



## Executive Summary

### Background

In 2016, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) awarded a five-year Public Charter School Program Start-Up Grant to the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The grant is intended to increase national understanding of the charter school model by providing financial assistance for the planning, program design, and initial implementation of charter schools and by expanding the number of high-quality charter schools available to students. The grant program is also intended to increase understanding of the charter school model by evaluating the effects of such schools on student outcomes, staff, and parents. The

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## Organizational Practices

The evaluation explored a number of factors key organization and management in charter school start-up grantee campuses. These included important practices related to the charter school campus mission and parent involvement with the school and in their child's education. Key findings include the following:

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- x Teachers at start-up grantee campuses in their second and third years of operation were more likely to note the frequency and importance of communications and collaboration with other teachers, as well as the use of instructional rounds where they visit the classrooms of other teachers, as important supports.
  
- x Classrooms were observed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS), which measures effective teacher-student interactions in Pre-K-12th grade. For three of the four CLASS observational domains (Emotional Support, Instructional Support, and Student Engagement), average CLASS scores were lower in the second year of serving students before rising back to year one levels in their third year of operation.



and prior academic achievement were used to estimate the effect of enrollment at a charter school

$\frac{3}{4}$  The use of social media to advertise the new charter school was more prominent at



## Teacher Recruitment and Retention Practices at Charter School Start-Up Grantee Campuses

The evaluation team also analyzed principal survey data, principal interview data, and CSP teacher focus group data from 2017-18, 2018-19, and 2019-20 to describe the methods by which start-up grantee campuses attract, recruit, and retain highly-qualified instructors. Recruiting and retaining high-quality educators is important when developing a new charter school campus or expanding an existing campus, as it is critical to support enrollment increases or expansion of the grades served. With this in mind, the evaluation examined a variety of issues related to recruiting and retaining high-quality educators at charter school start-up grantee campuses, including: 1) methods for attracting high-quality educators; 2) criteria for hiring teachers; 3) methods for retaining high-quality teachers; and 4) measures used to decide on whether or not to retain teachers.

- x While principals shared a wide array of effective teacher recruitment methods, they consistently rated word-of-mouth advertising about the school and current teachers recruiting colleagues as the most effective teacher recruitment strategies.
  - ¾ The use of social media to recruit teachers was more prominent among first-year campuses, and the use of current teachers to recruit colleagues became more prominent as campuses matured from the first to the third year of operation.
  
- x Passion for teaching, teacher fit with the mission of the campuses, and strong demonstrated pedagogical skills were rated by principals as the three most important considerations when hiring new teachers.
  - ¾ As campuses matured from the first to the th

