

Why Teacher Residencies Need to be the Standard

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Overview of US PREP & Definition of Residency

As states across the country grapple with growing teacher shortages, and seek to build a teacher workforce that is well equipped to meet the diverse learning needs of our nation's students, more and more school systems are turning to teacher residencies — yearlong clinical experiences that pair teacher candidates with highly effective mentor teachers in a Pk-12 classroom — as a pillar of their talent pipeline strategy. Teacher residencies have emerged as a highly successful model of teacher preparation, developing candidates who are more diverse, more likely to stay in the classroom longer, and have a greater impact on student learning outcomes.¹

Over 30 colleges of education are among a growing number of universities partnered with <u>University-School Partnerships for the Renewal of Educator Preparation (US PREP)</u>, a national <u>coalition of teacher preparation institutions</u>, to implement scaled and sustainable yearlong teacher residencies. The transformation of these preparation programs to a yearlong residency includes reallocating, reducing,

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CLIFTON TANABE, DEAN
UTEP COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

and reinvesting existing college resources, capacity, and budgets to <u>scale</u> and sustain the residency approach to preparation across all programs and pathways.

National partners like the <u>Pathways Alliance</u> and <u>US PREP</u> have codified definitions of residency. Taken together, the essential elements of residency include:

- A yearlong clinical teaching experience that allows teacher candidates for 3-5 days per week to experience a complete school year before becoming a teacher of record, including strong supervision, regular feedback from highly effective trained mentor teachers, coaching, and professional development;
- Highly effective mentor teachers that support candidates via co-teaching models, gradual release of instructional responsibilities, and regular observation and coaching; and
- Strong <u>district partnerships</u> that include shared decision-making, aligned expectations for candidate preparation, regular sharing of data, coordinated recruitment, placement, and hiring processes that reflect the needs of the District

Robust residency programs also include the following elements:

- Site Coordinators who help bridge the university (faculty/instructor coursework) and the district (selecting/coaching highly effective mentor teachers, selecting clinical placement sites, completing more regular and impactful observation and coaching cycles with candidates, leading governance, etc.);
- Practice-based coursework aligned to the program's instructional framework (e.g. T-TESS) and clinical fieldwork that supports candidates in effectively using <u>high-quality instructional materials</u> to best develop Pk-12 students;
- Consistent use of teacher candidate evaluation instruments to measure teacher candidates' competencies and implementation of standardsaligned instruction; and
- Collecting, analyzing, and using data for continuous improvement via routine data use structures and protocols

The Impact of Residencies

US PREP's data on residencies is already showing a positive impact and success in a multitude of areas, of which we cover three in this report that are the most salient:

- Student Achievement and Outcomes
- Teacher Employment and Retention
- · Perception of Teacher Candidates

What do we know about the Impact of Residencies on PK-12 Students?

A recent study conducted by Dr. Jessica Gottlieb and Dr. Jacob Kirksey² at Texas Tech University shows teachers prepared through the US PREP transformed model produce positive student achievement outcomes in reading and math for historically marginalized students, including English learners, students eligible for free or reduced-price

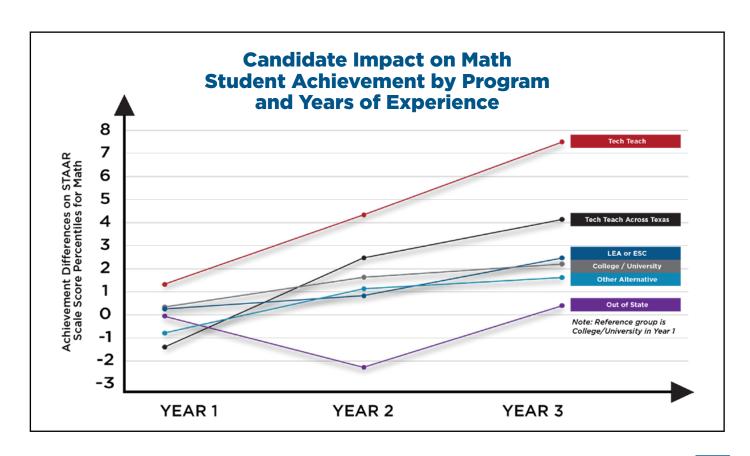
lunch; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; and students with disabilities. The core findings of the study demonstrate that:

PK-12 students who were taught by candidates prepared in the residency model...

- Exhibited stronger math performance compared to PK-12 students with teachers from other pathways.
- Demonstrated stronger reading scores compared to other students, and this was the only statistically significant difference in reading achievement by preparation pathway.

Teacher candidates prepared in the residency model...

 Had larger differences in their students' achievement compared to other pathways in years 2 and 3. This indicates that candidates in the Transformed Model are not only becoming more effective over time, but are improving student outcomes at a much quicker rate compared to teachers in other program types and pathways.



What do we know about the impact of residency on teacher retention?

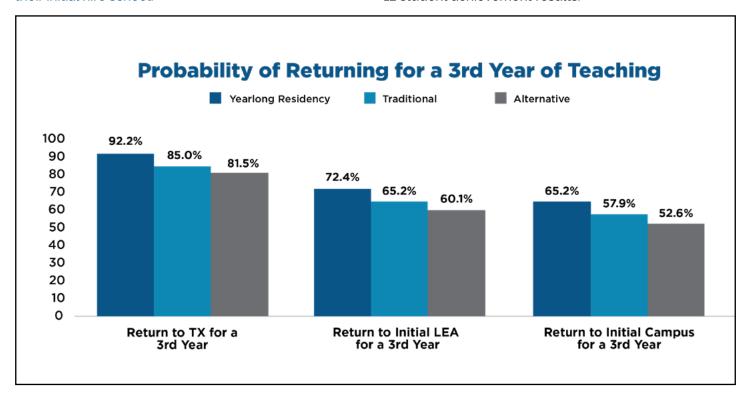
Teacher attrition is costly to districts and schools and has adverse impacts on student achievement.³ Therefore, as part of a broader study on technical assistance and residency experiences, the Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) assessed retention outcomes for beginning teachers who had completed a yearlong residency in Texas.

These analyses focused on four cohorts of first-year teachers in Texas public schools-in the 2016-17 through 2019-20 years-and estimated the likelihood that these beginning teachers would return for a third year of teaching (1) in any Texas public school; (2) in the same school district in which they were initially hired; and (3) at the same school in which they were initially hired. In these analyses, EPIC compared the retention outcomes of beginning teachers who had completed a yearlong residency with the retention outcomes of beginning teachers who had completed a traditional or alternative entry program.

Results from these analyses show that beginning teachers who completed a yearlong residency are significantly more likely to stay for a third year of teaching in Texas, in their initial hire district, and at their initial hire school.

- Those who completed a yearlong residency were 7 percentage points more likely than teachers prepared in a traditional preparation program (92.2% vs 85.0%) and nearly 11 percentage points more likely than teachers prepared in an alternative certification program (92.2% vs 81.5%) to return for a 3rd year of teaching in Texas public schools.
- Those who completed a yearlong residency were 7 percentage points more likely than teachers in a traditional preparation program (65.2% vs 57.9%) and nearly 13 percentage points more likely than teachers prepared in an alternative certification program (65.2% vs 52.6%) to return for a 3rd year of teaching in their initial hire school.

Higher attrition rates create more teacher vacancies than should be expected, and in turn fuels the need for more teachers prepared via fast-track alternative certification programs. EPIC found that if beginning teachers who completed a traditional or alternative entry program had the same retention rates as those who completed a yearlong residency, Texas would have needed 8,000 fewer 'first-year teachers' over this four-year period. Applying research on a national average cost of attrition (\$20,000 per new district hire)⁴, an investment in the residency model would save Texas' schools over \$40 million in hiring and induction costs each year. These savings compound over time, as does the increase in Pk-12 student achievement results.



What do we know about the impact of residency on candidate and teacher educator perception of readiness?

Recently, Education Policy Initiative at Carolina (EPIC) published <u>findings from a longitudinal analysis</u> of teacher candidate and mentor teacher perceptions of their experiences with the residency. Survey analyses revealed that Teacher candidates trained in the residency model compared to those in the traditional model are:

- Nearly 15 percentage points more likely to "strongly agree" that they were well prepared to teach.
- 6.3 percentage points more likely to "strongly agree" that their educator preparation programs has a shared vision.
- Mentor teachers supervising a candidate in the transformed model are 18 percentage points more likely to strongly agree that the educator preparation programs has a shared vision for effective instruction.

In addition to teacher candidates and mentor teachers, EPIC has also distributed and analyzed surveys given to

teacher educators (e.g. field supervisors, faculty, etc.) from educator preparation programs. For this analysis, EPIC compared perceptions of teacher educators of candidates completing a teacher residency and teacher educators of candidates completing traditional clinical experiences. Findings demonstrated that relative to teacher educators of traditional clinical models, teacher educators of residency models are:

- 23 percentage points more likely to conduct walkthroughs during student teaching and share those data with their candidates,
- 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 K-12 district partners

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Teachers who completed a yearlong residency are significantly more likely to stay for a third year of teaching in Texas, in their initial hire district, and at their initial hire school.

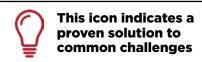
Challenges and Solutions to Scaling & Sustaining Residencies

Given the research on the efficacy of residencies, one might question why residencies aren't the standard in teacher preparation. Many residency programs offer critical financial support for teacher candidates, but result in the program being so expensive that it can serve only a limited number of candidates. Due to non-sustainable financial models, residencies have proven difficult to scale, which means that district hiring demands cannot be met. We explore the challenges to scaling residencies below and offer tangible solutions that have been enacted and proven effective in overcoming the implementation and scale challenges of paid yearlong teacher residencies:





"Candidates can't afford to give up their part-time/full-time job to do a yearlong clinical experience"





Fully Scaled Residency

Many universities in US PREP already scaled or are scaling a yearlong residency for all of their teacher candidates. These programs haven't given into the access barriers. Instead, these programs are working closely with their school district partners to rethink their staffing models and reallocate current funding, enabling resident stipends and structures to become a part of how a school operates well. This process is called Strategic Staffing, in which yearlong residents earn a sustainable stipend using underleveraged district funds while fulfilling the immediate instructional needs of Pk-12 schools. In the 2022-23 school year, 60% of teacher residents placed as part of the strategic staffing work were teachers of color⁵ compared to the state average of 41.1% teachers of color in Texas public schools. Strategic staffing and paid residencies are important tools in closing the diversity gap within the educator workforce in Texas.

Credit Hour Redistribution

Universities work to reallocate and redistribute course credit hours and preparation experiences towards the clinical experience (versus seat hours in lectures), prioritizing a more impactful approach to candidate development that includes co-teaching in Pk-12 classrooms under the guidance of an effective mentor teacher (apprenticeship). A redistribution from lecture hours to clinical hours ensures appropriate time is spent preparing candidates in the experiences proven to have the largest impact on their readiness to teach. There exists a shift nationally in education towards apprenticeship models, as this 'shelter and develop' model is widely accepted and proven successful in other fields (e.g. medical doctors, electricians, pilots, etc.).



"We have candidates who complete their student teaching in the fall and graduate in December, making a yearlong residency impossible."

Revise Course Catalogs and Degree Programs

Adjustments to course offerings and degree programs are often needed to allow for both a fall and spring start for the yearlong clinical experience. Sequencing courses that allow for this is not only possible, it's what almost all of the coalition members in US PREP have done as they have scaled and sustained the yearlong residency for all candidates.



University Reallocation & Overall Cost

US PREP Coalition members comprise colleges of education across the country who are rethinking what is possible and have already, or have started, to reallocate, reduce, and reinvest to support the yearlong residency model. While universities necessitate some additional funds while operating parallel programming during the transition from traditional to residency models, the overall operating costs of the education preparation program for each of the fully scaled residencies in the US PREP Coalition has been a difference of less than \$100k to operate the residency versus the original teacher preparation program.

Scaling the Site Coordinator

At Texas Tech University (TTU), funding for site coordinators was reallocated from positions that were no longer needed due to the expanded role of the site coordinator. This included nearly \$100,000 freed from salaries once allocated for a coordinator of pre-clinical experiences, a second staff position solely for arranging field placements for candidates, and piecework payments to university supervisors based on the number of students supervised. These shifts have actually brought the administrative cost per resident down slightly and dramatically increased the quality of candidate clinical preparation.¹¹

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External Incentives to Transform

Last year, the Texas Education Agency created a Vetted Teacher Residency program list that recognizes programs that offer teacher residency pathways and provided grants that incentivize districts and teacher residency program partners to implement fully scaled residencies. This model of teacher preparation is already impacting thousands of teacher residents (and their Pk-12 students) across the state of Texas. Other states across the nation are following suit or have created initiatives to scale residency.



Technical Assistance Matters

Educator preparation programs necessitate onthe-ground technical assistance to support and coach the program in both building capacity to implement the residency and ensure it is financially sustainable across all programs and pathways. US PREP has supported over 30 universities across the nation in implementing sustainable residency models, at scale.



"Residents would only experience one classroom/ mentor. Candidates need to experience multiple classroom settings."

Mentor Effectiveness

The most predictive factor of a candidates' future instructional effectiveness is the effectiveness of the candidates' mentor teacher during student teaching.⁹ While diversity in experiences is great, the quality of at least one mentor teacher matters more. While a candidate experiencing more mentors and classrooms can be positive, in theory, Pk-12 districts and educator preparation programs are challenged in identifying effective mentor teachers for each novice candidate. A mentor's ability to model effective instruction and implement co-teaching structures significantly impacts both the candidates' future effectiveness and the outcomes of the Pk-12 students in the classroom.^{8,9}

Prioritizing Pedagogy

A teacher's ability to implement research-based pedagogical practices that improve Pk-12 student outcomes, no matter the content, is critical to the effectiveness of an educator. Focusing candidates on a strong pedagogical foundation in the clinical year ensures that candidates can make use of those skills in various contents, guaranteeing all students learn.¹⁰

Maximizing Clinical Time

Effective mentors and student teaching experiences are intentional about the structures and approaches taken to both candidate development and student learning. Multiple mentors necessitates clear and purposeful transition and/or "hand off" structures when a candidate switches from one mentor's classroom to another, which is a high bar for an already stressed education/mentor ecosystem.

Early Field-Based Experiences

Intentional and focused field based experiences (observations) are the ideal opportunity for teacher candidates to experience multiple grade-levels and/or content areas. The Texas Administrative Code already requires that field based experiences for teacher candidates include a range of content and grade-levels during pre-service. Additional opportunities to see and interact with diverse settings can also be incorporated into coursework throughout a teacher candidates' trajectory such as practice-based coursework rehearsals and models that reflect different classroom settings.



"We need more teachers, and yearlong clinical experiences create unnecessary barriers for teachers to get into the classroom."



Fast(er) Tracks Don't Work

Tontinuing to prepare teachers via fast[er] track pathways has resulted in poorly prepared candidates that do not perform as well with students (see TTU study above). EPIC's research (see above) shows that teachers from fast-track pathways teaching leave teaching at rates far above both traditional programs and exceedingly above residency pathways. Fast-track preparation has not solved our nation's teacher shortage challenges in the last three decades, and it will not solve it in the next three.



Increased Retention Necessitates Fewer New Teachers

In a state like Texas, 6% of teachers (23,000+) are brand-new to teaching each year, affirming the growing percentage of novice teachers in Pk-12 classrooms. A Houston-based study across five years showed that nearly 9 out of 10 graduates from the University of Houston's yearlong residency program - a model of high-quality preparation - who go on to teach in Texas' schools remain teaching in a Texas classroom into their third year, which is 11 percentage points higher than the state average¹³. We can ensure our classrooms have the quantity of teachers we need without sacrificing their quality. A TEA analysis of teacher retention data outlined in the final report of the Teacher Vacancy Task Force highlighted that if teachers prepared in alternative certification programs were retained at the same rate as teachers prepared in traditional programs, over 3,700 fewer new teachers would have been needed last year (TEA, 2022).

Upholding a High Bar for Teaching

Even in the midst of a teacher shortage, reducing the qualifications and experiences for becoming a teacher does not professionalize the profession (in fact, it may degrade it). We must uphold a high standard for the knowledge, skills, and practices of an effective educator and the experiences that are necessary to develop them.

Examples Across Rural America

There exists many examples of rural-based residency implementation across the state of Texas, including at both Texas Tech University with the Tech Teach Across Texas program and Tarleton State University. Rural-based residency programs are growing, effective, and serving as the 'pathway of choice' for schools and candidates. One strategy these universities employ is site-based and/or virtual courses that bring the university to the student teaching placement (versus a candidate needing to travel to the university for coursework).

Hub Site Coordinator Model

In order to ensure a quality implementation of a yearlong residency, student teaching placement districts and schools must be considered immensely. Placing candidates in more districts/schools does not ensure quality supports and development for teacher candidates. US PREP Coalition universities think strategically about clinical teaching placements to ensure robust Site Coordinator supervision structures, effective mentor teacher selection and training, and deep partnerships with districts all in an effort to ensure all district/school recipients of teachers get the very best educator.

Deep Partnerships Matter

Deeper partnerships between rural schools and community colleges helps facilitate direct conversations about the challenges and needs of teacher candidates experiencing a yearlong residency. Multiple Pk-12 district partners can collaborate and agree alongside the educator preparation program to host enough residents to support the enhanced Site Coordinator model. Community Colleges and/or Pk-12 districts with access to student housing may even choose to support living arrangements for candidates during their yearlong clinical experience.

A Collective Call to Action

Make residencies "THE" teacher preparation pathway and call on educator preparation programs and school partners to work closely to achieve solutions. Many educator preparation programs across the nation are in the process of scaling and sustaining residency pathways for all the candidates with whom they prepare (nearly 1 out of 18 newly prepared teachers in the state14). These educator preparation programs haven't given into the barriers. Instead, these programs are working closely with their school district partners to rethink their staffing models and reallocate existing funding, enabling resident stipends to become a part of how candidates develop and schools operate.

While the challenges in implementing yearlong residencies are complex, the positive impact of successful residency implementation is clear for schools. teacher candidates, and students: Quality of candidate preparation, student achievement, teacher retention, and teacher diversity are all positively shifted by paid, yearlong, teacher residencies. Rewarding both educator preparation programs and candidates that choose a higher quality preparation route, resulting in additional value to student outcomes and longevity in the field, sends a strong message about what our country values. Strategic partnerships between educator preparation programs, Pk-12 districts, state agencies, and state legislatures, all collaborating to scale paid yearlong teacher residencies will ensure that highquality preparation for America's teachers becomes the standard.

Teacher residencies need to be the standard.

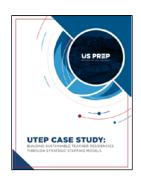
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Quality of candidate preparation, student achievement, teacher retention, and teacher diversity are all positively shifted by paid, yearlong, teacher residencies.

Resources & Citations

The US PREP Coalition is committed to codifying and sharing the best practices developed across the nation to improve the quality of teacher preparation and disrupt inequities in PK-12 communities. The coalition is pleased to share the following articles, publications, and resources that highlight some of the ways in which the coalition is collaborating to make sustainable change:

- · <u>University of Texas El Paso | Strategic Staffing Case Study</u> A case study showcasing the design and implementation of strategic staffing the El Paso region. This publication provides an overview of strategic staffing, the experiences for educator preparation programs and LEA, an introduction to the models, and challenges, solutions, and recommendations for approach.
- Tarleton University | Full Scale Transformation Case Study A case study showcasing the transformation of Tarleton State University to residency across all programs and pathways (in just three years).
- US PREP Coalition Member Case Studies from Texas Tech University, University of Houston, Southeastern Louisiana University, and Sam Houston State University,
- Scaling the Site Coordinator An in-depth look into scaling the most pivotal role necessary for implementing quality residencies.
- Hub & Spoke Technical Assistance Model US PREP's approach to technical assistance that ensures quality, scale, and sustainment of yearlong residency and improved outcomes for Pk-12 students across the nation.
- · Daring Leadership A publication written by US PREP's inaugural deans on the challenges and rewards of transforming their colleges of education to a yearlong residency, practice-based, teacher preparation program.
- Scale Toolkit Toolkit for designing, supporting and scaling a high-quality, sustainable, and accessible educator preparation program.
- Data Toolkit Assists educator preparation programs with diagnosing the status of their data use practices as well as providing valuable resources in the development of program protocols.











Citations

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