Professional Pathways for Teachers: 2018–2019 Evaluation Report

Executive Summary

Evaluation Overview

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

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

Program Overview

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

Summary of Results

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