



**Priority Staffing Program Evaluation Report**

**Eric Barela, Ph.D.**

**Los Angeles Unified School District  
Research and Planning  
Publication No. 2008-14**

**December 2008**

## Acknowledgements

---

I would like to thank the teachers, administrators, Teacher Advisers, and program staff members for generously giving me the opportunity to study the Priority Staffing Program. I truly appreciate your willingness to be observed, interviewed and/or shadowed.

I would also like to thank my staff of Professional Experts for their hard work:

Cynthia Ace  
Lauren Carter  
Melinda Duff  
Brian Gillespie  
Jessica Muro  
Cynthia Older  
Joshua Rosales  
Jeffrey Sheldon  
Gabriela Simeonova  
Matthew Tang

Without you, this work would not have been possible. While your diligence with data collection cannot be underestimated, I truly appreciated your ability to examine the data and assist me with telling the story of the Priority Staffing Program.

## Table of Contents

Acknowledgements .....	ii
Summary.....	1
Overview .....	1
Methods.....	3
Key Findings .....	4
Conclusion.....	25
<i>Limitations of the Study</i> .....	26
<i>Recommendations with Action Steps</i> .....	26

## Summary

This evaluation of the Priority Staffing Program found that the program was contributing to teacher recruitment and retention in LAUSD's 22 Program Improvement 4 and 5 senior high schools by providing support to new teachers in the form of Teacher Advisers.

- The Teacher Advisers supported the new teachers at each of these schools both inside and outside the classroom.
- In January 2007, 11 of the 22 schools were fully staffed and by November 2007, 18 of the 22 schools were fully staffed.
- Eighty-five percent of all new teachers recruited by these schools in 2006–07 remained teaching in LAUSD schools in 2007–08.
- There was some evidence to suggest that the program assisted its target schools with meeting their staffing goals in fall 2007 through increased recruitment activities.

These findings speak to the operational goals of the program, which were to recruit and retain new teachers at these 22 senior high schools. However, these findings cannot be used to determine the long-term effect of new teacher support on instructional quality.

## Overview

---

The Priority Staffing Program (PSP) was designed to assist with new teacher recruitment and retention in LAUSD's 22 Program Improvement (PI) 4 & 5 senior high schools and their feeder PI 4 and 5 middle schools. It was not designed to improve the quality of instruction by these teachers. Therefore, we did not attempt to determine the extent to which program activities improved teaching. The original PSP existed in the 1980s and early 1990s. This report covers the first and second years of the current program's implementation. During the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years PSP was managed by the Peer Assistance and Review (PAR) office.

The PSP consisted of two major program elements: 1) A Teacher Adviser assigned to and housed at each of the 22 senior high schools provided support services. These services included facilitating hiring practices and supporting new teachers; 2) An Incentive Substitute Teacher Program provided services to the same 22 senior high schools to address unfilled positions and teacher absenteeism. Five substitutes were assigned to replace absent teachers, replace teachers attending staff development events, provide other class coverage as needed, and provide other classroom duties as determined by the principal.

This report focuses on answering the following five questions:

- How was the PSP plan implemented during its first year with regard to each of its elements?
- What was the impact of the PSP on teacher recruitment in the target schools? Is there evidence that the program helped target schools achieve their staffing goals by fall 2006?
- What was the impact of the PSP on support for new teachers and on the perceptions and attitudes of new teachers toward the school and their own intentions of staying?
- What was the impact of the PSP on measurable teacher retention in the target schools during 2006–07 and returning for 2007–08?
- What was the impact of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program on the working environment of the school, support received by new teachers, and teacher perceptions and attitudes?

Findings are summarized below:

- Teacher Advisers consistently spent their time organizing meetings and orientations, providing instructional support, assisting new teachers with general management tasks, collaborating with teachers and administrators, assisting with recruitment, organizing BTSA-related activities, and engaging in other duties as assigned. The Incentive Substitute Teacher Program was implemented inconsistently at the PSP schools.
- The number of staff vacancies at the PSP schools declined in 2006–07 and in 2007–08. There was limited evidence that the PSP had helped target schools achieve their staffing goals by fall 2006. However, there is some evidence that the PSP helped its target schools achieve their staffing goals in fall 2007. Teacher Advisers only spent approximately five percent of their time engaging in recruitment activities during both the 2006–07 and 2007–08 school years. However, they spent more time on recruitment activities in May, July, and August 2007 than in other months. During those months, all Teacher Advisers were recruiting teachers from job fairs. Half of the Teacher Advisers were also conducting initial interviews of teacher candidates, participating on formal interview panels, and assisting administrators with final hiring decisions.

- Teacher Advisers focused their instructional support on teachers who were in their first or second years in the teaching profession. These brand–new teachers indicated that they received positive and constructive feedback from the Teacher Advisers. Eighty–three percent of all new teachers indicated that they intended to remain teaching.
- While there was limited evidence that the PSP had an impact on measurable teacher retention, eighty–five percent of all new teachers at the PSP schools in 2006–07 remained teaching in LAUSD schools in 2007–08.
- The impact of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program was unclear. It was implemented inconsistently at the PSP schools. More research is needed to determine the true impact of this program.

## **Methods**

---

We generated the following findings from data collected at all 22 PSP schools. The research team interviewed a total of 115 new teachers during winter 2007. We randomly selected six new teachers at each PSP school. We chose teachers from each subject area and, if applicable, track and/or Small Learning Community membership. We tried to ensure that the sample contained a representative proportion of teachers from “shortage” areas, such as math, science, and special education. We also interviewed school administrators and Teacher Advisers from all 22 PSP schools.

The PSP defines a new teacher as one who is in the first or second year of teaching at a PSP school, regardless of years of teaching experience. However, a distinction is made in this report between teachers new to the teaching profession and more experienced teachers who are new to a PSP school. A brand–new (BN) teacher is one who has been in the teaching profession for two years or less. An experienced (EXP) teacher has been teaching for at least two years but has been teaching at a PSP school for less than two years.

We also observed 182 meetings during 2006–07. These meetings covered the seven types of activities the Teacher Advisers were tasked with conducting at their schools. The seven types of activities were:

- Meetings and orientations,

- Instructional support,
- General management,
- Collaboration,
- Recruitment,
- Other activities as assigned, and
- Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA)–related activities.

The Teacher Advisers also provided data in the form of activity logs, which were accounts of the amount of time spent on each type of activity. The PSP Directors and Directors of School Services throughout LAUSD required that Teacher Advisers complete the activity logs every month as a way of being accountable to the Central Office. We analyzed and compared the activity logs from August 2006 to May 2007 and from August 2007 to May 2008. Only half of the Teacher Advisers had been hired by July 2006 so the activity logs from that month were not included in the analysis.

To determine how many teachers serviced by the PSP remained teaching after the first year of the program, we asked the Teacher Advisers to provide us with names of teachers who were still employed at each school. To ensure the accuracy of this data, we checked the Teacher Adviser lists with fall 2007 staff data to determine final retention rates.

In 2006–07, the PSP provided services to 805 new teachers across all 22 schools. The average PSP school had 37 new teachers. The number of new teachers at the PSP schools ranged from 16 to 71. Five of the 22 schools had to provide services to more than 50 new teachers.

## **Key Findings**

---

### ***How was the PSP plan implemented during its first year with regard to each of its elements?***

To answer this question, we examined the Teacher Adviser activity logs to determine how much time they devoted to the seven types of activities. The activity logs gave some insight into how the Teacher Advisers negotiated their responsibilities. We also analyzed meeting observation and interview data to determine the scope of the activities.

Table 1 shows the percentage of total time spent in each activity from August 2006 to May 2007 and from July 2007 to May 2008. We did not include data from July 2006 in Table 1 because only half of the Teacher Advisers had been hired. August 2006 was the first month that all PSP schools had a Teacher Adviser. We also did not include data from June 2007 and June 2008 because we did not receive activity logs from all Teacher Advisers for those two months. Overall, Teacher Advisers spent approximately 20% of their time in both years providing classroom support to new teachers. Slightly less time was spent facilitating and attending meetings, providing general management assistance, and collaborating with other teachers and administrators. Little time was spent assisting with recruitment and with BTSA. The pattern of time spent on activities held steady in both 2006–07 and 2007–08.

In both years, the Teacher Advisers spent between 28% and 30% of their time engaged in other activities as assigned, more than in any other type of activity. Upon further examination of these activities, it became clear that a sizable percentage of that time was spent engaging in three specific tasks: documentation, correspondence, and preparation and planning.

Documentation included time spent filling out activity logs and working with databases.

Correspondence included e-mailing, faxing, and writing memos and newsletters.

Table 1  
Percentage of Total Time Spent by Teacher Advisers on Activities: August 2006-May 2007 and July 2007-May 2008

Meeting Type	August 2006-May 2007	August 2007-May 2008
Meetings	16%	15%
Instructional Support	19%	21%
General Management	13%	14%
Collaboration	12%	12%
Recruitment	5%	7%
Other: Documentation	6%	5%
Other: Correspondence	4%	5%
Other: Preparation/Planning	7%	8%
Other	13%	10%
BTSA	4%	4%

### *Meetings and Orientations*

We observed Teacher Advisers conducting a variety of meetings. At the beginning of the 2006–07 school year, most Teacher Advisers led orientation meetings for their new teachers. While most were held on campus, some were held offsite. These orientation meetings often lasted for an entire day and consisted of icebreaker activities, descriptions of available resources, and workshops on classroom management and lesson planning.

Throughout 2006–07, we observed Teacher Advisers conducting meetings designed to meet the needs of the new teachers. They offered workshops on classroom management, lesson planning, and filling out paperwork. In addition, we observed meetings related to discussions of professional development materials. Teacher Advisers would clarify professional development objectives and teachers would ask questions related to implementation of the materials. During these meetings, Teacher Advisers provided positive feedback to their new teachers. Some used this meeting time to plan future activities with their teachers. Many Teacher Advisers also accompanied their new teachers to workshops organized by the PAR office. Writing Instructional Objectives and Classroom Management were two such workshops.

The new teachers who were interviewed indicated that these meetings and workshops were helpful. Many noted that they either used or were hoping to use the strategies they received during these trainings and meetings.

Teacher Advisers were expected to attend monthly meetings with PSP staff at the PAR office. During these daylong meetings, Teacher Advisers received professional development. For example, they participated in workshops related to direct instruction, implementation of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, and being generationally savvy, which is understanding that young teachers and older teachers may view the world differently and will respond better to different communication styles. The Teacher Advisers also received updates from relevant district personnel, such as representatives from Human Resources, the Substitute Unit, and Alternative Certification and Teacher Support (ACTS). Additionally, they were given time to complete their administrative paperwork and documentation.

The Teacher Advisers generally viewed their monthly meetings as helpful. However, most of them felt that there was just too much information being presented in an eight-hour

once-monthly meeting. In 2007–08, the PSP directors changed the meeting schedule from one monthly daylong meeting to two biweekly half-day meetings. Anecdotal evidence indicates that the Teacher Advisers viewed this as a welcome change that allowed them more time to work with their new teachers.

Some Teacher Advisers noted that there was not enough protected time to reflect and learn from one another. To combat this, several groups of Teacher Advisers met independently outside of the monthly meeting to share ideas and learn from one another. Most Teacher Advisers also used e-mail extensively to share ideas and ask for assistance. For example, when there was a hiring need at a PSP school, the Teacher Adviser often sent out an e-mail asking the other Teacher Advisers for qualified candidates.

### *Instructional Support*

Teacher Advisers observed teachers in their classrooms and provided them with instructional support. This was the most commonly observed single activity, occupying approximately 20% of their total time in both 2006–07 and 2007–08. We observed the Teacher Advisers engaging new teachers in an instructional support cycle, for which they had received training from PSP directors. This instructional support cycle consisted of three elements. First was a prebrief session, where ground rules and guidelines were established prior to the observation taking place. After the prebrief, the observation occurred and often lasted for an entire class period. Sometime after the observation had been completed, the Teacher Adviser would debrief with the new teacher on what was observed. Because of scheduling difficulties between the Teacher Advisers and the observed teachers, these debriefings would take place anywhere from several hours to one week after the observation. Often, the Teacher Adviser and new teacher would conclude the debriefing by jointly developing strategies for improvement. When we were unable to observe a debriefing session, we asked the teachers and Teacher Advisers informally if the debriefing had taken place. In most cases, the debriefing session occurred. If no follow-up took place, it was noted that the Teacher Adviser would at least provide written feedback.

The Teacher Advisers reported that initial observations were randomly scheduled with new teachers and that subsequent observations were scheduled either at the request of an

administrator or at the request of the individual teacher. Most Teacher Advisers reported that they concentrated instructional support on BN teachers. Our observations confirmed this. Most of the meetings we observed were in BN teacher classrooms. Few EXP teachers noted that they received this kind of support from the Teacher Advisers.

Lesson modeling was the most commonly observed focus of the instructional support cycle. Teacher Advisers scripted teacher lesson delivery and provided demonstration lessons to new teachers. For example, during one observation the Teacher Adviser provided a demonstration lesson on how to use a computer writing program students could access at home for doing their homework to a new teacher.

Teacher Advisers also worked with new teachers on classroom management. They informed teachers of student reaction to the lesson and of student ability to remain on task. During one particular debrief, a new teacher noted that she thought she delivered an effective lesson. The Teacher Adviser gave her notes on the content of the lesson and how she was managing her classroom. The teacher was not managing her classroom as effectively as she had thought. Because of this, the Teacher Adviser noted that her delivery of the lesson content was not effective. The Teacher Adviser then discussed strategies for concentrating on both lesson content and classroom management.

BN teachers indicated that the instructional support provided to them by the Teacher Advisers was perceived to be beneficial. Most noted that they received feedback and that it was both positive and constructive. This feedback was provided both verbally and via e-mail. When pressed about receiving feedback via e-mail, BN teachers stated that they appreciated it. They stated that it allowed them the opportunity to reflect on the feedback on their own time, rather than taking class time to do it. Because we were not observing teacher practice, but rather the interaction between the Teacher Adviser and the BN teachers being served, it was unclear if such instructional support had an impact on actual instructional practice.

### *General Management*

Teacher Advisers were also responsible for providing new teachers with assistance related to general management and administrative skills. The four most common types of assistance the Teacher Advisers provided were absence/substitute procedures, credential and

payroll issues, ordering supplies, and technical assistance. New teachers came to the Teacher Advisers for advice on how to fill out paperwork for absences and who to speak to for requesting a substitute. When new teachers asked for assistance with credential and payroll issues, the Teacher Advisers either answered the teachers' questions or contacted the appropriate Central Office personnel themselves. Teacher Advisers were observed ordering classroom supplies (e.g., pencils, paper, books) for new teachers. They also assisted new teachers with operating overhead projectors, laptops, and copy machines.

Both new teachers and administrators viewed these activities as helpful. New teachers expressed their gratitude for having someone help them navigate the many forms and procedures they must complete. Administrators indicated that having the Teacher Advisers assist with these activities was a timesaver. Having someone dedicated to assisting new teachers with their general management needs meant that they were free to focus on other administrative tasks.

### *Collaboration*

Teacher Advisers were observed collaborating regularly with other teachers on their campuses. They would collaborate on professional development opportunities that could be presented to the new teachers. At one school, the Teacher Adviser organized a meeting related to entering grades in ISIS that would be conducted by a veteran teacher who was familiar with the new system. At another school, the Teacher Adviser and several veteran teachers presented direct instruction strategies by subject matter to different groups of new teachers. Many Teacher Advisers also collaborated with veteran teachers with the purpose of matching them up with new teachers as partners. Many new teachers indicated that this partnering exercise was successful. The partner teacher was often viewed as an additional ally.

Teacher Advisers also worked with other teachers to arrange for observations and demonstration lessons. The Teacher Adviser would identify an effective teacher and would ask the teacher if he or she could be observed by new teachers or if he or she could demonstrate a lesson in a new teacher's classroom. Teacher Advisers would seek such exemplary teachers from both within their schools and at other PSP schools.

Teacher Advisers were also observed collaborating with administrators. They would meet with administrators on a regular basis to keep them informed of new teacher progress. These meetings would consist of discussion around new teacher needs and individual teacher problems. When discussing new teacher needs, Teacher Advisers indicated that administrators would often provide needed funds and resources for new teacher activities.

When discussing individual teacher problems, the administrator would ask for the Teacher Adviser to share his or her thoughts on how certain teachers could be supported. This often led to a recommendation that the Teacher Adviser observe the new teacher's classroom. However, there were instances when administrators would ask Teacher Advisers for confidential information about individual new teachers. The Teacher Adviser position is supposed to be non-evaluative. Some Teacher Advisers expressed a concern with the perceived lack of clarity with respect to confidentiality. They would only share insights that they felt would not violate confidentiality but also indicated that additional clarification of guidelines would be helpful.

### *Recruitment*

Teacher Advisers were involved in a variety of recruitment activities that they characterized as successful. Twenty-one of the Teacher Advisers (95%) indicated that they attended job fairs provided by both LAUSD and outside organizations, such as local California State University campuses and UCLA. At these job fairs, they would speak with qualified teacher candidates and invite them to their campuses. Teacher Advisers would also obtain candidate lists from Human Resources and invite qualified candidates to their campuses. Teacher Advisers characterized these interactions with Human Resources as extremely positive and helpful.

Teacher Advisers participated in the recruitment process on two different levels. At eleven of the schools (50%), the Teacher Advisers were only allowed to attend job fairs and obtain candidate lists with the purpose of bringing qualified candidates to a PSP school. Once the teacher candidate visited the school, the administrators would interview and select the most qualified ones, leaving the Teacher Adviser out of the process. However, at the other schools, the Teacher Advisers were included in the interview and selection process. They were observed interviewing candidates in all subject areas and potential PSP incentive substitutes. These

Teacher Advisers also participated in selection and, once the candidate was chosen, in the debriefing process. A common request from Teacher Advisers was to provide more training on the selection interview process. Some Teacher Advisers indicated that this increased knowledge may allow their administrators to give them more responsibility in the recruitment and selection process.

#### *Other Duties as Assigned*

Teacher Advisers were responsible for many other tasks that did not fall into the other categories. A total of 28% of Teacher Adviser time was spent engaging in these other activities, the largest percentage of any of the seven activities. While there were approximately 600 other duties tasks reported by Teacher Advisers, most time spent on other duties as assigned can be grouped into the following 12 categories:

- Preparation and planning
- Documentation
- Correspondence
- Checking in with teachers
- General office tasks
- Proctoring tests
- Supervision
- Unrelated meetings and trainings
- Unrelated visitations
- Student-related tasks
- WASC-related tasks
- Class coverage

Given that Teacher Advisers spent so much time engaging in preparation and planning, documentation, and correspondence tasks, these three activities were included on the chart of all types of activities. Checking in with teachers involved Teacher Advisers roaming from classroom to classroom asking new teachers how they were doing. General office tasks involved Teacher Advisers organizing their workspaces, conducting inventory, moving from one office to another, and dealing with their own computer problems. Teacher Advisers were

occasionally called upon to proctor tests. Unrelated meetings and trainings refers to those meetings and trainings that did not concern supporting new teachers, such as IMPACT meetings. When Teacher Advisers engaged in unrelated visitations, they were hosting visitors from other campuses. These visitations were not related to new teacher support. Student-related tasks involved retrieving students from class, escorting students to different parts of campus, and making phone calls to parents. Several Teacher Advisers engaged in tasks related to WASC accreditation. Class coverage refers to Teacher Advisers being asked to fill in for absent teachers.

Soon after the PSP began, there was a concern that Teacher Advisers were being asked to routinely assist with campus supervision. After analyzing the activity logs, this was shown to be an incorrect assumption. Teacher Advisers reported a total of 186 hours of supervision duty between August 2006 and March 2007. It appears that the Teacher Advisers were being asked to perform approximately one hour of supervision duty per month. This number dropped in 2007–08. Administrators noted that Teacher Advisers would only be asked to supervise in emergency situations. However, many administrators also reported that Teacher Advisers engaged in informal voluntary supervision while they are on campus conducting PSP business. They would make sure students were in class as they walked around campus.

#### *BTSA-related Activities*

The BTSA induction program is provided to BN teachers to assist them with completion of the necessary requirements for obtaining a Professional Clear Teaching Credential. With respect to BTSA, many Teacher Advisers served as liaisons between teachers and administrators. The Teacher Advisers helped new teachers with paperwork and answered their questions related to the California Formative Assessment and Support System for Teachers (CFASST), a series of 12 critical thinking tasks that must be completed with the assistance of a Support Provider (SP). SPs are veteran teachers who receive a small stipend for working with BN teachers. Teacher Advisers attempted to match BN teachers with SPs.

The Teacher Advisers and administrators reported that they received some assistance from school visits by both PSP and ACTS staff. During these visits, program staff would answer questions related to BTSA. The Teacher Advisers also indicated that their questions were

answered at trainings and meetings provided by PSP and ACTS. Local District offices also worked with schools to match SPs to BN teachers.

Both Teacher Advisers and administrators expressed their frustration with the lack of SPs at PSP schools. It is difficult to recruit SPs when they are expected to provide support to a new teacher for a minimum of two hours per week for \$1000 per year. Many Teacher Advisers and administrators noted that there was a shortage of SPs on their campuses because SP compensation was too small. To combat the shortage, several Teacher Advisers reported that their SPs took more than the maximum of two BN teachers. The SPs indicated to the Teacher Advisers that they felt overworked and underpaid. Teacher Advisers expressed a desire for ACTS to assist them in two ways: 1. clarify Teacher Adviser role with providing BTSA support and 2. assist with recruiting SPs.

#### *Foreign Teachers*

In addition to new teachers, Teacher Advisers also provided support to teachers from foreign countries, primarily the Philippines. Approximately 75% of PSP schools employed new foreign teachers. Although many of the foreign teachers hired by LAUSD have many years of teaching experience, they have little to no experience teaching in American schools. For that reason, foreign teachers just starting at the PSP schools could be considered BN teachers.

Teacher Advisers indicated that they assisted foreign teachers with a variety of tasks. They helped with credentialing and paperwork either by taking them through the process or making phone calls to the appropriate offices. However, they also had to provide additional services. LAUSD secured apartments for the foreign teachers but moved them into Park La Brea, a mid-Wilshire apartment complex that is far from all PSP schools. Teacher Advisers helped the foreign teachers find transportation to and from their schools. In some cases, the teachers decided to move out of their Park La Brea housing and find apartments closer to their schools. The Teacher Advisers would also help them find other living arrangements and would work with the apartment managers to attempt to negotiate lease-breaking agreements.

#### *Middle School Support*

Teacher Advisers were also encouraged to assist new teachers at their feeder PI 4 & 5 middle schools. In 2006–07, only four Teacher Advisers stated that they were able to provide

any kind of support to their middle schools. Of these four schools, two were below the PSP new teacher average of 37, one was slightly above it, and only one was well above it. We were able to observe three of the four Teacher Advisers who assisted middle school teachers. They primarily provided them with instructional support by engaging them in an instructional support cycle similar what was being implemented with the senior high school teachers.

Most Teacher Advisers indicated that they had every intention of assisting the new teachers at their feeder middle schools when they began working for the PSP. However, it became impossible to work at the middle schools as the year progressed. According to the Teacher Advisers, there were simply too many new teachers at their senior high schools who needed assistance. Given an increasing staffing stability, more Teacher Advisers were able to support their PI 4 & 5 feeder middle schools in 2007–08. However, we did not observe any middle school activities in 2007–08.

#### *Teacher Adviser Supports*

All 22 Teacher Advisers were asked about the supports that helped them do their work. Nine of the Teacher Advisers (41%) indicated that they looked to the PSP office to provide them and their new teachers with relevant workshops, such as for coaching strategies and Thinking Maps™. Thirteen Teacher Advisers (59%) noted that access to resources in the PSP office, such as books and training materials, have been very helpful with bringing what they learned at these workshops back to their new teachers. Sixteen Teacher Advisers (73%) noted that they looked to the PSP office to answer any questions they have about their work or their job descriptions.

Teacher Advisers also sought support from other Teacher Advisers, primarily in the form of sharing experiences. Twenty-one Teacher Advisers (95%) noted that it was very important for them to seek advice from their colleagues and to share successes. They formed a tight-knit communication network consisting of e-mails, visits, and conversations at monthly PSP staff meetings.

Teacher Advisers also looked to other teachers and administrators at their campuses for support. Eight Teacher Advisers (36%) indicated that other teachers shared their resources and experiences with them. Nine Teacher Advisers (41%) noted that more experienced teachers at

their schools allowed new teachers to observe in their classrooms. Thirteen Teacher Advisers (59%) noted that their administrators gave them the freedom to do their jobs as they saw fit. They were able to provide relevant services to their new teachers and knew that their administrators would support their work. Five Teacher Advisers (23%) stated that their administrators provided primarily monetary resources as a means of supporting their work with new teachers.

Teacher Advisers noted that they received limited support from the Central Office. What little support they received came from Human Resources, which provided them with candidate lists and job fair information and also answered credentialing and payroll questions. All 22 Teacher Advisers (100%) indicated that they viewed Human Resources as a support.

Because of these supports, all 22 Teacher Advisers (100%) indicated that the PSP's main strength was that they, as Teacher Advisers, were able to provide new teachers with the support they truly needed. They learned from their colleagues and were able to do their work with the support of their administrators. They were also able to take advantage of District resources. By being able to provide new teachers with relevant assistance, the Teacher Advisers indicated that this increased teacher morale.

Finally, six Teacher Advisers (22%) asked for increased clarification of their job duties. Early in the program, there was some confusion with BTSA funding, which led to some confusion about the Teacher Adviser role. Also, there was some confusion about the Teacher Adviser role with respect to assignment of incentive substitutes. However, many Teacher Advisers acknowledged that there was bound to be some confusion since this was the first year of PSP implementation and that they received the clarification they needed as the year progressed. In observed 2007–08 PSP staff meetings, there was no indication that this confusion over BTSA and incentive substitutes persisted.

***What was the impact of the PSP on teacher recruitment in the target schools? Is there evidence that the program helped target schools achieve their staffing goals by fall 2006?***

Table 2 shows that the teachers who were hired by the PSP schools in 2006–07 primarily represent the well-documented shortage areas of math, science, and special education.

Approximately 50% of all teachers hired at the PSP schools in 2006–07 belonged to one of these three subject areas. While it is apparent that the PSP schools were hiring teachers to address the need for coverage in these shortage areas, it is unclear how the PSP influenced such initial hiring decisions. This is an important caution when interpreting the success of the PSP.

Table 2  
Number and percentage of teachers hired by the PSP schools in 2006-07 disaggregated by subject area

Subject Area	Number	Percentage of Total Teachers Hired by PSP Schools
Art	31	4%
English/Language Arts	180	22%
ESL	17	2%
Foreign Language	36	4%
Health	23	3%
Math	145	18%
PE	23	3%
Science	108	13%
Social Studies	76	9%
Special Education	156	19%
Other	10	1%
Total	805	100%

While there is very limited evidence that PSP may have helped its target schools move toward meeting their staffing goals for fall 2006, there is some evidence that the PSP may have helped its target schools meet their staffing goals in fall 2007. Table 3 shows the staff vacancies, obtained from Human Resources, at the 22 PSP senior high schools in January 2006, January 2007, and November 2007. Human Resources provided January 2006 and 2007 data to the PSP staff because of concerns with potential staffing changes due to Norm Day. The latest staffing data we received from Human Resources were for November 2007. While January 2008 data would have allowed for more consistency, November 2007 staffing data were still collected after Norm Day. In January 2006, only one of the PSP schools was fully staffed. Between the other 21 schools, there were 92 vacancies. This averaged to approximately four vacancies per

not-fully-staffed school. In January 2007, half of the PSP schools were fully staffed and there were only 22 vacancies. This averaged to two vacancies per not-fully-staffed school. However, it was unclear if the PSP contributed to this decline in the vacancy rate.

There is some evidence that the PSP may have helped its target schools meet their staffing goals in fall 2007. According to Table 3, the number of vacancies dropped even further in November 2007. There were only five vacancies in the PSP schools and 18 of the 22 schools were fully staffed. This averaged to approximately one vacancy in each of the four not-fully-staffed schools.

Table 3  
Staff Vacancies in the 22 PSP senior high schools and the number of fully-staffed PSP schools: January 2006, January 2007, and November 2007

---

Month	Number of Vacancies	Fully-staffed Schools
January 2006	92	1
January 2007	22	11
November 2007	5	18

While the Teacher Advisers only engaged in recruitment activities between 5% and 7% of the time, there were certain months when this percentage increased. During May, July, and August 2007, the Teacher Advisers engaged in recruitment activities approximately 17% of the time, a roughly threefold increase from other months. In May 2007, all Teacher Advisers indicated that they attended job fairs and scheduled candidate interviews. In July and August 2007, all Teacher Advisers continued to schedule candidate interviews. However, 11 of the Teacher Advisers (50%) also reported conducting initial interviews of teacher candidates, participating on formal interview panels, and assisting administrators with final hiring decisions. This increased activity, combined with the decline in teacher vacancies in November 2007, could be viewed as evidence that the PSP assisted with helping its target schools meet their staffing goals in fall 2007.

When asked about the impact of the PSP on recruitment, administrators were generally positive. They indicated that it was helpful to have someone on staff dedicated to finding qualified teacher candidates. Administrators were able to spend more time at their schools and

to interview candidates quicker. Many administrators stated that their Teacher Advisers had worked at their schools for a number of years prior to assuming the new position. The administrators indicated that they trusted them to do the initial candidate screenings for them. Four of the eleven administrators who gave the Teacher Advisers more of a role in the recruitment process indicated that this level of trust was so high that they included the Teacher Advisers in all aspects of the hiring process to ensure that the hired candidates were of the highest quality.

***What was the impact of the PSP on support for new teachers and on the perceptions and attitudes of new teachers toward the school and their own intentions of staying?***

***New Teacher Support***

We asked new teachers about the supports they received at their schools throughout the year. They were asked about their interactions with others and how their strengths and identified areas of improvement were being supported by the PSP.

New teachers reported that they had regular positive interactions with their Teacher Advisers. Both BN and EXP teachers viewed these interactions as helpful. However, BN teachers were much more likely to report that they had regular interactions with Teacher Advisers. The EXP teachers indicated that they had few interactions with the Teacher Advisers but that those interactions had been positive. When asked to provide a reason for the limited interaction, most EXP teachers stated that since they were experienced, they did not need much support. They knew what they were doing.

Both BN and EXP teachers reported that they had limited interactions with administrators. These interactions consisted of classroom observations and STULL evaluations. However, most new teachers noted that they felt that their administrators had an open-door policy. They just did not need to seek support from their administrators very often.

New teachers also reported that they had limited interactions with other teachers on their campuses. When asked to explain, most new teachers noted that they themselves were too busy teaching and engaging in other school activities (e.g., athletic coaching, advising clubs, participating in BTSA) to regularly interact with their colleagues. However, some BN

teachers reported that they sought out more experienced colleagues, in addition to Teacher Advisers and administrators, for general advice and sharing.

BN and EXP teachers differed in their perceptions of support provided by their Teacher Advisers, coaches, and administrators. BN teachers were more likely to indicate that they felt supported in their areas of strength. They reported receiving positive comments and constructive feedback. EXP teachers were more likely to report that they did not receive much support from the Teacher Advisers. When asked to elaborate, the EXP teachers often noted that they did not need regular support because they already knew what they were doing. By their comments, it appears that Teacher Advisers were focusing their efforts on BN teachers.

New teachers were also asked to reflect on the areas in which they needed to improve. The most common answer from both BN and EXP teachers was classroom management. While BN teachers noted that they could relate to students, they did not necessarily indicate that they could create a disciplined learning environment for them. The EXP teachers indicated that they were not familiar with working with the kinds of students often found in PSP schools. BN teachers also indicated that they needed extra help with lesson planning and delivery, organization, time management, and grading. In particular, BN teachers reported that they needed extra assistance with managing and entering grades.

### *New Teacher Intentions*

As a preliminary measure of retention, we asked new teachers about their intentions to continue teaching in 2007–08. The percentages of teachers who intended to return next year can be found in Table 4. When asked if they would return to teaching, 83% of all interviewed new teachers indicated that they would continue to teach while only 6% noted that they would not. When disaggregated by experience, an even higher percentage of BN teachers indicated that they would return (89%) and a lower percentage noted that they would not (3%). While the percentages for returning EXP teachers (73%) is not as large as that for returning BN teachers, it is still high.

Of the teachers who said they were unsure if they would continue to teach in 2007–08, most BN teachers did not elaborate on why they were unsure. Of the EXP teachers who provided a

reason for being unsure, the most common response was that they were not sure if they would return to a PSP school but that they did intend to teach somewhere.

Of the teachers who indicated that they would not be returning, the most common responses were that they would be returning to school full-time, which would not allow them to teach, or that they would be moving and leaving the profession. Three teachers indicated that they would be leaving the profession because the challenge of the job prevented them from increasing student performance. Of all new teachers who were interviewed, only one teacher indicated that she would be leaving the profession because she did not receive adequate support and resources.

Table 4  
Percentage of interviewed teachers in 2006-07 intending to return to teaching in 2007-08

	Yes	Unsure	No
All Interviewed New Teachers	83%	11%	6%
BN Teachers	89%	8%	3%
EXP Teachers	73%	17%	10%

We asked new teachers who intended to continue teaching to identify those supports that influenced them to continue in the profession. The most common responses were positive relationships and interactions with students, internal motivation, and support from other teachers. Approximately 1/3 of teachers indicated that they were influenced by the connections they were able to make with their students. The following quote is from a BN teacher who was inspired by her students.

*I like the kids. I like to see them learn. And I like their reactions to the new information. I enjoy the classroom. I enjoy being with them and their enthusiasm, and their willingness. I have some that are not, they just don't want to take it in and even some of them surprise me. It is surprising and amazing to me that I have had students come up to me outside of class and talk to me about their goals and aspirations, even though they want to act up inside the class. Some of my students who aren't doing as well as I would want them to, I still have a positive relationship with them and that is amazing to me, the fortitude of the students.*

Approximately 1/3 of teachers also indicated that they were influenced to continue teaching because of internal motivation. They liked what they did and wanted to continue. The following quote is from a BN teacher who had worked in a variety of other fields before coming to teaching.

*I worked too hard for this credential for one thing. There are lots of intrinsic factors outside of this support. It took a tremendous effort to get here and I'm not one to walk away from that investment in time and money. Number two: I really enjoy it. I've worked in a number of corporate areas and careers as well filmmaking and this is the first job at the end of the day I walk away everyday, I did something important. And that's tremendous. I've worked at consulting, I've worked at finance, and I've never gotten that feeling of satisfaction. So that's a tremendous intrinsic reward right there.*

Many BN teachers also noted that other teachers influenced them to continue teaching. They stated that having a group of new teachers sharing the same experiences was helpful. They also indicated that their more experienced colleagues also served as an influence.

Approximately 20% of mostly BN teachers also cited their Teacher Adviser as a positive influence. The following quote is from a BN teacher who explicitly named his Teacher Adviser as a support.

*[The PSP Teacher Adviser] is a really good support....If I was questioning teaching...she would be somebody who could really show me that I'm doing the right thing. And, you know, that this was a place for me.*

While this percentage appears to be low, it is not a cause for alarm. It was possible that new teachers, when listing positive influences, considered the Teacher Advisers as part of the school's out-of-classroom certificated staff. While the Teacher Adviser position was not meant to be administrative, they were not in the classroom. It was possible that the Teacher Advisers were viewed as similar to Coordinators. Given their positive comments about their interactions with the Teacher Advisers, it was likely that this percentage is lower than it should be.

***What was the impact of the PSP on measurable teacher retention in the target during 2006–2007 and returning for 2007–2008?***

There is evidence that the PSP may have contributed to new teacher retention between 2006–07 and 2007–08. Table 5 shows the numbers and percentages of BN teachers, EXP teachers, and all new teachers who returned to the classroom in 2007–08. We considered a new teacher to be retained if he or she continued to teach in an LAUSD school in 2007–08. We did not make a distinction between teaching in the same PSP school and teaching in any LAUSD school as long as the teacher was displaced due to staffing changes. We considered both types of teachers to be retained. For example, a French teacher at a PSP school was displaced because the school decided to eliminate French language offerings due to consistently low student enrollment. This teacher found work in another LAUSD school. We considered this teacher to be retained. Out of a total of 805 new teachers in the 22 PSP schools, only 11 (approximately 1%) were displaced due to staffing changes.

Table 5  
Numbers and percentages of BN, EXP, and all new teachers who returned to teaching in 2007-08

	Number	Percentage
BN Teachers	491 (of 580)	85%
EXP Teachers	196 (of 225)	87%
All New Teachers	687 (of 805)	85%

In total, 687 of the 805 teachers being supported by the PSP, or 85%, continued to teach in an LAUSD school in 2007–08. At the school level, the PSP schools retained between 74% and 100% of their new teachers. The percentage of returning BN teachers was slightly lower than the percentage of those who indicated they would remain teaching (89% to 85%). However, the percentage of returning EXP teachers was much higher than the percentage of those who said they would return during 2006–07 (73% to 87%). Overall, 83% of new teachers in the PSP schools said they would return in 2007–08 and 85% of them actually did.

We examined the new teacher retention percentages by subject area to determine if the PSP was providing sufficient support to teachers in a particular subject. Table 6 shows the new teacher retention percentages by subject area. The retention percentages ranged from 80% to 92%. The retention percentages for the shortage areas of science (82%) and special education (83%) were slightly below the overall new teacher retention percentage of 85%. However, the PSP schools retained their math teachers at a rate of 90%.

It appears that the PSP school-level retention percentages were following an upward trend. The PSP schools appeared to be retaining most of their new teachers, who made up a sizable proportion of the overall teaching force at many of the schools. All but one PSP school retained at least 75% of all new teachers in 2007–08.

Table 6  
New teacher retention percentages by subject area in the PSP schools: 2007-08

Subject Area	Percentage of New Teachers Retained
Art	84%
English/Language Arts	86%
ESL	84%
Foreign Language	92%
Health	91%
Math	90%
PE	91%
Science	82%
Social Studies	84%
Special Education	83%
Other	80%

*Reasons Teachers Were Not Retained*

We asked the Teacher Advisers at each PSP school to provide a reason why the non-retained teachers left. This was done to compare the reasons being cited by the new teachers during their interviews with the actual reasons for non-retention. Table 7 shows the reasons why BN and EXP teachers did not remain teaching at PSP schools. The most common

explanation given for both types of teachers leaving was that they left the field entirely for personal reasons, such as going back to school or choosing to leave teaching. According to the Teacher Advisers, most new teachers who left went back to school or got higher-paying jobs in the private sector. This corresponded with the reasons the new teachers gave for leaving. Some BN and EXP teachers decided to remain teaching but not at an LAUSD school. While they remained in the profession, they were not considered to be retained because they chose to leave the district.

The percentages of new teachers who were not asked back by PSP school administrators (non-re-elects) were small. Overall, only 18 new teachers were non-re-elects. This represented approximately 2% of all new teachers being supported by the PSP in 2006-07. To confirm this, we phoned administrators at the PSP schools. All 18 teachers were confirmed by the administrators as non-re-elects.

Table 7  
Reasons why BN and EXP teachers did not remain teaching at PSP schools

Reason for Leaving	BN Teachers	EXP Teachers
Left Field for Personal Reasons	62%	65%
Teaching in a non-LAUSD school	24%	16%
Non-re-elect	13%	19%

***What was the impact of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program on the working environment of the school, support received by new teachers, and teacher perceptions and attitudes?***

There was confusion surrounding the implementation of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program at most of the PSP schools. Although the substitutes were a component of the PSP, many Teacher Advisers reported that they had a limited role with respect to the substitutes. Given the extreme variability of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program's implementation, it is difficult to determine what kind of an impact it had on working environment and teacher perceptions. More research is needed to determine the impact of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program on those variables.

However, we can report that the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program appeared to have a positive effect on the types of support received by new teachers at some of the PSP schools. Ten of the PSP Teacher Advisers (45%) reported that they had some role in the assignment of these five substitutes at their schools. All ten reported that having the substitutes made it easier to take new teachers to offsite professional development activities. They knew that there would be a substitute available to cover the new teachers' classes so it became much easier to organize these outings. Unfortunately, seven of the Teacher Advisers (32%) reported having absolutely no role in selecting or assigning these substitutes. Only two of these Teacher Advisers indicated that they thought the substitutes were being put to good use with respect to the new teachers.

## **Conclusion**

---

### ***Summary of Findings***

The PSP was re-established in 2006–07 to recruit and retain new teachers in the 22 lowest-performing senior high schools in the district. There is some evidence to indicate that the PSP may have contributed to improved recruitment and retention efforts at these 22 schools by fall 2007. The number of teacher vacancies at each of the PSP schools has been steadily declining. Also, 85% of new teachers at the PSP schools continued to teach in LAUSD schools.

The work was done by the Teacher Advisers, who spent much of their time directly supporting new teachers, either through meetings and workshops or through direct classroom observation. The teachers who received the support indicated that they received positive and constructive feedback. The school administrators noted that they were freed up to do other tasks because they knew that the Teacher Advisers were providing support to the new teachers. The Teacher Advisers themselves indicated that they were able to provide individualized support to their new teachers.

These findings must be interpreted with caution. We were unable to establish a causal link between increased teacher retention and the PSP. We cannot claim that the PSP caused the observed increase in new teacher retention. However, given the steady decline in teacher vacancies at the PSP schools, and the overall positive perception of the program from the new

teachers and school administrators, it is possible to state that the PSP had an influence on new teacher retention. Determining how influential the PSP was in new teacher retention is a matter for future study.

### ***Limitations of the Study***

A limitation of this study was the focus of the evaluation questions. PAR commissioned this evaluation in 2006–07 when it was under the auspices of the Chief Operating Officer’s office. The evaluation questions were focused on staffing and retention rates, which represented the operational part of the PSP. In 2007–08, PAR was positioned under the direction of Professional Learning, Development, and Leadership (PLDL). The goals of PLDL were different from the goals of Operations. There is now a need to focus evaluation questions on new teacher instructional quality, which this evaluation does not address. Future evaluations of the PSP may need to focus on the instructional support being provided by the Teacher Advisers, how the new teachers are able to incorporate this support into their classroom practice, and how the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program affects instructional coherence in the classroom. However, future PSP evaluation work should also continue to focus on new teacher recruitment and retention. There is little opportunity to study sustained instructional quality if teachers do not remain at the PSP schools.

However, the main limitation of this study is that most of the collected data was from 2006–07, the first year of implementation. We were not able to collect much data in 2007–08 due to lack of funds. While we used the Teacher Adviser activity log data to determine similarities between years 1 and 2, more thorough data collection would have been necessary to establish patterns between 2006–07 and 2007–08.

### ***Recommendations with Action Steps***

Because we have shared findings with the PSP directors throughout 2007–08, they implemented some of the recommendations that will be put forth in this section. The PSP directors addressed recommendations 1–3 in 2007–08. Recommendations 4 and 5 reflect further consideration of the data and may not have been acted on yet by PAR staff.

1) PAR should continue to clarify the roles of the Teacher Advisers with respect to BTSA involvement. Teacher Advisers expressed confusion over how they are intended to support new teachers who are completing BTSA. In 2006–07, the Teacher Adviser’s role with respect to BTSA changed several times and PAR brought in the directors of BTSA in LAUSD in an attempt to clarify this role. These conversations continued in 2007–08 and it appears that the Teacher Adviser’s role with respect to BTSA is continuing to be defined.

2) PAR should also continue to clarify the roles of the Teacher Advisers with respect to new teacher recruitment and hiring. While half of the Teacher Advisers were able to participate in all aspects of the new teacher recruitment process, half were not. A frustration cited by several of the uninvolved Teacher Advisers was that they did not know enough about the hiring process from the school side to be effective. In 2007–08, PAR brought in representatives from Human Resources on several occasions to clarify the hiring process and to answer Teacher Adviser questions.

3) There should be more of a focus on recruiting and retaining teachers at the feeder middle schools. Few Teacher Advisers were able to provide any kind of support to their feeder middle schools because of the large numbers of new teachers at their senior high campuses that needed their attention. Given the high rates of new teacher retention at the PSP schools, it might be easier in the future for the Teacher Advisers to support their feeder middle schools. In 2007–08, the PSP encouraged the Teacher Advisers to provide some support to their feeder middle schools.

4) There should be more uniformity with respect to the school–level implementation of the Incentive Substitute Teacher Program. Approximately half of the Teacher Advisers had little role with respect to the allocation of these substitutes. While it is clear that assigning substitutes is the job of school administration and office staff, it is possible that the PSP can recommend that these substitutes first be placed to cover new teacher professional development time. The PSP is providing the substitutes to the schools for this purpose and there should be increased oversight concerning how the schools assign them.

5) The PSP should focus more on how new teachers are being supported in the classroom. The Teacher Advisers spent approximately 20% of their time in classrooms in both

2006–07 and 2007–08. They are definitely spending time working with new teachers on instruction and classroom management. However, future evaluations should concentrate on what such support looks like, how teachers incorporate it into their practice, and how this support affects overall instructional coherence and quality. It appears that the PSP may be helping its schools recruit and retain teachers. With a potentially more stable teaching force, the PSP should seek to build the instructional capacities of new teachers. This would ensure that the teachers being supported at the PSP schools are providing high-quality instruction.