, 2001. The draft report of the effects of BTSA on teacher knowledge and skills will be delivered to CTC/CDE by August 1, 2001, and submitted in final form based on feedback by September 1, 2001.

### **Task 5: Organizational Structure of the Program at State and Local Levels**

BTSA is a multilevel program. At the state level, BTSA is co-administered by the CTC and CDE, with co-directors from each agency and an Interagency Task Force that manages the program. In addition, since 1998, simultaneously with the major expansion of the number of BTSA projects, five regional Cluster Consultants and six Professional Development Leaders (PDLs) provide a variety of support to local programs, including training in CFASST and developing opportunities for peer support among local projects. Locally, BTSA projects are organized in a variety of ways, with single and multiple district projects, projects led by County Offices of Education, and a few by IHEs. Also at the local level, projects vary in how they are structured, with some having high-level district administrators assigned varying amounts of time to lead BTSA and others with different leadership and staffing arrangements. As BTSA has grown, the organizational structure of BTSA at the state, intermediate, and local levels is challenged to ensure that new teachers experience a positive induction experience.

The key evaluation questions that frame Task 5 are:

- How does the organizational structure of BTSA influence its implementation and quality? How might it be improved?

WestEd will address the questions through 10 case studies, each of which provides a "vertical slice" of BTSA, from the local project through the helping organizations and individuals (Cluster Consultants and PDLs) and the cluster liaisons on the Interagency Task Force to the state BTSA co-directors. We will focus on how BTSA policies and practices create organizational and interorganizational structures and values to support program goals. In its early history, BTSA could create a "community of practice" among the various participants through direct interaction. As the program has grown, however, developing shared understandings of successful approaches to induction support is more challenging. The challenge is made more daunting by the issues raised within local projects, as delineated in Task 3, including finding, preparing, and assigning sufficient support providers who can meet frequently and intensively with new teachers.

In answering the key evaluation questions, WestEd will address related issues:

- How are the current structures perceived by BTSA participants? Are there differences in perception related to roles within the program?
- Are there problem areas shared across local projects, clusters, and the state? Are there shared successes? Are there problem areas related to particular types of districts or experiences with BTSA?
- Have organizations changed to support BTSA program goals? Would additional changes benefit participants and/or the BTSA system?

In the following sections, we describe our process for selecting sites to include in the case studies, preparation for site visits, on-site processes, and our analytic approach.

### *Site Selection*

The proposed case studies begin with the selection of 10 BTSA projects and trace through the organizational structure above them. Our sampling approach is based on concepts of "theoretical sampling" (Corbin & Strauss, 1994), rather than population sampling. Theoretical samples are drawn based on concepts or qualities of interest, and generalization is not to a population but to the concepts or qualities. For example, in BTSA, one program quality of importance to policy makers is the maturity of the program. In Task 3, SRI will be studying the effects of expansion into new districts; in Task 5, we will look at whether new projects need and receive different types of assistance than more mature projects.

In addition, the sites selected will represent a range of program variation, including those who are at the extremes so that we may "learn about unusual conditions or extreme outcomes that are relevant to improving more typical programs" (Patton, 1990, p. 194). Many project

characteristics and activities are similar across almost all sites. BTSA projects are required to offer professional development on classroom management and diversity, for example. Other characteristics vary, including the time commitment of the BTSA project director. Further, programs at the extreme, such as those in large urban districts work under conditions that are not applicable to rural or suburban programs. However, if we find ways these districts have been successful or failed in interesting ways, their experiences can help shape responsive policy measures.

With our goal of maximizing variety, but with a limited number of sites included, we have ranked selection criteria to place priority on some program or site characteristics. To start, we will categorize BTSA projects by cohort:

- Cohort I: The group of 30 projects originally funded in 1992. These projects were funded through competitive proposals.
- Cohort II: The group of urban projects funded in 1996. These projects were identified by CTC/CDE without competitive proposals.
- Cohort III: The remaining projects funded since the beginning of BTSA expansion in 1997.

The projects in each cohort not only represent different lengths of experience in BTSA but also began within different policy environments at the state and local levels.

The second quality influencing site selection is the project's organizational location. The projects in each cohort will be sorted by the organization that houses them, including IHEs, COEs, and local education agencies, and will select one of each type across the cohorts (total of three). In addition to the organizational home of the project, we are interested in differences and similarities between consortium-based programs and programs that serve a single district, so we will ensure that each type is contained in the sample, which may add an additional program.

Because the focus of our concern is organizational, we will select sites in which local program directors have different roles. In one site the director will be a full time BTSA director; in another, the BTSA director will also lead an Intern or Pre-intern program; and in another, the director will be a teacher on leave or a district administrator with multiple roles.

Finally, we will include in the sample projects that with high and low availability of support providers and those with a strong union presence.

After identifying the projects, we will work with SRI to ensure that only three of the sites overlap with the sites included in the Task 3 study of BTSA expansion. Some overlap is desirable so that we can gain the perspective of the Cluster Consultants and Interagency Task Force representatives about issues raised within the local project. On the other hand, SRI's study

conducted as part of the Teaching and California's Future initiative as augmented by the BTSA evaluation will place a burden on the sites they select for case studies, and we do not wish to add to it. Consequently, we decided that minimal overlap is appropriate. Following the site selection process, we will share the sites with CTC/CDE, including appropriate alternative sites to gain further insight into projects that will provide robust information.

In sum, WestEd will identify sites through the following steps:

1. Sort projects into three cohorts so all will be represented in the sample.
2. Select sites with different organizational bases, including LEAs, COEs, and IHEs (3).
3. Check that the sites selected in step 2 include a consortium. If they do not, add 1 consortium site.
4. Select sites with different types of directorships (3).
5. Select one site with sufficient support providers and one that has a more limited pool of potential support providers (2).
6. Select one site with a high level of union involvement (1).
7. Ensure that all Clusters are represented.
8. Match Task 5 site selection with Task 4 site selection so only three districts overlap.
9. Consult with CTC/CDE prior to final selection.

The programs selected will reflect variety in key BTSA project characteristics, enabling us to compare how the organizational structure at the state and local levels affects BTSA operations.

### *Preparing for Site Visits*

WestEd prepares for site visits by developing protocols for each respondent, preparing a site visit manual that includes the protocols and reporting formats as well as the overarching goals for the visits, and holding a training session for all site visitors. We will prepare a separate protocol for each type of respondent, but multiple respondent types may be asked the same questions. We are seeking information about how local project participants perceive the assistance from the Cluster Consultants and PDLs so we will ask both groups to describe activities and their satisfaction with them. Further, a major purpose for the evaluation is to provide CTC and CDE with recommendations about successful approaches to policy and administration of BTSA as it expands to serve all new teachers and become a formal of the credentialing process. Consequently, all protocols will address a common theme--whether project activities and challenges have changes with expansion and the extent to which the assistance structure is useful in meeting the challenges. In addition, we will ask multiple respondent groups about their perceptions of what constitutes "best practice" with regard to the local and state structure for BTSA. Some specific questions in the protocols will be drawn from the findings of Task 3, which will identify problems and successes with increasing the numbers of new teachers served by BTSA.

Our approach to the 10 case studies requires that all site visitors share a common framework and use the protocols. However, some adjustments may be made for particular projects. As an example, in consortium projects, the role of district administrators may be different from in signal-district projects. Site visitors will be prepared to probe for differences among participating administrators' views of the program and whether any issues stem from how the consortium is organized and run. Similarly, although the protocols will be designed to be used in individual interviews, in some cases, it might be appropriate to conduct focus groups of respondents. For example, in a large local project, it may be useful to form a focus group of the support providers.

Figure 3 displays the interview topics and respondent types for the Task Five Case Studies.

**Figure 3**

*Task Five Case Studies*

*Interview Topics by Type of Respondent*

<b>Interview Topics</b>	<b>Local BTSA Director and Staff</b>	<b>District Administrator</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Support Providers</b>	<b>Cluster Consultants and PDLs</b>	<b>Task Force Liaison</b>	<b>Task Force Co-Directors</b>
Activities							
• Description	X	X	X	X	X	X	
• Satisfaction	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Problems experienced and how they were addressed	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Successes experienced	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Issues confronted	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Understanding of BTSA							
• Program priorities	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
• Program goals	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Local Project Structure							
• Description, including changes over time with rationale	X	X	X		X		
• Perceived problems and how they were addressed	X	X	X		X	X	
• Perceptions of "best practice"	X	X	X		X	X	

**Figure 3 (continued)**

*Task Five Case Studies*

*Interview Topics by Type of Respondent*

<b>Interview Topics</b>	<b>Local BTSA Director and Staff</b>	<b>District Administrator</b>	<b>Principal</b>	<b>Support Providers</b>	<b>Cluster Consultants and PDLs</b>	<b>Task Force Liaison</b>	<b>Task Force Co-Directors</b>
Assistance Received							
• Nature of assistance: formal, informal	X			X	X		
• Changes over time, and rationale for the changes	X			X	X		
• Setting(s) in which assistance is received	X			X	X		
• Satisfaction	X			X	X		
• Problems encountered and how addressed	X			X	X	X	X
• Perceptions of best practice	X			X	X	X	X
State Policies							
• How they facilitate induction support	X	X			X	X	X
• Challenges they present for induction support	X	X			X	X	X

### *Site Visit Processes*

Case study "sites" in Task 5 are not geographical entities. We define the case as a project, the assistance providers (Cluster Consultants and PDLs), and state personnel (Task Force Liaisons, Interagency Task Force Co-Directors). Overall, each case study will involve two staff members for three days of on-site time, two of which will focus on the project and one on the Cluster Consultant. Cluster Consultants and PDLs will be interviewed individually. If the same Cluster Consultant serves two or more projects, we will ask for a two-hour block for the interview, but will not ask the questions twice. Rather, we will ask the Cluster Consultant to respond in terms of each of the projects within the same questions. Further, since all the Task Force liaisons are located in Sacramento, we will plan a two-day visit to the capital to interview them, but each interview will focus on the structure and service offered to a sampled project.

To summarize, for each case, we will interview or conduct focus groups with:

- BTSA project director (N=1)
- Other BTSA staff (N=1-4)
- District administrators (N=1-4)
- Principals (N=1-4)
- Support providers (N=5)
- Cluster Consultant (N=1)
- PDLs (N=1)
- Task Force liaison (N=1-2)
- Interagency Task Force Co-Directors (N=2)

Once sites are selected, we will work closely with the Task Force liaison to gain cooperation from the Cluster Consultants and the local projects. We have already scheduled a meeting with the Cluster Consultants, and will use that opportunity to begin to build the positive relationship to ensure the success of the study. Prior to visiting, WestEd will send a letter to the BTSA director describing the study and asking him or her to identify the appropriate people in the district to contact. In addition, we will request assistance in providing a space for interviews or focus groups. A second letter will be sent to the appropriate district leaders, with a

description of the study and a request for cooperation. Working with the BTSA director and the Cluster Consultant, we will arrange a schedule for the site visit.

### *Analysis*

At the conclusion of a site visit, the team completes the site visit report format, which is contained in the fieldwork manual used in training. The site visitors use the format to summarize findings, include quotations from respondents that illustrate key points, and note differences in responses across types of respondents. The visitors re-read interview transcripts, notes, and project documents, summarizing information in the format, which is organized around the issues contained in the conceptual framework. The visitors then prepare an interpretive summary of their findings, using a common format. The interpretive summary contains hypotheses about relationships, such as between project structure and needs for assistance, or size of district and role of Cluster Consultants.

The teams share their reports and interpretive summaries prior to a two-day analytic meeting that includes all site visit staff. During the analytic meeting, staff reviews the reports and interpretive summaries to develop what Yin (1994) calls "causal arguments," both within and across cases. In past projects in which we have used similar methods, we have found that frequently the discussion leads us to reexamine the original data, including project documents and interview transcripts. In the discussion, we seek counter-examples and test alternative interpretations of conceptual relationships. In this way, we can identify patterns across projects, types of structures, and type of assistance provided.

The analysis of the "vertical slice" case studies will identify common and unique problems in state and local policies and procedures for supporting new teachers. In addition, the team will analyze relationships between project structures and local conditions, including differences between single district and consortium projects' ability to serve greater numbers of new teachers, how project organization changes if a district has a large influx of new teachers, and the different ways Cluster Consultants assist projects. Such analyses will include a particular focus on the practices respondents saw as "best," so we can bring data to bear on their perceptions. Some "best practices" may, in fact, not have positive effects, while others accomplish project goals in efficient and meaningful ways.

The conclusion of the analytic meeting is devoted to developing an appropriate outline for the report on state and local organization for BTSA, along with writing assignments among the time.

The report will be delivered by November 1, 2001, and based on CTC and CDE feedback, revised and submitted by December 1, 2001.

## **Final Report**

The Final Report of the evaluation will include the methodologies employed and all deliverables. In addition, to the extent it is appropriate, the Task 3 deliverable will be revised to include data from the Task 4 survey and other available information. We will hold an Advisory Committee meeting to review a draft of the Final Report prior to the date that it is due to CTC and CDE. Following that meeting, the report will be revised and submitted as a Draft Final Report by December 1, 2001, and based on CTC and CDE response, will be completed and submitted in final form by December 31, 2001

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## **CHAPTER 2**

### **Task 2a Report**

#### **The Effect of BTSA on Employment Retention Rates of Participating Teachers**



## INTRODUCTION

In 1992, California established the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) based on the following:

The Legislature finds and declares that the beginning years of a teacher's career are a critical time in which it is necessary that intensive professional development occur. The Legislature recognizes that the public invests heavily in the preparation of prospective teachers, and that more than half of all new teachers leave some California school districts after one or two years in the classroom. Intensive professional development and assessment are necessary to build on the preparation that precedes initial certification, to transform academic preparation into practical success in the classroom, to retain greater numbers of capable beginning teachers, and to remove novices who show little promise as teachers. (Education Code §44279.1)

To carry out the legislative intent, BTSA sponsors (the California Department of Education [CDE] and the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing [CTC]) support a complex program that is intended to assist able new teachers in remaining committed to the profession and becoming confident and proficient teachers. The program includes local BTSA projects, many of which involve consortia of school districts and partnerships with institutions of higher education (IHEs) and/or County Offices of Education (COEs). In addition, Cluster Consultants (CCs) provide assistance to BTSA programs:

- In designing, implementing, refining, and evaluating their teacher induction program;
- In building the capacity to provide professional development for all personnel involved in the implementation of teacher induction programs, including beginning teachers, support providers, and administrators;
- By disseminating information on teacher induction programs to interested participants within the cluster; and
- By collaborating with other consultants statewide and with state administrative staff to ensure ongoing program improvement (Education Code §44279.1).

California's well-articulated approach to teacher induction has evolved based on research about the early years of teaching, including the results of a pilot project, the California New

Teachers Project (CNTTP). As a result, it is frequently cited as a model for the early stages of a professional development system that assists teachers throughout their careers.

Although BTSA was designed for beginning teachers who have completed their professional preparation, BTSA programs have been allowed to serve individuals teaching under emergency permits in districts with large numbers of such personnel. Since the creation of the Pre-Intern program, local projects have been encouraged to move beginners who are seeking qualification to that program, which is specifically designed for their needs. As a result, the number of such people served by BTSA has been greatly reduced. Nonetheless, in 1999-2000, many emergency permit teachers remained in BTSA programs and are included in the analyses in this report. California school staff teaching under emergency certificates have traditionally exhibited low rates of retention and have been concentrated in urban schools serving students with low socioeconomic status (SES).

The current Independent Evaluation of BTSA, conducted by WestEd in conjunction with SRI International, is a response to the continuously changing policy environment for teacher induction. First, BTSA has increased in both size and scope. Once a fairly small program with projects that competed for funding, BTSA now encompasses virtually the entire state and all new teachers. Issues arise, then, as to whether program quality is being maintained and whether the expanded BTSA program is having the same impact on retention as it did earlier. Issues related to expansion will increase as SB2042 is fully implemented, and BTSA becomes responsible for professional credentialing.

At the same time, the number of teachers needed for California's classrooms is increasing. According to projections by the National Center for Education Statistics, the number of classroom teachers in elementary and secondary classrooms in the United States will increase from 2.8 million in 1991 to 3.3 million in 2002 (NCES, 1991, cited in NCES, 1993, p. 149). The tremendous growth results from increasing student enrollments as well as teacher retirements and turnovers. It represents the largest growth in the demand for teachers in U.S. history (Darling-Hammond, 2000). In California, where class size reduction has greatly exacerbated the teacher shortage, it is estimated that a staggering 287,000 new teachers, averaging about 32,000 each year, will have to be hired between 1999 and 2008 in order to meet the demand (SRI International, 1999). Consequently, it is becoming even more important to retain capable teachers than it had been in the past.

The retention of able teachers is a key goal of most induction programs, especially in areas where teacher shortages are severe. National estimates indicate that first-year teachers who are not in induction programs leave the profession at a rate of 9.3%, and that by their third year of teaching, 23.3% of beginning teachers leave the classroom (NCES, 1997, cited in *Recruiting New Teachers*, 1999). In contrast, the Alabama/Birmingham First-Year Teacher Pilot Program retained

96% of participating first-year teachers, compared with 80% of unsupported teachers (Blackburn, 1977, in Huling-Austin, 1989). In the California New Teacher Project, the precursor to BTSA, 88% of participating first-year teachers remained in the same district the following year, as did 87% of participating second-year teachers. This represents a substantial increase in retention rates compared with the rates found for new teachers in other California districts—81% and 78%, respectively (Ward, Dianda, & van Broekhuizen, 1992).

In commissioning the Independent Evaluation of the BTSA program, the BTSA Task Force, which comprises representatives from CDE and CTC, recognized the issues surrounding collecting and reporting data related to teacher retention. While all BTSA projects conducted and continue to conduct local evaluations tailored to their perceived needs, not all had included information on teacher retention in their reports prior to 1997-98, when they were required to do so. As the BTSA program has grown, new projects are in the process of building the capacity to collect and report retention data.

In order to advance data collection efforts, the current evaluation is approaching the problem of developing solid information about retention in two ways. First, in regard to the effect of BTSA on teacher retention, this report provides information about promising practices that can be more widely adopted by BTSA program directors. Second, a separate report prepared by SRI International will present recommendations for a design of a statewide, career-long system for studying teacher retention.

This report, then, addresses the following questions:

- What is the effect of BTSA on employment retention rates of participating teachers?
- Does the effect of BTSA on employment retention differ in different local contexts, particularly with regard to schools serving high numbers of students in poverty or in urban or rural districts?
- Does the effect of BTSA on employment retention differ based on key program characteristics, specifically the support received by beginning teachers, the maturity of the project, or the size of the project?
- What promising practices can BTSA projects use to enhance their efforts to collect and analyze data related to retention of participating new teachers?

## Overview of the Report

The analyses contained in this report focus on the context in which each BTSA program operates, as well as local BTSA program characteristics. Two contextual factors have been noted in earlier research as having an effect on retention. First, previous findings indicate differences in retention rates based on the degree to which communities served by schools are urban or rural.

Urban schools nationwide educate between 40% and 50% of the students who are not proficient in English, about 50% of minority students, and 40% of the country's low-income students. Schools in urban areas also contend with the lowest levels of student achievement, the highest dropout rates, and a disproportionate percentage of students with special needs. Urban schools are also more likely to fill vacancies with teachers who have less-than-full credentials and require additional on-the-job training. These realities further exacerbate teacher turnover in urban schools. (*The Urban Teacher Challenge*, 2000)

According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and the California Department of Education (1992), teachers in large urban districts in California not supported by the California New Teachers Project stayed in teaching at a rate of 70%, while teachers in rural districts not supported by CNTP were retained at a rate of 50%. In contrast, teachers in urban districts who participated in CNTP had retention rates of 91%, and those in rural districts had rates of 88%. Similarly, Recruiting New Teachers (1999) found in their nationwide survey of urban induction programs that in 57% of reporting districts, participating teachers had retention rates of 90-100%, and that the median retention rate among all reporting participants was 93%. Rural schools without induction support also continue to face problems in retaining new teachers (Bobbitt, Leich, Whitener, & Lynch, 1994). In order to understand if BTSA has been able to retain teachers in areas where attrition rates have typically been high, this report includes retention rates among BTSA programs according to the degree of urbanicity of the communities served by schools in BTSA programs.

Similarly, previous studies of beginning teachers who do not receive support have found lower retention rates in high-poverty areas. Schools in such areas are likely to have students who score lower on the SAT-9, creating additional pressures on new teachers. The rewards and sanctions associated with California's school accountability system are likely to exacerbate these pressures. Such schools are also likely to have fewer experienced teachers, which limits the number and types of informal contacts new teachers have that could lead to greater success (SRI International, 1999). In addition, quality professional development activities and collaborative support from peers is often insufficient in high-poverty schools, presenting additional challenges to new teachers (SRI International, 1999; Garet, Birman, Porter, Desimone, & Herman, 1999).

With support from induction programs, however, retention rates can rise, as was seen in the CNTP study (Ward, Dianda, & van Broekhuizen, 1992). This report includes an examination of retention rates of BTSA participants by an unweighted average of the SES of the students served by the districts in each program to see if BTSA has an impact on the retention of teachers working in high-poverty contexts.

Further, this report includes analyses of program characteristics that may influence new teacher retention. One such characteristic is the amount and type of support from experienced teachers that beginning teachers receive. Darling-Hammond (2000) describes, for example, a number of districts in Ohio and New York that reduced their attrition rates from levels often exceeding 30% to rates of under 5% by providing first-year teachers with expert experienced teacher support. In addition, CNTP found that support for beginning teachers in the form of professional development tailored to their needs, and support from experienced teachers with structured time for interaction reduced attrition rates by two-thirds (Gold, 1996). In order to understand the effect of experienced teacher support on BTSA retention rates, the report includes an analysis based on frequency of various types of contact between support providers and beginning teachers, as well of beginning teachers' assessments of the value of the supports.

In addition, this report focuses on retention rates according to the "maturity" of the programs. One hypothesis was that programs with earlier start dates would learn from their previous efforts, improving their programs and thereby achieving increasingly higher retention rates. Also, the early BTSA programs competed for funding, thereby demonstrating commitment to induction activities. However, the growth of funding for BTSA led to many changes in programs. For example, as local BTSA programs sought to support increasing numbers of teachers, some split off, forming "new" single-district programs and smaller consortia. In addition, the BTSA Task Force developed structures to support local programs designed to ensure consistent quality, including the assistance provided by Cluster Consultants. Consequently, analyses of the effect of program maturity on participant retention must be interpreted carefully.

Finally, programs were analyzed by the numbers of new teachers they serve. This analysis was driven by the report, *Teaching and California's Future* (SRI International, 1999), which raised questions about whether induction programs serving large numbers of teachers could organize themselves and provide meaningful levels of support to new teachers.

This report is organized as follows: Section 2 provides information about the methods used in conducting the analyses, and notes the limitations of the study. Section 3 reports our findings related to retention of new teachers who participated in BTSA programs. Section 4 contains information about promising practices used by projects for systematically collecting data on

teacher retention, and notes the challenges to wider implementation of these practices. The report ends by summarizing our findings and their policy implications.

## METHODS

This report reflects the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods, including analyses of existing data and semi-structured interviews with local BTSA program directors and Cluster Consultants. The analyses of retention of BTSA participants in the teaching profession relied on quantitative analyses, and qualitative methods were used to identify promising practices for collecting retention data.

The quantitative data analyses used data from a variety of sources, including information related to BTSA programs from the BTSA Task Force, the BTSA website, and the most recent annual survey of BTSA programs conducted by the California Education Research Cooperative (CERC). The analyses also drew on data related to school and district characteristics from the California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS) and the Ed-Data website.

### **The Effect of BTSA Participation on Retention**

Questions related to the effect of BTSA on participants remaining in teaching were addressed by creating a database of the 128 projects for which the BTSA Task Force provided retention data, although data from these programs were not consistently usable. The 1999-2000 data analyzed in this report were provided on the standardized form that local programs complete, including information on the number of beginning teachers served, still teaching, retained in district and in the same school, and teaching elsewhere (see Appendix A).<sup>1</sup> The form also includes four reasons for leaving teaching.

In addition to data provided by the Task Force, the database includes information from the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) and the Ed-Data website related to contextual characteristics of the schools and districts served by BTSA programs. It also included responses from beginning teachers from the annual evaluation survey conducted by the California Educational Research Cooperative (CERC), which had a beginning teacher response rate of 61.3% (7,560 of 12,300 new teachers).<sup>2</sup> The database also includes program start dates, which were provided to us by BTSA Cluster Consultants.

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<sup>1</sup> Although we also received data for first-year BTSA teachers for 1998-99, these data were not used in the analyses as they included only about half of the current programs.

<sup>2</sup> Although the CERC survey also includes data from support providers, site administrators, and other BTSA staff, this report includes only data from beginning teachers.

In sum, the database includes the following entries:

- Project name
- Project start date (number of years in operation)
- Number of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers served by the program
- Number of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers still in the profession
- Number of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers still in the district
- Number of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year teachers still in the school
- Retention in teaching (percentage)
- Retention in the district (percentage)
- Retention in the school (percentage)
- An unweighted average percent free/reduced price meals to serve as an indicator of the socioeconomic status of students in districts served by the BTSA program
- A construct based on an average frequency of various types of supports provided to beginning teachers, and one that reflects the perceived value of those supports
- A construct representing the "urbanicity" of the region served by BTSA program

### *Limitations*

The analyses are limited in a variety of ways. Perhaps most important, data are not reported at the same analytic level in each of the sources. For example, data related to retention from the Task Force are reported at the level of the local BTSA program, with consortia often including multiple and diverse districts. Data from CBEDS and the Ed-Data website, on the other hand, are reported at the school and district levels. Further, not all schools actually employ beginning teachers, and CBEDS, Ed-Data, and BTSA do not identify the individual schools that have new teachers. As a result, because not all schools that comprise a region will necessarily be served by a BTSA program, the analyses of some of the variables such as socioeconomic status and degree of urbanization could potentially underestimate or overestimate what the variable is designed to represent.

Further, the local program data provided by BTSA reflected the growth of the number of projects and increased attention to data collection. For example, 46 projects were so new that they could only serve first-year teachers, and another group of projects had chosen to concentrate on first-year teachers until the state provided financial support for all first- and second-year teachers. Although analyses of second-year teachers were conducted, those of first-year BTs were more complete. The most complete analyses could be done for first-year BTs. Although similar analyses were conducted for second-year teachers, the sample sizes were smaller. In addition, the "reasons for leaving teaching" spaces were blank for about half the second-year teachers. Consequently, our report on why teachers left after their second year is quite tentative. Data that appeared erroneous, e.g., subtotals that exceeded the total were eliminated from all analyses. A total of 125 programs were included in the analyses, although the number of programs in a particular analysis varied depending on the completeness of the data.

### *Procedures for Quantitative Analysis*

The analyses of the effect of BTSA on employment retention rates of participating teachers included analyses of the relationship of retention to factors in the context in which the BTs taught. First, percentages of "free/reduced price meals," drawn from the Ed-Data website were used as indicators of SES, as is common practice in educational research. Such data, however, were only partially satisfactory as measures for many BTSA programs, since Ed-Data percentages are reported in district profiles, while many BTSA projects are multiple-district consortia. For such projects, an unweighted average was taken across districts within each consortium. The most recent data available on the website—for most districts, the 1998-99 academic year, and for a few districts, 1999-00—were used in this report. A small number of districts did not report the number of students receiving free/reduced price meals, usually the County Offices of Education (generally comprising special education, juvenile/community, and alternative schools). They were omitted in calculating the means of the consortia.

Another contextual variable of interest, based on past research on teacher retention, is that of degree of urbanization of the community served by a school. The measure for degree of urbanization was provided using CBEDS reports based on NCES classifications. They are:

- Large Cities: A large city is a central city with a population greater than or equal to 250,000.
- Mid-size Cities: A mid-size city is a city with a population less than 250,000.

- Urban fringes of Large Cities: An urban fringe of a large city is any area within the incorporated boundaries of a large city and defined as urban by the Census Bureau.
- Urban fringes of Mid-size Cities: An urban fringe of a mid-sized city is any area within the incorporated boundaries of a mid-sized city and defined as urban by the Census Bureau.
- Large Towns: A large town is an incorporated area of Census designated areas with a population greater than or equal to 25,000.
- Small Towns: A small town is an incorporated area of Census designated area with a population less than 25,000 and greater than or equal to 2,500.
- Rural: A rural area is any incorporated area, Census designated area, or territory designated as rural by the Census Bureau (CBEDS, 2000).

These categories are reported on the school level, which then must be aggregated to the local BTSA program level. Because of the nature of the data, this report includes three derived categories in addition to those identified by CBEDS. The derived categories are: Large City Metropolitan Area (including Large City and Large City Urban Fringe); Mid-size City Metropolitan Area (including Mid-size City and Mid-size City Urban Fringe); and Rural Area (including Large Town, Small Town, and Rural).

Besides the two contextual factors of SES and urbanicity, the analyses of retention explored program characteristics of interest, based either on prior research or policy concerns of the BTSA Task Force. These included a construct based on the average frequency of a variety of supports provided to BTs by support providers (SPs), the BTs perceived value of this support, the longevity of the local program, and the number of BTs served.

The analysis of BT support draws from data available in the CERC survey pertaining to the frequency of BT and SP engagement in various types of support activities. While the CERC data do not provide a direct measure of BT to SP interaction, they do provide a closer proxy of interaction than the BT:SP ratio, which may not necessarily reflect the intensity of support that a beginning teacher receives. High ratios, for example, may reflect full-time SPs who are able to provide a great deal of support, perhaps more than a part-time SP with half the number of BTs.

The measure for the average frequency of support was calculated by taking a mean of the BT responses to 15 of the 18 types of support activities referenced in the question, “How often

engaged in each activity below...?” from the 1999-2000 CERC survey.<sup>3</sup> (The survey questions are included in Appendix B). In addition, the CERC survey asks BTs the value they place on each type of support, measuring the perceptions of the teachers and not those of the SPs or other BTSA participants. A mean perceived value of the 15 activities was analyzed in relation to retention.

The last set of analyses performed deals with the relationship between maturity of programs and retention. Information about the maturity of projects was gathered from the Cluster Consultants.

### *Interviews*

This report also includes information about promising practices that BTSA program directors use to collect data related to retention. The identification of the practices relied on semi-structured telephone interviews with six BTSA program directors and three CCs. The program directors were identified by the BTSA Task Force as having developed rather substantial procedures for collecting retention data. The CCs were interviewed in order to provide a broader view of issues related to data collection in their regions. Interviewees were asked to describe their data collection systems, the challenges they had encountered in the collection of retention information, and how they overcame these obstacles.

All interviews were recorded and transcribed. Researchers then conducted a content analysis of the interviews, drawing out common themes, as well as other pertinent comments. The content of the interviews was coded by subject matter and organized accordingly (best practices, challenges, etc.). Table 3 summarizes the research questions, data sources, and methods for the study.

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<sup>3</sup> The frequency of supports to beginning teachers drew upon the following survey question and responses from CERC’s 2000 Evaluation Report from 119 BTSA programs: How often engaged in each activity below (Question 16, A – R)? There were 18 possible activities, including “Other,” that beginning teachers rated the frequency of their engagement. Possible responses included: 1 = Never; 2 = Once/Twice; 3 = Every 2 - 3 Months; 4 = Monthly; 5 = Weekly. The indicator of “Frequency of Support” only included those activities that measured direct interactions between the support provider and the beginning teachers, resulting in the inclusion of 15 activities. The sum of these 15 activities was divided by 15 to achieve a mean for “Frequency of Support.” The 3 categories that were not included were: “Other;” “SP prepared or sent materials to BT;” and, “SP network with other BTSA participants.” “Frequency of Support” could not be determined for 9 BTSA programs due to either missing data or inconsistencies between program names or identities.

**Table 3***Summary of Questions, Sources, and Methods*

Research Question	Sources	Methods
What is the impact of BTSA on retention rates?	CCTC, CBEDS, CERC survey, Cluster Consultants, BTSA website	SPSS quantitative analyses
What is the relationship between retention and SES, urbanicity, frequency and value of support between SP and BT, and maturity of project?		
What are "best practices" of retention data collection systems?	Cluster Consultants, Project Directors	Semi-structured phone interviews, content analysis of interviews

## EFFECT OF BTSA ON EMPLOYMENT RETENTION OF PARTICIPATING TEACHERS

This section presents the analyses of the effect of BTSA on employment retention of participating teachers. It begins with cross-program data related to retention, including an analysis of the reasons that teachers reported leaving the profession. It then turns to analyses that allow judgment about how well BTSA is performing as compared to findings from earlier research, as well as program success in confronting current challenges.

### Retention Rates

Retention rates are high across all BTSA programs. Retention in the profession for first-year beginning teachers included two outlier programs with retention rates of 66.7% and 70.7%, and the remainder ranged from 80% to 100%. The retention rate was calculated by dividing the number of teachers still in the teaching profession, district, and school at the end of the year by the total number of teachers served by each program. Retention rates were calculated separately for first-year and second-year BTSA teachers.

**Table 4**

*Descriptive Statistics of Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School Across BTSA Programs (Average Across BTSA Programs)<sup>4</sup>*

Descriptive Statistics		Program N - Valid	Program N- Missing Cases	Mean	Median	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
First Year	Profession	125	3	92.83	93.85	5.45	66.67	100
	District	117	11	87.13	87.5	7.04	62.5	100
	School	103	25	83.65	84.48	9.83	41.46	98.81
Second Year	Profession	102	26	92.71	94.39	8.35	38.46	100
	District	66	62	85.59	88.89	13.89	30	100
	School	63	65	81.01	84.34	15.32	25	100

<sup>4</sup> The program N differs for reporting retention in the profession, district, or school because programs reported data unevenly. As can be seen, they were most likely to report on retention in the profession, and least likely to report on retention in the same school. Retention rates were calculated as an average of retention rates across BTSA programs.

As Table 4 indicates, retention in the profession both at the end of the first and second year of BTSA participation is high. The mean retention rate of programs for first-year teachers is 92.83%, and for second year beginning teachers, 92.71%. In addition, the mean retention rate for programs for first-year teachers remaining in the district is also high (87.13%), but somewhat lower than for remaining in the profession.

Another way of looking at the relationship between BTSA participation and retention is to calculate retention percentages for the total number of BTs served by all BTSA programs. Table 5 displays retention rates across BTSA. Because little difference existed in the outcomes of the two analytic approaches, the remainder of this report relies on the results displayed in Table 4.

**Table 5**  
*Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School Across BTSA Programs (Collapsed Statistic)<sup>5</sup>*

Descriptive Statistics		Total Teachers Served	Total Teachers Remaining	Number of Programs	Mean
First-Year BT	Profession	15,791	14,746	125	93.4
	District	13,462	11,726	117	87.1
	School	10,920	9,152	103	83.8
Second-Year BT	Profession	9,153	8,547	102	93.4
	District	4,786	4,135	66	86.4
	School	4,399	3,555	63	80.8

Although the rate for first-year teachers is close to national estimates of 9.3% leaving, BTSA seems to have a major effect on retention of second-year teachers, 23.3% of whom NCES estimates will leave prior to their third year.

### Reasons for Leaving

The standardized form from each local BTSA program includes data on the number of teachers who left their teaching positions, with four categories of reasons for their departure: 1) non-reelect, 2) personal, 3) changing profession, and 4) other/unknown.

The reasons for leaving included in the data provided by the CTC are seen in Table 6. These figures are percentages of the total number of teachers who left teaching (e.g., of the 6.4% of first-year teachers not retained, 37% were non-reelected). The smallest percentages of both

<sup>5</sup> Retention rates were calculated by creating a total number for BT1s and BT2s served, as well as a total number of BTs remaining in the profession, district, or school. Programs with missing data were not included in the analysis.

first- and second-year teachers, 11.37% and 8.33%, respectively, left teaching to pursue a different profession.

**Table 6**  
*Reasons for Leaving*

	% of Total No Longer Teaching	<b>Selected Reasons Beginning Teachers Left Teaching</b>				
		% Non Re-elect	% Personal	% Change Profession	% Other/ Unknown	Program N <sup>6</sup>
1 <sup>st</sup> -yr. BTs	6.37	36.97	28.01	11.37	23.65	100
2 <sup>nd</sup> -yr. BTs	7.36	30.17	23.28	8.33	38.22	54

The "reasons for leaving" data are difficult to interpret. First, the categories are not clean. One purpose of BTSA is to counsel out beginning teachers who do not hold promise of becoming capable educators, which is one reason that retention rates of 100% are neither expected nor desired. Teachers who cite "personal" reasons may, in fact, have been counseled out of the profession, or teachers who predicted that they would not be reelected may indicate that they are changing professions. Further, the categories are quite broad. For example, some individuals listing "personal" reasons may, in fact, be reacting to salaries or the working environment. Finally, the large numbers included in "other/unknown" leave questions about the reasons BTs are leaving. These issues are discussed in greater detail in Section 4 through the Cluster Consultant interviews.

**Contextual Influences**

As prior research indicates, new teachers without support are likely to leave urban, rural, and high poverty schools and districts at greater rates than do teachers in schools in other communities. Consequently, analyses were conducted relating retention of BTSA participants to these contextual factors.

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<sup>6</sup> Program N differs because more programs reported data related to first-year BTs than they did related to second-year BTs.

### *Socioeconomic Status of Students*

The socioeconomic status of the students served by each BTSA program was derived from the percent of students who receive free and reduced price meals within the participating districts. For consortium programs, an unweighted average across the member districts was calculated. The SES indicator was derived for 127 out of the 128 programs because information about the schools served by one program was missing. Three of the 127 programs did not have usable retention data; therefore, only 124 programs are included in the analysis for SES.

Table 7 displays the correlation between SES and retention rates for first- and second-year teachers across BTSA programs. A significant correlation exists between SES and retention rates in the profession for first-year beginning teachers, where the higher the percentage of students on free or reduced price meals (or the lower the SES indicator score), the higher the retention rate ( $r=0.232$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

**Table 7**  
*Correlation Matrix for SES (% of Students on Free/Reduced Price Meals) and Retention Rates Across BTSA Programs*

Correlations by SES	First-Year Teachers			Second-Year Teachers		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N
Profession	0.232	0.010 **	124	0.081	0.42	102
District	0.074	0.43	116	0.074	0.55	66
School	0.05	0.62	102	0.066	0.61	63

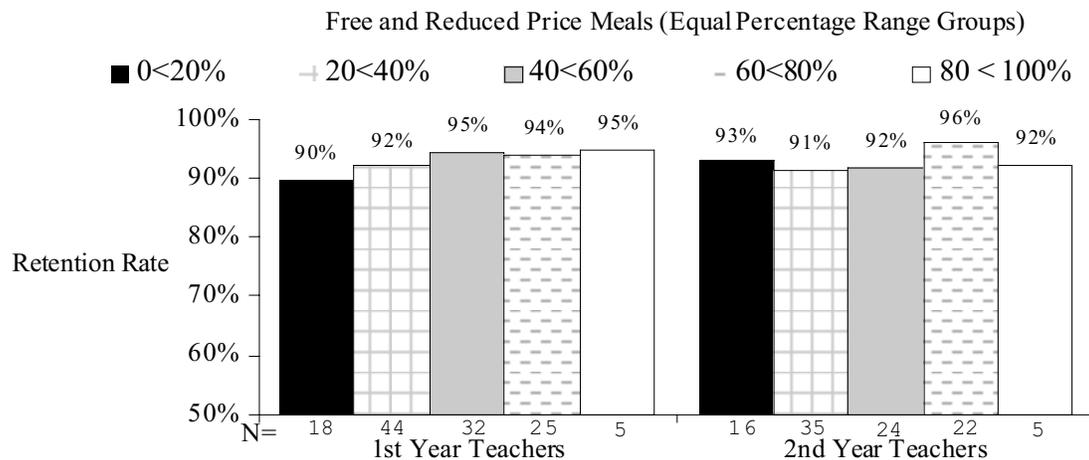
\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Using five equal percentage range groups simplified analyses and indicated differences among programs serving similar populations. In the exhibits that follow, equal percentage range groups are displayed from the highest number of students receiving free or reduced price meals (lowest SES) to the lowest (highest SES). The great variability across districts served by many programs makes this a crude measure of the local BTSA program-level SES. Retention rates are reported at the local program level, requiring some aggregation of school- and district-level SES data in order to determine whether BTSA support has a differential effect on BTs in schools serving large numbers of students living in poverty and those who serve more advantaged students. Based on the averages, the majority (or 82%) of BTSA programs serve between 20 to 79.9% of students on free or reduced price meals (see Table 8).

**Table 8***Frequency Distribution of SES (Free/Reduced Price Meals) Across BTSA Programs*

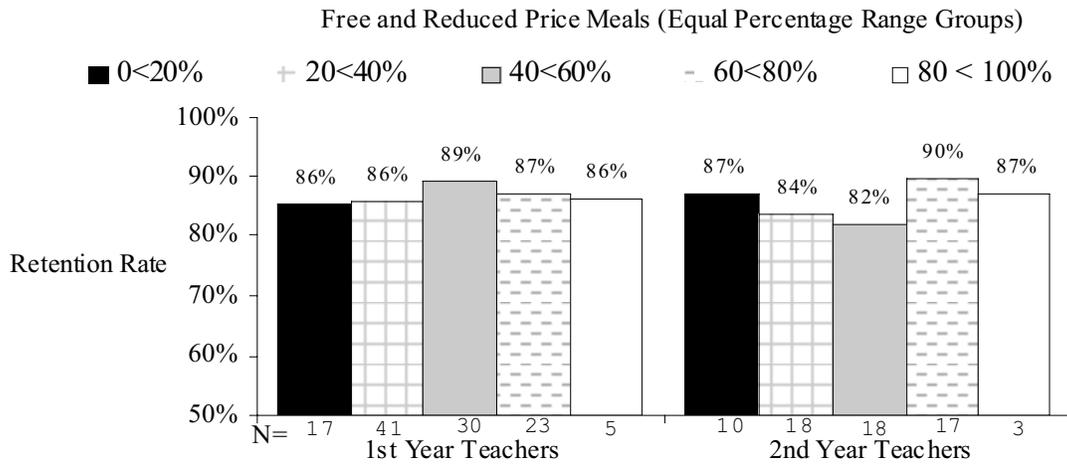
Free/Reduced Meals (Equal Percentage Range Groups)	Frequency	Percent of Total
80 - 100	5	3.94
60 - 79.99	26	20.47
40 - 59.99	32	25.20
20 - 39.99	46	36.22
0 - 19.99	18	14.17
Total	127	100.00

Moreover, the differences in retention rates in the profession among programs grouped in equal SES percentage ranges were statistically significant (ANOVA:  $F=3.221$ ;  $p=.015$ ). For example, programs with 80 to 100% of their students on free and reduced price meals had a retention rate of 94.9%, while those programs with less than 20% of their students on free and reduced price meals had a retention rate of 89.7% (see Figures 1, 2, and 3).

**Figure 4***Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the Profession by SES (Equal Percentage Range Groups)*

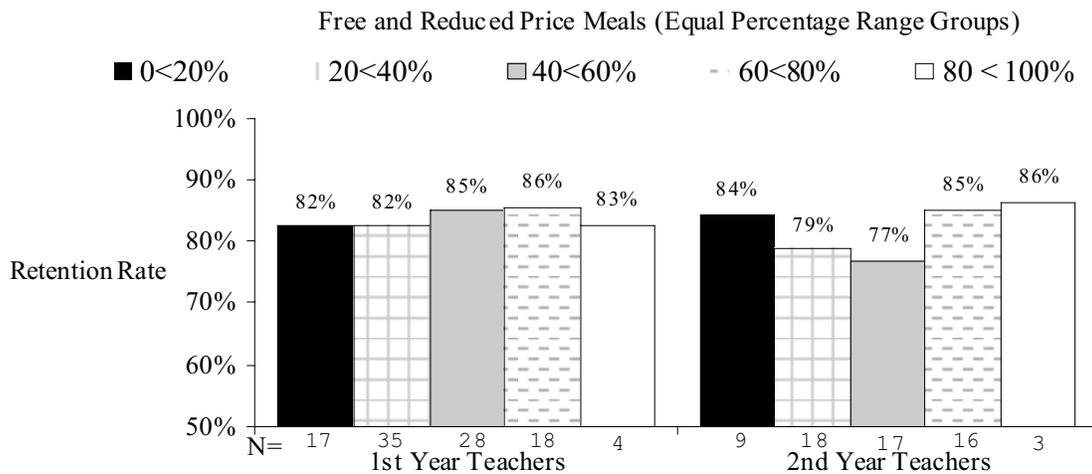
**Figure 5**

*Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the District by SES (Equal Percentage Range Groups)*



**Figure 6**

*Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the School by SES (Equal Percentage Range Groups)*



The relationship between SES and the remaining retention variables—retention in the district for first-year teachers, retention in the profession for second-year teachers, retention in the district for second-year teachers, and retention in school for first- and second-year teachers—were not statistically significant. While the correlation coefficients are in the same

direction, the relationships are weaker between retention and SES. In sum, our results indicate a limited relationship between SES and retention at the program level in the direction of higher retention in programs serving low-SES students.

### *Degree of Urbanization*

Developing an indicator for the level of urbanization of the schools served by BTSA programs was challenging. Unlike the percent of free or reduced price meals, the urbanization definitions found in CBEDS comprise the categorical scheme used by NCES, and the categories do not range from more populous to less populous. For example, an Urban Fringe of a Large City (category 3) may be smaller than the Urban Fringe of a Mid-size City (category 4). Consequently, creating averages across programs would be misleading. Instead, programs were categorized according to modal characteristics.

In developing the categories, the following decision rules were used:

1. Any program with 70% of the schools in a single category was classified as that category.
2. Any program with 70% of the schools in a combination of Large City and Urban Fringe, Large City was classified as Large City Metropolitan Area.
3. Any program with 70% of the schools in a combination of Mid-size City and Urban Fringe, Mid-Size city was classified as Mid-size Metropolitan Area.
4. Any program with a 70% of schools in a combination of Large Town, Small Town, and Rural was classified as Rural Area.

Table 9 shows the distribution of programs across these categories.

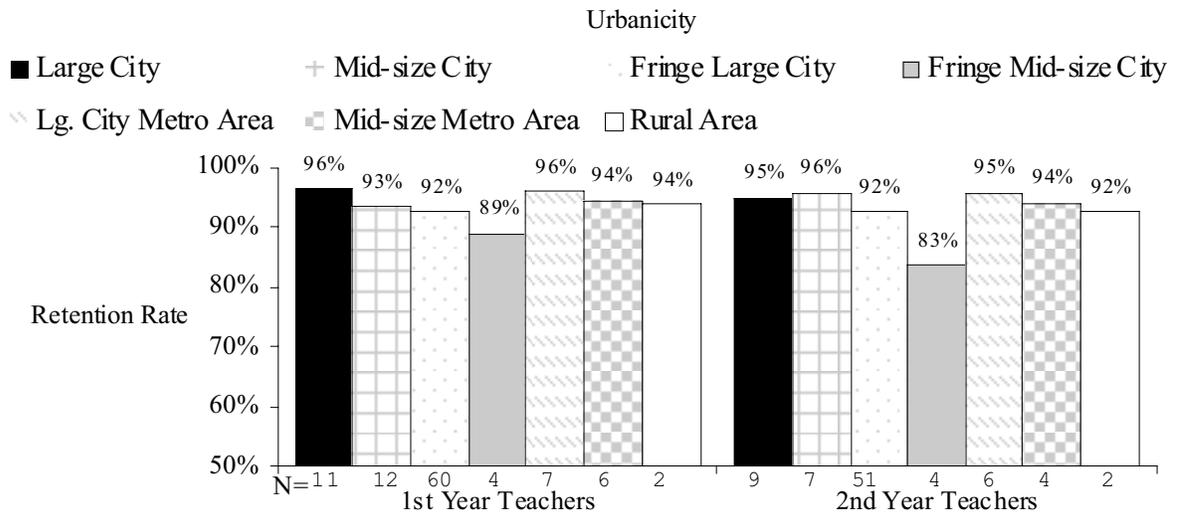
**Table 9**  
*BTSA Programs' Urbanicity/Rurality*

Urban Category	Program Number	Percent
Large City	12	9.4
Mid-size City	12	9.4
Urban Fringe-Large City	60	46.9
Urban Fringe-Mid-size City	4	3.1
Large City Metropolitan Area	7	5.5
Mid-size City Metropolitan Area	6	4.7
Rural Area	2	1.6
Missing Programs	25	19.5
Total	128	100.0

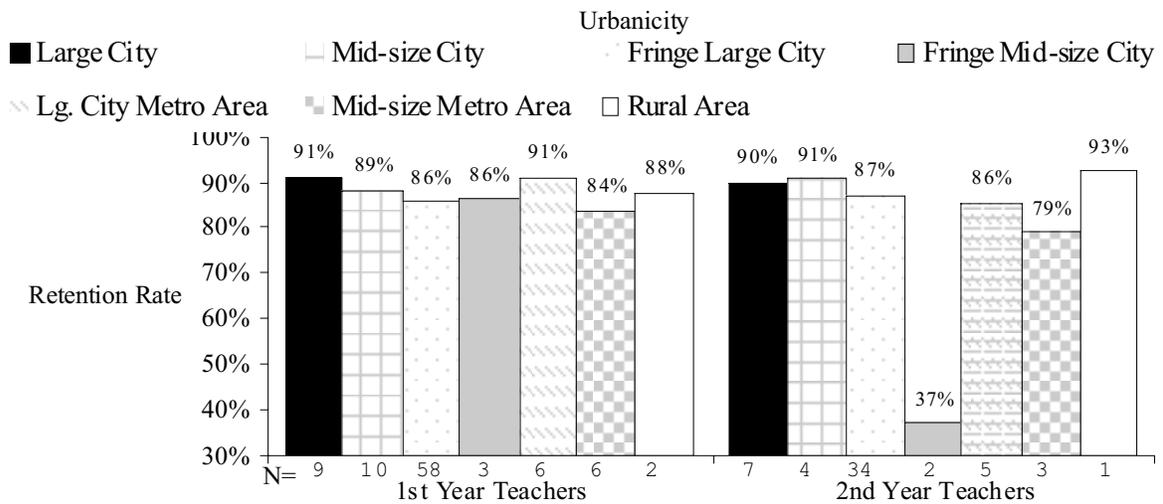
Twenty-five programs were not classified for one of two reasons. First, the CBEDS database did not categorize schools from nine programs. CBEDS gets the classifications from NCES, and it may take one to two years to classify a school, particularly in areas with large demographic changes. Second, the remaining programs had schools that were spread fairly evenly across categories so no modal descriptor would be accurate.

Figure 7 shows the mean retention rates for first- and second- year teachers in the profession, by degree of urbanicity. Figure 8 shows the same information for retention in the district. And Figure 9 shows retention rates by urbanicity at the school level.

**Figure 7**  
*Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the Profession by Degree of Urbanicity*

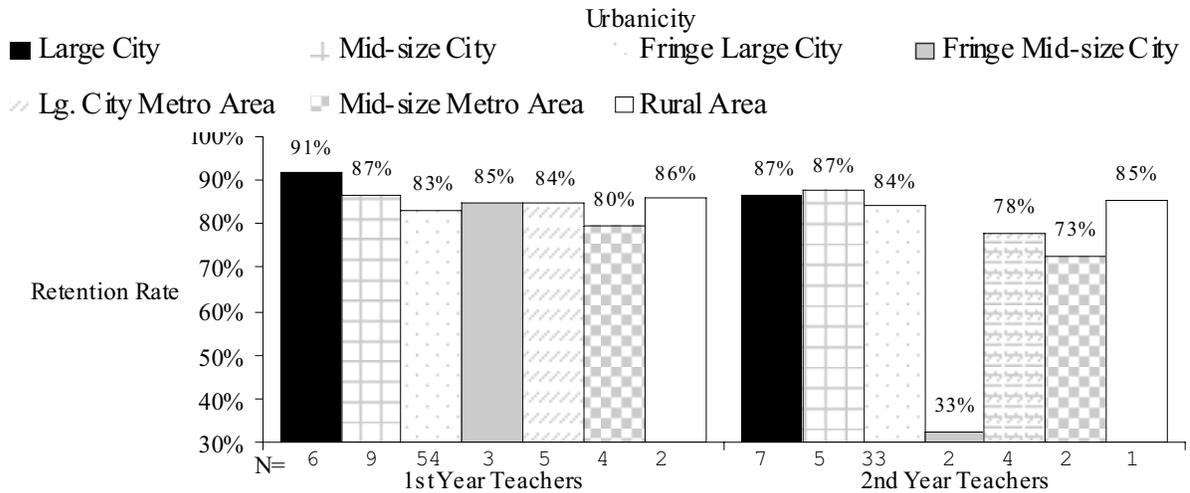


**Figure 8**  
*Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the District by Degree of Urbanicity*



**Figure 9**

*Mean Retention Rates for First- and Second-Year Teachers in the School by Degree of Urbanicity*



The differences in retention rates by urbanicity/rurality do not display a pattern, although retention in the district and school for Mid-size City Fringe for second-year BTs is low. However, care should be taken in interpreting this finding because of the differences in the number of programs reporting retention for second-year teachers in districts and schools from the number reporting other retention data.

### **Program Characteristics**

In addition to analyses related to the context in which BTSA programs operate, this report includes analyses of the relationship of program characteristics to retention. The analyses of the effect of frequency of a variety of support between SPs and BTs, the BTs perceived value of the support from the SPs, the maturity of the program, and the size of the local program are reported in this section.

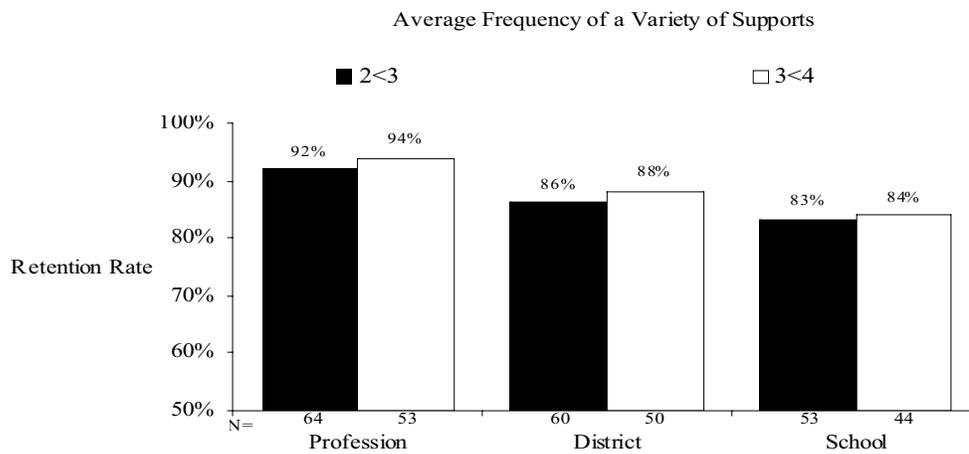
#### *Average Frequency and Perceived Value of a Variety of Supports*

Past research (Ward, Dianda, & van Broekhuizen, 1992) indicates that the frequency of interaction between the beginning teacher and support provider is related to retention. The CERC survey provided the data for 119 BTSA programs for the average frequency of a variety of types of support. The remaining programs were not included in the CERC data, reflecting changes in BTSA programs from combinations and split-offs.

The average frequency of support across the 15 different interactions between SP and BT was 2.94 (about once every two to three months) for 119 BTSA programs. There was little variation across programs on this construct. For example, 55.5% of the programs (N=66) had scores ranging from 2.00-2.99 (1-2 times a year to once every two to three months), and the remaining 44.5% (N=53) had scores ranging from 3.00-3.99 (once every two to three months to monthly). This organization of data facilitated analysis of the relationship of retention rates and the average amount of reported interaction between SPs and BTs (see Figures 10 and 11).

**Figure 10**

Mean Retention Rates for First-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Average Frequency of a Variety of Supports



**Figure 11**

Mean Retention Rates for Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Average Frequency of a Variety of Supports

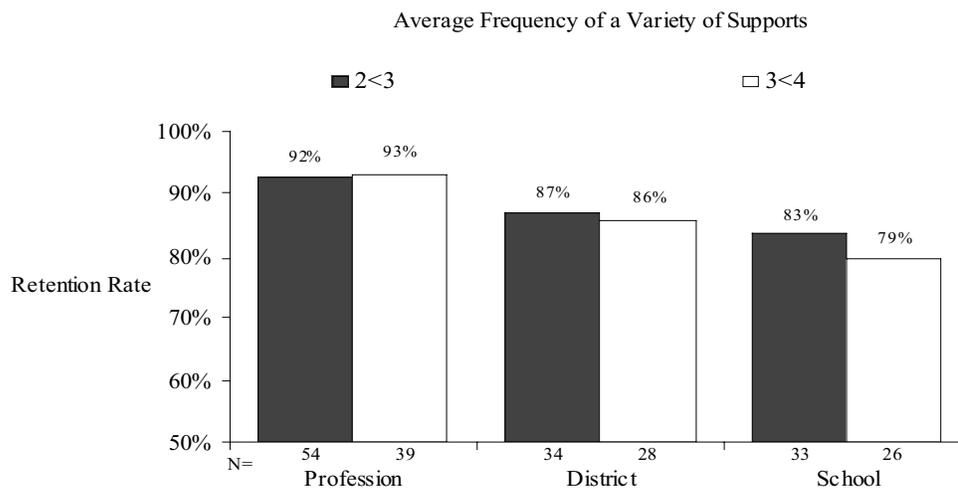


Table 10 shows the correlations between frequency of support and retention in the profession, district and school for first- and second-year BTs. None of the correlations have a probability of less than .05, although the relationship between frequency of support and retention in the profession for first-year teachers approached statistical significance.

**Table 10**

*Correlation Matrix for Retention Rates and Frequency of a Variety of Supports between SPs and BTs Across BTSA Programs*

Correlation Data by BT Year	First Year			Second Year		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N
In the Profession	0.176	0.057	117	0.056	0.595	93
In the District	0.157	0.102	110	-0.04	0.764	62
In the School	0.033	.749	97	-0.15	.255	59

The CERC survey also queries beginning teachers about how they perceive the value of each type of support. Using the same 15 activities as above, a mean perceived value of support was calculated. A statistically significant relationship was found between perceived value of supports and first-year teachers' retention in the profession and the district.

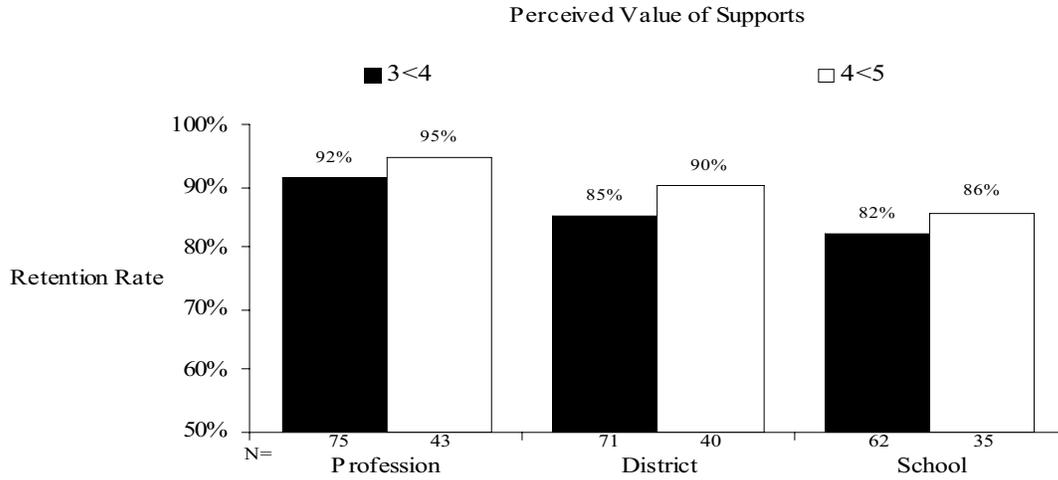
**Table 11**

*Correlation Matrix for Retention Rates and Perceived Value of Supports between SPs and BTs Across BTSA Programs*

Correlation Data by BT Year	First Year			Second Year		
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2-tailed)	Program N
In the Profession	0.267	0.003	118	0.103	0.321	94
In the District	0.318	0.001	111	0.262	0.038	63
In the School	.167	.103	97	0.140	.286	60

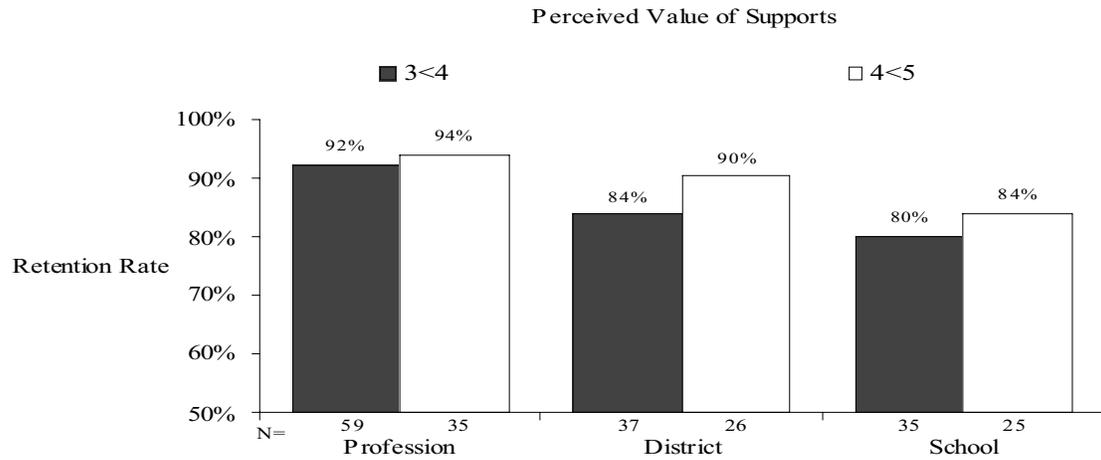
**Figure 12**

*Mean Retention Rates for First-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Mean of Perceived Value of Supports*



**Figure 13**

*Mean Retention Rates for Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Mean of Perceived Value of Supports*



### *Length of Operation of BTSA Program*

In order to collect information about the start date for each BTSA program, WestEd staff contacted each BTSA Cluster Consultant, yielding data for all but three BTSA programs. The majority of the BTSA programs (69%) were founded within the past three years (see Table 12). Another 23% of BTSA programs commenced operations between 1992-1995; i.e., start dates ranged from 1992-93, 1993-94, to 1994-95. The remaining 8%, or 10 BTSA programs, were founded in 1995-96, 1996-97, or 1997-98.

**Table 12**

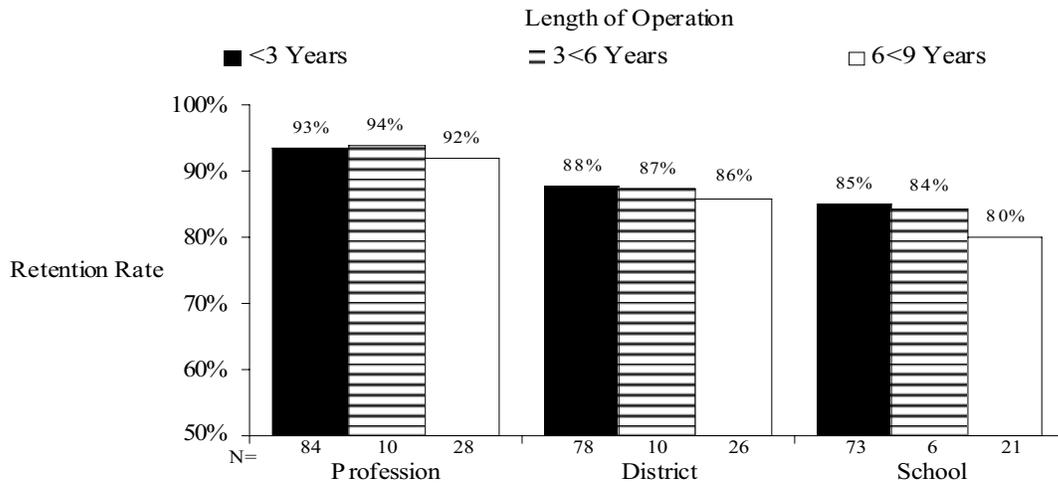
*Frequency Distribution of Length of Operation (Start Date) Across BTSA Programs*

Start Date	Frequency	Percent of Total
00-01	3	2.4
99-00	43	34.4
98-99	40	32.0
97-98	7	5.6
96-97	2	1.6
95-96	1	0.8
94-95	6	4.8
93-94	17	13.6
92-93	6	4.8
Total	125	100.0

No statistically significant relationships were found between length of operation and retention rates for first- or second-year teachers (see Figures 14 and 15). Programs initiated between 1995-98 (N=10) overall had slightly higher retention rates for second-year BTs, but the differences were not statistically significant.

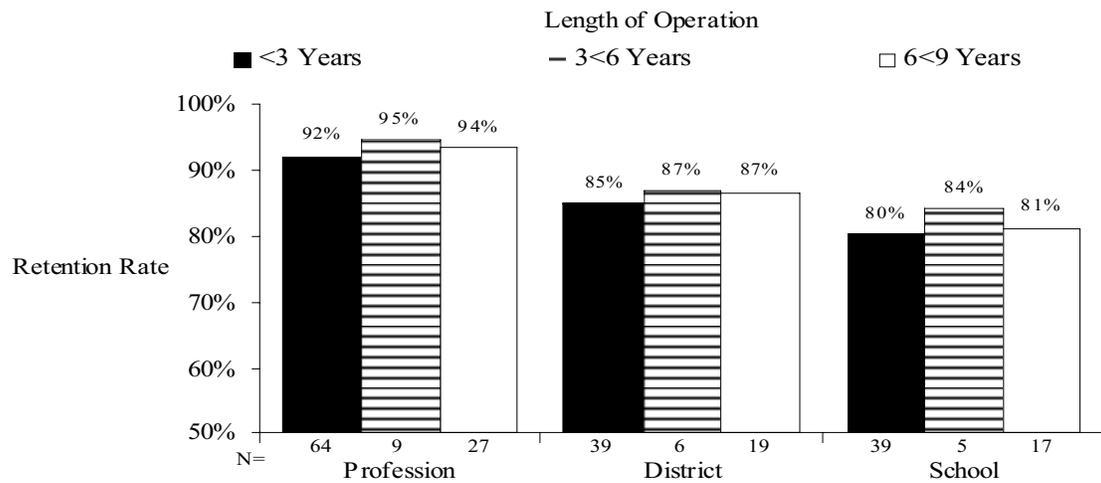
**Figure 14**

*Mean Retention Rates for First-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Length of Operation*



**Figure 15**

*Mean Retention Rates for Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Length of Operation*



The lack of a statistically significant relationship between program maturity and retention can be interpreted as indicating that BTSA maintains high retention rates in the face of rapid expansion.

### *Size of the Program*

In addition to expanding the number of programs participating in BTSA, the number of teachers within local programs has grown. Therefore, another indicator related to BTSA's impact on retention is whether programs serving large numbers of BTs are as effective as those with a smaller group of new teachers.

BTSA program size was calculated by adding the number of first- and second-year beginning teachers served during the 1999-2000 year. Twenty-eight, or 22%, of the programs are not included in this analysis because they lacked data on second-year BTs, and it was impossible to tell whether they did not serve second-year BTs or had made an error in data entry. The size of BTSA programs varies greatly, with programs ranging from 47 first- and second-year participants to 1612 participants. Approximately 75% of the BTSA programs serve between 100 to 500 participants (see Table 13). Twenty percent serve fewer than 100 participants and the remaining 5% serve 500 participants or more.

**Table 13**

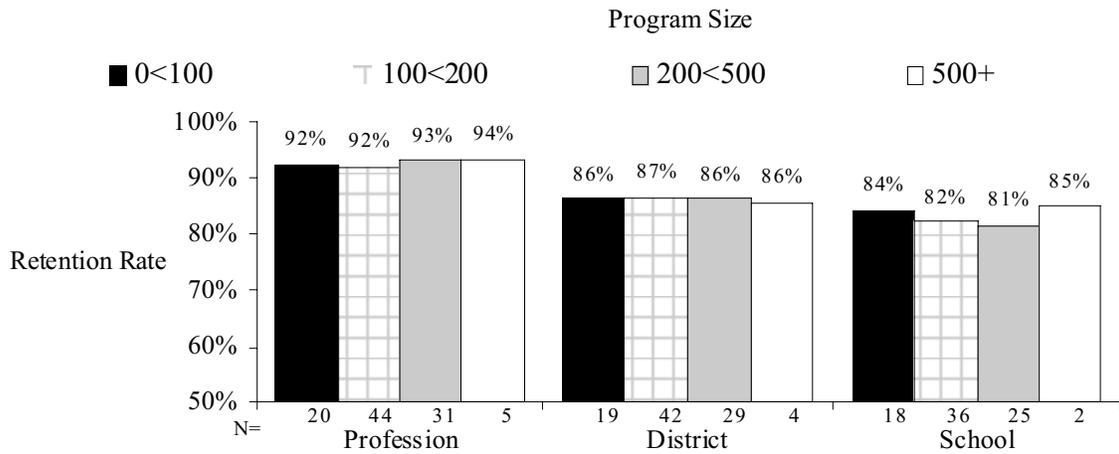
*Frequency Distribution of Program Size (Number of First- and Second-Year Participants) Across BTSA Programs*

Program Size (Range in Numbers)	Frequency	Percent of Total
0 – 99	20	20.0
100 – 199	44	44.0
200 – 499	31	31.0
500 – 999	4	4.0
1000 +	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0

No statistically significant relationships exist between program size and retention rates for first- or second-year teachers (see Figures 16 and 17).

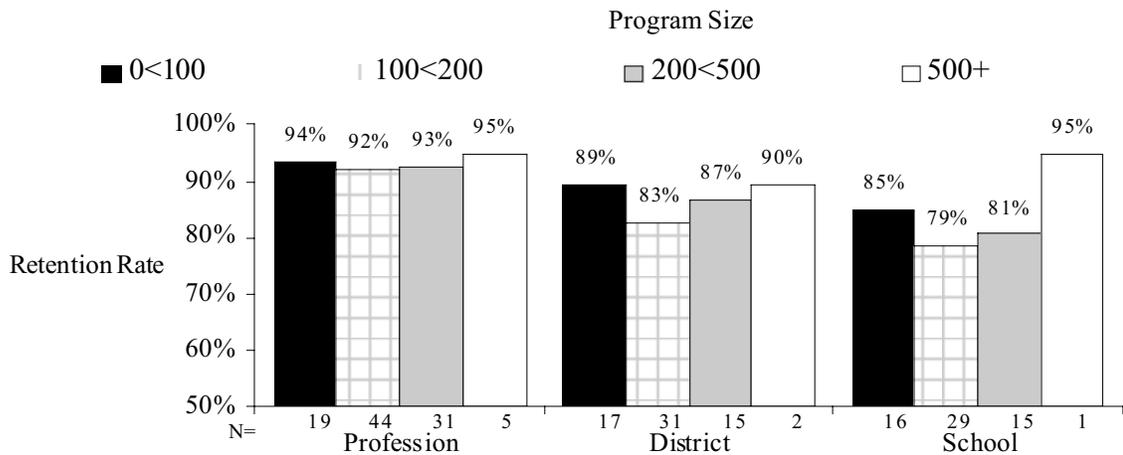
**Figure 16**

*Mean Retention Rates for First-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Program Size*



**Figure 17**

*Mean Retention Rates for Second-Year Teachers in the Profession, District, and School by Program Size*



Both large and small programs provide support that has a positive effect on retention of participants, again indicating that BTSA's impact on retention remains high.

## Conclusion

The effect of BTSA on retention of participating teachers is positive. We found:

- Overall, retention rates are high across all BTSA programs. Retention in the profession for both first- and second-year teachers is approximately 93%. Only two of the projects reported retention rates in the profession for first-year teachers below 80%, while 97 programs reported retention of new teachers between 90% and 100%.
- Beginning teachers in programs with districts serving large percentages of students from poverty backgrounds were *more* likely to remain in teaching than were their peers who taught in more economically advantaged settings. Programs serving high-poverty districts retained an average of 94.94% of first-year teachers in the profession as compared to an average of 89.69% in programs serving low-poverty districts.
- No statistically significant differences in retention were found in regard to degree of urbanization, with rates remaining high in all areas studied.
- No statistically significant differences were found in retention rates in programs providing more frequent forms of support than in others, although the range of support frequency was small. However, the effect of more frequent support on retention in the profession approached significance for first-year teachers. In addition, a statistically significant relationship was found between perceived value of supports and first-year teachers' retention in the profession and the district.
- No differences in retention exist between more mature and newer BTSA programs.
- No differences in retention exist between programs serving different numbers of new teachers.

## PROMISING PRACTICES

BTSA programs<sup>7</sup> have had varying degrees of success in collecting employment retention data on their beginning teachers. Many BTSA programs are relatively new and are developing the capacity to collect and report data. Further, until 1997-98, local projects were not required to collect retention data as part of their evaluations, although a number did so. This section focuses on successful practices implemented by project directors that could be shared so as to increase the system's capacity to report retention data accurately.

Six directors of BTSA programs cited by the BTSA Task Force as having promising procedures in place provided insights into how retention data might be collected more effectively. In addition, three Cluster Consultants offered a broader perspective across programs. Discussions with the directors and consultants explored the practices that programs have implemented to overcome some of the challenges faced in establishing and maintaining data collection systems, as well as problems that continue to confront them, and some of their suggestions for future retention data collection. (See Appendix C for the interview protocols.)

Respondents believe there are three keys to effective data collection. Programs that are successful in collecting retention data:

- Are knowledgeable about how teacher records are maintained, and appreciate the value of collecting retention data;
- Establish relationships and open lines of communication with relevant departments and institutions involved in supporting and maintaining records on teachers; and
- Seek funding and assistance from institutions outside of BTSA, particularly from IHEs, for help in collecting data and conducting retention research.

While all three practices pertain to collecting retention data requested by the state, the third also raises questions about the limitations of retention data related to providing information about the impact of specific aspects of BTSA support on teachers' remaining in or leaving the profession. Each of the three key practices will be discussed below, followed by a discussion of suggestions offered by those interviewed

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<sup>7</sup> All names of BTSA programs, institutions and staff are unidentified to maintain confidentiality.

## **Local BTSA Program Staff Knowledge**

All respondents had something to say about the kinds of knowledge that play a critical role in establishing effective retention data systems. First, they noted that program directors must understand the importance of collecting such data, which Cluster Consultants have stressed. Many directors view BTSA as the implementation of professional development supports for beginning teachers, so it is not surprising that the collection of retention data is not viewed as a high priority by some.

And the awareness level of the directors that it is essential to collect data has been heightened over the last couple of years. (Cluster Consultant A)

I think the retention can be done, and we're starting. I think over time, it's going to improve. I know the last year was better than the year before. And so for me, the way I approach it is, we're building these habits of mind among our project leadership. (Cluster Consultant C)

In addition, how much program directors know about personnel issues, such as the kinds of records on teachers that are maintained, which department and county offices house those records, and the routes by which that information can be obtained all play a large role in whether effective collection systems are established. While some BTSA programs are housed in Human Resource departments, with personnel having great expertise and experience in issues of retention and recruiting, other programs, housed in Curriculum and Instruction, may have personnel whose areas of expertise and knowledge are stronger in the area of teacher professional development, but less strong in gathering retention data.

I have seen a lot of retention data come from the X program, and part of that is because their director has worked in Human Resource and has experience with that. And they do exit and entrance interviews, so that helps. (Cluster Consultant B)

Obviously, in a system like Program Y, where you have a personnel director who's the BTSA director, you're keenly aware that you want to do exit interviews so you know what happens to them. And you know if they're still teaching, and you know what their experience was. That's important to you. So you have a gamut, a continuum, of people who think it is valuable and people who are quite clueless and collect no data. (Cluster Consultant A)

Knowledgeable directors are successful in collecting retention data by using a variety of methods. These methods include surveys systematically sent to district personnel officers asking about the status of their teachers, as well as surveys distributed to all new teachers. They also

include entrance and exit interviews, and a tremendous amount of work, such as sorting through Human Resource and Personnel files; combing through school board meeting minutes in districts that report resignations to the board; and making phone calls to the beginning teachers, their administrators, and other teachers who work at the same school sites.

A number of program directors tapped into the knowledge of coordinators or managers at each school site or district who, in addition to helping in the implementation of the BTSA programs, help inform the BTSA program directors about new teacher hires or departures. In some cases the coordinators/managers are teachers, who range from full-time in the classroom, doing additional work before and after school, to full-time release teachers. In other cases, the coordinators/managers are assistant superintendents.

What I have done is, I have somebody called a New Teacher Site Coordinator at each one of my sites and they assist the principal with implementation of the new teacher project BTSA support plan. So they'll call and say, "Pat is leaving on such and such day, so we're hiring somebody new in." So if there's a change, we can update our database. So that is another way that we do receive that information.... (Program Director E)

As indicated above, some program directors either have the knowledge themselves or enlist the assistance of others to help them establish and maintain databases in which information about participating teachers in their programs is stored. As programs expand and increasing numbers of teachers participate in BTSA programs, there is a growing need for programs to find a systematic way of tracking data on BTSA participants and completers. And some attempts are being made to relate teacher retention to the kinds of supports received.

Then she keeps a database of resignations and we can sort them by first-and second-year teachers. And it's also entered into our database of BTSA participants and we can track that. What we've done this year—I work in curriculum and we've tried to compose a database that will collect lots of different information. So that we can track the history and say, "This teacher received support five years ago. Are they still with us?" Then you can track beyond the two years. We are just starting that this year and then we're also tracking the professional development on this database. So we can say, "They resigned, but did they attend our professional development sessions?" That type of thing. We can kind of start to analyze, "Well, did they not have support," or those kinds of things. (Program Director E)

## Communication and Relationships

Nearly all respondents noted that another key to collecting good retention data is establishing good lines of communication and relations with Human Resource departments. In programs that are struggling to collect such data, the connections are not fully forged, with progress being made with each passing year. The challenge this practice poses to program leadership is not trivial. In many contexts, it requires a shift in paradigms, a change in the culture of the workplace, involving breaking down walls that have traditionally sealed the flow of information from one department to another. It requires that people involved in professional development and personnel speak with one another, and that programs that have long been accustomed to functioning in discrete and separate ways share information about teachers with one another in systematic ways. Forging such relationships and changing work cultures does not take place overnight. It is a process that must be nurtured and encouraged over time in each local context.

In some places, they collaborate greatly but in other places, it's a matter of changing the paradigm. I'm not sure what the approach is, but I do know that there has to be an understanding by those folks in personnel. (Cluster Consultant C)

The local context overrides so many of these things, so sometimes people doing professional development are not people who talk to personnel necessarily. In some districts, it's practically taboo to walk across the hall and talk to somebody. (Cluster Consultant A)

I had a conversation today with our county credentials person and she reminded me again how frustrating it is for her that in many other counties, folks across projects just don't talk to each other. She knows that our working relationship over here is very good. She thinks it's unusual that the BTSA director and the Pre-Intern director actually talk with the credentialing person and they exchange data and try to see who is really eligible for which program. When do they turn into the other category? Somebody has to monitor that. But that means you have to have a county-wide database and share information, which she thought should be the norm but in most counties, it's not. And she's been doing this for like 25 years. It's really weird, people are used to sticking to their own categories. And so, retention falls into that because if you don't know who they were in the first place, or what they needed, or don't properly track them, it will be hard to find them. No strings to tie them to the project or any reason for ongoing service, or any reason for them to fill out a questionnaire after they go. (Cluster Consultant A)

One way in which barriers between departments can be broken is by creating contexts for the relevant parties involved to meet and speak with one another. This promising practice not

only opens the door to communication by bringing people face to face with one another, it can also be used as a platform to bridge the knowledge gap that often exists between those involved in staff development and those involved in Human Resource. As a result, everyone becomes aware of the need for shared information about what happens with teachers as they proceed through BTSA programs and move on in their careers. As one Cluster Consultant noted, the need for all involved in supporting and maintaining teacher records to share information with one another is even greater now that BTSA has become responsible for professional credentialing with the passage of SB2042.

So one of the things we've tried to do most recently is find some excuse, frankly, for BTSA directors to talk to personnel and credentials people. A couple of folks have set up kind of a mini-forum, not a conference, really. They get the personnel directors, for example, from their participating consortia districts, to come together and listen to these new features of the SB2042 and some of the changes coming down. So people can see that not only is there value in talking to folks "across the aisle" but that, in fact, it's essential now because SB2042 puts induction that Level 2 (*sic*) credential in the arena of the BTSA director, not...universities. There really is tremendous need to know the participants very well and to know what happens to them while they're there and on their way out. So it's been a whole new area in development for BTSA directors who typically came from the staff development ranks and did not necessarily understand personnel credentialing, ... how to find people. So it has been a growth process for folks. (Cluster Consultant A)

Some noted that cross-departmental relations are more difficult to forge in consortia than in single district programs for the obvious reason that there are many more departments and people who must be involved in the exchange of information. It was also noted, however, that consortia often have more resources available, and some have creatively used these resources for hiring staff to collect retention data or enlisting the aid of institutions of higher education to help them track this information.

And the BTSA director's success in getting this data depends a lot on the relationships built locally, which then is exacerbated in a consortium, like here with twenty-five school districts, all the range of experience, tradition, and history. (Cluster Consultant B)

Some people had highly developed systems for tracking their own people and that tended to be the individual, single district projects where they had refined it very nicely. The consortia tend to have more trouble with that because they're so large. But they often have more resources. They sometimes can add another staff person to be tracking people down. And some folks that are using university people to track retention data are having some success too. I think Z County is doing that with A University. I think the models are starting to develop there. (Cluster Consultant A)

### **Seeking Outside Help**

BTSA program directors sought outside help in developing information about the impact of their program on teacher retention and tracking teachers over time. Through external assistance, programs were able to gather the more sophisticated data that would enable them to assess the impact of their activities on teachers' decisions to stay in the profession and gather information about more long-term effects of BTSA. The following section includes a discussion of how programs used non-BTSA resources and institutions to support their work.

Many of the respondent program directors noted the limitations of what they are able to learn about the impact of their program on teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the profession from the data that are required by the state. At present, programs complete a standardized retention data form as part of their annual BTSA Program Improvement Plan. The data include the total number of beginning teachers served, the number who continue teaching, and the number teaching in the same district, in the same school, or elsewhere. The form also asks for data on the number of teachers who left their teaching positions, with four categories of reasons for their departure: 1) non-reelect, 2) personal, 3) changing profession, and 4) other/unknown (see Appendix A).

According to the respondents, the categories used to describe reasons for leaving are insufficient for program planning and improvement because they do not include those a school district could address directly, such as dissatisfaction with salaries and working conditions. Merely reporting the numbers of teachers who move to other districts does not provide policy guidance to the district that the teachers left.

And also the categories on the form are not real explicit. For example, one of them is Other Teaching Position. Well, are they going for another teaching position because they're unhappy with the district, or because maybe their assignment was ending and that's just what they chose? So the categories themselves are not real conducive to what we're looking for. (Program Director D)

I think often times, let's say, for example, you have a choice of "I resigned" or "Non-reelect." In most cases, a district will give a beginning teacher an option of resigning or taking a non-reelect. But what's the real reason that that person left? So people will give you things like "my spouse relocated" or "I'm moving," or "the district next door had vacancies and it's closer to my home." There are lots of reasons like that, which are fairly open-ended and fall into certain broad categories. But is that the real reason most people change jobs? Relocation, probably yes. Beyond that, there are lots of little things that go into that decision. And I believe that most of the time it's working conditions and relationships. Because people will travel a long way and put up with a lot if they have a wonderful working environment and great relationships with their co-workers. When that doesn't exist, I think we're much more likely to move, and tell people lots of reasons why we do it, except for those reasons. That's all I'm saying. (Program Director F)

Although most directors agreed that to gain a clear understanding of whether BTSA programs are having an impact on teachers' decisions to remain in teaching, more than a form is needed. Implicit in their responses were some potential changes to the form. For example, from their responses it seems it would be useful to include in the reasons for "leaving teaching" whether salary and/or the working environment was the issue. With that information, BTSA programs could engage in conversations with the district/consortium about the appropriate actions that might help retain more teachers. Or if reasons for leaving the district were included, the BTSA project director could work with district personnel to address the most frequently cited issues.

In addition, many noted that exit interviews of teachers who leave the profession would be highly desirable. Most also remarked that, given their BTSA budgets and the daily constraints on their time, they are not able to do the more labor-intensive research that would provide them with the information that they desire.

We talked about doing that and decided not to because when people leave the district, it's hard to know where they've gone. We talked about it, and then finding those people would be very difficult. We have no way of knowing how they feel about the district. We talked with Human Resource about doing exit interviews, but we don't have the staff to do that right now. We just this year hired 1,200 new teachers, and we're actively recruiting for next year right now. (Program Director D)

Some programs, however, have conducted exit interviews, and have, through other means, such as administering surveys and maintaining thorough district records, gained a better understanding of the relationship between the support provided to teachers and retention decisions that teachers make. These programs have affiliated themselves with centers and

institutions, such as universities, external to BTSA, that conduct or help them conduct the desired research, and they have also obtained additional funding.

Well, basically what I did was I hired somebody to go through all of the district records and sort of ferret out as much as they could, and really scrutinize the information. I believe that's how we've been able to get good information.  
(Program Director C)

And the research component has been very extensive from the very beginning and the links with the institutions of higher ed. A lot of the districts didn't do that. And they're full players. We have at University A, six full professors that are part of our training. They develop and deliver the training to all the support providers. The retention piece is trained really by University B in terms of how we're collecting data and what we're doing with it and the report that they'll get at the district.... I think it's historically something we've had in place from the very beginning and has worked to our advantage. (Program Director A)

I felt like you needed to go way beyond any kind of form or data format, so we did interviews. I hired, through the Y Center, a researcher to go and interview all the teachers that left last year. So I have some of that data in narrative now, which I think is much more useful. But that's not with BTSA money either. With BTSA money, there is not, in my mind, at least in our project, I don't have any extra money to do this kind of work. (Program Director B)

I could never have done the study that we just completed, that we completed about a year ago, if I didn't have a center with a research team and the resources. It took forever. And then we interviewed them all. Because we wanted to find out, we wanted to try and unpack and understand what it is, why they'd stayed, and what contribution, if any, the A Project had made. That's what people really need to get and understand, I think. (Program Director B)

Program directors have also sought outside help in conducting longer-term tracking of teachers who completed the BTSA program. As one director put the challenge:

I have an outside evaluator who helps me draft up a variety of assessment tools and whatnot. And so we made a determined effort last year to try to get at "How much has BTSA impacted your desire to remain in the profession?" And frankly, I wasn't pleased with the results. And maybe it was the way it was worded. You know, I've talked about how we might get at this differently. But what I heard from a lot of people, particularly in their first-and second-years, "Look, I made a decision to go into teaching as a career. And whether I had BTSA or not, I'd be here." And I think that's very true in the first-and second-year. A decision to leave the profession, once in awhile it comes in those first two years, but if you have a support program like BTSA, it probably doesn't happen then nearly as much as in year four of five. And we're not asking those folks because we no longer really have access to them. You know, if they're still with us in a district, we know that they're still teaching, but we really don't have good information. (Program Director F)

Many respondents expressed the view that during the two years that beginning teachers receive direct support through BTSA, they would expect that a high percentage of teachers would continue in the profession. As seen in the analyses in Section 3, this appears to be true. However, the real test of the impact of BTSA, they believe, will come further down the line after teachers leave the program and no longer receive the continuous kinds of support and professional development they had as BTSA participants. Many national studies of teacher retention examine rates at the five-year mark, which is when a drop-off tends to occur in retention rates (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Respondents were interested in knowing whether BTSA will have a long-term impact on teacher retention, and not merely whether BTSA support of current participants helps to boost retention rates temporarily. There are tremendous challenges, however, in tracking BTSA completers, especially if the teachers leave the local districts, as indicated in the following quotation:

At any rate, I said to my coordinators, "I need you to help me with this, and as best you can, to keep track of, you know, who's in your district, if you leave the district and you know where they've gone, is there any way for you to keep track of them?" Well, most of them cannot. It's just, you know, and it's asking too much of them. And there is no personnel set up to track that. So when you call another district, ten times out of eleven, you get the run-around. (Program Director F)

Because of limitations on time and resources, most programs do not track teachers who complete their BTSA program. The key practice common to programs that have been successful in such tracking is enlisting the help, through external funding, of centers and institutions of higher education outside of BTSA, to assist them in conducting this research. The practice is

more common in consortium projects, perhaps because they have more resources available to them to conduct this kind of tracking than do small single district programs.

I have a director of research here at the Y Center, and we've actually put some resources into a company that helps you find people. So it's complicated, but I think it's important.... As part of my Y Center we have a research wing. I don't have the resources in the [BTSA] project budget to carry out any kind of significant retention study. (Program Director B)

### **Suggestions from BTSA Program Personnel**

The Cluster Consultants and Program Directors made several suggestions about the future of retention data collection procedures. First, they want a more systematic mechanism across the state to collect retention data, particularly related to reasons for leaving teaching. Second, they urge that a system to track teachers over longer periods than their participation in BTSA be developed. Each will be discussed in the following section.

While a standardized form for reporting data to the state is included in the annual Program Improvement Plan from each BTSA program, our respondents wanted the state to develop a process for collecting more information. They suggested statewide expectations that teachers who leave teaching resign through a formal process during which fairly subtle information can be collected. As indicated in the quotation below, some believe that this could be a step toward better retention data collection.

I think the exit interview is a key one, the collaboration with the HR, or some sort of form or document that is filled out that's part of the process for resignation. Some sort of reporting mechanism that's consistently used across the state hopefully, so the same kind of data is getting back to BTSA directors, and it's getting back about every participant. One of the challenges they have is that there will be several that are unknown, because they just resigned and they're gone. They've already moved away, their husband got a new job, or their wife. Or they felt they were going to be non-reelected so they quickly resigned. So, I think it's the tracking. And it might be building that expectation that when they're hired that we spend this time with you when you're hired, but we also spend this time with you if and when you leave our organization. (Cluster Consultant C)

In addition, respondents desired a system that would help them understand not only why teachers leave, but also those aspects of BTSA support, if any, that have an impact on the decision. As discussed above, although some programs have been able to secure outside funding and to forge links with institutions of higher education to help conduct such research, it is

unlikely that all programs would be able to do the same. Consequently, respondents expressed interest in increased state support for sophisticated data collection and analysis.

If the state really wants this kind of information, they would need to invest a fair amount of money. And most projects don't have the knowledge base to engage in research—not being critical—either the time or the knowledge. (Program Director B)

Others noted that local BTSA programs should not be solely responsible for collecting state retention data, particularly beyond participation in BTSA. Rather, they believe that the data could most efficiently and effectively be collected through state systems that are already in place, such as the retirement system, CBEDS, consent forms, and the Commission's database of credentials. Combining information from state systems already in place would make it possible to easily track California teachers long-term—even those who move from district to district or who temporarily leave teaching and later return—which is very difficult for programs to track at the local level. Those who expressed the desire for the state to be responsible for tracking retention rates are aware that obstacles exist at present (e.g., the reluctance of some teachers to provide their Social Security numbers, which make it difficult to put such a system in place). However, they are also confident that solutions to these problems can be found. In addition, if the state were to be responsible for this data, BTSA program directors would then be able to pursue other kinds of research questions that they are interested in examining, such as the impact of BTSA on the leadership development of new teachers.

The BTSA Task Force is already addressing this suggestion. Under the current contract for the Independent Evaluation of BTSA, SRI is exploring how an information system that pools data from a variety of sources could be implemented and could yield important and systematic information about the teaching workforce in California.

## CONCLUSION

Three key practices—having sufficient knowledge of retention collection procedures, developing relationships and opening lines of communication across the relevant departments and programs involved in supporting and maintaining records on teachers, and enlisting the help of centers and institutions outside of BTSA—have helped programs collect substantial retention data. These practices should be widely disseminated among BTSA programs, so that all can learn from previous successes.

In addition, the BTSA Task Force should consider modifications to the standard form for collecting data related to retention. Such modifications would include information about reasons for leaving the profession, particularly related to salary and work environment. The forms, then, would be more useful to BTSA directors as they seek to understand the impact of their support activities on teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the profession. Program personnel may perceive asking for more data as a burden, so the issue should be raised with CCs and BTSA program directors before being implemented.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The analyses of existing data related to retention as well as interviews with BTSA program directors and CCs yielded a great deal of information about the effects of BTSA participation on retention. As discussed previously, some of the analyses were limited by a number of factors, rendering some findings tentative. For example, because data in some cases were incomplete, due in part to the focus in some programs on first-year teachers, and the fact that 46 new projects did not yet have data on second-year teachers, the analyses of first-year teachers are more complete than those of second-year teachers. Moreover, data were drawn from various sources, which reported information at analytic levels that differed from the BTSA program levels in which retention data were reported, such as indicators of SES and degree of urbanization.

Despite such limitations, however, when program-level retention data were disaggregated by various contextual variables, retention rates were relatively high even in contexts of high poverty and high degree of urbanization. Such findings speak to the impact of BTSA and adds to previous research which has typically found lower retention rates among teachers in these contexts who do not receive induction support. In addition, although the retention rates within districts and schools were lower than the rates for retention in the profession, sizeable differences were not found between the different contextual categories, as previous research has indicated to be the case for unsupported teachers. This section presents the conclusions of our study and recommendations related to the collection of retention-related data.

- Overall, retention rates are high across all BTSA programs. Retention in the profession for both first- and second-year teachers is approximately 93%. Only two of the projects reported retention rates in the profession for first-year teachers below 80%, while 97 programs reported retention of new teachers between 90% and 100%.
- Beginning teachers in programs with districts serving large numbers of students from poverty backgrounds were *more* likely to remain in teaching than were their peers who taught in more economically advantaged settings. Programs serving high poverty districts retained 94.94% of first-year teachers as compared to 89.69% in programs serving low-poverty districts.
- No statistically significant differences in retention were found in programs serving schools with different degrees of urbanicity.
- No statistically significant differences in retention rates were found in programs providing more frequent forms of support than in others, although the range of support frequency was small. However, the effect of more frequent support on retention in the profession approached significance for

first-year teachers. In addition, a statistically significant relationship was found between perceived value of supports and first-year teachers' retention in the profession and the district.

- No differences in retention exist in more mature and newer BTSA programs.
- No differences in retention exist in programs serving different numbers of new teachers.
- Program directors who successfully collect retention data are knowledgeable about personnel issues and information, are adept at bridging organizational divides between personnel and professional development departments, and use external funding and agencies to support sophisticated data collection.

### **Recommendations Related to Retention Data**

Retention data could be more useful with increased attention both in BTSA program activities and changes in how data are collected. Each of these areas is discussed in the following section.

#### ***Program Activities***

BTSA continues to have a positive impact on retention in the face of expansion. As new local directors come into the program, they benefit from support from CCs and other members of the BTSA community. However, the study indicates that one area in which greater support might be necessary relates to collecting retention data.

Such support should take two courses. First, the BTSA Task Force, CCs, and a group of program directors should consider modifying the reporting forms used by projects. The program directors interviewed believed there were limits to the amount of useful information that could be gleaned from the forms, particularly with regard to the reasons for leaving. Recognizing the potential trade off between creating requirements that program staff may view as burdensome, some group attention to revising the information collected on the forms is warranted.

Second, the BTSA Task Force and CCs are aware of promising practices related to collecting retention data, many of which are included in this report. They involve building local directors' knowledge about retention data; establishing relationships across personnel and professional development departments; and seeking assistance from external agencies, including universities and research centers. Further, program directors who have successfully developed the necessary knowledge and relationships can articulate the steps they took in doing so. Consequently, CCs should provide opportunities for such program directors to share their knowledge with others during cluster meetings or through individual consultation.

### ***Data Collection***

Data collection can also take different paths than it does at present. The BTSA Task Force and others are exploring, through this contract, approaches to building a statewide database related to teacher retention. There are additional opportunities to improve data collection.

First, the current system relies on reports of participant retention at the program level. The result is a positive view of BTSA and its power to increase beginning teacher retention. However, CBEDS data indicate great variation in school conditions, particularly in larger programs and consortia. If program directors collected retention data at the school or district level, they might find differences that they could address through program activities.

Second, in addition to revising data collection at the program level, the BTSA Task Force can play a key role in complementing program-generated data with statewide efforts. In addition to current explorations related to developing a statewide database that enables analysis of how BTSA affects retention over time, the Task Force could support systematic studies of those who leave teaching. Interview respondents noted the inadequacy of a form for capturing real reasons for exiting the profession. For example, new teachers who are counseled out are likely to report a more socially acceptable reason for not staying in the profession. And even if the form includes a category that allows teachers to indicate that they find the work environment difficult, it cannot gather information about the workplace characteristics that are most difficult. Consequently, following the suggestion of one of our respondents, the Task Force should support a systematic study of those who leave. The most appropriate design for such a study is qualitative, generating rich data from a sample of those who do not remain in teaching.



## **CHAPTER 3**

### **Task 2b Report**

**A Proposed System for Studying Teacher Retention**



## INTRODUCTION

One of the longstanding goals of California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program is to increase the retention of new teachers. A key evaluation goal, then, is to assess the effectiveness of the program in this area. Unfortunately, even basic information about teacher attrition in California, regardless of program impact, is hard to find. Therefore, BTSA's task in assessing impact on teacher retention is twofold: to learn more about teacher retention overall and to learn more about BTSA's role in teacher retention. To approach these tasks, the following questions are important to answer:

1. How many teachers leave their particular school or district each year?
2. How many new teachers leave the teaching workforce each year?
3. Do these attrition rates vary by key variables, such as the demographics or location of the school, type of teaching assignment or teaching credential, or whether the individual is teaching "out of field"?
4. What number and percentage of first- and second-year teachers participate in BTSA?
5. Do attrition rates vary by whether the individual has participated in BTSA?
6. What are the reasons that some new teachers leave their schools or districts, or leave the teaching profession altogether?

At present, many of these questions cannot be answered well. The lack of information is understandable: tracking teacher retention is a complex and time-consuming task, particularly if the effort relies on data collected at the program level. As previous efforts have shown, it is difficult for local program administrators to determine and report accurately whether teachers switched schools within a district, transferred to another district, or left teaching altogether. Aggregating these data centrally also becomes problematic if local programs are late or negligent in reporting.

A system for tracking teacher retention must be consistent, reliable, and efficient. We believe that the most rigorous and robust approach to this task would use and improve existing statewide data collection efforts, rather than require dozens of local programs to collect and compile data. Specifically, we believe that an improved system could build on data collection already carried out by BTSA's two sponsoring agencies, the California Commission on Teacher

Credentialing (CCTC) and the California Department of Education (CDE), and by the state's new data collection system, California School Information Services (CSIS), to efficiently assess teacher retention rates.

In the sections that follow, we begin with a brief description of the data collection efforts of BTSA, CCTC, CDE, and the California State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS) that are relevant to tracking teacher retention. We follow with a description of how we propose to link data from different agencies to efficiently and accurately track teacher retention, including which analyses should be conducted with the linked data. Next we discuss the advantages of the proposed system, both for BTSA and for the policy-making community beyond BTSA. We conclude with a section that summarizes our recommendations for the creation of a new data system.

## **EXISTING DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS AND THEIR LIMITATIONS**

### **Data Already Collected by BTSA**

The BTSA program has collected data on its local programs and teachers since its inception. Two efforts in particular are relevant here. First are BTSA's efforts at tracking retention at the program level. Local BTSA programs, as part of their regular reporting requirements, submit reports that include information about the number of beginning teachers served, the number still teaching at the end of the school year, the number retained in the district and school, and the number who have left to teach elsewhere or left teaching altogether. For those individuals who have left teaching, programs are also required to note the reason for leaving by choosing among the options of "non-re-elected," "personal (family, marriage, children)," "changing profession," or "other/unknown."<sup>1</sup> This type of system has provided BTSA with retention data since 1996-97. However, we argue that it is somewhat burdensome to local programs and more susceptible to inaccuracies and missing data than the type of system we will describe here, which builds on other existing statewide data collection efforts.

A second data collection effort of BTSA is the collection of information at the level of the individual teacher. These data include teacher Social Security numbers (SSNs) and indicate in which BTSA program each individual is participating and in which school and district the individual teaches. Collected primarily for budgetary reasons and for use in other data analyses, these data could be used in our proposed system to link BTSA program information with other teacher-level information. (We will discuss this possibility further in a later section about linking databases.)

BTSA currently is working toward improving the collection of program-level data to track teacher retention. This is a worthwhile pursuit, given that fully implementing a new system like the one we propose would take time. However, we believe that this system could ultimately be replaced with one that uses other data from CCTC and CBEDS, as well as the teacher SSNs collected by BTSA.

## **Data Already Collected by CCTC, CDE, and STRS**

At present, tracking overall teacher supply and demand (of which teacher retention is a part) is not an explicit duty of any one state agency in California. Instead, three agencies—CDE, CCTC, and STRS—hold various pieces of information that potentially could be used to track teacher supply and demand on a statewide level. However, because these data are by-products of legislated responsibilities and constituent priorities, they cannot be manipulated or combined easily to address the task of tracking teacher retention. Our attempts to use data from CCTC and STRS to inform teacher retention questions have revealed several specific problems with the task, but also have suggested specific solutions to address these problems.<sup>ii</sup> Despite the challenges of using data already collected by separate state agencies, we believe that CCTC and CDE data, in particular, are the best building blocks for a comprehensive system to track teacher retention.

**CCTC data.** CCTC has a wealth of information on the credentials of most active teachers in the state, including information on the types of credentials issued, the dates of issuance, and the institutions of higher education that recommended the credentials.<sup>8</sup> CCTC, however, does not currently have a process for following credential recipients into the workforce or seeing how long they are retained in the workforce. These gaps make it difficult for CCTC and other policy-makers to assess the career routes of credential recipients of all kinds, including emergency permit holders and interns, who are of particular interest.

**CDE data.** CDE also collects a vast amount of data on teachers, as part of the California Basic Education Data System (CBEDS). Currently, a large database of teachers is maintained by CBEDS, known by the same name as its data collection instrument, the Personnel Assignment Information Form (PAIF). The PAIF database holds more than 300,000 records of currently employed teachers, their schools, their years of teaching experience, and their teaching assignments, among other items. In addition, the PAIF contains information about teachers' credential status; however, because it is self-reported, it is not as reliable as credential data from CCTC. (In fact, if CBEDS and CCTC data were linked, as described below, CBEDS's role in collecting credential data could be phased out over time.)

Importantly, beginning in 2001, CBEDS will no longer collect data for the entire universe of schools. Instead, CBEDS will begin to be gradually replaced by the California School Information Services (CSIS) system, a new system designed to support comparable information systems at the LEA level and the easy transmission of data electronically to meet state reporting requirements.<sup>iii</sup> Implementation of the CSIS system will begin in 2001. Every year thereafter, the number of districts that submit data to CSIS will increase and the number that submit data to

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<sup>8</sup> CCTC does not have ready access to data on teachers who received lifetime credentials before 1989 and have not conducted business with CCTC since 1989.

CBEDS will decrease. The target date for full implementation of CSIS is 2005.<sup>iv</sup> Because CSIS will assume CBEDS's role in collecting data on teachers, it includes the same data elements as CBEDS. For the remainder of this report, we will discuss CBEDS and CSIS data in conjunction.

**STRS data.** In addition to CCTC, CDE, and CSIS, STRS collects information that is relevant to the tracking of teacher retention. The retirement system has detailed information on individuals' contributions to the teacher retirement system, a proxy for active employment as a teacher.

STRS data, however, are not ideal for tracking teacher retention, for several reasons. First, the ways in which STRS data are collected and stored do not allow for easy analysis of teacher attrition. Specifically, codes indicating teacher activity and inactivity in the retirement system cannot be analyzed sequentially to determine the multiyear history of individual records or sets of records, unless cumbersome techniques are used and data for only a limited number of years are needed. Instead, STRS data are best used to determine the total number of individuals who are active or inactive in the retirement system at a given time.

Even if this methodological problem could be overcome, there are other significant limitations to linking STRS and CCTC data to determine teacher retention. First, analyses of this type can only assume that individuals are teaching in an assignment for which they were authorized by CCTC. In fact, many types of work constitute "creditable service" and qualify for STRS contributions, including community college teaching and, in some cases, part-time work and substitute teaching. Thus, the group of individuals who are "active" according to STRS does not precisely match the group that policy-makers typically define as most relevant—that is, full-time K-12 teachers.

Another problem with STRS data is that they cannot provide very specific information on the teacher's school or teaching assignment. There is strong evidence to suggest that teacher supply and demand varies greatly by school characteristics and by teaching assignment subject area.<sup>v</sup> However, merely tracking whether an individual is contributing to the retirement system is not sufficient to provide an accurate picture of how retention varies from school to school and along important dimensions such as school poverty level, for example.

Therefore, although STRS is one possible source of teacher retention data, its data thus far have proven to be both problematic and limited for this purpose. Rather, a combination of CCTC and CBEDS/CSIS data could provide the most precise, comprehensive information, and STRS data ideally would be used for limited analyses of teacher retirement instead. We turn now to a discussion of how CCTC and CBEDS data could be linked to inform teacher retention.

## **THE PROPOSED SYSTEM: LINKING RELEVANT DATA FROM DIFFERENT AGENCIES**

The central concept of the proposed system is the use of individual teacher records (rather than program-level data) as a source for accurate data on the workforce as a whole. “Tracking” individual records refers to the process of linking all relevant information (in this case, from different agencies) for each individual before analyzing trends for an entire group. This process can provide a more accurate and nuanced assessment of teacher retention than other methods that look at group data from different agencies and require vast assumptions about whether or not the data refer to the same individuals. Nothing in this proposal should be interpreted as an attempt to track individual teachers for accountability purposes or any purpose other than providing the most accurate picture possible of teacher retention and other teacher supply and demand issues. In fact, we recommend that efforts to enact the changes we propose be coupled with assurances that the resulting data will not be used to evaluate, reward, or impose sanctions on any individual teacher.

### **Linking CCTC and CDE Data**

Unfortunately, neither CCTC nor CBEDS/CSIS currently collects all the data needed to answer critical questions about teacher retention, leaving no agency able to provide a comprehensive picture of how many and what types of credentialed individuals enter the workforce, whether and when they leave the workforce, and trends in what types of schools and assignments they tend to leave. To produce these kinds of data, two different data links are essential: (1) the CCTC and CBEDS/CSIS databases need to be linked, and (2) CBEDS and CSIS data from different years need to be linked. Currently, neither is possible because there is no common data element between the CBEDS/CSIS data sets and the CCTC data sets, and the CBEDS/CSIS data have no unique identifier that is consistent from year to year.

One change could remedy this problem and greatly facilitate the tracking of teacher retention in California: the addition of teacher Social Security numbers to the PAIF database and to the CSIS data collection instrument. The PAIF currently has a field for a nine-digit “District Assigned Staff Identification Number,” and some districts choose to use teacher SSNs. However, districts are not required to use SSNs. Further complicating attempts at analysis, there is no indication whether the identification numbers listed in this field are SSNs or some other district-assigned number, or whether they are even consistent from year to year.<sup>vi</sup> CSIS does not include teacher SSNs at all.

**Collecting SSNs.** Although CCTC collects teacher SSNs as part of its function as a credentialing agent, the CBEDS and CSIS systems do not. At one time, CBEDS's PAIF instrument did request that districts submit teacher SSNs.<sup>vii</sup> However, in 1996, on advice from its legal counsel, CDE began discouraging districts from reporting SSNs. At the time, it was believed that collecting teacher SSNs was at odds with the Information Practices Act of 1977 (Section 1798 of the California Civil Code). This act requires that agencies maintain "only personal information which is relevant and necessary to accomplish a purpose of the agency required or authorized by the California Constitution or statute or mandated by the federal government," and that, among other things, the agency notify individuals of "the principal purpose or purposes within the agency for which the information is to be used." Believing that it was too difficult to notify teachers in advance of the many potential uses of the data, the department chose to discontinue collection of teacher SSNs, "for everyone's protection."

Although perhaps prudent from a legal perspective, this decision has cost the state dearly in terms of valuable information on teacher supply and demand. The lack of a common identifier that is consistent from year to year prevents the full use of CCTC and CBEDS/CSIS data to answer key policy questions accurately. In addition to facilitating a merge of PAIF and CSIS data with CCTC data, teacher SSNs would make possible longitudinal analysis of the PAIF and CSIS teacher data to generate important information on teacher retention and mobility. It appears possible that the collection of SSNs could be resumed, provided that the purpose is authorized and appropriate notification is given. This remains to be seen, however, and would require further investigation by CDE and other agencies participating in the effort.

Importantly, departments of education in several other states, including Florida, Texas, and Connecticut, collect teacher SSNs and have been doing so for years. Representatives from each of these departments report that they have never had any controversy surrounding the collection of teacher SSNs, in part, they all believe, because they are careful with the process and don't abuse their authority.<sup>viii</sup> "Districts are simply required to submit [SSNs], and they do. It's just a given," says a teacher data analyst of the Florida Department of Education. "We just don't publish things [that people would object to]. SSNs and other identifiers aren't made available to the public. It's a given that this is the way it is, and it is not abused [by the department]." Similarly, a data analyst at the University of Texas at Austin who does teacher retention analysis on behalf of the Texas Education Agency states that no legislation is violated when teacher SSNs are used to generate longitudinal retention data. Few people have access to the SSNs, and it's likely, he says, that teachers do not realize that SSNs are used for analysis. Because the analyses and publicly available reports generated from teacher SSNs are uncontroversial, the collection of SSNs itself is uncontroversial.

Connecticut's Department of Education collects teacher SSNs and has built a very sophisticated teacher data system. A Connecticut Department of Education representative also reports that collection of teacher SSNs has never been challenged. She speculates that Connecticut perhaps differs from California in that certification is administered through the department, rather than by a separate agency. "Collecting SSNs is sort of 'industry standard' for any credentialing agent in any field." Therefore, she argues, an individual who wants a credential must submit certain personal information, which will be subject to analysis. "Once a state department gives up that authority, they may also be giving up access to that data."

**Protecting privacy.** We recognize that the use of SSNs raises questions about protecting teacher privacy and may meet with resistance. However, data managers and analysts can take reliable measures to keep SSNs out of the public domain and protect the identity of individual teachers. From a technical perspective, SSNs are needed only to link data files; they do not contain information in and of themselves that is needed for the purposes described here. Therefore, the most important aspect of any system that includes SSNs is that these codes be available only to data analysts or managers who need them to link data, and that they be removed from any publicly available files. A Connecticut Department of Education representative stresses how seriously this responsibility is taken. "We have very strict confidentiality practices for transfer and dissemination of data. State auditors monitor publicly available data. SSNs are available only to people who have authority [to work with them] and have been granted access through passwords and special procedures." This responsibility extends to contracted work outside the department as well. "When sending data to a contractor, we use sophisticated Web-based encryption. We use a highly reputable contractor who has lots of experience protecting confidential information."

For publicly available files, data managers could use SSNs only to link files and then strip them out of the database altogether. Another option is to scramble SSNs or match SSNs with another unique identifying number for use in public versions of the data, while retaining the match between real SSNs and scrambled SSNs or other identifying numbers in a protected file that is not made public.

Because the critical component of this proposed system is the use of a consistent common teacher identifier to link data collected over time and by different agencies, we specifically recommend using teacher Social Security numbers rather than assigning new identifying numbers. Because all teachers have SSNs and many current and historical databases already use them as unique identifiers, we believe this would be the most efficient practice.

If, however, the acquisition of teacher SSNs proves to be politically infeasible, an alternative is to begin assigning teachers unique identification numbers when they receive their credential. This option is less desirable because it necessitates additional efforts for all agencies

involved. In addition, this option would prevent the use of historical credential data, causing an information lag of many years before the credential histories of current teachers could be analyzed. This type of limitation also would prevent analyses that disaggregated teachers by credential route (e.g., those who began teaching on an emergency permit versus those who began on an intern credential or regular preliminary credential). In Connecticut, the assignment of new unique identifiers was attempted but ultimately was abandoned because there were so many errors during data entry. Because there were no “source data,” the identifiers could never be checked against other data files or reliably remembered by individuals.

**Associated costs.** Although they need not be great, the costs associated with the addition of teacher SSNs to CBEDS and CSIS should not be overlooked, either. For CBEDS, additional funding would be needed primarily to cover the additional workload of notifying districts of the change; notifying individuals on paper, if necessary; and added follow-up efforts if significant numbers of SSNs are missing. For CSIS, additional funds would be required to modify the software to include a field for SSN and to notify districts of the change. Both agencies also would have some costs associated with developing and implementing procedures for protecting SSNs.

### **Adding in BTSA Data**

In addition to the collection by CBEDS/CSIS of teacher SSNs (or other identification numbers), another key element of the proposed system is the collection of teacher SSNs for BTSA participants every year by the individual programs and/or consortia. This information would allow BTSA-specific questions to be answered by linking BTSA participant data to the larger statewide database through the use of teachers’ Social Security numbers.

Under the proposed system, the primary requirement of local BTSA programs would be continuing the collection of Social Security numbers of BTSA participants for each year. These SSNs, linked with BTSA program affiliation, can be submitted to the statewide database, allowing retention rates and teacher flows to be analyzed at both the state and individual program levels. In addition, other options may exist for facilitating this effort, such as involving CDE or county offices of education and adding this relatively small data request to their existing annual data collection efforts.

The system ultimately could be used not just to determine retention rates but also to assist with other aspects of program administration. In Connecticut, for example, the Beginning Educator Support and Training program (BEST) has used the state’s data system to track participation in the induction program, even tracking which beginning teachers and mentor teachers have participated in specific trainings. An interactive voice response system has been developed, as well, allowing individuals to use the telephone to call up individual records and

enter data. Any methodology that tracks retention or assists with program administration for BTSA could be replicated for other programs, as well, such as the internship program or the preinternship program.

## THE PROPOSED SYSTEM: ANALYSES OF LINKED DATA

Are new teachers—in whose preparation and induction we have invested time and tax dollars—remaining in the teaching profession? Clearly, this is a key policy question at the heart of the BTSA program. To understand teacher retention in a sophisticated way, specific data need to be systematically collected statewide. As we argued above, an automated statewide system is superior for many reasons, including improved comprehensiveness, accuracy, and reliability, and minimal burden on local programs. Alternatively, the lack of high-quality statewide data would result in impoverished analyses that do not advance our understanding of how to retain novice teachers in the profession. Below, we discuss illustrative key analyses for the BTSA program that we believe are imperative and best enabled through a statewide data collection system that tracks individual teachers, like the one we propose. We propose that these analyses be performed on a regular, if not annual, basis to inform policy-makers of BTSA’s impact on the retention of new teachers. These analyses (see Exhibit 1) respond to the questions raised in the introduction of this paper and add analyses about two other related programs that support and prepare beginning teachers: the internship and preinternship programs.

### **Exhibit 1**

#### *Proposed Annual Analyses to Track Teacher Retention*

- (1) Number of new teachers who leave their particular school or district each year.
- (2) Number of new teachers who leave the teaching workforce each year.
- (3) Disaggregation of attrition rates by key variables, such as the demographics or location of the school, type of teaching assignment, type of credential held, and whether the teacher is teaching “out of field” (a subject other than the one he or she is credentialed to teach).
- (4) Number and percentage of first- and second-year teachers participating in BTSA.
- (5) Number and percentage of first- and second-year teachers participating in an internship program or preinternship program.
- (6) Disaggregation of attrition rates by whether the individual has participated in BTSA.
- (7) Disaggregation of attrition rates by whether the individual has participated in an internship program or preinternship program.

In suggesting these analyses, we especially emphasize the importance of the disaggregation of attrition rates by key variables, for several reasons. As our previous work on teacher development in California has demonstrated, statewide analyses often mask crucial differences at the local level.<sup>ix</sup> Regardless of the level of attrition *on average*, we hypothesize that certain schools and, perhaps, even certain teaching assignments—the same ones that are systematically hard to staff year after year—suffer disproportionate attrition among their teachers. Tracking data on the schools teachers work in, the schools' characteristics, and teaching assignments (including whether teachers are teaching out of field) will inform the degree to which turnover is concentrated in certain schools and assignments. Having such descriptive data, which are not currently available, will allow policy-makers to focus on where turnover problems are most acute and to target resources to those areas.

In addition, retention rates should be determined separately for teachers who previously held emergency credentials or internship certificates and those teachers who took a traditional route of full-time preparation and received a preliminary credential first. Although BTSA is designed and intended only for individuals who hold preliminary credentials, it is estimated that in 1999-00 about 6% of BTSA participants were also interns or preinterns and, by definition, lacked preliminary credentials.<sup>x</sup> An additional 25% of BTSA participants were emergency teachers. For the purposes of tracking retention, there are three distinct, noncomparable groups of BTSA participants: (1) those who held a preliminary credential on entering the BTSA program; (2) those who were emergency permit holders, interns, or preinterns on entering the BTSA program; and (3) those who were emergency permit holders, interns, or preinterns previously, but who obtained a preliminary credential before entering the BTSA program. We describe these groups as noncomparable because we would expect teachers in each group to have a different probability of staying in the teaching profession. These three groups are composed of teachers with different preparation experiences and different amounts of experience as the teacher of record in their own classroom. Because of these factors, the most rigorous analysis design will distinguish between these groups when tracking retention. Besides providing a more precise analysis of retention, this type of system would allow BTSA to assess its impact on the population for which it was designed and intended, as distinct from those who participated but did not have the presumed prerequisites. A database that incorporates credentialing information from CCTC will have the capacity to make such precise distinctions.

In addition to producing the analyses listed above, this database could be used for another, slightly different analysis area: determining reasons why some new teachers leave their schools or districts or leave the teaching profession altogether. BTSA's previous efforts have attempted to capture reasons for attrition at the program level, offering a limited set of reasons and relying on local program administrators to collect and compile the data. As mentioned previously, efforts of

this sort are prone to problems with accuracy and timely reporting. In the end, the overall “response rate” can be quite low. Another, more efficient approach would be to use the proposed database that includes teacher SSN, automatically identify all those teachers who changed schools or districts or left the profession, generate a stratified random sample of these individuals, and redirect resources into surveying only the random sample by mail or phone. By targeting resources on a smaller but representative sample, response rates can be greatly improved. Reliability is improved, as well, since teachers are asked *directly* why they left (and about other topics of interest to the BTSA program, if desired). Ultimately, the group of respondents is also likely to be more representative of the total population than with BTSA’s current approach, given the biases of inconsistent reporting at the program level.

## **ADVANTAGES OF THE PROPOSED SYSTEM**

A retention tracking system that uses existing CCTC and CBEDS/CSIS databases will provide the BTSA program with several advantages. We summarize these advantages here and conclude with a discussion of how the proposed system could provide useful information beyond the BTSA program and the specific issue of teacher retention, to inform broader issues of teacher supply and demand.

### **Advantages for the BTSA Program**

First, the data will be complete for all BTSA participants. Systems that rely on individual districts and consortia to collect detailed information on teacher whereabouts are likely to suffer from missing or inaccurate data. A system that uses statewide data that already are collected systematically for other purposes would automatically have complete information on the entire teacher population.

A second advantage is the minimal burden of data collection on local programs. Rather than administer a complicated instrument to track the retention of each individual teacher after he or she has completed the program, programs instead can collect just the SSNs of participants, once annually.

Third, such a tracking system will yield long-term data. Even if districts and consortia do have the capacity to track teachers accurately, they probably cannot track them beyond 1 or 2 years after leaving the program. A statewide system can follow teachers indefinitely and determine precisely whether teachers have stayed, left the profession, or left and returned in later years, thereby providing the BTSA program with a long-term assessment of the retention of its participants.

Fourth, data from the proposed system can be disaggregated in a variety of ways of interest to BTSA. Retention rates can be disaggregated by any variable on which CCTC or CBEDS/CSIS or the BTSA program holds data, including credentialing route, location of school, and various BTSA program characteristics.

Fifth, this proposed system would provide for a more efficient, and ultimately more reliable, analysis of the reasons why teachers left their school, district, or the profession.

Finally, as the state moves toward a two-tiered credential system, the proposed system could facilitate the tracking of induction program participation (eventually a requirement for a professional clear credential). This would be an added benefit primarily for CCTC.

## Advantages Beyond the BTSA Program

In addition to tracking teacher retention for the BTSA program, the proposed system also could benefit policy-makers, program administrators, and researchers who are concerned with other issues related to teacher supply and demand. We list some of these issues here, and their related questions.

- **Workforce participation.** How many newly credentialed teachers take teaching jobs, and where do they take them? Is there any variation by preparation program or credential route?
- **Movement between schools and districts.** To what extent do teachers move between schools or districts over the course of their career? Do they tend to move away from certain types of schools/districts and toward others?
- **“Reserve pool” of teachers.** How many former teachers hold valid credentials but are no longer teaching? Do these individuals ever reenter the profession? If so, how long are they out of the profession, on average?
- **Trends in different credential routes.** How many emergency permit holders and intern certificate holders are converting to regular preliminary credentials? How long, on average, do they take to do so?

Reliable, timely data in these areas are critical to researchers and policy-makers for several reasons. First, the data are needed to make reliable projections of the future supply of and demand for qualified teachers. Such projections help policy-makers identify how many teachers will be needed in future years and determine the level of funding for teacher recruitment and preparation efforts. Second, these data can help researchers better understand the dynamics of the teacher labor market in a shortage situation—that is, the patterns of movement from teacher preparation programs to teaching jobs, the flow of teachers within districts and between districts, and the flow of teachers out of the workforce. By understanding what types of schools teachers are attracted to, what types of schools they move to if they change teaching jobs, and what types of schools they tend to leave before retirement age, policy-makers can better determine whether and how funding should be targeted. Last, such data can help researchers actually identify and survey those individuals whose behavior is important to understand—such as those who leave teaching temporarily but eventually return to the workforce.

The system we propose here not only would provide BTSA with detailed information on teacher retention, but also would provide insight into the issues listed above, which are of interest to CCTC, CDE, and others in the California policy-making community.

## SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Above, we have described various data collection efforts already under way and described a more efficient system that would build on these existing efforts. The critical component of the proposed system is the teacher Social Security number, which should be collected along with other data on individual teachers, as part of both the PAIF data collection effort and the CSIS system. It may be that this change is best accomplished through legislation, though this is not necessarily the case. An initial step for CBEDS and CSIS would be to investigate their authority to collect teacher SSNs, as other state agencies do (such as CCTC). CBEDS and CSIS may be able to collect SSNs, provided they notify teachers or make certain guarantees of privacy. It is our assumption that policy-makers in Sacramento are best able to determine the specific procedures and political mechanisms for enacting the proposed changes. Regardless of the political process undertaken, we believe that a new system should adhere to the following recommendations.

**Recommendation 1.** The new data system should track retention of teachers and provide other information related to teacher supply and demand, primarily using data already collected by CCTC, CBEDS, and CSIS. Data from STRS should be excluded from this effort, since it is not maintained in a way that allows for straightforward analysis of retention and cannot provide information on what schools individuals are teaching in or what subjects they are teaching. The effort to design a new data system should be framed not merely as a method to track retention of BTSA participants, but with the aim of providing valuable information to policy-makers and other programs outside of BTSA.

**Recommendation 2.** Teacher SSNs should be added to the data collection efforts of both CBEDS and CSIS and continue to be collected by CCTC. Each agency involved in the effort to build a new data system should establish and make public specific measures to keep teacher SSNs out of the public domain to protect the identity of individual teachers. Every effort should be made to ensure that teacher SSNs and resulting data analyses are not used to evaluate, reward, or impose sanctions on individual teachers. Associated costs of adding teacher SSNs to CBEDS and the CSIS system should be assessed upfront.

**Recommendation 3.** Using teacher SSN as the common link, the data elements listed below should be merged. A timeline and format for delivery of these data should be agreed on by the agencies involved:

- Teacher credential history (from CCTC).

- Teacher assignment (grade and/or subject area, substitute, classroom teacher, resource specialist) history (from CBEDS/CSIS).
- Teacher status (full or part time) history (from CBEDS/CSIS).
- Teacher school assignment [which school, by County-District-School (CDS) code] (from CBEDS/CSIS).
- Teacher program participation history (whether and when in BTSA, internship program, preinternship program) (from programs).

These data then can be used to generate the analyses listed in Exhibit 1, which should be performed annually on a specified timeline and made available to interested parties. SSNs, of course, would be removed from any such files.

**Recommendation 4.** One agency should be identified to house the merged data from CCTC and CBEDS/CSIS and ultimately perform the annual analyses of these data listed above. This agency is likely to require additional funding for coordination of data collection, management of the data, and analysis and reporting of the data. Given its infrastructure for analyzing and reporting data, CDE may be the best positioned to fill this role. Another possibility is that a third, independent agency is the best choice to house and analyze the merged data.

**Recommendation 5.** Once the new system is established, BTSA should phase out local-program responsibilities for tracking teacher retention. Local programs and consortia should be required only to provide the SSNs of their participants as they enter the program and annually thereafter. The new system would have the capacity to provide retention reports to individual programs/consortia.

The system we describe above would provide much more reliable data on teacher retention to inform programs such as BTSA, and also would provide important trend data on the teacher workforce as a whole. This effort could be of great benefit to both the BTSA program and the entire education policy community in California.

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>i</sup> CCTC. (2000). Form: BTSA Retention Data at Program Level for 1999-2000 Cohort.

<sup>ii</sup> In the summer and fall of 2000, SRI conducted a pilot analysis of CCTC credential data for one cohort of credential recipients merged with STRS employment status data for the same group of individuals. Currently (winter 2001), SRI is conducting a follow-up effort to replicate the analysis with eight cohorts of credential recipients.

<sup>iii</sup> CSIS. (2000). "About CSIS." Retrieved January 2000 from the World Wide Web:  
<http://www.csis.k12.ca.us/mission.html>

<sup>iv</sup> Personal communication. (January 9, 2001). CDE personnel, Educational Demographics Unit.

<sup>vv</sup> Shields, P., Esch, C., Humphrey, D., Riehl, L., Tiffany-Morales, J., & Young, V. (2000). *The Status of the Teaching Profession 2000: An Update to the Teaching and California's Future Task Force*. Santa Cruz, CA: The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning.

<sup>vi</sup> Personal communication. (June 27, 2000). CDE personnel.

<sup>vii</sup> Personal communication. (January 9, 2001). CDE personnel, Educational Demographics Unit.

Personal communication. (March 7, 2001). CDE personnel, Educational Demographics Unit.

<sup>viii</sup> Personal communication. (February 8, 2001). Florida Department of Education personnel.

Personal communication. (February 9, 2001). Charles A. Dana Center personnel, University of Texas.

Personal communication. (March 7, 2001). Connecticut Department of Education personnel.

<sup>ix</sup> Shields, P., Esch, C., Humphrey, D., Riehl, L., Tiffany-Morales, J., & Young, V. (2000). *The Status of the Teaching Profession 2000: An Update to the Teaching and California's Future Task Force*. Santa Cruz, CA: The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning.

<sup>x</sup> Mitchell, D. Boyns, D., Turk-Bicakci, L. (2000). *2000 Statewide Evaluation Technical Report*. Riverside, CA: School Improvement Research Group.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **Tasks 3a and 3b Reports**

**Statewide Expansion of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning  
Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program**



## INTRODUCTION

Policy-makers in California have long recognized the importance of new teachers' first few years in the profession. Since the early 1990s, the state has supported a formal induction program for first- and second-year teachers. The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program has grown to be the largest formal induction program in the United States in both the number of teachers in the program and the amount spent by the state to support it. This report examines the impact of BTSA expansion on the quality of the program and effects of the program on the other parts of the education system. The report is part of the independent evaluation of BTSA sponsored by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) and the California Department of Education (CDE).<sup>9</sup>

The report is organized around two primary research questions: (1) What are the effects of the statewide expansion of BTSA on the quality of the program as experienced by participants? (2) What are the effects of the expansion of BTSA outside the program itself? The report begins with a discussion of the state support for induction that outlines the fiscal and legislative history of BTSA expansion. We then summarize our data collection methods. Next, we describe the characteristics of BTSA participants and what we know about teachers who do not participate in BTSA. This information about BTSA participants frames the discussion in the next section, where we describe the nature and intensity of supports received by BTSA participants. Included in the "Nature and Intensity" section are discussions regarding recent improvements to the program and the extent to which support services are maintained in the context of BTSA expansion. After describing the kinds of support activities participants receive, we illustrate the extent to which BTSA-related support activities have an impact on participants. Next, we examine the indirect impact of BTSA on the education system, including the program's impact on support providers. We then turn to the further challenges of BTSA expansion, followed by a discussion of BTSA's future in the context of large numbers of underprepared teachers. Finally, we present our conclusions and recommendations.

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<sup>9</sup> WestEd is leading the overall evaluation of BTSA. SRI International has subcontracted with WestEd and has primary responsibility for the content of this report.

## STATE SUPPORT FOR INDUCTION

In 1992, the state legislature passed SB 1422 (Bergeson) to support the development of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program. BTSA subsequently grew to become an \$87-million program by 2000-01, serving nearly 23,000 beginning teachers. Table 14 shows the progression of funding and numbers of local programs and teachers served since BTSA's inception. Teachers are served by local programs that are run by school districts, institutions of higher education, county offices of education, or some combination of these. The BTSA Interagency Task Force (consisting of members of CTC and CDE) projects that in 2001-02, when the budget allocation reaches \$104.7 million, the number of local programs will increase to 150 and BTSA will serve 29,616 teachers (Santiago, 2001). This latest increase reflects the expansion of many BTSA programs from 1-year programs to the 2-year programs envisioned by the initial legislation and the inclusion of additional special education teachers.

**Table 14**  
*BTSA Funding and Participant History*

Year	Funding	Number of Programs	Estimated Number of New Teachers Supported
1992-93	\$4.9 million	15	1,100
1993-94	\$5.0 million	30	2,300
1994-95	\$5.2 million	30	1,900
1995-96	\$5.5 million	30	1,900
1996-97	\$7.5 million	34	2,166
1997-98	\$17.5 million	73	4,118
1998-99	\$66.0 million	86	12,330
1999-00	\$72.0 million	133	22,156
2000-01	\$87.4 million	143	22,955 *

Sources: Bartell and Ownby (1994), CTC (1998), CERC (2001), Santiago (2001). \*CTC (2001a).

In 1997, AB 1266 (Mazzoni) established programmatic guidelines, such as requiring BTSA to assess beginning-teacher performance by using a formative performance assessment aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). In response to this directive, the BTSA Interagency Task Force formed a design team that developed the California Formative

Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST).<sup>10</sup> This system, used by all but 11 BTSA programs in 2000-01, integrates the use of formative assessment tools with new-teacher support and with training for support providers (Clark, 2001).<sup>11</sup>

In 1998, the legislature passed SB 2042 (Alpert), calling for the implementation of a two-tier credentialing system with preliminary (Level I) and professional (Level II) credentials. As part of this two-tier system, SB 2042 established new minimum requirements for the professional clear credential, including “completion of a program of beginning teacher induction” [Education Code, Section 44259(c)(2)]. The induction provisions for the new two-tier credential system will go into effect once two conditions are met: (1) the teaching performance assessment for the preliminary (Level I) credential is in place, and (2) state funding for induction support is sufficient “to provide statewide access to eligible beginning teachers” [Education Code, Section 44259(c)(2)].<sup>12</sup>

Following the new legislation, the BTSA Interagency Task Force changed the criteria for teachers who could participate in BTSA. SB 2042 defines a beginning teacher as a teacher with a preliminary credential or an intern who is in the first year or second year of service, but the legislation also charges CTC and the Superintendent of Public Instruction to “adopt and implement criteria and standards for participation in the system [BTSA], including criteria regarding the eligibility of teachers” [Education Code, Section 44279.1(c)]. In 1999, The BTSA Interagency Task Force asked BTSA program directors to set a goal of serving only teachers with preliminary credentials by January 2000 (CTC, 2000).

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10 CFASST was developed under a contract with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) in coordination with a development committee composed of representatives from ETS, CTC, CDE, WestEd, and the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project. Together, these groups formed the design team.

11 The non-CFASST programs had locally developed assessments in place before the implementation of CFASST; they are required to demonstrate that their assessment systems meet program standards, especially in regard to the formative nature of the assessment, the Individual Induction Plan (IIP), and the training of support providers.

12 The Level I teaching performance assessment is currently under development at the Educational Testing Service and is likely to be pilot-tested starting in January 2002. Subsequently, the teaching performance assessment (or the equivalent designed by teacher preparation programs choosing to use their own assessments) will be required for a preliminary credential for the cohort of teacher candidates beginning in fall 2003.

## **DATA COLLECTION METHODS**

Findings in this report come from a variety of information sources. SRI analyzed basic information about participants in BTSA and the growth and development of the program by using existing research on BTSA primarily derived from the annual survey data collected by the California Educational Research Cooperative (CERC) and data routinely collected by the BTSA Interagency Task Force. Case studies of seven BTSA programs provided core data on the impact of BTSA expansion on program quality. The case studies involved semistructured interviews with BTSA program directors, principals, participants, support providers, and higher education partners. Survey data and contextual information were provided by a larger study of the status of teaching in California, sponsored by The Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (CFTL). The support of CFTL has made it possible for this report to be far more comprehensive than the limited resources of the original study would have allowed.

### **Case Study Sample**

To answer questions regarding the impact of BTSA expansion on program quality and the indirect effects of BTSA expansion on the teacher development system, the evaluation team and the BTSA Interagency Task Force drew a purposive sample of 8 case study programs from the 143 programs that were operating during the fall of 2000. Sample selection was based on various characteristics, including urbanicity, the extent to which the program had expanded since its inception, the kinds of students served in the district, and whether the program was a single district or a consortium of districts. One district declined to participate, making the case study sample a total of seven BTSA programs and eight districts. This sampling strategy is limited in that it cannot provide us a representative and comprehensive view of all the variation across local BTSA programs. Case studies are also limited in that only provide information at a single point in time (in this case, spring 2001). More detailed information on the case study sample and the numbers of schools visited, teachers interviewed, etc., is provided in Appendix A.

## **Survey Data**

Tasks 3A and 3B of the Independent Evaluation of the BTSA Program did not include the development or dissemination of a survey targeted toward BTSA participants. The survey data used throughout the report are provided by surveys conducted by SRI International as part of a study for CFTL and the Teaching and California's Future Task Force. Two surveys from this study provided information pertinent to the BTSA evaluation: the Survey of California Teachers and the Survey of California Principals. The purpose of each survey was to capture respondents' perspectives on the teacher development system. Although the surveys did not focus solely on BTSA, they did contain questions regarding induction in general, along with some BTSA-specific questions. Because the surveys did not focus solely on BTSA, respondents' interpretations of some terminology may have not have been consistent. This could limit the accuracy of comparisons between BTSA-eligible and BTSA-ineligible teachers. More detailed information on survey sampling procedures and the numbers of respondents is provided in Appendix A.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF TEACHERS PARTICIPATING IN BTSA

State funding for BTSA has increased every year, and more new teachers than ever are participating. Funding increases have occurred at the same time as the program has narrowed the definition of who should participate in BTSA and as the overall number of new teachers without preliminary credentials has dramatically increased. With the expansion of the state's support for Intern and Pre-Internship Programs, BTSA has tried primarily to serve beginning teachers who have earned a preliminary credential.

BTSA primarily serves first- and second-year teachers who have completed a preparation program. In 1999-2000, BTSA served 22,156 teachers. About half of all fully-credentialed first- and second-year teachers (12,268) were part of that group of participants. An estimated one-quarter of first- and second-year teachers who had not completed a preparation program (5,590 teachers) also participated in BTSA.<sup>13</sup> Overall, first- and second-year teachers, with or without a preliminary credential, constituted the vast majority of BTSA participants (81% or 17,858 teachers) in 1999-2000 (CERC, 2001). BTSA also serves more experienced teachers. These are typically teachers who recently have received a full credential in California but who taught previously—either in California on an emergency permit or in another state. By 1999-2000, about 4,200 BTSA participants had 3 or more years of experience (CERC, 2001).

Unfortunately, we do not know what portion of fully-credentialed first-year teachers are participating in BTSA compared to the portion of fully-credentialed second-year teachers. However, we suspect that rate of participation is higher among fully-credentialed first-year teachers than fully-credentialed second-year teachers. We do know that about 70% of all BTSA participants are in their first year of participation in the BTSA program (CERC, 2001).

Until recently, only small numbers of special education teachers have participated in BTSA. The BTSA Interagency Task Force is attempting to coordinate their efforts with IHEs, which currently provide induction services to special education teachers. One of the primary reasons for the request to increase funding for 2001-02 is to incorporate about 1,100 new special education teachers who will participate in the BTSA Special Education Pilot program (Santiago, 2001).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> These estimates (number of fully credentialed teachers participating in BTSA and number of underprepared teachers participating in BTSA) are based on SRI's analysis of CERC (2001) survey data for 1999-2000 and data provided by CDE's (2000) Personnel Assignment Information Form database.

<sup>14</sup> Special education teachers serve under an Education Specialist credential; teachers who wish to obtain a Tier II credential are required to complete a program sponsored by institutions of higher education (IHEs). Thus, special education teachers have their own induction program provided by IHEs.

## **Full Participation in BTSA**

Based on the 1999-2000 data on BTSA participation, we can make a partial estimate of the additional participants needed for BTSA to reach all eligible new teachers in the state. In 1999-2000, BTSA funded 17,858 first- and second-year teachers—including those with full credentials (preliminary or professional clear) and those without full credentials (emergency permit, pre-intern certificate, intern credential). That year, California had 23,968 first- and second-year teachers with full credentials. Once the BTSA participants without full credentials are moved into their appropriate programs, BTSA will have funding to move the same number of fully-credentialed teachers into the program. However, in 1999-2000 there were an estimated 11,700 first- and second-year, fully-credentialed teachers who were not in BTSA; consequently, the BTSA program will still need to fund an additional 6,110 teachers.<sup>15</sup>

## **Nonparticipants**

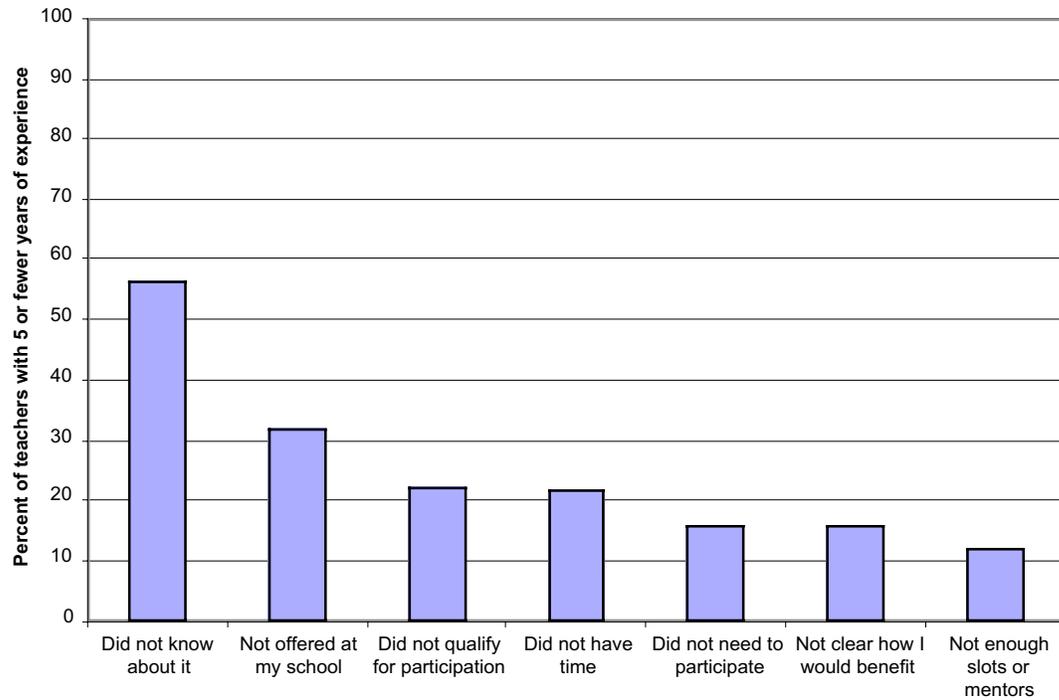
BTSA is currently a voluntary program designed for new teachers who have completed a preparation program. In 2000-01, half of California's first-year teachers had not completed a preparation program (Shields et al., 2001). Because of the large numbers of underprepared teachers and BTSA's target audience, only 51% of all first- and second- year teachers are eligible to participate in BTSA. We will discuss the implications of the state's teacher shortage on BTSA later in this report.

Among those teachers who are eligible to participate in BTSA, not all choose to do so. Table 15 presents teachers' reports of why they did not choose to participate in BTSA.

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<sup>15</sup> These estimates are derived from PAIF (2000) data and data from CERC's (2001) annual surveys. We must consider, however, that some teachers on emergency permit are from out-of-state and are merely waiting for paperwork to clear before obtaining their preliminary credential; these teachers would stay in the BTSA program and could not, therefore, be supplanted by incoming fully credentialed teachers. Unfortunately, the data we have does not allow us to determine how many out-of-state teachers fall into this category.

**Table 15**  
*Reasons Why Teachers Did Not Participate in BTSA*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information. Teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience who responded to this survey item are those who did not participate in BTSA. The proportion of nonparticipants who were eligible for BTSA but declined to participate versus those who were ineligible cannot be determined.  
 Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

More than half of BTSA nonparticipants responding to the survey indicated that they did not know about the program, and 32% indicated that BTSA was not offered at their schools. These particular findings may be misleading in that it is possible that, in some cases, teachers are participating in BTSA-supported programs but do not know them as BTSA programs. In other cases, teachers who opted not to participate in BTSA felt that the informal support at their school was sufficient. As Table 15 shows, 16% of teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience who did not participate in BTSA believed that their schools provided enough support and they did not need to participate.

The remaining reasons for nonparticipation reflect both the eligibility requirements (22% reported that they did not qualify for the program) and the voluntary nature of the program (did not have time, not clear how the teacher would benefit). Finally, 12% indicated that there were not enough slots or mentors available.

## **NATURE AND INTENSITY OF SUPPORTS RECEIVED BY BTSA RECIPIENTS**

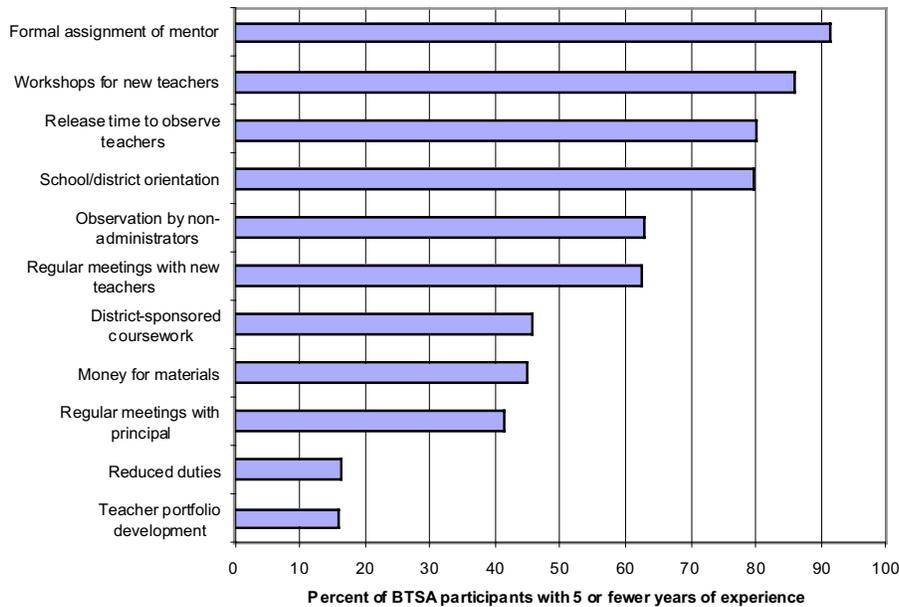
BTSA participants receive a variety of support activities from their districts, schools, BTSA programs, and support providers. Activities vary in intensity from receiving money for materials to having a support provider demonstrate lessons in a beginning teacher's classroom. This section describes the types of support received by BTSA participants and the role of school administrators and district personnel in fostering an environment that makes support activities meaningful for new teachers.

### **The Kinds of Induction Support Teachers Receive**

Although support provided to beginning teachers varies, teachers and principals reported that beginning teachers receive many kinds of induction support activities. Teachers who participated in BTSA reported that the most common types of support for BTSA participants were (1) the formal assignment of an experienced teacher to provide mentorship (91%), (2) school and/or district workshops for new teachers (86%), and (3) release time to observe other teachers (80%) (see Table 16). Some of these activities have the potential to be more intensive than others; for example, a support provider can provide valuable assistance to beginning teachers by demonstrating lessons, helping to plan lessons, or discussing an observation. In contrast, a district orientation may help a beginning teacher know where resources are located, but not necessarily how to use such resources.

The vast majority of principals of schools with teachers who were participating in a BTSA program reported that their beginning teachers were assigned to a support provider (92%) and had regular meetings with their support provider (96%). Many principals also reported that their beginning teachers had regular meetings with administrators (68%). Further, 92% of principals reported that support providers received release time to observe beginning teachers. Only a minority of principals reported that their beginning teachers received help with portfolio development (45%) and were given reduced duties (28%). The following section describes in more detail the types of support activities BTSA participants receive and how, in some cases, teachers not in BTSA receive fewer, less-frequent support activities.

**Table 16**  
*Induction Support Activities Received by BTSA Participants*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.  
 Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

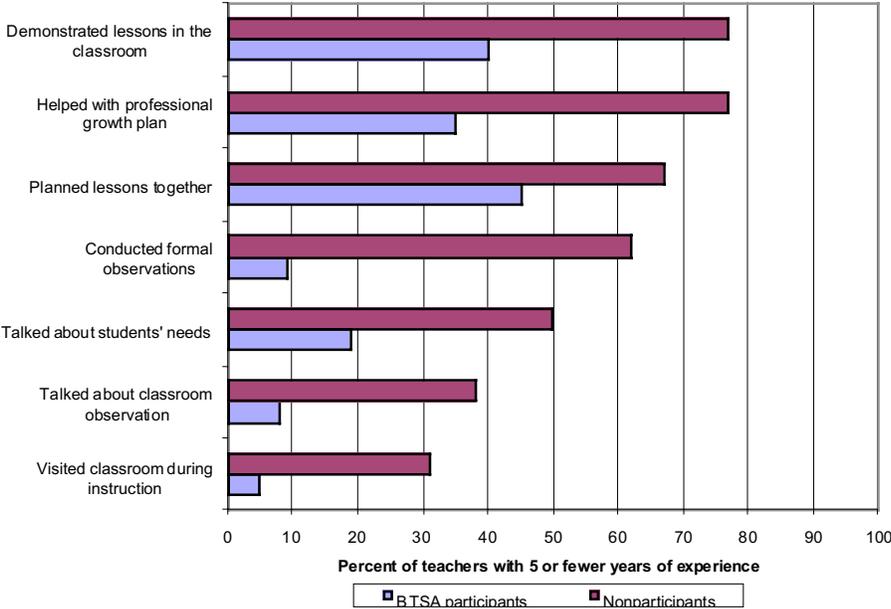
Nature and intensity of support provider activities. Mentors are perhaps the most critical component of new-teacher support. Indeed, one of the primary foci of BTSA is to provide structure for—and activities that allow beginning teachers to develop—relationships with their support providers. BTSA attempts to foster these relationships through the use of various program components, including CFASST or an alternative formative assessment, an Individual Induction Plan (IIP), meetings between support providers and beginning teachers, etc. In addition, BTSA support providers receive training related to CFASST or the alternative formative assessments.

A majority of BTSA participants (91%) reported being assigned a support provider (see Table 16). The beginning teachers whom we interviewed at most case study sites generally attributed the quality of their induction support to the quality of their relationships with their support providers. One beginning teacher described her experience:

I have my support provider on-site—she was also a former mentor teacher. We had contact almost daily. I felt well supported—all teachers are willing to help. My support provider helped me decorate my room, helped with the first week of planning, [and provided] emotional support.

Overall, beginning teachers did not receive any one form of support very frequently—in some instances, beginning teachers never received certain types of mentor support. BTSA participants, however, were significantly more likely than nonparticipants to receive mentor support activities. For example, 77% of non-BTSA teachers never received demonstration lessons in their classrooms, compared with 40% of BTSA participants (see Table 17). In addition, only 9% of BTSA participants did not receive a formal observation, whereas 62% of non-BTSA teachers never received a formal observation from a mentor.

**Table 17**  
*Teachers Reporting That They Never Received Various Types of Mentor Support, by BTSA Participation*

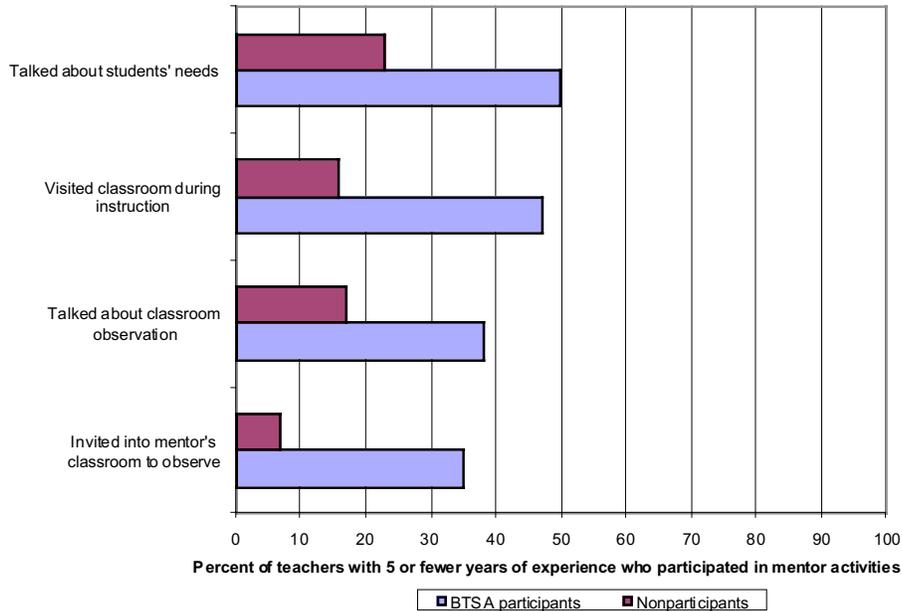


Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.  
 Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

Similarly, when we examined the frequency with which teachers reported getting specific types of mentor support activities by BTSA participation, we found that those who participated in BTSA were more likely to report that they had received certain types of mentor support activities frequently than those who did not participate in BTSA. For example, 47% of BTSA participants received classroom visits from their support providers monthly or weekly, compared with only 16% of teachers who received similar induction support in an informal or other program (see Table 18).

**Table 18**

*Teachers Reporting Monthly/Weekly Mentor Activities, by BTSA Participation*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.

Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

Use of release time. A majority (80%) of beginning teachers reported having release time to observe other teachers. This strategy allows new teachers to make direct connections between what they observe and their own practice, and is complemented by observation of the teacher's class by nonadministrators (63%). The use of release time varies by district, and sometimes even within districts. In some schools, shortages of substitute teachers undermine efforts to give new teachers opportunities to observe accomplished teachers and to be observed. BTSA directors in districts that have a shortage of substitute teachers struggle to find ways to allow beginning teachers and support providers time to observe each other or to meet. A director of one program reflected on this problem:

About 5 years ago I was the mentor teacher coordinator. There were not many subs, so I had to come back with something that didn't require release time. I would check things out, and everything required release time. We became the only school in the consortium that had an after-school model. After CSR, we became the model.

In most schools, teachers and principals often are reluctant to lose too much instructional time to out-of-classroom duties. One support provider summed up the feelings of teachers and administrators alike:

I'm concerned about the number of days that [beginning teachers] are pulled out of class. They are pulled out for BTSA and then pulled out by the science resource center. I estimate that new teachers get four days of science-specific professional development.

Beginning teachers' meeting time with other teachers. New teachers also need opportunities to talk with their colleagues—both more experienced colleagues, including their principals, and new teachers who may share some of their early challenges. These opportunities to interact with colleagues create important learning opportunities and are critical strategies in establishing an open and collaborative professional culture. Many BTSA participants with 5 or fewer years of experience reported having regular meetings with other beginning teachers (62%), but fewer than half (41%) reported regular meetings with their principals (see Table 16).

Opportunities to meet with colleagues are severely limited by the lack of time for planning and professional development built into teachers' schedules. Most meet before or after school; some even meet during the summer. When they can meet with other teachers, beginning teachers report that the time spent is very valuable:

The work that we've done at grade-level meetings is the only form of support that I have found to be helpful. At these meetings, we do long-term planning. We look at the student work of a high, medium, and low student. We analyze it and talk about it. [The principal] trained us, and [this process] is a schoolwide activity. We write up the students' strengths and needs, and identify appropriate teaching strategies to help students get to the next level.

Induction support for new teachers involves the entire school and district communities. New teachers value opportunities to meet with other new teachers to discuss common concerns and solutions. Often, such meetings lend important emotional support to a group of teachers facing similar challenges. Opportunities to meet with other teachers around specific discipline or grade-level concerns are also highly valued by new teachers. New teachers also reported real value in regular contact and communication with administrative staff, although such activities tend to occur less frequently than meetings with other teachers.

The role of principals in BTSA. Principals have a vital role in providing an atmosphere conducive to making BTSA activities more or less effective. When principals view the induction

of new teachers into the profession as part of their personal responsibility, BTSA programs are strengthened. One principal provided an example of her responsibilities to new teachers:

New teachers see me as an instructional leader because I am always in classrooms and willing to demonstrate lessons anytime, either when I'm asked or in order to help teachers who need support.

Although they were rare, we did visit schools with large numbers of new teachers in which the principals prioritized regular meetings with new teachers. In these cases, the meetings were regularly scheduled, and they focused on instruction. Both principals and beginning teachers, from one district in particular, provided positive examples of these kinds of interactions. In this district, support of new teachers is recognized as important at all levels of the system. Further, the school has a very active principal, who makes an extra effort to support her new teachers. Beginning teachers at this school commented on how this effort helps them:

We have new-teacher meetings, which I find to be really effective. [Our principal] does those for us here, and I don't know if other BTSA programs include these. We're usually reading professional books, and then we discuss them. Those have been really helpful for me.

The role of school culture in BTSA. BTSA is enhanced when teacher support is expected by all educators—from BTSA directors and district administrators to principals and teachers. One BTSA director described the expectations in her district:

BTSA is not mandatory. I approach it as “what a wonderful opportunity you have,” because the superintendent believes in supporting teachers from the beginning. There is never anyone who asks not to be part of the program, because principals really value the support that is given to them.

Another district participating in a BTSA consortium relies strongly on its internal support system and less on BTSA. One school in this small district has a very strong and valuable informal system of subject-specific new-teacher mentoring across all departments. Teacher after teacher told us their department members had taken them under their wing, shared lessons, invited them to observe teaching, provided curriculum guidelines and resources, helped them with discipline and other problems, and generally watched out that they didn't get burned out. In this case, BTSA's resources and structure enhance the district's induction activities, but this environment would be a positive one for new teachers with or without BTSA's presence.

In the districts and schools we visited that provide schoolwide or districtwide support for new teachers, it was clear that the new teachers in such schools were much happier and therefore

were less inclined to leave the profession because of a lack of support. The districts had small numbers of new teachers and a culture of leadership and support that enabled beginning teachers to use the teacher next door as a conduit for knowledge and support. The BTSA director in one such district made this comment regarding BTSA and retention:

I really like the program...I find it to be very positive and powerful. The support provider and beginning teacher grow reflective with the assessment piece. [It is] effective in retaining new teachers...

What remains unstated in this quote is that, in addition to the high expectations the district has for its teachers, new teachers in this district also receive various induction activities that existed prior to what are now considered BTSA activities. Newcomers to this district face a series of intensive interviews, including a demonstration lesson for the superintendent, and therefore are perhaps less likely, given the amount of time and effort it takes to be a teacher in the district, to leave the district.

In addition, high retention rates in this district appeared to be largely a result of the overall culture of the school. Both veteran teachers and administrators feel responsible for assisting new teachers. New teachers told stories of remarkable support they received from their colleagues. One new teacher, hired just before the school year began, arrived in her new classroom to discover that other teachers in the school had worked over the weekend to decorate and organize her classroom.

Many aspects of their school environment influence teachers' views of their BTSA experiences. Not only are external supports important (e.g., presence of release time for observations or meeting time with other teachers), but the perceived importance of teacher support is key, as well. If new teachers are in a district or school where the leaders really value support for new teachers and have some capacity to provide that support, those new teachers are likely to get better BTSA experiences (and also better informal mentoring) than new teachers in schools where leaders do not focus on teacher support. Further, if new teachers are in a school or district that has very weak internal leadership or lacks the capacity to support new teachers, the local BTSA program can serve as an important source of support, but only if the BTSA program itself is well run.

## Recent Improvements to BTSA

For those programs that use CFASST, most interaction between support providers and beginning teachers revolved around the various components of the CFASST process. CFASST is an integral component of nearly all BTSA programs and has been evaluated and refined since it was first developed. Since the first pilot implementation, CFASST trainings for support providers have been changed in response to evaluations and comments from support providers and BTSA administrators, and the assessment has been differentiated for first-year and second-year teachers. CFASST Year 2 was piloted in 1999-2000 and released statewide in 2000 (Clark, 2001)—meaning that nearly all BTSA programs should have a system for formatively assessing their first- and second-year teachers in preparation for recommending candidates for their professional (Level II) credential. Further, the standards in Draft Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs have been revised to better reflect the changes to BTSA and CFASST, and in anticipation of a two-tier credentialing process.<sup>16</sup>

Revisions to the structure of CFASST and other changes resulting from the expansion of BTSA may have contributed to the differences we found between BTSA participants with 2 or fewer years of experience and those with 3 to 5 years of experience. Table 19 shows that BTSA participants with 2 or fewer years of experience were more likely than those with 3 to 5 years of experience have their mentor visit during instruction (100% versus 89%) talk with their mentors about classroom observations, (100% versus 83%), demonstrate lessons in the classroom (74% versus 48%), and be invited to their mentor's classroom to observe (68% versus 36%).<sup>17</sup>

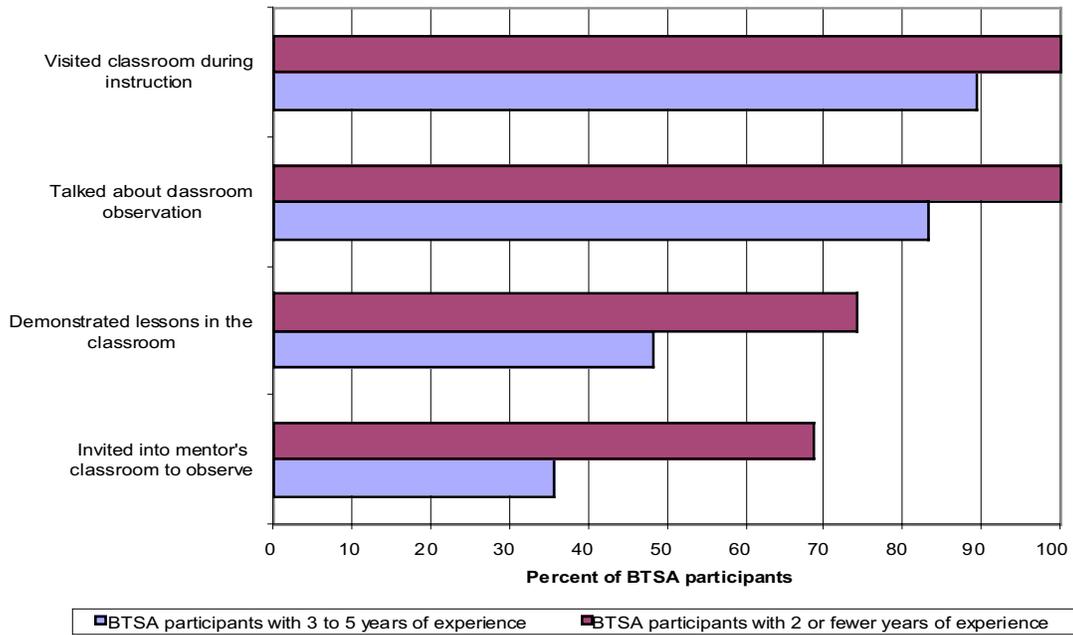
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<sup>16</sup> The *Draft Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs* were approved by CTC on September 6, 2001 and approval was withdrawn in the October 2001 meeting. The draft standards are currently under reconsideration; subsequent approvals by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction and the State Board of Education would be required before the standards can be implemented. (CTC, 2001b).

<sup>17</sup> These comparisons estimate only changes in teachers' BTSA experience as the program expanded in the last 5 years. Some teachers with 3 to 5 years of experience may have participated in BTSA during the last 2 years.

**Table 19**

*Percentage of BTSA Participants Reporting Engagement in Mentor Activities at Least Once, by Years of Experience*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.

Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

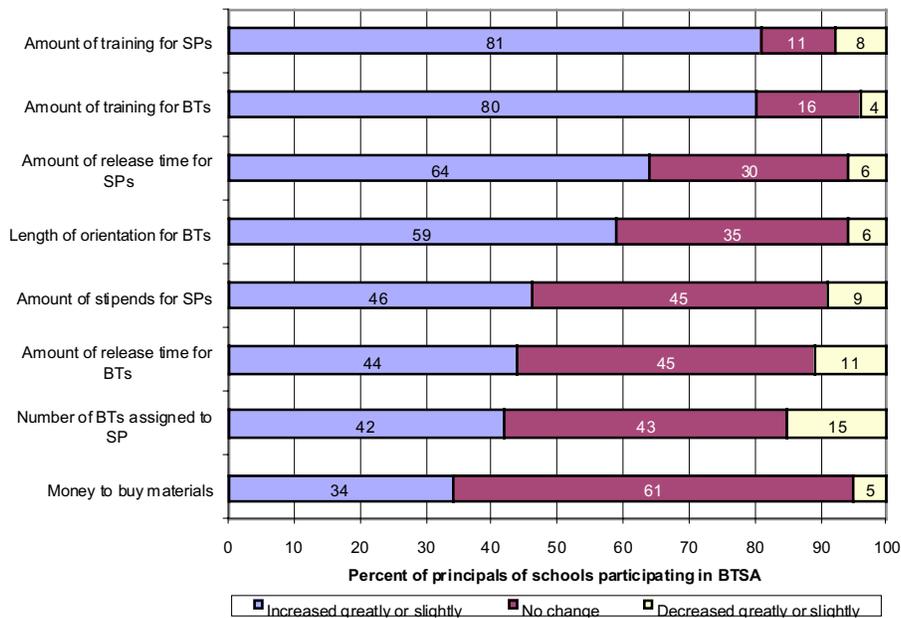
Comments on the CFASST process and components reflect the tension between the recognition on the part of most BTSA participants that formative assessment is a valuable and constructive experience and the amount of time and paperwork required to fulfill all the requirements. Although many teachers and administrators mentioned the value of CFASST, one caveat was nearly always included: the amount of paperwork. One beginning teacher summed it up: “If there wasn’t so much paperwork, it would be a wonderful tool. The triplicate box sometimes gets in the way, but [the assessment has] good intentions.”

## Maintaining Support Services in the Context of BTSA Expansion

Local BTSA programs face the challenge of increasing their size while maintaining their quality and intensity. Through our survey data, we found that BTSA programs successfully met this challenge. In those places where BTSA participation had increased over time, principals reported that services and resources for BTSA participants in their schools had either remained the same or increased. Table 20 illustrates that 81% of principals reported that the amount of training for support providers increased either greatly or slightly. Forty-two percent of principals also reported that the number of beginning teachers assigned to a support provider increased greatly or slightly, whereas only 15% of principals reported that BTSA expansion brought a decrease in the number of beginning teachers assigned to a support provider.

**Table 20**

*Principals Reporting Increase, No Change, or Decrease in Services as a Result of BTSA Expansion*



Notes: 1. SP = support provider; BT = beginning teacher.

2. See Appendix B for statistical information.

Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

Quality of training activities provided by BTSA. Despite principals' overwhelmingly positive responses indicating increases in BTSA-related services, case study data suggest that some BTSA components need improvement. In particular, CFASST-related training for support providers drew mixed reviews. At one end of the spectrum, a new program director reported: "CFASST is probably the best training the state has done in a long, long time." One support

provider from the same program described the training as intensive, with several not very focused follow-ups:

Training for support providers is 1 week long, and throughout the year we receive short updates. During the school year, we get substitutes in the classroom (after testing and most deadlines are met)—it's pretty intensive, and lots of it is training in all of the paperwork. One thing they really accentuate is the need to be a shoulder to lean on—a lot of reflective conversation, helping [beginning teachers] keep their heads above water.

A support provider from another district related the change in the trainings she received over the past few years to more paperwork than she noticed in the past, but the trainings were still a good opportunity to connect with other teachers.

We had training to become a BTSA coach for 2 or 3 days. This is ongoing for support providers. It is clear what is required of us as support providers. We have checklists. There is a lot more paperwork this year, and it seems more vague than years past. I don't know why.

And another comment from a BTSA administrator in a different program illustrates a belief that CFASST is a good learning process for teachers, but that the training is not as reflective as it used to be:

The state-level training is not as good as it used to be: it needs to have more emphasis on the reasons behind the activities, or it's hard for the new trainers to embrace it; it's not as meaningful. If the trainers present it as a format to follow and leave out the reasoning, the activities are seen only as paperwork, not as documentation...The state needs to make more effort to make CFASST a tool, not a routine...The program has grown too big too fast, to train too many people; it has become a trainer-of-trainers model where the emphasis is on learning how to follow the leader's notes.

Thus, we found a variety of opinions about the quality of training for support providers. Whereas some found CFASST to be a useful guide, others complained about the amount of paperwork and the decline in the quality of training.

## **IMPACT OF BTSA-RELATED SUPPORT ON PARTICIPANTS**

In an effort to understand the effects of induction activities on BTSA participants, we analyzed survey and case study data regarding the perceived impact and value of such activities. In this section, data from both BTSA participants and principals are explored.

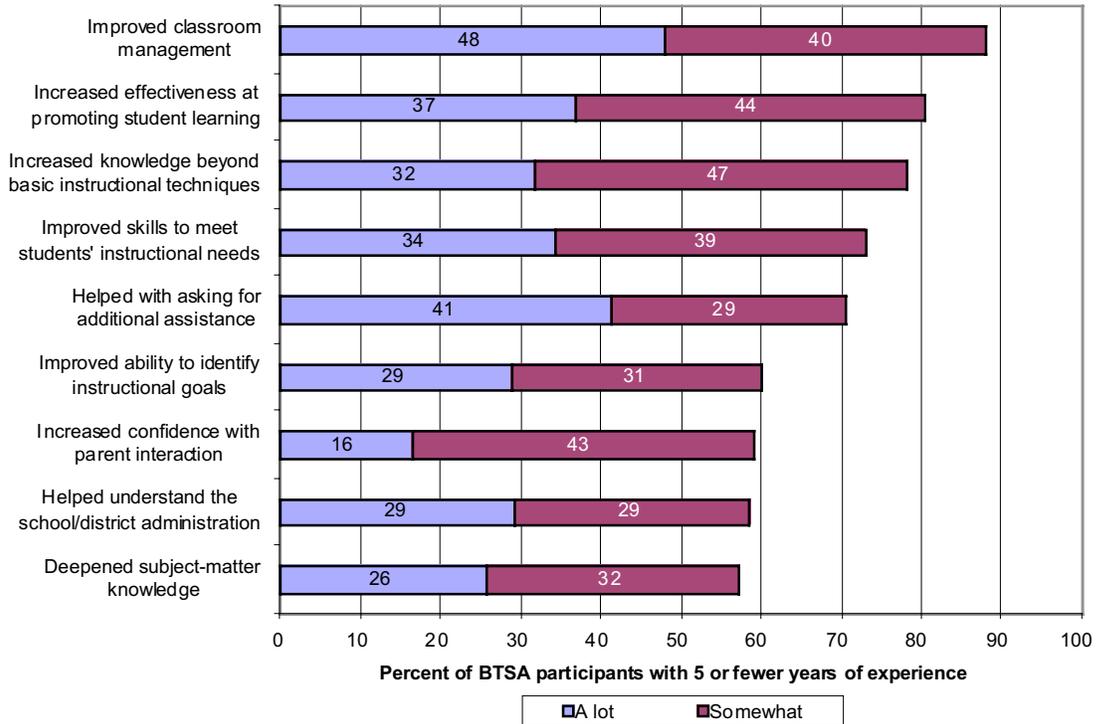
### **BTSA Participants' Perceived Impact**

Survey data indicate that BTSA is having some impact on most teachers (see Table 21). Along each dimension, more than half of BTSA participants reported that their induction activities contributed at least somewhat to their teaching practice. BTSA appears to have the greatest impact on classroom management, with 48% of respondents with 5 or fewer years of experience reporting that BTSA contributed “a lot” in that area. BTSA participants experienced the least impact on their confidence and responsiveness in interactions with parents, with only 16% indicating a contribution of “a lot.” One beginning teacher described how BTSA support helped her to change some teaching practices:

Working on curriculum and standards really refined my practice. Last year was good, but this year has really gotten down to the nitty gritty. I realized that my pacing was totally off. BTSA helped to put the buzzwords into place, [and I learned that] differentiated instruction can happen when I was guided through it. This year has been tremendous, the best teaching year.

**Table 21**

*Contributions of Induction Support Activities to BTSA Participants' Teaching*



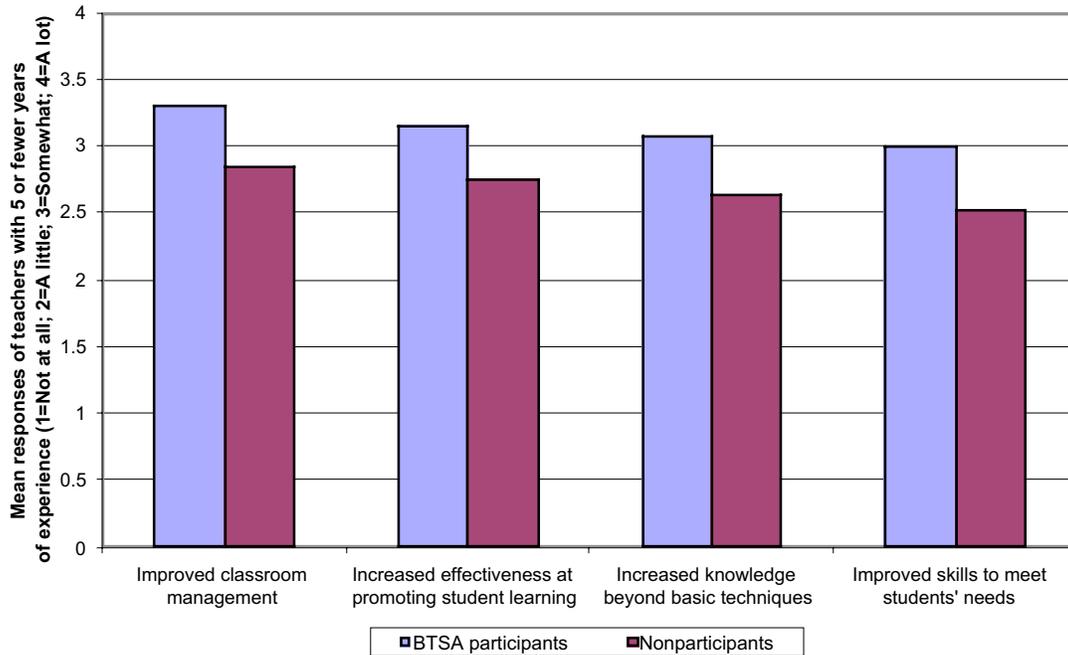
Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.

Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

In addition, survey data indicate that teachers who participated in BTSA found the support they received to be significantly more effective in the areas of improving classroom management, increasing effectiveness at promoting student learning, increasing their knowledge beyond basic instructional and assessment techniques, and improving their skills to meet the instructional needs of their students than did those who did not participate in BTSA (see Table 21). Still, it is important to note that the mean responses for the activities in Table 11 hover in the “somewhat effective” response category: BTSA participants found the support they received in these areas to be somewhat to slightly more than somewhat effective, whereas non-participants found the support they received through other programs to be less effective.

**Table 22**

*Mean Effectiveness of Induction Support, by BTSA Participation*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.

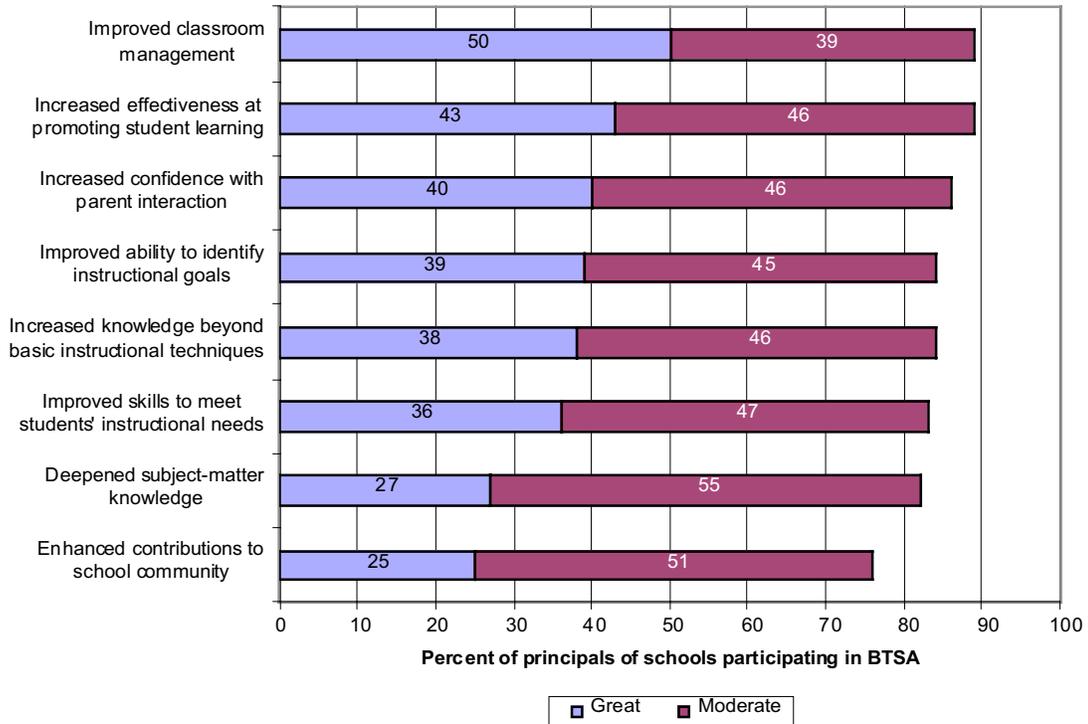
Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

### The Perceived Impact on Teachers by Principals of Schools Participating in BTSA

Principals of schools participating in a local BTSA program reported contributions of induction activities in a pattern similar to that of teachers. More than 70% of principals indicated that BTSA-related activities had at least a moderate effect on their beginning teachers' contributions to their school communities, skills to meet students' needs, and abilities to identify appropriate instructional goals, among other elements related to teaching. Table 23 illustrates that, like teachers, 50% of principals reported that the support resulted in a great improvement in their beginning teachers' classroom management skills. Fewer principals (27%) reported that induction activities deepened their teachers' grasp of the subject matter they were assigned to teach.

**Table 23**

*Principals Reporting Great or Moderate Effects of the Support Received from BTSA on Their Beginning Teachers*



Note: See Appendix B for statistical information.

Source: Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (Shields et al., 2001).

Teachers' and principals' reports suggest that the resources and structure that BTSA brings to induction are important contributors to the provision of more frequent and effective support. Interviews with both teachers and principals support this finding. As one support provider explained:

BTSA is a great program—referrals, information, the support provider is a good sounding board. It provides more quality control [than we had previously], formal support relationships, and [makes] the support provider more aware of her own teaching and improves her own practice.

**Supporting teachers through deepening their subject-matter knowledge.** One area in which BTSA appeared to have less impact is that of deepening subject-matter knowledge. Slightly more than one-quarter of both teachers and principals indicated that induction activities helped teachers “a lot” with deepening their grasp of subject matter. Teacher preparation institutions and the BTSA program traditionally have relied on teachers' undergraduate institutions to provide them with subject-matter knowledge; however, BTSA is currently

attempting to increase the focus on content by integrating content standards into the formative assessment process. Some of this increase in attention to subject-matter knowledge is apparent when comparisons are made between teachers with less experience (i.e., may have participated in BTSA more recently) and teachers with more experience. BTSA participants who had 2 or fewer years of experience were more likely to report that their induction programs helped them “a lot” with deepening their grasp of subject matter (38%) than BTSA participants who had 3 to 5 years of experience (16%).<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, a new version of CFASST Year 2 that focuses on the K-12 content standards and how to teach to them was piloted in 2000-01. Starting in 2001-02, CFASST Year 2 will become an integral part of BTSA programs that serve second-year teachers. The teachers and support providers we interviewed who participated in the pilot test responded favorably to the new focus on content standards:

The first year, I found [CFASST Year 1] to be kind of redundant. It felt like I did classroom management twice. This year, [CFASST Year 2] was much more applicable. The second year of BTSA that focuses on content is important. The revisions to CFASST that will reduce the paperwork and make it shorter should help.

Although it appears that revisions to CFASST Year 2 were well received in the field, it is important to note that the focus on content will place further demands on support providers. BTSA directors will have to make more strategic matches of beginning teachers and support providers or provide for different kinds of matches (e.g., subject-matter specialists) to offer new teachers the best content knowledge support.

### **Impact of BTSA on the Retention of Teachers in the Profession**

In addition to increasing teachers’ skills and knowledge, teacher induction programs such as BTSA are designed to increase the retention of teachers. This purpose of BTSA is described in AB 1266 (Mazzoni), which states:

The Legislature recognizes that the public invests heavily in the preparation of prospective teachers, and that more than half of all new teachers leave some California school districts after one or two years in the classroom. Intensive professional development and assessment are necessary...to retain greater numbers of capable beginning teachers  
[Education Code, Section 44279.1(a)]

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<sup>18</sup> Statistical information for this comparison is available in Appendix B.

Even as legislators recognize the attrition problem in many schools and districts across California, little is really known about statewide retention patterns. Indeed, the state lacks a data system that is capable of tracking the attrition of new teachers.<sup>19</sup> However, collecting retention data has been an important element of local-level BTSA program evaluations, and, as of 1998, local-level programs were required to include retention data as part of their Program Implementation Plans.<sup>20</sup> In the absence of a statewide database, we have to rely on uneven reports from local programs. One recent analysis of local program reports estimated a 93% retention rate among BTSA participants during their first year (Briggs et al., 2001). Thus, most teachers who were participating in BTSA in 2000-01 remained in their jobs during that year. Because this analysis did not include a comparison group, however, we do not know whether that figure is lower or higher for nonparticipants. Other research has demonstrated that induction programs can lead to increased retention among participating teachers.<sup>21</sup> Until California establishes a statewide data system that can track the state's teachers, policy-makers will have to hope that these promising outcomes of induction programs hold true for the whole state. Despite the promise of induction programs like BTSA to increase teacher retention, a variety of factors, such as workplace conditions, strong principal leadership, and school culture, combine to affect teachers' decisions to stay in the profession.

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19 See SRI's report for Task 2B of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program for a more detailed analysis of the changes required to obtain more accurate retention (and other) data from the state's data system (Esch and Young, 2001).

20 In 1998, local programs began including retention data as part of their Program Improvement Plans.

21 Included in this analysis were the following studies, each of which has a sample size of at least 100 beginning teachers: Odell and Ferraro (1992), Blackburn (1977), Colbert and Wolff (1992).

## **THE INDIRECT IMPACT OF BTSA**

This evaluation clearly shows that beginning teachers who participate in BTSA are far more likely to receive intensive and sustained support than those who do not participate. In addition, teachers report that the kind of support they receive through BTSA helps them become better teachers. BTSA also has had an effect beyond the confines of the program and the beginning teachers who participate. In this section, we examine the contributions BTSA has made to the broader teacher development system.

### **BTSA's Impact on Support Providers**

Research literature frequently cites the indirect effects of mentorship on those who do the mentoring—in BTSA's case, the support providers.<sup>22</sup> Beyond the existing research, our interviews with support providers across the state confirmed the benefits of mentoring others. As one support provider explained it:

As a support provider, you think you're training others, but you're more reflective about your own practice. Beginning teachers are so overwhelmed, really struggling in midyear, so it's hard to eke out enough time—hard but productive. Everyone wins.

It is not unusual for support providers to report that BTSA was the best professional development that they have ever had. In schools where there were sufficient numbers of accomplished teachers and just a few beginning teachers, the teaching staff generally agreed that BTSA is a high-quality program, one that is valuable to both new teachers and support providers. They reported that BTSA is focused, offers opportunities for reflection and good professional conversations, and offers opportunities to observe good teaching.

In a few districts, we found additional benefits of BTSA participation for support providers. Specifically, some BTSA programs are coordinating master's degree programs with their college or university partners. In these cases, support providers are able to use the knowledge and skills gained through BTSA and CFASST training toward the completion of a master's degree.

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<sup>22</sup> Healy and Welchert (1990) describe evidence that mentoring results in positive outcomes for mentors, including career and personal benefits such as increased collegiality, creativity, and a sense of efficacy (Ruskus, 1988). Mentors also gain increased satisfaction and professional recognition, as well as new knowledge and skills [Blackburn, Chapman, & Cameron, 1981; Dalton, Thompson, & Price, 1977; Kram, 1985 (all cited in Healy & Welchert, 1990); Hoffman et al., 1986]. Mentoring also can be a type of career advancement for experienced teachers, granting them increased status, empowerment, and renewal (Ruskus, 1988, cited in Gold, 1996). For full analyses, see Humphrey et al. (2000).

## **BTSA and the Importance of Induction**

BTSA also has had an indirect effect on educators' view of the importance of induction. Our survey of teachers across the state found that 98% of California teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience received some kind of induction support. Thus, whether a district has a BTSA program or not, almost all teachers receive some form of induction support. Although BTSA is not a direct cause of nearly universal induction for new teachers, the state's support of BTSA has clearly signaled to educators and the public the importance of induction. BTSA sets an expectation of new teacher support by providing financial resources and expecting districts to do the same by providing "in-kind" funds.

BTSA also has helped transform traditional views of teacher preparation and induction. By working with local colleges and universities as partners, the program has helped educators begin to view preparation and induction as part of the continuum of learning to teach. In parts of the state with large numbers of teachers without full credentials, the blurring of the line between preparation and induction is readily apparent. In those circumstances, districts and universities are being forced to rethink traditional roles and responsibilities for the preparation of new teachers. Although the use of mentors predates BTSA, the structure and training that BTSA supplies to its support providers have had an influence on pre-intern and intern programs.

## **BTSA as a Model for Other States**

Other states have looked to BTSA as a model for their own induction programs. BTSA officials have been generous in their assistance to other states and consulted on key components of the program for out-of-state educators. For example, Texas's Beginning Educator Support System (TxBESS) is based on the BTSA model. In addition, California state officials consulted with Texas during TxBESS's development.

## **THE CHALLENGES OF CONTINUED BTSA EXPANSION**

Taking a program to scale quickly while maintaining quality is not easy. Our research on BTSA expansion suggests that this program has avoided diluting its quality despite rapid expansion. Although the nature, intensity, and impact of induction support for California teachers vary, of those receiving induction support, BTSA participants are more likely to benefit from the activities than teachers who do not participate in BTSA. However, as BTSA continues to expand, it is likely to face significant challenges, which we discuss below.

### **The Issue of Scale**

In those districts with relatively small and predictable numbers of new teachers, coherent induction programs have been established or expanded with relative ease. By contrast, in districts where a relatively large proportion of the workforce is hired every year, providing high-quality induction support is a much greater challenge. However, most districts incurred some difficulties during the expansion process. For example, this program director from a medium-size district reported:

[When we first started, we tried to] focus on knowing the individual teacher's needs. ...[Our] scale-up [took us] from 35 to 160 [beginning teachers]. Training, building capacity was hard, but not truly problematic. [I'm not excited about] some support provider–beginning teacher matches, but I think that will always be the case. ...Communication was challenging. Also, administrators don't really understand how it all works.

Some consortia with rural districts face special challenges. For example, as one BTSA director explained:

Right now [our program] is able to accommodate all who want their services, with the exception of a few in the extremely distant areas...there are only about 25 eligible teachers in [this large] region who are not getting BTSA. The problem with capacity is the lack of travel time, substitutes, and local people way out in the "hub" areas who can help with the training of the support providers and coordinate groups.

California's large urban districts faced the most serious challenges. In those districts that hire large numbers of new teachers every year, recruiting participants, finding support providers, monitoring program quality, and maintaining accurate records test the capacity of the central

office. Obviously, managing a program that serves 50 beginning teachers is much easier than managing one that serves hundreds or even thousands of beginning teachers. Other challenges compound the problem of scale, especially in large urban districts.

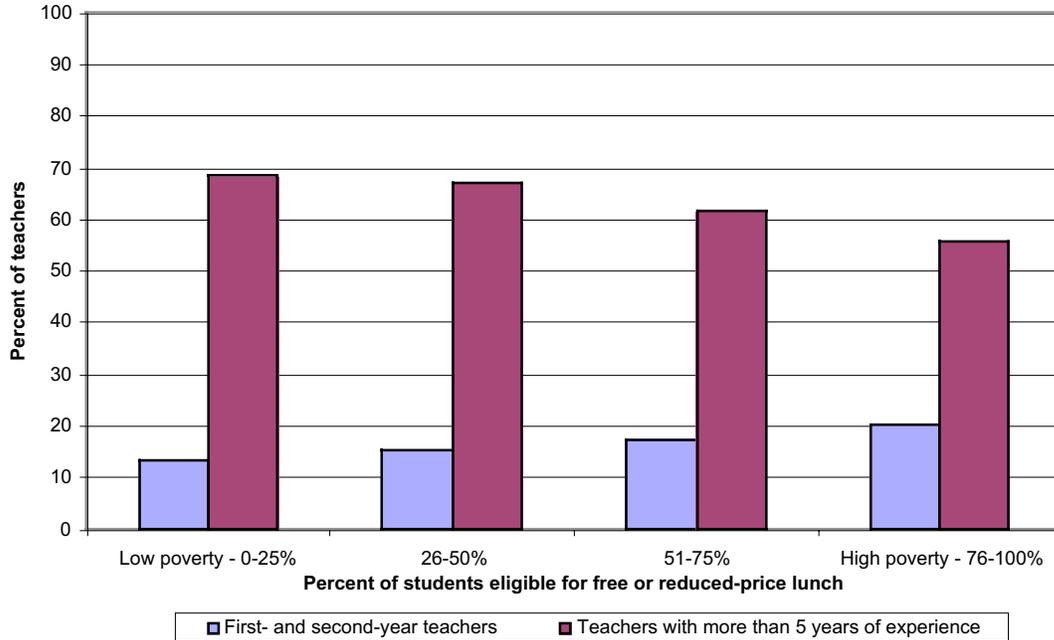
### **The Supply of Support Providers**

Closely related to the number of new teachers needing induction support, BTSA programs are increasingly challenged by the dwindling supply of potential support providers. At least three factors are involved: (1) the maldistribution of veteran teachers willing to serve as support providers, (2) the increasing rates of retirement among the teaching workforce, and (3) the increasing demands for the skills of veteran teachers.

Maldistribution of veteran teachers. Across the state, there are four teachers with more than 5 years of experience to every first- and second-year teacher (CDE, 2001). Of course, not all such experienced teachers are qualified or willing to be support providers. Even assuming that the ratio of accomplished teachers to beginning teachers is adequate statewide, the distribution of potential support providers is uneven. High-poverty schools, schools with low API scores, and schools with higher percentages of minority students have lower ratios of potential support providers to new teachers than do lower-poverty schools, schools with higher API scores, and schools with lower percentages of minority students. Table 24 illustrates how the relative proportion of new teachers to experienced teachers differs by poverty level; in this case, there are almost twice as many potential support providers per new teacher in low-poverty (5.2) schools as in high-poverty schools (2.8).

**Table 24**

*Percentages of New Teachers and Experienced Teachers, by School Poverty Level*



Source: CDE (2001).

Increasing rates of retirement among the teacher workforce. Demographic shifts during the next decade will be a significant challenge to BTSA and the supply of support providers. Indeed, we can expect teacher retirement rates to increase relentlessly—and perhaps drastically—as baby boomers now reaching the height of their careers begin to retire. According to the annual report of the California State Teachers’ Retirement System (CalSTRS), almost 40% of all its active members were 50 years or older in 1999-2000. At the average retirement age of 60, the majority of these members will retire by 2010 (CalSTRS, 2001).<sup>23</sup> Using conservative assumptions and CalSTRS membership data, we estimate that the annual retirement rate for teachers will peak in 2007-08 at 4.9%. Thereafter the retirement rate will begin to decline, but in 2009-10 it will still be approximately 4.1% of the workforce, compared with today’s estimated rate of 1.7% (CalSTRS, 2001).<sup>24</sup>

23 CalSTRS membership data include K-12 classroom teachers, community college faculty, and some nonclassroom personnel. The data cannot be disaggregated to analyze these groups separately.

24 SRI analysis. Retirement rate projections use age cohort data for CalSTRS membership. We estimate that in 2007-08, the retirement rate for CalSTRS members at the average reported age of 60 will reach 2.88 times the average retirement rate between 1991-92 and 1999-2000, and 2.43 times that average by 2009-10. For the complete analysis, see Shields et al. (2001).

Increasing demands on veteran teachers. Many support providers do multiple leadership- and support-related tasks at their schools. A support provider in one school listed her nonteaching roles as: “PAR mentor, BTSA, Student Action Referral Team representative, Faculty Senate representative, also supervises color guard and school plays.” A BTSA director offered another example of the burdens on experienced teachers:

Qualified teachers who have always done the BTSA and mentor programs are doing other things. What’s the priority at underperforming schools? Teachers are so stressed about standards and testing that they don’t want to leave the classroom. If that’s all [experienced teachers are] doing, support providers are okay. But they’re being asked to do a lot of other things.

The expansion of the demands being placed on accomplished teachers is a direct threat to the further growth and development of BTSA. When the pressures of the API and state accountability measures are added in, many accomplished teachers we interviewed were overwhelmed, exhausted, and discouraged. The schedule of one veteran teacher tells it all:

I get to school at 7 a.m. and the kids are already waiting for me outside my room. For the first hour I teach reading, then we have a 25-minute homeroom. Then there is a 15-minute nutrition break, but I use it to get supplies and make copies. I then teach four class periods, but we have a block schedule so I get one group for second and third period and another group for fifth and sixth period. I have the last period to take care of my responsibilities as department chair. You know, filling out order forms, moving supplies, etc. I also teach one class of sixth-grade science. I leave about 4:30. Until then, kids are in and they work in my room. I correct papers when I can then, but often I am at meetings. I have two regular meetings a week plus meetings that the district calls. I serve on one committee that is selecting new textbooks. So I usually have meetings 4 days a week. I spend from 6 to 7 on the phone with my mentees. I am helping six new teachers. I work from 7 to 11 correcting papers and planning. I have worked six of the last seven Saturdays at the school. I ran the science fair. I also held the student-led conferences for parents.

Consequences of the shortage of veteran teachers. Districts that have a shortage of qualified, experienced teachers to serve as support providers find themselves in the position of having to either lower standards (i.e., selection criteria) or make trade-offs when they assign mentors to new teachers. Whereas some of the districts without shortages can screen their support providers, districts with shortages struggle to find anyone to do the job. “Anyone” can often be someone who is a recent BTSA graduate him/herself. As one teacher put it:

So, I was relatively much more well prepared than the other teachers. This year, we're able to give each other more support—as much as a second-year teacher can support a first-year teacher.

In one district with an extreme shortage of experienced teachers, the board passed a policy prioritizing each group of new teachers for the assignment of mentors. District interns get first priority, followed by pre-interns, then BTSA participants, and finally emergency permit holders. This order makes sense from the perspective that the first three groups of new teachers are eligible for state-funded support, and, among those three groups, the district intern program is the largest and most expeditious route to a credential. The downside of this response to state policy and local conditions is that the neediest new teachers get the least support.

Across the state, BTSA directors and principals expressed concerns about the growing difficulty of finding qualified support providers and mentors:

For BTSA they must be credentialed to act as a support provider; for our pre-interns—anyone that the principal deems okay can be a support teacher. Some of our beginning teachers qualify for BTSA and are supporting pre-interns. As for the mentors, we are running out. There are just not enough support providers for all of the people who need support as a result of all of the new programs (e.g., mentor teachers, literacy coaches, new math initiatives; another one may come for ELLs). The pool of experienced people is going to shrink.

Even within districts, there is substantial variation in the ratio of credentialed, experienced teachers to new teachers. The shortage of support providers is most severe in the hardest-to-staff schools because they have relatively few credentialed teachers. For example, one district had some schools with 60% of its teachers lacking full credentials and others with no uncredentialed teachers. In many cases, new teachers were distributed across the grades or subject areas. For example, some of our case study elementary schools had entire grade levels (typically the upper grades) filled with new teachers. This practice only exacerbated an already challenging situation, given the goal of matching support providers with new teachers by assignment. At middle and high schools, content also becomes an issue. As a BTSA coach told us:

Well, we're doing it. It's always hard to get coaches, but you do what you have to. One year, I found myself coaching a home economics teacher. You do what you have to do. We try to match content between coaches and new teachers. If we're real lucky, we do content and conference period coordination.

## Workplace Conditions

Perhaps the most daunting challenge is the urgent need to improve working conditions for all teachers and learning environments for all children in the state. Overcrowded school buildings, large and impersonal schools, difficult assignments, extra responsibilities, weak leadership, and poor compensation are familiar circumstances facing far too many California teachers. All of these workplace conditions are particularly difficult for beginning teachers, as they try to learn how to teach and cope with the seemingly insurmountable obstacles to their success and their students' learning.

BTSA participants are affected by poor working conditions in a variety of ways. When they take positions in California schools, new teachers go to work in school facilities that range from being well maintained and well equipped to being poorly maintained, ill equipped, and astoundingly overcrowded. For overcrowded schools that have had to move to year-round schedules, the shorter year and the longer teaching day limit the opportunities that support providers have to work with beginning teachers.

New teachers in overcrowded schools were more likely than their experienced colleagues to “rove” from classroom to classroom. In multitrack elementary schools, this might involve changing classrooms each month or two as teachers go on and off track. In secondary schools, it may mean keeping your instructional materials in a shopping cart and moving from classroom to classroom each period of the day as other teachers' classrooms free up. Importantly, there are schools that make efforts to protect their new teachers from these adverse workplace conditions. For example, one multitrack elementary school had a rule that new teachers would not rove. Of course, having any teacher rove places an extraordinary burden on the teacher and places the teacher's students at a disadvantage.

School size is also a factor in workplace conditions, and large schools can undermine the effectiveness of BTSA. In our case studies, it was hard to see how BTSA could operate effectively in 2,200-student elementary schools, 3,600-student middle schools, and 4,600-student high schools. BTSA appeared to work best when the entire school culture embraced the idea of inducting beginning teachers into the profession. Although these extremely large and impersonal schools struggled to establish that kind of supportive school climate, by and large they did not succeed.

School principals play a crucial role in creating a school climate that is conducive to supporting new teachers. As we have argued earlier, the most successful BTSA programs are found in schools where the entire school views the induction of new teachers as a collective responsibility. If the school principal does not or cannot create such a workplace environment, BTSA is less likely to work well. Unfortunately, in large, overcrowded schools and in schools

with large numbers of emergency teachers, the school office is reminiscent of an emergency room in a hospital. In these cases, principals are so busy performing triage that it takes an extraordinary leader to shape the school climate. With many programs and even more crises, BTSA can look like just another funding stream, just one more thing to do.

Another workplace condition that undermines a strong BTSA program is the system of teaching assignments for beginning teachers. New teachers often find themselves assigned to the most difficult classrooms and undesirable schedules. A common practice is to make assignments on the basis of seniority. The result in some elementary schools, for example, is that new teachers are assigned to an upper-grade class with 35 students, while their experienced colleagues opt to teach at the grade levels with reduced class sizes. In some secondary schools, new teachers reported having more classes to prepare for each day than their more experienced colleagues; this was especially true if the new teacher was hired after most courses had been assigned. New teachers also reported being assigned to classes that they did not feel prepared to teach. For example, one new high school science teacher we interviewed was assigned a “sheltered English” science course when she had not been trained in the instructional method, nor did she have more general knowledge about language acquisition.

We noted earlier that about 20% of beginning teachers reported having reduced duties. This is more than double the number of beginning teachers who reported receiving reduced duties just 2 years ago. Unfortunately, the portion of beginning teachers with reduced duties is still very small. Some districts in the state on year-round schedules are beginning to take steps to make sure that beginning teachers are not all assigned to the least desirable tracks. Still, it remains common for the least experienced teachers to be concentrated on tracks least like traditional schedules—tracks filled with students with the greatest needs.

Other workplace conditions that impinge on the successful induction of beginning teachers include shortages of curriculum materials and substitute teachers. It has become a truism that a teacher’s first year is the most difficult one. It does not have to be that way. BTSA is an attempt to help make a new teacher’s first and second years successful. More can be done, like reducing duties for beginning teachers. But until these schools are turned into good places to work and learn, even the best induction program will struggle.

## **BTSA'S FUTURE**

BTSA has gone from a relatively small program to a large and vital part of the state's strategy to improve the quality of teaching. BTSA is still expanding and remains a program that, when developed in the right circumstances, helps improve beginning teachers' skills and knowledge. When compared with beginning teachers who do not participate in BTSA, BTSA participants are far more likely to receive intensive and sustained support and are more likely to report significant benefits from that support. At the same time, BTSA programs will need to make significant improvements if all eligible beginning teachers are to benefit. Fewer than half of all BTSA participants report receiving the kinds of support and levels of intensity most likely to make significant contributions to their teaching. But, BTSA has established the curriculum and infrastructure necessary to expand and intensify the program for more beginning teachers.

### **BTSA and Underprepared Teachers**

BTSA's future is clouded by the growing number of underprepared teachers. Throughout the 1990s, California was unable to provide a fully-credentialed teacher for every child. Beginning in 1996-97 with the implementation of the state's Class-Size Reduction Program, the number of classroom teachers who lacked full credentials (defined as a preliminary or clear credential) grew dramatically. By the 2000-01 school year, California had 42,427 underprepared teachers (defined as all teachers lacking full credentials, including those holding emergency permits, waivers, intern credentials, and pre-intern certificates).<sup>25</sup> By that same year, half of all new teachers in California classrooms had not completed a preparation program.

California's underprepared teachers are not evenly distributed across the state. Instead, they are concentrated in schools serving poor, minority, and underperforming students. These schools represent a significant portion of all California schools. By 2000-01, at least one out of every five teachers lacked full credentials in nearly a quarter of all schools in the state. In the worst cases, more than half of a school's teachers were underprepared.

The situation has worsened since 1996-97. Our projections show that the demand for teachers will continue to grow. From 2001-02 to 2009-10, 195,000 teachers will need to be hired as baby boomers retire from the workforce. Given current trends, the total number of underprepared teachers is expected to rise to 65,000 by the end of the decade.<sup>26</sup>

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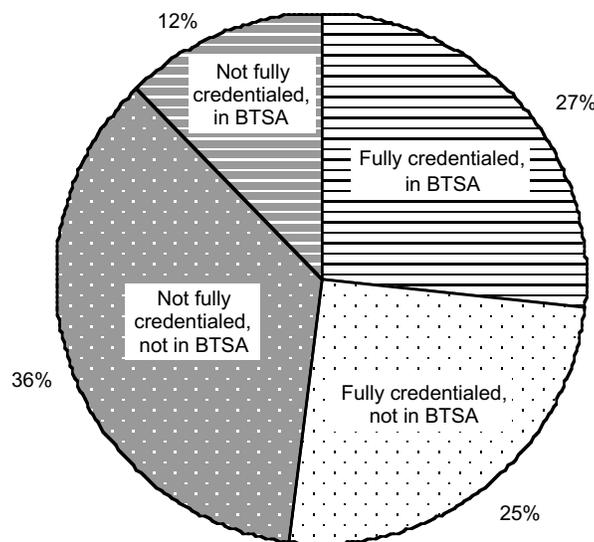
<sup>25</sup> Although there is a good deal of variation in the skills and knowledge of this 14% of the workforce, these teachers were placed in classrooms before completing a preparation program.

<sup>26</sup> For a complete analysis see Shields et al. (2001).

BTSA was developed before the recent explosion of underprepared teachers. One result is that BTSA actually only serves an estimated 4 out of 10 of all new teachers who need induction support. Table 25 portrays the proportions of first- and second-year teachers, by credential status and BTSA participation. It shows that 27% of all first- and second-year teachers participated in BTSA and were also fully credentialed.<sup>27</sup> Twelve percent of all first- and second-year teachers were not fully credentialed and participated in BTSA. Sixty-one percent of all first- and second-year teachers did not participate in BTSA.

**Table 25**

*First- and Second-Year Teachers, by Credential Status and Estimated BTSA Participation, 1999-2000*



Sources: CDE (2000); CERC (2001); SRI analysis.

The shortage of teachers has dramatic effects on all parts of the education system. The easy availability of teaching jobs has weakened the incentives to earn a credential prior to employment. As a result, teacher preparation institutions are seeing a dramatic increase in the number of “teacher candidates” who are already responsible for running a classroom.

Policy-makers have tried to cope with the increasing numbers of underprepared teachers by expanding intern programs (for teachers without credentials who have met subject-matter requirements) and creating pre-intern programs (for teachers without credentials who have not met subject-matter requirements). Arguing that BTSA is most appropriate for teachers who already have been prepared in preservice programs, BTSA has tried to move the large numbers of

<sup>27</sup> Table 12 includes first- and second-year teachers with preliminary and professional clear credentials (fully credentialed) and emergency permit, pre-intern certificates, and intern credentials (not fully credentialed). Special education teachers are included in both categories.

emergency permit teachers who had been participating in BTSA into either intern or pre-intern programs. In districts where the vast majority of new teachers are underprepared, BTSA programs have been shrinking at the same time that intern and pre-intern programs have been growing. Unfortunately, the level of support and the quality of these programs vary across the state. Indeed, pre-intern programs are concerned primarily with getting participants to pass subject-matter tests and rarely offer much support beyond test preparation. Intern programs typically assign a mentor to the participating teacher, but the quality of the mentorship is uneven. Unlike BTSA, there is usually not a formal “curriculum,” such as CFASST, associated with intern mentorships.

The introduction of the new credentialing system, expected to begin in 2003, is likely to further complicate matters. A key feature of this new system will be mandatory participation in an induction program. The problem for BTSA, especially in districts that hire large numbers of underprepared teachers, is that the majority of teachers have been in the classroom for many years before earning a preliminary credential. Not surprisingly, they are reluctant to participate in a program for beginning teachers after having spent many years in the classroom. In 2000-01, the state had nearly 19,000 teachers without a preliminary or professional clear credential who had been teaching for 3 or more years (CDE, 2001).

In addition, BTSA was designed for newly credentialed teachers, not teachers with 3 or more years of experience. Although there are elements of BTSA that can benefit all teachers, the program is a mismatch for underprepared teachers, out-of-state veteran teachers who must complete BTSA to obtain a California credential, and teachers with 3 or more years of experience who taught before earning a credential.

It is also unclear how the character of BTSA will change once it is a mandatory program. Some argue that it may lose its current emphasis on support. As one BTSA liaison at a partnership IHE put it:

As you move from something that’s voluntary to mandatory, how do you do that so that the spirit of the program is maintained? The sheer number creates challenges; you can’t match new teachers and support providers for personality, grade level, teaching style, etc.

An additional problem is the capacity of districts to take on the new credentialing responsibility. In our case studies, we were struck by how few districts seemed aware of the implications of this new policy. Clearly, large districts will need to build up their capacity to manage their new record-keeping responsibilities, not to mention expanding BTSA rapidly to serve all newly certified teachers.

If the new credential system is to bring meaningful improvements to the quality of teaching in the state, steps need to be taken to ensure that participation in an induction program is more than a formality. At this point, it is not clear what constitutes completion of an induction program, or what skills and knowledge teachers who complete an induction program should have. Policy-makers should be alert to the unintended consequences of well-meaning reforms. The two-tier credentialing system holds great promise, but also possibly great peril if districts are overwhelmed with new credentialing responsibilities and teachers view induction as merely an additional hoop to jump through.

### **BTSA's Role in the Underprepared-Teacher Crisis**

BTSA did not cause the current problems associated with the underprepared-teacher crisis. BTSA officials have tried to keep the focus of their program on new fully-credentialed teachers. This approach is understandable, given the original design of the program. However, the unintended consequence of this policy is that the new teachers who need the most support—underprepared teachers—receive the least support. In addition, BTSA itself is being undermined in districts with large numbers of underprepared teachers. In those places and for those underprepared teachers, BTSA is largely irrelevant.

Leaving the preparation and induction responsibilities to intern and pre-intern programs, given their current level of resources, is an insufficient response. As policy-makers try to address the crisis of underprepared teachers, programs like BTSA are likely targets for the redistribution of resources, given the comparative advantage BTSA participants have over underprepared teachers. Already, expansion of the intern and pre-intern programs is institutionalizing the underprepared route into the profession. Unless the incentives for earning a credential prior to teaching are restored, policy-makers are likely to redistribute resources to try to shore up supports for underprepared teachers.

The situation cries out for a comprehensive rather than a programmatic solution. As local officials report, BTSA program directors are increasingly responsible for intern and pre-intern programs, along with the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. They argue for more flexibility across the programs so that resources can be applied according to local needs rather than strict program requirements. Whether more local flexibility is the answer or not, BTSA's future is inexorably tied to meeting the needs of all new teachers. Failure to address the induction needs of a growing majority of new teachers in California is not a realistic option for the long-term health of the BTSA program.

As BTSA program directors find themselves responsible for a growing list of programs, including pre-intern, intern, and PAR, some are beginning to rethink how these programs might be

more reasonably integrated. Similarly, as teacher preparation faculty at IHEs see their job of training teachers change, some are rethinking ways to recapture their influence over the skills and knowledge of new teachers. If BTSA is to become a meaningful component of teacher development in the parts of the state most heavily affected by teacher shortages, it will need to help lead the reinvention of teacher preparation and induction to match the new realities. At the very least, this effort will require close partnerships between BTSA leadership, IHEs, and school districts to plan better ways to prepare uncredentialed teachers before putting them in classrooms. Some districts are beginning to grapple with this challenge as they try to integrate components of BTSA into intern programs. However, unless the problem of underprepared teachers is solved, BTSA will never be able to meet its potential.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are based on the findings of this report. Our findings suggest the importance of addressing such basic problems as school facilities and workplace conditions. For purposes of this report, however, the following recommendations are focused primarily on the BTSA program.

**Recommendation 1:** Award planning grants, and then waivers, to partnerships of IHEs and school districts to develop comprehensive preparation and induction programs, using funds from BTSA, PAR, intern, pre-intern programs, and professional development programs. These comprehensive programs would target the development of teachers working in schools that currently have more than 20% of their teaching staff without full credentials.

**Recommendation 2:** The Induction Task Force should work with the new Principal Training Program to ensure that an induction component is part of the new professional development program for administrators.

**Recommendation 3:** Address the shortage of support providers by creating a cadre of veteran teachers in each BTSA Cluster to serve as full-time support providers in schools with shortages of accomplished teachers who are willing to serve as support providers.

**Recommendation 4:** Supply districts, in partnership with IHEs, with the expertise and funds necessary to administer the new credential system.

**Recommendation 5:** Expand the BTSA Interagency Task Force to include state officials responsible for PAR, intern, and pre-intern programs, refocus its responsibilities to include the induction of all new teachers in the state, and rename it the “Induction Interagency Task Force.”

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **Task 4 Report**

**Methodologies for Studying Program Effects on Increased Knowledge and Skills of Beginning Teachers**



## **METHODOLOGIES FOR STUDYING PROGRAM EFFECTS ON INCREASED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS**

As part of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program, WestEd carried out a study to recommend methodologies that address a question that is core to BTSA:

- What is the effect of the program on participants' knowledge and skills?

This question addresses one of BTSA's main goals: increasing the knowledge and skill of beginning teachers. WestEd conducted a literature review, interviewed key researchers, and conducted a small-scale pilot study in order to advise policymakers and stakeholders of the most efficient ways to analyze the effects of the BTSA program on teacher knowledge and skills. Assessing the impact of the BTSA program on the knowledge and skills of beginning teachers fits within a broader discussion in the field of education that focuses on assessing individual teachers' knowledge and skills. The literature is clear that such assessment is a complicated, challenging task, and this report confirms such judgments. As Ingersoll (1996) notes, one consequence of the effort to assess teachers is a disagreement in the field of education over what skills and knowledge are essential for effective teaching, and what methods are most appropriate and effective for capturing teachers' skill and knowledge. In the 1990s the debate became so contentious that the term "war" was an appropriate descriptor (Wilson, 2000).

Multiple views of the knowledge and skills teachers need to promote student learning emerged over time. Initially, grounded in the behaviorist tradition, assessments used a checklist approach to catalog the behaviors of teachers in classroom settings, noting whether or not the instructor did such things such as introduce the goals of the lesson, begin class on time, and so forth, while multiple-choice tests looked at the basic subject-matter and pedagogical knowledge of teachers (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999).

In the middle 1980s, many scholars began to argue for a more complex conceptualization of teachers' knowledge and skills. Lee Shulman (1987), for instance, argued:

Critical features of teaching, such as the subject matter being taught, the classroom context, the physical and psychological characteristics of the students, or the accomplishment of purposes not readily assessed on standardized tests, are typically ignored in the quest for general principles of effective teaching (p. 6).

Shulman outlined seven areas of knowledge and skill needed by teachers:

- Content knowledge
- General pedagogical knowledge
- Curriculum knowledge
- Pedagogical content knowledge
- Knowledge of learners and their characteristics
- Knowledge of educational contexts
- Knowledge of educational ends

Since then, there have been variations on the theme. Linda Darling-Hammond et al. (1999), for example, identify five abilities and knowledge as basic requirements for professionals in the field, and Suzanne Wilson (2000) lists similar categories in a working paper drafted for the United States Department of Education.

These and other models of teacher skill and knowledge share a recognition that teaching is a complex act requiring the teacher to integrate content and pedagogical knowledge and carefully select teaching skills in response to a host of contextual factors, including individual students, current educational theory, and district policies. Darling-Hammond et al. (1999) note, “The interrelations between subject-matter knowledge and knowledge of learners and pedagogy make it virtually impossible to think meaningfully about teaching and content without considering learners and context” (pp. 57-58).

The growing belief in the complexity of the teaching act engenders awareness that assessing teachers is not simply a matter of looking at the teaching skill and content knowledge, but also understanding the *reasoning* behind the choices they make and the behaviors they exhibit (Kennedy et al., 1993; Shulman, 1987). Says Shulman:

[Teaching] begins with an act of reason, continues with a process of reasoning, culminates in the performances of imparting, eliciting, involving, or enticing, and is then thought about some more until the process can begin again....Teachers must learn to use their knowledge base to provide the grounds for choices and actions....good teaching is not only effective behaviorally, but must rest on a foundation of adequately grounded premises (1987, p. 13).

Duffy (2000) describes this as understanding the moral or value choices teachers make regarding how they use the various kinds of knowledge and skill they have. Yet as Kennedy et al. (1993) explain, there is little empirical evidence to date on the relative contributions of different components of teacher knowledge or attitudes in shaping effective teaching.

As the understanding that teaching is an immensely complex act has grown, however, so has the realization that the methods used for assessing teachers' knowledge and skill are not yet fully developed or validated. The fact that teacher knowledge and skills are so complex and interrelated suggests that multiple methods are required to get a picture that even begins to capture the complexity. Kennedy et al. (1993), discussing their study of the growth of teachers' knowledge and skill, support this notion:

...recognizing all of these [the many dimensions of teaching expertise] introduces an unusual sort of data collection problem, for each aspect of expertise requires its own method of documentation. We can learn about teachers' skills by observing their teaching, for instance, but cannot very well learn what they know or believe. On the other side, if we used paper-and-pencil instruments to measure teachers' knowledge and beliefs, how could we know whether these bits of knowledge or beliefs had any bearing on practice? If we were to be true to our understanding of teaching as influenced by all of these things — knowledge, skills, dispositions, beliefs, etc., then we needed a method of data collection that could tap all of these things. We could not limit data collection to one format (p. 6).

As the analysis in the next section demonstrates, however, each method comes with its own trade-offs between breadth and depth, efficiency (cost) and completeness. Each method raises questions of reliability and/or validity. Moreover, each method typically reveals only a portion of the entire picture that is the teaching act, and even it is not entirely clear which components of teachers' knowledge, skills and attitudes correlate most closely with student learning. Finally, most methods have been used to assess individual teachers' knowledge and skills for such purposes as licensing or promotion. The issues become more complex and challenging when the intended use is to make judgments about a program, because ascribing increases in teachers' knowledge and skills to an external intervention (program) raises additional questions related to the extent that the program is responsible for the changes.

The above challenges posed by the complexity of assessing teachers' skills and knowledge and the uncertainty of the methods for doing so are further complicated by today's current context of high-stakes accountability. Teachers face demands on their time, including a growing number of tests intended to measure student learning, and the pressure to see that students perform well on these assessments. Under such circumstances, teachers may respond by engaging in practices, such as increased use of drills, that they believe will lead to higher scores on tests. Perhaps more important, any additional assessments, even those used to evaluate BTSA as a program and not individual teachers, are both threatening and burdensome. Consequently, teachers are likely to be reluctant to participate in studies of the effects of participation in BTSA on their knowledge and skills out of fear about how the information will be used.

As a result of the challenges outlined above, and after discussion with the BTSA Task Force, the focus of this task in the Independent Evaluation was adjusted from examining the effect of BSTA on the skills and knowledge of beginning teachers to exploring methodologies to study such effects. The California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) provide a framework for identifying the important knowledge and skills to assess, but research offers no clear methods for capturing these. Given the expense of conducting large-scale studies, and the current uncertainty over what data to collect and how best to collect them, a small-scale pilot study was conducted to determine what could be learned from different methods.

The following report begins with analyses of methods for assessing new teachers' knowledge and skills, including the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. It is followed by a report on WestEd's multi-method exploratory study of BTSA's impact on new teachers' knowledge and skills. This section presents information about the methods used and outlines the methodological findings from the exploratory study, including an analysis of the challenges encountered. The report concludes with recommendations regarding appropriate next steps to answer the question: Does participation in BTSA have a positive effect on new teachers' knowledge and skills?

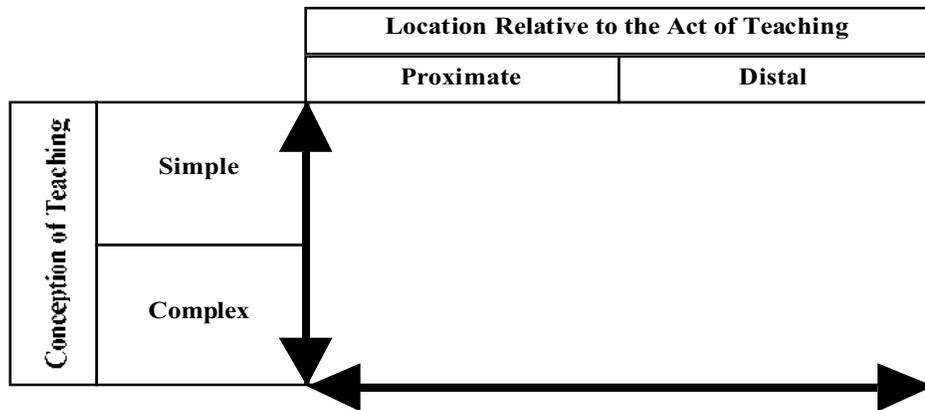
### **Framework for Assessing Teachers' Knowledge and Skills Based on the Literature**

The complexity of assessing the skills and knowledge used by teachers in their classrooms suggests that multiple approaches need to be used to gather the necessary data from which to draw conclusions. As the discussion below shows, many methods are available to assess components of teachers' knowledge and skills, but each method comes with particular strengths and weaknesses relative to the task (Ingersoll, 1996).

The following discussion is organized around two continua. The first focuses on the teaching act, starting with methods that are most distant from this act and moving to those closest to it. The second continuum is from methods whose inherent definition of teaching is simple to those that recognize the complexity of the teaching act. It may be helpful to think of these continua as displayed in Figure 18.

**Figure 18**

*Approaches to assessing teacher knowledge and skills*



These continua provide a useful starting point for organizing and considering various options for gathering data on teachers' skills and knowledge. The following discussion draws on a review of the literature and conversations with experts about each of the methods. The section concludes with a description of a comprehensive system of teacher assessment, also drawn from the literature. The California Formative Assessment Support System for Teachers (CFASST) exemplifies such a comprehensive system, and a discussion of its potential use for evaluating BTSA's impact on teacher knowledge and skills concludes the section.

### *Approaches Based on Simple Conceptions of Teaching*

The following approaches to assessing teacher knowledge and skills reflect the more simple conceptions of teaching. They are discussed from the very simple to moderately complex. All are distal from the teacher.

#### **Closed-End Tests**

One commonly used method of capturing the knowledge of beginning teachers is the closed-end (e.g. multiple choice) test. The multiple choice portions of the Reading Instruction Competency Assessment (RICA) and the Multiple Subjects Assessment for Teachers (MSAT) are well-known examples. Among the advantages of these tests is that they are easy to administer and score and therefore relatively inexpensive. Such tests *can* use carefully crafted scenarios and questions to assess a teacher's ability to analyze and synthesize information (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999), and measure subject-matter knowledge as well.

However, they have been widely criticized for focusing only on the basic skills and knowledge needed to teach, stressing bureaucratic facts, and providing limited contextual information for questions. Closed-end tests do not reveal teachers' decision-making skills, nor the reasoning process used to arrive at a particular answer, both important components of professional knowledge. Finally, these tests also do not reveal how a teacher might act in a real life situation, and what the impact of teacher actions on students is. Teachers can respond to a situation in an ideal way on paper, but may not react that way in real life. How a teacher talks and relates to students, and what they learn from the teacher cannot be measured through such tests.

### **Student Test Scores**

The recent trend toward increasing accountability for schools and school districts has brought with it a growing emphasis on standardized tests as a way to measure school, and often teacher, performance. The assumption is that effective teaching will produce student success on standardized tests. However, scholars question the logic behind such an assumption. Thompson (2001) notes that, while the idea is interesting, it is too soon to link teacher quality with student test scores because there are too many relationships that are unaccounted. For instance, students enter a classroom with many experiences (family, community, past school experiences) that affect their learning experiences in that class. Moreover, structural variables (class size, school size, and school funding) may further affect student learning. How does one separate the effect of *these* experiences and structural considerations on student learning from the impact of a given teacher?

William Sanders, a statistician at the University of Tennessee, has been researching appropriate ways to link student test scores to teacher knowledge and skills. He believes that it is possible to isolate the effect of teachers on student academic growth. Sanders and his colleagues (Sanders et al., 1998) have used the Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS) to develop an extensive longitudinal database that links individual students and their outcomes both to their schools and to teachers at each grade level. The researchers argue that teacher effectiveness is the "major determinant of student academic progress," exceeding other factors such as socioeconomic class, class size, and classroom diversity.

While scholars regard Sanders' work as promising (Ingersoll, 1996; Valli, 2001), they offer important caveats. First, even if the assumption is made that higher student test scores reflect solid teacher knowledge and skills, relying on test scores will not necessarily reveal the extent of teachers' knowledge and skills, teachers' reasoning, or the context of teaching. Second, Sanders' claims rest on the ability of the research group to track the same students over an extended period

of time. This task may prove to be exceptionally difficult (even impossible) in a state like California, which not only far exceeds Tennessee in size, but is a much more mobile state, with tens of thousands of students, and thousands of teachers, moving in and out of school systems each year. Furthermore, the cost of tracking a significant sample of students and teachers in a mobile and populous state like California would be great, in terms of finances and labor intensity.

Third, the use of value-added methods require stability in the tests that are in use. As teachers become more familiar with a particular test and testing format, student scores tend to rise. Such rises are difficult to attribute to increased teacher knowledge and skill, except in the narrow sense of knowledge of the test and preparing students to take it. Further, student test scores typically dip when the test is revised. Sanders argues that with sufficient time with the same test, changes in student outcomes can be appropriately attributed to individual teachers. However, in California such stability may not exist.

In the best of circumstances, student test scores reflect actual student learning. Yet it is only possible to draw inferences that, if test scores rise, teachers' skills and knowledge have risen as well, and then only if the tests are closely aligned with student academic content standards. More likely, test scores (rising or falling) reflect a host of influences, one of which may be teachers' skill and knowledge, and separating these effects is exceptionally complicated, particularly in a state like California.

Therefore, while using a statewide test such as the STAR may initially seem appealing, doing so would be beset by many challenges. Student and teacher mobility, and confounding variables such as the effect of changes in the test on student performance, would likely make it difficult, at best, to isolate the effect of teachers on student learning and make claims about the impact of the BTSA program on beginning teachers. Linking high or increasing student test scores to high or growing teacher knowledge and skills would, in today's current environment, be a difficult task, requiring great caution in interpretation and facing significant challenges from the academic community. Consequently, policymakers may wish to avoid this path until the standardized test is more closely aligned with student academic content standards and more is known about how to isolate the effect of teachers on student learning.

## **Student Surveys**

Strong and Ostrander (1997) argue that students, as the most consistent observers of any teacher and the recipients of instruction, have legitimate feedback to provide. Such feedback has been shown to be as reliable as observations by trained observers, even at the kindergarten level. Student responses might well shed light on the pedagogical skills and knowledge of teachers, suggesting how attentive teachers are to various ways students approach learning, classroom diversity issues, and active learning. If administered several times throughout one year, student surveys can reveal teacher consistency, or even possible improvements, within that year.

But this method also comes with its drawbacks. First, Thompson (2001) worries about the social desirability effects that may occur if students (particularly younger ones) respond with an eye toward pleasing their teacher rather than giving an honest appraisal. She suggests that one way around this problem may be to have simply worded questions that focus not on the teacher, but instead on the school (e.g., I like going to school). Second, if surveys were worded with general phrases that focus on the school, students may respond based on characteristics (other students, difficult work) that do not reflect the quality of the teacher. This would critically challenge the validity of the instrument, as it would not be measuring teacher knowledge and skills, but a students' happiness with school. Third, it is not clear that student surveys could provide much insight into teachers' subject-matter knowledge. Finally, student assessments of teachers are, at best, useful for a particular year and cannot track teacher growth beyond that single year because ratings come from a different group of students each year.

Student surveys would probably work best with older students (middle and high school) who understand the purpose and seriousness of the study and the value of honest, confidential responses. Furthermore, to use students as subjects in any type of research would require their parents' permission and collecting parental consent forms would add time, labor and financial costs.

### ***Complex-Proximate Approaches to Assessment***

The following assessment approaches exemplify more complex conceptions of teaching. In each, the nature of the instrument used may range from a view of teaching as moderately complex to one that attempts to capture a wide range of thinking about teaching and actual performance. The methods are displayed from the most proximate to the classroom to the least.

## Direct Observation

Observation is the traditional and most common method of assessing and evaluating teacher performance (Stronge and Ostrander, 1997). The major strength of observations lies in their authenticity because observers actually *see* a teacher perform and do not have to rely on self-reports that may give the professionally acceptable answer but do not align with a teacher's actual practice (Stansbury 1998). Kennedy et al. (1993) argue, in fact, that "only in the classroom...is it possible to understand how teachers' ideas and commitments are blended in action – what they are both *able* and *inclined* to do" (p. 99, emphasis in original). Feiman-Nemser (2001) suggests that classroom observation is an important component of any effort to examine teachers' knowledge and skills. A recent analysis by Kennedy (1999) suggests that observations may be one of the most effective approximations of complex student learning because the observer can actually witness the complexity of the learning experiences students have. Similarly, Roberson (1998) notes that observations can vary from low-inference designs, where observers work from a prescribed list of behaviors for observation, to high-inference, where observers use extensive judgment and take the context into account to evaluate teachers' decisions. Although Bond (2000) indicates that significant variation in observation scores of the same teacher can exist, Kennedy (1999) says that doing two observations per teacher can reduce variability by as much as 20 percent.

On the other hand, observations are labor and time intensive, requiring, among other things, extensive training of observers if the ratings are to be reliable (Stansbury, 1998). As a result, they can be relatively costly to carry out. Observations generally sample only a small portion of teachers, so data come only from a few school districts, and the lesson or lessons observed is only one small slice of the overall curriculum (Kennedy, 1993; Kennedy, 1999; Stronge and Ostrander 1997) or, in the context of a study of BTSA, a small slice of the impact of the BTSA program. In addition, observations are isolated events, and observers will not see the full range of a teacher's knowledge or skill. Further, although recent efforts have been made to improve observation protocols, observations traditionally have ignored context, been divorced from state standards, and not acknowledged subject-matter and grade-level differences in desirable teaching behaviors (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999).

## Portfolios

Educators have increasingly used portfolios to document professional growth. In the past decade, much progress has been made in the ways to conduct performance-based assessments of teachers. Connecticut, for instance, uses portfolios as part of its licensure system for new teachers. Teachers' portfolios are expected to include video clips of their teaching, reflective commentary on those clips, and materials ("artifacts") that chronicle a period of their teaching for expert assessors to review (Moirs, 2001). The NBPTS also uses a portfolio as part of its assessment, expecting teachers to submit four tasks that demonstrate their teaching and analysis of that teaching, as well as two tasks that speak to their contributions outside of the classroom and explain the significance of these (Committee on Assessment, 2001)

Wolf et al. (1997, p. 195) offer four key elements of a teaching portfolio:

- It is structured based on professional content standards, as well as school and individual goals;
- It has carefully selected samples of both teacher and student work;
- Its content is labeled and accompanied by reflective commentary from the teacher; and,
- It is best developed as part of a mentored experience.

Scholars agree about the importance of having clear standards for evaluating portfolios intended for teacher assessment (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999; Stansbury, 1998) and multiple sources of evidence for each exercise (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999). The standards used for the Connecticut portfolios are used throughout the entire state department of education so the message to teachers is consistent, aligned with national standards for teaching excellence where appropriate, and based on job analyses with input from professors, administrators and teachers. Teachers are evaluated holistically in four areas: designing instruction, implementing instruction, assessment, and reflection (Moirs, 2001).

According to Darling-Hammond et al. (1999, p. 84), the positive aspects of portfolio use by the NBPTS are:

The Board's work illustrates how standards of knowledge can be applied to open-ended, contextualized representations of work without resorting to simplistic checklists. By looking at similar tasks about which evidence is collected and presented in a structured manner, it is possible to evaluate candidates against common standards. This is made possible by assuring that similar kinds of data about teaching will be available for assessment.

The authors note several positive aspects of using portfolios. For example, allowing teacher commentary and collecting information over an extended period of time permits reviewers to develop a better understanding of context and get a “long view” of instruction than more isolated methods like observations. Moreover, if portfolios include student work, reviewers can also make judgments about student learning and observe how the teacher comments on student work to facilitate learning.

Nonetheless, portfolios have limitations. They take time both to create and review (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999, Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Selecting materials, assembling the portfolio, and completing reflection exercises can take a great deal of a teacher’s time. Some individuals question the utility of this, given that a teacher might be able to spend that extra time on his or her teaching duties. Similarly, evaluating portfolios is a time-consuming process that can be costly. In Connecticut, for instance, reviewers work in pairs to assess portfolios (Moirs, 2001), and each reviewer must undergo as many as 70 hours of training before assessing a portfolio (Committee on Assessment, 2001). Finally, questions about how to determine whether the work submitted as part of a portfolio actually belongs to the teacher have been raised (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999), although Stansbury (1998) notes that requiring student work samples, video tapes, and teacher reflection increases authenticity.

### **Teacher Self-Reports**

Another means for collecting data on teacher knowledge and skills is the use of teacher self-reports. These might come in the form of a teaching log or a diary. Self-reports may address specific questions designed to inquire about teacher activities, or engage the teacher in reflection about particular aspects of instruction. Ball et al. (1999) piloted a web-based log in anticipation of a six-year longitudinal study seeking to capture varied student instructional experience in classrooms and link these to school improvement. The researchers’ pilot study suggested that, while teachers may be willing to participate in the surveys, it is often difficult to have agreed-upon definitions of key terms (even such as what constituted a “lesson”), thereby raising validity and reliability questions, and extensive training is required to ensure that teachers share understandings of definitions (Ball et al., 1999).

Thompson (2001) suggests that studies have found that such documents correlate with actual teacher behavior only at the most general of levels (e.g. a teacher teaches forty minutes of math each day, as reported), and thus say relatively little about the actual behaviors of the teachers. Ball et al.’s (1999) study confirms this. They concluded that the self-report was useful in providing information about the number and duration of lessons, student attendance, materials used, and instructional formats and student grouping. Most of these do not relate to teachers’

knowledge and skills. Questions of validity are also raised since it may be difficult for teachers to recall accurately details of lessons delivered hours earlier, and research shows that the validity of self-reports decreases when the questions relate to practices associated with current reforms (such as collaborative learning) (Ball et al., 1999). Consequently, teacher self-reports will have limited utility in assessing the impact of BTSA on teacher knowledge and skills.

### *Complex-Distal Approaches to Assessment*

The following methods for assessing teacher knowledge and skills represent complex conceptions of teaching, although the degree to which they do so is dependent on the instrument used. They are also more distant from the classroom. They are discussed in order of the distance from the classroom.

#### **Teacher Interviews**

Interviewing teachers can be a useful way to collect data about their pedagogical and content knowledge, and it may be particularly useful when combined with other approaches. For instance, teachers might be interviewed before and/or after a classroom observation (as WestEd did for this Independent Evaluation) to understand the context, the teacher's goals, his or her reasoning, and what he or she might do differently in the future. Likewise, interviews that draw on videotapes of instruction, query teachers about their responses to directed activities, or follow structured simulation, can be useful in gaining insight into teachers' knowledge and their reasoning.

However, interviews are very difficult to standardize because each will have unique elements and questions. They, therefore, can be costly. Teacher interviews rely on expert interviewers and risk rater bias since the interviewer and teacher have face-to-face interaction (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999). As with teacher surveys, teachers may give the "correct" response, however without seeing a teacher's actions in the classroom or including student perspectives, one cannot know that a teacher will act on what she says. The interview approach may also benefit teachers with greater verbal facility. This is not necessarily negative (Stansbury, 1998).

## **Teacher Surveys**

Researchers have been turning in recent years to teacher surveys to chronicle changes in teacher knowledge and beliefs. Much like closed-end tests, surveys have the advantage of collecting large amounts of data very efficiently. The *Teacher Education and Learning to Teach* (TELT) study used teacher surveys, administered to the same group of teachers over a period of years, to document changes in knowledge, skills and beliefs, assuming that any changes reflected learning that took place over time (Kennedy et al., 1993). Valli (2001) and others also developed and administered a survey (the results of which are still being analyzed) that sought to link teachers' comments about their pre-service preparation, and how they said they taught reading and math, to student learning outcomes.

Teacher surveys suffer from the same limitations as other closed-end methods: an inability to assess the reasoning of the teachers. In addition, surveys also allow for social desirability bias due to self-reports by teachers. As with closed-end tests, teacher surveys do not necessarily reflect actual practice, but rather ideal responses. Teachers may believe they are teaching in particular ways when they are not and report this information, or they may not respond with complete honesty in order to reflect more positively on their teaching performance.

## **Open-ended Tests and Directed Activities**

Open-ended tests and directed activities give teachers the opportunity to provide responses to questions or situations in depth. They provide a chance for teachers to explain their responses, unlike closed-end tests. Such assessments may include hypothetical scenarios that ask teachers to analyze and suggest courses of action related to analyses of text books or student work, creation of a sample lesson plan, or other similar challenges. Often open-ended tests and directed activities are administered in assessment centers (as with the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards [NBPTS] exercises) and, in common with the methods that are discussed later, require trained, expert assessors to review teachers' responses and make judgments.

The open-ended tests and directed activities offer several potential advantages. First, such exercises give assessors a sense of the reasoning behind teachers' responses, since the teachers are free to answer questions in some depth and provide context to their replies. Second, written exercises may limit rater bias, since identifying physical characteristics of the teacher (race, gender, age, etc.) are not apparent (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999), though bias related to factors such as writing ability, structure, or dialect may remain. Third, such exercises make it relatively easy to ask complicated synthesis and analysis questions, and they can also be fairly simple to score with the use of standardized rubrics (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999).

At the same time, open-ended tests and directed activities raise challenges. Such assessments are more expensive to administer than multiple choice tests because they require trained reviewers. Moreover, while the exercises collect teachers' responses to specific situations, one cannot know whether the teachers will actually behave as they say they do when faced with similar situations in the classroom (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999). Finally, Darling-Hammond et al. (1999) note that such written exercises may disproportionately benefit teachers who are skilled writers and disadvantage those who are challenged in this area. This is not a negative aspect (as it is reasonable to expect teachers to be able to write) so much as it is something that policymakers should be aware of as they contemplate using such approaches to assessing teacher knowledge and skills.

### **Simulation Exercises**

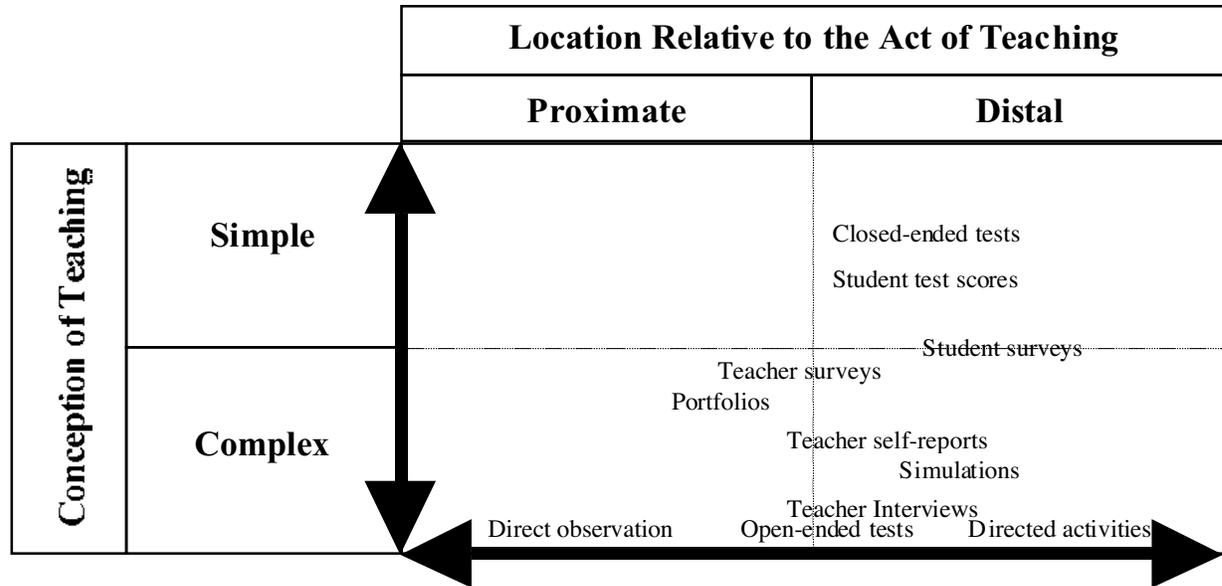
Simulations, like interviews, open-ended tests and directed activities, are most commonly held at centralized locations such as assessment centers. They allow assessors to control and standardize the situation (the task, the students, the setting, etc.) across all teachers, permitting an evaluation of specific skills and minimizing contextual factors that can make judgments across teachers difficult. Moreover, they allow reviewers to actually *see* the teacher demonstrate his or her skills, rather than relying on self-reports or responses to questions.

However, simulations can be costly to administer and place teachers in an artificial situation in which they cannot make judgments based on their understanding of the unique contextual factors (Darling-Hammond et al., 1999). Citing studies of teaching expertise conducted by David Berliner, Darling-Hammond et al. (1999) note that the artificial context may actually penalize seasoned, expert teachers more than novices, since the former rely on their ability to assess methodically contextual factors as they design and carry out instruction.

### ***Data Collection Approaches Continua***

The above sections outlined multiple methods for collecting data on the knowledge and skills of teachers, while the figure below provides an idea of where each method may fall on the continua related to conceptions of teaching and proximity to the classroom. Figure 19 displays the methods along the continua. However, a number of the methods, such as direct observation, teacher interviews, and teacher self-reports, can embody different conceptions of teaching (from the simple to the complex), depending on the instrument used.

**Figure 19**  
*Assessment methods arrayed on the continua*



***Integrated Assessment Systems***

Given the limitations of any single approach to assessing teacher knowledge and skills, some type of integrated assessment system is needed. A yet-to-be published analysis conducted by the Committee on Assessment and Teacher Quality for the National Research Council (Committee on Assessment, 2001) examined four programs that assess teacher knowledge and skills: the Connecticut licensure program, the NBPTS program, Ohio’s teacher induction program, and Alverno College’s assessment of students in its teacher education program. The Committee’s review suggests that these models, which represent different approaches to or elements of performance-based assessment, and which combine many of the items from the “menu” of methods just discussed, share the following:

- A *clear statement* about what teaching qualities are valued, offering a theoretical or conceptual framework that underlies and frames the remainder of the assessment process;
- Evidence of *actual* performance, whether through classroom observation, videotapes, or artifacts in portfolios;

- A *system* of assessments that, taken together, look at the broad range of knowledge and skills required of teachers and, where appropriate, do so at relevant points in time;
- Attention, as part of the assessment, to professional development and support; and,
- Ongoing research into the validity of the assessment instruments and methods.

NBPTS, for instance, has created more than two-dozen assessments that are field- (e.g. math, science, etc.) and grade-range specific. These assessments include a four applied exercises held at assessment centers. Ohio's induction program, set to begin in 2002, uses the PATHWISE® Induction Program-Praxis III version to facilitate interaction between mentors and beginning teachers. Data are then collected through classroom observations, teachers' written descriptions of the students and instructional goals, and pre- and post-observation interviews. Alverno college's teacher education program added five core competency areas to the eight already required by the College's general education curriculum. The program carefully links theory to practice, and requires prospective student teachers to keep logs reflecting on their practice, explore the relationship between theory and practice, and work toward a philosophy of education. Before students are allowed to student teach, they must submit a portfolio documenting skills and knowledge, and respond to questions from teachers of teachers and principals who review the portfolio (Committee on Assessment, 2001).

As appealing as such comprehensive systems of assessment are, they are also complex to administer and costly to deliver. Bond (2000), who has been closely involved in the NBPTS assessment process, suggests that, despite their best efforts at efficiency, the Board has been unable to get their costs for assessment below \$2,000 per candidate. He also notes that it is difficult to establish uniform content (what will be assessed) and performance (at what level teachers much perform) standards. Further, developing instruments that are both valid and reliable can be time consuming and costly. The time required to train expert assessors for performance-based assessments can be extensive (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Committee on Assessment, 2001). Yet, expert assessors are particularly crucial to any performance-based assessment program. As Stansbury (1998) notes, assessors will come to the program with many different perspectives (e.g. behaviorism versus constructivism), and it is important to move beyond these paradigms if teachers who apply different methods are to be assessed fairly.

California, although not included in the NRC study, has the essential elements of an integrated assessment system in place through the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) and the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST). It is conceivable that CFASST materials might be modestly adapted to service both

the professional development needs of teachers and the desire for program evaluation data. When joined with observation data, particular CFASST exercises might take the place of open-ended tests or directed activities, providing rich data for analysis. Such a design has the advantages of cost effectiveness (by drawing on existing elements of BTSA for the evaluation) and the knowledge that it would be tailored to issues important to education in California.

Support providers also could be a source of consistent information about beginning teachers' knowledge and skills. If implemented, such an approach must be carefully designed so as not to exacerbate what support providers perceive as an existing tension between their role as a mentor/coach and the use of CFASST to assess new teachers. Further, the program evaluation would require careful attention to maintaining the confidentiality of beginning teachers. Feiman-Nemser (2001) suggests that it may be possible for support providers to document changes they see in a beginning teacher's practice that are directly attributable to the relationship with the support provider, illuminating important evidence of program impact.

While the above options for working through the CFASST system and support providers have attractive elements, there are also several important limitations. First, WestEd recognizes that using CFASST in an evaluative mode—even for program evaluation—may negate the benefits of a formative assessment system, and urges caution in such action. Any approach must be carefully designed so as to not change support providers into evaluators – something it is not clear can be done. Second, asking support providers to attribute changes in teachers' practice to a relationship with the provider may raise questions of validity. Just as teachers may have conscious and unconscious motives for identifying certain “ideal” behaviors on any self-report, support providers will most likely have similar motives to identify changes in the practices of beginning teachers' practice as a result of the support provider relationship.

Perhaps most important, the programs cited by the NRC committee as well as CFASST are designed so that the individual assessments are used to influence the practice of the pre- or in-service teachers who are assessed. As difficult as it might be to assess individuals, it is even more difficult to use individual assessments to evaluate a program, because attributing changes in teacher knowledge and skills to the program requires more than an assessment system. It also requires a design that rules out other explanations for change, including increased experience or school-related influences.

## **The Exploratory Study**

WestEd designed an exploratory study focusing on the impact of BTSA participation on new teachers' knowledge and skills. The study was conducted to determine if an approach that combined methods and included a comparison group of new teachers who had not participated in BTSA would be useful to policymakers in assessing program impact. The study revealed challenges associated with different data collection methods, suggested elements of cost-effectiveness for each, and offered lessons useful in designing future statewide studies.

### ***Methods***

WestEd explored whether a combination of teacher observations, interviews with the teachers who were observed, and surveys of the students in the observed teachers' classrooms could be effectively and efficiently carried out to address whether BTSA participation affected teachers' knowledge and skills. The intent was to include a sample of 20 third-year teachers who had participated in BTSA and a comparison sample of 20 third-year teachers who had not.

Working closely with the BTSA Task Force, WestEd identified districts that seemed likely to have sufficient numbers of third-year BTSA and non-BTSA teachers. However, problems arose because more teachers had been served by BTSA than anticipated. While this is good news regarding BTSA's reach, it created a major challenge for the exploratory study.

### **Teacher Observations**

Aware of both the strengths and limitations of teacher observation, WestEd sought to adapt the method to make it useful for the investigation. An observation form based on selected standards from the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (Appendix A) was adapted from the PATHWISE® project and developed as the observation instrument. A rating scale of 1(low) to 3.5 (high) was established. Five observers, all WestEd staff members, were trained by a consultant who was an experienced PATHWISE® trainer, to observe teachers based on the instrument. The observers used videotapes of teaching situations to practice observing and establish inter-rater reliability. The researchers discovered that the most effective way to record all pertinent information was to script everything happening in the classroom throughout the observation time period, return to the notes of evidence for each standard, and assign a numeric score for each standard and element. The observation coding form is also attached in Appendix B.

Most teachers were observed twice on the same day, although in a few instances a teacher was observed either once or three times. Multiple observations were used as an attempt to minimize variability and see the teacher in a variety of circumstances. The same staff members

observed the teacher each time. Observers agreed upon a common score for each standard, and, when multiple observations were conducted, scores for each standard were averaged in another effort to minimize variability.

### **Teacher Interviews**

WestEd planned to interview the teachers being observed both before and after the observation in order to allow WestEd staff to put the observations into a larger context. The pre-observation interview protocol (Appendix C) inquired about goals for the lesson, the lesson's place in the larger unit and curriculum, and student characteristics, while the post-observation interview (Appendix D) explored the teacher's reflection on the lesson, student learning, and future adjustments they wished to make.

The approach to administering the interviews varied. Most teachers were unable to sit for pre- and post-interviews because of the time demands of their jobs and the fact that the observations and interviews held no immediate benefit for them. WestEd staff conducted interviews with most teachers, typically only after the observation. The interviews focused primarily on professional development and assessment of student learning. In some cases, the pre-observation interview protocol was sent to the teacher prior to the observation, and sometimes the post-observation questions were left for the teachers to answer at their convenience and mail or e-mail to WestEd. The variation in ways the teachers answered the questions, or if they did, affected the study because WestEd was unable to link teachers' plans and reflections to their instructional practice. However, the difficulty in establishing uniform conditions across all teachers reflects practical reality and is likely to affect all such evaluations.

### **Student Surveys**

In addition to the observations and interviews, WestEd developed student surveys for distribution in each class that was observed. As part of the observation, the WestEd staff distributed a "negative consent form," asking students to take the form home to their parents, who signed the form if they did not want their son or daughter taking part in the survey. The surveys for elementary (Appendix E) and secondary (Appendix F) students asked ten questions related to the learning environment and the teacher. The questions asked of elementary students were more simply worded than were those on the secondary questionnaire and did not use a numeric scale for responses.

WestEd planned to return a week after the observation to administer and collect the surveys. However, teachers volunteered to administer the survey themselves, and distributed the

survey to all eligible students. WestEd agreed to this method because it was more convenient for the teachers and less intrusive than interrupting their class a second time. The teacher collected the surveys and mailed them to WestEd for compilation and analysis.

Almost 500 students participated in the survey. Assuming approximately 25 students in each class observed (and therefore a total of 1,000 students overall—40 groups of students were observed), this would represent a return rate of approximately 49.1 percent.

### ***Methodological Lessons***

This section describes the challenges experienced in conducting the exploratory study and the lessons learned from these challenges, because such challenges are related to the methods used and are therefore useful in informing future studies. WestEd combined data collection methods at a fairly low cost in order to find out if such an approach would be useful if applied on a wider scale. There are three main methodological lessons arising from this exploratory study. First, the continuing expansion of the BTSA program makes it challenging to find a comparison group of teachers necessary to examine the program's impact. Second, the study was exploratory and participation voluntary, and the teachers who agreed to take part all came from schools with high Academic Performance Index scores, thereby skewing the sample. Third, gaining the active and constructive participation of teachers and students can be a difficult task.

### **Comparison Group**

The ability to make claims about the effects of the BTSA program rests on either establishing a comparison group of similar teachers who did not take part in BTSA to compare their knowledge and skill levels to those of BTSA participants, or tracking changes in the knowledge and skill of participants over time. The exploratory study sought to establish a comparison group by seeking equal numbers of BTSA and non-BTSA teachers to study, ideally with distributions across grade-levels and subject areas. However, identifying and accessing teachers for the study proved to be a major, time-consuming effort.

More teachers were served by BTSA than had been anticipated. Consequently, finding non-BTSA teachers was difficult, and the scope of the search for them expanded. Where possible, WestEd worked with the BSTA director in the area to identify teachers, even those who had not participated in BTSA. Not all districts were fully supportive of the request to help WestEd identify third year teachers who had or had not taken part in BTSA. When teachers were finally identified, sometimes researchers had less than a day's notice of an opportunity for

observation. The result is that the sample of teachers is not fully balanced between BTSA and non-BTSA participants, nor is it necessarily balanced across subject areas.

A study that compares BTSA and non-BTSA teachers will become increasingly difficult to carry out as BTSA expands statewide. Non-BTSA teachers will become more and more rare. This suggests that any attempt to draw conclusions about the impact of the BTSA program in the future will need to focus on identifying BTSA participants early in the program, establishing baseline data regarding knowledge and skills, and then tracking changes over time. An alternative might be to identify a comparably diverse array of beginning teachers in another state, and compare the knowledge and skills of BTSA participants to this comparison group at the end of the program. However, such a research design would surely face questions regarding the comparability of the two groups, whether state policies and practices might have influenced the sample, and so forth. A third type of comparison could be among BTSA participants, and compare knowledge and skills with different types and intensity of support. Such a study would be costly, because documenting the support would, itself, require resources.

The most feasible approach to dealing with the lack of comparison group is likely to be a panel study, in which new teachers are followed over time.

### **Teacher Sample**

The intent was for the pilot study to include a fairly representative sample of teachers, but it proved impossible to do so. The sample was to include BTSA and non-BTSA teachers who worked at elementary, middle, and high school levels. Further, the design was to have some variation in school context. However, WestEd relied on voluntary participation, and schools that are concerned about accountability did not agree to participate. As a result, the teachers in the pilot study all came from schools with high API scores.

The reasons school leaders who did not participate gave for their reluctance related to the current high-stakes accountability environment. School staff did not say they were concerned that WestEd staff would add another layer of scrutiny to their work. Rather, the issues were more subtle. They talked of the time that the study would take, with such time detracting from instruction. Further, they said that with no direct school, student, or teacher benefits, it would be hard to justify participation. High API schools, in contrast, were not as worried about the intrusion nor were they as concerned about direct benefit (although, as the next section shows, individual teachers had those concerns).

In order to ensure a representative sample of teachers, then, future studies of BTSA must address the issues. One way to increase the willingness of low API schools to participate in such studies would be to require it. More positively, and probably more effectively, providing an

incentive for participation, such as additional professional development or library funds, is likely to increase the representative nature of a teacher sample.

### **Gaining Active Participation**

Securing the active and reliable participation of both teachers and students proved to be a challenge. Participation was a particular issue for the pre- and post-observation interviews with teachers and for the student surveys. Teachers' reluctance to participate stemmed from their desire to avoid disruptions in the instructional day.

While the original plan had been to conduct both pre- and post-observation interviews with teachers, they seldom had enough time for both. Therefore, as noted above, most conversations were limited to post-observation interviews, and the majority of these teachers took place in the relatively short time-span between classes or during breaks. As a result, there was little opportunity to engage in the kind of in-depth discussion and probing that are a major benefit of interviews. WestEd researchers also had to garner some responses through e-mail or mail. In addition to a general desire to protect their time, the reluctance stemmed from teachers' correct perception that the interviews and student surveys would yield little direct benefit to them.

Teachers volunteered to distribute the student surveys themselves (rather than have WestEd staff return to do so) because they preferred not to have another disruption of their classroom routine. However, when teachers distributed the survey, students, particularly those in the lower grade levels, may have felt they were completing it for the teacher rather than for WestEd. This could have influenced students to answer in more positive ways than if a stranger had administered the survey. It is also possible that students responded to the survey with friends, perhaps agreeing on responses and therefore limiting variability. Moreover, many teachers did not return student surveys. At least one teacher found the survey "offensive." Others may not have liked the survey or found it inappropriate, did not think it was worth taking class time to complete, or thought the survey was asking students to judge their teacher.

The above challenges suggest several lessons. First, if future studies require teacher interviews, researchers should schedule larger blocks of time with teachers, probably the night before and in the afternoon following the observations, to permit more extensive discussion. Doing so is likely to require some form of financial compensation for teachers' time, raising the cost of any research effort. Second, teachers play an important "gatekeeper" role in distributing the student surveys. Linking any financial compensation to distributing the survey as well as engaging in pre- and post-observation interviews would most likely increase teacher buy-in. However, other alternatives for gathering student perspectives are also worth considering. For instance, focus groups might be a useful method. Students involved could meet after school and

be offered compensation in the form of movie tickets or donations to class trips. Third, even with financial compensation for teachers, future data collection methods should intrude as little as possible on the normal work of the school day. Fourth, if a student survey is used, research staff should be the ones administering and collecting the form.

### *Summary*

The pilot study was intended to provide methodological lessons about assessing the knowledge and skills of teachers in order to inform future, more extensive studies in this area. As described above, this study confirmed much of what the literature on assessing teachers' skills and knowledge says: doing so is a challenging undertaking.

WestEd employed multiple methods, as a way to overcome the limitations of each approach, in an effort to find a cost-effective way for policymakers to base conclusions about the effect of BTSA on teachers' knowledge and skills on evidence. However, the investigation was challenged by the difficulty of finding a diverse comparison group to complement the sample of BTSA teachers and the non-representative nature of the sample itself. Individual methods faced difficulty as well. Teacher interviews were affected by the lack of free time teachers had, while the effectiveness of student surveys was constrained by teachers' protection of classroom time. All three methods were seen as intrusions, particularly since their benefits were unclear.

The lessons from this exploratory study suggest that, while an evaluation of the BTSA program's effect on teacher knowledge and skills is not impossible, such an effort will take extensive planning and a high financial investment. Given the inherently challenging nature of assessing changes in the knowledge and skills of teachers, described in the literature and confirmed by WestEd's experience, it seems useful to explore alternative strategies for future evaluations.

## CONCLUSION

The report on Task 4 of the Independent Evaluation of BTSA began with the question of whether BTSA has an impact on teachers' knowledge and skills and moved to a discussion of the difficult methodological and practical issues raised by the question. The report illuminates the challenges experienced in a multiple method study, and through the lessons learned, enables WestEd to recommend approaches to designing and implementing future evaluations.

The general advice arising from the review of the literature, interviews with researchers, and the pilot study is that California should proceed slowly and cautiously in efforts to evaluate the impact of BTSA on teachers' knowledge and skills. Such an evaluation requires cost-effective solutions to problems of measuring teacher knowledge and skills, as well as methods that are minimally intrusive on the school day and a design that allows changes in teachers' knowledge and skills to be related to program activities. Each of these requirements presents difficult challenges, so the state should be careful in attempting to implement a full-scale evaluation of BTSA's impact on teacher knowledge and skills.

WestEd has recommended some possible approaches for studying the effects of BTSA on teacher knowledge, including a longitudinal panel study and a statewide survey. Despite the challenges and the caution required, the potential benefits of a long-term, intensive investigation will help reveal not only the impact of BTSA, but could also assist in shaping the program to better serve its participants and in identifying and meeting any undetected needs of beginning teachers. Therefore, the state should conduct the longitudinal study and at least a small-scale survey.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES**

This section draws on the lessons learned from the literature, as well as those gained from the exploratory study, to provide recommendations for policymakers regarding future efforts to collect data on BTSA's impact on teachers' knowledge and skills.

California policymakers have appropriate interest in gathering data about the impact of BTSA on teacher knowledge and skills. However, WestEd's exploratory study indicates that the issue may be more complex than most acknowledge. Researchers interviewed for this study, as well as the research literature, find the challenge of measuring teachers' knowledge and skills fairly daunting. A program evaluation has an even greater challenge—not only must the evaluation use valid and reliable measures, but it must do so within a context of day-to-day schooling and with a design that allows attribution of changes to the program. Most of the problems WestEd encountered in the pilot study arose from the imposition on normal school operations. Neither teachers nor students received direct benefits from participation. Consequently, the recommendations that follow are framed by two separate considerations. The first constitutes a search for a cost-effective means of collecting valid and reliable data on teachers' knowledge and skills. The second consideration is a desire for an approach that is minimally intrusive on teachers and administrators.

Future studies investigating the impact of the BTSA program on the skills and knowledge of beginning teachers also face the challenge of finding a comparison group to serve as a baseline against which to make claims of program impact. As BTSA moves to statewide implementation, there will no longer be any non-BTSA teachers to serve as a comparison group.

Given the complexity of the task and the practical challenges, the most effective and efficient course for future evaluations may be to orchestrate a series of relatively small-scale studies that attempt to chronicle the effect of BTSA over time. These studies could collect data on teachers' knowledge and skills at the start of their involvement in BTSA and track changes that occur over the years. Employing a series of smaller-scale investigations will allow policymakers to move carefully as they undertake a daunting task, adjusting and expanding the scope of investigation as methods and processes are refined, and documenting elements of BTSA along the way.

Therefore, based on this exploratory study, and a thorough review of the related literature, WestEd recommends two approaches to evaluating BTSA's impact on teacher's knowledge and skills:

- A longitudinal panel study that identifies a fairly small group of beginning teachers and uses multiple measures (observations and interviews) to track changes in knowledge and skills of these teachers over time. This approach will gather data on the depth of teachers' knowledge, their teaching skill as applied in the classroom, their beliefs and their reasoning processes.
- A larger survey of a representative sample of beginning teachers. This approach will gather data on the breadth of teachers' knowledge, their skill (albeit not in actual practice), and their beliefs and values.

These approaches include methods that address the complexity of the teaching act, with observations and interviews situated close to actual practice and the surveys at greater distance. They capitalize on what appear to be the most promising current approaches to assessing teacher knowledge and skills, while drawing on the lessons learned in the pilot study. Both approaches require assessing teachers' knowledge and skills before, during, and after participation in BTSA, tracking changes over time, and embedding the assessment in a program evaluation that also collects data relevant to program activities. Each of the proposed approaches, as well as a combined approach, is discussed in the following section.

### ***Longitudinal Panel Study***

The longitudinal panel study relies on classroom observations, conducted by well-trained expert assessors. The observations would be accompanied by pre- and post-observation interviews. Observations and interviews are among the most direct ways for assessing teachers' knowledge and skills. Observations facilitate independent review of teachers' actual behavior, and there are a number of well-researched instruments that could be used, as indicated in the review of prior research. Interviews allow evaluators to collect in-depth information on teachers' reflections and reasoning processes. Such methods yielded useful data in the pilot study, although too few teachers participated and those that did represented high API schools so it was impossible to draw meaningful, generalizable conclusions.

Certainly, these methods pose challenges, as revealed in the pilot study. They require extensive and costly training of observers to insure that the observers can reliably capture, document and interpret the acts and comments of teachers. In part because of the cost of hiring and training observers, as well as the time involved in gathering data, observations and interviews cannot be conducted with a large sample of teachers. In addition, because of the episodic nature

of the observations, they typically only capture a small portion of what teachers do during a given year. Moreover, they can require extensive amounts of time from teachers who already face many time pressures, and who are just beginning their careers.

Still, if carried out with a relatively small group of teachers over a two-year period, the approach would allow researchers to monitor the evolution of teachers' reasoning processes, decision-making in the classroom, approach to teaching, and reflection on their experiences. Observations might take place in the first month of teaching for a beginning teacher, to develop a baseline, and then three to four times a year over the course of two years to capture performance at different times. The teachers involved in the panel study should receive compensation to ensure the kind of involvement and time commitment required, thereby overcoming a major practical problem WestEd encountered in the pilot study.

Including a larger number of teachers would increase the power of the evaluation. A panel with a larger number of teachers (up to 500) would mitigate the effects of attrition, always a concern in longitudinal studies. Such an increase would add costs to the study because it would be necessary to train a larger group of assessors and offer financial incentives to more teachers. In short, the considerations are practical, not conceptual, and policy makers should fund the largest longitudinal study possible.

### *Teacher Survey*

A broad survey of the beliefs, attitudes, and/or knowledge of BTSA teachers across the state would provide the opportunity to gather broader data, generating findings that could be generalized to the larger population of teachers. For instance, the *Teacher Education and Learning to Teach* study (Kennedy et al., 1993) used an extensive survey, administered repeatedly, to look at changes in teachers' knowledge, attitudes and beliefs over time. A relatively simple survey can gather information about basic pedagogical practices and knowledge, teacher beliefs, perceived support, and perceived sense of efficacy. More elaborately designed surveys can assess teachers' ability to analyze and synthesize information and diagnose problems in scenarios. In the case of BTSA, it might be argued that such changes were at least partly a result of teacher participation in BTSA.

Teacher surveys come with trade-offs. Surveys are removed from the actual act of teaching, so what a teacher reports as an actual practice or as a response to a hypothetical scenario may or may not represent what actually happens in the teacher's classroom. Further, surveys are conducted at particular points in time, so are not as likely to reflect daily practice as are other self-report methods, such as teacher logs. However, logs entail high costs for training teachers to use them, which would limit the number of teachers from whom data could be collected. Both

teacher logs and surveys suffer from concerns regarding self-report bias, suggesting that teachers may respond in a way that casts their efforts in the most favorable light. Finally, a more elaborate survey, though worthwhile in terms of the kind of data it could collect, would take substantial time and money to design and pilot test. There may well be models that could be adapted to ease this burden, but it is an important consideration.

### *Combining the Panel Study and Teacher Surveys*

Working over time to integrate the large-scale survey data collection with the panel study would create a general portrait of changes in the BTSA teacher population, along with rich descriptive data that provide evidence of changes in the more complex aspects of teaching. As the two approaches are developed, what is learned from each could be used to refine the other, until the two are part of a larger, unified approach to program evaluation, which may even grow to include additional components, such as portfolios.

Moreover, it is possible that, with time, if clearer links are established between teaching practice and student learning, if a methodology for measuring teacher impact becomes valid, and if student academic content standards are linked to standardized tests (such as STAR), BTSA program outcomes in terms of teacher knowledge and skill may be linked to student learning. However, the current state of research methods and knowledge do not allow for this, and such a goal is likely years away from being attained.

Continuing with small-scale studies for the immediate future, with an eye toward both integrating them and expanding their size, offers several benefits. First, it will allow evaluators and policymakers in California to fine tune methods for gathering data. Second, it will permit them to take advantage of improvements in instruments and methodology for assessing teachers' knowledge and skills at a national level. Finally, a careful approach to developing and refining methods will ensure that methods are both effective for gathering the necessary data and also as non-intrusive as possible in the daily work of teachers and administrators.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **Task 5 Report**

#### **Organizational Structure of BTSA at State and Local Levels**



## **ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE BEGINNING TEACHER SUPPORT AND ASSESSMENT PROGRAM AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVELS**

The Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program is a complex program designed to provide induction support to beginning<sup>28</sup> teachers in order to assist them in becoming strong practitioners and encourage them to stay in the profession. Earlier reports from the Independent Evaluation of BTSA have demonstrated its positive impact on retention, and provided guidance for future BTSA Task Force efforts to examine the impact of BTSA on teachers' knowledge and skills. Further, a previous report under this contract has shown that BTSA remains a high quality program, even as it addresses the challenges that come from expansion. This report focuses on the organizational structure of BTSA at the state and local levels, and addresses the questions:

- How does the organizational structure of BTSA influence its implementation and quality? How might it be improved?

California has developed a complex interorganizational structure to support BTSA induction activities. As the program has expanded, so, too, have demands on the state and local organizations that comprise BTSA. Consequently, it is important at this juncture, as BTSA moves into serving all eligible new teachers in the state, to take stock of the value of the organizational structures, analyze their strengths and weaknesses, and recommend ways that the structures can provide improved support to BTSA.

This report begins with a discussion of why the evaluation of BTSA organizational structures is particularly important at this time, along with a description of the framework that guided the study and the methods used. The report then moves to a description of the BTSA structure, including an overview of the organizational units and role groups that are crucial to the program's functioning. The overview of the BTSA structure is followed by descriptions of other supports that are built into the program, including the California Formative Assessment Support System for Teachers (CFASST), training for various groups involved in BTSA, meetings within geographical clusters and of Program Directors, and formal and informal program reviews.

The next section of the report presents the methods used to collect and analyze data, followed by the findings from the study, organized around how various groups in BTSA perceive their roles, the challenges and successes experienced as the program grew to scale, and issues of organizational change. The findings are then placed in the current policy environment, in which

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<sup>28</sup> BTSA was designed to serve teachers in their first or second year after receiving a preliminary or clear teaching credential as an initial California teaching credential.

California's credentialing process is changing and other programs, most notably the Peer Assisted Review (PAR), are affecting BTSA implementation, while the state is experiencing a teacher shortage. The report concludes with recommendations for ways the BTSA Task Force can strengthen the organizational structure to meet the challenges.

The overall conclusion of the evaluation of the organizational structure of BTSA is that the program is strong, the supports that are in place are appropriate, and the BTSA community is a major force for ensuring that well-qualified teachers teach all students in California. BTSA has developed a compelling conceptual base, documented through the program quality standards for induction programs (*Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs*), which is further supported by strong personal ties throughout the state. At the same time, the current policy context provides challenges, recognized by the BTSA community, which will require some modification of the structures as they exist. In the past, although BTSA was a large program, participants from support providers (SPs, the mentors of the beginning teachers that BTSA serves) through the Task Force had many shared experiences on which to build as they interacted over policy and practice. Indeed, many indicated that they had "grown up" in BTSA, or its predecessor, the California New Teacher Project (CNTTP). Consequently, the feeling of community and the amount of shared knowledge have been great. At this point, however, the growth of BTSA challenges the sense of community, and BTSA participants throughout the state are seeking ways to maintain the personal interactions that nurture successful practices while adapting to the current policy environment.

## **Methods**

WestEd addressed the question of how the organizational structure of BTSA influences the implementation and quality of support using a case study methodology that involved semi-structured interviews with participants from nine selected BTSA programs. Originally, 10 programs were selected for the sample, but one decided not to participate because it was undergoing major changes. WestEd captured a "vertical slice" of the program, interviewing several participants from support providers to Task Force liaisons of the various programs. Researchers then used a qualitative data analysis program to sort through the information, find common themes as well as dissimilarities, and present useful findings to the Task Force.

In order to grasp a clear understanding of the range of BTSA programs, WestEd drew a "theoretical sample" from the 145 programs across the state. Theoretical sampling (Strauss & Corbin, 1994) allows researchers to select units of study based on specific qualities of interest derived from prior research, theory, and/or experience. The findings cannot necessarily be generalized to the population, but can be generalized to the qualities or concepts. For example,

findings on challenges that consortia programs face can be used to understand challenges in other consortia programs, but would be less useful with regard to single-district programs. The sample was selected based on the following characteristics:

- Age of program
- Organizational bases (local education agency, county office of education, institution of higher education)
- Consortia and single district programs
- Rural and urban
- Representation of different BTSA clusters

In addition, the sample was designed to have limited overlap with the case studies for Task 3 in order to avoid overburdening BTSA participants. The BTSA Task Force and WestEd collaborated in selecting the case study sites.

### *Case Studies*

A case study is described as “an idiographic examination of a single individual, group, or society” (Babbie, 1998), useful when “there [are] more variables of interest than data points” (Yin, 1994, p. 13). WestEd used a case study approach to researching and analyzing the organizational structure of BTSA by looking in depth at nine programs across the state. The following were interviewed:

- Support Providers (SP)
- Program Directors
- Other BTSA staff (Co-directors, Coordinators, Trainers)
- Site Administrators (Principals, Assistant Principals)
- District Administrators (District Liaisons, Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents)
- Cluster Consultants (CC)
- Professional Development Consultants (PDC)
- Task Force Liaisons

For each program, the objective was to interview the program director, one to four other staff members (such as a district coordinator or co-director), one to four district administrators, one to four principals, five support providers, one CC, one PDC, and the Task Force Liaison. These criteria were met for all nine programs with some minor exceptions. Of the two principals who were usually interviewed, one worked at a school with a relatively high number of SPs and one at a school with a lower number of SPs. In general, two SPs at each of the schools were interviewed. For most programs, two district administrators were interviewed, and one or two “other BTSA staff.” Interview protocols (Appendix) were standardized by role, but all interviews were semi-structured in that they were conducted flexibly, yet covered all issues pertinent to the Task Force. The amount and quality of data collected through interviews depended on the amount of time available to the interviewee, degree of knowledge he or she has about the program, degree of involvement in the program, and/or desire to share about BTSA. In addition, most discussions were shaped and slightly varied by the rapport between the interviewer and interviewee, as well as where and how the interviewer probed on items.

In total, WestEd interviewed 79 individuals: 25 support providers, 9 directors, 15 site administrators, 12 district administrators, 4 Cluster Consultants, 5 Professional Development Consultants, and 3 Task Force Liaisons, and 6 “other staff” (co-directors and coordinators).

WestEd and the BTSA Task Force agreed upon the interview protocols presented in the Appendix. The protocols focus on activities (roles and responsibilities), assistance and support given and received, the local project structure, and in some cases, state policies and their impact on teacher induction programs.

Most interviews were conducted face-to-face, with some data collected through focus groups and telephone interviews. It was generally more cost-effective to speak with individuals, mainly Cluster Consultants, Professional Development Consultants and Task Force Liaisons, by phone. Scheduling interviews with them was most difficult, as the demands on their time are overwhelming. In addition, all Task Force members are located in Sacramento, and most PDCs and CCs are not housed conveniently close to all the programs they serve, so their interviews were not scheduled at the same time as site visits. Occasionally, SPs were interviewed in structured focus groups with participants answering questions together, but sharing individual experiences, and elaborating on each other’s responses.

### *Data Analysis (Hyperqual)*

As the interviews were completed, they were transcribed and coded in a qualitative database. Hyperqual 3, a qualitative analysis tool that allows coding and retrieval of interview data, was used to sort the information from the interviews into a workable form. By entering interview transcripts into Hyperqual3, the research team was able to read across interview data to discover patterns and contradictions in the text. The research team developed a coding scheme based on the interview topics and the major emerging themes.

Data were sorted into four major topics: Goals, Organizational Structure, Policy Environment, and Support System. Then, the research team created subtopics into which responses were displayed. Researchers were then able to look across responses, by interviewee role and project, to analyze and synthesize the data and present it in a useful narrative.

The following section includes the results of these analyses. The findings focus on the BTSA organizational structures and other supports.

### *Limitations*

WestEd used a case study methodology to view a “vertical slice” of the BTSA program. This approach yields a deep and rich understanding of each case in the study, and it also allows flexibility throughout the evaluation, enabling researchers to tailor questions and methods to the context and operation of particular BTSA programs and their supports. Most important, the case studies were conducted during a particular point in time and represent a snapshot of the organizational structure of BTSA. Consequently, the cases do not present a developmental view of programs, including changes within the program and those that impinge upon it from the state and local context in which it operates.

In addition, since the study began, much has changed in the policy context of BTSA, the state, and the nation. As the independent evaluation took place, BTSA expanded to include a sixth cluster, Task Force members have come and gone, California has faced a budget crisis, and the nation became involved in war. When such events occur locally and nationally, priorities may change and people’s views on issues shift. For example, this report includes an interview with a cluster leader (CC or PDC) who complained about his or her workload. By the time this report is released, the sixth cluster leader may have already alleviated that concern.

Even with its limitations of the study, the findings are strong and informative.

## **BTSA Structure**

BTSA can be characterized as interorganizational in structure. It brings a variety of organizations together to pursue common goals in a number of ways. First, at the state level, the program is administered by an Interagency Task Force of representatives from the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) and the California Department of Education (CDE). Second, CCTC and CDE selected regionally based Cluster Consultants (CCs) and Professional Development Consultants (PDCs) to provide support and assistance to local BTSA programs. And, third, the state provides funds to school districts, consortia of districts, or counties, frequently in collaboration with institutions of higher education, to develop and implement BTSA programs.

In addition to the structural components, BTSA provides other support activities. Perhaps the most important, in the eyes of participants, is CFASST, which is an assessment system designed to assist beginning teachers (BTs) and support providers (SPs) to identify new teachers' strengths and areas for improvement. Viewed as a support, CFASST provides a framework geared to the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP) that enables local programs to fulfill an essential requirement of induction programs - providing BTs with evidence about their teaching practice. CFASST is fairly complex, at least as seen by BTSA participants, and the Task Force sponsors training and other assistance in its use. Along with CFASST training, the Task Force and regional (cluster) leaders provide Toward Equity training, which deals with issues of diversity in California schools. Additionally, BTSA leaders facilitate Site Administrator training for principals and other administrators working with BTSA participants.

Other supports for BTSA implementation come in the form of cluster meetings, in which local program directors and other key leaders meet in geographical groups to discuss policy and program improvement issues, and statewide program directors meetings. These meetings help build the sense of community (Brown & Duguid, 1991) needed for individuals located in dispersed organizations to share common principles and understandings. In such communities, specific practices may vary, but the underlying goals and guiding philosophy are the same. Further, BTSA includes formal and informal program reviews, which provide feedback to local programs to help them identify areas of strength and address challenges they might experience in addressing the CSTP standards.

The following section begins with a description and analysis of the organizational structure of BTSA by presenting a "vertical slice" of the program. It moves to analyzing the other supports that are central to the implementation of BTSA. The section concludes with a brief summary of the structures that support BTSA.

### *A Vertical Slice*

The following description of the organizational units and role groups in the BTSA structure begins with a discussion of the BTSA Task Force and moves through the clusters, including the cluster and professional development consultants, to local program directors. The description of local program directors differentiates between directors of single district BTSA programs and those who direct multiple district consortium programs, because those difference are important in understanding the challenges faced by BTSA in its expansion. Further, consortium programs include an additional role, district (or site) coordinator, which will also be described. And, programs operate within and across districts, so district administration has an impact on BTSA programs. Program directors and district coordinators relate to support providers, who work most closely with beginning teachers. In some local programs, additional roles include SPs who coordinate the work of other SPs and on-site facilitators. Finally, programs include site administrators, generally the principal or assistant principal. Each of these units and roles will be discussed in turn.

#### **BTSA Task Force**

Members of the BTSA Task Force come from CCTC and CDE, and members have dual functions on the Task Force, in addition to any other assignments they might have from their home agency. First, Task Force members are responsible for developing and implementing policies toward new teachers in general. For example, one Task Force member had a particular responsibility for the revision of CFASST, another was the primary contact for this Independent Evaluation, and another was assigned to monitor budgets across the BTSA programs. Such duties are essential to maintaining the Learning to Teach Continuum, which undergirds the BTSA program.

At the same time, Task Force members are assigned to work with particular clusters and the local programs that the cluster coordinates. In this role, they help coordinate formal and informal program reviews, work with the CCs to organize cluster meetings, and with the PDCs to ensure that participants understand and use CFASST (or another acceptable assessment system) appropriately to examine BT practice and in turn provide effective support to BTs. When appropriate, the Task Force liaison provides what one member called "the strong voice of the state," in working with local programs. Taking on the strong state role frees CCs and PDCs to work collaboratively and supportively with programs that experience difficulties while simultaneously ensuring that problems are addressed.

As might be expected, Task Force members express concern that they cannot devote sufficient time to individual programs. One member said, "There is a challenge in balancing the overall Task Force responsibilities, which are not necessarily program-specific...balancing...with the ability to focus on your cluster needs, and the program needs is a challenge." Further, some challenges come from within the program itself. According to one Task Force member:

I think a challenge for me right now is to understand what the directors need, supporting them in growing their leadership...there has been some real holes in their [program directors'] learning. Some of it is around what good inquiry and good research, good data looks like, period. I mean we are not very educated educators around how to use data in constructive, open ways...So as we try to get directors to look at both organizational data and new teacher data and student data. This is an area where I see us needing more capacity. (Task Force member)

In addition, the coordination of two agencies presents challenges as Task Force members try to influence policies to facilitate BTSA success. Task Force members point out that the two agencies have different mandates and cultures, and it is sometimes difficult to work across them. Further, the members of the Task Force assert that resources for both agencies are "over promised and under delivered." As one member put it, "We have a pretty fragmented system in California so trying to create coherence at any one level is a challenge."

As a result of changes in both CDE and CCTC, the composition of the Task Force has changed during the last year, which increase the challenges to Task Force members, because new members do not all share the experience of "growing up with BTSA." Others in the BTSA organizational structure, particularly CCs and PDCs, indicated that the growth of BTSA, coupled with turnover in the Task Force, had made the job of Task Force members difficult:

It's the same few people at the Task Force who are just working so hard...I mean we're going to have a lot of people on stress leave soon. (Cluster Consultant)

Two CCs suggested a reorganization of the Task Force. Rather than having Task Force members assigned to clusters, they would like each to have a substantive area of expertise, such as eligibility, assessment, or budget. Such assignments would lessen the stress of the role because they would be the same as the specialties within the Task Force. On the other hand, moving from a mix of geographic and substantive responsibilities to only substantive assignments would tend to lessen Task Force understanding of particular local contexts and mitigate members' ability to help CCs, PDCs, and BTSA programs work through issues created by the context.

In sum, the Task Force has faced challenges normally associated with interagency coordination. The situation has become more challenging as new people have been assigned to the Task Force and new administrators supervise its activities.

### **Cluster Consultants**

The state is organized into "clusters" of BTSA programs in order to facilitate interchange among local programs and communication between the Task Force and programs. As the program grew, the state recognized the need for an additional cluster, which is fully functional as of the 2001-02 academic year. Data for the Independent Evaluation were collected prior to the additional cluster so do not reflect changes that might result from the existence of another cluster consultant.

Each cluster has a "Cluster Consultant" and a "Professional Development Consultant," which are not hierarchical roles. The CC provides technical assistance to BTSA programs within the regional cluster. Such work involves organizing cluster meetings so that information can be given and ideas exchanged. The technical assistance also involves responding to questions about a particular teacher's eligibility for BTSA, along with advice about how to work with administrators or others. The CC also helps organize formal program reviews to ensure that local programs are meeting BTSA standards and requirements, and more informally reviews and assists in developing local Program Improvement Plans (PIPs). During the year, then, the CC follows up with local program directors to assess how well the program is going, particularly in light of needed improvements noted in formal reviews, and provides assistance to ensure that challenges are met.

Depending on the region, the CC role may have changed a great deal since its inception. In some regions, in the early years of the program, the CC spent a great deal of time working with potential local programs to help share understanding of the BTSA program standards so they could write a BTSA proposal. The work of conceptualizing a BTSA program within a variety of local contexts was reported to be "hard, but fun." Now, in regions in which there are stable BTSA programs, the job has shifted to more quality control, including budget oversight. In other regions, however, local programs are still developing, either by splitting off from existing consortia or other means, and the CC helps with conceptualizing the program, and, as they begin implementation, with ensuring that the programs operate successfully. One Task Force member believed that the solution to the greater demands on CCs and PDCs lies in reconceptualizing their jobs. She said she has worked with the CC and PDC and says to them:

You don't need to do everything. Every time we have a cluster meeting, there should be a group of directors up there presenting and they should be working with you. (Task Force member)

Despite the many demands, experienced CCs talk about their relationships within the BTSA program positively. One said:

I think I've been able to accomplish quite a bit, involving strong relationships with the...BTSA directors with whom I've worked very closely... We're friends, you know, in all cases. (Cluster Consultant)

The combination of defined organizational roles and "friendship" is a common theme in the BTSA program.

### **Professional Development Consultants**

PDCs are responsible for training within BTSA. They are key to providing training to local BTSA directors, coordinators, and SPs on CFASST, the state-developed assessment system. They also provide Site Administrator training and Toward Equity training. In addition, they provide follow-up and technical assistance about CFASST, through attendance at local training events, telephone calls, and e-mails. The PDCs also provide support to local programs as they prepare for formal program reviews, teaching program leaders how to use data to identify areas for improvement.

CFASST and other trainings are generally implemented through "training of trainers," and the PDC responsibility is for training the trainers. They also attempt to attend some of the local training events, to provide another level of quality assurance. Even if they do not attend individual CFASST trainings, the PDCs collect and review evaluations of the trainings.

PDCs provide trainings, follow up and technical assistance for CFASST as part of the state support system for CFASST. Programs that do not use CFASST but implement local assessments are responsible for their own training and follow-up of their assessment system. However, if such programs experience difficulties meeting standards for induction programs, the PDCs will provide technical assistance in identifying and understanding issues and formulating plans for revision.

Like CCs, PDCs talk about their roles as "intermediaries" between the state, personified by the Task Force, and local programs. In talking about the role of the CCs and PDCs, all respondents emphasized that they could meet with program directors and explain the reasons for policy and program changes:

It wouldn't be the same as sending a memo off from Sacramento as it is to sit down and have a conversation about it. We're still talking. (Professional Development Consultant)

PDCs, like others throughout BTSA, sometimes feel increased pressure for outcomes, sometimes in their view, without allowing sufficient time for program modifications to take hold. In this regard, the PDCs are most concerned with the implementation of CFASST, and are concerned that the changes in progress for certification (see below) may overwhelm local programs' capacity to provide the type of formative feedback envisioned by BTSA.

### **Program Directors**

The role of program director may be the most varied within BTSA, because program structures differ, with some being single district programs and others consortia of a number of districts. Further, some BTSA programs have been in place for long periods, others are new, and even longstanding programs may have new leadership. The placement of the BTSA program also influences how it operates, with the majority of the programs located in professional development units and some in human resources divisions. According to a Task Force member:

The director has a critical role, because, the way we disseminate information, to directors and leadership team, at director's meetings and cluster leadership meetings. It's five times a year on average that we work with these people, and as a Task Force member I really never work with support providers or beginning teachers at all... If you don't have a director that understands, or even if they understand but they don't have the power to cause a change, then the program is ineffective. (Task Force member)

This section, then, begins with a discussion of the various structures of local BTSA programs, with emphasis on the different roles BTSA program directors play with each structure. It concludes with brief acknowledgement of two issues confronting local BTSA programs--the optimal size of such programs and the appropriate professional identity of the program director.

**District-based programs:** BTSA programs that serve a single district are led by program directors, occasionally with the help of an assistant director. In such programs, the director is most commonly housed in the professional development and/or curriculum and instruction units of the school district or, less commonly, within human resources. According to the program directors and their supervisors, there are trade-offs in either approach: Having BTSA sit inside professional development facilitates a seamless professional development program, with BTs participating in general professional development as well as induction activities. Those responsible for professional development have a good sense of what new teachers are experiencing and do not require their presence at staff development workshops that are redundant. On the other hand, placing BTSA in the human resources division facilitates efforts to

place new teachers in appropriate programs (e.g., pre-intern, intern, and BTSA) and also eases record keeping about retention. One program director asserted that she has "the best of two worlds" because her original organizational base was human resources, and she maintains good relationships with the department although BTSA is now housed (along with other induction programs) in the professional development unit.

Single-district directors are responsible for identifying SPs, usually in conjunction with principals; providing them with appropriate training; and collaborating with principals to facilitate their interactions with BTs. Identification of SPs can be challenging, particularly in districts with many new teachers. In fact, some program directors said that although they wish to use only teachers with four or five years of experience, many SPs are third-year teachers. For program directors, it is not just a matter of identifying SPs with sufficient experience; they must also find "suitable" teachers, those who are willing and able to work within the BTSA framework, including learning the CFASST system and working with BTs.

Of course, program directors have a fiscal responsibility as well, with oversight of the budgets. The budgetary oversight presents challenges to a number of the directors, because their background is teaching, and they have little administrative experience. This, too, indicates a tension in the BTSA program: On the one hand, program directors who served as SPs are substantively strong with regard to BTSA standards and activities. On the other hand, they are less experienced with administrative duties, including supervision and budget implementation. The tension may have an impact on a local program, but the role of BTSA in providing opportunities for experienced teachers to exercise leadership and develop themselves as teacher leaders is important, although under acknowledged.

Program directors work with SPs, and also with site administrators (principals or assistant principals) to ensure that BTSA serves the BTs. Work with the principals includes facilitating participation in site administrator training and collaboration around scheduling opportunities for SPs and BTs to meet. In the most successful local programs, principals understand and support BTSA, retaining the formal evaluation function but facilitating formative assessment. In less successful programs, principals may view BTSA as an intrusion or press SPs to move from formative to summative evaluation. In most cases, SPs resist the pressure.

**Consortium projects:** Consortium programs have somewhat different structures from those of local districts. First, a number of the consortia are collaborations between a group of districts, sometimes through the County Office of Education (COE), and an institution of higher education (IHE), with co-directors representing each institution. Second, consortia generally have district coordinators in each participating district. The district coordinators fulfill some of the duties of program directors in single-district programs, including identifying SPs, arranging for SP and site administrator training (which may be carried out at the consortium level), and assisting

principals and SPs to facilitate SP-BT interaction. District coordinators range from fairly high-level administrators to teachers on leave, partly based on the number of new teachers in a district. Teachers on leave who serve as district coordinators gain leadership experience and skills, although they, like their program director counterparts, may be less proficient program managers than are administrators serving in the same role.

The challenges to consortium programs are numerous. Perhaps most important is that consortium directors are unable to know and understand the district context in the ways that single-district directors can. Further, some consortia serve very large numbers of new teachers, and without deep knowledge of local context, are stretched to provide specific relevant induction support. Within consortia, as well, districts vary in size and the number of new teachers supported by BTSA. Uneven distribution of needs creates tensions within the consortium. Further, district coordinators who are teachers on leave or low in the district hierarchy are hampered in attempts to influence district policy, including ensuring that only eligible teachers are served by BTSA.

All consortium programs face challenges in implementing a high-quality program in a variety of district contexts. However, consortia located in rural areas are, perhaps, the most highly challenged. Local control and distance can present obstacles to a smooth implementation of BTSA events and trainings.

BTSA directors and administrators working in rural areas report that local control is of paramount importance among individuals living and working in such locations. Educators and administrators in these areas desire to run their own programs in ways that fit their view of the local context. As a result, small districts or even counties have split off from their larger consortia. It appears that as soon there are 50 BTs (the minimum for starting a BTSA program), groups want to secede from their neighboring districts and counties. One consortium director said these split-offs hurt the consortia they leave, partly because they remove funding. Consortia serving relatively small numbers of BTs are also challenged to recruit enough BTs to keep their own program above the minimum enrollment.

In addition to split-offs, local control prevents some districts from fully embracing and supporting BTSA. While many superintendents are quite supportive and some even mandate that first and second year teachers participate in BTSA, this is usually due to a personal relationship between the administrators and the BTSA director. Other superintendents are not as supportive.

Rural consortia can be geographically dispersed, with small numbers of BTs scattered throughout the region. Consequently, the directors are challenged to ensure that all SPs and BTs receive training. In a number of cases, two or three BTs are located miles away from another group of teachers or a central county or district office. Consortium program directors value these

teachers as much as any others, and are struggling with ways to reach them effectively. One program is exploring the idea of “satellites,” regional training centers located throughout the program’s geographical area:

We have to look at a service model, and we’ve established a satellite in one of our districts and so they have been doing some of their trainings within that district. And we’re looking at doing that in at least one other location. I just got two applications from people in one of our other large districts that want to be CFASST trainers. We would co-train with them the first year and see them along, but then they could also offer training around their calendars too. We’re really trying to establish cohorts, or satellites or whatever you want to call it, so people don’t have to come into the county office. (Program Director)

Another program has regional training coordinators that serve particular districts or areas. This seems to work well for them, but raises the cost of travel. One director said:

We do seminar training for support providers and beginning teachers. The way it’s structured in this consortium is they have to be whole-day trainings. We have to do it that way because it’s four hours for us to go to [another county], and it’s impossible to send a trainer out four hours to do a 2-hour after-school training and then come back four hours. It just doesn’t work.

I find it frustrating in terms of the money. We get the exact same amount of money that a district program gets.... [W]hen a trainer [has] to go out the night before, that means unpaid travel and overnight, for them to get there to train the beginning teachers, which means a much higher cost for this, versus a district program where everybody goes to the same training, and you don’t have to travel to get there. So we have a very high cost in terms of that. I use mostly county offices, but once in a while I have to use a hotel because there’s nothing else. And you have to rent hotel rooms in order to do that. So we have a cost difference from some of the other programs, but we get the same amount of money. So I’m always very panicky about that, making the money stretch. (Program Director)

The particular challenges faced by consortia are important because such programs address specific needs, especially in rural districts where there are small numbers of beginning teachers, and it would not be cost effective to create a BTSA program in each district. Consortia also contribute to the stability of BTSA. Many consortium leaders have been with BTSA since its inception and, particularly those serving less stable districts, bring with them an institutional memory that hastens district coordinators' understanding of BTSA, thereby easing implementation.

Just as the family metaphor is used for the BTSA program as a whole, consortium participants and their CCs, PDCs, and Task Force liaisons use the language of "family" to

describe the dynamics within consortia. In this regard, they speak of the challenges as "family stress," rather than institutional problems.

**Program size:** Although the Independent Evaluation did not directly address issues related to the optimal size of a local program, some respondents provided information that can enlighten discussions. First, as indicated above, rural consortium directors expressed concern about the geographic spread of their programs. When a local BTSA program serves a large region, there are logistical difficulties in providing appropriate services. Perhaps more important, program directors are less able to understand the local contexts of all the districts they serve and rely on district coordinators to ensure that BTSA meets local needs. The coordinators, however, are less likely to be positioned to influence district policy to meet the needs of BTs than are directors of more geographically compact programs.

Second, even in large consortia, when participating districts have a small number of BTs, the chances of ensuring high quality services are somewhat lowered. In part, this results from the fact that policies that have a special affect on new teachers, such as class and course assignments, are more likely to be resolved based on district wide needs than with attention to the particular needs of BTs.

In sum, the information from this evaluation indicates that projects can be too big geographically and too small in the number of BTs served. The Independent Evaluation gathered little evidence related to whether there is an upper limit to the number of BTs a program can adequately serve.

**Professional identification of program directors and district coordinators:** The discussions above about program directors and district coordinators indicated that they represent one of two professional orientations. Some are "teachers on special assignment," who work for a term in BTSA leadership roles, and others are administrators who are permanently assigned to serve as directors or coordinators. The Independent Evaluation found strengths and weaknesses in both approaches, as elaborated in the following paragraphs.

When local BTSA leadership comprises "teachers on special assignment," the benefits are clear. Such teachers bring to their roles an understanding of the specific context in which the BTs they serve are working. They can tailor the program and select appropriate support providers. Further, the special assignment teacher-leaders are exposed to sophisticated discussions about high-quality teaching, learn to use tools (such a CFASST) to gather evidence useful for reflecting on teaching practice, and gain skills as leaders. In a fundamental sense, BTSA constitutes the best of "work-embedded professional development" for such teachers, who can serve as leaders in their schools when their assignment to BTSA ends. In this way, BTSA is a force for the greater professionalization of teaching in general.

At the same time, relying on teachers on special assignment brings some liabilities. The teachers are less likely to understand budgeting and resource allocation than are administrators. Perhaps more important, there is turnover in leadership roles. With such turnover, it is difficult to maintain institutional memory and establish relationships with those responsible for professional development and the human resources divisions within the districts served. It is even difficult to establish and maintain relationships with CCs, PDCs, and other local program directors. Such relationships, it is clear, facilitate the success of BTSA programs by building and supporting the sense of BTSA as a community of learners.

The strengths and weaknesses of having local BTSA programs directed by administrators are the obverse of those related to teacher leaders. Administrators are experienced with budgets, have longstanding relationships within their districts, and can serve for a number of years, thereby maintaining an institutional memory for the BTSA program. Further, with continuity, BTSA programs are able to address the more complex issues related to teacher induction and teaching practice, as they become more knowledgeable about the field. This is particularly true regarding developing understanding of the relationship of formative assessment to support, a concept that seems difficult to fully implement across BTSA programs. However, over time, administrators may lose direct contact with the daily context in which BTs work with the result that programs may be less than optimally responsive to the needs of BTs.

The Independent Evaluation could only gather information about the perceived costs and benefits of each approach to leadership within local programs. However, the information in the evaluation can be used for enlightened discussions about the trade-offs involved.

### **District Administrators**

Whether a single-district program or a consortium, BTSA programs must find a place in the district. Attitudes toward BTSA vary, with some district administrators seeing BTSA as an isolated program with a limited mission and others viewing BTSA as offering important knowledge and skills that can help fulfill the district's mission.

District administrators are more likely to view BTSA as an integral part of the district's professional development mandates under two conditions. The first is when BTSA is housed in the same unit that is responsible for all professional development, generally the curriculum and instruction unit. One consortium director contrasted two districts in the consortium:

I think in [name of district], it's a very, very good fit, and one of the reasons for that is that the professional development coordinator for the district is a member of the BTSA team. And that was very helpful, and continues to be so. We rolled to a different side of the house in [second district name]. We were working with Curriculum and we rolled to work with Personnel. That was their choice. We now fit with the professional development for beginning teachers...out of the Personnel side, but for experienced teachers...out of Curriculum. (Program Director)

The problem with housing BTSA in personnel offices is that there is no coordination with other professional development activities: what one director termed "two different PD departments-parallel tracks." In such cases, the burden on beginning teachers can be great, because they must participate in both BTSA activities and professional development activities geared to any school wide improvement efforts that are underway. Maybe more important, BTSA's focus on the CSTP has helped districts coordinate all professional development around the standards. District administrators have asked BTSA directors to train all central office and site administrators on the CSTP to develop a shared culture of professionalism.

On the other hand, when BTSA is housed in personnel units, it is easier to identify eligible new teachers and place them in BTSA. And, as SB 2042 is fully implemented, it will be easier to ensure that new teachers' personnel records reflect their participation in an appropriate induction program when human resources is in charge of the program.

The second condition that helps integrate BTSA into district professional development procedures relates to where the program director sits in the hierarchy of the district. In most single district projects, the program director has an administrative position, either as a unit director or higher. However, the district coordinators in consortium programs, and some single-district directors, can be "teachers on special assignment." In such cases, BTSA has little influence on district policy and practice for two reasons. First, the director serves a specified term so cannot develop the relationships needed to embed the program in the district and does not sit in meetings where major decisions are made. Second, as a teacher, the coordinator is seen as lower in the hierarchy by administrators and can have a difficult time being acknowledged, particularly with regard to policy issues.

### **Support Providers**

In many ways, SPs are the linchpin of BTSA. They are responsible for working with BTs on CFASST events and providing BTs with ongoing support. Because of their importance to BTSA, SPs receive professional development, generally from people who have been trained by the PDCs.

Local programs select SPs in a variety of ways. Districts that are highly impacted by teacher shortages frequently use fairly inexperienced (third-or-fourth-year) teachers as SPs and seek volunteers. Programs in districts with less teacher turnover may use rigorous criteria for selection. In one BTSA program, for example, the SPs apply and are observed in their classrooms before selection. Other programs are less stringent in their criteria, and consortium directors indicate that they have little control over selection:

In working with multiple districts, the county office cannot regulate how each local district elects their support providers. Usually that's a negotiated contract thing in each local setting. So one place may have a minimum requirement of three years of teaching experience, whereas another district might say, well, we want a minimum of five years of teaching experience...[We] give them like the characteristics of a quality support person, and hopefully those districts would be able to match that. (Program Director)

Program directors and CCs believe that some of the strongest SPs were BTs who had been served by the program. In fact, they speak of the movement from BT to SP as a sign of BTSA's success. A director of a large consortium said:

This year I have three BTSA graduates who will become SPs! That is like my dream! They're very young teachers but boy they know CFASST and they've been so recently in that new position, they understand. (Program Director)

The director of a somewhat struggling program that has undergone structural shifts and serves overcrowded districts with many inexperienced teachers, reported:

A large percent of BTs go on to become SPs. I just sent six to their first administrative jobs, which is typical for them-become site administrators or going into district offices. (Program Director)

Local programs vary on how they match SPs and BTs. All respondents indicated that the best situation was when the SP and BT were in the same building, teaching the same subject areas or grade levels, and on the same schedule. The last was particularly noted in year-round schools. However, in many cases, local programs were unable to match all three criteria, and made decisions on which was most important. For the most part, propinquity, rather than grade level or content knowledge, framed the decision, but some programs made sure the match was substantive, rather than geographic. All acknowledge trade-offs with any decision. If the focus is on content and there is distance between SP and BT, observations and conversations are likely to be less frequent than if the SP is nearby. On the other hand, SPs who do not share grade level or

content background with BTs are more likely to focus on psychological support rather than helping the BT move toward expert pedagogy in a content area. One SP described the position as:

We help them with curriculum. We help them in setting up their classrooms. We help them with discipline. We help them if they need help with bulletin boards, holiday things. We help them with state standards, if they have questions, if they have parent problems. I mean it is like the whole circuit. Plus we give them nice little things so that they feel good.

Another said she works "...as a therapist, a mom, you name it..." (Support Provider)

One program director claimed that when possible, the first year match should be based on propinquity and the second year on subject area. Others believe that the match should be made differently based on the grade level involved, with elementary teachers having less need of a content-oriented match, and secondary school teachers needing an SP in the same content area, even if it means the SP comes from another school. And a Task Force member addressed the content match issue at the secondary school level in a different way when she suggested that the support function should be dispersed:

Separate support from providers, I want department chairs to play a stronger role in instructional support, but I want them to be trained in how to support teachers. If I'm teaching economics in the tenth grade for the first time, it's a very different course than teaching social studies in the eighth. So we really need to find the online ways, or the connected ways to hook up with that art teacher that's so fabulous in X high school so she can support the art teacher in the high school.

So you have one person that's your direct contact ...but that you really show openness to connect directly with three or four other people that may give you weekly or monthly or daily support around a particular class. Maybe a teacher doesn't want to be a support provider, but is teaching ninth graders mathematics. Well then we need that connection. (Task Force member)

Respondents also indicated that there was a less tangible concern at issue in matching BTs and SPs, and that was some personal compatibility. The solution presented was to have some sort of "fair" or social event that would result in BTs listing two or three potential SPs, and then having the match made by the program director or site administrator. Such an idea does not take into account the importance of providing support from the start of school.

Further variation lies in how local programs allocate SP time. Some programs use full-time classroom teachers and provide a number of release time days. Others assign SPs to part-time work, with the remainder of their time allocated to their position as SP. Still others have full-time

SPs, who are released from classroom duties and provide support to a larger number of BTs. Programs select the approach based on the local context, including the availability of experienced teachers to serve as SPs, the number of BTs, and prior experience with the program. SPs who also work as full-time teachers are concerned about their ability to provide the needed support. Both part-time and full-time SPs, however, have positive comments about their ability to work with BTs.

From a district perspective, it is difficult to staff classrooms when there are numerous SPs who are not teaching a full load, particularly at the elementary school level. However, some claim that it is important for SPs to remain in classrooms:

The longer you're out of the classroom, the less connection you have...unless you're actually in the classroom using the curriculum and going to the meetings, you really don't have that knowledge to share with beginning teachers. (Support Provider)

In contrast, the argument for full-time SPs is that "they're not in their classroom and trying to juggle those responsibilities." A Task Force member noted the trade-offs:

An on-site [as opposed to full-time roving] SP, you have a lot more people that you have to try to work with, to get like a one-on-one or one-to-two ratio, but the training is the big issue. How do you train all those people? That's the cost factor. Takes money away from what you could do to support beginning teachers when you have to put a lot of money into training. The support providers can't work without training. So you're always working at a give and take. (Task Force member)

Two programs developed the role of "lead SP." One of these created two such positions, one of which works with the SPs responsible for first year BTs, and the other with the SPs working with second year BTs. The other project with lead SPs assigns them responsibility for coordinating the work of SPs in a building. This role, while unusual, provides assistance to the program director, particularly in large programs, and is also able to tailor support to building-level context. The lead SP is full time and serves for a specified term. Lead SPs are available to visit all sites.

The variations in how SP roles are organized exemplify program variation within BTSA. Such variation indicates efforts to adapt BTSA to local circumstances and provide meaningful support to BTs. At the same time, however, the variation contributes to some stress within the BTSA community, because it becomes difficult to administer such a program, and some programs within a cluster are unsure of the appropriate approach to use.

## **Site Administrators (Principals)**

Although principals are not a formal element in the BTSA organizational structure, their role in the program is essential, and their buy-in to the program can make a major difference in its success. BTSA recognizes their importance by providing site administrator training and encouraging program directors to develop strong, positive relationships with the site administrators.

Principals have two roles related to BTs and SPs. As the school leader, the principal is responsible for everything that goes on in the building. Consequently, his or her support is essential to successful BTSA implementation. Most site administrators must approve release time for BTs and SPs and some approve assignments of SPs. When SPs are released from teaching assignments on a part-time basis, the principal must ensure that classes are covered. Some find BTSA professional development events quite time consuming. One principal spoke on behalf of his teachers:

Teachers don't like to be out of their classrooms. Sometimes they come back from a BTSA all-day event, and they feel like they would have rather been in their classrooms. It wasn't worth their while. (Principal)

In addition to BTSA meetings and professional development events, SPs sometimes leave their classrooms to observe and meet with their BTs, especially when the SP is not on the same site as their BT or if the two have conflicting schedules.

When SPs and BTs are out of the classrooms, principals struggle with the issue of coverage. Finding substitutes is particularly difficult in some areas and even more difficult at certain times during the year.

Well, it seems to be more and more of a challenge, just because our substitutes are dwindling. We never have enough subs and towards the end of the year it just becomes more difficult, we try to make up for some teachers who have left us mid-year. (Principal)

Schools and districts arrange for substitutes and release time in a variety of ways. Some teachers have an established number of release days for the year, but if substitutes are not available, districts have to get creative. Some schools have assistant principals cover classrooms and some principals grant partial days as release time. In any case, many BTSA principals struggle with releasing teachers from their classrooms, especially in impacted districts. BTSA program directors can work collaboratively with principals to address the issue of teacher

absence from classes, and CCs can facilitate the sharing of best practices in this regard. Such an approach is likely to increase principal buy-in to participating in the program.

The second crucial principal role relates to evaluating new teachers. Principals are responsible for the formal evaluation of teachers, leading to recommendations to elect or dismiss. In some schools, the principal relies on SPs for information about new teacher progress, although SPs have a confidential relationship with the BTs to whom they are assigned. One principal indicated how she walked a careful line between gathering information and respecting the relationship between the SP and BT:

I support teachers; I meet with individuals, do class observations and point out areas for improvement. There have been times when I've met with SPs, have touched base and indicated that when they meet with BTs, there are areas for improvement to discuss. (Principal)

In addition to the formal roles that principals play, BTSA encourages administrators to lighten the load of new teachers by giving them assignments with reduced demands. Principals generally attempt to do so, but many have little choice in teacher assignments. Because of teacher shortages, especially in urban districts or where the local bargaining agreement frames teacher assignments, all teachers have high demands and great responsibilities placed on them. Conversely, in one rural district, where the supply of teachers *exceeds* demand, administrators report that they have persuaded beginning teachers to *decrease* their commitments:

Most BTs carry the same load as experienced teachers. Many BTs want to do more- they have to limit the amount of extracurricular activities BTs can do, like coaching and serving on committees. (District Administrator)

[BTs think] hey! Let's get involved, and they can't say "no". But part of it is they want to be more involved and they don't have a good understanding yet of how much they can take...It's hard—I guess when I learn that they wish to be a coach, I really talk with them about that and encourage them not to make a formal commitment, but rather volunteer and be a part of it as their schedule evolves, and to give themselves the room to make the classroom the priority. (Principal)

Administrators make an attempt to reduce the demands on their beginning teachers whenever possible. But the success of decreasing responsibilities and burdens for new teachers varies according to the site's circumstances.

Personal relationships between the director and administrators in the districts and school sites can be key variables in the success of the BTSA program. If the relationship is positive, it can lead to further collaboration between BTSA and local schools. One director said:

I do administrator training. Because I was an administrator, I know all of the administrators, although there's lots of changes with retirements but that's been a huge advantage. I also do the follow up. When they call afterwards and ask if I can do a training on the teaching standards, I'll go and do that. (Program Director)

However, in districts with limited commitment to BTSA, reported to occur more in urban than rural districts, the site administrator is less involved. In such settings, the principal has little information about the interactions between SPs and BTs, and does not adapt schedules or other requirements to ensure that they can meet. Perhaps more disturbing, in the case studies, some principals indicated that they no longer felt responsible for teacher evaluation, and that the BTSA coordinator was performing that function with CFASST.

### **Summary**

BTSA is an interorganizational program with many institutions playing roles. Further, the program has established links between the Task Force, representing two state agencies, CCs and PDCs, representing geographically grouped sets of programs, and the local programs. The local BTSA programs can be single district or consortium programs, with strengths and challenges evident in each structure. Local programs include SPs, who are provided with consistent training but are organized differently depending on the local context. The means of organization represent trade-offs between a number of desirable characteristics.

The organizational diversity within BTSA presents a major challenge to effective program implementation. Nonetheless, BTSA is a strong program, which reflects the strength of the personal ties among BTSA participants. The language of "family" and "community" is frequently used to characterize the program, and this quality is evident in and between each participating organization. The personal relationships help hold BTSA together, but so, too, do some other types of support, including standards, consistent training, cluster meetings, formal and informal program reviews, and CFASST. Each of these is discussed in the following section.

### *Other Supports*

Other types of support buttress the interorganizational relationships in BTSA, which range from regular community-building events to state-established standards of practice. This section includes a discussion of various approaches to supporting local implementation of BTSA that are built into the program statewide. The first support to be described is CFASST, because it (or some other approved assessment system) plays an important role in BTSA. Its role, and differences in understanding of that role, will be discussed. In addition, BTSA provides a great deal of training at every level of the system. In addition to the professional development for BTs, which was described in an earlier report (Task 3), BTSA trains SPs and others in the use of CFASST and how to carry out their roles. Two sorts of meetings also support BTSA implementation. Local program directors meet within clusters, as indicated above, and all program directors, CCs, PDCs, and Task Force members meet in statewide project directors' meetings. These meetings are used to carry out BTSA agendas, and also to build the BTSA community, as will be discussed. Finally, local programs undergo both formal and informal reviews, which are used to ensure that programs meet standards.

### **CFASST**

CFASST is designed as a series of "events" that encourage BTs to use evidence to reflect on their practice. Such evidence is gathered through observations, the collection of student work and other data, and thoughtful conversations between the BT and SP. As conceptualized in BTSA, assessment of teacher practice through CFASST or some other equivalent approach is essential to providing support. In this view, support should be individualized to each new teacher's needs, and discovering what those needs are requires formative assessment. Further, the assessment must be aligned with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP). CFASST, then, was designed to facilitate the essential formative assessment in alignment with the CSTP. Over the years, CFASST has been modified, based on feedback from BTSA participants and formal evaluations.

This section is organized as follows. The first section focuses on the choice of alternatives to CFASST, and the perceived strengths and weaknesses of such an option. The next section includes descriptions of how CFASST is used and reactions to it by participants in BTSA programs. It concludes with a discussion of the tension that SPs feel about using any assessment approach within the context of supporting new teachers.

**Alternatives to CFASST:** The BTSA program requires that CFASST or "an equivalent" assessment system be implemented in order to provide SPs with evidence that leads to providing

appropriate support. CFASST is used by all but 11 of the local BTSA programs. All new BTSA programs are required to use CFASST. This policy is based on the experience of the early CNTP and BTSA programs, which developed their own assessment systems. Such development required both a great deal of time and much technical capacity. CFASST is an efficient approach to ensuring that BTSA programs rely on a technically sound formative assessment system. The programs that do not use CFASST had already developed their own assessment systems prior to CFASST's development.

Since the non-CFASST programs are among the most experienced BTSA programs, it is not surprising that respondents believe their local assessment systems appropriately frame the support. One program director said about the alternative assessment used:

In a lot of ways it's not that different from CFASST. We were a pre-CFASST project, so we had to have our own local design before the state had its design... (Program Director)

Alternative assessment systems must be as rigorous as CFASST, and they are an important part of formal program reviews. In some cases, the review teams (and others in BTSA) agree that the system works well. However, despite local program assertions, at least one Task Force member said of an alternative approach, "They're stuck in an old model from the beginning days. They need to take advantage of the advances."

As the state moves to implement SB 2042, which requires participation in an induction program as a condition for receiving a clear credential, there will be increasing scrutiny of alternative assessment programs and their value in supporting new teachers.

**CFASST in Practice:** CFASST entails a series of events that enable users to assess where new teachers are in meeting the CSTP. As such, the events entail attention to classroom context and particular knowledge and skills, including planning for instruction and approaches to instruction. In response to an independent evaluation and stakeholder feedback, CFASST has been revised. A new version is being implemented starting with the 2001-02 school year. The information presented here relates to the earlier version of CFASST.

Local programs have different views on the value of CFASST, and, indeed, there are differences within programs. For many, CFASST is an excellent tool. According to two SPs from different projects:

The CFASST program is...good...It's not the driver, it's the guide, and once we can get people into that mindset, I think it's actually going to find the true value in it. I see a lot of good value in it... (Support Provider)

I think it's awesome. It's a great program and it really helps BTs. (Support Provider)

And a Task Force liaison said:

It sounds somewhat trite... but I'm going to say CFASST is best practices when it's well trained and well implemented.... CFASST is support, but it takes the ability of a support provider to figure out how to-when to use the CFAST box and when not to use the box. When to use the box even though you're not supposed to use it at this moment, actually could be very helpful to deal with a specific issue that has come up. (Task Force member)

Other participants did not see CFASST as helping them support BTs. In their eyes, CFASST entailed "too much paperwork," which some described as "useless." In this view, CFASST imposes an artificial structure on what should be more natural conversations about what has transpired in the classroom. At best, according to one critic, the activities are redundant of what good SPs help BTs understand. One SP summed up the criticisms:

I think a lot of the paperwork is useless. You have a lot of the same assessment forms-there's no need to sit there and fill out the assessment form 3,4,5,10 times! I understand that there should be certain assessments, but it's a lot of work. One, because as a beginning teacher, it's your first year teaching and to take the time out to deal with all this paperwork and CFASST events on top of your lesson planning and grading and everything-that, in itself, is overwhelming. (Support Provider)

**Assessment and Support:** Despite clear direction from the BTSA Task Force, developed in written documents that support the program (particularly the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs*) confusion exists throughout the BTSA community about the role of assessment in support. The underlying philosophy of BTSA is that support should be provided that meets individual BT needs, and that evidence is essential to identify the needs. Further, BTSA encourages reflective practice, in which BTs gain habits of collecting evidence from their work, reflecting on it, and changing what they do as a result. CFASST and alternative assessment systems, then, are designed to be used in such formative ways. However, complaints about CFASST as burdensome and not helpful reflect a frequent confusion about the role of assessment in providing support:

But I would say there's not enough emphasis on truly supporting your BTs as much as there is on assessing. I feel like there is a great emphasis on observations and assessing. Well, anybody can observe, anybody can assess...A support provider should provide support so I think the emphasis is on filling out forms, meeting deadlines and assessment, and it's up to the teacher to personalize that. (Support Provider)

The speaker represents interviewees who see assessment as different from support, in contrast to the framework for BTSA. Such confusion is not confined to users of CFASST. A similar view of the difference between assessment and support was expressed by a program director in a program that uses a local assessment tool:

First of all, our model of beginning teacher/support provider interaction is a very specific one-on-one model, and it's oriented quite a bit toward the relationship team. Early on, our support providers expressed an interest in not being responsible for the assessment piece. So in the early days, and even today, we have a group of people known as university partners [to do assessment]...Very often they're retired principals, or assistant superintendents, or district language arts people, and we've kind of cultivated them over the years. (Program Director)

Although participants praise the training associated with CFASST (discussed in the following section) or other assessment tools, it is clear that for many the concept of assessment *in the service* of support is not clear. For them, assessment and support run on parallel tracks.

## **Training**

As might be expected in a program that focuses on the professional development of teachers, BTSA sponsors training for principals (site administrators) and SPs. SP training includes in-depth training in the use of CFASST, as well as other content. BTSA training is delivered through the PDCs, who generally develop a cadre of trainers in the region, who in turn provide the professional development within local programs. In fact, one frequently stated objective of the PDCs is to build local capacity for professional development through the BTSA program.

This section begins with a description of the training for administrators and then moves to the more complex set of offerings for SPs. The discussions include analysis of the value of the professional development, which, as will be seen, varies depending on the strength of the local program.

**Site Administrators:** BTSA programs require site administrators to attend training that at least provides an overview of BTSA and how it operates within school buildings. The content focuses on how to create a climate for support for BTs, with some discussion of working to

ensure that BTs do not have the heaviest schedule, although everyone recognizes that such practices may be difficult to implement. The administrator training also includes information about what constitutes effective professional development, CFASST and how it is used within BTSA, and expectations for SPs.

At best, the site administrator training helps principals gain deeper understanding of the CSTP and the goals of BTSA. Such understanding was cited as helping principals move toward standards-based evaluation of teachers. According to one program director:

The district has changed their evaluation component of teachers so that it reflects the CSTP. Site administrators had no knowledge of the CSTP before...Practiced in a lab setting how that might look...They used the tapes in order to help them get used to the standards. The site administrators were then expected to train the teachers on their site on the standards before that evaluation piece came into effect. (Program Director)

However, other principals expressed concern about the time BTSA meetings took, and believed they presented information about teacher evaluation that was better found elsewhere. Principals' appreciation or lack thereof of the professional development offered by BTSA was indicative of their on-going support for BTSA in the school. For some, worrying about SP/BT opportunities to interact was one more problem to be faced, compounded by the challenge of covering teachers' classes; for others, however, BTSA was a helpful program, and they were supportive of it and of the professional development opportunities offered to them. According to one program director, who was a former administrator and used personal relationships to gather support for BTSA, the training itself could create administrator buy-in:

One full day of training is mandated. At first they're a little skeptical, it's a full day. But once they come, there's a big difference. The difference in me getting back SP nomination forms, for example. They buy into it totally. And they follow up with phone calls. And just learning the standards, they find it valuable. (Program Director)

All noted the busy-ness of administrators' schedules and a desire for efficient (and short) site administrator training.

**Support providers:** SP training is key to the success of BTSA. According to one member of the Task Force, "I think every beginning teacher is entitled to a well-trained support provider." In this view, SP training is more important than selection and assignment, as discussed above. However, selection, assignment, and training are related because in districts with more limited numbers of potential SPs, it is difficult to find people who are willing to engage in the training required. Further, districts that are hiring new teachers up to the beginning of school are unable to

identify SPs in advance and provide training before school opens. (Some of the most impacted districts report making the SP/BT matches up to two months after school opens.) In such cases, it was not unusual to hear complaints about SP training:

...The first semester was bad because I got thrown in at the last minute. I was told two days before the training that I had to go to [a different district] and I would be there for four days. So I was going to miss school and I had to do lesson plans at the last minute.... There was a lot of information at the training, and it didn't all sink in when it should have. I think we should have had an informational meeting first for support providers about what BTSA is and what would be covered in the training. Something that said, "This is your role as an SP." Instead it was like, "OK. I'm a mentor and here's step 1, which covers this standard...." (Support Provider)

SPs receive significant amounts of training in CFASST at the start of the year. Most appreciate the training and desire opportunities to review events just before they work with teachers on them. Aside from the CFASST training, programs vary in the staff development provided to SPs. At the high end, programs include workshops on cognitive coaching and other ways to work with BTs, content standards, and providing evidence-based feedback to BTs. Some programs have intensive sessions using videotapes of instruction and CSTP-based discussions, above and beyond the CFASST training. Less well-implemented programs have more limited discussions about how SPs and BTs should interact and touch on important content issues, such as equity (mirroring the BTs' equity training). On the other hand, some SPs reported that BTSA training, particularly related to equity and other general topics, was redundant with other professional development and pulled them out of their classrooms unnecessarily.

The BTSA community acknowledges the importance of BTSA-specific training. In fact, in most programs the training component is strong. Further, professional development for SPs and site administrators is assessed during formal program reviews, so local programs are alert to the need to demonstrate strength in this regard. From the perspective of CCs and PDCs, it is vitally important that they build local capacity for professional development so the type of on-going support in implementing CFASST that SPs desire, for example, is readily available. To that end, they use a trainer-of-trainers approach, which has been quite successful. But the growth of BTSA and the increasing demands on induction programs that result from SB 2042 place stresses on the system. The stresses are felt most strongly in districts with large numbers of new teachers, which, as demonstrated in the report on Task 3, are also districts serving high-poverty students. BTSA programs in such districts are also most likely to have problems with the formal program reviews and need assistance from CCs and PDCs.

## **Cluster and Program Director Meetings**

Face-to-face meetings among program leaders further buttress the organizational structure of BTSA. The complex interorganizational structure works well in part because of the personal relationships that have been built throughout BTSA. Prior to statewide implementation, leaders developed strong collegial relations, which were easy to maintain on a personal level.

As BTSA has grown, however, the program has been faced with ensuring that new programs and their leaders understand BTSA and implement its essential elements. BTSA faced this growth in two ways. The first was to formalize procedures to ensure that local programs met the *Standards of Quality and Effectiveness for Professional Teacher Induction Programs*. (New induction standards, developed by the SB 2042 Advisory Panel with input from BTSA staff, are currently under review by the CCTC.) The formal program reviews, discussed in the next section, represent the institution of formal procedures. The second is BTSA's continued support for meetings within clusters and for program directors. The meetings have both formal and informal purposes, which comprise the content of this section.

CCs gather the project directors in their cluster for formal meetings three times a year. In addition to the program directors, other members of the local program's leadership team attend the meeting, as do associate superintendents and human resources people on occasion. When possible, the Task Force liaison also attends the cluster meetings. In general, the two-day meetings have an agenda that covers:

- Legislative updates
- Program evaluation
- Accountability
- Schedules for training and other events
- Issues raised by the program directors

Most recently, cluster meetings have provided the opportunity to discuss the new standards for induction programs and the role of induction in credentialing that was generated by SB 2042. In addition, the meetings offer an opportunity for program directors to share ideas and offer help to one another. One CC uses the meetings to observe how the program director works with his/her team, so she can provide support that moves each program forward. Other CCs talk about using the cluster meetings to build "a learning community" and share best practices.

In addition to the formal meetings, some clusters also have shorter, more informal meetings during which program directors can share ideas. Attendance at the informal meetings depends on

program directors' interests and schedules. The informal meetings facilitate conversations with participating IHEs, so that all participants can share understanding of IHE teacher preparation programs and strengthen relationships between the IHEs and districts. Clusters organize these meetings in different ways, with one having rotating hosts among the participating programs, thereby enhancing directors' ability to understand the different contexts in which programs operate so their support and advice can be focused.

CCs and program directors value the meetings more for the opportunities to develop strong networks and collegial associations than for the formal topics that are considered. CCs make sure that there "is always time for growth and network opportunities." As BTSA has grown, CCs with increased numbers of programs have made adjustments in order to ensure that such opportunities exist, including holding intra-cluster regionalized meetings.

BTSA holds statewide program directors' meetings twice a year. Again, the meetings have a dual purpose. They are an arena in which policy can be discussed, with administrators from CCTC and CDE frequently making presentations. They also offer a chance for small group discussions of issues that commonly face BTSA programs in which "best practices" are shared. Clusters also meet during the statewide meetings, and new program directors receive important information and support. For the most part, program directors appreciate the opportunities to get together. However, users of local assessments said that too much time was devoted to discussions of CFASST. The local assessment users also tend to be the most experienced BTSA directors, and they found a number of the topics irrelevant to their concerns.

Less formally, but equally important, the statewide meetings build the BTSA community. Filled with symbolic gestures, the meetings help socialize new members of the BTSA community and strengthen the sense of common purpose. One director said, "We get wonderful resources, great networking. I feel very supported and I feel like I can call another director and ask them questions."

Both program director meetings and cluster meetings act as professional development opportunities for program directors and forums for directors to voice questions and concerns. Cluster leaders often arrange workshops and breakout sessions with activities that involve interaction among directors. Sometimes directors make presentations to their colleagues on various topics of interest. In addition, some cluster and Task Force leaders are encouraging small groups of directors to plan activities for the meetings to better meet the needs and interests of the participants. In a significant way, the BTSA leadership is modeling what they train SPs and BTs to do- making activities (meetings, trainings, classes) learner-centered. The meetings make a particular contribution to the professional development of teachers on leave to serve as program directors and district coordinators, providing them with information and opportunities to develop as leaders.

In sum, the various organizational components of BTSA intersect at fairly frequent intervals for face-to-face meetings. Not only do these meetings offer the chance for the state agencies to share information about policies and programs that may have an impact on BTSA, but they also offer an opportunity for networking and professional development. These opportunities strengthen the sense of BTSA as a community of learners.

### **Formal and Informal Reviews**

The growth of BTSA draws attention to issues of program quality. In a small program in which participants develop procedures and approaches together, quality is assured by sharing understandings of the purposes of the program and the conceptual base on which it has been developed. The program directors, cluster consultants, and Task Force members who have had roles in BTSA from the start were involved in developing the set of documents and activities on which the induction program rests. Consequently, many held views in common about the role of assessment in support, "best practices" related to selecting, training, and matching SPs, and other important matters. However, as longstanding programs grow, some have been hesitant to take advantage of the increasingly sophisticated understanding of what is required for induction support and have held on to inappropriate practices. New programs require opportunities to judge their activities against state standards. As a result, BTSA as a system has begun to formalize quality assurance through formal and informal program reviews.

Both types of reviews are based on the induction program standards. In the past, there were 13 standards for induction programs, but the new revision has 20, with the increase related to the new role of induction programs in teacher credentialing. The program reviews discussed here, however, were based on the 13 standards.

The formal program reviews are quite structured, with a review team of fellow BTSA program directors, CCs, PDCs, and Task Force members assessing the program against the 13 standards. Program directors collect evidence around each of the standards, and the team judges whether the standards have been met. Although directors describe the formal review as "arduous," they also reported that it was useful:

It caused us to have to think about the program...I don't think we had thought seriously across all 13 standards...Having only a year to prepare, and this may sound ridiculous, but having only a year to prepare was really difficult. And we never had the time to assure our BTs especially, but also our SPs and our districts, that they needed to be truthful, that the money was not going to go away.... We're still using our formal program review. We used it to frame the questions on the evaluation that we did on the program this year. We used it to implement initial needs assessments of BTs. It wasn't part of our program. Boom! It came through. We used it to change a little bit of the structure of how we collect information and how we collect paperwork at our meetings, and not at our meetings. What they said we really tried hard to implement, and I think it made a difference this year.  
(Program Director)

Another program director was less enthusiastic, saying it was "rather intimidating and too heavy duty for this program." Nonetheless, those programs that met the standards were very pleased, and the programs in the case studies that did not meet particular standards addressed those over the next year. CCs work with programs to address the unmet standards, occasionally drawing upon the Task Force liaison to underscore the importance of remedying any problems.

Informal reviews are held in years in which a program does not participate in the formal review. The informal reviews pair two programs, which develop evidence around the 13 standards, similarly to the formal review but less rigorously. The informal reviews focus on standards that a formal review has shown to need improvement, or on standards selected by the program. The success of the informal review rests largely on whether the reviewing project understands the program and has prepared for the informal review. One program director gave examples of two informal reviews in which she had participated. In one, the review group had prepared for the review and "the information we got from that, although it was informal, was so great." In the other, however, "The informal review was not as useful to use, mostly because I don't think the review team that came to us was as well prepared as they should have been." The program director who was critical of the formal program review praised the informal review because it led to "lots of learning. We had honest conversations around the standards. Getting an outside perspective was good."

A Task Force member noted that formal program reviews were difficult for BTSA participants because the focus of BTSA is support, and formal program reviews carry images of accountability. Nonetheless, throughout the BTSA community, there is a recognition that a statewide program such as BTSA requires assurance of quality so it remains viable.

## Summary

In addition to the organizational supports, local BTSA programs are supported by other means. CFASST, a well-structured and researched formative assessment tool, provides programs with the base from which to provide individualized support to BTs. Despite its strength as a tool and clear messages from the Task Force and cluster leaders that CFASST is to be used in service of support, many SPs, and even some program directors, do not make the link between assessment and support.

Other supports help ensure the quality of BTSA even as it has grown. Formal and informal reviews direct attention to induction program standards and enable BTSA leadership to monitor local programs. Both the informal reviews and cluster and statewide meetings have a secondary purpose-to foster the sense of community and family that was an essential feature of BTSA in its early years.

## The BTSA Structure and the Current Policy Environment

As with any other program, BTSA exists within a policy context that affects the organizational structure and is affected by it. Although not directly affecting BTSA, the new accountability structures in the state provide a context for its implementation. Accountability places additional pressures on participating schools, which have been addressed in the report on Task 3.

This section focuses on the challenges that arise from the current policy environment confronting the BTSA program at the time data were collected, and presents an analysis of the extent to which BTSA's organizational structure is successful in its efforts to rise to the challenges. Since that time, there have been changes in the context, most notably the economic decline in the state, that are likely to alter BTSA participants' perceptions of challenges and how best to address them.

The section begins with an analysis of ways the structure helps or fails to help local BTSA programs cope with the complexities of the Learning to Teach (LTT) continuum, particularly in programs that are most affected by the current teacher shortage. Following that, the analysis moves to looking at how well the structure helps local programs work through issues related to an approach to professional development, the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) program. The section ends with a discussion of BTSA and the implementation of SB 2042, which requires teachers to complete an induction program in order to gain a second-level credential. The new credentialing requirements have important implications for the organizational structure of BTSA.

The challenges to BTSA from the policy environment also affect individual BTSA programs. Such affects were discussed in the Task 3 report, *Effects of Statewide Expansion on*

*BTSA Program Quality.* In contrast, the discussion in this report focuses on the organizational structure of BTSA and its role in responding to the challenges.

### ***The Learning to Teach Continuum***

California's approach to teacher professional development, the Learning to Teach Continuum, reflects the state's efforts to ensure that all children are taught by qualified teachers, even in the face of teacher shortages. Teachers who enter classrooms with less than full preparation are supposed to be placed in pre-intern or intern programs, which provide education and support as they move to certification. The implications for BTSA that stem from the LTT continuum for schools and local programs have been described in the Task 3 report. But the existence of new teachers who are not eligible for BTSA support affects the organizational structure of BTSA as well as local programs. The following section describes how program directors, CCs and PDCs, and Task Force members approach this challenge.

Local program directors feel the impact of the existence of pre-intern and intern teachers in two ways. First, they have a greater burden in ensuring that the teachers who are included in BTSA are appropriate. As one director said:

Our major challenge has always been the eligibility of the BTs. And up until this year, we have taken credentialed teachers first, and then we have filled with non-credentialed teachers who are not supported in other programs. We just couldn't keep continuing to do this. The state was telling us that, and we knew it. We've known it all along. (Program Director)

One Task Force member, however, expressed concern about the roles of pre-intern, intern, and emergency certified teachers, saying BTSA was impeded by:

A policy that tolerates the assignments of the emergency teachers, pre-interns and interns. What that does is it de-legitimizes legitimate teacher preparation pathways, and I'm not talking about alternatives, I'm talking about having a heart surgeon that's actually practiced surgery before he really does an operation. So we have to make up our mind. (Task Force member)

In the current environment, however, BTSA directors must make sure that new teachers are placed in the appropriate program. Along with that responsibility is the need to monitor funding sources to ensure that support for each type of new teacher comes from the appropriate bucket of funds. At least one program director has a full-time budget analyst on her staff to ensure that the audit trail is clean.

A second and more positive impact falls on the BTSA directors who are responsible for all programs that serve new teachers. In those cases, the director can develop a coherent and integrated pathway from subject matter preparation through induction. One director stated:

Since I do all of it, it works real well. I haven't seen any conflicts. What being the district's new teacher support person and being the BTSA coordinator allows me to do is make sure that the BTSA people have extra support and then the people who are not involved with BTSA, or who are not pre-interns, then I make sure that I give them more support. In other words, I can balance out so that most of our new teachers, especially our first year ones, are getting as much support as possible. (Program Director)

In general, CCs and PDCs play a minor role in assisting local programs in developing responses to the LTT continuum. One said that dealing with pre-intern and intern programs was "not really our charge," adding:

There's no ramifications from us if they don't work with that pre-intern program, and making a nice transition into BTSA. I would hope that they would do that anyway, because that would be good-hearted and good-natured, but again, there's no standard in our 13 standards that says you have to work with a pre-intern program and make sure that there is a smooth transition into a BTSA. (Cluster Consultant)

Others recognized that the variety of programs were competing for experienced teachers and said they offered advice to program directors on occasion. One CC includes intern and pre-intern directors in informal cluster meetings in order to encourage collaboration:

We have what we call a continuum of teacher support for [name] county that we actually print out that shows, starting with the pre-intern all the way through to BTSA, all the different programs in the county, there is support available. We also have a column on there for emergency permit that shows no support, so people can see that they don't want that; they want to be in a program...(Cluster Consultant)

A Task Force member recognized the work of one program director who was able to create a seamless set of programs, and said she encouraged others to look at the program.

In sum, although individuals throughout the support structure for BTSA recognize the challenges faced by programs in districts with pre-intern and intern programs, little active assistance in creating a positive continuum exists. From the perspective of one CDE Task Force member, since CDE has no direct influence on the intern and pre-intern programs, it is difficult

for the BTSA interorganizational structure to address the concern. It is, she says, "a conceptual flaw" that she would like to see addressed.

### *Peer Assistance and Review*

The PAR program raises three sets of issues for BTSA. First, experienced teachers, much like those who would serve as SPs, comprise PAR panels. As such, and much like the pre-intern and intern programs, BTSA and PAR compete for those teachers. Second, there have been conflicts about both funding and organizational relationships between BTSA and PAR. Third, BTSA has tools, particularly CFASST, that PAR panels believe would be useful, and issues have arisen about the appropriateness of using CFASST within the PAR program. As with the intern and pre-intern program, the greatest stress is within local BTSA programs, and CCs provide limited assistance, although Task Force members have weighed in at the request of either CCs or local program directors. These issues are discussed in this section.

As the report for Task 3 makes clear, competition for experienced teachers with the skills and interest to serve as guides to others is high. Program directors report that PAR has an advantage in recruiting experienced teachers because it pays significantly more than BTSA. Further, "People are recognizing that BTSA training is valuable for PAR teachers and administrators," making former SPs highly valuable to PAR.

In addition, conflicts over funding have arisen. Some of the conflict stems from the fact that districts are required to provide in-kind support to BTSA. In the past, Mentor Teacher Program stipends were frequently used for the match. When PAR was created, the Mentor Teacher Program was eliminated, but the expectation was that the mentor funds would be replaced by PAR funds. The legislation allows PAR funds to be used for BTSA, but in some districts, this creates conflict.

The second issue is more complex. Interviewees speak about the clarity (and number, and potential burden) of the rules that govern BTSA compared to the openness (or looseness) of PAR. In the absence of rules, and with the political and legislative history of PAR, in some districts, PAR and BTSA have been in conflict. A CC explains the problem in this way:

If the local context is in disarray, the PAR panel believes they rule the world and don't allow any money for BTSA. PAR panels are in various states of support to nonsupport of BTSA. This is a result of unclear legislation. (Cluster Consultant)

Another CC observed:

In many districts, instead of looking at PAR as part of the learning to teach system, and being one of the spokes of the umbrella, they look at it as being the umbrella, and BTSA, pre-intern, all of these underneath it... (Cluster Consultant)

Another saw PAR as becoming "a war between unions and administrators [and] sometimes what ended up on the plate was not helpful to BTSA." In others, however, the PAR agreements are seen as "very complimentary to BTSA." In the most difficult contexts, the program directors tried to resolve the problems, but if the program director did not occupy a significant position in the district hierarchy, the problems remained.

Both CCs and Task Force members actively sought to help resolve problems with PAR when they occurred, although some CCs reported being more involved than others. The Task Force, however, sent a strong letter clarifying the fact that BTSA funds should be separate from PAR funds, and not used to support PAR. The letter also said that PAR could support BTSA. Even with the letter, some conflict remains.

The third area of problems with PAR lies in the use of BTSA-related tools. PAR, like BTSA, should involve some sort of assessment on which to base assistance. Unlike BTSA, however, PAR is not directly tied to the CSTP nor does it have tools to use in assessing teachers. One positive result of this has been that districts have become more conscious of the need for evidence, thereby reinforcing the BTSA approach to assessment. Further, some districts look to the BTSA program for specific advice on how to tie PAR work to CSTP, even involving CFASST. An example of such action comes from a local program director:

I've...gotten a lot of calls for PAR training. I know we're not allowed to use the CFASST, it's copyrighted. Now, they have pulled out pieces of CFASST, like building the trust relationship and some of the activities, and we can use that for other training. So that opens another avenue. I've had to be very careful. We have had PAR teachers go through the SP training if they're supporting new teachers, but we've been careful with the funding and everything. But now that opens a whole other door for us. (Program Director)

Although all policy-level issues between PAR and BTSA have not been resolved, and rough spots exist in the relationship in a number of districts, both CCs and the Task Force have effectively supported local BTSA programs as they attempt to maintain program focus and integrity. However, because SPs are well trained in assessment and support related to the CSTP, they are prime recruits for PAR, thereby limiting the pool of potential SPs for BTSA.

## SB 2042

Perhaps the most significant policy having an impact on BTSA is SB 2042, which changes the teacher credentialing system in California. The new system includes two levels of credentials. The first is a preliminary credential earned as a result of completion of an acceptable pre-service or internship program, as demonstrated in a performance assessment, either the one currently under development or an equivalent assessment. The second level requires "completion of a program of beginning teacher induction." It is the second level that presents a challenge to BTSA and its supporting structures.

With few exceptions, BTSA leaders (program directors, CCs, and Task Force members) speak of the change as "challenging." The underlying concern is that if BTSA becomes a "licensing" program, its formative and supportive nature may be changed, and participants are concerned about losing the strength of the program. Further, as indicated above, some programs do not have strong ties to the human resources department, and the new credentialing system requires collaboration with the personnel office. According to BTSA directors, personnel offices were unaware of the new procedures and the accompanying record keeping that would be required. One project director said that as a result of SB 2042:

If Senate Bill 2042 is implemented in the way it's supposed to, where BTSA is going to become a credential issuing, or one of the three approaches to clearing the credential and giving it professional clear, I think BTSA is not going to be the same. It's going to be a whole different ballgame. Projects such as ours that are linked to universities, and with teacher training programs, are probably better positioned to do that, because we are in the credentialing business. But district programs, to me I don't even understand the concept of how a district is going to be able to legitimately credential their own people. (Program Director)

Another director spoke at length about concerns related to SB 2042:

The main challenge is that BTSA has been about professional growth, and now it's evaluative and affects employment. We could look like we're butting in to a lot of stuff that we have no business dealing with, including unions, IHEs, and teacher prep programs...We're not really going to be prepared for all of this until it happens...A lot of people are walking into roles they have not been trained to be in. The days of the BTSA director being a lead teacher are almost over. It's going to have to be someone who has a lot of administrative experience and can sign off on a huge document. (Program Director)

Other concerns arose when program directors imagined scenarios in which the BTSA director certifies that a BT has met the requirements, but the principal's evaluation leads to a

"non-reelect" recommendation. Although similar conflicts currently exist, local BTSA program personnel are much more conscious of them and concerned about how they might best be resolved when the induction program has increased responsibility under SB 2042.

However, a program director in a district program believed that the district could carry off the credentialing process if they developed a strong database that included information about specific induction activities in which teachers engaged. The database could provide evidence to support the recommendation of a candidate for a second-tier credential. That program director had no illusions about the difficulty of building such a database, but viewed the problems as solvable with enough technical expertise.

To help prepare for the change, CCs and program directors invited personnel office representatives to meet with them, which was, in the words of one director, "a real eye opener." CCs have served as an information conduit to the local programs about the new certification procedures, and have also supported them in informing personnel offices. In addition, they have added staff to work with local programs and IHEs to support the transition to certification as mandated by SB 2042. For the clusters, this is also a change because the move is from supporting programs to participating in the implementation of a major policy change, which may involve more regulatory behavior than they are used to.

The Task Force is also playing a supportive role through sessions at the program directors' meetings and creating opportunities for program directors to hear about promising approaches to meeting the challenge of SB 2042.

The creation of a new system for certification will have a major impact on BTSA. At this point, participants are preparing for implementation of the second level credential, and the BTSA community is supportive of the efforts. What is not known is the extent to which the change will influence the support ethos of BTSA.

## CONCLUSIONS

The Independent Evaluation of BTSA was charged to address the question of how the program's organizational structure influences its implementation and quality and how it might be improved. This concluding section answers those questions and then summarizes the remaining challenges to BTSA.

The interorganizational structure of BTSA and the other supporting mechanisms have helped build a high-quality program throughout the state. Given the complexity of California, as well as the challenges that stem from demographic and policy changes, the achievement is remarkable. Through BTSA, according to respondents, teachers have created intellectual communities, which help improve the profession as well as assist in student achievement. According to one director:

As a result of [BTSA], we have seen the leadership within the teachers emerge to such a point that I believe it has helped propel our district into this fast-paced, dynamic movement into improving teacher effectiveness and student achievement.  
(Program Director)

Others point to CFASST as focusing attention on key standards for teaching and creating cadres of reflective practitioners.

At the same time, the structures have not surmounted all challenges. For example, issues of how best to identify and assign SPs remain. Programs use various methods, and directors and others recognize the trade-offs among the options. Further, most decisions are based on the local context and the availability of well-qualified SPs. Nonetheless, the Task Force could help BTSA programs move forward by examining the context and outcomes of various methods of assigning SPs. Conventional wisdom, expressed in interviews reported here, is that assigning SPs with the same content background matters most in secondary schools, but that is an empirical matter. The Task Force could help move the conversation forward by commissioning some in-depth studies of outcomes related to different methods of matching SPs and BTs.

Second, a perceived conflict between assessment and support was a consistent theme in the interviews. Except for Task Force members, large numbers of other respondents spoke of CFASST or other assessment systems as if they were, at best, parallel to support and, at worst, antithetical to helping new teachers become fully functioning professionals. Given the ongoing efforts of the Task Force to underscore the formative nature of assessment in BTSA, and the role of assessment in the service of support, it is difficult to recommend additional steps that should be taken. However, constant attention should be paid to the issue. SP trainings should emphasize

and clarify that a significant part of the SP role is formative assessment. Currently, it seems that the terms “formative assessment,” “summative assessment,” and “evaluation” are confused with each other. More effort is required so SPs understand that assessment is both consistent with support and essential to it. Such attention should emphasize the importance of going beyond hand holding of new teachers to helping them become strong, reflective professionals. Further, with the implementation of SB 2042, concerns about assessment are likely to be exacerbated, and the entire support structure for BTSA should be organized to address them.

A third challenge comes from a combination of the expansion of BTSA and instability in Task Force membership. This issue is particularly salient for CCs and PDCs, who feel stretched by the changes in their jobs resulting from BTSA growth. The growth has seemed to them to be accompanied by a decreased focus on assistance and an increase in their role of holding programs accountable, through the formal program reviews. In their eyes, whereas once they could rely on the Task Force for assistance and wisdom, they now hold more institutional memory than the Task Force as a whole. At the same time, they need more help now than in the past and are concerned about a lack of consistent messages about policies from the Task Force.

Fourth, BTSA expansion has had a particular impact on consortium programs in two ways. The consortia are experiencing changes in internal structures as districts begin to serve sufficient BTs to warrant separate programs. As a result, there is a fiscal impact, and also the loss of a critical mass that may be needed to provide sufficient training and support to SPs. In addition, the wide geographic spread of some consortia, coupled with the need to serve all BTs, has created pressures. Some consortia are working to develop satellite centers, but this places additional financial demands on a program that is funded by individuals served and does not account for differential overhead costs.

Fifth, as the report on Task 3 makes clear, the rise of other programs that rely on experienced teachers challenges BTSA. From a structural perspective, the most challenging of these is PAR, because many are confused about the relationship of BTSA and PAR, both programmatically and in fiscal terms. The Task Force has addressed both, and much progress in reconciling the two programs has been made, but further steps are needed. On a conceptual level as well, the two programs are sometimes used to support one another, through the use of CSTP and the conceptual base of CFASST, and other times seem to be at odds. Most agree, however, that SPs, with their grasp of teaching standards, could make major contributions to PAR, and in some settings, actually do.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to BTSA comes from SB 2042. An uneasiness about the legislation pervades the BTSA community. BTSA is a program with a strong ethos of helping, and the fear is that SB 2042 will lead to evaluation and regulation. Participants at all levels need

models of best practice of how to implement SB 2042 in the context of a strong support program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The independent evaluation of the organizational structure of BTSA demonstrates that the program is strong in the face of expansion. Nonetheless, WestEd offers the following recommendations:

**1. The legislature should fund a series of studies directed at issues that arose during the course of the evaluation.** As WestEd interviewed participants, a number of questions were raised that could not be addressed in the independent evaluation. Evidence-based answers to such questions would enhance policymakers' abilities to ensure that all new teachers receive high quality induction support. Such questions include:

- **What qualities are most important for matching Support Providers and Beginning Teachers?** When all conditions cannot be met, is it better to match teachers based on propinquity, schedules, or content/grade level similarities? Are there other approaches to new teacher support that might better serve induction?
- **Are there optimal sizes for programs?** The Independent Evaluation revealed concerns about the geographical spread of some programs, but did not address questions related to whether a program could serve too few or too many teachers.

**2. Continuous professional development is required throughout the BTSA system related to the question of how assessment systems support new teacher development.** The widespread perception of conflicts between assessment and support detracts from BTSA's efficacy. New approaches to professional development around the issue are needed for Cluster Consultants, Professional Development Consultants as well as local Program Directors, Support Providers and district and site administrators. The message is not currently clear, and BTSA program participants do not speak with one voice on the issue. Its importance will grow with the implementation of SB 2042.

**3. Financial support should be provided to large, geographically dispersed rural programs so they can develop satellite centers.** As it now stands, funding is based solely on the number of new teachers served. Geographically dispersed projects seem to have greater efficacy when they can provide some support through satellite centers, but the funding formula does not allow for building an infrastructure. Special funds should be made available to develop such satellites.

**4. BTSA should continue its current structure, with Task Force liaisons, clusters, and program directors.** As BTSA grows, it might be useful to add more clusters, but the current interorganizational structure is appropriate.

**5. BTSA should continue the community-building activities associated with cluster and program director meetings.** Such activities have enabled BTSA to remain a learning community in the face of expansion and contextual challenges.

Overall, however, the achievement of BTSA is remarkable. The language used by Task Force members, CCs, PDCs, program directors, SPs, and others is the language of family and community. In a state as large and complex as California, and within the current policy environment, the importance of maintaining a sense of communities of learners cannot be overstated.



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## APPENDIX A

All programs are required to collect the retention data below for each cohort group of teachers. Programs may choose to provide additional information.

### BTSA Retention Data at Program Level for 1999-2000 Cohort

Program Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Cluster: \_\_\_\_\_

	A	B	B <sub>1</sub>		B <sub>2</sub>	C	Reason for Leaving			
	# BTs Served	Number Still Teaching	Number Retained in District	(Of those in District) # Retained in Same School	Number Teaching Elsewhere	Number Left Teaching Position	C <sub>1</sub>	C <sub>2</sub>	C <sub>3</sub>	C <sub>4</sub>
1999-2000 Year 1										
SAMPLE:	20	10	8	5	2	10	4	4	1	1

**Computation Legend:**

$A = B + C$ $B = C_1 + C_2 + C_3 + C_4$ $C = B_1 + B_2$
---

C <sub>1</sub> Non-Re-elected	C <sub>2</sub> Personal (family, marriage, children)
C <sub>3</sub> Changing Profession	C <sub>4</sub> Other/Unknown



## **APPENDIX B**

The 15 activities included in the indicator for Frequency of Contact were:

1. SP held scheduled conference with BT;
2. SP visits BT class during instruction;
3. SP conducts formal observation in BT class;
4. SP talks to BT about class observation;
5. SP helps BT develop Individual Induction Plan;
6. SP engages BT in reflective conversations;
7. SP attends organized activities/sessions with BT;
8. SP conferences with BT by phone;
9. SP visits BT class during non-instruction time;
10. SP demonstrates lessons for BT in classroom;
11. SP made informal contacts with BT;
12. SP planned lessons with BT;
13. SP met with BT and BT site administrator;
14. SP and BT visit classrooms together; and,
15. SP helps analyze student work.



## **APPENDIX C**

### **Phone Interview Protocol for BTSA Program Directors**

#### **Retention Data Collection**

1. Please describe how your BTSA project collects retention data.
2. What obstacles have you confronted in collecting this data? Have you been able to overcome them? How?
3. What do you consider "best practices" of collecting retention data?
4. What types of supports, if any, would help your project collect more solid, accurate retention data?
5. Any other comments about retention data?



## **APPENDIX D**

### **Data Collection Methods and Analyses**

SRI International conducted the research and analyses for the Report on Tasks 3A and 3B of the Independent Evaluation of the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program using data from two primary data collection activities. First, SRI conducted a series of case studies of local BTSA programs. Second, SRI used relevant data from two surveys that were conducted as part of a study for the Center for the Future of Teaching and Learning (CFTL) and the Teaching and California's Future Task Force.

### **Case Studies of Local BTSA Programs**

To obtain data regarding the impact of the statewide expansion of BTSA on the quality of the program and the indirect effects of BTSA expansion on the teacher development system, SRI conducted cross-sectional case studies of seven local BTSA programs. Case studies consisted of site visits, during which SRI staff conducted interviews with district and school administrators, teachers (beginning teachers and support providers), BTSA directors, and other BTSA staff members. Additionally, SRI gathered data at each site via the study for the Teaching and California's Future Task Force, which allowed for more time at each site and interviews that could provide insight into the regional and district context in which the local BTSA programs operate.

#### ***Sample of Local BTSA Programs***

The evaluation team and the BTSA Interagency Task Force drew a purposive sample of 8 case study programs from the 143 programs that were operating during the fall of 2000. Sample selection was based on various program and district characteristics. One district declined to participate, making the case study sample a total of 7 BTSA programs, 6 unified school districts, 1 union elementary school district, and 1 union high school district. Seven of the 8 districts chosen as sites for this evaluation were also sites for the study conducted for the Teaching and California's Future Task Force. SRI thus was able to obtain additional contextual information useful for the BTSA evaluation. Such contextual information provided us a deeper understanding of the local context of teacher development through a better grasp of local supply and demand issues and an understanding of local teacher preparation institutions. (Table D-1 illustrates the sampling frame for the final 7 case study sites.)

**Table D-1**  
*Characteristics of BTSA Case Study Sites\**

BTSA Program	Type	Urbanicity	School-Aged Population	Size	Expansion Category
Clovis	District	Suburban	Low minority	Medium	Moderate
Long Beach	District	Urban	High minority	Large	Moderate
Los Angeles (District J)	District	Urban	High minority	Large	Decreasing
Northstate (Susanville, Lassen)	Consortium	(Rural)	(Low minority)	(Small)	Decreasing (No change)
RIMS (Coachella Valley) <sup>29</sup>	Consortium	(Rural)	(High minority)	(Small)	Moderate (Decreasing)
Sacramento City	District	Urban	High minority	Medium	Moderate
San Diego City	District	Urban	High minority	Large	Moderate

\* Where pertinent, district rather than consortium (e.g., Northstate and RIMS) characteristics are displayed in parentheses.

This sampling strategy is limited in that it cannot provide us a representative and comprehensive view of all the variation across local BTSA programs. The use of cross-sectional case studies further limits our ability to analyze case study data in terms of expansion in that we have only a single point in time (in this case, spring 2001) for use as a reference point in making inferences about how the expansion of BTSA affected program quality and had an indirect impact on the teacher development system.

### *School and Teacher Samples*

Within each district (or area) associated with a local BTSA program, we generally sampled 3 or 4 schools: 2 elementary, 1 middle, and 1 high school. In some smaller districts, K-8 schools were sampled to represent both elementary and middle schools. We chose schools that matched the overall demographics of the district. Typically, all 4 schools were within a single district; however, for Northstate BTSA the schools we visited were in single-school districts.

Within each school, we interviewed 4 to 10 teachers—generally, 2 to 4 new teachers (beginning teachers) and 2 to 4 experienced teachers (support providers). In each case, we selected a range of the grade levels and subjects the schools covered.

This strategy yielded a sample size of 7 BTSA programs in 8 districts with 18 schools and 134 teachers, as shown in Table D-2. In addition to those shown in Table A-2, we interviewed

<sup>29</sup> Coachella Valley USD was not participating in BTSA during the 2000-01 school year. It has participated in BTSA in the past, however, and we interviewed past BTSA participants and support providers, as well as administrators who had worked with the RIMS BTSA program and currently are working with the RIMS pre-intern program.

37 teachers who were on special assignment as full-time support providers, school coaches, and in other capacities at the district or BTSA program level.

**Table D-2**  
*BTSA Program Evaluation School Case Study Sample*

Level	Schools	School Administrators	Teachers
Elementary (incl. K-8)	10	16	55
Middle	3	8	35
High	5	13	44
<b>Totals</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>134</b>

### *Site Visits*

Site visits to the seven BTSA programs were conducted during the spring of 2001 and ranged from 1 to 2 days on-site by teams of two to four researchers, depending on the complexity of the program and local system of teacher development.<sup>30</sup> For each BTSA program, we conducted interviews with teachers, school administrators, district-level personnel, BTSA directors, and other BTSA personnel as related to the specific district or as related to a specific function (e.g., project teachers are a unique element of the RIMS program and were interviewed to get a better idea of how RIMS coordinates with the large number of districts in its consortium).<sup>31</sup> Table D-3 lists the types of interviewees at each level.

**Table D-3**  
*BTSA Program Evaluation Case Study Interviewees*

Level	Types of Interviewees
School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teachers (including beginning teachers and support providers)</li> <li>• Principals</li> <li>• Full-time support providers or coaches with unique roles</li> </ul>
District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Superintendent and/or assistant superintendent</li> <li>• BTSA coordinator, curriculum specialists, coaches, staff developers, professional development coordinators, full-time support providers</li> <li>• Pre-intern, district intern program administrators</li> </ul>
Local BTSA program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BTSA director</li> <li>• Liaisons with districts, IHEs</li> <li>• Full-time support providers, coaches, CFASST or other trainers</li> <li>• Liaisons with Pre-intern, district intern programs</li> </ul>

In addition to interviews, in some cases we conducted focus groups with teachers. Interviews and focus groups with beginning teachers focused on teacher preparation, perceptions

<sup>30</sup> Site visits to the BTSA programs were conducted in conjunction with the data collection activities for the Teaching and California's Future report. Visits for that study ranged from 5 to 15 days.

<sup>31</sup> In one BTSA program where site administrators do not participate actively in BTSA, none were interviewed.

and experiences with BTSA (including relationships with support providers, and perceptions of CFASST, or the local program assessment, and its various elements), and other induction-related activities. Interviews and focus groups with support providers emphasized general experience and background information, perceptions and experiences with BTSA (including relationships with beginning teachers and perceptions of CFASST, or the local program assessment, and related training activities), and relationships with BTSA program administrators. Interviews and focus groups were semistructured, framed by interview topic guides that were flexible enough to capture the respondents' unique stories but had sufficient prompts to provide an acceptable level of data uniformity to permit cross-case comparisons.

### *Case Study Analysis*

Detailed case study debriefing forms guided the preparation of internal case study reports. Each site visiting team met several times after the site visit and was responsible for analyzing the data collected for its own site and synthesizing the data in the case study reports. Once the case study reports were completed, site visitors and the project directors held analytic meetings to discuss findings within and across cases and to develop cross-site themes for each major element of BTSA. We analyzed case study data according to various strata by which we sampled (i.e., program type, school-age population, expansion category, etc.), as well as other variables that emerged as salient, particularly the proportion of underqualified teachers in the BTSA programs' districts and the presence of other programs designed to support such teachers. Following the larger analytical meetings, core members of the BTSA evaluation team met frequently to conduct further qualitative analyses before and during the report writing process.

## **Statewide Surveys**

Tasks 3A and 3B of the Independent Evaluation of the BTSA Program did not include the development or dissemination of a survey targeted toward BTSA participants. The survey data used throughout the report are provided by surveys conducted by SRI International as part of Phase II of a study for CFTL and the Teaching and California's Future Task Force. Two of the surveys from this study provided information pertinent to the BTSA evaluation: the Survey of California Teachers and the Survey of California Principals. The purpose of each of these surveys was to capture respondents' perspectives on the teacher development system. Although the surveys were not focused solely on BTSA, they did contain questions regarding induction in general, along with some BTSA-specific questions. Where relevant, we included the information in the Task 3 report. Based on stratified random samples across the state, these surveys were designed to provide a representative portrait of respondents' views.

### ***Survey of California Teachers***

The Survey of California Teachers was designed to provide a representative portrait of teachers' views about the extent, nature, and effectiveness of their teacher preparation, induction, and other professional development experiences. A random sample of 1,000 full-time K-12 teachers in California were asked to report on a variety of topics, grouped into the following sections:

- Teaching assignment and preparation
- Job search and support for new teachers
- Workplace support and professional development
- Compensation
- Teacher background and student information.

Respondents were given specific instructions about the time period each question referred to, and certain questions were asked of only subgroups of teachers for whom they were appropriate. Table D-4 describes the type of respondent for each section and the time periods the questions inquired about.

The teacher survey instrument was modified from the 1999 Statewide Teacher Survey (see 1999 report for survey development process). Questions that did not provide useful information in the 1999 survey were improved, and some questions were changed to reflected changes in

topic areas of interest to the study. The draft 2000-01 questionnaire was piloted with five teachers to assess completion time and the comprehensibility of each survey item.

**Sampling Procedures.** An accurate and up-to-date list of all practicing teachers in California was not available to serve as a sampling frame. We therefore opted for a two-stage sampling approach—first selecting a stratified random sample of schools within California and then selecting teachers within those schools.

Stage 1: School Sample. The sampling frame for schools was developed by using the 1998-99 California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS) database. Eligible schools were those identified in the CBEDS database as elementary, middle, junior, or high schools. Approximately 1,000 less-traditional schools were excluded, such as alternative high schools or community day schools, to allow for a more focused analysis of the experiences of teachers within the most typical school settings in the state. The 6,910 schools in our population were stratified along three dimensions: the percentage of faculty with less than a full credential (three ranges of less than full credentials), the size of their districts (three ranges of student enrollment), and grade levels served (elementary, middle, high). Junior high schools were placed in the middle school category. To provide a robust number of schools within each cell of this sampling frame, we selected a total of 120 schools for the survey. There were 40 schools in each of the three ranges for faculty with less than a full credential. Within each range of faculty with less than a full credential, about 60% of the schools were elementary schools, 20% were middle schools, and 20% were high schools.

**Table D-4**

*Types of Respondents to the Survey of Teachers and Relevant Time Periods, by Survey Topic*

Survey Topic	Type of Respondent	Time Period Referred to in Survey Item*
Teaching assignment	All	Current school year
Preparation	Teachers who completed their preparation less than 5 years ago as of November 2000	Period of preparation program
Job search	Teachers with fewer than 6 years of classroom teaching experience as of November 2000	Period of job search
Support for new teachers	Teachers with fewer than 6 years of classroom teaching experience as of November 2000	First 2 years of teaching
Workplace support	All	Current school year
Professional development	Teachers in at least their second year of teaching in 2000-01	1999-2000 school year <sup>†</sup>
Compensation	All	Current school year and 1999-2000 school year
Teacher background	All	Current school year

\*The SRI Survey of California Teachers was administered from January 2001 through May 2001.

†Only those teachers who had been formally assigned to provide guidance and assistance to new teachers answered questions about being a mentor for the time period during which they were formally assigned.

Stage 2: Teacher Sample. To build a sampling frame for teachers, we obtained teacher rosters for schools selected in Stage 1. Principals of the 120 selected schools were faxed a letter explaining the overall initiative, its sponsors, and the purpose of the survey. The letter requested a list of the school's full-time classroom teachers. Following the faxes, calls were made to all schools to obtain staff lists, and, when necessary, district permission was sought. When available, faculty rosters of sampled schools were also collected from the Internet. This process resulted in a sampling frame of teachers from 101 schools (84% of the original sample). Table A-5 shows the distribution of schools in the original sample (120 schools), the school-level response rate of these 120 schools by cell, and the corresponding number of schools from the statewide population that falls within each cell.

**Table D-5**

*Distribution of School Sample by Stratum*

		Schools with less than or equal to 10% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with between 11% and less than or equal to 19% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with more than 20% of faculty with less than a full credential			<b>Row Total</b>
		<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			
<b>School Level</b>		<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	
Elementary	Schools sampled	7	9	7	3	8	11	3	7	15	70
	Response rate	57%	44%	100%	33%	50%	100%	100%	100%	93%	
	Schools in population	1,003	1,170	975	143	291	411	130	283	609	5,015
Middle	Schools sampled	3	3	3	2	2	4	2	2	4	25
	Response rate	100%	67%	100%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%	75%	
	Schools in population	188	243	196	53	81	101	30	60	124	1,076
High	Schools sampled	2	3	3	2	4	4	2	2	3	25
	Response rate	100%	100%	100%	100%	75%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
	Schools in population	148	170	174	55	78	101	25	30	38	819
<b>Column Total</b>	Total school sample	12	15	13	7	14	19	7	11	22	120
	Statewide population of schools	1,339	1,583	1,345	251	450	613	185	373	771	6,910

After obtaining rosters of full-time teachers from the sampled schools, rosters were pooled in each cell (27 cells in total), and the sample for each cell was randomly selected from the total number of teachers in that cell by using a random number generator. Table A-6 shows the number of teachers sampled from each cell and the total number of teachers statewide that fall within that cell. The total number of teachers, 255,031, is the number of teachers working in 1998-99 in the population of 6,910 California schools eligible for study.

**Table D-6**

*Distribution of Teacher Sample, by Stratum*

		Schools with less than or equal to 10% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with between 11% and less than or equal to 19% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with more than 20% of faculty with less than a full credential			<b>Row Total</b>
		<b>District Size (Student enrollment)</b>			<b>District Size (Student enrollment)</b>			<b>District Size (Student enrollment)</b>			
<b>School Level</b>		<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	
Elementary	Teachers sampled	50	84	66	36	95	61	12	38	158	600
	Teachers in population	19,904	33,594	26,440	3,939	10,288	6,501	2,872	9,160	38,389	15,1087
Middle	Teachers sampled	14	29	23	14	35	21	3	12	49	200
	Teachers in population	5,102	10,068	7,950	1,145	2,854	1,674	673	2,637	11,310	43,413
High	Teachers sampled	11	31	25	11	27	33	3	14	45	200
	Teachers in population	5,527	15,262	12,216	1,576	3,844	4,596	744	3,827	12,939	60,531
<b>Column Total</b>	Total teacher sample	75	144	114	61	157	115	18	64	252	1,000
	Statewide population of teachers	30,533	58,924	46,606	6,660	16,986	12,771	4,289	15,624	62,638	255,031

**Survey Administration.** The Survey of California Teachers questionnaire was administered by mail from January 2001 through May 2001.<sup>32</sup> In the first mailing, each teacher was sent a packet containing an explanatory letter signed by the *Teaching and California's Future* Task Force cosponsors, a survey questionnaire, a postage-paid reply envelope, and \$5 as a token of appreciation. To encourage teachers to respond promptly, teachers who returned their completed survey questionnaires were offered a chance to win one of 10 computers. Returned survey questionnaires were logged by unique identification numbers into a response-tracking system. Ten days after the initial mailing, a reminder postcard was sent to all nonrespondents. After another 2 weeks, a second survey questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents.

To maximize the response rate, a shortened version of the original survey questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents after the second mailing of the original survey. This shortened version included the most critical survey questionnaire items. Ten days after the mailing of the shortened survey questionnaire, a reminder postcard was sent to all nonrespondents. After another 2 weeks, a second shortened survey questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents.

Sixty-six percent of all teachers in the original sample responded by returning either the original or shortened version of the mail survey questionnaire. Many teachers who were sent survey questionnaires were eventually determined to have been ineligible for the study because they were no longer teaching, were not teaching at the sampled school, or were not teaching full-time. Of the eligible teachers, 69% responded to the survey questionnaire. Table D-7 shows the number of respondents and the effective response rate (the responses divided by the difference between the sample and the ineligibles) for each of the 27 cells of this sampling frame.

Data were entered into computer files for analysis. Spot checks for accuracy were made for data from the long survey questionnaire; data from the short survey questionnaire were entered twice and compared for accuracy. Data from the two versions of the questionnaire were merged into one computer file for analysis.

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<sup>32</sup> Administration of the questionnaire was subcontracted out to a survey research firm.

**Table D-7**

*Teacher Survey Response Rates, by Stratum*

		Schools with less than or equal to 10% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with between 11% and less than or equal to 19% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with more than 20% of faculty with less than a full credential			<b>Row Total</b>
		<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			
<b>School Level</b>		<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	
Elementary	Respondents	27	64	41	25	61	42	6	22	108	396
	Effective response rate*	57%	78%	63%	71%	66%	71%	50%	58%	69%	65%
Middle	Respondents	12	18	16	12	26	15	1	5	34	139
	Effective response rate	86%	64%	70%	92%	79%	75%	50%	63%	74%	73%
High	Respondents	10	23	9	7	15	23	3	10	26	126
	Effective response rate	91%	82%	43%	64%	58%	72%	100%	71%	62%	71%
<b>Column Total</b>	Respondents	49	105	66	44	102	80	10	37	168	661
	Effective response rate	78%	75%	59%	76%	68%	73%	67%	64%	68%	69%

\*Effective response rate is the responses divided by the difference between the sample and the ineligible.

Survey Analysis. All survey analysis was conducted with the statistical software package SUDAAN, which is capable of analyzing data gathered in surveys that use complex sampling methods, as this study did. Each teacher in California did not have an equal chance of being selected for the survey because the study used a stratified sampling plan. For this reason, the respondents cannot be treated equally if the sample is to represent the population of California teachers. Instead, teachers' responses are adjusted to reflect their chance of participating in the study.<sup>33</sup> The following analyses were conducted:

- We examined the response distributions for each item and computed simple summary statistics.
- We examined the response distributions for subgroups of teachers defined by the key variables of interest shown in Table D-8.
- Chi-square tests were used to determine statistical differences in the distributions of subgroups on categorical variables.
- For analyses of continuous variables, F-tests were used to assess the mean differences among subgroups. These were followed by planned contrasts between subgroup pairs when there were three or more subgroups (e.g., percentage of faculty with less than a full credential).

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<sup>33</sup> For the sample to represent the target population of California teachers, each teacher's response was weighted by the inverse of the teacher's probability of being selected. In addition, we adjusted for possible effects of nonresponse bias, since the cells of the sample design had different response rates. Each teacher's responses also were weighted by the inverse of the response rate for the cell of the sample that the teacher represented. Thus, the final weight assigned to a teacher's response is the same for all teachers in a cell and is the product of two weights: the inverse of the probability of being selected into the sample and the inverse of the response rate for the cell.

**Table D-8***Selected Key Independent Variables for Survey for Teachers*

Independent Variable	Categories
Percentage of not fully credentialed teachers in respondent's school	$\leq 10\%$ not fully credentialed teachers $\geq 11\%$ to $\leq 19\%$ $> 20\%$
Grade span of respondent's school	Elementary Middle High
Years of experience	$\leq 2$ years $\geq 3$ to $\leq 5$ years $\geq 6$ to $\leq 10$ years $> 10$ years

***Survey of California Principals***

The Survey of California Principals was designed to provide a representative portrait of principals' views on recruiting teachers, teachers' career development, and teachers' opportunities for learning and professional growth. In this survey, a random sample of 1,000 K-12 principals were asked to report on a variety of topics, grouped into the following sections:

- Recruiting
- Teacher preparation
- Induction
- Professional development
- Workplace conditions and school background information.

Respondents were given specific instructions about the time period each question referred to, and certain questions were asked of only subgroups of principals for whom they were appropriate. Table D-9 describes the type of respondent for each section and the time periods the questions inquired about.

The survey questionnaire was a newly created instrument and was developed with input from the research community and from principals. The draft 2000-01 survey was piloted with two principals to assess completion time and the comprehensibility of each survey item.

**Table D-9***Types of Respondents to the Survey of Principals and Relevant Time Periods, by Survey Topic*

Survey Topic	Type of Respondent	Time Period Referred to in Survey Item*
Recruiting	All	Current school year and 1999-2000 school year
Preparation	Principals who hired newly credentialed teachers, interns, and/or emergency-permit teachers in the last 3 years	1998-99 school year through the 2000-01 school year
Induction	Principals whose teachers participate in induction programs	Current school year
Professional development	All	Current school year and summer of 2000
Workplace conditions and school background information	All	Current school year

\*The SRI Survey of California Principals questionnaire was administered from November 2000 through May 2001.

**Sampling Procedures.** The sampling frame for principals was developed by using the 1998-99 CBEDS database. Eligible principals were chosen from the school sample that was developed for the Survey of California Teachers. The principals from the 6,910 schools in our population were stratified along three dimensions: the percentage of school faculty with less than a full credential (three ranges of less than full credentials), the size of their districts (three ranges of student enrollment), and grade levels served (elementary, middle/junior, high). We selected principals from a total of 1,001 schools for the survey.

**Principal Sample.** Principals were randomly sampled from the 27 cells of the three stratification variables. There were approximately 333 principals in each of the three ranges of school faculty with less than a full credential. Within each range of school faculty with less than a full credential, about 60% of the principals were elementary school principals, 20% were middle school principals, and 20% were high school principals. Table D-10 shows the number of principals sampled from each cell and the total number of principals statewide that fall within each cell. The total number of principals, 6,910, is the number of principals eligible for our study during the 1998-99 school year.

**Table D-10**

*Distribution of Principal Sample, by Stratum*

		Schools with less than or equal to 10% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with between 11% and less than or equal to 19% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with more than 20% of faculty with less than a full credential			<b>Row Total</b>
		<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			<b>District Size</b> (Student enrollment)			
<b>School Level</b>		<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-19,999	>20,000	
Elementary	Principals sampled	64	74	62	34	69	97	25	55	119	599
	Principals in population	1,003	1,170	975	143	291	411	130	283	609	5,015
Middle	Principals sampled	20	26	21	15	23	29	9	19	39	201
	Principals in population	188	243	196	53	81	101	30	60	124	1,076
High	Principals sampled	20	23	24	16	22	29	18	22	27	201
	Principals in population	148	170	174	55	78	101	25	30	38	819
<b>Column Total</b>	Total principal sample	104	123	107	64	114	155	53	96	185	1,001
	Statewide population of principals	1,339	1,583	1,345	251	450	613	185	373	771	6,910

Survey Administration. The Survey of California Principals questionnaire was administered by mail from November 2000 through May 2001.<sup>34</sup> In the first mailing, each principal was sent a packet containing an explanatory letter signed by the Teaching and California's Future Task Force cosponsors, a survey questionnaire, and a postage-paid reply envelope. Returned survey questionnaires were logged by unique identification numbers into a response-tracking system. Ten days after the initial mailing, a reminder postcard was sent to all nonrespondents. After another 2 weeks, a second survey questionnaire was sent to nonrespondents.

To maximize the response rate, a telephone questionnaire of nonrespondents was conducted for approximately 5 weeks during May and June 2001. Principals were telephoned repeatedly during this 5-week period until they granted a phone interview, refused to participate, or were determined to be ineligible. Not all survey nonrespondents were reached by phone by the end of the 5-week period. Telephone interviewers were directed to make a particular effort to raise response rates in cells that had few respondents. The phone questionnaire was a shortened version of the original mail questionnaire and included the most critical items on teacher recruitment, preparation, and career development.

Forty-seven percent of all principals in the original sample responded by returning the original survey questionnaire or participating in the telephone questionnaire. Many principals who were sent survey questionnaires were eventually determined to have been ineligible for the study because they had not completed at least 1 year in their roles as principals at the sampled schools. Of the eligible principals, 55% responded to the questionnaire (Table D-11).

Data were entered into computer files for analysis. Spot checks for accuracy were made for data from the long survey questionnaire; data from the short survey questionnaire were entered twice and compared for accuracy. Data files from the two versions of the questionnaire were merged into one computer file for analysis.

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<sup>34</sup> Administration of the questionnaire was subcontracted out to a survey research firm.

**Table D-11**

*Principal Survey Response Rates, by Stratum*

		Schools with less than or equal to 10% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with between 11% and less than or equal to 19% of faculty with less than a full credential			Schools with more than 20% of faculty with less than a full credential			
		District Size (Student enrollment)			District Size (Student enrollment)			District Size (Student enrollment)			
<b>School Level</b>		<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<5,000	5,001-20,000	>20,000	<b>Row Total</b>
Elementary	Respondents	31	41	26	23	37	42	12	28	40	280
	Effective response rate*	58%	65%	48%	82%	65%	48%	52%	57%	48%	58%
Middle	Respondents	0	13	20	9	15	17	3	8	15	100
	Effective response rate	0%	59%	95%	69%	83%	61%	43%	53%	48%	57%
High	Respondents	9	13	11	7	8	11	8	10	10	87
	Effective response rate	64%	68%	52%	58%	47%	44%	50%	56%	43%	54%
<b>Column Total</b>	Respondents	40	67	57	39	60	70	23	46	65	467
	Effective response rate	41%	64%	65%	70%	65%	51%	41%	48%	46%	55%

\*Effective response rate is the responses divided by the difference between the sample and the ineligible.

Survey Analysis. All survey analysis was conducted with the statistical software package SUDAAN, so that principals' responses could be weighted appropriately in the analysis.<sup>35</sup> The following analyses were conducted:

- We examined the response distributions for each item and computed simple summary statistics.
- We examined the response distributions for subgroups of principals defined the by key variables of interest shown in Table D-12.
- Chi-square tests were used to determine statistical differences in the distributions of subgroups on categorical variables.
- For analyses of continuous variables, F-tests were used to assess the mean differences among subgroups. These were followed by planned contrasts between subgroup pairs when there were three or more subgroups (e.g., percentage of faculty with less than a full credential).

**Table D-12**  
*Selected Key Independent Variables for Survey of Principals*

Independent Variable	Categories
Percentage of not fully credentialed teachers in respondent's school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≤10% not fully credentialed teachers</li> <li>≥11% to ≤19%</li> <li>&gt;20%</li> </ul>
Grade span of respondent's school	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elementary</li> <li>Middle</li> <li>High</li> </ul>
Teacher preparation program type	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Traditional program</li> <li>Intern program</li> </ul>

<sup>35</sup> For the sample to represent the target population of California principals, each principal's response was weighted by the inverse of the principal's probability of being selected. In addition, we adjusted for possible effects of nonresponse bias, since the cells of the sample design had different response rates. Each principal's responses also were weighted by the inverse of the response rate for the cell of the sample that the principal represented. Thus, the final weight assigned to a principal's response is the same for all principals in a cell and is the product of two weights: the inverse of the probability of being selected into the sample and the inverse of the response rate for the cell.



## APPENDIX E

### Statistical information for SRI Survey data

This appendix provides statistical information for the survey data from SRI’s Survey of California Teachers and SRI’s Survey of California Principals presented in this report. Please note that percentages are based on weighted data.

**Table E-1**

*Reasons Why Teachers Did Not Participate in BTSA*

The following table presents the responses of teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience who did not participate in the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program.

What are the main reasons you did not participate in the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) Program?*	Percent of Respondents	Standard Error
I did not know about it.	56.3	5.79
It was not offered at my school.	31.9	6.28
I did not qualify for participation.	22.3	6.01
I did not have time.	21.6	6.33
I felt that I had enough support in my school and didn’t need to participate in the program.	15.8	5.43
It was not clear how I would benefit.	15.8	5.93
I wanted to but there were not enough slots or enough mentors.	11.9	5.65

\* Respondents were instructed to “Circle all that apply.” N=70.

**Table E-2**

*Induction Support Activities Received by BTSA Participants*

The following table presents the responses of teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience who participated in the BTSA Program in the past 5 years.

During your 1 <sup>st</sup> and/or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of teaching, did you receive any of the following types of professional support at your school?*	Percent of Respondents	Standard Error
Formal assignment of an experienced teacher to provide mentorship	91.2	3.43
School/district workshops for new teachers	85.9	5.11
Release time to observe other teachers	79.9	4.57
School/district orientation	79.6	4.97
Observation of your class by non-administrators	62.9	6.00
Regular meetings between you and other beginning teachers	62.4	5.09
Coursework on topics such as teaching methods, lesson planning, or discipline, paid for by the school district	45.5	7.20
Money to buy materials, exceeding the normal budget allotment for other teachers at your school	44.8	6.40
Regular meetings between you and the principal	41.3	6.47
Reduced duties (e.g., an extra planning period, no committee assignments)	16.1	4.48

During your 1 <sup>st</sup> and/or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of teaching, did you receive any of the following types of professional support at your school?*	Percent of Respondents	Standard Error
Teacher portfolio development	16.0	5.64

\* Respondents were instructed to "Circle all that apply." N=89.

**Table E-3**

*Teachers Reporting That They Never Received Various Types of Mentor Support, by BTSA Participation*

The following table presents the analysis of the responses regarding participation or nonparticipation in mentor activities by teachers with 5 or fewer years of classroom teaching experience.

How often did your mentor engage in this activity with you?	Participation in BTSA	Never	At Least Once*	Row Total	Chi-sq: p=	N
Demonstrated lessons for me in the classroom	Yes	40%	60%	100%	0.000	158
	No	77%	23%	100%		
Helped me develop a professional growth plan	Yes	35%	65%	100%	0.000	158
	No	77%	23%	100%		
Planned lessons with me	Yes	45%	55%	100%	0.018	156
	No	67%	33%	100%		
Conducted formal observations in my classroom	Yes	9%	91%	100%	0.000	158
	No	63%	37%	100%		
Talked with me about the strengths and/or needs of specific students	Yes	19%	81%	100%	0.000	157
	No	50%	50%	100%		
Talked with me about a classroom observation	Yes	8%	92%	100%	0.001	157
	No	38%	62%	100%		
Visited my classroom during instruction time	Yes	5%	95%	100%	0.000	158
	No	31%	69%	100%		

\* Includes respondents who answered "Once," "A few times," "About monthly," or "At least weekly."

**Table E-4**

*Teachers Reporting Monthly/Weekly Mentor Activities, by BTSA Participation*

The following table presents the analysis of the responses regarding the frequency of participation in mentor activities by teachers with 5 or fewer years of classroom teaching experience.

How often did your mentor engage in this activity with you?	Participation in BTSA	Once/ A Few Times	About Monthly/ At Least Weekly	Row Total	Chi-sq: p=	N
Talked with me about the strengths and/or needs of specific students	Yes	50%	50%	100%	0.010	102
	No	77%	23%	100%		
Visited my classroom during instruction time	Yes	53%	47%	100%	0.001	133
	No	84%	16%	100%		
Talked with me about a classroom observation	Yes	62%	38%	100%	0.009	124
	No	83%	17%	100%		
Invited me into his/her classroom to observe	Yes	65%	35%	100%	0.003	75
	No	93%	7%	100%		

**Table E-5***Percentage of BTSA Participants Reporting Engagement in Mentor Activities at Least Once, by Years of Experience*

The following table presents the analysis of the responses regarding participation or nonparticipation in mentor activities by teachers who participated in BTSA and who had 2 or fewer years versus 3 to 5 years of classroom teaching experience.

How often did your mentor engage in this activity with you?	Years of Experience	Never	At Least Once*	Row Total	Chi-sq: p=	N
Visited my classroom during instruction time	2 or fewer	0%	100%	100%	0.047	85
	3 to 5	11%	89%	100%		
Talked with me about a classroom observation	2 or fewer	0%	100%	100%	0.022	85
	3 to 5	17%	83%	100%		
Demonstrated lessons in the classroom	2 or fewer	26%	74%	100%	0.034	85
	3 to 5	52%	48%	100%		
Invited me into his/her classroom to observe	2 or fewer	31%	69%	100%	0.038	83
	3 to 5	64%	36%	100%		

\* Includes respondents who answered "Once," "A few times," "About monthly," or "At least weekly."

**Table E-6***Principals Reporting Increase, No Change, or Decrease in Services as a Result of BTSA Expansion*

The following table presents the responses of principals of schools participating in BTSA in a district that increased the number of teachers or schools involved.

Based on the services received by BTSA participants at your school, to what extent have the following services or resources been increased or decreased as a result of the BTSA expansion?	Percent of Respondents Reporting...*					N
	Increased Greatly	Increased Slightly	No Change	Decreased Slightly	Decreased Greatly	
Amount of training for support providers	58.0 (6.08)	23.5 (5.00)	10.9 (3.78)	4.7 (2.08)	2.9 (2.80)	89
Amount of training for beginning teachers	53.1 (6.11)	26.9 (5.34)	16.5 (4.58)	0 (0)	3.5 (2.74)	94
Amount of release time for support providers	28.5 (5.68)	35.2 (5.64)	30.0 (5.63)	6.3 (3.07)	0 (0)	91
Length of orientation training/meeting(s) for beginning teachers	28.4 (5.11)	31.0 (5.92)	35.3 (6.03)	4.5 (2.98)	0.9 (0.81)	89
Amount of stipends for support providers	17.0 (5.41)	29.1 (5.33)	44.8 (6.80)	5.6 (3.62)	3.5 (3.39)	76
Amount of release time for beginning teachers	10.4 (3.58)	33.6 (5.19)	44.8 (6.02)	11.2 (4.34)	0 (0)	95
Number of beginning teachers assigned to a support provider	19.7 (4.63)	22.5 (5.36)	43.2 (6.25)	13.1 (4.49)	1.6 (1.05)	87
Money for new teachers to buy materials	10.0 (4.20)	23.8 (5.30)	60.9 (6.39)	2.2 (1.24)	3.2 (3.09)	82

\*Standard errors are presented in parentheses underneath percentages.

Note: The numbers presented in Table 9 in the report may differ from those presented here because of rounding and because categories were combined (e.g., "Increased Greatly" and "Increased Slightly" are combined as "Increased greatly or slightly").

**Table E-7***Contributions of Induction Support Activities to BTSA Participants' Teaching*

The following table presents the responses of teachers with 5 or fewer years of experience who participated in BTSA in the past 5 years.

<i>The support I received during my first year(s) of teaching specifically...</i>	Percent of Respondents Reporting "A Lot"	Standard Error	Percent of Respondents Reporting "Somewhat"	Standard Error	N
Improved my classroom management, allowing me to try new instructional activities.	48.0	6.81	40.0	6.38	89
Increased my effectiveness at promoting student learning.	36.9	5.12	43.5	5.61	89
Increased my knowledge beyond the basic instructional and assessment techniques that are appropriate for the subject matter I taught.	31.8	5.98	46.5	6.43	79
Improved my skills to meet instructional needs of the student population at this school (e.g., English language learners or students from diverse cultural backgrounds).	34.2	5.16	38.9	5.62	89
Helped me ask for additional assistance and feedback when I needed it.	41.4	6.24	29.1	6.00	79
Improved my ability to consistently identify instructional goals appropriate to the subject matter I taught.	29.0	5.37	31.1	6.10	79
Increased my confidence and responsiveness in interactions with parents.	16.4	3.54	42.7	7.05	79
Helped me understand the way my school/district and its administration worked.	29.3	5.62	29.3	5.32	79
Deepened my grasp of the subject matter I taught.	25.8	5.63	31.6	5.35	89

**Table E-8***Mean Effectiveness of Induction Support, by BTSA Participation*

The following table presents the analysis of the mean responses regarding the effectiveness of induction support by teachers with 5 or fewer years of classroom teaching experience.

<i>The support I received during my first year(s) of teaching specifically...</i>	Participation in BTSA	Mean Response*	p-value	N
Improved my classroom management, allowing me to try new instructional activities.	Yes	3.3	0.008	159
	No	2.8		
Increased my effectiveness at promoting student learning.	Yes	3.2	0.002	158
	No	2.8		
Increased my knowledge beyond the basic instructional and assessment techniques that are appropriate for the subject matter I taught.	Yes	3.1	0.011	140
	No	2.6		
Improved my skills to meet instructional needs of the student population at this school (e.g., English language learners or students from diverse cultural backgrounds).	Yes	3.0	0.009	159
	No	2.5		

\*Scale is: 1=Not at all; 2=A little; 3=Somewhat; 4=A lot.

**Table E-9***Principals Reporting Great or Moderate Effects of the Support Received from BTSA on Their Beginning Teachers*

The following table presents the responses of principals of schools participating in BTSA.

<i>For new teachers, BTSA specifically...</i>	Percent of Respondents Reporting "Great"	Standard Error	Percent of Respondents Reporting "Moderate"	Standard Error	N
Improved their classroom management, allowing them to try new instructional activities.	50.0	3.21	39.0	3.10	348
Increased their effectiveness at promoting student learning.	43.0	3.18	45.9	3.19	346
Increased their confidence and responsiveness in interactions with parents.	39.5	3.34	46.2	3.37	286
Improved their ability to consistently identify instructional goals appropriate to the subject matter they have been assigned to teach.	39.2	3.38	45.3	3.40	290
Increased their knowledge beyond the basic instructional and assessment techniques appropriate for the subject matter they have been assigned to teach.	38.3	3.28	45.5	3.42	289
Improved their skills to meet instructional needs of the student population at this school (e.g., English language learners or students from diverse cultural backgrounds).	36.2	3.06	47.0	3.17	344
Deepened their grasp of the subject matter they have been assigned to teach.	27.4	2.77	55.2	3.22	334
Enhanced their contributions to the school community to better meet the needs of its students.	24.8	2.89	50.8	3.46	279

Under heading: Supporting teachers through deepening their subject matter knowledge (p. 22).

The following table presents the analysis of the responses regarding the contribution of induction experience to their teaching by teachers who participated in BTSA and who had 2 or fewer years versus 3 to 5 years of classroom teaching experience.

Contribution to "Deepened my grasp of the subject matter I taught."	A Lot	Somewhat	A Little	Not at All
BTSA participant with 2 or fewer years of teaching experience	38%	20%	34%	8%
BTSA participant with 3 to 5 years of teaching experience	16%	46%	19%	18%

Chi-sq: p=0.016. N=85.



## APPENDIX F

### Standard 2. Creating and Maintaining Effective Environments for Student Learning

Standard 1. Engaging and Supporting All Students in Learning	
1. <u>Connecting</u> students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests with learning goals	Connects learning • Student knowledge, culture and language • Lesson: adaptations: captures attention: build on student responses
2 Using a <u>variety</u> of instructional <u>strategies</u> and <u>resources</u> to respond to students' diverse needs	Different ways of learning • Second language learners • Understand subject matter • Modify resources • Technology • Teacher talk • Active and full participation
3 <u>Facilitating learning</u> experiences that promote <u>autonomy, interaction, and choice</u>	Positive student interactions • Student groupings • Autonomy and choice • Collaborative learning • Help manage time and materials
4 <u>Engaging students</u> in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that make <u>subject matter</u> meaningful	Subject matter content: concepts, questions, strategies • Multiple approaches • Diverse perspectives • Meaningful contexts • Problem solving and critical thinking
5 Promoting <u>self-directed</u> reflective <u>learning</u> for all students	Clear and challenging learning goals • Reflect and monitor own progress • Describe learning process • Examine and reflect on own and peer's work • Access to info and strategies

### Standard 3. Understanding and Organizing Subject Matter for Student Learning

#### 3.1 Demonstrating knowledge of subject matter content and student development

Subject knowledge: Concepts and themes (current, supports learning, different perspectives) • Development knowledge: Cognitive, Linguistic; Social, Emotional

#### 3.5 Using materials, resources, and technologies to make subject matter accessible to students

Accessible • Use of resources to organize curriculum • Promotes understanding of subject matter/key concepts • Diversity

### Standard 5. Assessing Student Learning

#### 5.1 Establishing and communicating learning goals for all students

Grading systems • Use other standards to set goals • Involve students • Review and revise w/students • Reflect subject skills and concepts • Appropriate: development, language acquisition, special needs • Work with colleagues for goals and assessment • Promotes learning

#### 5.3 Involving and guiding all students in assessing their own learning

Monitor own goals • Opportunities for reflection of skills • Peer discussion • Tools and guidelines • Model strategies • Integral to learning

## APPENDIX G

### OBSERVATION CODING SHEET

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
School/District: \_\_\_\_\_

1.1 Connecting students' prior knowledge, life experience, and interests with learning goals

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

1.2 Using a variety of instructional strategies and resources to respond to students' diverse needs

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

1.3 Facilitating learning experiences that promote autonomy, interaction, and choice

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

1.4 Engaging students in problem solving, critical thinking, and other activities that make subject matter meaningful

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

1.5 Promoting self-directed reflective learning for all students

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.1 Creating a physical environment that engages all students

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.2 Establishing a climate that promotes fairness and respect

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.3 Promoting social development and group responsibility

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.4 Establishing and maintaining standards for student behavior

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.5 Planning and implementing classroom procedures and routines (P&R) that support student learning

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

2.6 Using instructional time effectively

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

3.1 Demonstrating knowledge of subject matter content and student development

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

3.5 Using materials, resources, and technologies to make subject matter accessible to students

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

5.1 Establishing and communicating learning goals for all students

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

5.3 Involving and guiding all students in assessing their own learning

1.0 1.5 2.0 2.5 3.0 3.5

## APPENDIX H

### PRE-OBSERVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
School/District: \_\_\_\_\_

Please respond to questions 1a – 1c for the first class we will observe:

- 1a. Please describe the general instructional levels and special needs (e.g., behavioral and academic) of the students in this class.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 1b. What are your goals or objectives for this lesson, i.e., what do you intend for students to learn and be able to demonstrate? How and why did you select these instructional goals?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 1c. How does this lesson fit into the overall plan or unit?

Please respond to questions 2a – 2e for the second class we will observe:

- 2a. Please describe the general instructional levels and special needs (e.g., behavioral and academic) of the students in this class.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2b. What are your goals or objectives for this lesson, i.e., what do you intend for students to learn and be able to demonstrate? How and why did you select these instructional goals?

- 2c. How does this lesson fit into the overall plan or unit?
- 2d. What professional development activities have you participated in since you began teaching? Please identify who else participated in these activities (e.g., only new teachers? All teachers at your grade level? All teachers in your school?)
- 2e. What further kinds of support would you like to receive?

## APPENDIX I

### POST-OBSERVATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ ID#: \_\_\_\_\_  
School/District: \_\_\_\_\_

(Ask for each class observed)

1. Was this typical of your class? Were there any special circumstances that I should be aware of?
2. Did the students learn what you intended them to learn?
3. How did you determine whether your students achieved the learning goals you set? Why did you select this/these method(s)? How do you plan to use the results?
4. How effective do you think your assessment strategies are? Would you make any changes in your approach to assessment? If so, what changes would you make and why?
5. Did you make modifications to your plan during the lesson? If so, what were they, and what motivated these changes?
6. What would you do differently to improve the lesson in the future? (e.g., with regard: instructional strategies, student grouping, promoting student interaction, student activities, and, materials, resources, and technology.)



## APPENDIX J

### BTSA TASK 4: STUDENT SURVEY Elementary

School \_\_\_\_\_ Teacher \_\_\_\_\_ Subject \_\_\_\_\_

- |  |      |     |    |     |
|--|------|-----|----|-----|
| a. My teacher makes learning fun.                                    | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| b. My teacher thinks my family and I are important.                  | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| c. The students in my class are nice to each other.                  | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| d. My teacher explains this subject so that I understand.            | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| e. My teacher lets me know how I'm doing and how I can do better.    | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| f. I have to work hard to do well in this class.                     | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| g. My teacher has us do different kinds of activities.               | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| h. My teacher knows a lot about what he/she is teaching.             | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| i. If I don't understand something, my teacher will help me.         | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |
| j. We all know what to do in class so that we don't waste much time. | YES! | Yes | No | NO! |



## APPENDIX K

### BTSA TASK 4: STUDENT SURVEY Secondary

Please complete this survey to the best of your ability. Read the statement and circle the number that best describes how you feel:

1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree.

- |  |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|
| a. My teacher makes learning interesting by making it meaningful to me.                      | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| b. My teacher values my cultural background.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| c. The students in my class treat each other with respect.                                   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| d. My teacher explains this subject so that it makes sense to me.                            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| e. My teacher lets me know how I'm doing in this class and what I need to do to improve.     | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| f. I find this class challenging.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| g. We do different types of learning activities.   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| h. If I don't understand something, my teacher will explain it in different ways until I do. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| i. My teacher knows the subject matter very well.  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| j. Everyone knows what to do in class, so we don't waste much time.                          | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |