

Florida State Education Board

November 18, 2009

TEACHFORAMERICA

Agenda

- Who we are – our mission and theory of change
- Our impact – corps member effectiveness and alumni leadership
- Our approach – what we have learned about great teaching and achieving results in the classroom
- Florida story – our current and potential impact in Florida

Who We Are

Teach For America is the national corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit two years to teach in low-income communities and become life-long leaders for expanding educational opportunity.

Over 450,000 students impacted across 35 regions

- 95%+ are African-American or Latino
- On average, begin the year scoring at the 14th percentile against the national norm*



7,300+ corps members and 17,000+ alumni

2009 Corps Statistics → over 35,000 applications for ~4,100 teaching positions

- Average GPA: 3.6
- Average SAT score: 1344
- 11% of all Ivy League seniors applied to TFA in 2009 (15% at Princeton and Yale, 13% at Harvard)
- 25% of Spelman's graduating class applied, and over 35% of African-Americans at Harvard applied as well

*Source: Mathematica Policy Research

The Problem We Are Working to Address

We believe the educational inequity that persists along socioeconomic and racial lines is our greatest domestic social and economic challenge.

Where children grow up determines their life prospects

- Nine-year-olds living in low-income communities are three grade levels behind their peers growing up in high-income communities*
- Of the approximately 13 million children growing up in poverty across our nation – more than 600,000 in the state of Florida – half will not graduate from high school. Those who do graduate will perform on average at an eighth-grade level*
- Only one in 10 students from low-income communities will graduate from college**

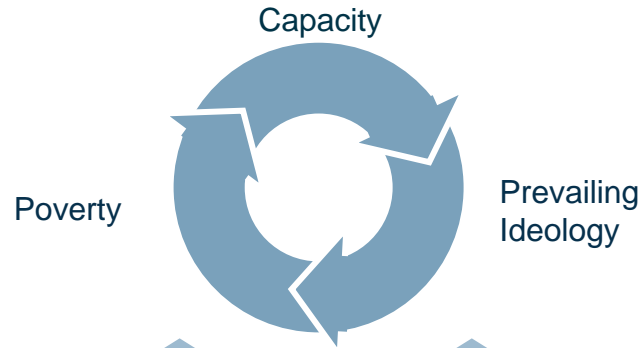
* Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005

** Source: Mortenson, Tom. "Family income and Higher Education Opportunity," Postsecondary Education Opportunity, 2005

Our Mission and Theory of Change

Our mission is to enlist our nation's most promising future leaders in the movement to eliminate educational inequity.

Underlying Causes of the Problem



Our Theory of Change

Recruit, select, prepare and develop outstanding recent graduates of all majors and career interests to commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools – where they adopt a goal-oriented approach and go above and beyond traditional expectations to help students overcome the challenges of poverty despite the current capacity of the school system.

The experience of succeeding in the classroom transforms our corps members into outcome-oriented alumni agents of change on behalf of low-income students.

Alumni become leaders in education and across all sectors, attacking the challenges of poverty and building school system capacity.

Collectively, alumni contribute to changing the prevailing ideology by bringing hope about what is possible and perspective on what it will take to close the achievement gap.

Our Impact: Corps Member Effectiveness

Studies conducted by external researchers demonstrate the impact of Teach For America corps members on student achievement.

Principals report high levels of satisfaction with Teach For America corps members*

- 97% are satisfied with the Teach For America teacher(s) working in their schools
- 94% report that Teach For America teachers have made a positive impact in their schools

Most principals rate corps members as more effective than other beginning teachers

- 95% rate Teach For America corps members as effective as other beginning teachers in terms of overall performance and impact on student achievement
- 66% regard Teach For America teachers as *more effective* compared with other beginning teachers in their schools with respect to their impact on student achievement

The most rigorous studies have shown impact that exceeds that of experienced and certified teachers in the same schools.

2008 Urban Institute study found that corps members in North Carolina high schools

- Have a positive impact on student learning even as compared with experienced teachers and traditionally certified, in-field teachers
- Achieved an incremental impact that was three times that of an experienced teacher, when compared against the baseline of a traditional novice teacher

2004 Mathematica Policy Research study found that corps members in elementary schools in six regions

- Make more progress with their students in both reading and math than would be expected in a year
- Attain significantly greater gains in math than the other teachers in the study, even when compared to certified teachers and veteran teachers

* Policy Study Associates Principal Survey, July 2009

Our Impact: Alumni Leadership

Nearly 17,000 alumni are working for educational equity as leaders from all sectors - effecting policy changes, leading community reform, and marshalling the necessary resources to effect lasting change.

- Of the 67% of alumni who remain in education, more than half are teachers in low-income communities. Hundreds of alumni have been honored as teachers of the year at the local, state, and national level
 - Jason Kamras (D.C.corps '95) - 2005 National Teacher of the Year
 - Sara Egli (Phoenix corps '05) and Brian MacKenzie (Mississippi Delta corps '96) – 2009 Arizona Teacher of the Year semifinalist and finalist
- Alumni become leaders of schools and innovative programs in support of educational equity
 - 440 alumni are leading district and charter schools around the country, including a significant percentage of schools in the most successful, outcome-driven charter school networks
 - Knowledge Is Power Program: Founded by Dave Levin and Mike Feinberg in Houston in 1994, there are now 82 KIPP schools nationwide preparing students from low-income communities for college and life
 - The New Teacher Project: Founded by Michelle Rhee in 1997, TNTP provides alternative certification and support to new teachers with the aim of improving the level of teaching in low-income communities
- In addition, 93% of alumni are supporting Teach For America's mission through career, philanthropy, volunteerism or graduate study
 - 24 alumni have won elected office to date and 35 alumni are participating in School Board Fellows Program in preparation for school board candidacy
 - Alumni recognized for civic leadership include 22 Coro Fellows, 32 Fulbright Scholars, 19 Presidential Management Fellows, 4 Rhodes Scholars, and 4 Skadden Fellows

Our Approach: Teaching As Leadership (“TAL”) Framework

Based on years of observation and analysis, we have learned that teachers in low income schools who effect significant student academic growth are those who display the following characteristics.

Teaching As Leadership framework

- 1 Set an ambitious vision of students’ academic success
- 2 Invest students and their families in working hard toward the vision
- 3 Plan purposefully to meet ambitious academic goals
- 4 Execute those plans thoroughly and effectively
- 5 Work relentlessly to meet high academic goals for students
- 6 Continuously reflect and improve on leadership and effectiveness

Development and implications

- The Teaching As Leadership (TAL) rubric guides corps members in their efforts to become more effective in the classroom, and helps our program staff to focus their support on concrete actions that will measurably improve corps members’ teaching
- The rubric distills the best practices of excellent teaching into 26 discrete behaviors, and further rates the levels of these behaviors on a continuum, from “pre-novice” through “exemplary.”
- Our research tells us that when proficiency is reached on key, foundational rows of the Teaching As Leadership rubric, students will achieve more than a year’s worth of academic progress.

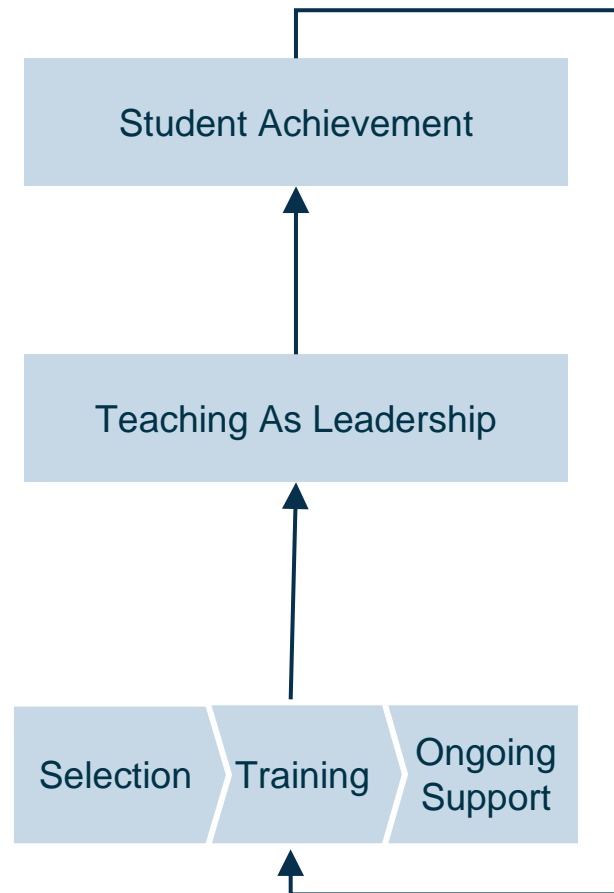
Our Approach: Commitment to Continuous Improvement

Over the years, we have utilized student achievement data to continuously improve our understanding of what makes teachers effective, and to improve our ability to recruit, select, train, and support those teachers.

We charge corps members to lead their students to significant academic achievement, and we measure the extent to which this is happening in classrooms.

We have codified the goal-oriented approach to teaching into the Teaching As Leadership (TAL) framework, which serves as the foundation for our teacher preparation, support and development work.

We have built a selection model that is grounded in our existing student-achievement data and based on the characteristics required to implement the Teaching As Leadership approach.



We use student achievement data to evaluate and improve our impact on students in low-income communities by:

- Deepening our understanding of what differentiates great teachers, and
- Improving our program strategy and execution.

Florida Story: History and Current Scale

We launched our first Florida region in Miami-Dade in 2003, followed by Jacksonville in 2008. In 2010, we will have more than 240 corps members serving approximately 19,000 students in low-income communities.

Florida's 5-year growth history

Metric	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11*
Incoming corps members	49	48	110	97	155
Total teaching corps members	105	92	150	192	240
Alumni	138	173	184	206	288
Students impacted (K)	8.4	7.4	12.0	15.4	19.2

- Past growth in Florida has been driven by the addition of the Jacksonville region
- In 2010, we plan to double the incoming corps size in Miami-Dade

* Projected values

Florida Story: Corps Member and Alumni Impact

Our Florida corps members are consistently recognized as some of the most effective teachers serving students in low-income communities and alumni are beginning to assume leadership in broader education and social reform efforts.

Teacher success

- 39% of Miami-Dade corps members were nominated for 2009 Rookie Teacher of the Year; last year's county winner, Kelli Valdez, was also a corps member
- Yael Dverin (Miami-Dade corps '08)
3rd grade, Frederick Douglas Elementary
Yael led his 3rd grade students achieve more than 2 years of growth in reading levels, exiting the year performing at above a 4th grade level
- Erin Kane (Jacksonville corps '08)
8th grade ELA, Jean Ribault Middle School
In her first year of teaching, Erin's students improved over two years in reading on the FCAT. She was voted Teacher of the Year after her first year

Alumni leadership

- Trey Csar (Houston corps '02)
President, Jacksonville Public Education Fund
Trey is leveraging the resources of the Jacksonville community to advocate for systemic change in Duval County Public Schools, with a focus on increasing the graduation rate and eliminating the achievement gap
- Phillip Poekert (New York corps '01)
Program Director, Ready Schools Miami
Phil helps lead the effort to connect early learning programs with parents and community to improve early childhood success in school
- Abena Osei (Houston corps '01)
Executive Director, Breakthrough Ft. Lauderdale
Abena oversees the rigorous summer and after-school programs for high-potential, under-served students

Florida Story: Looking Ahead to 2015

As Teach For America seeks to double in size to over 15,000 corps members by 2015, we see exciting opportunities to strengthen our partnership and increase our impact in Florida.

With a strong partnership at the State and district level, we could help to:

- Grow in existing and new (e.g., Orlando, Tampa) regions to ensure that we are bringing enough high quality teachers to Florida to match the level of need
- Continue to improve effectiveness of our teachers, enabled by direct access to student achievement data to drive continuous improvement efforts
- Accelerate alumni leadership by, among other things, recruiting pipeline programs such as high performing charter management organizations or New Leaders for New Schools into Florida

Appendix

- Scale comparison

Florida Story: The Need to Scale

Although we have built a solid foundation for reaching low-income students in Florida, the scope of the need requires us to scale our presence to have maximum impact.

Region	FARL students* (K)	% of national total	2010-11 teaching CMs	% of national corps	Students impacted (K)	Alumni school leaders	% of national leaders
Florida	500	5%	240	3%	19	1	<1%
California	1,700	20%	700	8%	56	88	20%
Texas	1,000	12%	1,000	12%	80	41	9%
New York	800	9%	630	8%	50	78	18%
Mississippi	100	1%	530	6%	42	1	<1%

* Source: National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2005