

The California State University Teacher Residencies

Introduction

This analysis provides a brief overview of the teacher residency programs within the California State University (CSU). The CSU system produces half of California's new teachers. On 12 of its 23 campuses, teacher candidates have been able to participate in residency programs that share a number of features with national residency programs.^{1,2} At the same time, these programs have a number of unique attributes, and this analysis describes both. The CSU campuses have implemented programs that, patterned in part on a medical residency, provide teacher candidates with a yearlong apprenticeship teaching alongside an expert mentor teacher. Candidates also complete credential coursework that is aligned with their clinical placement.

The CSU system is part of a larger, national teacher residency movement to innovate in teacher preparation. The CSU has benefitted significantly from the assistance provided by the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR), a national non-profit organization that works to expand the scale and impact of teacher residency programs. It is notable that the CSUs are unique among their peers and serve as a leading example of a university-led, system facilitated transformation of teaching and learning. With the residency model, CSUs are further ensuring preparation is in service to school districts and their students.

CSU campuses have partnered or are beginning to partner with over 30 districts in their residency programs. Eight of the campuses received federal Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grants³ and most of these have traditional residencies. All but two of the campuses have also participated in the New Generation of Educators Initiative (NGEI), a five-year reform supported by the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, which has at its center the creation of, transformed teacher education models reflecting some residency attributes. One campus, CSU Long Beach, also has a nationally recognized local residency program, UTEACH—the Urban Teaching Academy. It has private sector support that has enabled it to provide scholarships to some participants.⁴ Additionally, most CSU campuses have clinically-based programs that have many features of teacher residencies.

Characteristics of CSU Teacher Residencies

The overriding attribute of CSU programs is that they are heavily clinically oriented. Teacher education candidates serve as co-teachers, engaging in learning through practice. Coursework has a close theory-to-practice integration, emphasizing the application of knowledge in schools. The focus throughout is to prepare candidates who are ready to be successful with diverse learners and

¹ NCTR, 2016. *Drivers of Teacher Preparation*, Chicago, IL: National Center for Teacher Residencies. <https://nctrresidencies.org/research/nctr-landscape-analysis-four-drivers-project/>.

² NCTR, 2014. *Building Effective Teacher Residencies*, Chicago, IL: National Center for Teacher Residencies. <https://nctrresidencies.org/research/building-effective-teacher-residencies-2/>.

³ The campuses are CSU Bakersfield, Chico, Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Los Angeles, Monterey Bay, Northridge, and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

⁴ CSULB also has an Urban Dual Credential Program (UDCP) that is designed as a residency program. It is the first dual special education/elementary credential program within the CSU structured as a residency.

with challenging standards on day one. To achieve this, the preparation programs have an emphasis on the clinical components of teacher preparation.⁵

A particularly prominent characteristic is the deep partnership between teacher preparation and the partnering school district.⁶ They develop a shared vision of effective instruction and together plan a cohesive set of learning experiences that will promote the achievement of that vision from pre-service through induction. They share resources and program management roles to reach common impact goals. The partnership generally entails the calendar of the residency program being aligned with the district calendar, so that candidates are in school sites from the first through last days of the school calendar. The district and university together select participants. The district often looks for individuals who represent the students that they will serve, particularly those populations that are underrepresented in the teaching profession. The CSU programs are designed to produce new teachers who are well prepared to teach in high-need schools in high-need districts. Models differ between programs in part because they are specialized for the campuses, districts, and regions they serve.

A second characteristic is that the district and university collaborate in defining the high priority abilities--the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed by beginning teachers in the district. These are the abilities that are most vital in teacher preparation based on the needs of local K-12 students. In the case of both the NGEI and TQP campuses, the prioritized skills include competency to instruct in the California Common Core Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards. They typically include instructional skills such as *Using Questioning and Discussion Techniques Effectively* or *Centering Instruction on High Expectations for Student Achievement*.⁷

A third prominent characteristic is preparation through practice at high quality school sites typically akin to professional development schools. Candidates are generally grouped in cohorts. Effective mentors are critical in this work. They are carefully chosen in a process involving both the university and the district. Then they are trained so they are prepared to work closely with the university teacher preparation program. They often receive some financial support (e.g., a stipend) or have paid release time. The CSU residency program is designed to deliver an intensive, cohesive, and engaging experience with a large number of hours in clinical practice. The integration of coursework and fieldwork is central to program design. The program is a guided teaching apprenticeship during which candidates observe, learn from, assist, and co-teach alongside an experienced mentor teacher.

The fourth prominent characteristic is a culture of feedback for teacher candidates that is data-driven, specific, and actionable. The university faculty, supervisors and mentors together select, adapt, or develop teacher observation forms with a rubric for assessing candidates. This is used

⁵ Tobin, B. 2018, *Preparing a New Generation of Educators*, San Francisco, CA: Williams Group for S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, <https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/teacher-education/ngel/Documents/Preparing-a-New-Generation-Educators.pdf>.

⁶ Tobin, B. (2018). *The Power of Partnership in Teacher Preparation*, San Francisco, CA: Williams Group for S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation, <https://www2.calstate.edu/impact-of-the-csu/teacher-education/ngel/Documents/Power-of-Partnership.pdf>.

⁷ NCTR (2015) *Clinically Oriented Teacher Preparation, Research Report*, Chicago, IL: National Center for Teacher Residencies, <https://nctrresidencies.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/NCTR-COTP.pdf>, p.39.

consistently to provide feedback based on an agreed upon set of measures of new teacher performance. Candidates receive feedback from university faculty, supervisors and from mentors, and it is aligned with the rubric selected or developed specifically for the program. Teacher candidates are generally grouped in cohorts, and group collaboration typically results in further feedback to individual candidates.

The fifth common characteristic across the programs is using data to measure progress toward attainment of as well as gaps in the prioritized skills. A structure exists to provide timely information to drive continuous improvement for both candidates and institutions. The partners co-design and implement information-gathering and analysis processes. They collect, analyze, and use data continually to inform candidates, mentors, and the program leaders in the district and university of candidate progress toward prioritized skills, to identify gaps and opportunities to enhance candidate preparation, and to assess whether changes are having the desired effect on program quality. The use of data is part of an ongoing improvement effort that helps the partners gain critical insights about the residency program, including its strengths and areas requiring attention.

CSU's teacher residencies also help to diversify the teaching profession. Through partnerships with public schools and nonprofits, the residencies are preparing diverse, effective educators for the students and schools that need them most. Most CSU residency graduates are teaching in low-income Title I schools and a large number of the residents are from underrepresented groups themselves.

With respect to fields of CSU residency programs, several have or are planning to include special education. Many programs have also prepared STEM or bilingual education teachers and elementary or secondary candidates for low-income schools.

A feature of other residencies that is not consistently found in these CSU programs is stipends equaling a living wage for participants. While a number of campuses include a living wage stipend for participants, others do not. A few provide scholarships in the range of \$1,000 to \$10,000.

Concluding Comments

Studies on residencies suggest that they have attracted greater diversity into the teaching workforce and supplied more teachers in hard-to-staff subjects, while retaining them in the sponsoring districts at much higher rates than other new teachers.⁸ The longest-standing CSU residencies report similar results. This is particularly important since hard-to-staff urban and rural schools, characteristic of the CSU residencies, normally experience high turnover.

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⁸ Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). *Diversifying the teaching profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute, https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Diversifying_Teaching_Profession_REPORT_0.pdf.