DENVER: TREVISTA and MCGLONE

Shifting teaching roles to target instruction
Explore the concrete ways two Denver schools, Trevista at Horace Mann and McGlone Academy, employed “Power Strategies” that address critical student needs now and lay a sustainable foundation for lasting improvement.

Learn more and see examples here.
With [the impact of COVID-19] in mind, we wanted to make sure that we were able to support students social-emotionally and, most importantly, academically. So we remained flexible in all of our roles.

JESSICA MULLINS,
TREVISTA PRINCIPAL
#1 Empowering, Adaptable Instruction

#2 Time & Attention

#3 The Teaching Job

#4 Relationships & Social-Emotional Support

#5 Family & Community Partnerships

See Snapshot of Trevista & McGlone
Students and teachers at both Trevista & McGlone ran into multiple challenges returning to a hybrid learning environment in the 2020-21 school year.

**Students’ Experiences**
- Significant *unfinished learning* from disrupted school year
- Struggled to *engage* in virtual learning on remote days

**Teachers’ Experiences**
- **Radically increased responsibilities**, including...
  - Learning new technologies
  - Adapting lessons to both an in-person and virtual settings
  - Checking in with students and families
- **Providing instruction both in-person and remote**
  - Teaching in-person to students in school and at home in the hybrid environment
  - Teaching remotely when needing to quarantine
WHAT THEY DID

Trevista & McGlone made key changes to address these new needs:

Changes to Students’ Experiences

- Regular access to small-group instruction in-person

Changes to Teachers’ Experiences

- Distributed teaching responsibilities to reduce workload
- Increased coaching support & real-time feedback
HOW THEY DID IT

To support these changes, Trevista & McGlone shifted resources in **three key ways**:

1. **Assigned additional instructional responsibilities** to student-teachers to take a team-based approach to teaching and create more opportunities for personalized instruction.

2. Adjusted master schedules and **reassigned specials teachers** to reduce group sizes in core instructional blocks.

3. **Repurposed administrator roles** for more distributed instructional leadership to improve professional development.
Denver’s Teaching Academies model integrates student-teachers and licensed rookie teachers as instructional supports throughout the day, while also giving explicit coaching supports to help them grow. When Denver schools went remote last year, student-teachers began playing an even bigger role in the instructional day:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Former Responsibilities</th>
<th>New Hybrid Responsibilities</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Support small group instruction as needed</td>
<td>✓ Co-develop virtual learning experiences with lead teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Aid with students’ social-emotional needs</td>
<td>✓ Coordinate their own small group instruction remotely (aligned with mentor teachers’ lessons)</td>
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<td>✓ Provide in-person feedback and instruction to students if the lead teacher had to teach virtually</td>
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<td></td>
<td>✓ Check in daily with an assigned set of students to ensure they are getting to school or logging on and receiving the supports they need</td>
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Roles similar to student-teachers such as paraprofessionals, substitutes, or tutors (from City Year, etc.) could employ a similar approach.
HOW THEY DID IT:
Adjusted master schedules and **reassigned specials teachers** to reduce group sizes in core instructional blocks

In the hybrid schedule, specials occurred on students’ remote day as asynchronous lessons or activities. This freed specials teachers to **push into in-person core instruction classrooms** to reduce group size:

<table>
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</table>
| ✓ Teach their specials class to each homeroom in-person two days per week | ✓ Develop weekly specials lessons for students to engage with asynchronously  
✓ Push into core instructional time to facilitate small group instruction in-person or virtually using breakout groups  
✓ Check in daily with an assigned set of students to ensure they are getting to school or logging on and receiving the supports they need |
HOW THEY DID IT: Repurposed administrator roles for more distributed instructional leadership

In one school, the principal repurposed her assistant principal to invest in more teacher-leadership roles, which distributed instructional leadership across six positions and allowed the team to provide more high-quality coaching for their teachers.

The other school distributed supports for English Language Learner instruction by reassigning a full-time ELD teacher to serve as a PD lead supporting dual-certified teachers and interventionists in providing instruction to English Language Learners. This structure integrated professional learning for the ELD team while enabling more daily pull-out instruction for students.
WHAT SUPPORTED CHANGE AT TREVISTA & MCGLONE?

A portion of Denver Public Schools, including Trevista and McGlone, use a “teaching academies” model in which student- and rookie teachers push-in to instruction in classrooms while simultaneously receiving mentoring and professional learning. Denver had its first cohort of teacher residents in the 2009-10 school year, and in 2018 developed a set of teaching academies in high-poverty schools to reduce turnover and support rookie teachers.

Teaching academies include a site coordinator and highly effective teachers who serve as mentors to teaching residents (candidates in undergraduate or graduate programs). Some schools have hybrid associate teacher roles for licensed rookie teachers, who have their own classes but teach fewer periods per day in order to create time for planning and professional development.

ERS estimates that a strategic approach to placing and supporting rookie teachers, like Denver’s teaching academies, could yield more than four months of additional student learning.
Although Trevista & McGlone are still in the process of assessing the outcome of the shifts, initial bright spots include:

- Additional push-in supports have **increased the time students spend in small groups**
- **Coaching frequency has increased** — and become more real-time — as teacher-leaders conduct both in-person and virtual classroom observations and provide real-time feedback on online lessons
- Teachers have reported **higher levels of transparency and insight into leader decision-making** as a direct result of the more distributed model

"If we looked at it from the perspective of how many touchpoints students get per day, it would be a drastic increase from last year. Between all the adults that are pulling small groups and all the small group intentional instruction that we’re giving."

- AMANDA SWALES, KINDERGARTEN TEACHER, TREVISTA
Both schools are exploring ways to expand their approaches, including:

- **Consolidating Homerooms**
  Enables investments in intervention and support staff (raises class sizes by ~5 students)

- **Increasing Time for Small Groups**
  A dedicated intervention block can expand these opportunities

As part of their next steps, they could focus on building toward...

- **Scaling Up the Teaching Academies Model**
  Creates more systemwide opportunities for small group instruction while ensuring that novice teachers receive necessary support and mentoring

- **Supporting Distributive Leadership Models**
  Facilitated by formalizing teacher leader roles that allow teachers to extend their reach as part of a robust career and compensation ladder across the district

- **Recruiting, Developing, and Retaining Strong Teachers and Leaders, Who Reflect Student Diversity**
  Leverage existing teacher residencies, comprehensive supports for novice teachers of color, and/or “grow your own” programs to recruit teacher candidates from nontraditional populations, such as paraprofessionals
APPENDIX
SCHOOL SNAPSHOT

ENROLLMENT

**Trevista:** 358 Students  
*ECE - 5*

**McGlone:** 857 Students  
*ECE - 8*

FUN FACT

Trevista’s name builds off the Denver Northside community’s history and vision.

“Tre” represents the three original elementary schools in the area, which were consolidated into Trevista at Horace Mann in 2008.

“Vista” represents the singular vision of success for all students across these three communities.
MCGLONE SNAPSHOT

- Hispanic: 76%
- Black: 12%
- White: 3%
- Asian: 1%
- 2+ Races or Ethnicities: 2%

- Students from Low-Income Backgrounds: 92.4%
- English Language Learners: 70%
- Students With Disabilities: 13%
ARTIFACTS

- Read about Denver’s “teaching academies”
- Visit Trevista at Horace Mann’s website
- Visit McGlone Academy’s website

THE LIBRARY

RELATED

- Growing Great Teachers Report Education Resource Strategies
- Igniting the Learning Engine Education Resource Strategies
- Teaching Innovation: New School Staffing Strategies Inspired by the Pandemic FutureEd
- District Systems to Support Equitable and High-Quality Teaching and Learning EdResearch for Recovery
- School Practices to Address Student Learning Loss EdResearch for Recovery
- Does Class Size Matter? National Education Policy Center