TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

# RESEARCH BRIEF

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Center for Research & Development in Dual Language & Literacy Acquisition

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Education Leadership Research Center

## Component 1: Master's Degree in Educational Administration

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### Introduction

Over three years, 100 school leaders were recruited across Texas to earn their M.Ed. in Educationa Administration, along with Texas English as a second language (ESL) teacher certification (Exam #154), an Texas principal certification (TExES #268, PASL #368). These new qualifications will serve as preparation to lea campuses and influence policy in districts that serve diverse learners, particularly those with English learners (ELs and low-income schools. This program was formatted as an online cohort model with an accelerated pace of fou semesters (including summer), and participants could remain in a full-time teaching role.

*Figure* 1. **APLUS graduation ceremony (TAMU ELRC Facebook, 2019)**

### Cohorts 1 and 2

Cohort 1 started in fall 2018 with 47 participants, wh graduated fall 2019.

Cohort 2 launched in summer 2019, consisting of 5 participants. They graduated in summer 2020.

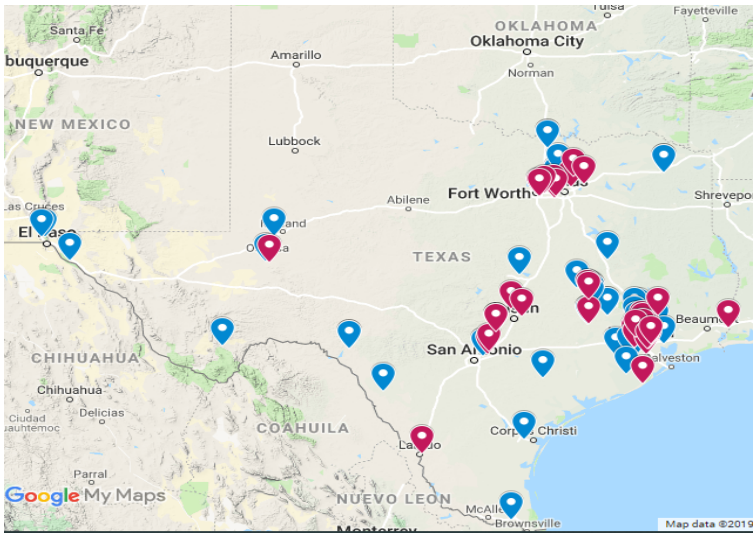


*Figure* 2. **Map of APLUS school districts across Texas. The blue represents Cohort 1, and red is Cohort 2.**

### APLUS Master's Program Online Course Sequence

This program was formatted as an online coho model with an accelerated pace of four semeste (including summer). Courses were taught in a fiv week consecutive sequence, with the exception summer courses. The summer courses were offere simultaneously within a ten-week period.

The program course sequence is on the next page.

**Table 1**

*APLUS Master's Program Course Sequence*

| | Course Number | APLUS Master's Program Course Sequence | Credit Hours |
|---|---|---|---|
| **First Semester** | EDAD 687 | Principles of Professional Practice in Education | 3 |
| | BIED 614 | Bilingual Education Curriculum Development | 3 |
| | BIED 632 | Research in Second Language Education | 3 |
| **Second Semester** | **Course Number** | **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** |
| | BIED 689 | Special Topics: Programs Serving ELs in High-needs Campuses for Administrators | 3 |
| | EDAD 605 | School Principalship | 3 |
| | EDAD 635 | Administration of Special Services | 3 |
| | EDAD 684 | Internship | 1 |
| **Third Semester** | **Course Number** | **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** |
| | EDAD 609 | Public School Laws | 3 |
| | EDAD 638 | Developing School and Community Partnerships | 3 |
| | EDAD 624 | Administration of Special Populations & Special Programs | 3 |
| | EDAD 684 | Internship (Summer Residency for Cohort 1) | 1 |
| **Fourth Semester** | **Course Number** | **Course Name** | **Credit Hours** |
| | EDAD 606 | Instructional Leadership Development | 3 |
| | EDAD 608 | K-12 Finance & Budgeting | 3 |
| | EDAD 684 | Practicum (Summer Residency for Cohort 2) | 1 |

## Replicable, Standards-aligned, and Competency-based M.Ed. Program

With the cooperation of the university faculty, course alignment and competency-based curriculum, campus-leve practicum residency, and mentoring/coaching were developed for aspiring principals. We ensured that th curriculum covered all the principal competencies stated in the Texas Examinations of Educator Standards. Fielc based activities were offered for the students to implement new knowledge and skills into real-world practic Different rigorous assessment methods (e.g., class participation, papers, presentations, and practicums) were use to assess students' learning outcomes.

## Virtual Mentoring and Coaching

Two virtual mentors/coaches (VMC) with K-12 school administrator experience supported the master's studen through their coursework. The virtual coaches met with students biweekly for up to an hour to discuss coursewor and fieldwork. Videos of the coaching sessional were recorded with GoToMeeting video conferencing software.

Leadership-related topics that emerged from the VMC sessions included:

- developing a realistic and actionable school vision,
- evaluating and interpreting student performance,
- creating a collaborative working environment,
- building a responsive learning environment based on students' diverse backgrounds,
- supporting ELs,
- multi-task management, and
- teacher observations.

We also evaluated the overall quality of the VMC intervention through a self-report survey. Among 24 participants in Cohort 1 treat group group, 95.75% of them rated VMC at the highest level (Mean=4.7, SD=0.1). The top three most effective and beneficial learning areas identified were situational problem solving, operational management, and leadership communication. They reported that their coach built a safe and comfortable communication environment (95.65%), and they were satisfied with the strategies the coaches used to enhance their understanding of leadership learning (91.3%).

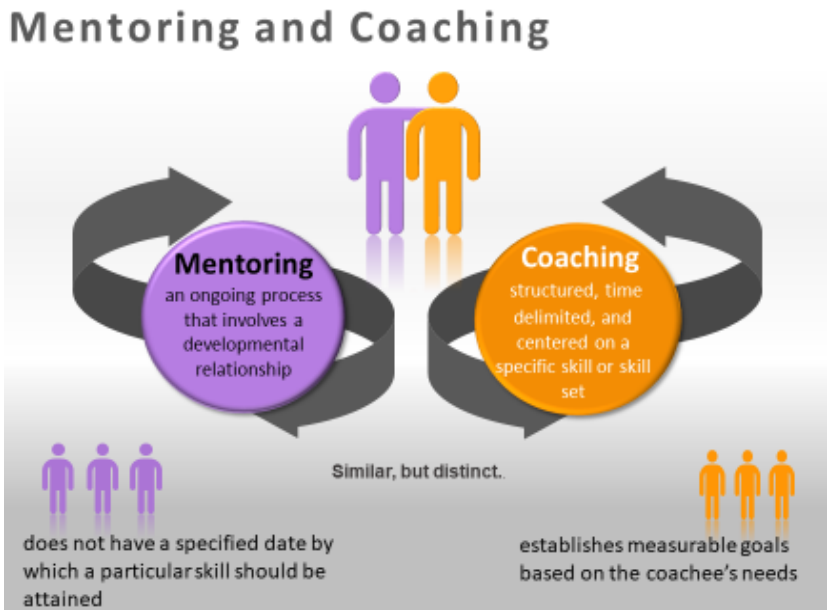


***Figure* 3. Mentoring and coaching concept**

## Transitional Bilingual Observation Protocol (TBOP)

TBOP is an instrument utilized by principal candidates to observe teachers' instruction based on a low-inferenc teacher observation scale. TBOP was also used to determine the level of quality of principal candidates competency and outcome-based instructional feedback for the observed teachers based on differences betwee treatment principal candidates (those who had VMC) and control (without VMC).

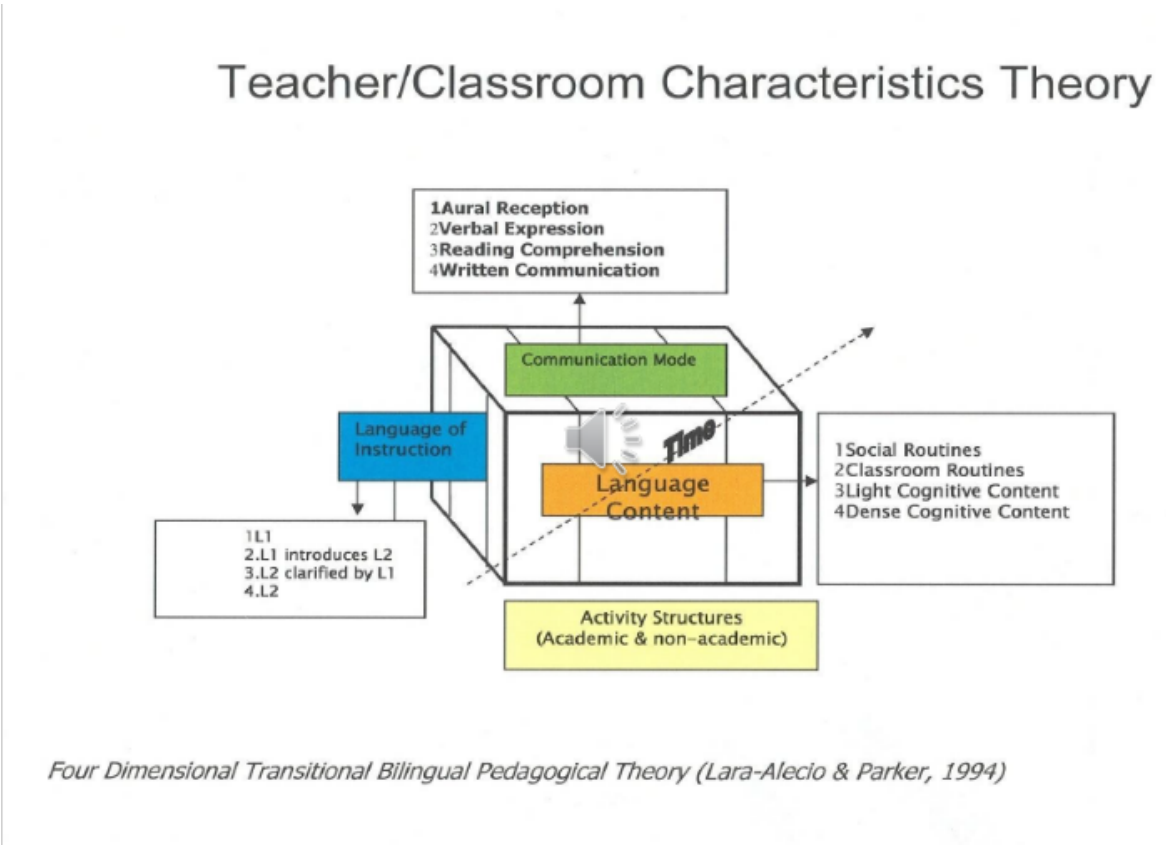


***Figure* 4. TBOP Model (Lara-Alecio & Parker, 1994; reprinted with permission)**

## Differences Between Treatment and Control on TBOP Performance

The clinical supervision involved three stages: (a) pre-observation conference, (b) observation, and (c) pos observation conference. During the pre/post conferences, the candidate met with the teacher to discuss th observation. After the clinical supervision, candidates submitted a reflection cycle report per observation.

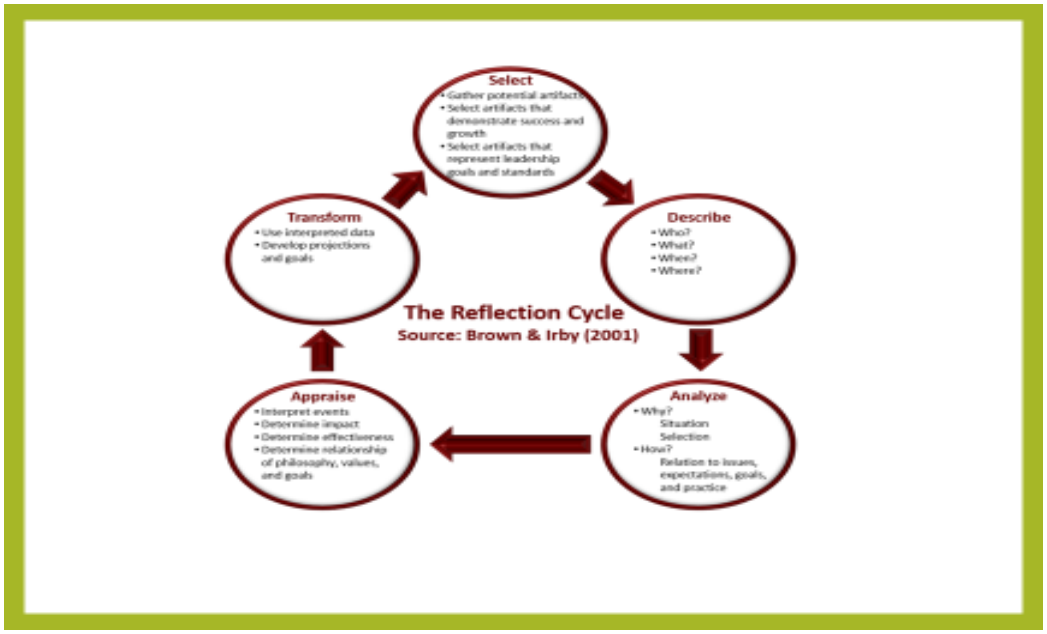


***Figure* 5. The Reflection Cycle framework (Brown & Irby, 2001; reprinted with permission)**

The average score was 46.13 (SD=0.38) for the treatment (T) group, and 45.82 (SD=0.44) for the control (C group, suggesting that the T group demonstrated consistently better performance than the C group. Although ther was no statistically significant difference between the two groups in the independent *t*-test results ($t(44)=0.5$ $p=0.6$), the qualitative analysis of the candidates' Reflection Cycle reports revealed great differences between the and the C groups.

## Qualitative Differences Between Treatment and Control in Reflection Cycle Reports

### Pre-conference

- While the C group simply informed the teacher about the observation, the T group specifically clarified th purpose and the objectives of the observation. Many candidates from the T group also discussed the lesso plan with the teacher.

### Post-conference

- Both T and C groups praised the teachers about their areas of strength and provided suggestion Nevertheless, the T group candidates were able to analyze the observation to in-depth by assisting th teacher in conducting his or her own reflection on the lesson, analyzing specific examples, and providin constructive feedback.
- Most candidates from the T group reflected on how the use of the observation protocol may promot continuous improvement for teachers in classrooms as well as direct and improve students' learnin accordingly, which was notably absent in the reports from the C group.

## Parent and Family Engagement Systematic Plans and Community Engagement Plans

Parent and family engagement systematic plans and community engagement plans from both Cohorts 1 and 2 wer developed, implemented, and collected in the following course: EDAD 638-Developing School and Communit Partnerships. Examples of the service projects included conducting Spanish translations, implementation of literacy curriculum for ELs, and coordination of community outreach activities.

For Cohort 1, a total of 46 parent and family engagement plans were collected (22 – T group and 24 – C group For Cohort 2, a total of 49 parent/family and community engagement plans were submitted (26 – T group & 23 – group). One participant's plan was pending due to extenuating circumstances. The plans were evaluated based on rubric (on a four-point Likert scale) that included the following domains: (a) community identification, (b rationale for the service, (c) family/community engagement, (d) EL profile, (e) dissemination, (f) multicultura activities, (g) advocacy plan, and (h) implementation.

## Differences Between Treatment and Control on Parent and Family Engagement Plans

### Cohort 1

The descriptive statistics indicated that the average score was 3.07 (SD=0.38) for the T group, and 2.79 (SD=0.44 for the C group, suggesting that the T group had consistently better performance than the C group. The independer *t*-test results revealed a statistically significant difference between participants' performance on the engagemer plans. Further analysis of the scores across each domain showed that the T group outperformed the C group acros all eight domains.

### Cohort 2

The descriptive statistics indicated that the average score was 2.86 (SD=0.47) for the T group, and 2.61 (SD=0.39 for the C group, suggesting that the T group slightly outperformed the C group. There was no statisticall significant difference between the two groups found with the independent *t*-test results ($t(47)=2.01$, $p=0.05$ however, the T group outperformed the C group in terms of assessing community resources, noting the imperativ role of ELs' and/or economically challenged students' families and providing multiple ways of family/communit engagement.

## Student Action Resource Plans

In order to enhance the understanding of culturally and linguistically responsive leadership, pre-service principal were required to analyze the current curriculum at their schools and develop a dual language (DL) model t facilitate ELs' learning in a particular school setting. Student action research projects from both Cohorts 1 and were developed, implemented, and collected in the following two courses: BIED 614: Research in Secon Language Education and BIED 632 Special Topics: Programs Serving English Learners (ELs) in High-neec Campuses for Administrators. Action research reports were evaluated based on a rubric (on a four-point Like scale) that included the following domains: (a) problem identification, (b) significance of study, (c) research-base evidence, (d) DL model plan presentation, and (e) evaluation and implementation.

## Differences Between Treatment and Control on Differences in Dual Language Models

### Cohort 1

For Cohort 1, a total of 46 action research reports were collected (24 - T group and 22 - C group). The descriptiv statistics indicated that the average score was 3.63 (SD=0.28) for the T group, and 2.73 (SD=0.54) for the C grou An independent *t*-test was completed to compare the mean scores between the two groups. The results showed tha T group significantly outperformed the C group ($t(44)=7.11$, $p=0.001$, d=2.10).

- The T group participants were able to identify and provide more insightful and accurate description of th challenges they encountered at their schools.
- T participants' evaluation of the DL model was more systematic than those from C group.
- More comprehensive and accurate plans for future implementation of the revised DL models wer addressed more often by participants in the T group.

### Cohort 2

For Cohort 2, a total of 50 action research reports were collected (26 - T group and 24 - C group). The descriptiv statistics indicated that the average score was 3.36 (SD=0.32) for the T group, and 3.25 (SD=0.32) for the C grou suggesting that the T group slightly outperformed the C group. There was no statistically significant differenc between the two groups revealed in the independent *t*-test results ($t(48) = 1.16$, $p=0.25$). The solid performanc from both groups indicated strong instruction and curriculum related to dual language leadership developme being delivered to all participants involved in the master's program.

- Compared to the C group, participants in the T group were able to provide more detailed plans with step needed for implementation, content and curriculum change, as well as specific instructional practices.
- The T group also provided a clearer and more strategic evaluation process with varied assessment too tightly aligned to the DL models.

## School Accountability and Action Projects

We were interested in knowing if the principal candidates made a difference in their EL students' Englis proficiency growth. In order to explore any differences in principal candidates' performance between T and C, a measured by the campus English proficiency before and after the master's program, the campus Texas Englis Language Proficiency Assessment (TELPAS) scores were collected in the spring of 2018 and 2019. The tota number of students who were in the principal candidates' campuses and participated in TELPAS testing was 6,31 in 2017-2018, and 6,423 in 2018–2019.

Campus English proficiency was assessed in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The percentag of students scoring at the Advanced High level in each of the language areas were calculated for the two academi years. The progress between the two academic years was then calculated for both T and C campuses. Both group improved across three language domains – listening (by 3.47%), speaking (by 3.15%), and reading (by 0.08%).

Campus English proficiency was then compared between the T and C conditions. The results indicated that both and C campus English proficiency improved in listening (by 4.87% for T and 2.06% for C) and speaking (b 3.38% for T and 2.91% for C), with greater progress in the T group. Taken together, the findings indicated that th principal candidates in the T group outperformed the C group in terms of fostering the English proficiency o students on their campus by developing and implementing successful DL models. For Cohort 2, TELPAS score for 2018-2019 were collected as baseline, and TELPAS scores for 2019-2020 were not available due to COVID-19

## Component 1 Research Dissemination: Presentations and Professional Media Sources

Component 1 has been featured on multiple media sources throughout its project life. For instance, the researc was shared though university social media, such as the Facebook pages for the Education Leadership Researc Center (ELRC) and Center for Research & Development in Dual Language & Literacy Acquisition (CRDLLA Below is a breakdown of some the presentations and media sources that featured APLUS Component 1 research:

**Table 2**

*Presentations and Media Sources Featuring APLUS Component 1 Research*

| Date | Presentation or Media Source Type | Description |
|---|---|---|
| June 4, 2019 | La Feria ISD Facebook | Summer Residency in La Feria ISD |
| June 19, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | Summer Residency in Gainesville ISD |
| June 24, 2019 | Gainesville Daily Register | Summer Residency in Gainesville ISD |
| June 24, 2019 | The Eagle Newspaper | Summer Residency in Hearne ISD |
| June 25, 2019 | Calallen ISD School Presentation | Summer Residency in Calallen ISD |
| June 27, 2019 | KBTX TV Station News | Summer Residency in Hearne ISD |
| June 27, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | Summer Residency interview with teacher |
| June 28, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | Summer Residency experience in Hearne ISD |
| June 28, 2019 | Navasota ISD School District Website | Summer Residency experience in Navasota ISD |
| July 2, 2019 | iEducate Website | Description of partnership with APLUS program |
| July 17, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | Cohort 2 master's program orientation |
| September 6, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | Advancing Educational Leadership training |
| December 14, 2019 | CRDLLA Facebook | APLUS Cohort 1 graduation |
| December 22, 2019 | ELRC Facebook | APLUS Cohort 1 graduation ceremony |
| December 22, 2019 | CRDLLA Facebook | APLUS Cohort 1 graduation ceremony |
| February 10, 2020 | ELRC Facebook | Article on APLUS Cohort 1 graduate students |
| February 10, 2020 | CRDLLA Facebook | Article on APLUS Cohort 1 graduate students |
| February 10, 2020 | CRDLLA Website | Article on APLUS Cohort 1 graduate students |
| April 17-21, 2020 | American Educational Research Association | 2020 Conference Paper |

## Disposition Scale Rubric

The students completed a self-evaluation utilizing the Disposition Scale to assess their own ethical and soci justice leadership behaviors. Students completed the Disposition Scale Rubric in the first and last semester of the program.

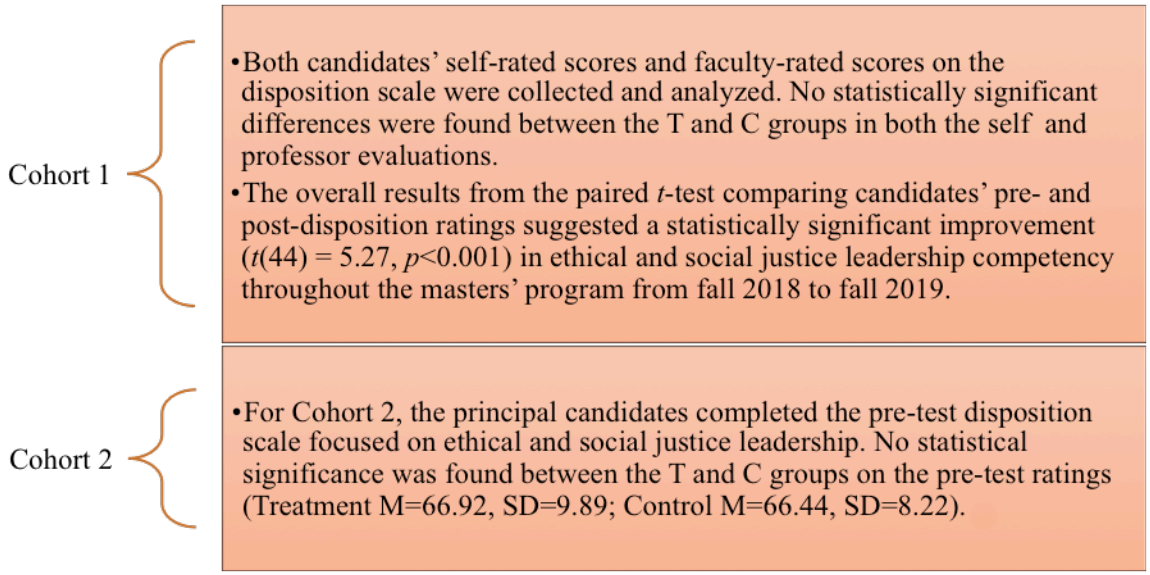


***Figure* 6. Disposition Scale treatment and control comparisons for Cohorts 1 and 2**

## GPA Differences Between Treatment and Control

Cohort 1 principal candidates' course GPAs were collected from fall 2018 (3 courses), spring 2019 (3 courses; one-credit hour course); summer 2019 (3 courses; 1 one-credit hour course), and fall 2019 (3 courses; 1 one-cred hour course). The average GPA was 3.86 (SD=0.18) for fall 2018, 3.97 (SD=0.14) for spring 2019, and 3.9 (SD=0.08) for summer 2019.

A comparison of course GPAs between the T and C groups was computed for each semester. Although the resul did not show any statistical significant differences between the two groups: fall 2018 (Treatment M=3.83, Contr M=3.88, $t(44)$ =-0.85, $p$=0.42), spring 2019 (Treatment M=4.0, Control M=3.94, $t(44)$=1.52, $p$=0.14), summe 2019 (Treatment M=3.97, Control M=3.99, $t(44)$=-0.51, $p$=0.61), and fall 2019 (Treatment M=3.98, Contr M=4.0, $t(44)$=0.96, $p$=0.34). High GPAs from both groups indicated a strong program and curriculum bein provides to all participants. The percentage of students whose GPA was 3.5 and above was 100% for T and 100% for C (no difference). Although the VMC did not distinguish T from C based on GPA, the VMC did impa instructional feedback and capacity building, as evidenced in other performance measures, such as:

- TBOP reflection cycles (Qualitative Performance Measure 5.b),
- Summer residency (Qualitative Performance Measure 6.c), and
- VMC effectiveness survey (Quantitative and Qualitative Performance Measure 9a and 9b).

## Cohort 1 Summer Residency and Partnership with iEducate

Part of the principal preparation program included a summer residency for principal candidates to practice the leadership skills in the school setting. The majority of the T group summer residencies were comprised of fou weeks of instruction, and its duration adhered to each school district's summer program schedule. APLUS als partnered with iEducate, a non-profit organization that identifies and brings together motivated undergraduat college students and high school students to assist elementary school students in underserved and underperformin schools. College and high school students engaged in a 3-1 ratio with up to 48 K-2 elementary students in summer bridge/enrichment school.

The Cohort 1 summer residencies took place in 14 Texas school districts:

1. Bryan ISD (two residencies)
2. Buffalo ISD
3. Calallen ISD
4. Eagle Pass ISD
5. Gainesville ISD
6. Hearne ISD
7. Heritage Academy Charter Schools
8. Huffman ISD
9. La Feria ISD
10. Little Elm ISD
11. Mount Pleasant ISD
12. Navasota ISD
13. San Felipe Del Rio CISD (two residencies)
14. Tornillo ISD

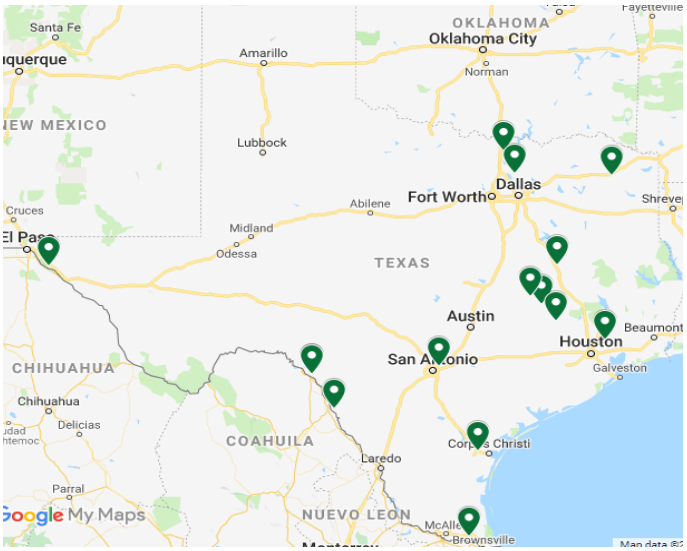


***Figure* 7. Map of Cohort 1 Summer Residencies**

### Cohort 1 Differences Between Treatment and Control in Perceived Effectiveness of the Summer Residency

When interviewed, 88% of the participants from the T group and 73% from the C group evaluated the summe residency program positively in terms of their leadership learning experiences and practices. The candidates in th T group reported that, with assistance from iEducate, they served as actual principals in the summer residenc program. Working as instructional leaders, they managed modules and curriculum, and coached teachers fo effective instruction. They also practiced being an administrator, as they collaborated with the district for service and resources, and communicated with parents about policies and procedures. They reported that their coache provided them with useful resources, critical feedback and suggestions, and psychological support during th internship.

In contrast, while participants in the C group were also able to experience real school problems, they were mostl learning by observing the administrator. They reported that the summer school internship provided them with a opportunity to shadow an administrator, but their role was still that of the observer, who was not directly involve in resolving school issues.

### Cohort 2 iEducate Summer Residency

On April 6, 2020, the Texas A&M Sponsored Research Services Office informed iEducate of a Stop Work orde The iEducate/APLUS summer residency partnership was paused due to a shelter-in-place order causing the closu of schools across Texas in an effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19. APLUS principal investigators and sta met to plan alternative options to the summer residency.

It was decided that all principal candidates would complete the following activities:

- Participate in APLUS Component 3 Virtual Professional Learning Communities (VPLCs) and interact wit Texas practicing principals.
- Participate in Massive Open Online Professional Individual Learning (MOOPIL) professional developme based on curriculum content they received in the master's program. They completed the followin MOOPILs:
    - Leading and Learning in Professional Learning Communities,
    - Using Data to Make Instructional Decisions,
    - Monitoring Curriculum and Instruction,
    - Understanding English Learners' Needs and Dual Language Programs, and
    - Critical Dialogues.
- Create one MOOPIL professional development based on curriculum content they received in the master' program. Each principal candidate was eligible to earn a stipend for creating a credible MOOPII Treatment students (formerly the iEducate Summer Residency Group) had their assigned VMCs attend th VPLCs with them in order to assist with the writing of their MOOPILs.

## References

Brown, G., & Irby, B. J. (2001). *The principal portfolio* (2nd ed.). Corwin Press.

Irby, B., J., Lara-Alecio, R., Tong, F., & Torres, M. (2017). Accelerated Preparation of Leaders for Underserved Schools (A-PLUS): Building Instructional Capacity to Impact Diverse Learners. Project Sponsored by the Supporting Effective Educator Development Grant Program. (SEED), U.S. Department of Education.