

# Five Domains for Teacher Preparation Transformation



This is a legacy resource that predates our new brand.

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In July 2023, *Prepared To Teach* transitioned to be a national organization, independent of our first home at Bank Street College of Education. We are keeping all of our materials available for partners who may find them helpful, but we encourage you to use our [searchable resource hub](#) to find newer materials that may include updated information.

**For the latest updates from *Prepared To Teach*, please visit our website, [preparedtoteach.org](https://preparedtoteach.org). There, you can find new resources, see current events, and subscribe to our monthly update.**



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# Learning With and From the Field

Since late 2015, *Prepared To Teach*, an initiative at Bank Street College of Education, has promoted sustainable, affordable, high-quality teacher preparation. Our work has engaged with teacher preparation/P-12 partnerships across the country to understand how the field might redesign systems so that high-quality preparation pathways are accessible to all aspiring teachers. Overwhelmingly, we have found that partnerships want to transform their work together so that every aspiring teacher has the kind of preparation the field knows makes a difference—preparation that connects emerging research to the realities in today’s schools; is steeped in knowledge of how people learn; ensures candidates understand content, pedagogy, and culturally responsive and sustaining practices; includes sustained, reflective clinical practice in a supportive environment; has equitable program structures accessible to aspiring teachers from underrepresented backgrounds; and provides candidates with tools to disrupt inequities in the schools they will serve and beyond. These components not only set up teacher candidates for success, but they also ultimately lead to better experiences for all K-12 students in our nation’s schools. As a means for ensuring that aspiring teachers have ample opportunities to consolidate the vast knowledge and practice base they need to be effective teachers, high-quality programs strive to ground their work in deep practice and in partnership with schools and districts, which often offer students a full year of clinical placement in a “teacher residency” alongside an accomplished teacher.

In fall 2018, the *Prepared To Teach* team received support to learn from partnerships what it might take to move more systematically toward sustainably funded, equitably accessible, high-quality residencies. The project reached out to partnerships that were implementing, improving, exploring, or expanding their focus on teacher residencies. In the end, over a dozen partnerships across six states wanted to engage in a co-constructed learning agenda that could strengthen their residencies. Institutions received small subgrants, stipends, or professional learning supports for two years to participate in and support a shared national learning agenda while they simultaneously forwarded their work toward sustainably-funded, high-quality residency programs.<sup>1</sup> (The partner report on the findings from the study, entitled *Aspiring for More: Deeper Partnerships for Sustainable Residencies*, is available at [bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach](http://bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach).) ●



## Working Definition of Residency

Based on extant research and our own study of programs across the nation, we offer the following three-part description of common features in high-quality residency programs.<sup>2</sup>

### PROGRAM CURRICULUM

- Foundational knowledge in content, educational theory, and pedagogy are tightly integrated into residents' placement experiences.
- Residents' instructional practice is grounded in research-based principles based in the research on learning and development,<sup>3</sup> not simply in mastery of techniques.
- Residents study and practice culturally responsive and sustaining practices and explore personal and systemic biases to develop capacities to disrupt systemic inequities.

### STRUCTURAL PRINCIPLES

- Responsibility for residents' development as novice professionals is shared by school, district, and program partners.
- Residents do not serve as teachers of record. Rather, they work as co-teachers with an accomplished teacher who has strong mentoring capacities.
- Residents follow the P-12 calendar for full-time clinical placements, generally at least four days a week or half a day each day, experiencing the arc of the school year with a consistent set of students.
- Residents' roles in their classrooms are substantive. They help plan, deliver, assess, and reflect on their and their co-teachers' impact on student growth and learning.

### CO-DESIGNED APPROACHES TO MEET SPECIFIC LOCAL NEEDS

- Partnerships make concerted efforts, often including strong incentive packages, to recruit residents from under-represented backgrounds and prepare them for specific district hiring needs, especially in shortage areas.
- Districts provide financial support during the residency year, often in exchange for a commitment to teach in the district for a minimum number of years.
- Once hired in the district, residency graduates often receive ongoing mentoring and support.

# **B**uilding a Shared Learning Agenda

From the outset, *Prepared To Teach* knew that every program ultimately would be designed to address unique local needs, creating potential challenges for learning across sites. We also knew that a solid research base to engage a formalized cross-site case study approach on residencies did not yet exist, so our goal was to identify learning agenda domains that seemed universal across partnerships in order to document both commonalities and differences across sites and ultimately surface promising practices and principles through the study. Accordingly, the focus of year one of the project was to identify shared focal points and definitions of residency partnership work to ultimately develop a common framework through which to gather information and codify findings.

Over the course of two convenings with research leads from each partnership, the project developed a learning agenda framework focused on how partnerships are built, how curriculum shifts, how schools and districts are affected during residency implementation, and how mentors and residents change and learn through programming. Research partners also developed guiding questions and protocols for focus groups, interviews, and questionnaires to inform the learning agenda work. As a result of these meetings, the project committed to the following residency development areas:

## **1 PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

*How do partnerships structure and guide their work together to ensure mutual benefits for schools, districts, and program participants?*

## **2 PROGRAM REDESIGN**

*What changes to preparation programs and curriculum do partnerships prioritize, and why do they do so?*

## **3 SUPPORTING SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT BY BUILDING AUTHENTIC SCHOOL LEARNING COMMUNITIES**

*How might mutually beneficial residency partnerships support schools?*

## **4 MENTOR DEVELOPMENT**

*How are mentors' roles and supports designed and experienced?*

## **5 RESIDENT LEARNING**

*What do teacher candidates think about their residency experiences?*

In addition, because of *Prepared To Teach*'s focus on developing quality programs that are accessible for all candidates, partnerships agreed to seek ways to make their programs more affordable and to participate in a comprehensive survey of their enrollees' financial situations, helping the project answer two questions about sustainability:

### **SUSTAINABILITY**

*How can partnerships build towards sustainable models that ensure candidates from all backgrounds can afford to enter their programs?*

*What kinds of financial barriers do candidates face during clinical practice?*

After the focus areas were established, partnerships began conversations about growing their local residencies. Each program had a unique starting point for this work. Some had residencies already in place and were having conversations about how to make them financially accessible and sustainable; some previously had residency programming and were looking at ways to reinstate them without outside funding; others were new to the residency model and were having conversations around how to start them. As partnerships pursued implementation efforts, the project, in collaboration with local researchers, collected data from across the network to explore the successes and challenges programs experienced. ●



# The *Prepared To Teach* National Learning Network Timeline of Activities

**Oct. 2018**

## **Learning Grant Launch**

The *Prepared To Teach* National Network learning project launches.

**Nov. 2018**

## **Focus Area Development**

*Prepared To Teach* develops a set of hypothesized key focus areas to develop sustainably funded residencies.

**Dec. 2018**

## **Learning Agenda Network Virtual Kick-Off**

Network provides feedback on focus areas and informs construction of domains and guiding questions.

**Feb. 2019**

## **Network Convening, Albuquerque, NM**

Network agrees on finalized domains.

**Mar. 2019**

## **Learning Agenda Launch**

Network partnerships begin local conversations about sustainably funded residencies. The project begins to collect learnings across the network.

**May 2019**

## **Grounding Questions Identified**

Network finalizes research protocol.

**Sept. 2019**

## **Network Convening Los Angeles, CA**

Network discusses emergent findings; *Prepared To Teach* introduces the financial burden survey.

**Oct. 2019**

## **Transformation Framework Development**

Transformation Framework identifies 5 critical, distinct, yet interconnected domains to shift the teacher preparation ecosystem.

**Jan. 2020**

## **Transformation Framework Finalization**

The 5 Domains are presented to the network, refined, and finalized.

**Apr. 2020**

## **High-Level Data Analysis**

Complete datasets for survey and local partnership work are analyzed, surfacing high-level cross-site learnings

**May 2020**

## **Communities of Practice Development**

*Prepared To Teach* develops structures and content for the upcoming Communities of Practice tied to the 5 Domains.

**Fall 2020**

## **Communities of Practice Launch**

Communities of Practice (CPs) begin with partnerships including participants from both P-12 and preparation programs in every CP.

## Grant Cycle Year

Y1

Y1

Y1

Y1

Y1

Y1

Y1

Y2

Y2

Y2

Y2

Y2

### **Mar. 2019 – Dec. 2019**

#### **Learning Agenda Data Collection and Analysis**

*Prepared To Teach* supports partnership sites with data collection, interviews, focus groups, and analysis.

### **Nov. 2019 – Apr. 2020**

*Prepared To Teach* launches candidate survey across 12 institutions in 7 states.



# Working from Strengths

## Boosting Productive Beginnings

The most inspiring lesson we have learned from this study is that districts and teacher preparation programs have a deep, genuine hunger to create the kinds of residency partnerships that can transform education. Each of the study sites made significant movement towards implementing more sustainably funded residencies that are based in new, productive partnership models. In the first year of residency implementation alone, the network welcomed over 220 new residents into their programs, found local funding through reallocation and reduced costs that provided residents, on average, more than \$5,000 in real dollars and savings, and directed over \$1.1 million local dollars to residents. (Note: In other work, *Prepared To Teach* has also documented approaches to finding funding for candidates through three case studies; see [bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach](http://bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach))

To achieve these impressive results, each partnership drew on strengths within their existing contexts, allowing them to leverage change-signaling shifts towards sustainably funded residencies and new visions for partnerships. This strengths-based growth also surfaced a corollary: Partnerships seemed limited in their capacity to engage changes that did not have an associated strength to help them move forward. For example, the sites that entered the study with a strong university leadership commitment to residencies were able to pursue internal curricular shifts; other sites, while not moving forward in that area, drew on strong school-based clinical partnerships to integrate residents more deeply into schools' daily work.

### IDENTIFYING NEXT STEPS

Partnerships wanted to expand their work beyond the ready affordances of current strengths, but there was no roadmap, no way to focus priorities. To help partnerships move beyond their existing areas of strength, *Prepared To Teach* engaged two questions to help us interpret the change stories that had arisen in the first year of the project:

*What are the various domains of change and trajectories of development within those domains that sites experienced?*

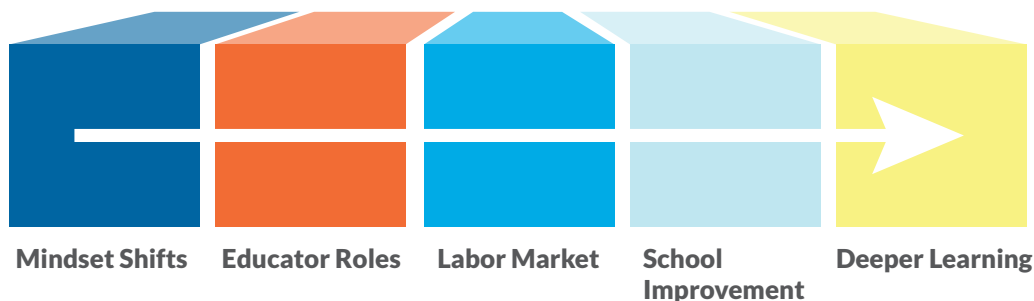
*What kinds of supports might partnerships need to support the growth of high-quality, affordable residency programs, regardless of their current set of strengths?*

In exploring answers to these questions, we developed a framework of what we believe are necessary, distinct, yet interconnected domains for achieving scalable shifts in the teacher preparation ecosystem that can provide all aspiring teachers with access to high-quality, sustainably funded teacher residencies. The *Prepared To Teach* Transformation Framework Domains, outlined below, represents the project's emergent theory of change about how sites can pursue progress along five interconnected domains that will enable them to transform their programs and partnerships, regardless of existing contexts and strengths.

## THE PREPARED TO TEACH TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORK DOMAINS

The project is now working on transformation through five domains. The first domain, Mindset Shifts, focuses on how leadership of P-12/preparation program partnerships can effect long-term transformation of their preparation systems. The middle three domains—Educator Roles, Labor Market Alignment, and School Improvement—all delve deeply into the nuts and bolts of systems shifts that need to occur, including supports for mentors and program curricular shifts. The final domain, Deeper Learning, ensures that the work of transformation is in the service of equitable teaching and learning for all.

### The Five Domains



*We developed a framework of what we believe are necessary, distinct, yet interconnected domains for achieving scalable shifts in the teacher preparation ecosystem to allow all aspiring teachers to access high-quality, sustainably funded teacher residencies.*

To address the second question, *What would it take to support partnerships so they could move beyond initial stages to realize a complete transformation of their preparation and partnership models?*, partnerships have begun engaging in a pilot two-year cycle of Communities of Practice (CPs) to support their progress in each domain. The CP pilot, which launched in the 2020-21 academic year, consists of nine individual learning strands, each linked to one of the five domains, with four strands in year one and five additional strands in year two.

In each partnership, individuals from both the preparation and P-12 sectors participate in role-relevant CP strands. So, for example, human resources leaders and program directors might attend the Educator Roles CP while deans and superintendents might attend the CP on mindset shifts. Each virtual community meets monthly, hearing from leaders in the field, brainstorming ways to move forward together, and exploring the

possibilities for change that reside in each domain. Partners also have the opportunity to present current progress, obstacles, or wonderings from their contextual viewpoint to their CP to get feedback and share perspectives across the network. In addition, participants from local partnerships come together in local advisory groups to share learnings from CP strands and make concrete plans to shift their programs towards sustainable, accessible, high-quality residencies.

The goal of the CP networks is to elevate, support, and focus work across partnerships, making cross-site learning more accessible and providing exemplars for other partnerships around real possibilities for change. The following section details the rationale, design, and anticipated impacts for the CP work in each of the five domains. ●



## Overview: Communities of Practice Two-Year Cycle of Exploration

The five domains vary in terms of the amount of content the partnerships might want to explore, so domains have one, two, or three CP strands across the two years. Year 1 CPs explore powerful changes that the study found to be within reach in a short period of time; Year 2 CPs focus on deeper areas of transformation that partnerships will ultimately need to engage with in order to develop a seamless and equitable teacher preparation system.

## Year 1

Domain	CP Strand	Strand Focus
Mindset	Advisory Groups	Visioning to create an inclusive advisory group to co-construct a vision and short- and long-term goals
Educator Roles	Exploring Staff Structure Flexibilities	Exploring models to incorporate residents into the P-12 system's instructional efforts
School Improvement	Curriculum and Whole School Design	Integrating program curricula with P-12 schools' instructional needs to support school improvement
School Improvement	Mentors	Creating a shared vision for mentor teachers' roles and teacher leadership development within a residency program

## Year 2

Domain	CP Strand	Strand Focus
Mindset	Long-Term Sustainability	Developing long-term strategic plans that break down silos, braid resources and roles, and center quality and equity
Labor Market	Local Education Needs	Aligning programs and recruitment with P-12 instructional and hiring needs, including "grow your own" plans
Deeper Learning	Centering Equity	Assessing equity gaps and anti-bias needs; revising curriculum to center the disruption of historic inequities
Deeper Learning	Learning and Development	Understanding how people learn and change; redesigning supports and opportunities to learn in programs and P-12
Deeper Learning	Resident Learning	Maximizing candidate learning and identity development opportunities within the context of the redesigned partnership



# Mindset Shifts

## Creating a Shared Space for Teacher Preparation

The structural and regulatory separation of preparation programs and P-12 systems in the United States creates challenges for high-quality teacher preparation. Higher education, where most teacher preparation occurs, has no authority to control the school-based experiences that its candidates have once they are placed in classrooms for clinical practice. For their part, districts have no authority to control the curriculum taught in preparation programs to ensure it reflects the needs of today's students. As a result, academic learning and clinical practice experiences in teacher preparation are often disconnected; in some ways, neither P-12 nor the preparation program is clearly responsible for what happens during the critical phase of clinical practice. To be sure, there are excellent programs and student teaching placements where collaboration and deep learning occur with regularity, but the system itself is not set up to ensure all aspiring teachers benefit from such models.

To realize systems-level change in teacher preparation, both P-12 and teacher preparation programs need to find ways to rethink their roles so that they share responsibility equally in the designs for and work of preparing future teachers by creating stronger collaboration across academic and clinical portions of preparation. Good relationships between preparation programs and host schools and districts are crucial for such shifts to occur, but relationships alone are not enough. Partners need to co-create deeply shared goals and collaborative structures so they can design programs that fully integrate study and practice, meet the needs of P-12 students, and prepare new teachers in the best ways possible.

### THE MINDSET COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (CP)

The work of shifting partnerships' mindsets is central to transforming teacher preparation. Finding ways to re-imagine teacher preparation as the work of both P-12 and teacher preparation programs requires new thinking on the part of leaders from both sectors, redefining roles and goals for their individual organizations and the partnership overall. In addition, the range of shifts necessary to transform partnerships needs senior leadership to guide and coordinate a large set of work, including curriculum development, professional learning opportunities, quality and equity needs, and balancing of short-term and long-term goals.

The Mindset Shift domain was designed to support partnerships' development of cross-sector strategic leadership teams to accomplish these goals. This domain, unlike any others,

is a two-year CP. Leaders, such as deans and superintendents, focus on coming to understand each other's priorities and needs so they can define a shared vision, set shared goals, and create shared governance structures for the residency development/teacher preparation transformation work. They establish local advisory groups and work teams to address targeted needs, such as recruitment, program course sequencing, candidate financing, and other focus areas the partnership identifies, which are often tied to teams' suggestions from the other CPs. Over the course of two years, they integrate visions from across all the CPs to create a unified set of short- and long-term plans.

In this CP, participants focus on how to frame partnership goals to signal priorities and focus on both quick wins (to generate excitement and progress) and deep wins (to move forward long-term goals). The CP explores how to build political will using social media, networking, and political outreach to support the development of sustainable teacher residencies. Participants also have the opportunity to apply research and to learn from others' successful journeys. The goal of the CP work is for each partnership to have developed a three-to-five-year plan for the transformation of their teacher preparation pathways into deeply partnered teacher residencies. ●

## **A**nticipated Transformations Within This Domain

- Deeper, more synergetic partnerships that can readily design needed initiatives and provide mutual support to achieve shared goals
- Development of a shared responsibility for the profession of teaching through collaboration in the development and mentoring of future teachers
- Strength and capacity to plan for and achieve long-term visions for recruitment, preparation, and retention of high-quality teachers
- Development of sustainable funding streams to support residents financially while they are working alongside accomplished mentor teachers, supporting instruction, and learning their craft
- Reduction of siloed work both within the individual sectors of teacher preparation and P-12 schooling, and between the two





# Transformation Story

## Mindset Shifts at Western Washington University and Ferndale School District

### An Ever-Deepening Quest for a Remodeled Teacher Preparation System

Woodring College of Education at Western Washington University and Ferndale School District were ready to explore ways to provide Woodring candidates with some form of compensated work that would allow candidates to increase their time and experiences in the school system. As the report *Co-Designing Residencies: Sharing leadership, finding new opportunities* details, district and program leaders came together to identify compensated opportunities for residents that could meet both district and program needs. The effort was a success. Not only did the paraprofessional substitute teaching roles that residents took on allow the district to more easily manage the logistics of the state mandated trainings for its paraprofessional staff, but residents also grew profoundly more aware of the many supports beyond the classroom teacher that are necessary to ensure quality education for all students.

Although compensated work for teacher candidates remains a focus of conversations, much more is on the table. A second district, Mount Vernon, has now been invited into the residency partnership work, and leaders from both districts and the College are reimagining how they can work together to create a more integrated teacher preparation system. For example, some work that faculty at Woodring has done with the state education department on mentor teacher development is being redesigned. Currently, individuals from across the state enroll in these mentor academies. Mount Vernon will now be piloting a model

where the three-day mentor academy will be offered specifically to current and potential cooperating teachers within the district with hopes that the shared learning experiences among the cohort of cooperating teachers will strengthen the academy's coherence and application.

The partners' openness to rethinking how teacher preparation might shift to meet new and growing needs in P-12 schools has also helped center their shared commitments to justice and equity. Woodring currently has several programs that support candidates of color, including pathway programs within the College that link high school, community college, and teacher preparation. Woodring is working to expand these existing avenues as much as possible to help meet districts' desires to recruit and prepare teachers who match the student demographics and language diversity of their communities. Beyond the incremental growth in these programs, leaders are exploring the deeper questions of what it would look like to strengthen the current pathway programs to focus on diversity recruitment efforts that would offer both financial support and education-affiliated learning opportunities beginning in high school, through higher education, and through funded residencies during their final year of college teacher preparation. As part of these discussions, the partnership is also thinking through how to ensure every point in these pathways is culturally responsive and sustaining and includes strong, personalized connections.



# ducator Roles

## Rethinking Resources

Bringing quality teachers into the profession starts with ensuring aspiring teachers can afford to study in quality preparation pathways. Most people can't afford to live with no income, so during clinical practice, while working in schools for free, future teachers have to either work on top of teaching full time and completing university coursework or they take on debt—or sometimes both.<sup>4</sup> Without financial supports, the incentives to choose inexpensive, fast-track programs where novice teachers receive a salary while learning to teach is strong. Such programs leave the nation's teaching force underprepared for the complexities of teaching, and teachers from these pathways are more likely to leave the profession compared to those who attend programs with adequate clinical practice.<sup>5</sup>

There is another way. Preparation partnerships can create opportunities for aspiring teachers to “earn while learning,” designing meaningful paid work opportunities that support both P-12 student growth and candidates' learning.<sup>6</sup> In particular, with funded residency programs, everyone wins. Residents can spend their time and energy engaging in deep work rather than worrying about how to pay their bills. Programs can attract individuals from backgrounds that are currently underrepresented in teaching, helping ensure students have teachers who look like them. Residency-prepared teachers also remain in the profession longer, stabilizing staffing and improving outcomes<sup>7</sup>. By finding dollars to support candidates during clinical practice, the field can attract and prepare people who will stay in the profession.

### THE EDUCATOR ROLES COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Educator Roles CP supports partnerships in rethinking the allocation of their human resources. Participants in this strand include school-based staffing leads, district human resource managers, program chairs, and resident supervisors. Exploring how P-12 and program resources can be braided together to create stronger classroom instruction, ensure deeper resident learning, and offer more financial supports for candidates, the CP focuses on how to integrate program design with work-based opportunities that are mutually beneficial for all stakeholders.

A surprisingly large pool of P-12 education dollars are spent on non-teacher roles that are crucial to the instructional program; many such roles can become part of preparation programs' work, allowing partnerships to tap into existing funding streams. This CP is organized around *Prepared To Teach's* “Three Rs” framework for sustainability: Reallocation, Reinvestment, and Reduction. Role *reallocation* includes ideas like giving residents substitute

*By having residents deeply embedded in a school community, doors open for those residents to be hired back into the district after they graduate, satisfying hiring needs, creating a lasting positive impact on school culture, and allowing districts to reinvest back into the residency.*

teaching and paraprofessional opportunities that are meaningful to the residents' learning and serve instructional needs in schools. By ensuring that these in-school roles are integrated into the residents' curriculum, possibilities can emerge to eliminate certain course requirements, *reducing* program costs without sacrificing quality. By having residents deeply embedded in a school community, doors open for those residents to be hired back into the district after they graduate, satisfying hiring needs, creating a lasting positive impact on school culture, and allowing districts to *reinvest* back into the residency any costs of teacher turnover, which are estimated at over \$20,000 per teacher in urban areas. Case studies on each of the 3Rs including examples from across the country will be released in April 2021 and available at [bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach](https://bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach). ●

## **A**nticipated Transformations Within This Domain

- Access to a stable substitute teacher pool comprised of teacher candidates who have a strong motivation to perform well for the district
- Built in supports for residents serving as substitute teachers or paraprofessionals through linked coursework and reflective practice provided by a high-quality preparation program
- Fewer instructional interruptions in school buildings because of a planful use of residents to support assessment, remediation, and enrichment needs
- By virtue of the financial incentives available, recruitment of full cohorts into programs, resulting in increased cost efficiency for program delivery
- Turnover reduction by hiring teachers likely to stay in the district because their programs immerse residents in the culture and community of schools they serve



# Transformation Story

## Redesigned Roles at the University of South Dakota

### Shifting System Policies to Integrate Residencies

The University of South Dakota (USD) is one of a handful of preparation programs in the nation that has reimagined teacher preparation to include a yearlong residency in the final year of its four-year undergraduate programs. Elementary, secondary, and special education undergraduate majors complete a yearlong residency placement as “teacher candidates.” The renaming of the field placement and role (omitting “student”) was important to shift the perception of the teacher candidate role from student to early practitioner, someone serving as part of the school’s education team. The candidates and their PK-12 teacher mentors use the co-teaching model during residency.

Internal research and survey data indicate this model positively impacts the quality of graduates and also improves PK-12 learning during the residency; however, teacher candidates did report through surveys that they often faced financial challenges. Many reported moving back home or having multiple roommates to reduce living expenses, and few were able to complete the program without part-time work on nights and weekends in order to pay bills.

As part of the *Prepared To Teach* engagement, USD brought together urban and rural partner districts to explore structural possibilities for financially supporting USD teacher candidates. Teacher candidates also shared their experiences in focus groups, suggesting that if they could earn \$400 a month through work in

the school system, they would not need to work nights or weekends in part-time jobs outside of education.

The focus groups’ feedback soon became the foundation to explore how to support teacher candidates during school hours. Although many districts in South Dakota prefer hiring substitute teachers who hold bachelors’ degrees, the state does not require it. Substitute pay in South Dakota is substantial enough so that one day a week of substitute teaching would help most candidates avoid part-time jobs. Districts rethought their local substitute teacher policies and worked with the program to design a process—inclusive of mentor teachers, building leaders, faculty, and the candidates themselves—to ensure teacher candidates would be ready before substituting in the building where they were completing residency.

Districts have come to realize that everyone in the school benefits from teacher candidates substituting in the school in which they are completing residency. Because candidates are already integrated into their schools, they know school and district procedures already often have strong relationships with the students, and the residents are familiar with content that is being taught in many classes—especially when the resident remains in the regular class and the mentor teacher is assigned to lead the class needing the substitute—an approach used increasingly more and more in USD partner schools.



# **abor Market Alignment**

## **Helping Programs Meet Local Hiring Needs**

The teacher preparation system is not intrinsically designed to meet local school districts' staffing needs. Students often attend college far from home, relocating closer to home once they've graduated, so preparation programs do not necessarily enroll students intending to work in their college towns. In addition, since individuals select and pay for college, they also choose their own majors. As a result, college students might study to become English teachers or elementary teachers, while districts might need math and special education teachers most. Candidates also may not have any experience with student populations the local districts serve, so they may not be able to envision themselves being effective teachers in those sites. This domain explores how partnerships might find ways to incentivize and support individuals to enroll in programs of study that can help local districts fill their hiring needs with well-prepared novice teachers from a variety of backgrounds. When partnerships progress in this domain, preparation programs and districts are able to engage in mutually beneficial strategic planning, and dollars currently spent on low-value human resource investments can be redirected to targeted residencies that meet labor market needs.

### **THE LABOR MARKET ALIGNMENT COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE**

The Labor Market Alignment CP, which includes human resources managers, curriculum leads, and both university and district recruitment personnel, focuses on four major explorations. First, partnerships assess where the matches and mismatches are between the number and certification areas of program graduates and the hiring needs of local schools and districts. From these analyses, they create long-term plans with specified targets to increase the number of graduates who can appropriately fill local hiring needs.

Second, partnerships seek ways to address the historic mismatches between the enrollees in programs and the districts' hiring needs. By developing strong community-based experiences and monetarily incentivizing individuals to pursue residencies in high-need certification areas, partnerships can ensure that more program graduates are both certified for and capable of teaching students effectively in the areas of highest need. Including employment contracts as part of residency stipends can also enhance districts' capacity to hire and retain strong graduates from local residency programs.

Third, partnerships delve deeply into "grow your own" (GYO) models, where local individuals have robust, well-supported pathways through the residency partnership to become

certified. These GYO models include the relatively shorter-term development of pathways for paraprofessionals to have the job security and supports they need to complete a strong teacher preparation residency. GYO models also include long-term development and stabilization of the local educational workforce by creating articulated pathways from middle and high school through early college dual enrollment and community college programs—all deeply supported and ultimately linked to the high-quality funded residency program.

Finally, CP participants explore new ideas for publicizing and recruiting for their programs. For example, they might revise websites or create shared efforts between district human resource offices and university recruitment offices to reach out to local groups whose constituents might be strong candidates for teaching, such as workers in after school programs, individuals working with social services and youth programs, and alumni networks. ●

## **A**nticipated Transformations Within This Domain

- Meeting recurring district hiring needs for hard-to-staff schools and licensure areas, helping districts become less reliant on lower-quality quick-entry programs
- Viable grow-your-own pathways for existing paraprofessionals to study through high-quality preparation programs while earning a living stipend
- A long-term workforce development model that engages local middle and high school students in meaningful pre-service activities, including earning college course credits that transfer into strong local residency programs
- Recruitment of local talent and other aspiring teachers who understand and share backgrounds with individuals in the community
- Turnover reduction by developing novice teachers who, through their program's field experiences, have already been immersed in the culture and community of their schools



# Transformation Story

## Changing the Hiring Pipeline at Virginia Commonwealth University

### Transforming the Teacher Hiring Pipeline

Since its inception, RTR at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) has maintained a 100 percent job placement rate with their residency graduates.<sup>8</sup> The RTR residency program focuses specifically on helping its candidates become effective teachers in high-needs and hard-to-staff classrooms in the community. The success of the program and subsequent job placement hinges on deep collaboration between VCU and its district partners. As leadership from one district partner shared, “VCU is walking this walk with us, they are responsive to what we need...ensuring that the teachers in front of our students are well-prepared for our classrooms, keeping our minds and our focus on the students...the young lives that we are impacting.”

Responsive to labor market needs, VCU has worked to design RTR to meet the hiring needs of partner school districts. Built into the design of the program are economic incentives to attract students to serve in high-need schools, and additional incentives for high-need subject areas, including science and math. Tuition and fees are fully covered in this highly selective program; residents receive a stipend of approximately \$8,600 to help cover living expenses while serving in partner schools. Because RTR is committed to their graduates retaining in their new positions once hired, the program provides one-on-one support with a content-specific career coach throughout the first two years of graduates’ teaching careers, helping novices navigate their first years of teaching.





# School Improvement

## Holistic Models for Transforming Education

The School Improvement domain focuses partnership efforts on the ultimate goal of quality teacher preparation: to improve K-12 schools and the experiences of their students. Strong partnerships not only have the potential to create better teacher preparation pathways, but they can also transform teaching and learning inside schools through 1) intentional partnerships that ensure mentor teachers are integral to program design and delivery and 2) curricular revisions that maximize programs' capacity to bring their strengths to schools and schools' capacity to bring their strengths to programs.

The first key to creating residency programs that support school improvement is to acknowledge that the role of the mentor teacher is indispensable. Residents are expected to be co-partners in all the activities teachers engage in: planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting on instruction; working with parents; supporting schoolwide committees; learning about new school and district initiatives—and hundreds of other things that inevitably arise in the life of a teacher. Residents count on their mentors to be the day-by-day guides in all these experiences.

Current preparation structures rarely integrate the important work of mentors into districts' established teacher development plans and models so that, for example, districts value mentors' work with pre-service teachers in the same way they might value mentors' work with novice teachers. Instead, individual teachers usually get small stipends from programs—generally between \$50 and \$500 dollars—as an incentive to “take” a pre-service teacher.

Strong residencies where mentors are integral partners provide authentic teacher leadership opportunities, helping re-engage veteran educators in their profession. Professional learning communities that are linked to program curriculum offer opportunities for mentors, other teachers, and residents to be co-learners, creating a culture of continuous improvement and lifelong development of skills for teachers, ultimately fostering improvements across the system.

The second key is to ensure that the program's curriculum is integrated and aligned with partner schools' work, which can support powerful system changes. When programs commit unequivocally to social justice goals through their curriculum, districts reap profound benefits. When curriculum links faculty expertise with school-based professional development efforts, linkages between pre-service teachers and schoolwide professional learning opportunities create the kind of shared language and program focus that can transform schools. When districts and programs create shared curricular priorities, the



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power of aligned learning opportunities and residency activities can help everyone focus on instructional efforts that best meet student needs.

Because so much learning happens during an integrated residency placement and because mentors are partners supporting the program’s learning goals, partnerships often find they can streamline coursework without compromising on quality—and even strengthen candidates’ learning, in particular, about working with special populations—resulting in reduced tuition costs to candidates. Integrating assignments and assessments more tightly into classroom-based experiences also strengthens these crucial program components.

## **THE SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE**

The first community of practice strand in this domain, Mentors, focuses less on how to select a strong mentor teacher—although that is critically important—and more on how to develop a strong pool of potential mentors. Through our work with partnerships over the years, a recurring theme has been the struggle to identify a sufficient number of strong teachers who are ready to mentor residents. This strand focuses on how partnerships, as part of a comprehensive teacher development approach, can co-create a vision of mentors as teacher leaders, and how they can align efforts to develop strong teachers over time who can serve as mentors. Participants in this strand include teachers, coaches, union leaders, faculty members, and clinical supervisors.

The second community of practice strand in this domain is Curriculum & Whole School Design, created for principals, mentors, and preparation program faculty and staff. The CP explores how to revise curricula to align with school and district needs in ways that support both candidate and P-12 student learning. Residents in tightly aligned programs provide targeted instructional supports to schools and districts, helping improve learning and behavioral outcomes for students. Residents also benefit from a year of reflective, hands-on practice so they can consolidate knowledge in ways that make them effective first-year teachers. Such designs mean that residency expenses, including resident stipends, can qualify as valid expenditures of local and state dollars and federal dollars from programs such as Title I, Title II, and IDEA.<sup>9</sup> ●

## **A**nticipated Transformations Within This Domain

- Increased instructional capacity in K-12 classrooms, providing daily support to students while residents co-teach with mentors
- Reduced grade-level retention, need for remediation, and potentially inappropriate placement of students into special education through the use of residents' additional support in classrooms and their more effective instruction as first-year teachers
- Development of teacher leaders through their involvement in the intellectually stimulating work of mentoring and collaborating closely with both school leadership and program faculty
- School-level benefits in residency placement sites that have cohorts of residents, including the integration of faculty, coursework, and professional learning communities
- Redirection of dollars currently spent on quick fixes for hiring needs toward supporting residents who will become a long-term part of a district's human resources

# **T**ransformation Story

## **Improvement through the University of Southern California/LAUSD Partnership**

### **Adapting Resident Learning With School Needs in Mind<sup>10</sup>**

The University of Southern California (USC) began its residency development in partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) seeking a deeply integrated design. Through their planning conversations, they surfaced several structural adjustments the program could make so that candidates' academic learning could be more integrated into instruction at school sites. The program shifted the calendar for candidate's placements to better match the district's needs and also adjusted the sequencing of coursework and assignments so residents' clinical experiences connected to the work they were engaging in the school.

USC also engaged a deeper set of work, examining all aspects of their program through an equity lens. The district had struggled to ensure that students with a wider range of learning needs had access to well-qualified teachers. USC already had a well-respected Education Specialist program, but most candidates were not enrolled in that strand of study. The Education Specialist endorsement as it had been designed at USC required additional coursework, meaning that candidates wishing to become special education teachers faced higher

financial burdens than other candidates. The program began to explore how, by integrating special education throughout the general education certification curriculum, they might be able to reduce candidates' financial burdens and strengthen the pool of teachers who could work with students. Their LAUSD partners fully endorsed and supported this integration.

USC faculty integrated Education Specialist content into the general education certification coursework for both elementary and secondary programs so all candidates now have deeper study and clinical practice around crucial areas, such as inclusion, 504 planning, and IEP implementation. Students wishing to pursue the Education Specialist endorsement now complete five asynchronous modules in addition to engaging in specialized clinical practice placements as they complete the program. The residency is focused on this Education Specialist path. These changes mean that all USC graduates are more prepared to work with students' diverse educational needs, and for those who would like to focus their careers in special education, they can do so more affordably.



# Transformation Story

## Improving Professional Learning at UCCS

### Mentoring as Teacher Professional Learning<sup>11</sup>

School leadership can play a pivotal role in the quality of clinical placements. Residencies offer principals powerful opportunities not only to ensure that teacher candidates have positive learning experiences, but also existing teachers have support in the building in new ways.

Recognizing the indispensable role mentor teachers play in a strong residency placement and the potential benefit for overall school improvement, a school principal in partnership with the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs (UCCS) designed a new, integrated teacher professional learning approach in support of the residency.

The partners created a “teacher development packet” containing carefully selected materials and resources that could support authentic learning for teachers as they engaged their new roles as mentors. These mentor teachers already had the skill sets to effectively teach K-5 students, but guiding preservice teachers who would spend a year in their classrooms was new to most. As such, the materials drew on adult learning principles and included explicit exploration of co-teaching methods to support the inclusion of the resident in the classroom.

The packet included a wide variety of resources, including readings, case studies, questionnaires, self-assessment checklists, and other resources developed to facilitate conversations and practical applications. The principal held structured bi-weekly meetings for staff to reflect on the materials and on their individual classroom experiences with their residents. Meetings often began with a case study followed by group discussion, where they applied the ideas to their own classroom experiences with their residents.

Invested in the growth and development of existing and potential new staff, the principal explained her deep involvement in the process: “I really want to make sure that the mentors are set up for success, so that the residents are set up for success.” The principal views the designated time as an important way to facilitate authentic learning opportunities for mentors and the larger school staff and create a culture of continuous improvement and lifelong development of skills for teachers, with the goal of ultimately fostering improvements across the system.



# Deeper Learning

## Building Shared Purposes for Education

Without a commitment to ensuring equity and quality, all the work of redesigning teacher preparation might more effectively and equitably distribute dollars, but it would not necessarily transform teaching and learning in schools. The fifth domain, Deeper Learning, anchors partners' work in foundational elements necessary for equitable, quality preparation.

This domain is being developed in collaboration with EdPrepLab, a national network led by Learning Policy Institute (LPI) and Bank Street's Graduate School of Education. The domain is grounded in the research that LPI has led around deeper learning in both P-12 schools and teacher preparation, and in the applications of research on learning and development to education.<sup>12</sup> The three CPs in this domain are designed to explore the interrelated areas necessary to promote high-quality, equitable education systems: Partnerships' understanding and adoption of the principles of deeper learning, including how people thrive and learn and what supports their growth; the design of learning opportunities for residents that maximize their own transformations; and commitments across the partnership to make all design and implementation decisions based on equity and justice.

### THE DEEPER LEARNING COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

Updating the curriculum of teacher preparation programs is part of ensuring quality. Recent developments in our understandings of how people learn make it clear that teachers must know more than content and how to manage a class in order to be effective.<sup>13</sup> Being a good teacher requires a complex set of skills acquired through both study and practice before an individual should be the sole adult leading that important space of learning—the classroom. The complexities of learning also help explain new research on the multidimensionality of teaching. Learning to teach is not synonymous with learning to raise test scores, for they only measure a portion of the kinds of outcomes that are critical for human development.<sup>14</sup> Teaching is a multidimensional profession, one where adults must know how to support human development across the full array of social, emotional, and intellectual capacities. The CP focused on Research on Learning and Development supports partnerships' work to strengthen both programs and P-12 schools in light of this knowledge base.

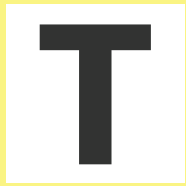
Next, programs need to find ways to support the deeper learning of their own candidates. The CP focused on Resident Learning explores both pedagogical approaches and new assessments that can help ensure that graduates have internalized the learning they need to be excellent teachers.

Finally, this discussion of the five domains closes with the most important commitment: equity. A focus on program and candidate quality alone is not enough to disrupt the systemic inequities our nation's education system has perpetuated since its inception. Partnerships must focus directly on issues of justice and equity. All stakeholders, including faculty, school and district personnel, system leaders, candidates, and community members need to engage questions of implicit bias and systemic racism in order to begin to build a more just educational system. The CP on Centering Equity supports that work. ●

## **A**nticipated Transformations Within This Domain

- Residency graduates who enter the field as novice teachers equipped to meet the needs of all students as the result of programs that keep resident learning at the forefront and curriculum based on equity and the science of learning
- Integration of deeper learning principles into residencies, utilizing the emerging knowledge base around how people learn, ultimately strengthening schools
- Improvement of a teacher's ability to teach all students effectively. Given that many current aspiring teachers do not come from the communities and backgrounds of their students, a focus on equity—both in terms of the system's need for change and the individual's role in perpetuating or disrupting inequity—will guide this outcome
- Strengthening of broader societal goals related to equity and democracy through stronger, more equitable approaches to teaching and learning, which will result in a more tolerant, better educated citizenry

*A focus on program and candidate quality alone is not enough to disrupt the systemic inequities our nation's education system has perpetuated since its inception.*



# Transformation Story

## Deeper Learning in Los Angeles

### Putting Justice at the Center

UCLA's Center X has prepared thousands of social justice teachers, with a particular focus on preparing teachers of color. Data collected since 2011 show that alumni have a 97 percent three-year retention rate in high-needs urban schools. Students of these alumni outperform their peers on standardized tests. Alumni stay in the profession, often being honored with teaching awards; their students appear better prepared for their journeys through the educational system when compared to their counterparts.<sup>15</sup>

Those impact data, while strong, are premised on individualistic outcomes not necessarily related to broad themes of justice, equity, and democracy. Center X graduates' schools, and the communities they serve, still face incredible injustices. A single, strong teacher does not necessarily protect a student from future underprepared educators—or undo the damage done by prior poor teaching. And a single supportive school environment doesn't protect a Black or Brown student from unequal

opportunity, police violence, or acts of racism, whether within or outside of a school building.

These broader systemic realities have informed Center X's approach to working with both candidates and current educators. Potential mentor teachers experience an intensive weeklong course before hosting a resident, and questions of identity, bias, and commitments to undoing racism are brought to the forefront. In all their educator development work, Center X's stance is that all involved are "reciprocal learners"—a student, resident, teacher, administrator, or faculty member at any time may be the learner or the teacher.<sup>i</sup> All are acknowledged respectfully for what they bring to the table.

<sup>i</sup> *Prepared To Teach* would like to gratefully acknowledge our Center X partners for deepening our understanding of how we ourselves can better center our shared values of social justice and anti-racism more concretely in our work.



# Conclusion

Hosting these Communities of Practice framed around the domains is not, of course, itself the goal of the Transformation Framework. The CPs' function instead is to foster deep conversation within each domain that participants can then bring back to their local advisory groups to remodel their preparation program partnerships in ways that are sustainably funded, use local resources effectively and efficiently, meet districts' labor market needs, support school improvement and teacher development, and, ultimately, foster deep, equitable learning environments so that all students and teachers can thrive. It is the work of each locality that, as always, makes the difference in the lives of their students and the fabric of their communities.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, 150 individuals are engaged in the CP work across seven states. They hail from 13 universities, 17 district offices, and 16 schools, including many collective bargaining representatives. To date, learning has been rich and guest speakers from state, national, and local groups have shared how they have found ways to help shift teacher preparation towards the kind of high-quality opportunities the nation wants and needs every aspiring candidate to have. In the 2021-22 academic year, another five CPs will launch to complete their study in the five Transformation Domains, with some current and some new participants. Through shared documentation and learning with participants, the project hopes to be able to elucidate how, by drawing on existing strengths across the nation and facilitating opportunities for new thinking, teacher preparation partnerships can realize their goals for themselves and those they serve. ●



<sup>1</sup> Most programs received \$50,000 over the course of the project, although two states engaged the work as learning collaboratives, proposing budgetary needs to meet their shared local interests.

<sup>2</sup> As part of our working definition, *Prepared To Teach* incorporates the elements of residencies from the high-quality report from Learning Policy Institute on largely grant-funded, graduate-level residencies, as outlined in Roneeta Guha and Tara Kini, “Teacher Residencies: Building a High-Quality, Sustainable Workforce” (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, 2016), <http://bit.ly/2phcQwi>; In addition, our own research includes a wide variety of residency models, including unfunded and undergraduate programs, which inform our working definition. For resources on *Prepared To Teach*’s research, see “*Prepared To Teach*,” Bank Street College of Education, accessed March 2, 2021, [bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach](http://bankstreet.edu/prepared-to-teach).

<sup>3</sup> Linda Darling-Hammond et al., “Implications for Educational Practice of the Science of Learning and Development,” *Applied Developmental Science* 24, no. 2 (February 17, 2019): 43.

<sup>4</sup> Divya Mansukhani and Francheska Santos, “#MoreLearningLessDebt: Voices of Aspiring Teachers on Why Money Matters” (New York: Bank Street College of Education, *Prepared To Teach*, February 2021), [https://educate.bankstreet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=pt&\\_ga=2.116123843.430171213.1616095113-471324392.1499353649](https://educate.bankstreet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1007&context=pt&_ga=2.116123843.430171213.1616095113-471324392.1499353649)

<sup>5</sup> Desiree Carver-Thomas and Linda Darling-Hammond, “Teacher Turnover: Why It Matters and What We Can Do about It” (Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, August 2017).

<sup>6</sup> Karen DeMoss et al., “Clearing the Path: Redesigning Teacher Preparation for the Public Good” (New York, September 2017), <http://bit.ly/2Sbswhy>; Karen DeMoss, “Following the Money: Exploring Residency Funding through the Lens of Economics” (New York: Bank Street College of Education, *Prepared To Teach*, April 2018), <https://educate.bankstreet.edu/faculty-staff/16/>; Brigid Fallon, “Investing in Residencies, Improving Schools: How Principals Can Fund Better Teaching and Learning” (New York, NY: Bank Street College of Education, *Prepared to Teach*, September 2017), [https://educate.bankstreet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=faculty-staff&\\_ga=2.111936833.430171213.1616095113-471324392.1499353649](https://educate.bankstreet.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1011&context=faculty-staff&_ga=2.111936833.430171213.1616095113-471324392.1499353649)

<sup>7</sup> Guha and Kini, “Teacher Residencies”; Kay Sloan et al., “A Different, More Durable Model” (San Francisco, CA: Rockman et al, September 2018).

<sup>8</sup> Center for Urban and Regional Analysis (CURA), Virginia Commonwealth University and VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY, “Benefit-Cost Analysis of Richmond Teacher Residency (RTR) Program” (Richmond, VA: Virginia Commonwealth University, L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs, November 2020).

<sup>9</sup> The Sustainable Funding Project, “The ESSA Opportunity” (Bank Street College of Education, *Prepared to Teach*, 2017), <http://bit.ly/29YOAby>.

<sup>10</sup> Vignette authored by Margo Pensavalle, the principal researcher for the University of Southern California partnership on the *Prepared To Teach* learning agenda project that resulted in the development of these domains.

<sup>11</sup> Vignette authored by Ji Hyun Oh, the principal researcher for the University of Colorado, Colorado Springs partnership on the *Prepared To Teach* learning agenda project that resulted in the development of these domains.

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<sup>12</sup> Darling-Hammond et al., “Implications for Educational Practice of the Science of Learning and Development.”

<sup>13</sup> Darling-Hammond et al. *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> David Blazar and Matthew A. Kraft, “Teacher and Teaching Effects on Students’ Attitudes and Behaviors,” *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* 39, no. 1 (March 1, 2017): 146–70, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373716670260>.

<sup>15</sup> See Center X, “10 Years of IMPACT,” UCLA Center X, November 5, 2019, <https://centerx.gseis.ucla.edu/xchange/10-years-of-impact/xpress-papers/> for a range of reports on Center X impacts.