



T-BAR 2 Summary: Sonoma County Office of Education

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Summary of T-BAR 2: Sonoma County Office of Education

Introduction

This report provides a summary of the Teacher Based Reform (T-BAR) grant activities specific to the partnership with Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE). The 2014-2015 fiscal year represented the final year of T-BAR grant funding for the Pacific Coast Teacher Innovation Network initiative. In addition to teachers, this final iteration (T-BAR 2) of the model included administrators, coaches and district leadership in the site-based teams as a way to support sustainability and build capacity within the school and district sites. Resourcing Excellence in Education (REEd) at UC Davis first asked SCOE to act as an intermediary partner in a design phase which took place over the summer of 2014. SCOE subsequently recruited four districts and eight schools (20 Teachers/13 Administrators) to be a part of the implementation phase activities (September 2014-June 2015). A complete list of individuals, schools and districts that participated is in Appendix A. REEd documented Sonoma County activities throughout the year via observation of team meetings, phone interviews, and a teacher and administrator end of the year survey. Although the work of each of the teams cannot be described in detail in this summary, specific examples of the work the school and district teams did will be highlighted.

The T-BAR 2 grant activities in Sonoma County appear to have had a variety of impacts on teachers and administrators who participated. Both teachers and administrators responded that they were collaborating more frequently following T-BAR 2 and that this had resulted in a culture change at their sites that was primarily manifested by a new openness and increased communication. Team members described the value of having a common goal that their team was working towards. The time to meet together regularly was an important aspect of the T-BAR 2 work. Both teachers and administrators described a deepening of knowledge. This included having a deeper understanding of what their colleagues knew and seeing their colleagues as a valuable resource. Teachers mentioned the importance of having administrator and district support for their T-BAR 2 work. Many teachers commented that administrator and district involvement made them feel supported and heard. Participants also reported that working on T-BAR 2 had made them more enthusiastic about being a teacher or administrator.

T-BAR Activities

A SCOE design team, made up of a diverse group of teachers, administrators and district leaders, was established in the summer of 2014. The design team participated in a planning phase facilitated by REEd. During the planning phase the SCOE design team was introduced to Ann Jaquith's Instructional Capacity Building (ICB) Framework as well as various strategies and tools used to support a process of continuous improvement and learning. During the planning phase the SCOE team invested a substantial amount of time developing a driving question that would guide their work during the year. Given the fact that administrators and district leadership were working alongside teams of teachers, the group focused their question on the importance of

balancing teacher voice with administrator leadership and district needs. The driving question the SCOE teams came up with as a group was: *“How might we balance an entity’s autonomy and system coherence to foster professional growth?”*

By the end of the planning phase SCOE had recruited four sub-teams with additional participants from Sonoma County school sites and/or districts, each of which developed their own prototype plans with different areas of focus and activities after being introduced to many of the tools and resources shared in the planning phase. This implementation phase began in fall of 2014 and continued until spring of 2015. All of the prototype plans focused on the supports needed to sustain professional learning related to implementation of Common Core State Standards or Next Generation Science Standards. During the implementation phase the four teams met monthly (on average) to plan, reflect and revise. In addition, all of the teams were brought together by SCOE for three cross-team county-wide meetings during the year. These meetings were designed for teams to share content and ideas across schools and districts. The meetings were also an opportunity for REEd and SCOE to share some processes and content with the teams, such as information on how to foster cycles of continuous improvement.

As an example of the types of prototypes that were tested, one of the SCOE teams focused on Common Core math implementation. The team targeted specific math skills that they wanted elementary students to have, completed a needs assessment, and used the ICB framework to tap into their current resources and areas of need. The team as a whole agreed on a shared goal and developed a structure for working together during the year. As a result of these initial activities the team recognized that they needed to increase their content knowledge on Common Core Math. SCOE provided the team with 6 ½ days of targeted math professional development and coaching. The team met monthly to discuss strategies, share ideas and plan. Teachers videotaped themselves teaching and shared the videos during team meetings. Teachers also observed one another’s classrooms and did some peer coaching.

The team reported that T-BAR 2 teachers developed a common language across grade levels. In addition, the team felt that there was a real shift to a more open culture at their school site where teachers, administrators and other educational leaders were collaborating openly. Teachers described not only seeing shifts in their own practice but also shifts in their students’ practice. The team spoke, as well, of being very grateful for the time to collaborate. As one team member put it, *“The clock is a gift of time.”* The team organized weekly grade level meetings as well as weekly leadership meetings and math support group meetings. The team lead summarized these activities in an interview by saying, *“There are increased opportunities for staff to talk about the work they are doing in math...We started a math support group which is held two times a month. It’s a place for teachers to share successes and challenges. Teachers lift each other up with shared stories of both struggles and triumphs.”*

Summary of Conversations with Team Leads

Initially, contact between REEd and the prototype teams was limited. However, when it became apparent that it would be useful to communicate directly with the prototype teams about the work they were doing and to get their feedback, input and ideas, REEd staff scheduled regular check-in phone calls that included both the point person at SCOE and the prototype team leads. During the check-ins, teams were asked to describe the work they had been doing as well as any successes and challenges which provided REEd with an additional way to document the process.

The information gathered at the monthly check-ins suggests that teams were working together closely, meeting regularly and reflecting on their plans and goals. All of the teams described initial team building activities and discussions about common goals and needs. Several of the teams also described having to modify their original plans because they were overly ambitious (e.g. focus on math vs. all content areas). All of the teams described the value of having dedicated time to meet and collaborate on their targeted professional learning goals.

The check-ins with team leads also provided an opportunity for REEd to ask how the teams were using resources. Each of the teams described the value of attending to the instructional resources detailed in Jaquith's capacity building framework. For example, one team lead commented, *"We also used the ICB Framework again in April. We reviewed our original version and reflected on where we see ourselves now. We all agreed that we had seen the most change in the area of professional relationships. We now know each other's strengths much more clearly and see each other as resources we can turn to. We talked about how valuable it was to have [a curriculum specialist] from the district office attend all of our meetings. Teachers talked about how this made them feel heard."*

Most of the team leads described how professional relationships and knowledge had expanded and deepened through the collaborative T-BAR 2 work. One team lead described: *"There has definitely been an increase in collaboration. Teachers are now sharing both their frustrations and their enthusiasm. We have been working on Math Talks and have been amazed at our students' abilities. The more people shared their experiences the more camaraderie increased. We learned to share the good and the bad."*

Given the focus of the SCOE teams on CCSS implementation there were also examples provided by teams of how student skills had grown through the T-BAR 2 work. Most of the teams targeted specific students skills and met together regularly to discuss student work. An exemplar quote from the conversations with team leads is: *"It has been interesting and exciting to use the observation system of students. Teachers have created purposeful partnerships (pairs) that work together on lesson study. They observe each other's classrooms and focus on students... This approach is working well."*

REEd staff also asked team leads how the guiding question was driving their ongoing work. It was clear that this question played an important role in how teams collaborated and helped the

teams to focus on balancing teacher voice with system level needs. For example, one team lead described how the driving question was *“the lens which we use and we know this balance is important. As an example, teacher voice was the genesis for the release days. We want this to be teacher driven.”*

The prototype teams were able to develop a structure where administrators were learning alongside their teachers and coaches and this level of involvement made the team members feel valued and supported in ways that were not happening prior to T-BAR 2. Evidence of this was captured during observations of team meetings but also in the T-BAR 2 teacher survey (full summary below) in which the majority of teachers responded that their participation led to:

- *greater trust between teachers and administrators,*
- *an increase in opportunities for teachers to become teacher leaders;*
- *more support to collaborate effectively; and*
- *increased access to resources to support their work.*

Challenges that team leads mentioned encountering throughout the year included finding time to meet regularly, lack of consistent administrator participation, the complexity of Common Core State Standards, and difficulty scheduling substitutes for classroom observations.

Summary of Conversations with SCOE Lead

The conversations that REEd staff had with the SCOE point person during the year provided a good summary of the overall activities, as well as successes and challenges each of the school or district teams was having. The SCOE lead saw her role as helping teams keep the work on track, providing resources where necessary and facilitating communication. SCOE set up a T-BAR 2 online file sharing site for teams to post and share documents. In addition, the SCOE lead started the year by interviewing all of the teachers working on each of the teams. This provided the teachers with an opportunity to voice their concerns and needs. This also gave SCOE a good snapshot of the unique context at each site and a realization that each team was at a different starting point. The SCOE lead described how T-BAR 2 had given her the opportunity to learn a great deal about the districts/schools in the county. This information was used during the year to tailor supports for each team and will continue to inform the work of SCOE next year. As an example, several of the sites needed additional guidance in keeping the work teacher driven (e.g. including teachers in the decision making process) which required some training and coaching. Most of the team members (teachers and administrators) attended a professional training on coaching.

Several challenges that SCOE noticed teams encountered in their work were deciding on a focus, changing the culture to be truly teacher driven, and finding the time for the team to meet regularly. Another challenge that SCOE noted for some teams was agreeing on the nature of teacher based reform and what this looks like. By the end of the year the SCOE lead noted that

all teams had become teacher driven (to varying degrees) and that T-BAR 2 teachers were taking on new leadership roles in their sites/districts.

SCOE also described ways that the work of T-BAR 2 teams was being shared across the county with other stakeholders. For example, a district superintendent on one of the teams shared the T-BAR 2 model at a Superintendents' leadership meeting. The county also hosted a monthly Common Core Implementation Team and the work of several T-BAR 2 teams was highlighted and shared with this group. T-BAR 2 teams also presented at a variety of district level meetings.

It was clear from the SCOE lead's comments that the work on T-BAR 2 had begun to change the way the county viewed their role in supporting teachers, schools and districts. Specifically she said, *"It is challenging to think about our role...we all realized that it was time to change what we're doing. Our work really needs to get closer to classroom teachers and address their needs and beliefs. We need to give them rich experiences about teaching and learning. We need to address the underlying beliefs of teachers about their own capacity."*

End of the Year Meeting

At the end of the year all of the SCOE teams met as an entire group. Each team shared a presentation describing the work they had done over the year, what they had accomplished and their plans for the coming year. Although each team had a different focus they all spoke about the importance of having time and the organizational structures in place to support their collaborative meetings. Several school site teams also described the power of having teachers open their doors and have peers and administrators visit and observe. School site teams were asked to respond to several questions in an end of the year reflection and an example from one site is shared in Appendix B.

At the end of the year meeting, team members were asked to share their primary take-aways from the work they had done on T-BAR 2 and they shared their impressions of what was most valuable:

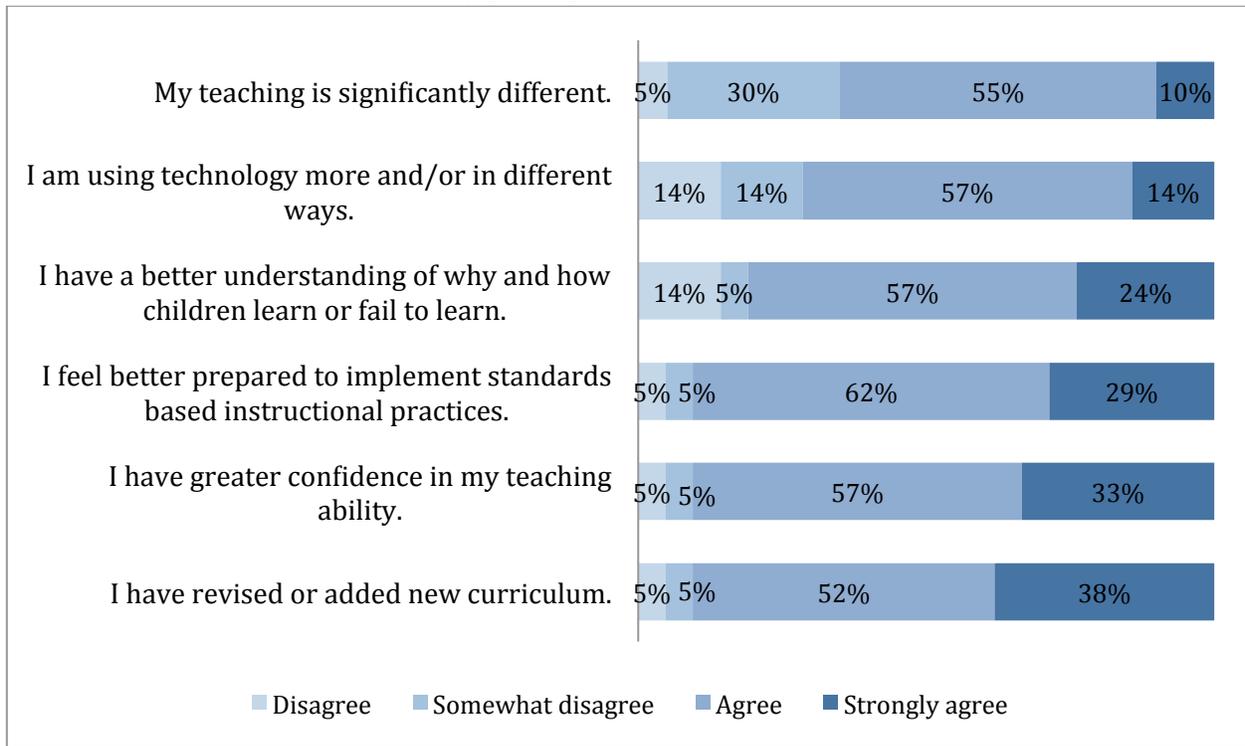
- Establishing a common goal
- Using guiding documents/frameworks (ICB Framework and Cycles of Inquiry)
- Deepening professional relationships
- Seeing teachers as a resource for teachers and administrators
- Empowering teachers
- Valuing district support and knowledge
- Keeping the focus on students
- Establishing cultural norms
- Creating an environment where it is safe to take risks, be inventive and creative
- Having a point person to lead the work
- Opening up classrooms (observe, discuss, share)

The end of the year meeting provided an opportunity for T-BAR 2 teams to share what they had learned during their collaborations. The teams all spoke of the productive challenge and risk taking involved in making meaningful changes. In addition, many teachers described how T-BAR 2 made them feel valued and that they were being treated as professionals. The spirit of the end of the year meeting cannot be captured in writing but numerous teachers described how the project had reinvigorated their teaching practice and made them feel more enthusiastic about teaching than they had felt in years. As one teacher described it, the enthusiasm and energy generated during T-BAR 2 was a real resource.

T-BAR 2 Teacher and Administrator Survey Summary

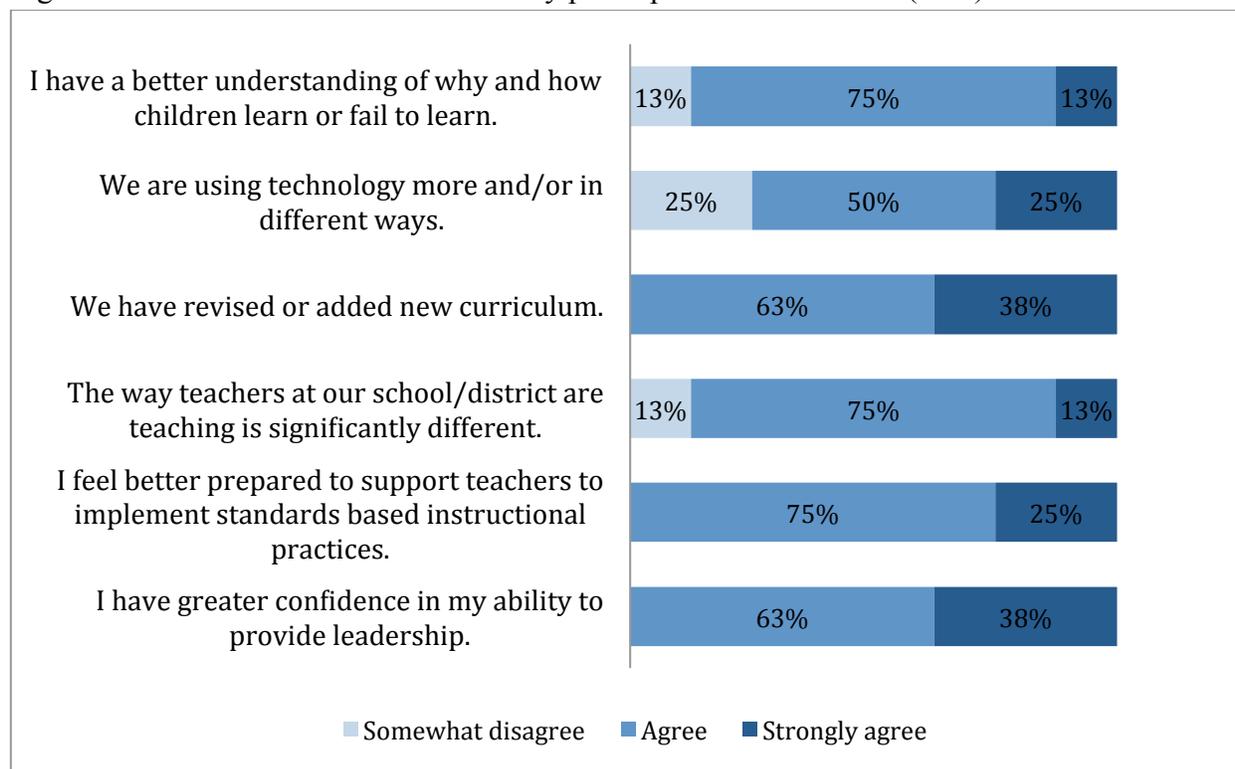
To gather additional feedback from individual teachers and administrators a short online survey was sent to all T-BAR 2 participants in May, 2015. The teacher survey was sent to 27 teachers and 23 responded (85% response rate). The administrator survey was sent to 8 administrators and all 8 responded (100%). Although the surveys for administrators and teachers were not identical, responses to similar items will be reported side by side. The first question on the teacher survey asked teachers to rate their agreement with a series of statements about changes in their teaching following their participation in T-BAR. Teachers ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with five of the six statements. The statement with the least number of agree/strongly agrees was, ‘My teaching is significantly different.’ There were three statements that received over 80% agree/strongly agree ratings (Figure 1). These statements were: ‘I feel better prepared to implement standards based instructional practices,’ ‘I have greater confidence in my teaching ability,’ and ‘I have revised or added new curriculum.’

Figure 1. Teachers: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 (N = 21)



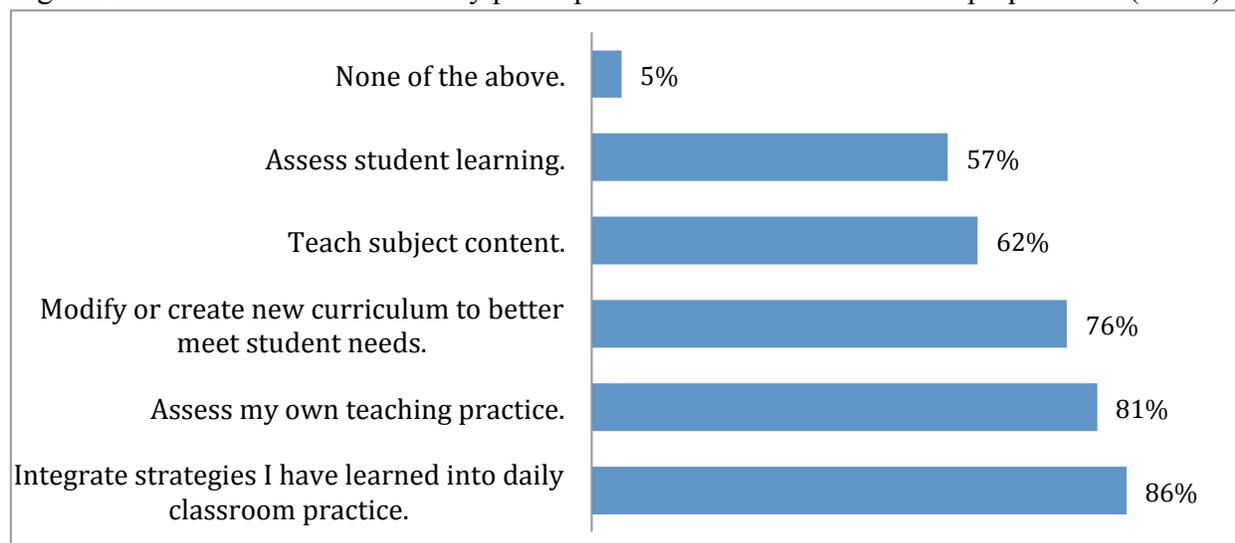
Administrators were asked a similar question and the majority of administrators also agreed or strongly agreed with these statements. Unlike teachers, a large number of administrators (88%) responded that ‘The way teachers in our school/district are teaching is significantly different.’ The item with the most disagree ratings was ‘We are using technology more and/or in different ways’ (Figure 2). This is not surprising given the fact that technology was not a major focus for most of the teams.

Figure 2. Administrators: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2: (N=8)



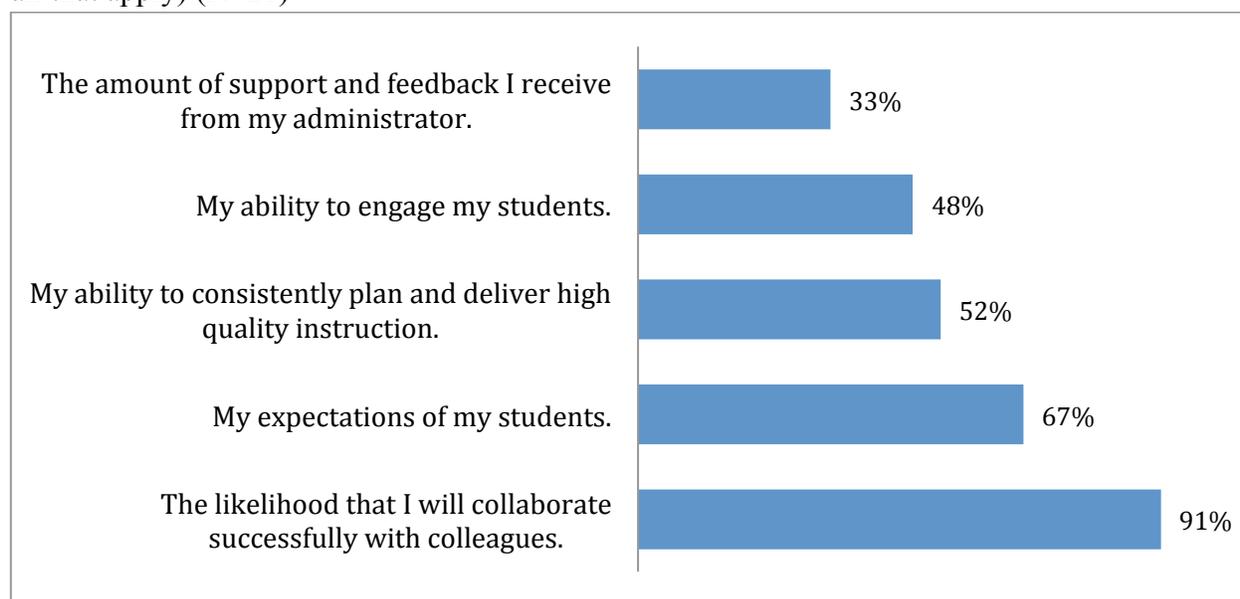
Teachers were asked to select if they felt better prepared in a range of instructional practices following their participation in T-BAR 2. Over 60% of teachers responded that they felt better prepared on these instructional practices, with the exception of ‘assess student learning’ (57%) (Figure 3). This suggests that teachers felt that they had gained a wide range of skills by participating in T-BAR 2. As teams are considering a focus for next year’s activities it might be important to consider including strategies for assessing student learning (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Teachers: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 I am better prepared to: (N=21)



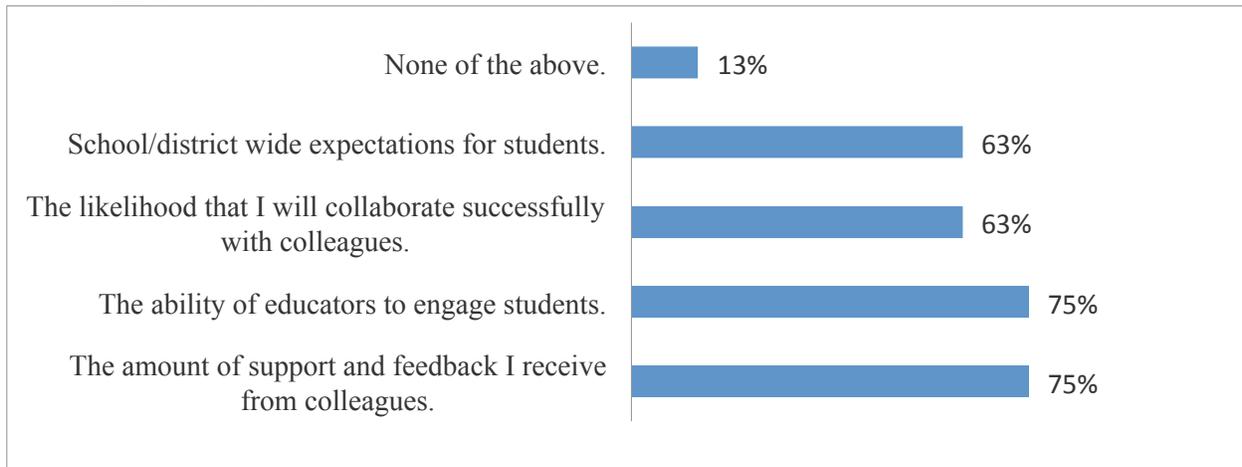
Teachers were also asked to identify specific areas where they had identified shifts in both their practice as well as in the levels of feedback they received from their administrator. The majority (over 52%) of teachers responded that they had noticed a shift in all of the items with the exception of ‘My ability to engage my students,’ and ‘The amount of support and feedback I receive from my administrator’ (Figure 4). Almost all of the teachers (91%) responded that they had noticed a shift in ‘The likelihood that I will collaborate successfully with colleagues’ (Figure 4). These responses suggest that teachers may need additional support engaging their students and this might be an area to focus some additional resources and training next year. An alternative explanation may be that teachers felt they were able to engage their students before the T-BAR 2 project so they may not have noticed a shift (although 48% did respond that this shifted for them).

Figure 4. Teachers: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 I have noticed a shift in: (check all that apply) (N=21)



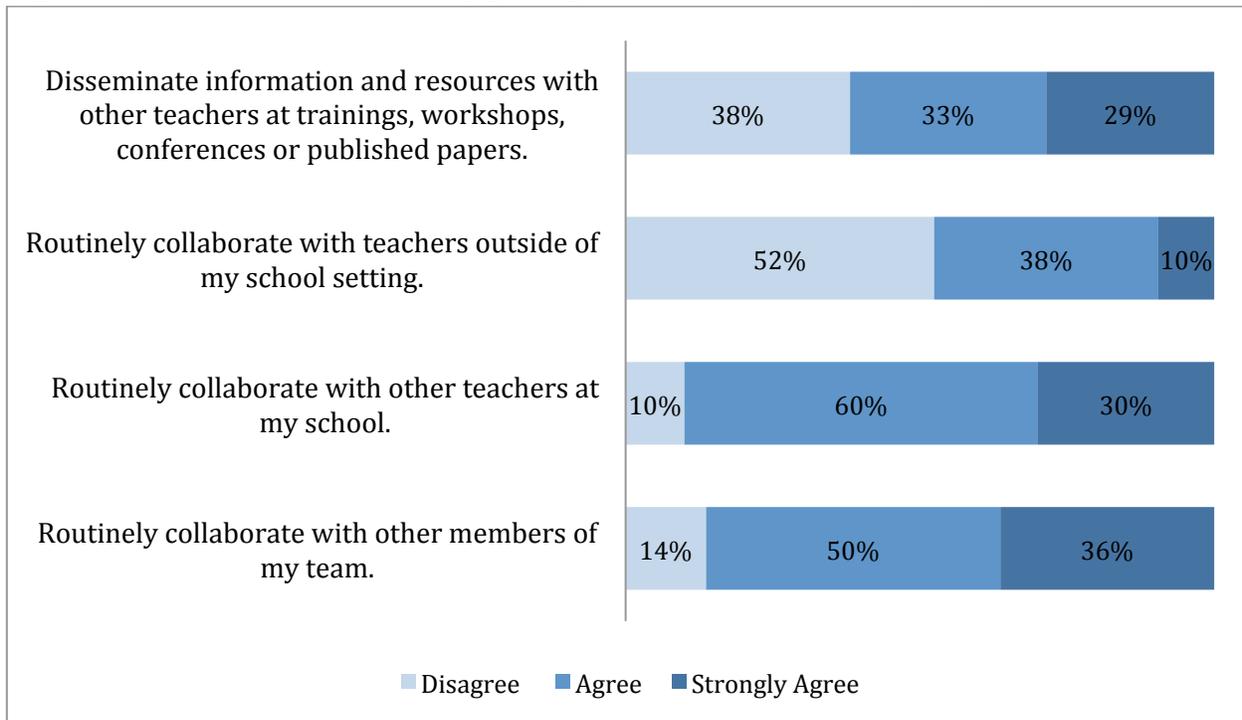
A parallel item on the administrator survey also asked about shifts in practice. The majority of administrators (over 63%) responded that they had noticed a shift in all of these areas. Unlike teachers, the majority of administrators felt that they had seen a shift in ‘The ability of educators to engage students.’ This suggests that perhaps administrators saw more examples of this across classrooms than individual teachers saw within their classrooms. An alternative explanation may be that administrators were attending to this facet of instruction more closely during the T-BAR 2 project (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Administrators: As a result of my T-BAR 2 experience I have noticed a shift in (check all that apply) (N=8)



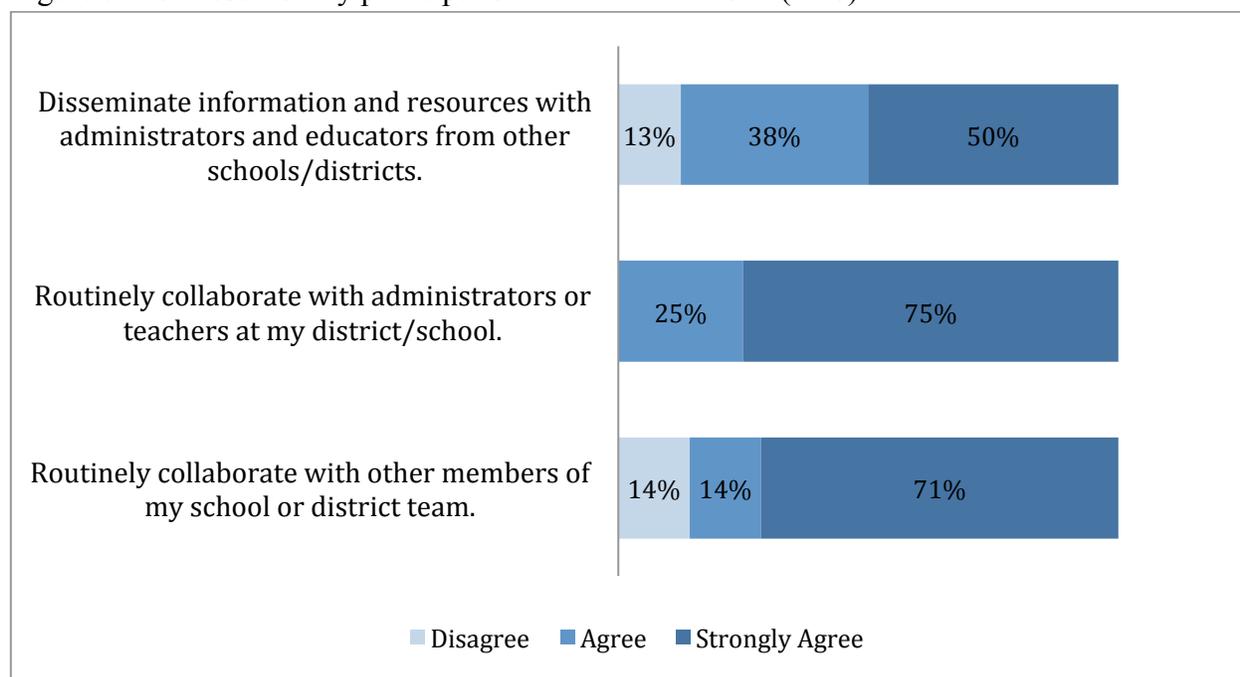
Teachers were asked to respond to a question about sharing information and resources both within their school and outside of their school. The majority of teachers (90%) responded that as a result of T-BAR 2 they now: ‘Routinely collaborate with other teachers at my school site,’ and another 86% responded that they, ‘Routinely collaborate with other members of my team.’ The item with the highest number of ‘disagree’ ratings (52%) was, ‘Routinely collaborate with teachers outside of my school setting,’ (Figure 6)

Figure 6. Teachers: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 I now: (N=22)



Administrators were asked a similar item about disseminating information to, and collaborating with, colleagues in their school site and across the district (Figure 6). All of the administrators either strongly agreed (75%) or agreed (25%) that they now “Routinely collaborate with administrators or teachers at my district/school.” Another 85% of administrators either agreed (14%) or strongly agreed (71%) that they now “Routinely collaborate with other members of my school or district team.”

Figure 7. As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 I now: (N=8)

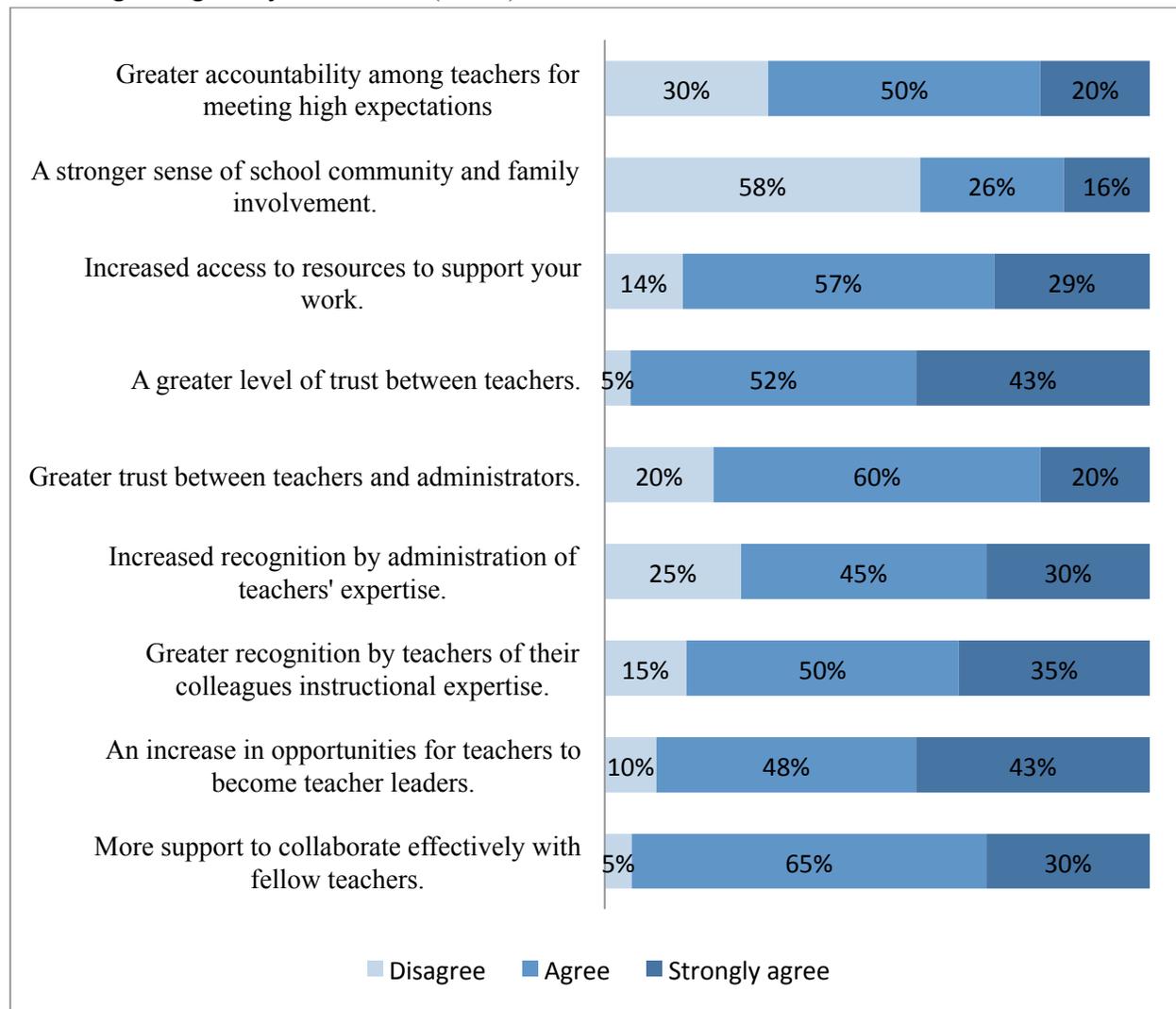


The teacher survey asked teachers to rate their agreement with a series of statements about a variety of changes at their school site following T-BAR 2. Most teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that they had seen these changes at their school site. For example, 80% or more of teachers either agreed or strongly agreed that participation in T-BAR 2 had resulted in:

- More support to collaborate effectively with fellow teachers (95%)
- An increase in opportunities for teachers to become teacher leaders (91%)
- Greater recognition by teachers of their colleagues’ instructional expertise (85%)
- Greater trust between teachers and administrators (80%)
- A greater level of trust between teachers (95%)
- Increased access to resources to support your work (86%)

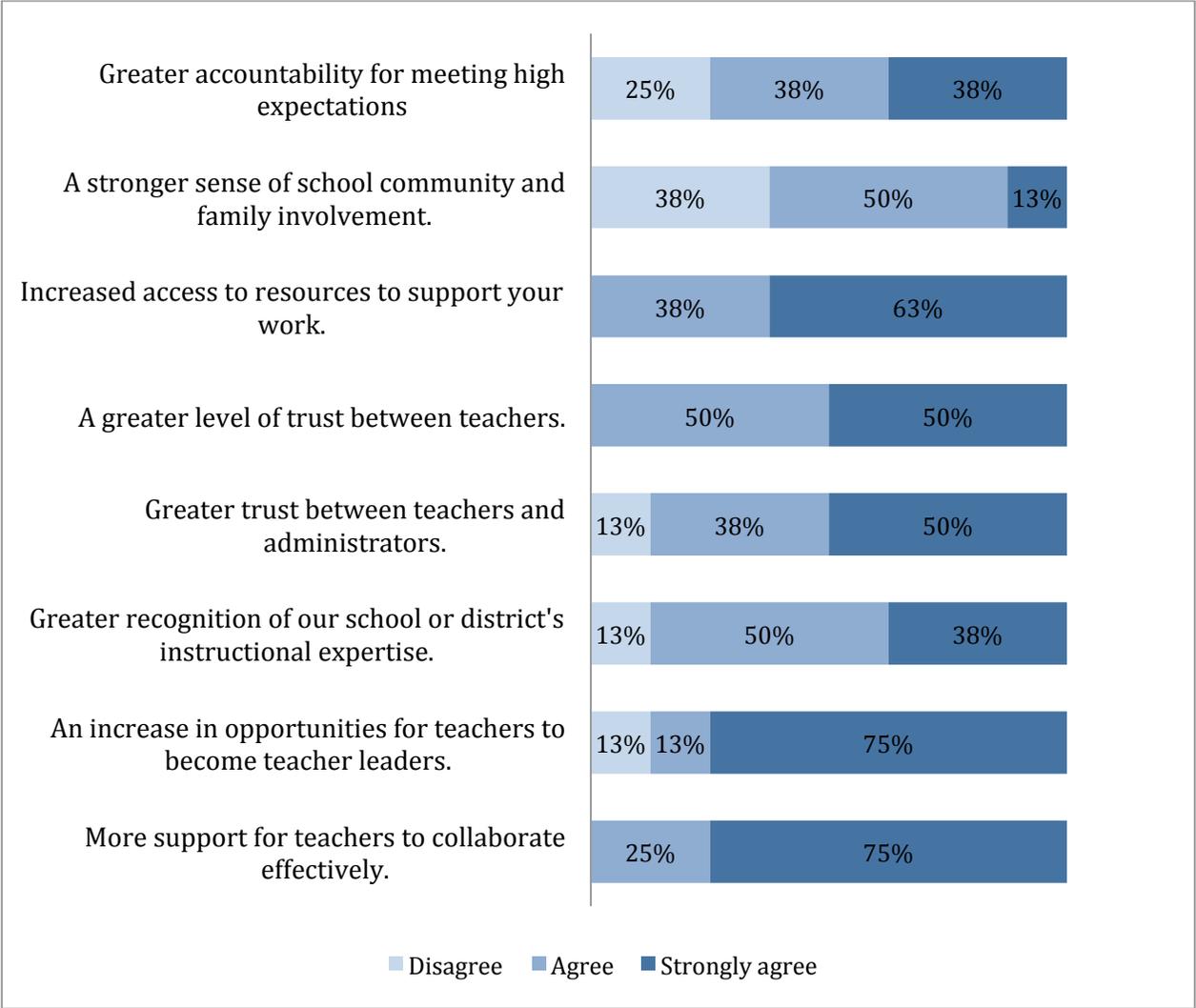
There were just two items that received over 25% disagree ratings from any teachers. These items were: ‘A stronger sense of school community,’ and ‘Greater accountability among teachers for meeting high expectations.’ As the teams move forward with their work it seems important to consider how to address these areas, especially accountability and meeting high expectations.

Figure 8. Teachers: Do you think your participation in the T-BAR 2 project led to any of the following changes at your school? (N=21)



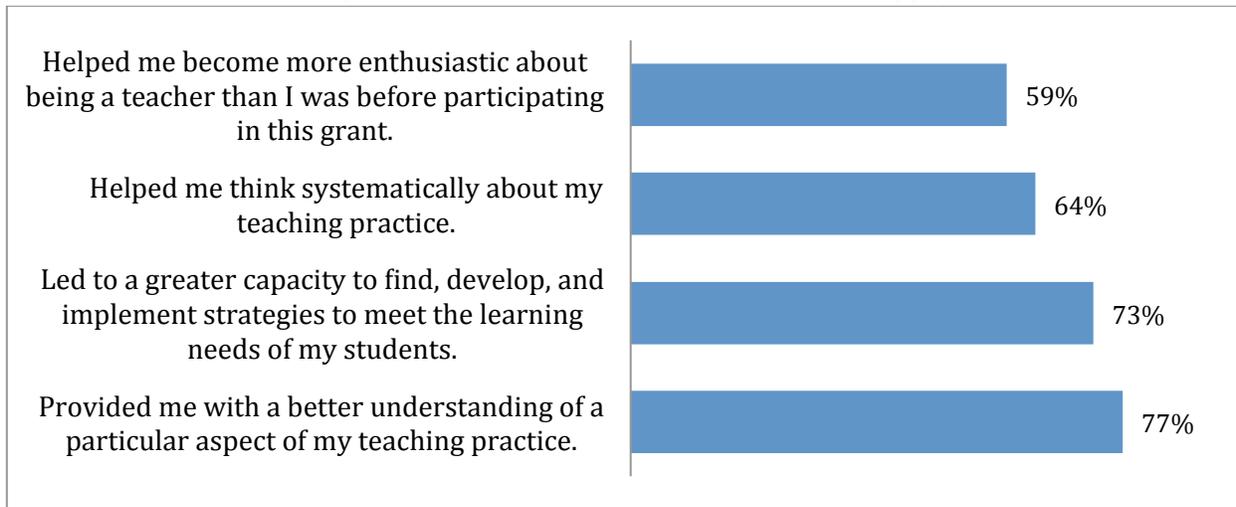
When administrators were asked a parallel set of questions about changes at their school their responses were very similar to those of teachers. For example, most administrators agreed or strongly agreed that T-BAR 2 had led to these changes at their school. However the two items that received some disagree ratings were the same that teachers most commonly disagreed with: ‘Greater accountability among teachers for meeting high expectations,’ (25%) and ‘A stronger sense of school community and family involvement,’ (38%) (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Administrators: Do you think your participation in the T-BAR 2 project led to any of the following changes at your school? (N=8)



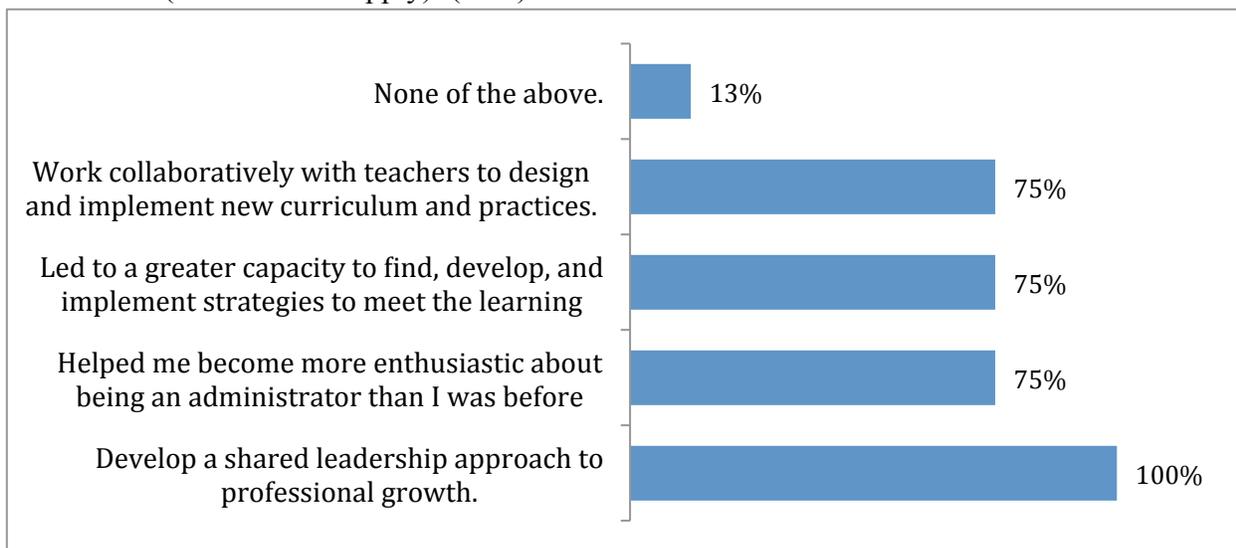
The next set of items on the teacher survey asked teachers to select areas of professional growth that had changed as a result of being involved in T-BAR 2. The majority of teacher respondents selected all of the items. However the item with the highest number of selections was: ‘Provided me with a better understanding of a particular aspect of my teaching practice,’ (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Teachers: Being involved in T-BAR 2 has (check all that apply): (N=22)



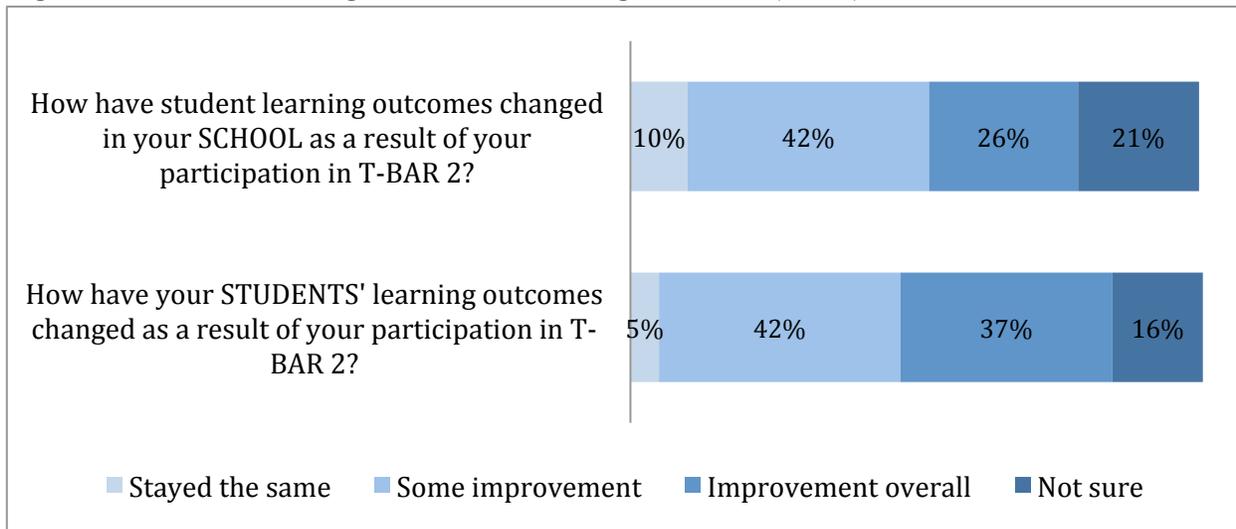
Administrators were asked a similar question about their professional growth and all participating administrators (100%) responded that as a result of T-BAR 2 they felt better prepared to ‘Develop a leadership approach to professional growth,’ and 75% responded that they were better prepared to ‘Work collaboratively with teachers to design and implement new curriculum and practices.’ Another 75% of administrators felt that as a result of their participation in T-BAR 2 they were better prepared to ‘Work collaboratively with teachers to design and implement new curriculum and practices,’ and the work had ‘Led to a greater capacity to find, develop and implement strategies to meet the learning needs of our students,’ and ‘Helped me become more enthusiastic about being an administrator than I was before participating,’ (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Administrators: As a result of my participation in T-BAR 2 I am better prepared to/T-BAR 2 has: (check all that apply): (N=8)



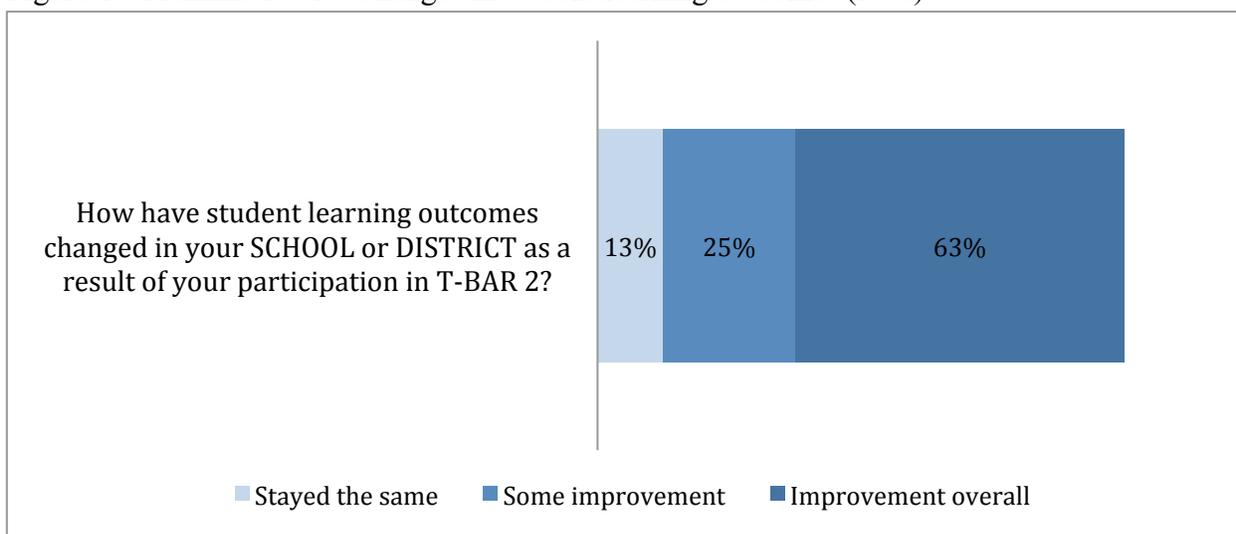
The teacher survey also included a set of questions related to student learning outcomes. The majority of teachers (over 60%) responded that their students' learning outcomes had either made 'some improvement' or 'improvement overall' both in their classroom and at their school site (Figure 12).

Figure 12. Teachers: Changes in student learning outcomes (N=21)



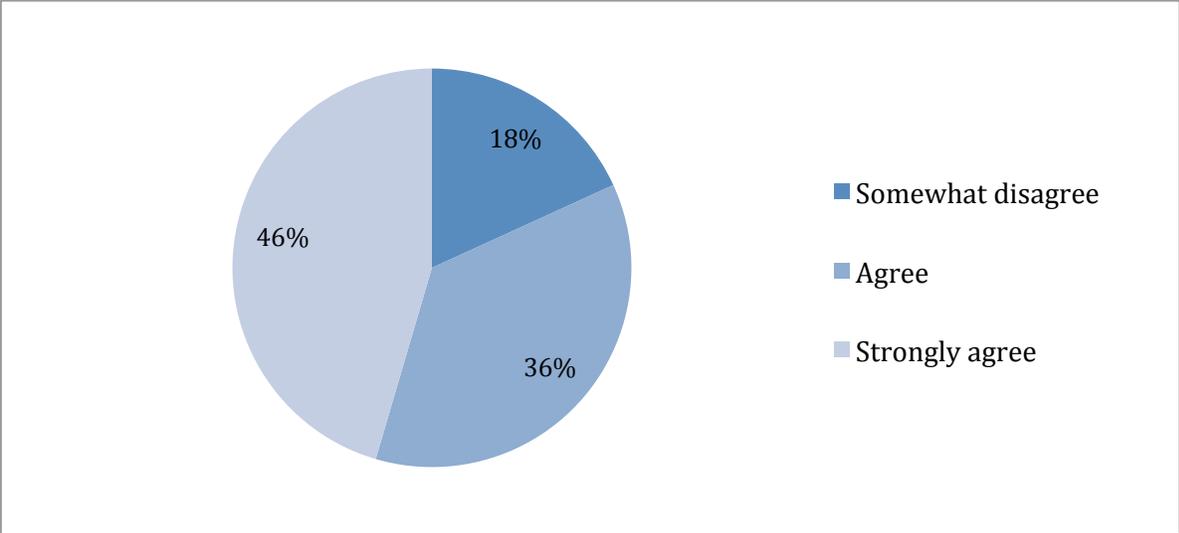
When administrators were asked a similar question related to student learning outcomes, 63% responded that there had been 'improvement overall' in student learning outcomes in their school or district as a result of their participation in T-BAR 2. Another 25% responded that there had been some improvement (Figure 13). This suggests that perhaps administrators are seeing more widespread improvements across their site and or district that teachers would not be as able to assess.

Figure 13. Administrators: Changes in student learning outcomes (N=8)



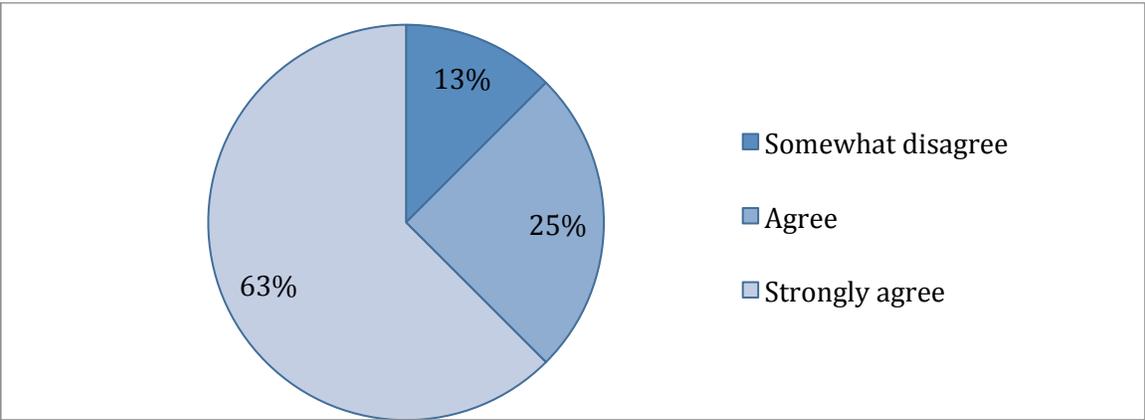
When asked if the T-BAR 2 project had helped with the transition to Common Core State Standards, over 80% of teachers agreed (36%) or strongly agreed (46%) that it had. A smaller percentage (18%) of teachers somewhat disagreed that T-BAR 2 had helped during the transition (Figure 14).

Figure 14. Teachers: The work I did with T-BAR has helped me during the transition to teach Common Core? (N=22)



Administrators were asked this same question and as with several other items, they rated the degree to which T-BAR 2 had helped with the transition to Common Core more highly than teachers in the county. 63% of administrators ‘strongly agreed’ that T-BAR 2 had helped their school or district during this transition and another 25% agreed with this statement (Figure 15).

Figure 15. Administrators: T-BAR has helped our school/district during the transition to teach Common Core (N=8)



Open Ended Survey Items

In an open ended item teachers and administrators were asked what had been the biggest impact of the grant overall (administrators) and on their teaching practice (teachers). Eighteen teachers and six administrators provided a response to this item. The complete list of open ended comments can be found in Appendix C. One of the primary things teachers wrote was the increase in both the quantity and quality of collaboration. As one teacher put it:

“I think the biggest impact has been the growth of the teaching community and feeling like we were all in the same boat and working towards common goals. It helped to have common practices to talk about.”

Administrators also described how T-BAR 2 had increased the levels of collaboration between teachers. Administrators mentioned how the T-BAR 2 work had changed the model of professional development. As one administrator wrote the biggest impact was in the area of:

“Supporting the work of teachers learning from each other. Changed our definition of professional development/learning.”

Teachers also commented that T-BAR 2 had encouraged them to take risks and experiment with new strategies and ideas. For example:

“Taking the risk and examining my teaching and working on improving it in order to set students up for success.”

A second open ended item asked teachers and administrators if there were any resources that were especially valuable to their work. Fifteen teachers and six administrators provided comments on this open ended question. A complete list of the open ended comments can be found in Appendix D. Teachers mentioned the collaboration with colleagues as the most valuable resource for this item. This included having the time and support to meet regularly with their colleagues. Teachers also mentioned other resources related to specific content such as design thinking and the ICB framework. Several administrators wrote that their teachers were a valuable resource. Administrators also mentioned specific content as a valuable resource such as, leadership coaching, the ICB framework and design thinking. One administrator commented that valuable resources included:

“ICB Framework was important when we launched the work; helped us think about building on what we already had in place. SCOE, UCD, REEd personnel who jumped in with ideas, encouragement, or assistance which was really important at the leadership level.”

Appendix A
T-BAR 2: Sonoma County Participants

Sonoma County Office of Education

Name	Role	School/District/Organization
Jennie Snyder	Superintendent	Piner-Olivet USD
Kathy Harris	CCSS ELA Implementation Coach	Piner-Olivet USD
Pamell Gallagher	6 th Grade Teacher	Piner-Olivet USD (Olivet Elementary Charter School)
Lynn Garlock	3 rd Grade Teacher	Piner-Olivet USD (Olivet Elementary Charter School)
Gina Silveira	Principal	Piner-Olivet USD (Schaefer Charter School)
Terry Metzger	Assistant Superintendent	Rincon Valley USD
Amy Wiese	Consulting Teacher	Rincon Valley USD
Colette Haldi	Consulting Teacher	Rincon Valley USD
Kelly Lister	Principal	Rincon Valley USD (Binkley Elementary School)
Matt Reno	Principal	Rincon Valley USD (Sequoia Elementary School)
Katrina Kutz	2 nd Grade Teacher	Rincon Valley USD (Whited Elementary School)
Patty Turner	Director of Curriculum & Instruction (7-12)	Santa Rosa City Schools
Vicki Zands	Vice Principal	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Teri O'Donnell	High School Teacher	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Amy Breninger	High School Teacher	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Gale Ligotti	High School Teacher	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Candy Nichols	High School Teacher	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Joy Schermer	High School Teacher	Santa Rosa City Schools (Maria Carillo High School)
Karen McGahey	Director	Sonoma County Office of Education
Jessica Progulske	Teacher-on-Loan	Sonoma County Office of Education
Mickey Porter	Assistant Superintendent	Sonoma County Office of Education
Anna Van Dordrecht	Teacher-on-Loan	Sonoma County Office of Education
Kelly Matteri	Teacher-on-Loan	Sonoma County Office of

		Education
Anne Richards	Leadership Coach	Sonoma County Office of Education
Sarah Lundy	Director of Teacher Development	Sonoma County Office of Education
Jill Rosenquist	Principal	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Leslie Clark	Title 1 Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Bonny Russell Larrain	Kindergarten Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Diana Castleberry	1 st Grade Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Andrea Reichmuth	2 nd Grade Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Amy McLoone	3 rd Grade Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Heather Tyler	4 th Grade Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)
Todd Bellinger	5 th Grade Teacher	Twin Hills USD (Apple Blossom Elementary School)

Appendix B

T-BAR End of the Year Team Lead Sample Reflection

The following responses were written by a teacher lead on one of the PacTIN teams working with the County Office of Education.

What are you taking away from this project?

I am taking away a better understanding of how significant it is to have professional development that fosters the development of professional relationships. In the ICB Framework and personal reflections, every team member commented that they had a better understanding of and respect for the strengths of their colleagues and were excited to collaborate and learn from them. This paves the way for deeper work on NGSS, CCSS, and 21st century learning that teachers and administrators are eager to engage in together. While the work on our strengths and the sharing out about practices was time intensive, I have a deeper appreciation for how valuable this process is and how it leads to further peer-to-peer professional work.

What is your school/organization taking away from this project?

The team is taking from this project deeper professional relationships and enthusiasm for further work on NGSS. The teachers felt like they established deeper working relationships with each other and with the district office. The administrative relationship is particularly significant since this has not been in place in recent years.

How, if at all, did the project further learning (student/teacher) and practice (teacher)?

The specific focus on arguments and evidence influenced the strategies tried by teachers in their practice. Teachers experimented with various strategies in order to engage students in arguments and evidence. These included modifying assessments, using more group work, adding to or changing labs, and changing the way students engage with text and media. Teachers noted many of these changes were difficult for students, but they have the potential to impact student learning greatly in coming years.

What conditions enabled these changes?

The main condition that enabled this change was the fostering of deeper professional relationships and collaboration. Teachers noted that they could use the professional collaboration done in T-BAR as a model for student collaboration, and this changed their approach to collaborative work in the classroom. In addition, dialogue was opened up about best practices, and teachers were inspired by colleagues to try new strategies in their own classrooms.

To what degree do you see yourself able to continue this work next year?

The team unanimously would like to continue the work next year. They see this year as the first of what should be a two-year prototype. This year was about establishing professional relationships and developing a basic understanding of NGSS. Next year they would like to develop a deeper understanding of the NGSS standards and work in subject-specific teams to develop lessons and units.

Appendix C

What has been the biggest impact of the grant?

Teachers:

Collaboration

- The biggest impact is the development of strong professional relationships and therefore expanding the community I can share resources with and learn from. This then makes my work in the classroom stronger and more creative and engaging.
- Collaboration with other teachers on how to transition to common core.
- Collaboration between teachers (it reminded me how important it is to share and be open to the wonderful ideas that my colleagues are using in their classrooms.
- I think the biggest impact has been the growth of the teaching community and feeling like we were all in the same boat and working towards common goals. It helped to have common practices to talk about.
- Don't feel so alone
- I enjoyed working on a common goal with my fellow teachers.
- Having the resources to provide time for teachers to work together to develop lessons and observe one another teaching was very valuable. This has helped make the teaching practices at our school more transparent which is improving classroom instruction.
- Finding my strengths and the strengths of my colleagues has totally changed how I feel about going to work each day for the better. I already loved my job, but now I love it more.

Taking Risks / Experimenting

- Taking the risk and examining my teaching and working on improving it in order to set students up for success.
- Willingness to take risks and fail and be okay with that. The collaboration has also been a huge plus.
- I am an instructional coach, and my involvement with T-BAR has given me the knowledge and experience I need to be bold, to try and fail (PDSA!) and to use and draw attention to the many resources that we need and use every day to provide excellent and powerful instruction to students (ICB!).

Impact on students

- It has helped me help students redefine what it means to be mathematically proficient and give them more confidence in their mathematical ability.
- We chose to focus on Math at our site and the biggest impact has been on how I teach math. The students are more engaged in explaining their thinking and developing understanding of concepts rather than focusing on procedures.
- The T-BAR experience has given me permission to spend more time going in-depth with my students. The why portion of what we study. The time to create, solve and argue, with evidence problems presented in class.

Others

- The biggest impact of the grant on my teaching practice has been the modeling of High Quality of Instruction that I have been able to observe.
- I am not currently a teacher. I work at SCOE. I has helped me in my context to better understand the need of sites and districts in the county, and therefore, serve them better.
- At this point I feel that I have some increased awareness of what is going to be happening in the future. However, I have not focused on specific implementations at this point.
- A variety of quality professional development opportunities, including a dream retreat to Re-Imagine learning coming in June.

Administrators:

Support of teachers

- Support for teacher-driven professional development. Rather than have a set plan from the beginning of the year, the various PD activities "organically" unfolded from collaborative conversations among teachers and administrators.
- Supporting the work of teachers learning from each other. Changed our definition of professional development/learning.

Others

- Time to collaborate. Staff agreement about what to pursue. Homework (accountability). Observations of student performance. Identification of next steps. The struggle. Investigation of resources.
- We have reflected on our approach to professional learning and have made adjustments based on feedback and observations. We have clarified our shared understandings related to unit design.
- Distributed leadership among many strong teachers and made their talents more accessible to the entire district.
- The ability to learn more about NGSS, grow our relationship between teachers and district admin in this learning and trust building.

Appendix D

Teachers:

Collaboration with others

- I enjoyed the breakout and group work where we did work
- Time to work with others.
- The time to talk and share ideas for lessons and teaching practices.
- The time to meet as a group was VERY valuable.
- Having the time to work with other teachers was the most valuable resource for me.
- Fellow teachers.
- other teachers
- Working with a science teacher was very helpful to understand what other/similar subjects are going through.

Support from others / Other content

- Support from our TBAR consultant.
- Support from SCOE.
- Mindset class and support to develop units with grade level team have been most valuable.
- Design Thinking and Kristen Swanson

Others

- Promotion of PLC's
- Attending the Carnegie Summit the first year was mind-changing and a great foundation for the work. PDSA and ICB have also made a huge difference, although in a way I feel that we are just getting started.
- We received the books which describe the revised standards - no other resources were made available.

Administrators:

Working with experts

- Being able to work with an expert in CCMath. Release time. Repeated reflection on our work. Celebration of our accomplishments. Working with a coach who gave us feedback.
- Leadership coaching. On-site PD
- [REDACTED] was an ideal leader and resource to our group.
- ICB Framework was important when we launched the work; helped us think about building on what we already had in place. SCOE, UCD, REEd personnel who jumped in with ideas, encouragement, or assistance was really important at the leadership level.

New perspectives

- Teacher perspectives, instructional coaching, the design process.
- Understanding design thinking