ABOUT THE ORIGINAL STUDY

How Do Teachers From Alternative Pathways Contribute to the Teaching Workforce in Urban Areas? Evidence From Kansas City

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Why It Matters

Alternative preparation routes may contribute differently to urban staffing, diversity, and student learning. This study compares Teach for America and Kansas City Teacher Residency teachers with local nonprogram teachers.

Data and Sample

The study uses Missouri administrative records to examine program placements, student achievement, and teacher retention in the Kansas City area. Value-added analyses focus on tested grades and subjects; the residency teacher sample is small.

Key Findings

- Both programs disproportionately placed teachers in charter schools and schools serving disadvantaged students.
- Program teachers were more racially diverse than the wider local workforce, although comparisons with teachers in the same districts were less uniform.
- TFA and residency teachers showed stronger math value added; early retention was particularly high for residency teachers, while TFA retention declined after the initial commitment period.

Policy Implications

- Assess alternative pathways on effectiveness, diversity, placement, and retention together rather than a single outcome.
- Interpret program comparisons in their local school and district contexts and account for differing training models and commitments.
- Replicate residency evaluations with larger samples before generalizing the favorable Kansas City findings.

Full Citation and Paper Link:
An, Y., & Koedel, C. (2021). How Do Teachers From Alternative Pathways Contribute to the Teaching Workforce in Urban Areas? Evidence From Kansas City. *AERA Open*, 7, 23328584211026952.
Read the full paper: https://doi.org/10.1177/23328584211026952
Publicly available working paper: https://caldercenter.org/publications/how-do-teachers-alternative-pathways-contribute-teaching-workforce-urban-areas

Acknowledgment and Disclaimer:
This brief was produced with support from the Walton Family Foundation. The ERRE Center summarizes the original research; any errors in this summary are the responsibility of the center. The findings and interpretations presented do not necessarily reflect the views of the center or its funders. Readers should consult the original paper for complete findings and details.