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# Does Technical Assistance Influence Teacher Preparation Program Practices and Quality? Perceptions of University-Based Teacher Educators in the US PREP Coalition

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In this research brief, we assess the effect of technical assistance on the practices and quality of teacher preparation programs (TPPs). Specifically, we analyze survey data from teacher educators at TPPs engaged with US PREP, a national technical assistance center for university-based TPPs. Using these survey data, we estimate the impact of US PREP's technical assistance to enact a transformed preparation model on perceptions of program quality and candidate competency, sharing data with teacher candidates, supports for teacher educator practice, and engaging in partnership activities with PK-12 districts. We compare preparation models (transformed vs traditional preparation models) within TPPs and compare across TPPs who have been engaged in the US PREP coalition for different lengths of time. When comparing survey responses from teacher educators in the transformed model to peers in a traditional model at the same institution, we find that those in the transformed model were more likely to share data with teacher candidates and to engage in partnership activities with PK-12 districts. For measures of program quality and supports for teacher educator practice, teacher educators in the transformed and traditional models had similar perceptions. When comparing teacher educator perceptions based on length of engagement with US PREP, we find that teacher educators at TPPs with long-term coalition membership reported more positive perceptions of program quality, data sharing with candidates, supports for teacher educator practice, and partnership activities with PK-12 districts. Overall, these results suggest positive impacts of US PREP technical assistance and identify continued opportunities for US PREP to enhance its support of TPPs. However, these survey data and analyses have limitations, including questions about the generalizability and validity of responses, survey timing, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on teacher preparation and technical assistance.

## Introduction

High-quality teacher preparation matters for the performance and retention of early-career teachers. Teacher preparation can ensure that educators enter the classroom with the knowledge and skills to succeed, develop, and stay in teaching. As such, many policymakers, teacher educators, and philanthropic groups are focused on ways to strengthen TPPs and the quality of program graduates.

Partnerships between TPPs and technical assistance centers are one approach to improve preparation quality.<sup>1</sup> In such partnerships, technical assistance centers provide TPPs with the supports and resources to enact high-quality teacher education practices that are scaled across the program and sustained over time. The goal of this mutual engagement is to strengthen TPP and PK-12 district relationships and to improve graduates' readiness to teach.

<sup>1</sup> Examples of these technical assistance centers include US PREP, Branch Alliance for Educator Diversity, Teaching Works, and the National Center for Teacher Residencies.

We assess the impact of technical assistance centers with a focus on US PREP and the TPPs it supports. Housed at Texas Tech University, US PREP is a national technical assistance center that partners with nearly 30 university-based TPPs across the country. Specifically, US PREP provides a range of technical assistance supports and resources—e.g. transformation specialists, clinical coaches, professional development sessions, data sharing—to help TPPs enact a transformed preparation model.<sup>2</sup> This transformed model emphasizes a common understanding of effective teaching, extensive opportunities to practice instruction, data analysis and data-informed decisions, highly effective teacher educators, and strong partnerships between TPPs and PK-12 districts. Enactment of a transformed preparation model is exemplified by yearlong student teaching experiences, frequent opportunities for co-teaching and high-quality feedback during coursework and student teaching, the revision of teacher education curriculum and pedagogies, intentionally selected and trained university field supervisors and mentor teachers, a focus on data sharing and use, and regular governance meetings between TPP and PK-12 district personnel.

As one component of a four-year, mixed-methods evaluation of US PREP's technical assistance, the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) developed and administered surveys to a range of teacher education stakeholders. In this research brief, we analyze survey data from university-based teacher educators to assess the impact of US PREP on TPP practices and perceptions of TPP quality. With these analyses, we hope to inform US PREP regarding the ways in which its technical assistance is perceived effective or may need further development. Likewise, we seek to provide state education agencies, TPPs, and PK-12 districts with evidence on the efficacy of technical assistance for TPP improvement.

## Background

Since fall 2018, EPIC has partnered with US PREP to evaluate the implementation and impact of its technical assistance for TPPs. This evaluation has included an extensive range of interviews with TPP and PK-12 district stakeholders, analyses of teacher candidate and mentor teacher survey responses, and the building of a statewide data system that connects TPP and PK-12 education data.<sup>3</sup> For this research brief, we analyze data from a survey of university-based teacher educators. These teacher educators include deans and associate deans; department chairs; full, adjunct, and

clinical faculty; and university field supervisors.<sup>4</sup> Working in partnership with US PREP, we have administered this university personnel survey on three occasions—Spring 2020, Spring 2021, and Spring 2022. Teacher educators at preparation programs in US PREP's first and second cohorts participated in all three survey administrations; teacher educators at preparation programs in US PREP's third cohort participated in the Spring 2021 and Spring 2022 survey administrations.<sup>5</sup> For these analyses, we assess teacher educator survey data from all three survey administrations and for TPPs across all three US PREP cohorts.

The university personnel survey includes items on the extent to which a program has a shared understanding of effective instruction, opportunities for teacher candidate practice, feedback to teacher candidates, program data use, teacher educator practices, and engagement between university field supervisors and PK-12 district personnel. Many survey items are answered by all university personnel; some of the survey items are only answered by university field supervisors who oversee teacher candidates during student teaching. Survey items use one of three response scales: strongly disagree to strongly agree, how often certain preparation activities occur, and whether a preparation activity occurs at all. For items on a strongly disagree to strongly agree scale or items on a frequency scale, we created dichotomous outcome measures that indicate whether the survey response was in a particular category. For example, we created outcome measures equal to '1' if the respondent strongly agreed with a respective item. We also have dichotomous outcome measures for survey items on whether (yes/no) a particular preparation activity occurred. To enhance the relevance of our results, we have aligned our outcome measures with the four quality domains in US PREP's Developmental Framework.<sup>6</sup> Those domains focus on program quality and candidate competency, data sharing and data use, supports for teacher educator practice, and engaging in partnership activities with PK-12 districts. In our results sections below, we present our survey findings organized within these four categories.

To assess the impact of US PREP on TPP practices and perceptions of program quality, we estimate two sets of regression models. First, we estimate *transformation models* that compare the survey responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their institution's transformed model to the survey responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their institution's traditional model. With this comparison, we identify whether perceptions of program quality and practices

<sup>2</sup> Please see the following for all 14 components of US PREP's transformed model: <https://www.usprepnationalcenter.com/our-model>

<sup>3</sup> See the following for prior deliverables from our US PREP evaluation: [https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/11/EPIC\\_US-PREP\\_survey\\_analyses\\_2021\\_final.pdf](https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/11/EPIC_US-PREP_survey_analyses_2021_final.pdf); <https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/10/Bringing-an-Implementation-Science-Lens-to-Program-Transformation-Stakeholders-Perceptions-of-US-PREPs-Technical-Assistance-for-Inaugural-Sites.pdf> and <https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/10/Bringing-an-Implementation-Science-Lens-to-Program-Transformation-Stakeholders-Perceptions-of-US-PREPs-Technical-Assistance-for-Cohort-Two-Sites.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> In the US PREP transformed model, the university field supervisor is often called a site coordinator. For consistency across transformed and traditional models, we use the term field supervisor throughout this brief.

<sup>5</sup> Generally, TPPs in US PREP's inaugural cohort started working with US PREP in January 2016. TPPs in US PREP's second and third cohorts began working with US PREP in August 2019 and January 2020, respectively.

<sup>6</sup> See the following for US PREP's Developmental Framework: [US PREP Developmental Framework](#)

differ between a transformed and traditional preparation model. These analyses control for the year of survey administration, the demographics of field supervisors, the number of candidates a field supervisor oversees, and how long the individual has worked as a field supervisor. These models also include a TPP fixed effect, meaning we compare perceptions of field supervisors within the same preparation program. Second, we estimate *cohort models* that compare the survey responses of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP's inaugural cohort to the survey responses of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP's second and third cohorts. With this comparison, we identify whether perceptions of preparation quality and practices are different at institutions that have engaged with US PREP for a longer period of time. These analyses control for the year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics, and the role (e.g. department chair, full-faculty, adjunct-faculty) of the teacher educator.<sup>7</sup>

**Table 1** presents descriptive data for the teacher educators who responded to our university personnel survey. There are over 850 survey responses from teacher educators at 21 TPPs in the US

PREP coalition. Responses are relatively evenly spread across survey administrations. A majority of responses are from female and white teacher educators. Likewise, a majority of responses come from university field supervisors and from teacher educators at Cohort 2 institutions. Among field supervisors, 34 percent of responses come from those who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's transformed model; 42 percent of responses come from those who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's traditional model.<sup>8</sup>

Before discussing results, we highlight the limitations of our survey data and analyses. These limitations include concerns about response rates and the generalizability of responses. More specifically, we do not possess data on the number of university-based teacher educators who were eligible to take this survey and we do not know whether the perceptions of respondents are similar to the perceptions of teacher educators who did not respond.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, we note that these are self-reported perceptions of program practices and quality. We do not have observational measures of changes in program practices and quality. There are

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for University Personnel Survey Responses**

TEACHER EDUCATOR CHARACTERISTICS		
# of Survey Responses		862
Unique # of TPPs		21
% Spring 2020		29.00
% Spring 2021		37.35
% Spring 2022		33.65
<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b>		
% Female		82.13
% American Indian		0.70
% Asian		2.55
% Black		9.40
% Hispanic		14.50
% Multiracial		4.06
% Other Race/Ethnicity		1.62
% White		65.55
<b>COHORT</b>		
% Cohort 1 US PREP		25.99
% Cohort 2 US PREP		53.48
% Cohort 3 US PREP		20.53
<b>ROLES</b>		
% TPP Leadership		6.61
% TPP Full Faculty		21.23
% TPP Adjunct/Clinical Faculty		15.89
% TPP Field Supervisors		56.26

Note: This table presents descriptive data on our university personnel survey respondents.

<sup>7</sup> We do not display regression coefficients in this brief. Instead, post-estimation, we generate predicted probabilities from our regression analyses and display these for our transformation and cohort models. This approach allows us to display differences in outcomes between groups and the level of outcomes for each group.

<sup>8</sup> Among field supervisors, 24 percent of responses come from those who supervise teacher candidates in both their university's transformed and traditional models. These individuals are included in analyses but results are not reported in this brief.

<sup>9</sup> To administer the university personnel survey, EPIC and US PREP provided study contacts at TPPs with a link to the survey instrument. Study contacts at TPPs were responsible for disseminating the survey to colleagues at their institutions, with EPIC and US PREP providing regular updates on the number of responses. Survey responses are anonymous.

also potential concerns regarding survey timing and the tenure of TPPs’ engagement with US PREP. In particular, the initial administration of the university personnel survey (in Spring 2020) was four years after Cohort 1 TPPs began working with US PREP and nearly a year after Cohort 2 TPPs began working with US PREP. There are not baseline data capturing the perceptions of university-based teacher educators before their institutions engage with US PREP.<sup>10</sup> Lastly, we note that our survey administrations—Spring 2020, Spring 2021, and Spring 2022—overlap with the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic had profound impacts on PK-12 and higher education and influenced the ways in which US PREP engaged in its technical assistance. This context should be kept in mind when reviewing survey results.

## Program Quality and Candidate Competency

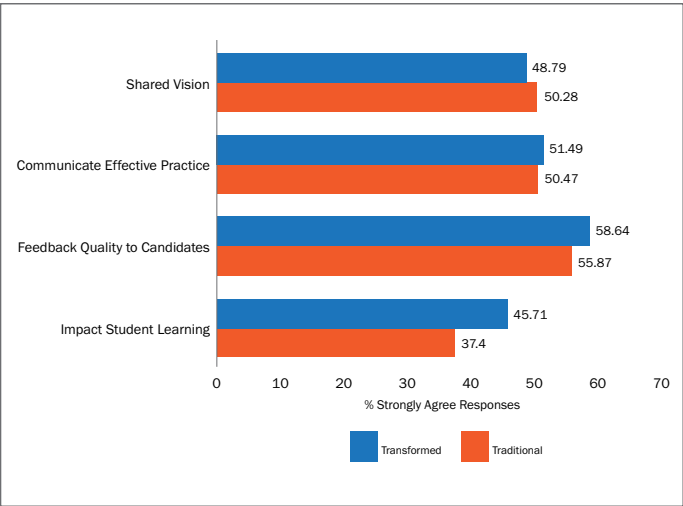
**Figures 1 and 2** display results from our *transformation* and *cohort* models for outcome measures on program quality and candidate competency. These outcome measures capture perceptions of the following: (1) the extent to which the TPP has a shared vision for effective teaching; (2) the extent to which the TPP communicates that vision; (3) the quality of feedback provided to teacher candidates in coursework and clinical experiences; and (4) whether

the candidate is well prepared to positively impact student learning. Data in **Figures 1 and 2** are predicted probabilities for the percentage of strongly agree survey responses.

Overall, **Figure 1** shows that there are no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of the transformed versus traditional model. Field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university’s transformed model have similar perceptions of program quality and candidate competency as peers who only supervise teacher candidates in their university’s traditional model. For example, approximately 59 percent of the survey responses for field supervisors in their university’s transformed model strongly agree that their program provides high quality feedback to candidates. The comparable value is nearly 56 percent for field supervisors in their university’s traditional model.

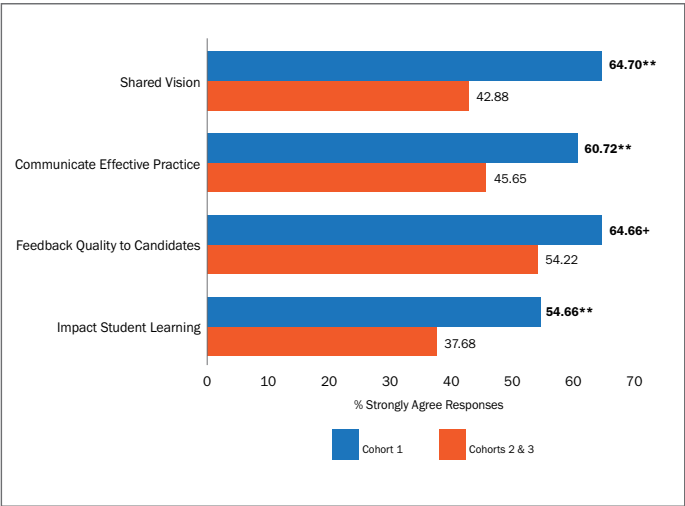
**Figure 2** indicates that there are large and statistically significant differences in the perceptions of program quality and candidate competency across US PREP cohorts. Relative to teacher educators at institutions in US PREP’s second and third cohorts, teacher educators at universities in US PREP’s inaugural cohort are more likely to strongly agree that their program has a shared vision for effective practice, that their program communicates that vision well, that their program provides high-quality feedback to candidates, and that their candidates are well prepared to positively

**Figure 1: Transformation Model Results—Program Quality and Candidate Competency**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the perceptions of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university’s transformed model to the perceptions of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university’s traditional model. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics and experience, and a TPP fixed effect. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between transformed and traditional models at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

**Figure 2: Cohort Model Results—Program Quality and Candidate Competency**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the perceptions of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP’s inaugural cohort to the perceptions of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP’s second and third cohorts. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics, and the role of the respondent. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between Cohort 1 and Cohorts 2 and 3 at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

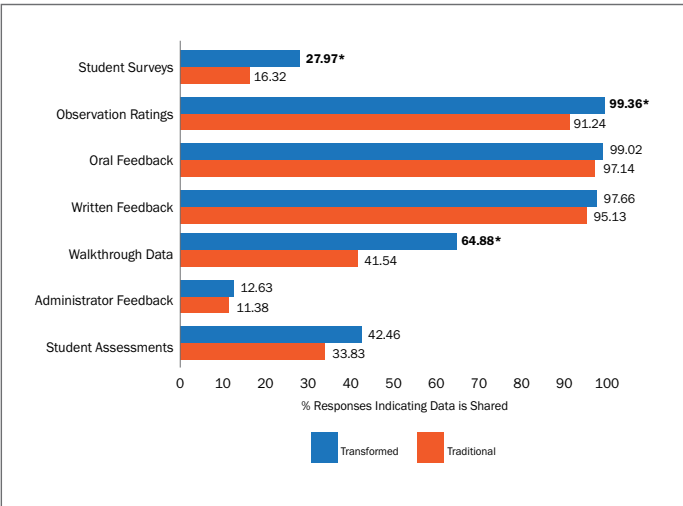
<sup>10</sup> US PREP is shifting the administration of the university personnel survey to capture baseline data on teacher educators’ perceptions as their institutions begin engaging with US PREP.

impact student learning. For example, teacher educators at Cohort 1 institutions are nearly 22 percentage points more likely to strongly agree that their program has a shared vision for effective teaching practice. Likewise, they are nearly 17 percentage points more likely to strongly agree that their candidates are well prepared to positively impact student learning. While these results suggest that program quality may be higher at institutions engaged with US PREP for a longer period of time, it is also important to note that differences across cohorts may be attributable to differences in the institutions that chose to initially partner with US PREP.<sup>11</sup>

## Program Data Sharing

**Figures 3 and 4** display results from our *transformation* and *cohort* models for outcome measures on data sharing. In particular, these are dichotomous outcomes for whether university field supervisors report sharing the following data elements with teacher candidates during their student teaching experience: PK-12 student surveys, observation ratings, oral feedback, written feedback, walkthrough assessments, school administrator feedback, and PK-12 student assessments. Data in **Figures 3 and 4** are predicted probabilities for the percentage of field supervisors that report sharing the respective data element with their teacher candidates.

**Figure 3: Transformation Model Results—Program Data Sharing**

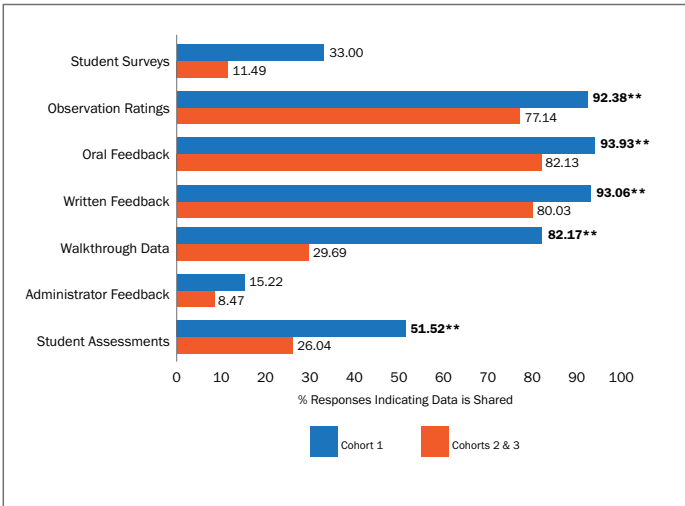


Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's transformed model to the responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's traditional model. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics and experience, and a TPP fixed effect. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between transformed and traditional models at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

Relative to field supervisors of traditional model candidates, **Figure 3** indicates that field supervisors of transformed model candidates are more likely to share PK-12 student surveys, observation ratings, and walkthrough assessments with their student teachers. For example, field supervisors in the transformed model report that they are 23 percentage points more likely to conduct walkthroughs during student teaching and share those data with their candidates. This finding is notable since frequent, informal walkthroughs are a key activity for field supervisors in the transformed model. Beyond comparisons between models, **Figure 3** also highlights that certain types of data sharing are more/less common with transformed model candidates. Observation ratings, oral feedback, and written feedback are very commonly shared with transformed model candidates; field supervisors less frequently share student assessments, student surveys, and administrator feedback.

**Figure 4** shows that field supervisors at universities in US PREP's inaugural cohort report that they are more likely to share observation ratings, oral feedback, written feedback, walkthrough assessments, and PK-12 student assessments with their student teachers. Once again, the sharing of observation ratings, oral feedback, and written feedback with student teachers is very common. Furthermore, the finding for conducting walkthroughs during student teaching and sharing those data with candidates is notable given the emphasis US PREP places on field supervisor

**Figure 4: Cohort Model Results—Program Data Sharing**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the responses of field supervisors at universities in US PREP's inaugural cohort to the responses of field supervisors at universities in US PREP's second and third cohorts. Models control for year of survey administration and teacher educator demographics. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between Cohort 1 and Cohorts 2 and 3 at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

<sup>11</sup> We also estimated models to assess how survey responses may have changed over time. One key finding is that in Spring 2021 and Spring 2022 (relative to Spring 2020) a lower percentage of teacher educator respondents strongly agreed that their candidates were well prepared to positively impact student learning. This may highlight ways in which the COVID-19 pandemic impacts TPPs and technical assistance.



walkthroughs as part of the transform model. Field supervisors at Cohort 1 institutions are 52 percentage points—82 to 30 percent—more likely than field supervisors at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions to report that they engage in frequent, informal walkthroughs.

The university personnel survey also includes items on the extent to which teacher educators believe that their programs consistently and collaboratively analyze data and use those data to inform program improvement. There were no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of field supervisors in the transformed versus traditional model for those items. However, teacher educators at Cohort 1 institutions, relative to teacher educators at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions, were 22 percentage points more likely to strongly agree (49 to 27) that their programs effectively analyzed and used data for program improvement.

## Supports for Teacher Educator Practice

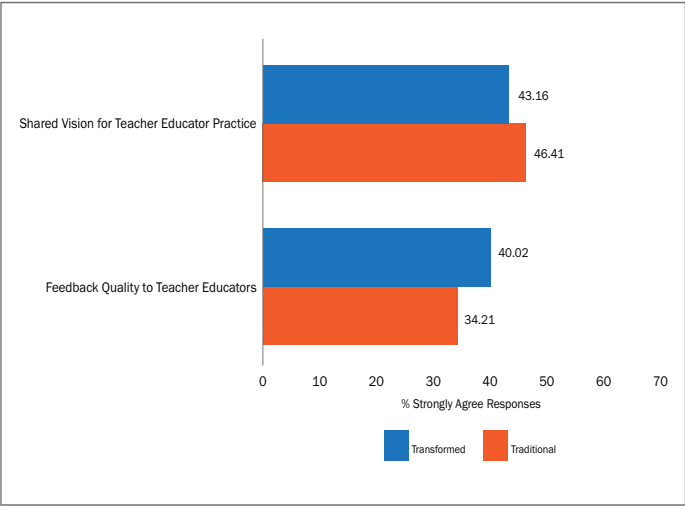
**Figures 5 and 6** display results from our *transformation* and *cohort* models for outcome measures on teacher educator supports. These outcome measures focus on the extent to which the TPP has a shared vision for effective teacher educator practices and the quality of feedback provided to teacher educators about their practice. Data

in **Figures 5 and 6** are predicted probabilities for the percentage of strongly agree survey responses.

In considering survey items on supports for teacher educator practice, **Figure 5** shows that there are no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of field supervisors who only supervise transformed model candidates relative to their peers who only supervise traditional model candidates. Approximately 43 percent of field supervisor respondents in the transformed model strongly agree that their program has a shared vision for effective teacher educator practices and 40 percent strongly agree that they receive high-quality feedback on their practices as teacher educators.

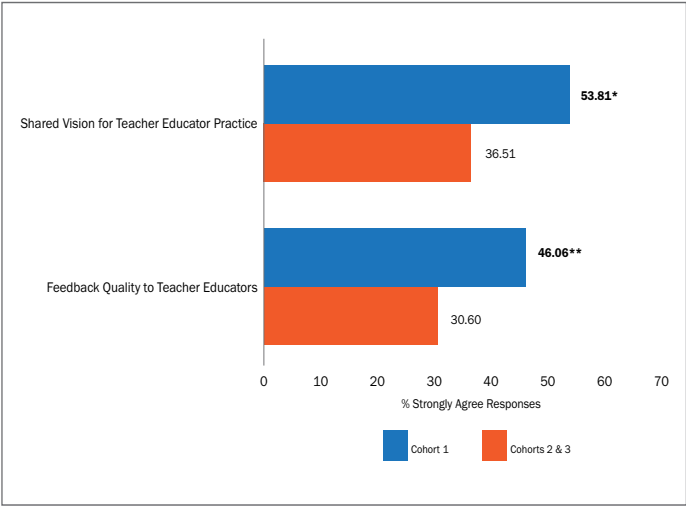
**Figure 6** indicates that there are significant differences in the perceptions of teacher educators across US PREP cohorts. Specifically, teacher educators at Cohort 1 institutions are 17 percentage points more likely than peers at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions to strongly agree that their program has a shared vision for effective teacher educator practices and 15 percentage points more likely to strongly agree that they receive high-quality feedback on their practices as teacher educators.

**Figure 5: Transformation Model Results—Supports for Teacher Educator Practice**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the perceptions of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's transformed model to the perceptions of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's traditional model. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics and experience, and a TPP fixed effect. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between transformed and traditional models at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

**Figure 6: Cohort Model Results—Supports for Teacher Educator Practice**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the perceptions of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP's inaugural cohort to the perceptions of teacher educators at TPPs in US PREP's second and third cohorts. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics, and the role of the respondent. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between Cohort 1 and Cohorts 2 and 3 at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

## Partnership Activities with K-12 Districts

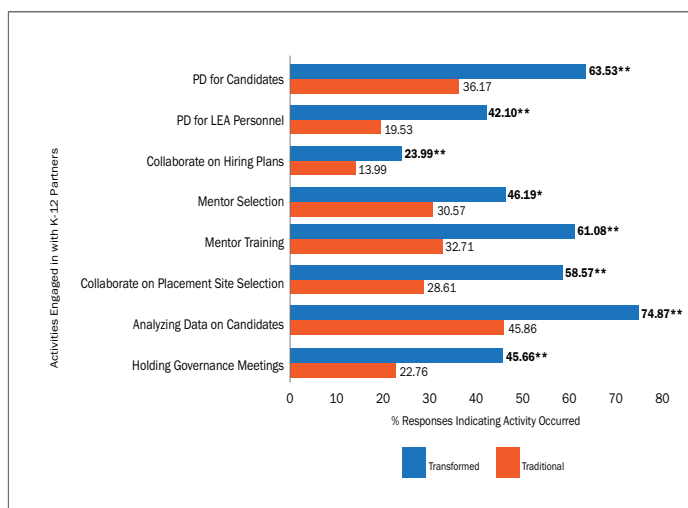
Finally, **Figures 7 and 8** display results from our *transformation* and *cohort* models for outcome measures focused on interactions between university field supervisors and PK-12 district partners. These are dichotomous outcomes for whether university field supervisors report engaging in the following activities with PK-12 district partners: providing professional development (PD) for candidates, providing PD for district personnel, collaborating on hiring plans, selecting mentor teachers, training mentor teachers, collaborating on placement site selection, analyzing candidate data, and holding governance meetings. Data in **Figures 7 and 8** are predicted probabilities for the percentage of field supervisors that report engaging in the respective activity with PK-12 partners.

Relative to field supervisors of traditional model candidates, **Figure 7** shows that field supervisors of transformed model candidates are significantly more likely to engage in all eight of the TPP/PK-12 district activities we analyzed. For example, field supervisors of transformed model candidates report that they are 27 percentage points more likely to provide PD for teacher candidates, 29 percentage points more likely to participate in mentor teacher training, and 23 percentage points more likely to hold governance meetings with PK-12 district partners. These results strongly suggest that enacting a transformed preparation model pushes

TPPs to engage in more meaningful ways with their PK-12 district partners. Despite these positive findings for the transformed model, the results may also highlight areas for continued improvement. In particular, less than half of transformed model field supervisors report that they help provide PD for PK-12 district personnel, collaborate on hiring plans, help select mentor teachers, and hold governance meetings.

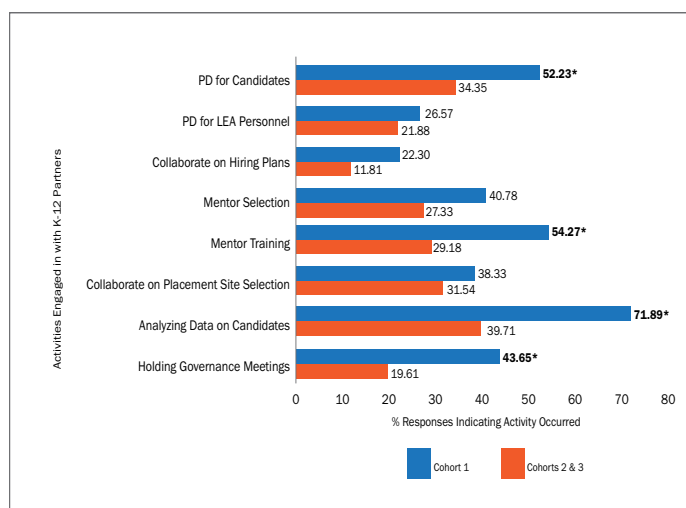
When comparing across cohorts, **Figure 8** indicates that field supervisors at Cohort 1 institutions are more likely to report providing PD for candidates, training mentor teachers, analyzing candidate data, and holding governance meetings. For example, relative to peers at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions, field supervisors at Cohort 1 institutions are 32 percentage points more likely to report analyzing teacher candidate data with PK-12 partners. As with the *transformation* model findings described above, these cohort model results also suggest opportunities for deeper engagement between TPPs and PK-12 districts, especially in areas such as providing PD for PK-12 personnel and collaborating on hiring plans and placement site selection.<sup>12</sup>

**Figure 7: Transformation Model Results—Partnership Activities with PK-12 Districts**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's transformed model to the responses of field supervisors who only supervise teacher candidates in their university's traditional model. Models control for year of survey administration, teacher educator demographics and experience, and a TPP fixed effect. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between transformed and traditional models at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

**Figure 8: Cohort Model Results—Partnership Activities with PK-12 Districts**



Note: This figure displays predicted probabilities from regression models comparing the responses of field supervisors at universities in US PREP's inaugural cohort to the responses of field supervisors at universities in US PREP's second and third cohorts. Models control for year of survey administration and teacher educator demographics. +, \*, and \*\* indicate statistically significant differences between Cohort 1 and Cohorts 2 and 3 at the 0.10, 0.05, and 0.01 levels, respectively.

<sup>12</sup> We also estimated models to assess how the likelihood of engaging in these partnership activities may have changed over time. In Spring 2021 and/or Spring 2022 (relative to Spring 2020) a lower percentage of field supervisors at Cohort 1 institutions reported providing PD for candidates and participating in mentor teacher selection and training. Again, this may highlight impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and/or challenges in sustaining transform model activities over time.

## Discussion

There is a need for rigorous, multi-stakeholder perspectives on the extent to which technical assistance for TPPs impacts preparation practices and quality. For four years EPIC has engaged in such analyses in partnership with US PREP. Our recent work (Fall 2021) indicated that teacher candidates and mentor teachers in the transformed model report more positive perceptions of preparation practices and quality.<sup>13</sup> With this research brief, we extended our analyses to assess the perspectives of university-based teacher educators.

When comparing *within TPPs*, there is some evidence that the transformed model differs from a traditional preparation model in desired ways. In particular, field supervisors for transformed model candidates were more likely to report that they shared certain data elements with their student teachers and that they engaged in key preparation activities with PK-12 partners. These results highlight the potential impacts of US PREP on program data usage and partnerships with PK-12 districts. However, across transformed and traditional models, we find no differences in the perceptions of field supervisors for survey items on program quality and candidate competency and a program's supports for teacher educator practice. In considering these findings, we note that survey items on data use and TPP/PK-12 partnerships assessed whether a given event or activity occurred, while survey items on program quality and supports for teacher educator practices assessed teacher educators' perceptions. We may expect to see changes in practices—such as data use and partnership activities with PK-12 districts—before changes in perceptions of quality. Continued analyses should assess whether differences in the perceptions of teacher educators in the transformed versus traditional model develop with time.<sup>14</sup>

When comparing *across TPPs*, we find that teacher educators at institutions that have been in the US PREP coalition for a longer period of time (Cohort 1 versus Cohorts 2 and 3) report more positive perceptions of program quality and practices. This holds for survey items on program quality and teacher educator practices (assessing respondents' perceptions) and for survey items on data use and partnerships with PK-12 districts (assessing whether respondents report completing certain activities). The differences across cohorts are relatively large in magnitude and suggest that US PREP may have positively influenced Cohort 1 programs. There are other possible explanations, however, including Cohort 1 institutions being inherently different than other programs that joined the US PREP coalition in later cohorts. Challenges to data

collection—i.e. the survey administration transpired during the COVID-19 pandemic and began well after Cohort 1 programs entered the US PREP coalition—limit our ability to better isolate the relationships between length of engagement with US PREP and changes in program practice. Moving forward, we encourage US PREP to collect perspectives of teacher educators at baseline, ensure a high percentage of teacher educators complete the survey, and track changes in perceptions and reported practices over time.

These survey data highlight areas in which US PREP can enhance its technical assistance. There are improvements to be made in the sharing and use of data with teacher candidates and in the collaboration between teacher educators and PK-12 personnel. For example, despite the positive *transformation* and *cohort* model results, many field supervisors report that they do not share student survey or assessment data with teacher candidates and that they do not engage in mentor teacher selection or training. Furthermore, the results indicate that teacher educators' perceptions of program practices and quality are meaningfully lower at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions. While these institutions have engaged with US PREP for a shorter period of time, much of which was impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need for US PREP to ensure that these institutions are making progress towards a scaled enactment of the transformed model.<sup>15</sup>

For TPPs and PK-12 districts, our analyses of teacher candidate, mentor teacher, and teacher educator survey data suggest that US PREP technical assistance enhances perceptions of program practices and quality. This is important evidence as TPPs and their PK-12 partners consider ways to strengthen teacher pipelines. As a next step, it is important to assess impacts on the performance and retention of program graduates who experienced a transformed model. Towards this end, EPIC is partnering with stakeholders in Texas to build a statewide teacher preparation data system. This work connects TPP completer data to statewide PK-12 administrative data on schools, teachers, and students. With this data system we are already assessing student teaching placements and teacher employment and retention in Texas public schools. We will continue to study these outcomes and will soon begin to examine teacher effectiveness. These analyses will allow us to further assess US PREP's technical assistance and its impacts on TPP practices and quality.

<sup>13</sup> See the following for the results from these survey analyses: [https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/11/EPIC\\_US-PREP\\_survey\\_analyses\\_2021\\_final.pdf](https://epic.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1268/2021/11/EPIC_US-PREP_survey_analyses_2021_final.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> We note another possibility for these results: that field supervisors, depending upon the strength of their connection to program faculty/practices, may have less awareness of certain program elements (e.g. whether the program has a shared vision for effective candidate and teacher educator practices). While this is possible, field supervisors in the US PREP transformed model are intended to be a key linchpin for program quality and connections to PK-12 sites. As such, they are expected to have awareness of program practices.

<sup>15</sup> In further analyses we found that teacher educators' perceptions of program practices and quality at Cohort 2 and 3 institutions have not significantly changed across our survey administrations. To contextualize this finding, it is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic may have limited US PREP's technical assistance and TPP's progress.





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