



CONNECTIONS TO PRACTICE

The Memphis Teacher Residency (MTR) maintains a consistent track of quality control gates throughout the residency year. These checkpoints seek to monitor resident performance proactively so that struggling residents receive timely attention and support. If performance continues to lag despite initial supports, residents progress through a four-tiered intervention process. If necessary, this intervention process can lead to formal probation and, eventually, expulsion from the program.

Due in part to these quality control gates, 87% of the 2010–2019 residency classes have successfully completed residency and graduated from the program.

MTR monitors the performance of its residents through the following embedded measures:

Quarterly Resident Evaluations. MTR evaluates residents on a quarterly cycle that is aligned to program coursework and teaching expectations. This “gradual release” model ensures residents learn content and receive feedback on their performance in relation to specific proficiencies. These expectations—ranging from planning and assessment skills to specific teaching techniques—codify MTR’s support during the residency year and offer a range of performance categories from novice to highly effective. The program is also able to analyze these data in aggregate, allowing for a program-level view across instructional coaches and contents. Below is an example of MTR’s quarterly expectations.

| LEARNING ENVIRONMENT | LEARNING ENVIRONMENT | LEARNING ENVIRONMENT | LEARNING ENVIRONMENT |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Relational Capacity: Teacher-Student | Backwards Planning | Pacing | Appearance |
| What To Do | Standards-Based Objectives | Right is Right | Attendance |
| Warm/Strict | Sequence of Learning Experiences | Format Matters | MTR Duties |
| 100% | | Wait Time | School Duties |
| Strong Voice | | Student Thinking | Ethics and Confidentiality |
| Emotional Stability | | | Response to Feedback |
| | | | Professional Communication |

Mentor-Resident-Coach Meetings. Once a month, mentor-resident-coach triads meet to review performance and preview coming expectations. These meetings allow for consistent communication between all parties and serve as a formative check on the resident's development.

Monthly Coach-Director Meetings. Each instructional coach has a standing meeting with a director-level staff member at MTR. During these meetings, instructional coaches review the progress of residents under their care and solicit suggestions for improvement. By maintaining a monthly meeting time, instructional coaches can flag underperformance as early as possible.

If necessary, underperforming residents are placed on a four-step plan that is designed to promote growth and performance:

STAGE ONE:

The resident's instructional coach meets with the underperforming resident and mentor teacher to clarify concerns and develop an action plan. As the instructional coach works to craft a successful plan, each member of the triad must have a role in the plan's execution. After the plan is finalized, the instructional coach will monitor progress, and if the resident demonstrates growth, no further action is taken.

STAGE TWO:

If a resident isn't successful on their coach-level action plan, the MTR residency director will hold a meeting with the resident and instructional coach to craft a formal improvement plan, including specific remediation steps. This plan is more structured than a coach-level action plan and includes a performance timeline that the instructional coach monitors.

STAGE THREE:

Residents that don't demonstrate growth within their improvement plan will be placed on probation. During this step, the director of education holds a four-way meeting with the residency director, instructional coach, and resident to review progress and clarify next steps. During this phase, residents are placed on a highly structured plan with a weekly "check-in." Recognizing the value of consistent communication, the director of education distributes copies of the probationary plan to the resident, mentor, instructional coach, residency director, principal of the host school, and the dean of MTR's university partner. The resident remains on probation until there are at least two months of consecutive improvement as outlined in the probationary plan.

STAGE FOUR:

If the resident isn't able to make sufficient progress during his or her probationary period, MTR notifies the resident of their pending dismissal. This step includes clarifying information regarding the resident's final day in the program and any associated responsibilities that must be completed before leaving.

Remaining Questions: As MTR continues to monitor resident performance, the program hopes to adjust the residents' evaluation cycle to achieve the best balance of rigor and feasibility. The program also recognizes the need to develop as many proactive supports as possible, so that residents may remain in the program and receive support before underperformance issues balloon into unmanageable situations.

For More Information:
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