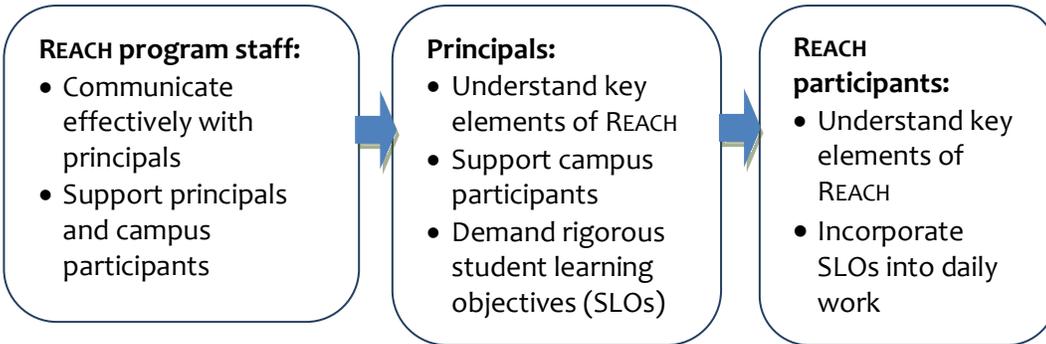




AUSTIN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Department of Program Evaluation

REACH Program Update: Program Implementation October 2010

According to REACH data collected from program staff and REACH participants, the program¹ works best when the following occur:



REACH program participants responded to a 2009–2010 mid-year survey regarding the program’s impact on their campuses and their attitudes toward the program. In addition, Central Office REACH staff participated in a Spring 2010 focus group and independently rated the program implementation for each campus after the 2009–2010 school year. Campuses where a higher percentage of participants met at least one SLO target received the highest program implementation ratings from program staff, suggesting that REACH does indeed make an impact on teachers when implemented well.

Three key factors predicted high campus implementation and program impact:

Principals make or break the program. Teachers at schools with the highest implementation and program impact ratings said their principals

- expanded their teaching skills and/or knowledge,
- encouraged teacher collaboration to help struggling teachers and students, and
- required teachers to show evidence of student growth.

Attitudes toward SLOs are critical. Program staff ratings of SLO implementation also were linked to their overall program implementation ratings. Similarly, REACH teachers who felt that the program was making an impact on their campus also said

- they understood the purpose of SLOs,
- they felt well supported by the REACH Central Office team,
- SLOs were easy to integrate into their current work,
- their conversations with principals about SLOs were valuable,
- they talked with colleagues about planning instruction about SLOs, and
- the results of SLOs were worth the extra work because students benefitted from them.

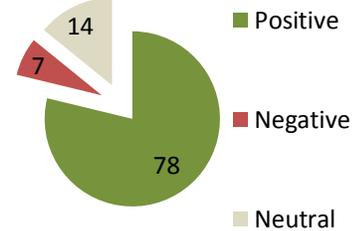
¹ For more information on the REACH program, please visit:
<http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/compensation/>

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FAST FACTS

- **Seventy-eight percent of REACH teachers** who responded to open-ended questions regarding SLOs on an interim survey felt that the **SLO process is positively changing their instructional strategies** (e.g., assessing student data).



“In order for REACH to work, REACH staff and the principal have got to be on the same page.” – REACH program staff

- **REACH teachers who feel supported by and collaborate with their principal about REACH feel they can teach in challenging situations.**

“For REACH to work, teachers have to understand the *why* of the program.” - REACH program staff

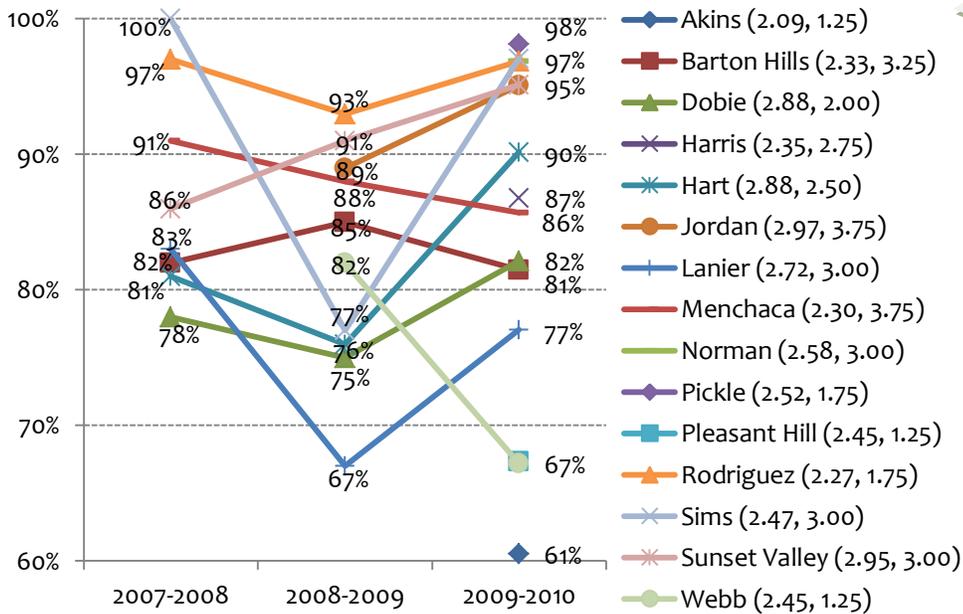
Teacher self-efficacy matters. REACH participants at campuses with high implementation ratings believed that they can teach in challenging situations (i.e., had high levels of self-efficacy). REACH teachers with high levels of self-efficacy also

- worked on campuses where a high percentage of REACH participants met at least one SLO,
- felt SLOs improved student achievement,
- integrated SLOs into their daily work, and
- believed the program was making an impact on their campus.

Implementation and Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS). In general, analyses suggested that REACH campuses had higher TAKS passing rates² when

- program staff felt that principals ensured SLO rigor (related to reading/English language arts [ELA] TAKS),
- REACH participants felt that SLOs were making a positive impact on their campus (related to mathematics [math] TAKS)
- REACH participants met both SLOs (related to math TAKS),
- REACH participants said their principals collaborated and supported their work (related to math TAKS), and
- program staff gave high implementation ratings (related to reading/ELA, math, and science TAKS).

Percentage of REACH Participants Who Met at Least 1 SLO, 2007–2008 to 2009–2010, by Campus



Note. 2009—2010 ratings of campus impact (based on REACH participants’ ratings on a 1 to 5 scale) and program implementation ratings (based on REACH program staff ratings on a 1 to 4 scale), respectively, are provided in parentheses next to each campus’s name. For an explanation of the decrease in the percentage of REACH participants who met at least one SLO in 2008-09, please refer to the AISD REACH Year 2 Evaluation report II.

² Calculated as the percentage of students on each campus who met the 2010 passing standard in TAKS reading, math, or science.

NEXT STEPS

Future steps to improve program implementation at all campuses include:

- Providing additional training (i.e., particularly for new campuses) to ensure that REACH participants are knowledgeable about the purpose and philosophy of the program.
- Encouraging REACH participants to become more proactive in their SLO training (e.g., by seeking out training information, using the online resources, talking to an SLO expert on their campus).
- Providing training for campus approval teams to ensure the rigor of SLOs on campuses.

“The SLO process forces you to scrutinize student data to hone in on the specific needs of the students.” - REACH elementary school teacher

ABOUT THIS SERIES

This is the first in a series of briefs focusing on the 3rd year of REACH. Forthcoming issues will examine retention rates at pilot and comparison schools, TAKS performance at pilot and comparison schools, and the REACH mentor program at pilot schools. To access these and other REACH reports, please visit: <http://www.austinisd.org/inside/initiatives/compensation/research.phtml>