DELWARE TALENT
CO-OPERATIVE:
Final Report
Prepared for the Delaware Department of Education

Claire Robertson-Kraft
Nate Bronstein
Operation Public Education
University of Pennsylvania
September 2015
In 2011, as a part of Delaware’s Race to the Top (RTTT) application, the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) launched the Delaware Talent Cooperative (Co-Op) initiative. The Co-Op offers financial incentives for high-performing educators to stay in and move into schools serving students, mostly from low-income communities, in the state. The highest-performing educators in each school were identified based on those who were rated “Highly Effective” on the state’s educator evaluation system, DPAS-II. These educators were offered up to $10,000, paid in equal installments over a two-year period, if they remained in one of the participating schools (Retention Component). Additionally, high-performing educators across the state were eligible for transfer incentives of up to $20,000 if they committed to transferring/working in participating schools (Attraction Component). Educators in both the Retention and Attraction Components were required to participate in additional professional development (focused on developing Teacher-Leaders) over the course of their participation in the Co-Op initiative.

Operation Public Education (OPE) at the University of Pennsylvania was commissioned by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) to gather information on the implementation of the Delaware Talent Cooperative (“Co-Op”) and evaluate how the initiative influenced educator retention in the state’s high need schools. This document summarizes key findings from OPE’s research conducted between January 2015 and May 2015.

The research and data collection centered around three main research questions, and this final evaluation report has been structured accordingly.

- **Introduction: Background & Methodology (pages 2-5).** This section provides additional information on the Co-Op’s Talent Retention and Attraction Components and describes our overall research methodology.

- **Research Question #1: Participation (pages 6-10).** Who participates in the Co-Op and what influences their decision to join the initiative? This section examines how the characteristics of educators participating in the Co-Op compared to other sub-groups of educators and explores why educators decided to join/not join the Talent Retention or Attraction Components.

- **Research Question #2: Implementation (pages 11-22).** What have been the strengths and challenges associated with the implementation of the Co-Op? This section investigates educators’ perceptions of the strengths and challenges associated with Co-Op implementation in their schools, as well as how perceptions of working conditions and educator evaluation may have influenced Co-Op implementation.

- **Research Question #3: Outcomes (pages 23-27).** Do educators in Co-Op schools have different rates of retention? This section examines how educators in Co-Op schools’ retention rates compared to other sub-groups of educators.

- **Conclusion: Opportunities & Recommendations (pages 28-30).** This section provides an overview of opportunities for future research and offers recommendations for how Delaware and other education agencies might consider approaching or refining this type of initiative.

- **Glossary & Appendix (pages 31-33).** This section provides an overview of key terms associated with the Co-Op, as well as a sample Co-Op statement of commitment.

---

1Experienced educators who only receive a summative evaluation every other year were eligible for participation based on their Student Improvement Component rating in the year they did not receive a summative evaluation.

2A description of Co-Op schools’ eligibility criteria can be found on page 3 of this report.

3For a full description of Co-Op participation requirements, refer to the commitment form in the Appendix on page 33.
**Background**

Over the past decade, a growing body of research has demonstrated that teachers can have a substantial impact on student progress but that teachers vary considerably in their effectiveness. Unfortunately, students from low-income families are less likely to have access to high quality instruction than their peers in higher-income communities.4

One strategy designed to address this issue is the use of financial incentives to recruit and retain high-performing teachers in high needs schools. This type of policy has been implemented over the past decade in several states. Most notably, researchers conducted a multi-year study of the Talent Transfer Initiative (TTI), an initiative implemented in ten school districts in seven states, which offered the highest-performing teachers $20,000 over a two year period if they transferred to and remained in designated high needs schools. The study found that retention rates were higher for TTI teachers and that elementary TTI teachers had a positive impact on student test scores.5 While this study suggests that talent transfer and retention policies have the potential to ensure low-income students have access to the highest-performing teachers, the research on their impact is still fairly limited.

The Delaware Talent Cooperative, modeled off of some of these earlier efforts, was a critical element of the state’s ambitious Race to the Top plan for improving educator effectiveness. The application envisioned the following for transfer and retention incentives in the state’s highest-need schools:

“In addition to becoming eligible for new pathways and programs, highly-effective teachers and leaders in select high-poverty or high-minority schools will be eligible for substantial retention bonuses, beginning in the 2011-2012 school year (when the DPAS II revisions go into effect). Using examples from other States, for example Prince George’s County in Maryland, the State will determine the size of the bonuses, likely about $10,000 for “Highly Effective” principals, $10,000 for “Highly Effective” teachers in critical subject areas, and $8,500 for “Highly Effective” teachers in non-critical subject areas. Retention bonuses will be available to a sub-set of the lowest-performing high-poverty or high-minority schools, and the number of schools eligible will be expanded over the course of the three-year program. All bonuses are contingent upon teaching in the same (or a similarly) high-need school in the year after a highly-effective rating is received.”

The Co-Op initiative began during the 2011-2012 school year and in Fall 2012, the DDOE convened an advisory council that included representatives of the DDOE, the Delaware State Education Association (DSEA), the Delaware Charter Schools Network, community organizations, districts and schools to gather feedback on the initiative. The DDOE also held focus groups with educators across the state, and their feedback helped shape the initiative. For example, many focus group participants shared that they felt it was unfair that the Co-Op only included educators in tested subjects in year 1. As is noted below, the DDOE responded to this feedback by expanding the eligibility criteria to include all educators during the second year of the initiative.

The Co-Op initiative has two components, Talent Retention and Talent Attraction.

✔ **Talent Retention.** The Co-Op initiative began during the 2011-12 school year with the Talent Retention component, which is designed to retain “Highly Effective” educators in high-needs schools. Participating educators received the first installment of their compensation incentive in Fall 2012 based on 2011-12 performance. Educators were offered up to $10,000, paid in equal installments over a two-year period, if they remained in one of the eligible schools (see criteria below) and participated in professional development, among other requirements, over the course of the year. Over the past three years of the initiative, 345 educators have participated in the Talent Retention Component.

✔ **Talent Attraction.** During the 2012-2013 school year, the Co-Op initiative expanded to include the Talent Attraction component, which is designed to encourage high-performing educators to transfer to high-needs schools. DDOE used that year to recruit and select educators eligible to transfer to new schools and districts for the 2013-14 school year. “Highly Effective” educators across the state were eligible for incentives of up to $20,000 if they committed to transferring to participating schools and attending additional professional development over the course of the year. Over the past two years of the initiative, 10 educators have participated in the Talent Attraction Component.

**Educator Eligibility Criteria**

Educators were eligible for the Co-Op if they were in a participating school (or transferred to a participating school) and earned a “Highly Effective” summative rating on DPAS-II (the Delaware Performance Appraisal System). During the first year of the Co-Op (2011-2012), only Group 1 educators in participating schools were eligible for the initiative. Based on feedback from educators (noted above) and the availability of data for the Student Improvement measure of DPAS-II, the initiative was expanded to include all educators (Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3) during the 2012-2013 school year.

**School Eligibility Criteria**

Schools were eligible to participate in the Co-Op if they served high needs students. Specifically a school needed to meet at least one of the following conditions:

✔ It was a Partnership Zone school
✔ It was one of the top 15 schools in at least two of three statewide categories – highest percentage of non-white students, highest percentage of students eligible for free and reduced price meals, highest percentage of English Language learners (ELL), or
✔ At least 75% of its students were non-white, eligible for free and reduced-price meals, or ELLs.

In Year 1 (2011-2012), 49 schools met the eligibility criteria, 30 schools were invited and 11 schools participated. In Year 2 (2012-2013) and 3 (2013-2014) of the initiative, all 49 schools were invited and 18 schools participated. Those same 18 schools also participated in Year 4 (2014-2015) of the initiative.

---

6Experienced educators who only receive a summative evaluation every other year were eligible for participation based on their Student Improvement Component rating in the year they did not receive a summative evaluation.

7Group 1 educators include anyone who instructs English Language Arts (ELA) and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10 and is the educator of record for at least 10 students. Group 2 educators include anyone who teaches in any grade or subject other than ELA and/or mathematics, teaches formal “courses” to those students, and for whom an approved assessment (Measure B) is available. Examples include science and social studies educators. Group 3 educators include anyone who does not meet the criteria for Group 1 or Group 2 educators. Examples include specialists, such as nurses, psychologists, and counselors.
Methodology

This evaluation utilized mixed methods to address the three overarching research questions noted above. Quantitative data provided aggregate information on Co-Op educators’ background and experiences, while qualitative data more thoroughly explored the strengths and challenges associated with Co-Op implementation. Additional information on the measures and analytic methods is included below.

Research Question #1: Who participates in the Co-Op and what influences their decision to join the initiative?

We used administrative records to examine how the characteristics of educators and schools participating in the Co-Op compared to the population of educators and schools in Delaware. We supplemented this quantitative data by conducting focus groups and interviews with educators and leaders who were eligible to participate in the Co-Op to gather insight into why educators opted to participate (or not participate) in the initiative.

- **Administrative Data.** We used administrative data to compare Co-Op educator demographics to demographics for other “Highly Effective” educators (identified through DPAS-II) in the state, all educators in the state, and other educators in high needs schools.

- **Retention Focus Groups.** We conducted one focus group of 15 educators participating in the Talent Retention component. These participants were selected because they were attending a Co-Op professional development session. Despite the fact that this group was not randomly selected, the participants represented a range of educators across cohorts and educator groups. In total, educators from 7 of the 18 schools were represented.

- **Attraction Focus Groups.** We conducted one focus group of eligible and participating Attraction educators within the Co-Op. We sent invitations to all of 10 of the educators participating in the Attraction Component and ultimately, 8 chose to participate in the focus group.

- **Interviews with Eligible Non-Participating Educators and Leaders.** We interviewed 3 educators and 6 principals who were eligible to participate in the Co-Op initiative but chose not to take advantage of the incentive.

Research Question #2: What have been the strengths and challenges associated with the implementation of the Co-Op?

We used survey data to gather information on educators’ perceptions of the implementation of the Co-Op, as well as school working conditions and the DPAS-II evaluation system. To better understand these trends, in addition to utilizing the focus group data noted above, we also interviewed key stakeholders and conducted two case study site visits in Co-Op schools.

- **Co-Op Fall (2014) Survey.** We analyzed data obtained from a Co-Op survey given by DDOE at one of the Co-Op meetings in Fall 2014. The survey was taken by 157 Co-Op members who were largely experienced educators with more than 10 years of experience. Additionally, half of the respondents were Group 2 educators and 56% were in Cohort 3. The vast majority of respondents (91%) were part of the Talent Retention Component.

- **Co-Op Spring (2015) Survey.** Based on the results of the Fall Survey administered by DDOE and the qualitative research conducted in Spring 2015, OPE administered a second survey in Spring 2015. This survey asked more in depth questions on educator perceptions of the Co-Op, as well as questions on the factors influencing Co-Op educator retention. 77 respondents (or a 29% response) participated in this survey.
**TELL Survey.** The Teaching, Empowering, Leading and Learning (TELL) Delaware survey is a statewide survey of educators designed to assess teaching conditions at the school, district and state levels. We used TELL survey data from the 2012-2013 year to investigate how Co-Op educators’ perceptions of their working conditions compared to educators in other high needs schools, as well as to the population of educators in the state. The TELL Delaware survey was conducted in January-February 2013, and there was a participation rate of 60% across 175 schools.

**DPAS-II Survey.** The DPAS-II survey is an annual survey given to all teachers, specialists, and administrators to gather feedback on DPAS-II. We used DPAS-II survey data from the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 years to investigate how Co-Op educators’ perceptions of the evaluation system compared to the educators in other high needs schools, as well as to the population of educators in the state. 232 schools participated in the survey.

**Interviews.** We interviewed five (5) members of the Co-Op design team and conducted weekly check-ins with DDOE staff to gather additional information on the design and implementation process of the Co-Op. These conversations helped us build a better understanding of the purpose of the initiative, as well as challenges encountered during the implementation process.

**Case Studies.** We used the interviews described above, as well as our analysis of the DPAS-II survey data, to identify 1 “high-quality” and 1 “low-quality” implementation Co-Op school. We visited each of these schools to explore which factors led to variation in Co-Op implementation and how these factors may have resulted in observed outcomes. Each site visit involved meeting with the administrators and educators separately, to better understand how their perspectives on the initiative may have varied. At each school, we conducted three focus groups, one with the administrative team, one with participating educators and one with educators who were not eligible for the initiative.

*Research Question # 3: Do educators in Co-Op schools have different rates of retention?*

We used administrative data to gather information on educators’ retention rates in Co-Op schools compared to other educators in the state.

**Administrative Data.** Administrative data provided information on Co-Op educators’ demographics and retention rates compared to demographics and retention rates for other “Highly Effective” educators in the state, all educators in the state, and other educators in high needs schools.

**Figure 1: Data Sources (Collected in the 2014-2015 Year)**

*The following table documents quantitative and qualitative data collection methods over the course of the 2014-2015 year.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quantitative</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2014 Co-Op survey administered by DDOE (157 respondents)</td>
<td>One focus group with participating Co-Op Retention educators (15 participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative data, TELL working conditions survey data, and DPAS-II evaluation survey data</td>
<td>One focus group with participating Attraction educators (10 participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention data on educators in the state of Delaware</td>
<td>Site visits to a low-quality and a high-quality implementation school with a combination of interviews and focus groups (21 participants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2015 Co-Op survey administered by OPE (77 respondents – 29% response rate)</td>
<td>Interviews with key stakeholders including current/former union leaders, DDOE leaders, participating and eligible non-participating principals and teachers (13 participants)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARTICIPATION

Who participates in the Co-Op and what influences their decision to join the initiative?

Overview

We analyzed the demographic data from Cohort 1 (2011-2012), Cohort 2 (2012-2013), and Cohort 3 (2013-2014) of the Talent Co-Op Retention Component. For each Cohort (and corresponding year of the Co-Op), we looked for statistically significant differences between participating educators and other groups of educators on the following characteristics: age, gender, race, years of teaching experience, school level, and level of education. We compared participating educators in the Talent Retention Component to the following sub-groups of educators for each year of the Co-Op (2011-2012, 2012-2013, 2013-2014):

- **“Highly Effective” Educators** – all educators in the state of Delaware who earned a rating of “Highly Effective” on DPAS-II
- **All Educators** – all educators in the state of Delaware
- **High Needs Educators** – all educators in high-needs schools
- **“Highly Effective” Educators in High Needs Schools** – all “Highly Effective” educators teaching in high-needs schools. This would include those educators who would have qualified for the Talent Co-Op, but were not teaching in participating schools.

Due to the small number of participants in the Talent Attraction Component of the initiative (1 in Cohort 2, 9 in Cohort 3), we did not conduct quantitative analysis on these educators.

Who participates in the Co-Op?

The demographic information in Figure 2 below outlines the demographics of the three cohorts of the Co-Op Retention Component.

Figure 2: Educator Demographics Across Co-Op Cohorts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2011-2012 (Cohort 1)</th>
<th>2012-2013 (Cohort 2)</th>
<th>2013-2014 (Cohort 3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Op Participants: 20 Members</td>
<td>Co-Op Participants: 143 Members</td>
<td>Co-Op Participants: 182 Members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Age ~37yrs</td>
<td>Avg. Age ~41yrs</td>
<td>Avg. Age ~41yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg. Years of Exp. ~10yrs</td>
<td>Avg. Years of Exp. ~10yrs</td>
<td>Avg. Years of Exp. ~11yrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.7% Male</td>
<td>21% Male</td>
<td>23.2% Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.8% Non-White</td>
<td>15.8% Non-White</td>
<td>13.8% Non-White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100% Return to the Same School</td>
<td>95.2% Return to the Same School</td>
<td>92.8% Return to the Same School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Differences Among Co-Op Educators and Other Sub-Groups

There are several notable differences between Co-Op educators and other subgroups of educators.

Co-Op Retention educators are slightly younger and less experienced than other sub-groups of educators. Co-Op educators tend to be younger and less experienced than other sub-groups of educators with the exception of other “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools. However, it is important to note that these differences were only statistically significant for Cohort 2. Figure 3 examines each sub-group of educators’ average years of experience for each year of the initiative, Cohort 1 (2011-2012), Cohort 2 (2012-2013), and Cohort 3 (2013-2014).

Figure 3: Subgroups of Educators by Average Years of Experience

Co-Op Retention educators are more likely to teach at the secondary level. The Co-Op consistently has a disproportionately high number of secondary educators compared to other sub-groups of educators. Figure 4 below demonstrates this trend for Cohort 3 participants, but the trend was consistent across different cohorts of the Co-Op. However, this trend was less pronounced when comparing Co-Op educators to other “Highly Effective” educators in high-needs schools. This finding is a result of the composition of high needs schools in the state.

Figure 4: Subgroups of Educators by Teaching Assignment

*Note that when results are reported as statistically significant throughout, the p<.05 threshold was used.
Why do educators and schools participate?

Educators

Participating educators shared the following reasons for their participation in the Co-Op:

- **Additional compensation.** Many educators indicated that the compensation aspect of the Co-Op made it possible for them to pursue and stay in positions in lower paying schools or districts. Though compensation was not the primary driver of decisions, educators felt that the stipend was helpful and appreciated the extra compensation.

  “I mean, nobody wants to talk about it, but the money was definitely appreciated.” (Retention Educator)

- **Recognition for high-performing educators.** Educators reported that the Delaware Talent Cooperative recognized achievement in high needs schools, and many educators saw compensation as a reward for their hard work within their schools.

  “It was recognizing and valuing great educators, because I came from a school where I worked 12 hours a day at home, at school, and yeah I am “highly effective” in my observations but you go home at the end of the day but no one recognizes it and no one seems to value it, and I was at the point where I didn't want to teach anymore. I was burned out and I was done so it was nice to, even in a letter, have someone be like we do value you in this state, we do recognize that you are working hard and to now be somewhere where it is recognized still. I think that's working.” (Attraction Educator)

- **Opportunities to share best practices with other high-performing educators.** Educators reported that the Delaware Talent Cooperative provided them with a unique and valued opportunity to interact with – and learn from – other high-performing educators across the state.

  “…what I really got out of the-Co-Op was I sat around a table with really good educators, talking education.”

  (Retention Educator)

Schools

Across the board, principals in participating schools shared that the Co-Op fulfilled their desire to compensate and reward their high-performing educators. The Co-Op provided them with a mechanism to recognize talent in their buildings and offered an incentive to encourage educators’ continued professional growth. None of the principals we interviewed mentioned the advantage of attracting high-performing educators to their schools as one of the strengths of the initiative.

“I would definitely strongly recommend it [The Co-Op]. There are more seasoned staff members who have been with the Co-Op a lot longer and typically some of those staff members have been with their grade level team, so they have already been exposed to a lot of the training initiatives…Providing resources, training opportunities, professional development, ideas and resources. That’s one of the things that I think we benefited from our partnership.”

(Co-Op Principal)
Why don’t educators and schools participate?

Educators

The educators we interviewed who opted not to join the Co-Op Attraction Component cited stability and security in their current job as the primary contributing factor. This included concerns about tenure and compensation, as well as concerns over teaching a different population of students.

☑️ Stability & Security. Some educators shared that they were comfortable with their existing population of students and did not know what to expect with teaching students in low-income areas. Conversely, several educators worried about whether they would be able to maintain their tenure status if they moved to a new district or obtain the same level of compensation, particularly since several of the participating Co-Op schools were charter schools with lower pay.

“I felt more like an effective educator because I was working in that area where it was more, where kids came from well-balanced homes, where their mindset when they came to the classroom was education. I really didn’t know much about the school that I wanted to go to in Dover.”
(Eligible Non-Participating Attraction Educator)

“If I leave my district and go on to another district, do I start over? What happens with my tenure-ship? You know? That was a big concern. I did learn from that that if I stayed in my district that I would be fine, that I wouldn’t have to worry about that after two years because I am already tenured, I’m in my district. I felt safe. But to be completely honest with you, I did not feel safe going into another district not knowing what was going to happen to me after two years.”
(Eligible Non-Participating Attraction Educator)

Schools

The process a school used to determine whether or not to join the Co-Op varied considerably. All of the principals we interviewed shared that the district superintendent initially contacted them about the initiative and that a DDOE employee or the district superintendent visited the school to meet with them individually. However, after these conversations, some of the decisions were made at the district level (by the School Board and/or the Superintendent) while other decisions were made at the school level (by the principal and/or the school community as a whole).

When the decision was made at the school level, some principals sought input from educators and took a vote of the faculty, while others made the decision on their own. Though there was variation in how the decision was made, all principals reported quick turnarounds on the school’s or district’s decision to join the Co-Op, and, since their decision, non-participating principals have not heard about the enactment of the Co-Op in other schools or districts.
Principals whose schools did not participate in the Retention Component cited perceptions of unfairness and community as the primary reasons why the Co-Op was not implemented in their respective schools.

**Unfairness in Eligibility.** One principal shared that her district did not enter the Co-Op because there were concerns (particularly among the union leadership) that only educators in tested subjects would be eligible. Though this practice has changed in recent years, the principal was not aware of the change or involved in the conversations at the district level.

> “Educators who were math or English educators in the secondary level could be rewarded for success of their students. A lot of the staff was upset, because it is a school effort to be successful. PE, music educators help too. Some of the staff was insulted, because we are one school.” (Principal in Eligible Non-Participating School)

**Community.** Building off the eligibility concerns, another principal reported that the idea of the Co-Op was insulting to some staff and undermined the idea that all educators contributed to student success. She worried that it had the potential to disrupt a positive school climate.

> “I think the intentions are very good but people need to realize it is the whole school that improves teaching. But when only some educators are rewarded, you get hurt feelings and that divisiveness… We were moving away from “these are my students” to these are “our students”. Especially with Component V,9 educators who were responsible for students under Component V really wanted to hold onto those students, like in enrichment periods. I am in line with the idea that it is a huge divisive factor.” (Principal in Eligible Non-Participating School)

**Unfairness in DPAS-II.** One principal felt very strongly that DPAS-II did not have accurate criteria for identifying high-performing educators (particularly due to the Student Improvement measure). Several members of the Co-Op design team indicated that determining the criteria was one of the most challenging aspects of creating the initiative.

> “One of my good educators, not my great educators, sometimes you just get better classes, but she consistently is a “Highly Effective” educator even though she doesn't have the hardest kids. The educators that were willing to take on the students with the most need wouldn't get the bonus. Retention bonuses would fracture the school and the climate in a detrimental way.” (Principal in Eligible Non-Participating School)

**Concerns over the Attraction Component.** Several principals expressed concerns regarding educators who would transfer to their schools as part of the Attraction Component. These principals felt that transfer educators might move because of money, instead of a genuine interest in helping low-income students. One principal argued that just because an educator is high performing at one school, this does not guarantee that he or she would have success in a high needs school. In addition, the transfer educator might not mesh with the school culture or the principal’s leadership style.

> “I can see why it would help in some situations, but I have to weigh and balance the pros and the cons. If they are here for the right reasons, they stay for the right reasons. It’s a big factor knowing I can hire anyone. I can pick from the cream of the crop because people like to be in this area and they have a heart to work with high needs kids. And I don’t think bringing a person here just because they were going to make more money is the kind of staff member I want.” (Principal in Eligible Non-Participating School)

---

9Component V is now being referred to as the Student Improvement Component of DPAS-II. Please see page 20 for a more thorough discussion of DPAS-II.
What have been the strengths and challenges associated with implementation?

Overview

Implementation of the Co-Op has changed since its initial roll-out during the 2011-2012 school year. Specifically, the Co-Op has increased in size, with the largest increase occurring between Year 1 and Year 2 when the Co-Op was expanded from just Group 1 educators to include Group 2 and Group 3 educators. Figure 5 outlines general information from each year of implementation:

**Figure 5: Co-Op Implementation across Years of the Initiative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Group 1 Educators</th>
<th>Group 2 Educators</th>
<th>Group 3 Educators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012 (Year 1)</td>
<td>Only open to Group 1 educators, No Attraction Component, 20 educators participate in the Retention Component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013 (Year 2)</td>
<td>Open to Groups 1, 2, and 3 educators, Attraction Component implemented, 1 joins</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014 (Year 3)</td>
<td>Open to Groups 1, 2, and 3 educators, 9 educators join the Attraction Component, 143 educators participate in the Retention Component</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Educators learned about the Co-Op through a variety of communication channels. As demonstrated in Figure 6 below, just over half of educators learned about the Co-Op from their administration, while almost 20% learned of the initiative from other educators. A third of educators reported learning about the Co-Op through a letter that they received in the mail.

**Figure 6: How Did Educators’ Hear about the Co-Op?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>All Respondents</th>
<th>Cohort 1 2012</th>
<th>Cohort 2 2013</th>
<th>Cohort 3 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learned about Co-Op from Administration</td>
<td>55.8%</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned about Co-Op from Another Educator</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned about Co-Op from A Letter</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned about Co-Op from A Phone Call</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learned about Co-Op from Another Source</td>
<td>3.9%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Educators were given the opportunity to check multiple options.*

“We were all in on the phone conference for the first year they ever did it and someone from DOE was explaining what it was, and it left crickets…. I had no clue what it was. And I think people thought you were going to be docked money if you didn't get it or if you didn't exceed.” (Retention Educator)

“What I heard, I heard it towards the end of the year, because other people were talking about it.” (Retention Educator)
Strengths

On the Fall 2014 survey administered by the DDOE, 65% of educators gave the Co-Op either an A or a B and 75% believed that their school should continue participating in the initiative. The Spring 2015 survey given by OPE gathered more in-depth information about the Co-Op’s usefulness. As demonstrated in Figure 7, educators cited that several components of the Co-Op were helpful – additional compensation, professional development, and opportunities to collaborate with other high-performing educators. The strengths noted in these results were reinforced from data collected through focus groups and interviews.

Figure 7: Educators’ Perceptions of Helpfulness of Co-Op Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Not Helpful</th>
<th>Somewhat Helpful</th>
<th>Helpful</th>
<th>Very Helpful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Additional Compensation</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>58.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Development</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities to collaborate with other high performing educators</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N=77 educators who completed the Spring 2015 survey given by OPE*

**Additional Compensation.** Additional compensation was ranked as the most helpful aspect of the Co-Op. Over 90% of respondents revealed that the added money was either helpful or very helpful.

Retention educators reported that the compensation helped to recognize educators' hard work:

“We had a very weak math department, and we were able to get an incredible math educator. I think he took a cut in pay to come to our school. You get that check around December – that was nice. I was happy for him. So that was a very positive plus. We already had him anyways, but it was very nice for us to acknowledge a truly outstanding educator, especially in an area where we were struggling.” (Retention Educator)

Some Attraction educators shared that the compensation helped them to transfer districts. One educator explained that moving to a new district without the Co-Op would have required her to take a salary cut but the Co-Op’s financial incentive helped her maintain her existing salary.

“The salary difference was $10,000 so for me, I wasn't going to take that cut, honestly, so for me, it just kept me where I was so <referring to her annual salary> that I didn't have to worry about moving.” (Attraction Educator)

**Professional Development.** Although there was some critical feedback from educators that attended professional development in the early years of the Co-Op that it was too rudimentary, educators in Cohort 3 (2013-2014 school year) reported that the same professional development helped them establish teacher-leadership roles in their schools (suggesting that the PD had improved over time).

Retention educators in early years of the Co-Op implementation expressed concerns with the PD.

“If we are supposed to be those talented educators who earned the money and did what we were supposed to do and showed growth in our classroom, why do I have to go to a PD where you are going to show me how to set up a calendar, you might think I know how to do that. The things that they taught at the PD were not applicable.” (Cohort 2 Retention Educator)
However, educators in the most recent cohort (Cohort 3) were more positive about the quality of PD:

“\text{We were at the same PD a year later, I thought that it was really helpful. She introduced a lot of interesting ideas that I have never really thought of before, and that what we did the last day where we developed something that we would implement in our school, in a leadership role, I thought that it was well presented.}”

(Cohort 3 Retention Educator)

\textbf{Leadership Opportunities.} Cohort 3 educators who participated in the Spring 2015 professional development shared that the training helped them establish leadership roles on their campuses. They believed that developing plans for improving schools was a great way to build educator leadership.

“\text{When they had us develop and implement a plan to improve some aspect of our school, I felt like they were taking our perspective into consideration. What about your school needs to be improved and how could you make it better?}”

(Retention Educator)

\textbf{Opportunities to Interact with High Performing Educators.} All educators appreciated the opportunity to interact – and share teaching methods – with other high-performing educators. The aspect of the professional development educators found most meaningful was the group work and being around peers who were “inspiring” and made them “feel good to be an educator.”

“What I got out of the program was I had the opportunity to meet other educators that inspired me.”

(Retention Educator)

\textbf{Focus on Goal-Setting.} Some educators expressed that the Co-Op helped them clearly identify goals and became a rallying point for educator improvement. Educators were motivated to work and grow as a team in order to meet learning goals for their students. On the Fall 2014 survey, over half of the Co-Op educators indicated that educators were taking the goal-setting process around student achievement more seriously.

“I think it kind of brought a lot of us together in a sense. I remember crying to (name redacted) saying ‘I’m not going to make it, I’m not going to make exceeds’, and her encouraging me like ‘you got this, you got this, you’ve done everything you can and all you can do is let them take that test.’ I feel like it really made me feel like part of the team.”

(Retention Educator)

\textbf{Financial Incentive More Motivating for Less Experienced Educators.} Overall, less experienced educators appeared to have better perceptions of the Co-Op. In particular in the Fall 2014 survey given by DDOE, educators with 2-3 years of experience were more likely to report that the financial incentive was a factor in their decision to remain in/transfer to a high needs school (M=3.59), when compared to educators with more than 4-6 years of experience (M=2.14). These differences approached statistical significance at the p<.10 level.
Case Study 1: Successful Co-Op Implementation

School Overview

School 1 is a low-income school, which has had high rates of educator turnover over the past few years, which is one of the reasons the principal noted that the Co-Op initiative would be useful on the campus. The current staff at School 1 has a strong sense of collaboration and a positive school culture. Educators met on a regular basis and had friendships with one another that extended beyond the classroom. Most of the interviewed educators expressed a deep passion not just for teaching, but also for the specific neighborhood, and reported their desire to stay within their school regardless of their Co-Op membership.

Co-Op Implementation

Educators at School 1 shared that while they were grateful for the extra money, it was the level of recognition of their hard work that they appreciated most. As one educator noted, “People are grateful for that extra money, but it’s more about recognition.” Another educator shared that the Co-Op provided a goal to drive towards: “I mean, for us, we go the extra mile for our kids anyway, but having a goal to shoot for made it something that we looked forward to.”

Several factors appeared to contribute to successful Co-Op implementation at School 1:

- **Positive Collaborative Environment.** The administration and educators shared that the school’s strong collaborative environment contributed to successful Co-Op implementation. They initially had some concerns about how the Co-Op might impact school culture due to some educators being rewarded over others. However, the pre-existing collaborative environment helped to prevent any divisiveness between Co-Op and non Co-Op educators.

  “Everybody is concerned about one another and takes care of one another and we pitch in to help, so you feel good about being here.”

- **Principal & Educator Trust.** The principal was very “in-touch” with his educators’ needs and concerns. It was clear from the interviews that the educators respected the leadership and felt as though they could be honest and approach them with concerns; and that they would not only listen, but implement suggestions.

  “We can approach our leadership with any concerns. They are there to support us and help us and will listen to our suggestions.”

- **Constructive Feedback.** Educators cited the importance of quality feedback that they could use to improve their practice. They reported that feedback was most useful when it was framed in a constructive light and was specific, so educators knew how to take actionable next steps.

  “What you really want is professional feedback. It’s all about continued growth.”
Challenges

In the Spring 2015 survey administered by OPE, educators cited several factors that contributed to challenging Co-Op implementation. In particular, as demonstrated in Figure 8, educators referenced inconsistency in Co-Op expectations and unfair criteria for member selection. These survey findings were reinforced from data collected through focus groups and interviews.

**Figure 8: Educators’ Perceptions of Co-Op Communication, Criteria, & Community**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perception</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The information I received about the Co-Op when I joined, provided me with an understanding of the program</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
<td>62.9%</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The expectations for my participation in the Co-Op are clearly defined</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>8.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The criteria for selecting members of the Co-Op is fair</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
<td>33.9%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel comfortable talking about the Co-Op with other educators at my school</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>24.6%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: N=77 educators who completed end of year survey*

**Inconsistent and Infrequent Communication.** The initial design team focused on the development of the Co-Op but did not establish a clear plan for how the initiative would be communicated to districts, schools, and educators. Consequently, most educators agreed that there was some initial confusion when they were introduced to the Co-Op and some felt ambushed by the demands of the initiative. Educators expressed that expectations and scheduling should be laid out more clearly in advance and reinforced ongoing throughout the year.

> “It would be nice for [Co-Op expectations] to be really clear; this is what it is, this is what you need to do, this is what you needed, this is what's expected of you.” (Retention Educator)

> “They could definitely use someone with PR, a communicator to send out their messages.” (Retention Educator)

> “I don't think anybody really ever talks about it. Nobody knows who's on it. We've never had an administrator talk to us about it. Or even acknowledge that any of us are even on it. The only thing we've really done is we went to the trainings.” (Retention Educator)

**Unfair Standards for Co-Op Selection.** Many educators felt Co-Op selection standards were unfair and did not accurately identify high-performing educators. The concerns varied on a school basis, but generally educators felt that leadership was not always successful in identifying the high-performing educators and often excluded educators who made comparable gains with their students. Their concerns did not prevent the majority of eligible educators from participating in the Talent Retention Component, as they appreciated the extra money. Only one educator who was qualified for the Co-Op chose not to participate, another ~20 educators were qualified but became non-compliant with the Co-Op requirements. Several reported that it led to feelings of unfairness on their campuses.

> (In regards to the fairness of the selection criteria of the Co-Op) “It was extremely difficult and I feel like it was partially the money part too, because some people made it by one kid, and some people didn't make it by one kid. So is there really that big of a difference between the educators? No, of course not. So why couldn't we do something that would be just rewarding everyone across the board? Like if you have a really good English department, why not just reward everyone? It just didn't feel fair.” (Retention Educator)
Possibility of Divisiveness in Co-Op Schools. While educators in some schools felt the Co-Op had a positive impact on team-building, other educators expressed concerns with the negative stigma associated with the Co-Op. In some schools, educators expressed that they felt they could not talk about Co-Op membership with other educators, making the atmosphere divisive. Educators indicated that divisiveness undermined the initiative’s mission.

“In some schools, I think this compensation has been very divisive. Even within departments.” (Retention Educator)

“For whatever reason, in education, the idea of an attraction incentive is looked at negatively... it definitely does not create a nice feeling in a building. There’s a lot of closed door meetings with only those people and we try not to talk about it to people that we know didn’t get it.” (Attraction Educator)

Rudimentary training and development (for Retention Component). Educators in Cohorts 1 and 2 expressed frustration with the training, sharing that the Co-Op professional development was too rudimentary and didn't acknowledge that participating educators were already high performing. Some educators also expressed frustration that administration did not review their collaborative projects created at the conference. As noted in the strengths section above, this trend did not apply to Cohort 3 educators, who were considerably more positive about the quality of the professional development.

“I just wish the conference was something that would have been pushing me a little bit more. Like I am here, push me here. Or give me something to take back to the rest of my team.” (Cohort 1 Retention Educator)

Inadequate support and training (for Attraction Component). While the professional development had improved over the year for the Retention educators, Attraction educators shared that they would have liked additional support to help them adapt to their new school environment. Attraction educators reported that they were left to navigate their new schools with little training on how best to serve their new population of students or guidance on how to influence fellow educators.

“My understanding was when they sent us into buildings to be leaders, they were giving us a lot of professional development to be able to do that in a positive manner. So, that’s what I am kind of waiting on, is the professional development that will help me into that building in a way that I would be received better.” (Attraction Educator)

Educator Burnout (for Attraction Component). One major concern for Attraction educators was educator burnout. Several Attraction educators expressed that their new schools required a tremendous amount of work and that because they were not receiving adequate support, they were considering leaving the Co-Op.

“I’m considering leaving the program. So the money is not what attracted me to the program and the money is definitely not what will keep me in the program. This is my second career; in my first career, I did a lot of things that I wanted to do to climb a corporate ladder. Now I am at the time in my life where I am in the right place where I have joy about coming to work. And the money doesn’t get, wouldn’t keep me in a school where I am miserable.” (Attraction Educator)

Smaller payment than expected (for Attraction Component). Several Attraction educators expressed concerns that the bonus was not nearly as much as they expected. One educator shared that “it was taxed so much that it wasn’t even close to $10,000.”
Case Study 2: Challenging Co-Op Implementation

School Overview

School 2 is a low-income school which boasts a rigorous academic environment in which high achievement is an absolute priority. Educators and administration alike corroborated their commitment to breaking the achievement gap by holding high expectations for students. Educators expressed their appreciation for a culture that is perpetually pushing them to be better educators. However, this last school year brought with it a number of challenges, particularly in student behavior, which led to decreased educator morale.

Co-Op Implementation

Educators at School 2 described the pay incentive as a “break-even” factor in making up for other expenses. However, there appears to be limited awareness of the Co-Op among educators across the school and educators report that it is not a factor influencing their experience or retention. As one educator notes, “Besides getting the money, which is the biggest factor, there’s nothing going on in the Co-Op.”

Several factors appeared to contribute to successful Co-Op implementation at School 1:

- **Negative Environment Due to Behavioral Issues.** Educators and administrators were quick to recognize that they were dealing with severe behavioral issues in their school. The administration noted that this year in particular had seen an upswing in behavioral problems, and educators reported that behavioral expectations had been inconsistently enforced.

  “Our group of kids are very unique in that they have a lot of trauma and they have a lot of behavioral, academic, and intellectual... just a lot of problems in general. And we are just not servicing, we are just not giving them the services they need at the current moment.”

- **Lack of Trust with Administration.** Professional development was not responsive to educators’ needs, and educators did not feel comfortable approaching their administration with concerns.

  “It’s like you set aside time for PD but you don’t have the resources or the time to plan really like, engaging, experiences. So a lot of the PD will be like the hour, oh we are going to give you this 20 page plan to do your data analysis on, like ‘here you go.’ It’s like, this isn’t a good use of my time.”

- **Negative Feedback.** Educators shared that they did not feel as though they received quality feedback on their performance, which influenced their ability to improve and reach “Highly Effective” status.

  “I am killing myself to do great work in the classroom and I am getting this list, this laundry list of things that I am doing wrong. And you are not telling me anything that I am doing right.”
Influence of Working Conditions & DPAS-II Implementation

As these case studies suggest, Co-Op implementation is influenced by the working conditions in a school, as well as how DPAS-II (or the evaluation system in the case of charters who are using a different system) is being implemented.

☑ Working Conditions. As the case studies illustrated, educators perceptions’ of their school environment appeared to influence their experiences with the Co-Op. As a result, we examined how educators’ perceptions of working conditions in Co-Op schools compared to educators’ perceptions in other high needs schools, as well as all schools in the state.

☑ Educator Evaluation. We also examined how educators’ perceptions of DPAS-II (the state’s educator evaluation system) in Co-Op schools compared to educators’ perceptions in other high needs schools, as well as all schools in the state. Though DPAS-II is a separate policy, it is integral to Co-Op implementation, as it is the mechanism for identifying eligible educators in traditional public schools (note that many charter schools in the Co-Op had their own evaluation systems by Cohort 3). Thus, educators’ perceptions of the fairness of the evaluation metrics are critical to understanding their perceptions of the overall fairness of the Co-Op.

Working Conditions

We analyzed the TELL Delaware survey given to all educators in 2012-2013. The survey reviewed educators’ perceptions of different aspects of their working conditions, and results were aggregated at the school level (N=175). It is important to note that not all schools participated in the survey, so the sample size is smaller than in other analyses. Of the participating schools, 13 were Co-Op schools and 23 were high needs schools. Perceptions of Co-Op educators were not separated out, but rather, data represented school-wide results. However, this is preferable for our analysis, as we are interested in school culture among both participating and non-participating educators.

We compared educators’ perceptions of working conditions in Co-Op schools to those in other high needs schools and all schools in the state. Working conditions were analyzed in composite scales made up of relevant questions on the following topics:

☑ Facilities and Resources – availability of instructional, technology, office, communication, and school resources to teachers

☑ Time – available time to plan, collaborate and provide instruction and barriers to maximizing time during the school day

☑ Community Support and Involvement – community and parent/guardian communication and influence in the school

☑ Managing Student Conduct – policies and practices to address student conduct issues and ensure a safe school environment

☑ Teacher Leadership – teacher involvement in decisions that impact classroom and school practices
School Leadership – the ability of school leadership to create trusting, supportive environments and address teacher concerns

Professional Development – availability and quality of learning opportunities for educators to enhance their teaching

Instructional Practices and Support – data and supports available to teachers to improve instruction and student learning.

Figure 9 represents the statistically significant differences from the TELL survey in 2012-2013. Each question asked educators to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements using a 4 point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree. The data below presents the % of educators agreeing or strongly agreeing that each of the following indicators – facilities and resources, time, community support and involvement met their needs as educators.

These findings represent scales developed for each of the following constructs – facilities and resources, time, and community support and involvement. The facilities and resources scale captures information on teachers’ access to instruction materials, technology, equipment and the quality of the school environment. The time scale captures information on teachers’ perspectives on the time they have to collaborate with colleagues, focus on instruction, and meet the needs of all students. The community support and involvement scale captures information on teachers’ perspectives on the relationship between parents/guardians and the school as well as the community as a whole. A full list of questions in each scale can be found at http://www.telldelaware.org/.

Across all TELL survey measures, Co-Op educators consistently rated their working conditions higher than other high needs schools but lower than all schools in the state. While some of these differences are not particularly large in magnitude, the trend is consistent.

**Significant differences in Perceptions of Facilities and Resources, Time, and Community Support and Involvement.** The differences in facilities and resources, time, and community support and involvement were the only statistically significant differences. As demonstrated in Figure 9, educators in Co-Op schools were more likely to agree that the facilities and resources, time and level of community support and involvement met their needs when compared to educators in other High Needs schools. However, educators’ perceptions of these working conditions in Co-Op schools were still lower than perceptions in all schools in the state of Delaware.

10These findings represent scales developed for each of the following constructs – facilities and resources, time, and community support and involvement. The facilities and resources scale captures information on teachers’ access to instruction materials, technology, equipment and the quality of the school environment. The time scale captures information on teachers’ perspectives on the time they have to collaborate with colleagues, focus on instruction, and meet the needs of all students. The community support and involvement scale captures information on teachers’ perspectives on the relationship between parents/guardians and the school as well as the community as a whole. A full list of questions in each scale can be found at http://www.telldelaware.org/.
Education Evaluation

OPE analyzed the DPAS-II implementation survey given to all educators in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. The survey reviewed educators' perceptions of different aspects of DPAS-II, and results were aggregated at the school level (N=232). Of those schools, 18 were Co-Op schools and 47 were high needs schools. It is important to note that, as with the TELL survey, perceptions of Co-Op educators were not separated out, but rather, data represented school-wide results. However, this is again preferable for our analysis, as we are interested in understanding how the Co-Op might influence educator evaluation among both participating and non-participating educators.

DPAS-II has two overarching evaluation measures – observation and student growth. The observation measure is composed of four components (Components I-IV), which capture information on educators’ practice and is evaluated through administrator observations and conversations. The Student Improvement Component (previously referred to as Component V) captures information on the progress of students in educators’ classrooms and is differentiated based on educator teaching assignment. These differences are noted below:

- **Measure A** assessments were not applicable during the 2014-2015 school year but for the years used in our analysis (2012-2013 and 2013-2014) were based on Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) test scores for reading and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10.

- **Measure B** assessments are comprised of two types of assessment options: external and internal assessments. External assessments are recognized and identified by Delaware educator groups but generally created by outside vendors, while internal assessments were developed for and by groups of Delaware educators, coordinated by a DDOE facilitator. Both types of assessments are reviewed by an outside vendor for validity prior for approval by the state for use. An educator, with administrator approval, may choose to use either an external measure or an internal measure.

- **Measure C** growth goals are educator developed, reviewed by an outside vendor, and approved by the state. These growth goals are content-specific and based upon professional standards and position responsibilities.

We compared educators’ perceptions in Co-Op schools to those in other high needs schools and all schools in the state on the following DPAS-II implementation indicators:

- **Fairness** – educators’ perceptions of whether DPAS-II was fair and equitable
- **Observation** – educators’ perceptions of the fairness of Components I-IV
- **Student Growth** – educators’ perceptions of the fairness of the Student Improvement Component (Measures, A, B, and C)
- **Implementation** – educators’ perceptions of the consistency and quality of DPAS-II implementation
Figure 10 represents the significant differences from the DPAS-II survey in 2013-2014. Each question asked educators to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the following statements using a 4 point Likert scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree. Mean scores for each type of school are represented in Figure 10 below.

Figure 10: Significant Differences in Teachers’ Perceptions of DPAS-II (2013-2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Co-Op Schools</th>
<th>High Needs Schools</th>
<th>All Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fairness</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair and Equitable.</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Student Growth</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure A. Measure A is a good indicator of my teaching effectiveness</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>2.21</td>
<td>2.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure B. Measure B is a good indicator of my teaching effectiveness</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>2.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measure C. Measure C is a good indicator of my teaching effectiveness</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Improvement. Can be judged fairly and equitably</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Across all DPAS-II survey measures in 2013-2014, Co-Op educators consistently rated DPAS-II (or their alternative educator evaluation system) implementation higher than other schools. While some of these differences are not particularly large in magnitude, the trend is consistent.

**Significant differences in Perceptions of Fairness and Student Growth in 2013-2014.** The differences in fairness and student growth were the only statistically significant differences. As demonstrated in Figure 10, educators in Co-Op schools had better perceptions of the overall fairness of the DPAS-II system and the accuracy of student growth measures (across Measures A, B, and C) when compared to educators in all schools and other high needs schools.

To determine whether the differences in DPAS-II perceptions could be explained by the differences in working conditions, we also analyzed the 2012-2013 DPAS-II survey data and controlled for the significant variables from the TELL survey given that same year (i.e., community support and involvement, facilities and resources, and time). Results are presented in Figure 11 below.
Similar Trends in 2012-2013 Data. Even when accounting for working conditions, there were still significant differences in perceptions of overall system fairness and fairness of the student improvement measures between Co-Op schools and other types of schools (these significant differences have been shaded in Figure 11 above). Educators in Co-Op schools were more likely to report that student improvement and the evaluation system as a whole were fair when compared to educators in high needs schools, as well as educators from all schools in the state. However, the differences in perceptions of Measure A, B, and C fairness were not statistically significant when controlling for working conditions. This suggests that while working conditions influence educators’ perceptions of the fairness of the evaluation system, they do not fully explain the differences between Co-Op schools and other types of schools.

Educators’ Perceptions of Working Conditions Also Predicted Perceptions of DPAS-II. Though it is not the focus of this report, it is worth noting that analyses revealed that educators’ perceptions of working conditions also predicted their perceptions of the evaluation system. Of particular note, educators’ perceptions of the time they had available to plan, collaborate and provide instruction was a statistically significant predictor of their perceptions on all of the DPAS-II survey indicators noted above.

Since the TELL survey and DPAS-II survey were both given after the Co-Op had already been implemented, we were not able to conclude whether a school’s decision to participate in the Co-Op led to better perceptions of working conditions and the fairness of evaluation system or whether these differences resulted from Co-Op implementation.

As noted in the section above, several eligible non-participating principals shared that they had significant concerns with the accuracy of the evaluation measures (in particular, the Student Improvement Component). This suggests that schools with better perceptions of the evaluation measures may have been more likely to opt into the Co-Op. However, participation in the Co-Op could very well have influenced educators’ perceptions of the fairness of the evaluation system. Indeed, principals in Co-Op schools shared that the Co-Op increased their focus on the implementation of the evaluation system, as they knew the final rating would be consequential for their teachers.

Regardless of the direction of these relationships, it is important to note that Co-Op schools had better perceptions of their working conditions and fairness of the evaluation system(s) when compared to other high-needs schools.
Do educators in Co-Op schools have different rates of retention?

Overview

We examined the critical outcome of Co-Op implementation – rates of educator retention. It is important to note that due to limitations in data collection (see final section below), we were not able to conduct rigorous impact analysis. As such, these results are merely correlational and should be interpreted as suggestive of potential relationships, not causal connections.

Educator Retention. As discussed in the Overview section, the Co-Op offered financial incentives with the goal of encouraging high performing educators to stay teaching in high needs schools. All of the stakeholders we spoke to – principals, educators, and DDOE leadership alike – identified this as the primary purpose of the Co-Op. To determine whether this purpose was achieved, we examined how Co-Op educators’ overall rates of retention and rates of intra-district turnover compared to the retention rates of several other subgroups of educators (i.e., “Highly Effective” educators, educators in high needs schools, “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools, as well as all educators in the state).

Educator Retention

We analyzed the teacher-level retention data from Cohort 1 (2011-2012), Cohort 2 (2012-2013), and Cohort 3 (2013-2014) of the Co-Op Retention Component. For each Cohort (and corresponding year of the Co-Op), we looked for differences between participating educators and other groups of educators’ overall retention rate, as well as intra-district turnover rate. We compared participating educators in the Retention Component to the following subgroups of educators for each year of the Co-Op (2012, 2013, and 2014):

- **“Highly Effective” Educators** – all educators in the state of Delaware who were rated “Highly Effective” on DPAS-II
- **All Educators** – all educators in the state of Delaware
- **High Needs Educators** – all educators in high needs schools
- **“Highly Effective” Educators in High Needs Schools** – all “Highly Effective” educators teaching in high needs schools. This would include those educators who would have qualified for the Talent Co-Op, but were not teaching in eligible schools.

Overall, we discovered that Co-Op educators had higher rates of retention and lower rates of intra-district turnover. However, not all of these differences were statistically significant. Additionally, Co-Op educators were less likely to report that the financial incentive influenced their decision-making process.
Higher rates of retention among Co-Op educators in Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 than all other sub-groups of educators. As demonstrated in Figure 12 below, Co-Op educators in Cohort 1 and 2 returned to the same school at a higher rate than all other sub-groups of educators, and these differences were statistically significant. In Cohort 1 (2011-2012), 100% of educators stayed teaching in their same school the following year and in Cohort 2 (2012-2013), the retention rate was 95%. These rates of retention were significantly higher than all other subgroup of educators.

Higher rates of retention among Co-Op educators in Cohort 3 when compared to other high needs schools. Co-Op educators in Cohort 3 did not have higher retention rates across the board but were still more likely to stay teaching in their schools when compared to other High Needs educators and “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools.

Lower rates of intra-district turnover among Co-Op educators than other sub-groups of educators across all Cohorts. As demonstrated in Figure 13 below, when Co-Op educators did leave their schools, they had lower rates of intra-district turnover, meaning they were less likely to stay teaching in the same district. However, the only statistically significant difference was between Co-Op participants and other “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools. For example in 2013-2013, only 1% of Co-Op educators went to teach at another school in the district, compared to 9% of other “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools.

Note that these results are slightly different from initial data reported by DDOE due to a larger sample size of included teachers and more accurate reporting of Co-Op participants.
Higher Rates of Retention across All Educator Subgroups. To analyze differences across educator group, we combined data from the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years (the two years when all educator groups were included in the Co-Op initiative). As demonstrated in Figure 14 below, Co-Op educators across all three educator groups (Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3)\textsuperscript{12} tended to have higher rates of retention when compared to educators at other types of schools. However, these differences were most pronounced between Co-Op schools and other high needs schools and “Highly Effective” educators in high needs schools.

\textsuperscript{12} Group 1 educators include anyone who instructs English Language Arts (ELA) and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10 and is the educator of record for at least 10 students. Group 2 educators include anyone who teaches in any grade or subject other than ELA and/or mathematics, teaches formal “courses” to those students, and for whom an approved assessment (Measure B) is available. Examples include science and social studies educators. Group 3 educators include anyone who does not meet the criteria for Group 1 or Group 2 educators. Examples include specialists, such as nurses, psychologists, and counselors.

\textsuperscript{13} Note that these results are slightly different from initial data reported by DDOE due to a larger sample size of included teachers and more accurate reporting of Co-Op participants.
Half of surveyed educators reported that the Co-Op influenced their decision to stay teaching in their school (but was more influential among younger educators). In the Fall 2014 survey, only 46% of educators agreed that the financial incentive was a factor in their decision to remain teaching in a high needs school. This finding was reinforced in the Spring 2015 survey, with only 50% of surveyed educators sharing that they were more likely to stay teaching at their school because of the Co-Op. However, it is important to note that in both surveys, less experienced educators (in particular those with 2-3 years in the classroom) were more likely to report that compensation influenced their decision to stay teaching in their school.

Since we did not conduct a rigorous impact analysis, it is certainly possible that the Co-Op did not influence educators’ decisions and that some other factor accounted for the higher retention rates in Co-Op schools (for example, perhaps the stronger school culture we observed in Co-Op schools contributed to retention rates). As demonstrated in Figure 15, Co-Op educators indicated that a variety of factors influenced their decision to remain in teaching.

![Figure 15: Most Important Factors Influencing Educator Retention](image)

*Note: The data shown above was gathered from Spring 2015 survey (N=77). Co-Op educators were given a list of factors that could determine whether they would stay in their school and were asked to pick their top 3 most important factors.

Administrative support most important factor. Data from both surveys and focus groups indicated that administrative support was the most important factor influencing educators’ decision about whether or not to stay teaching at their current school. They shared that quality leaders were consistent, approachable, and supported educators as professionals. Leadership influenced many other critical factors including scheduling, level of support, and the quality of professional development.

“What is really key to me is stability in the administrator’s office. Because that affects the feeling in the whole school. So because you have many different administrators coming in and out, there’s an uncertainty in the building as far as what the expectations are, what the rules are, what students are or are not allowed, and at my building, there is no consistency, particularly in the areas of discipline and content.” (Retention Educator)

School culture is second most important factor. Data from both surveys and focus groups indicated that school culture was also a critical factor influencing educators’ experiences and decisions about whether to remain in teaching. The Co-Op Retention focus group defined school culture “as the way the staff interacts with each other and the administrative team supports the staff.” They shared that school culture captured the “feel” of a building and the strength of the community. Several educators noted what school culture meant to them as educators.
Compensation appears on the survey as the third most influential factor, which was corroborated in focus groups. As such, it is also possible that the discrepancy in retention outcomes and educator self-reports of the influence of the financial incentive could be explained through social desirability bias. In other words, educators may be less likely to report that compensation influenced their decision because they would not want others to believe that money motivated their work as educators, since teaching is considered a selfless profession. Indeed, when asked about the value of compensation, educators were more likely to cite how it helped them sustain their work, rather than motivate their decisions.

Compensation helped educators sustain their work. As noted in the Implementation section above, additional compensation was ranked as the most helpful aspect of the Co-Op. Over 90% of respondents revealed that the added money was either helpful or very helpful. When educators shared in focus groups that compensation was a critical factor in their decision to stay in teaching, they cited overall sustainability of the teaching role. As the educator below noted, compensation was a “daily survival thing” and educators often “struggled from paycheck to paycheck.”

Compensation recognized but did not necessarily motivate improvements in practice. Educators shared that while the additional compensation was helpful in recognizing their hard work, it did not necessarily motivate changes in their instructional practice. Indeed, educators reported that they were already working as hard as they could to impact students.

“The money is nice, don’t get me wrong, a nice surprise, but I think that we are all trying to be effective and always trying to want to do better to help our students be successful. I mean, no matter if, you know, the cohort has anything to do with it or not, it’s not going to make us say “Oh, well I am not going to try as hard”.

(Retention Educator)
Opportunities for Future Research

There are several limitations in this analysis worth noting that have implications for future research:

- **Other Factors (e.g., Administrative Support, School Culture) Influence Retention.** Given the non-experimental nature of the Co-Op schools’ selection, it is possible that other factors could explain differences between Co-Op schools and other types of schools. It is important, therefore, that these outcome results are interpreted with caution. For example, the fact that educators in Co-Op schools had better perceptions of several working conditions variables could be responsible for observed differences in retention. Future research on Co-Op retention rates should take into consideration these other factors that may influence outcomes.

- **Generalizability.** The validity of these findings is also limited by the nature of the sample. The end of year Co-Op survey administered by OPE had a low response rate (only 29%). In future years, we recommend giving an annual survey at a Co-Op training (as was done with the Fall 2014 survey) to ensure higher response rates or consider making the survey a requirement of participating in the initiative. Additionally, given restrictions in data collection, we were only able to conduct focus groups with a relatively small percentage of Co-Op educators and visit two Co-Op schools, which means that the perceptions of those participating in our study may not have been representative of the larger population of Co-Op educators.

- **Self-Report Data.** As noted above, there are limitations in relying on educator self-reports as a primary source of data, particularly when discussing something as controversial as compensation. Given social desirability bias, educators may be less likely to report that compensation influenced their decision because they would not want others to believe that money motivated their work as educators. As a result, it is essential that future research on the impact of the Co-Op balance this self-report data with analysis of educators’ actual decisions.

Recommendations

Overall, the results of the Co-Op are mixed. On the positive side, educators found the additional compensation offered through the financial incentive to be helpful in recognizing and sustaining their work and appreciated the opportunity to interact with other educators across the state. Most educators believed in the purpose of the initiative and shared that they would like to see it continue at their schools; however, they noted challenges with implementation on the ground. In particular, they expressed concerns over the lack of clarity in expectations, the perceived unfairness of Co-Op selection criteria, and the divisiveness the Co-Op created at some schools. Educators also spoke to the untapped potential of certain aspects of the Co-Op, namely how best to leverage educator leadership and create a professional community of high-performing educators across the state. As DDOE decides how best to move forward with the Co-Op in future years, it should heed the recommendations below and ensure that all stakeholders have a voice in the process.

It is important to note that over the past few years, only 10 educators have participated in the Attraction Component, compared to 345 educators in the Retention Component. Despite considerable efforts on the part of the DDOE, it has been challenging to recruit educators to participate in the Attraction Component. These challenges appear to be due to communication issues – e.g., lack of knowledge and inconsistent messaging about the initiative – as well as concerns over implementation – e.g., eligible teachers were unsure of whether they would have job security and be successful in their new roles. Additionally, administrators expressed concern over the impact of the initiative, questioning whether “Highly Effective” educators in other communities could be successful in high needs schools. DDOE should consider discontinuing the Attraction Component so that it can focus its efforts and resources on the Retention Component. With this overall recommendation in mind, our recommendations below primarily focus on the Retention Component.
Clearly communicate the purpose & expectations of the Co-Op. Educators were more likely to be invested in the Co-Op if they did not view it solely as additional compensation, but instead as part of a comprehensive initiative designed to recognize and support professional growth. Additionally, educators who understood the Co-Op expectations were more likely to have positive perceptions of the initiative’s impact. When leaders communicate with current and prospective Co-Op educators, they should emphasize the purpose behind the initiative and set clear expectations for the requirements at the beginning of the year. To support aligned communication, DDOE and district leaders should provide principals with communication training on how to message the value and structure of the Co-Op. Some specific suggestions include:

- Emphasize the educator community and training aspects of the initiative in all communication so educators are aware of how the Co-Op supports professional growth
- Publish Co-Op expectations in an easily accessible public space/online forum for educators to reference
- Clearly outline communication guidelines and offer trainings for principals and other administrators on key Co-Op messages to share with their educators

Focus on the perceived fairness & usefulness of performance measures. Educators’ perspectives of the Co-Op were influenced by their perceptions of the accuracy and fairness of state-approved educator evaluation system(s). Many educators were concerned about the subjectivity associated with the observation measures, in addition to the attainability of the student growth measure. As a result, some educators believed the Co-Op created a divisive culture in their school, which made them reluctant to discuss their participation. Leaders should ensure that educators understand the performance measures and offer specific and actionable feedback to help them improve their instructional practice. In turn, DDOE and district leaders should provide principals with additional training on expectation setting and feedback, as well as facilitate opportunities for them to share best practices around building school culture with other leaders. Some specific suggestions include:

- Continue to collect and incorporate educator feedback into improved implementation of DPAS-II
- Provide principals with additional training on setting expectations and providing quality feedback
- Offer opportunities for school leaders to share best practices across Co-Op schools

Continue the financial incentive but conduct additional research on how it interacts with other working conditions to motivate behavior. The ways in which financial incentives influence teachers’ behavior are complicated. The vast majority of educators shared that the financial component of the Co-Op was helpful or very helpful. However, educators tended to report that the financial incentive did not influence their decision to stay teaching in their school, though less experienced educators did report that the incentive was more of a motivating factor. As the higher retention rates of Co-Op educators would suggest, it is possible that the financial incentive is influencing behavior, but that educators do not identify compensation as a motivating factor because they do not want to report being influenced by money (social desirability bias). Alternatively, it is possible that the financial incentive itself is not influencing behavior but that other factors in Co-Op schools are more predictive of teachers’ decisions. Additional research needs to investigate how the financial incentive influences behavioral change. Some specific suggestions include:

- Continue to collect more robust survey data in Co-Op schools (e.g., through the re-administration of the TELL survey) that can be accounted for in future retention analyses
- Conduct more in-depth case studies of individual schools and teachers to understand how compensation interacts with other conditions to influence teachers’ decision-making patterns
- Ask targeted questions on an annual Co-Op survey about the amount of incentive that would be motivating for educators (and consider adjusting the amount and researching the impact of this adjustment)
Recognize educators’ and schools’ differentiated needs. Educators identified a variety of factors driving their decision to stay teaching in their school. While compensation was one of the most important factors, most educators shared that the level of administrative support and school culture were even more critical, and others felt that factors such as level of involvement and autonomy were most relevant. DDOE and district leaders should consider creating differentiated tracks and offerings within the Co-Op, which can be better customized to meet educators’ and schools’ varying needs. Some specific suggestions include:

- Conduct an annual survey of Co-Op educators and prospective educators to identify needs
- Develop strategic marketing materials for the Co-Op based on survey results
- Offer differentiated tracks to meet varying needs of schools and educators (e.g., differentiated professional development as part of the Co-Op)

Provide additional opportunities for ongoing collaboration. Educators appreciated the opportunity to connect and share teaching methods with other high-performing educators in the state. They reported that learning directly from their peers was the most inspiring aspect of the initiative and challenged them to continue developing their practice. However, Co-Op meetings were infrequent, and it was often challenging for educators to travel across the state to attend. DDOE leadership should consider developing informal networks that would allow Co-Op educators to connect with other participating educators throughout the year (e.g., affinity groups, online discussion forums, twitter chats). Some specific suggestions include:

- Create meet up opportunities in different geographic locations so educators do not have to travel as far for trainings
- Establish affinity groups (e.g., on critical topics identified by Co-Op educators) to continue collaboration outside of trainings
- Maintain an online community with updates and opportunities for Co-Op members to continue sharing best practices outside of the trainings

Re-engage select stakeholders in the process. To be successful and sustainable over time, stakeholder engagement needs to be a dynamic and iterative process. DDOE leadership should create a Co-Op working group (similar to what existed in the initial design phase) composed of key stakeholders (e.g., state and union leadership, participating principals and educators) to revisit the goals of the Co-Op and refine the structure and programming moving forward. Some specific suggestions include:

- Create a Co-Op working group composed of key stakeholders (e.g., educators, principals, union leaders)
- Conduct an annual survey of Co-Op educators to gather feedback on implementation
- Revisit and refine the Co-Op offerings (e.g., training, opportunities for collaboration) utilizing direct input from different stakeholders
Overall Terminology

✓ **Group 1 Educators.** Group 1 educators include anyone who instructs English Language Arts (ELA) and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10 and is the educator of record for at least 10 students.

✓ **Group 2 Educators.** Group 2 educators include anyone who teaches in any grade or subject other than ELA and/or mathematics, teaches formal “courses” to those students, and for whom an approved assessment (Measure B) is available. Examples include science and social studies educators.

✓ **Group 3 Educators.** Group 3 educators include anyone who does not meet the criteria for Group 1 or Group 2 educators. Examples include specialists, such as nurses, psychologists, and counselors.

✓ **High Needs Schools.** To be considered a high needs school, a school must meet at least one of the following conditions: (1) it was a Partnership Zone school, (2) it was one of the top 15 schools in at least two of three statewide categories – highest percentage of non-white students, highest percentage of students eligible for free and reduced price meals, highest percentage of English Language learners (ELL), or (3) at least 75% of its students were non-white, eligible for free and reduced-price meals, or ELLs. High needs schools were eligible for participation in the Co-Op.

Delaware Talent Co-Operative Terminology

✓ **Delaware Talent Cooperative Initiative.** The Delaware Talent Cooperative (Co-Op) initiative offers financial incentives for high-performing educators to stay in and move into schools serving students, mostly from low-income communities, in the state. It has two components—the Retention Component and the Attraction Component.

✓ **Retention Component.** The Retention Component of the Co-Op is designed to retain “Highly Effective” educators in high-needs schools. The highest-performing educators in each school were identified based on those who were rated “Highly Effective” on the state’s educator evaluation system, DPAS-II. These educators were offered up to $10,000, paid in equal installments over a two-year period, if they remained in one of the participating schools.

✓ **Attraction Component.** The Attraction Component of the Co-Op is designed to encourage high-performing educators to transfer to high-needs schools. Educators identified as “Highly Effective” across the state were eligible for transfer incentives of up to $20,000 if they committed to transferring/working in participating Co-Op schools.

✓ **Educator Eligibility Criteria.** Educators were eligible for the Co-Op if they were in a participating school (or transferred to a participating school) and earned a “Highly Effective” summative rating on DPAS-II (the Delaware Performance Appraisal System). During the first year of the Co-Op (2011-2012), only Group 1 educators in participating schools were eligible for the initiative. The initiative was expanded to include all educators (Group 1, Group 2 and Group 3) during the 2012-2013 school year.

✓ **Participating Co-Op Educator.** A participating educator is an educator who met the eligibility requirements for the Co-Op initiative (noted above) and elected to participate in the initiative.

✓ **Eligible Non-Participating Educator.** An eligible non-participating educator is an educator who met the eligibility requirements (noted above) for the Co-Op initiative and elected not to participate in the initiative.
**Evaluation System Terminology**

- **DPAS-II.** DPAS-II, the Delaware Performance Appraisal System, is the system used to evaluate educators across the state of Delaware.

- **“Highly Effective” Educator.** Educators are rated as “Highly Effective” if they reach the top level of the DPAS-II Appraisal System.

- **Observation Measure of DPAS-II.** The Observation measure of DPAS-II is composed of four components (Components I-IV), which capture information on educators’ practice and is evaluated through administrator observations and conversations.

- **Student Improvement Measure of DPAS-II.** The Student Improvement measure of DPAS-II captures information on the progress of students in educators’ classrooms and is differentiated based on educator teaching assignment (Measures A, B, and C). Note that this measure was previously referred to as Component V.

  - **Measure A.** Measure A assessments were not applicable during the 2014-2015 school year but for prior years were based on DCAS test scores for reading and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, Measure A will be based on Smarter Balanced test scores for reading and/or mathematics in grades 3 through 10.

  - **Measure B.** Measure B assessments are comprised of two types of assessment options: external and internal assessments. External assessments are recognized and identified by Delaware educator groups but generally created by outside vendors, while internal assessments were developed for and by groups of Delaware educators, coordinated by a DDOE facilitator. Both types of assessments are reviewed by an outside vendor for validity prior for approval by the state for use. An educator, with administrator approval, may choose to use either an external measure or an internal measure.

  - **Measure C.** Measure C growth goals are educator developed, reviewed by an outside vendor, and approved by the state. These growth goals are content-specific and based upon professional standards and position responsibilities.
Delaware Department of Education  
Teacher & Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU)  
Delaware Talent Cooperative: Cohort 4  
Statement of Commitment

The Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) is pleased to extend the opportunity to join the Delaware Talent Cooperative as part of Cohort 4. The initiative launched in 2012 with the aim of retaining and attracting excellent educators in some of the state’s highest-need schools. Given the magnitude of this opportunity, this Statement of Commitment outlines the expectations for participants, schools, and the Department.

The Delaware Department of Education commits to:

- Awarding retention incentives in two installments (August 2015 and October 2016) upon verification of the recipient meeting eligibility requirements.
- Being available to answer questions about participation in the Delaware Talent Cooperative.
- Convening Cohort 4 periodically in small and large group forums to share lessons learned from their experience and insights from their classrooms.
- Providing rationale as to how and why the schools and eligible educators were selected based upon documentation reviewed at the school site.
- Analyzing and publicizing the results of the Delaware Talent Cooperative in terms of retention rates and student achievement gains via internal and external evaluation.
- Providing professional learning opportunities that create opportunities for Cohort members to collaborate with other educators across the state and assume teacher-leadership roles.

As a member of Cohort 4 of the Delaware Talent Cooperative, I commit to:

- Remaining in the school/subject for which I was selected as a participant through the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years and continuing to serve my school community well during those years.\(^1\)
- Mentoring colleagues through the Delaware Talent Cooperative and/or other initiatives, thus serving as a leader in your building and statewide in communicating about the initiative (via sharing the great things happening at your school, reading emails from the TLEU, checking the website regularly, etc.).
- Participating in ongoing DDOE program evaluation focus groups and attending semi-annual meetings on initiative development and continuation.
- Agreeing to have your classroom instruction and/or student support services videotaped and catalogued for sharing with colleagues and/or for DDOE observation of best practices.
- Opening your classroom/office/school for DDOE visits for the purposes of observation, showcasing of your instruction and/or any other classroom/school visits deemed necessary for the successful review and continuation of the program. DDOE will embark upon school visits beginning in September 2015.
- Attending at least one three-day professional learning seminar for Cohort 4 members. For those who have been apart of previous Cohorts, a new professional learning opportunity will be required as part of membership in Cohort 4. (Dates: TBD)

\(^1\)Situations in which educators are involuntarily transferred to another high-need school or have encountered unforeseen hardship (medical leave, etc.) that does not allow for them to be working in their respective school at the time of employment verification (prior to financial disbursement) will be reviewed by DDOE on a case-by-case basis (upon request of the LEA or selected educator).