

TEACHFORAMERICA

Presentation to Appropriations and Revenue Committee

October 1, 2019



OUR HISTORY

Since 2011, **Teach for America Appalachia** has recruited and trained over 150 outstanding leaders to teach in Appalachian Kentucky, serving thousands of students in high-need subjects. Our work has been made possible by state allocations, as well as private partners in our work. This biennium, we are requesting an increase in our state allocation-from \$500k-\$1.25M over the biennium-to grow and deepen our impact across the Commonwealth.

1990: Teach For America Founded Nationally

2011: Teach For America Appalachia Founded

2019: Commissioner Lewis names TFA as critical partner in GoTeachKY campaign

Rapid Organizational Growth

2015: Grow into a top performing region out of 51 nationwide

WHY TFA

The Problem

In EKY, generations of poverty, a declining force of qualified teachers and limited economic mobility have created huge educational barriers. As a result, students in our 14 most-distressed counties are not academically competitive and our best and brightest often don't stay in their home communities. **In the region only 40% of students make it through a 4-year degree program, and those who do rarely return home.** In the counties we serve, the percentage of adults with bachelors' degrees or higher is below 20%, with **some counties as low as 12%.**

What's Needed

To change the predictable future in EKY, we must:

- 1) Expand our incoming force of high-quality teacher leaders
- 2) Collaborate across the state to increase college, career, and work-readiness
- 3) Create incentives for young professionals to commit to living and working in EKY

Our Mission

Teach For America Appalachia recruits, retains and equips leaders who are committed to building a bright future for students in Central Appalachia.

OUR APPROACH

Pre-Service thru Corps Commitment

- 40-45 hours of independent pre-service training to build understanding of educational inequity and the leadership required to solved it.
- 5-6 weeks of rigorous, resident teacher preparation to develop skills and mindsets enabling successful teaching.
- Year-round professional development including observations and 1:1 coaching with a master teacher.
- Those who remain beyond year two can become permanently certified teachers at no cost to their district.

Alumnihood

- Through firsthand experience in the classroom, our teachers develop a strong conviction to make a difference and join our national alumni network—56,000 strong—committed to students' futures.
- Our alumni who remain in the classroom are seen as proof-point teachers and leaders.
- We provide targeted career and leadership support to alumni in all sectors.

Recruitment

Summer Training

Alumnihood

Matriculation

Corps Commitment (two years in classroom)

OUR VISION FOR 2030

1. By 2030, we will be bringing in our largest and longest-remaining teaching corps to date, with more than half of our incoming corps each year composed of Appalachian students returning home.
2. By 2030, students in EKY will achieve ACT and freshman GPA scores at or above their peers in the commonwealth's top public schools.
3. By 2030, national publications will cite EKY as one of the fastest growing economies and talent hubs in the country, driven by alumni migration.

OUR APPROACH: TEACHER RECRUITMENT

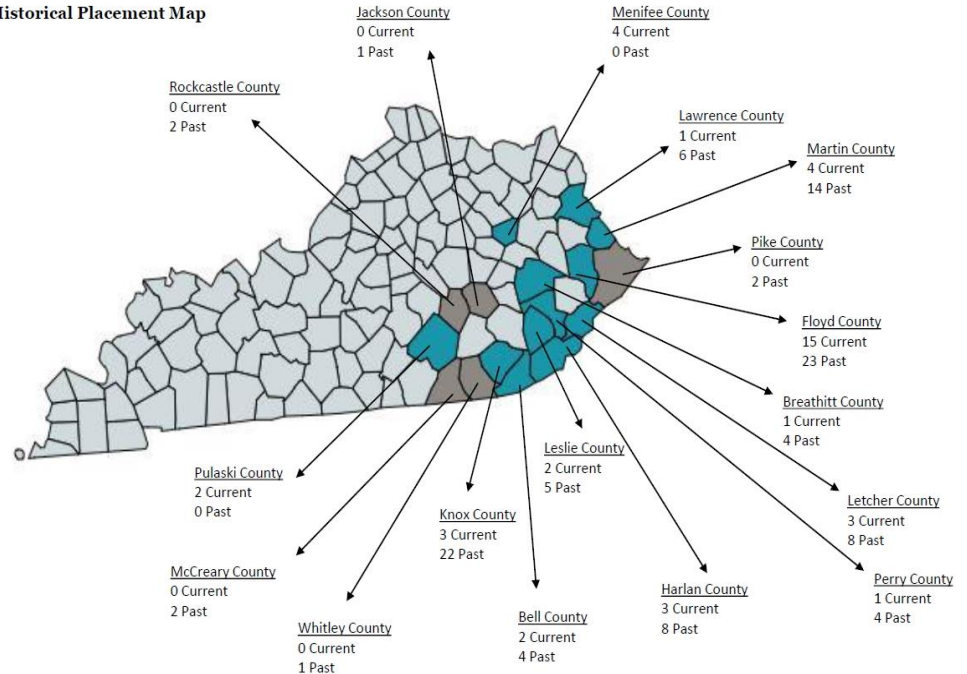
Traditional Models	TFA Model	2020-21 Innovations with Increased State Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relies on teachers from traditional programs applying to openings online through heavily bureaucratic process.• Many schools compete for same candidate.• Scarcity may lead to selecting under-qualified or uncommitted candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brings top leaders from universities, armed forces, and professions (12% acceptance rate) from across the country.• Hand-pairs teachers with districts for interviews based on need and knowledge of school culture.• Facilitates hiring and certification process for districts.• 100% principal satisfaction with teachers based on biannual survey.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Offer professional development to traditionally-trained teachers.• Establish relationships with and dramatically increase recruitment presence at honors programs within local KY colleges and universities without a large national presence: EKU, Berea, Morehead, WKU, Alice Lloyd, Transylvania, etc.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend recruitment fairs• 1:1 student interview support

OUR IMPACT

- Over 150 teachers brought in through selective recruitment model
- Over half of our corps comes from KY or other central Appalachian states
- The remaining half of our corps bring diverse perspectives and experiences from across the country
- Our corps includes:
 - Decorated military veterans
 - Recipients of the Singletary, Robinson and Gatton Scholarships
 - Recipients of prestigious fellowships
 - Former interns from presidential and gubernatorial offices
- Each year, more than half of our teachers remain past their two-year commitment

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Appalachia Historical Placement Map



OUR IMPACT

Ms. Roberson has easily been the most influential adult in my life, as well as my role model...She now helps me learn how to teach others and consider what it would be like to come back to my school and be a teacher.”

“They [TFA teachers] come to our communities to teach, but they are also open to learning. They become embedded in the community and the reciprocal relationship benefits everyone.”

“My goal is to come back to my hometown and reach out and help my community just as my high school teachers have...Without the Teach For America teachers supporting me throughout my high school career, I don't believe I would be where I am today.”

-Allison Horn
Sheldon Clark High School, Class of 2019

“Martin County is desperate for highly-qualified teachers. There are no local applicants for high school positions. I have 4 TFA English teachers, 2 math teachers, 1 science, and 1 history. Six of these were hired just this year (2015). Without TFA teachers, I do not know how we could have had school. I must stress that TFA does more than just fill highly needed positions. TFA teachers are excellent workers and do a wonderful job educating our students. Moreover, the extra support TFA provides helps the teachers and me beyond measure.”

-Dr. Lonnie Laney, Former Principal Sheldon Clark High School

“Because of TFA teachers, my son now has role models in his school who have attended Ivy League Schools, studied abroad, and are choosing to live here--now he can see himself as one of those people, too”

-Brent Hutchinson, parent, Floyd County

OUR APPROACH: PARTICIPANT SUPPORT & DEVELOPMENT

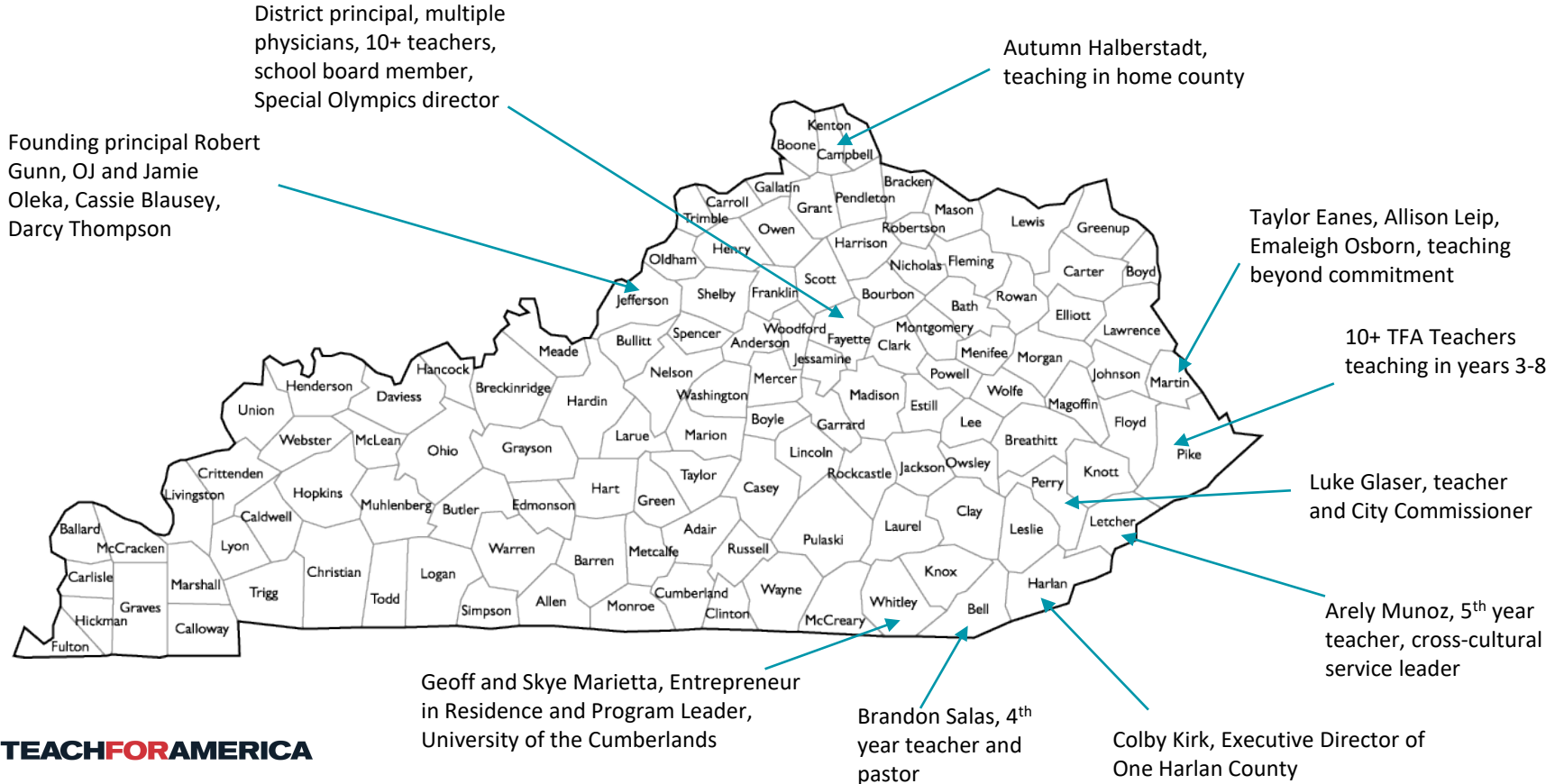
Traditional Models	TFA Model	2020-21 Innovations with Increased State Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teacher prep programs do not traditionally have the capacity to support teachers once they are placed in schools.• Other alternative certification programs do not have a leadership, or “systems-thinking” focus, despite the complex challenges most students face in underserved schools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Direct, 1:1 support from staff from recruitment through alumnihood.• Recruit those with quantitative leadership success.• Professional development model focuses on pedagogy, culturally responsive teaching and systems leadership.• Continued engagement through alumnihood, leverage network of 65,000 across country and over 150 in Kentucky.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Significantly increase efforts to both retain impactful alumni in Kentucky through direct engagements, gatherings, and career support across the entire state• Pilot prestigious programs to attract TFA alumni across the country to high-need roles across sectors in EKY

OUR IMPACT

- Doubled rate of growth on college and career readiness in communities with heavy TFA presence over last eight years.
- Historic establishment and success in initiatives such as AP programs, cross-cultural service trips, extracurricular activities, and athletics.
- Over 150 alumni leaders across state leading in key sectors for educational progress and economic growth.

County	AP Courses Offered through TFA Teacher
Floyd	Spanish, Human Geography, Computer Science, Biology, Calculus, Statistics, US History, Literature, Language.
Martin	English, Environmental Science, Calculus
Perry	Calculus AB/BC, Literature
Meniffee	Biology
Knox	Human Geography, US History, English, Biology
Bell	Chemistry, Physics
Letcher	Spanish

OUR IMPACT



COMPARATIVE STATE ALLOCATIONS

Of the TFA regions that receive state allocations, **Kentucky ranks as the lowest overall amount** received per year.

In neighboring Indiana, the state funds TFA's work at \$2.25M over the biennium. ***In TFA regions with a large rural presence, including Mississippi and South Carolina, the state funds over 70% of their operating budget.***

Even with a state funding increase, we remain one of the most fiscally conservative regions in the country with the lowest cost to baseline ratio, and a commitment to both strong public and private partnerships.

INCREASED STATE FUNDING= A THRIVING ECOSYSTEM OF LEADERSHIP ACROSS THE COMMONWEALTH

1) Expand regional university partnerships to increase size and strength of **teacher pipeline**

2) Expand and strengthen development model to support **local schools**

3) Build private-public partnerships to recruit best and brightest TFA Alums to **relocate to and remain in KY**

4) Double capacity to develop KY leadership force by investing in **full-state alumni efforts**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

TFA Background and Impact in Kentucky

- Since 2011, TFA has **recruited 150 teachers** to work as full time, certified educators in high need schools and subjects across EKY.
- TFA teachers are **effective, impactful, and working in partnership with their communities**. In the last 8 years, counties with a heavy TFA presence have seen college and career readiness rates grow at double the rate of their neighboring counties without TFA. TFA teachers have established AP courses and routinely fill vacancies in critical, tested subjects such as math, science, Spanish and English, spanning grades 4-12 across twelve counties.
- TFA's **force of 150+ alumni across Kentucky** are working for the future of the commonwealth in every sector.
- TFA teachers in EKY have some of the **highest rates of learning and satisfaction in the country compared to 51 other regions**, and historic retention rates of over **50% remaining past their two-year commitment**.

The Funding Request

- **Current funding background:** From 2011-2019, TFA received **between \$250-500K over the biennium from the state**. While we are constantly working to partner with private donors, coal-income based philanthropy is rapidly declining in EKY, making local funding sources scarce and small. Additionally, our national organization sees state funding as a signal of commitment to state partnership and size of need.
- TFA **requests \$1.25M over the biennium** to maximize the size and impact of the TFA leadership force in Kentucky.
- This investment:
 - Will **incentivize continued private funding**, as it will ensure a **public-private partnership (state funds remain less than 50% of total operating budget)**
 - Is in tight **alignment with Commissioner Lewis' Go Teach KY Campaign, which names TFA as a critical partner**
 - Allows us to dramatically increase our program offerings, including recruiting from more local KY universities, engaging our alumni across the state, and offering professional development opportunities to strengthen the retention and performance of teachers across EKY, and attract alumni to KY from across the country.
- Notably, **state funding is very common across the country for TFA regions. All 3 surrounding states with a TFA presence fund their programs at over double the current rate of our allocation**. Several states with a rural presence (e.g., South Carolina and Mississippi) fund TFA at over 70% of their annual operating budgets.

Consequences of State Funding Remaining at Current Level or Decreasing

- **Zero or limited state funding will cut TFA's operating budget** due to the rapid decline of coal philanthropy in the region, and the ripple effect of private philanthropists and the national organization, being unwilling to support a program that is not a public-private partnership.
- **We estimate a dramatic cut to our numbers and impact over the next 10 years** as funds go directly to recruiting and supporting teachers.
- Given that TFA educators are filling critical needs and having proven impact, the implication is that **thousands of students in EKY will have fewer opportunities to fulfill their potential** without a strong and thriving TFA presence in their communities. Additionally, a decrease will shrink our programs' unique efforts to recruit and retain leaders to live and work in EKY's most distressed counties.



APPENDIX

Additional Letters of Support

My experience with TFA has been quite positive as both a parent and as a School Administrator/Personnel Director in Letcher County Schools. My daughter has been taught by several TFA staff over the last 6 years. I have been very impressed with their connection to and rapport with students, their professionalism and honor to the teaching profession, and their ability to teach the content successfully. They each brought new perspectives, varied backgrounds and unique experiences to students who may not have otherwise known or experienced such differences. In fact, my daughter's favorite teachers in middle school were her TFA teachers. They truly made a difference for her at a pivotal time in her life and still serve as mentors to her today.

As the Personnel Director, I have also been impressed by their willingness to immerse themselves into the school culture and local community. They work as club sponsors, coaches and take on extra duties. They have the ability to collaborate and work with a team, and their knowledge of educational practices and effective strategies is impressive. Our TFA folks are some of our best employees, and we value the contribution of and relationship with TFA to provide high-quality instruction to our students, especially in critical content areas such as mathematics and science.

Finding good employees is difficult right now for our district. Finding "good teachers" is even harder, and we depend on TFA to provide top-notch folks to fill vacancies in our district so our students have equal opportunities for success post-graduation. Only good things will happen for schools and students in Kentucky, particularly the mountain region, with the continuation and expansion of the TFA program.


Thank you,

Wendy M. Rutherford

Personnel Director & Director of Pupil Personnel Services

Letcher County Public Schools

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I am very passionate about the impact I have witnessed firsthand with TFA teachers. Their influence has made a huge difference in students' drive and ambition while teaching them to realize they can become anything by believing in themselves. The high quality of TFA teachers introduce and create new opportunities in learning that involve families and the communities in which they live in. Please consider an increase in support so our students can experience the best opportunities available for Kentucky's future while providing an educational and economic boost for our school districts.

Betsy Clemons

Executive Director

Hazard Perry County Chamber of Commerce



I'm sure you recognize the shortage of teachers across our state, and especially throughout Appalachia. Teach for America has become a vital resource in bringing quality applicants to our region. In the five years that I have served as principal of Letcher County Central High School, I have had the pleasure of working with several TFA teachers, and I can say with confidence that each of those teachers have served LCCHS well! Had it not been for TFA, we could have been faced with the possibility of filling positions with substitutes rather than certified teachers.

Gracie Walters Maggard

Principal, Letcher County Central High School

Honorable Members of the Interim Joint Appropriations and Revenue Committee:

As the Superintendent of Menifee County Public Schools, I am writing to communicate my sincere and continuing support for Teach For America Appalachia's presence and expansion in our Commonwealth. In the brief three years that they've been part of our school district, the five teachers we have had have worked relentlessly and in partnership with us to improve outcomes for our students.

In 2017, we welcomed a young woman named Ali Bentley to our school as our first TFA teacher--not knowing what to expect, we have been simply blown away by Ms. Bentley's professionalism, competence, teamwork, and commitment to our students and community. During her time here, she has taught many different courses that we would not be able to offer, including two AP courses that are changing the trajectory for our students and opportunities they will have after high school. In addition, she leads many extracurricular activities, and is a visible presence at community events to make sure students know that she cares for them and supports their aspirations.

Most of all, I am impressed by TFA teachers humility and desire to learn. Although they have best-in-class training before and during their time with us, they simply want to work alongside our great veteran teachers, and see our students and their families as assets and partners in their work.

In future years, our district will continue to look to Teach For America to not only fill critical needs in our district, but to do so with some of the finest leaders our nation has to offer. We thank you for your support of the program in years past, and hope to see it grow in service of the many students in our Commonwealth who would otherwise miss out on incredible teachers.

Sincerely,

Timothy D. Spencer
Superintendent
Menifee County School District