Common Practices for Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Bilingual and Diverse Teachers

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In the 2015/16 school year, students of color made up more than half (51 percent) of the K–12 student population in the United States, yet a fifth (20 percent) of the nation's educators were teachers of color (U.S. Department of Education, 2017; 2018). This imbalance is significant because evidence suggests that teachers of color may have a positive impact on the academic achievement of students of color (Dee, 2004; Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017), in part because they can serve as role models and intermediaries between school and home cultures (Clewell & Villegas, 2001; Monzo & Rueda, 2001; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Weiher, 2000).

There is also a national shortage of bilingual teachers (Cross, 2017), creating a demographic mismatch between educators and the rapidly growing population of English learner students (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Bilingual and dual-language education has been shown to have a positive impact on the achievement of both English learner and non-English learner students (Steele et al., 2017).

WHAT IS THIS DOCUMENT?

This research review highlights practices commonly used to recruit, train, and retain bilingual and diverse teachers. It is a tool to facilitate the discussion of existing and potentially new program features among staff members and educators who manage or work with programs intended to diversify the teacher workforce.
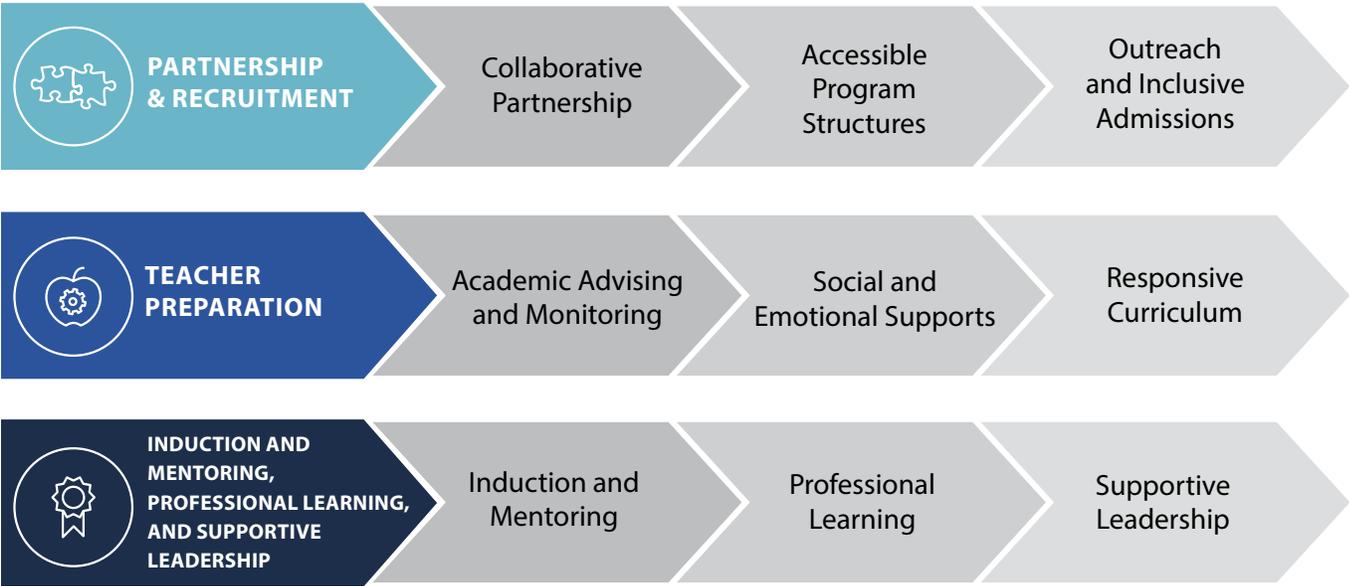
We examined nearly 40 articles written between 1996 and 2017 that describe teacher preparation programs and district practices to recruit, train, and retain bilingual and diverse teachers in the United States. We selected a subset of articles from this pool based on relevance and generalizability. These articles describe common practices and participant experiences but do not address long-term outcomes. Therefore, this document focuses on common program features but does not provide evidence of impact. Details about specific features are available in the individual articles, which are cited in a references table at the end of this document.

COMMON STRATEGIES SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAMS EMPLOY TO RECRUIT, TRAIN, AND RETAIN BILINGUAL AND DIVERSE TEACHERS

We identified nine strategies in three broad areas that teacher preparation programs and school districts have used to achieve high rates of recruitment, preservice program completion, hiring, and retention of bilingual and diverse teachers:

Framework for School District and Teacher Preparation Partnerships to Recruit, Train, and Retain Bilingual and Diverse Teachers

PARTNERSHIP & RECRUITMENT	Collaborative Partnership	Accessible Program Structures	Outreach and Inclusive Admissions

TEACHER PREPARATION	Academic Advising and Monitoring	Social and Emotional Supports	Responsive Curriculum

INDUCTION AND MENTORING, PROFESSIONAL LEARNING, AND SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP	Induction and Mentoring	Professional Learning	Supportive Leadership

Partnership and Recruitment

Successful partnerships establish a fully articulated system for identifying, recruiting, training, and retaining bilingual and diverse teacher candidates. These systems are based on a shared vision and include a comprehensive implementation and evaluation plan, clearly defined roles, methods for ongoing communication, procedures for data collection, and program structures that support candidates' success.

Collaborative Partnership

School districts and institutions of higher education form partnerships by first articulating a clear vision and goals for increasing the number of bilingual and diverse teachers. They collaboratively create an evidence-based plan that includes ongoing and comprehensive evaluation, with procedures for data collection, reflection, and refinement. Finally, they align expectations and establish roles and responsibilities and methods for ongoing communication and collaboration.

Accessible Program Structures

Partnerships commonly align candidates' work experience with student teaching requirements. Many bilingual and diverse teacher candidates work as educators while they are students (Osterling & Buchanan, 2003). As a result, some of the teacher training program requirements—such as classroom observations and student teaching—may be redundant. Coordinating these requirements with current and prior work experiences may improve the likelihood that candidates will complete their teacher preparation program.

For example, participants in the *Futures in Quality Education* program, who work in classrooms as paraprofessionals, are not required to conduct classroom observations to fulfill the observation requirements for their courses. In addition, university faculty members visit the paraprofessionals at their work settings to observe teaching and provide student teaching credit for their work experience.

Partners also coordinate course scheduling, ensuring that courses do not conflict with candidates' work schedules. Bilingual and diverse teacher candidates often work during the week; consequently, many teacher preparation programs offer courses in the evenings and weekends. For example, the *Bilingual Paraeducator Career Ladder* schedules most of its classes after work hours, and *Project Nueva Generación* and *Pathways to Teaching Careers Program* both offer classes at local schools.

Many programs also offer courses at a nontraditional pace—either faster or slower, depending on individual need. For example, *Futures in Quality Education* allows candidates to take courses on an accelerated schedule. In contrast, the *Bilingual Paraeducator Career Ladder* has some of its candidates take courses on a reduced schedule to balance work, life, and school.

For low-income teacher candidates, who are disproportionally bilingual and diverse, two common barriers are the inability to pay tuition and a loss of wages due to missing work to attend classes (Connally, Garcia, Cook, & Williams, 2017). Teacher preparation programs and school districts coordinate their programs to address these barriers in innovative ways.

Many provide teacher candidates with financial assistance and resources to help candidates pay for tuition, fees, books, supplies, and living expenses, or assist in identifying and applying for scholarships and grants. The *Weingardt Program* and the *Project 29 Pathways Program* both provide grants ranging from half to full tuition costs. The *Migrant Special Education Training Program* provides living stipends and textbook vouchers (Salend, Whittaker, Garrick Duhaney, & Smith, 2003).

Outreach and Inclusive Admissions

School districts seek out bilingual and diverse staff members already working in schools—such as paraprofessionals, substitute teachers, limited-certificated teachers, and school clerks and secretaries—who they think may be interested and may benefit from the teacher education program (*Academy for Teacher Excellence, The Pathway Program, Migrant Special Education Training Program*) (Flores, Clark, Claeys, & Villarreal, 2007; Lau, Dandy, & Hoffman, 2007; Salend et al., 2003).

Staff members who are already working in schools are familiar with the high-needs school environment and may be more likely to teach in such a setting. For example, the *Pathways to Teaching Careers Program* uses the district's personnel information system to identify potential candidates and then sends out individualized recruitment letters.

Teacher preparation programs also identify bilingual and diverse candidates from incoming and transfer students, as well as current students with undeclared majors or majors in other disciplines (Flores et al., 2007). Some programs conduct presentations for students enrolled in Spanish, Latin American Studies, and Black Studies courses at four-year institutions (Flores et al., 2007; Salend et al., 2003), ensure there is staff representation at freshman orientation sessions and campus events, and seek out referrals from student service offices and faculty members (Flores et al., 2007).

Partners work together to create marketing materials, such as descriptive brochures, informative websites, and engaging videos. These are often translated into target languages and are designed with input from graduates of the program. Materials are disseminated to school and district administrators, at local and regional conferences, and at campus events (Flores et al., 2007), as well as through newsletters and email.

Some partners invite graduates to recruit prospective students. For example, a program at SUNY New Paltz has developed a video featuring four graduates who share their own experiences of participating in the program, outline the courses and fieldwork, describe the impact the program has had on their careers in education, and make recommendations for those interested in applying (Salend et al., 2003).

Admission requirements, such as grade point averages and college entrance exam requirements can be a barrier for some bilingual and diverse applicants, so partners create an inclusive admissions policy that enables candidates to demonstrate their experience, knowledge, and skills in other ways. For example, the Armstrong Atlantic State University's *Pathways to Teaching Program* seeks to recruit

candidates who are "understanding, compassionate, nurturing, practical, empathetic, loving, and inspiring" (Lau et al., 2007). The applicants may not meet the traditional requirements around grade point average and college entrance exams but are provided academic and other forms of supports.

Similarly, the *Migrant Special Education Training Program* broadened its admissions process to evaluate prospective students in terms of their cross-cultural experiences, as well as their commitment to working with students with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse students (Salend et al., 2003).

Teacher Preparation

Successful partnerships support bilingual and diverse teacher candidates by providing academic advising and monitoring, social and emotional supports, and a responsive curriculum that builds their capacity to work with a diverse student population.

Academic Advising & Monitoring

Bilingual and diverse candidates bring skills and knowledge to the classroom, but they may face challenges to success in a university setting. To negotiate these challenges, the literature describes a wide range of academic supports. Some programs offer test-preparation classes or tutoring to help candidates prepare for application and credentialing exams. This can be an important support for those who are not native English speakers and may have difficulty passing standardized professional tests (Brown, Smallman, & Hitz, 2008).

Programs may also offer developmental education courses to build up candidates' college-level academic skills. For example, *Project Nueva Generación* offers a study skills course, developmental math, writing, and English as a Second Language classes for students who need to refine their skills.

Project 29 designed and implemented an academic advising component of their program to address the needs of individual students. The program director develops an individualized plan of study for each candidate to meet the requirements for certification and the requisite master's degree (Sakash & Chou, 2007). Similarly, the *Migrant Special Education Training Program* faculty meet periodically to monitor academic progress, discuss personal situations that may be affecting their performance, and identify strategies to address their needs (Salend et al., 2003).

Social and Emotional Supports

Bilingual and diverse participants may find it difficult to balance the academic demands of their program requirements with their family and work life (Skinner, 2010). Most of the programs in our literature review provide ongoing social supports to their candidates to ensure they are successful. These include strategies to foster peer networks and learning communities, and counseling to address the challenge of balancing work, family life, and school.

The *Kūkuluao and Ka Lama Education Academy* pairs candidates with alumni who can offer support and advice. The *Bilingual Paraeducator Career-Ladder* schedules ongoing meetings between candidates and counselors to help candidates negotiate emotional stress and family, job, and academic demands. Similarly, *ATE-TALC* convenes weekly sessions where counselor interns assist teacher candidates with personal issues (Flores et al., 2007). *Project 29* facilitates groups of students that meet regularly throughout the program to discuss academic and social issues that may arise in their schools or lives (Sakash & Chou, 2007). Other programs, like the *Academy for Teacher Excellence* and the *Portland Dual Language Teacher Fellows Program*, require candidates to attend a summer institute, which prepares candidates for teaching and academic support for their university courses.

Responsive Curriculum

To be successful in the classroom, teacher candidates must build their understanding and knowledge of effective instructional practices that are effective with a diverse and bilingual population. Research consistently shows that teachers often leave high-poverty, low-performing, at-risk schools because they have not been adequately prepared to teach in such challenging environments (Laine, 2008). On the other hand, research shows that new recruits who have had training in specific aspects of teaching, who have experienced practice teaching, and who received feedback on their teaching leave the profession at half the rate of those who did not (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003).

Project 29 students enrolled in "Teaching and Learning in a Bilingual Classroom" and other courses that address the needs of English language learners. Each student is asked to write a paper helping them understand the strengths of their current K–8 students and themselves. These personal stories helped create trust and empathy (Sakash & Chou, 2007).

Induction and Mentoring, Professional Learning, and Supportive Leadership

Successful partnerships continue to support newly certified bilingual and diverse teachers as they enter the teaching profession. These programs often include a formal induction process that offers instructional coaching, mentoring, and peer support. To promote teacher retention, these programs continue to provide opportunities for professional growth in a collaborative school climate.

Induction and Mentoring

Partnerships can enhance the beneficial effects of strong initial preparation with strong mentoring and induction programs during the first years of teaching. The evidence suggests that well-designed mentoring programs can improve retention rates for new teachers and promote positive attitudes about the profession, feelings of efficacy, and stronger instructional skills (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996).

Comprehensive induction—combining mentoring, professional development, support, and formal assessments for new teachers during at least their first two years of teaching—has been shown to cut attrition rates in half and to develop novice teachers into high-quality professionals who impact student achievement (Villar, 2004). For example, a comprehensive induction program developed and operated by the *New Teacher Center* provides one-to-one mentoring sessions during which an exemplary teacher helps a novice teacher analyze their practice and uses classroom data to offer constructive suggestions for improvement. Mentors help new teachers set professional goals, plan lessons, analyze student work, and reflect on their progress (Moir, 2009).

Professional Learning

School districts and institutions of higher education work in partnership to ensure that professional development activities are rooted in the best available research and measured by their impact on student achievement. Analysis of existing research suggests that professional development is effective when it is sustained, comprehensive, and embedded in the school day. It also suggests that professional development must incorporate peer coaching, observation, modeling, and feedback and be explicitly tied to higher-order content and skills to significantly impact teacher practice (Darling-Hammond & Wei, 2009).

Successful professional development programs typically have the following characteristics:

- Strong content focus on higher-order, subject-matter content and the pedagogy of how students learn that content.

- Active learning opportunities during the school day for teachers to get involved in inquiry-oriented learning approaches, such as observing and receiving feedback, analyzing student work, or making presentations.

- Collaborative learning opportunities with groups of teachers from the same grade, subject, or school to build interactive learning communities.

- A consistent body of professional development activities that build the coherence of teacher knowledge, school curricula, district policy, and state reforms.

- Sufficient duration and span that spreads professional development activities over the school year or semester and includes at least 20 to 40 hours of contact time.

- Evaluation design that collects data on at least one measure of each program objective, including quality of implementation of development activities, gains in teacher knowledge, changes in classroom practices, and increases in student achievement.

Supportive Leadership

The evidence suggests that schools could recruit and retain more high-quality teachers if school leaders promoted good working conditions, including an atmosphere of collegial support, meaningful involvement in decisionmaking, and a focus on student learning. Retention increases when effective principals are actively involved in teacher induction, providing "professional socialization" in the form of frequent discussion, monitoring, and feedback. In schools where there is a climate that sets high expectations for student learning combined with the belief that all students can learn,

beginning teachers express loyalty to—and the intention to stay in—a particular school because the mission, vision, and values of the school culture match their own (Angelle, 2006).

Research suggests that there are five major factors of supportive leadership that have a positive influence on teacher retention:

- **Provide time to interact with educational leaders** in a reciprocal relationship of respect, support, and involvement in leadership opportunities.

- **Provide time to collaborate with colleagues** to plan and participate in professional activities.

- **Offer job-embedded professional development** that is planned collaboratively with other teachers and leaders to target instructional strategies and other content immediately applicable to their practice.

- **Create a sense of autonomy** to exercise authority in their classrooms and to participate in the decisionmaking process at the school level.

- **Create opportunities to provide input regarding student learning outcomes** as part of a professional learning community in which teachers question and discuss student needs, subject matter, assessments, equity and access, and generate local knowledge (Charlton & Kritsonis, 2009/10).

Recruiting, Training, and Retaining Bilingual and Diverse Teachers Framework

This framework is intended to guide reflection and discussion about existing and potential practices.

Components		Features	Discussion Questions
Partnership and Recruitment	**Collaborative Partnership**	• Clear vision and goals for a coherent system • Regular communication and collaboration • Coherent plan informed by the literature • Evaluation plan with procedures for data collection, reflection, and refinement • Articulated roles and responsibilities	• What are the partnership's shared vision and goals for increasing the number of bilingual and diverse teachers in schools? • What is included in the partnership's plan, and how is it informed by the literature? • What are the roles and responsibilities for each partner? • How frequently do partnership members communicate? • What data will the partnership use to evaluate progress and effectiveness?
	Accessible Program Structures	• Teacher candidates' work experience aligned with student teaching requirements • Convenient scheduling of courses • Financial assistance	• How is the program structured to increase accessibility to bilingual and diverse students? • How do course requirements, scheduling, and location impact participation and retention? • What financial barriers may prevent candidates from entering or completing the program? • How will the program gather data to determine whether it is accessible to all potential candidates?
	Outreach and Inclusive Admissions	• Coordinated approach for identifying potential bilingual and diverse teacher candidates • Accessible recruitment materials and resources • Clear communication of the benefits, requirements, and obligations to successfully participate in and complete the teacher preparation program • Inclusive admissions process	• What data are used to determine recruitment needs and efforts? • What is important for candidates to know and understand about the program? • How is information disseminated and made accessible to potential candidates? • How do admissions criteria reflect the experience, knowledge, and skills students need to successfully complete the program and work with a bilingual and diverse student population?
Teacher Preparation	**Academic Advising and Monitoring**	• Targeted academic supports • Individualized advising and monitoring	• How does the partnership assess the academic needs of students? • What data does the partnership use to routinely monitor progress? • What types of supports are provided to help candidates complete the program?
	Social and Emotional Supports	• Access to mentor teachers • Individualized counseling • Cohort groups and social interactions	• How does the partnership assess the social and emotional needs of each candidate over time? • How do teacher candidates access counselors and mentors? • How does the partnership organize opportunities for candidates to support one another? • What role does culture, language, and diversity play in supports provided?
	Responsive Curriculum	• Curriculum to increase candidates' knowledge and skills to work with a diverse and/or bilingual population	• How does the partnership build teacher candidates' understanding of and skill with instructional practices that are effective with a bilingual and diverse population? • What data does the partnership use to engage in a cycle of improvement?

Induction and Mentoring, Professional Learning, and Supportive Leadership	**Induction and Mentoring**	• Comprehensive induction and mentoring program • Trained mentor teachers who help novice teachers analyze practice and use data to plan improvement • Establish professional goals, assist in planning lessons, analyze student work, and reflect on their progress	• How are bilingual and diverse teachers supported during their first two years of teaching? • How are mentor teachers selected and trained to work with new bilingual and diverse teachers? • How does the partnership solicit feedback from new bilingual and diverse teachers on needs and challenges? • How is this induction different for each teacher? • What data from mentors and mentees are collected to evaluate program effectiveness
	Professional Learning	• Opportunities to analyze student learning gaps and identify areas for professional growth • Professional development opportunities aligned with evidence-based practices	• In what ways and how frequently do teachers analyze evidence of student learning and identify gaps? • What types of evidence-based professional learning opportunities do bilingual and diverse teachers participate in? • How is the impact of professional learning measured? How does the partnership know whether it has been effective?
	Supportive Leadership	• Leadership promotes a shared vision, atmosphere of collegiality, and meaningful involvement of teachers in decisionmaking • Leadership designs and implements professional learning activities that are aligned with research-based instructional practices and focused on evidence of student learning	• In what ways does school leadership ensure a shared vision? How does the principal foster an inclusive school climate and atmosphere of collegiality? • How are bilingual and diverse teachers meaningfully involved in decision-making? • How are professional development activities selected? • How is feedback about professional development activities solicited from bilingual and diverse teachers? • How does the program gather data from school leadership and teachers about school climate and support?

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Brown, J. E., Smallman, S., & Hitz, R. (2008). Partnerships to recruit and prepare bilingual teachers. *Metropolitan Universities, 19*(3), 54–67. http://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ878264	Recruit and preparing bilingual and/or bicultural teacher candidates
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General education literature

	Program	Components
Collaborative Partnership and Accessible Program Structures	**Futures in Quality Education**	Participants working in classrooms as paraprofessionals are not required to conduct classroom observations to fulfill the observation requirements for their courses. In addition, university faculty members visit the paraprofessionals at their work settings to observe teaching and provide student teaching credit for their work experience. The program also allows candidates to take courses on an accelerated schedule.
	Bilingual Paraeducator Career Ladder	Participants can take courses on a reduced schedule to balance work, life, and school. Most of its classes are scheduled after work hours
	Project Nueva Generación	The program offers evening classes at a local elementary school
	Pathways to Teaching Careers Program	The program holds university classes at local schools
	Pathways to Teaching Program	While employed as full-time non-certificated staff members, participants are released on Fridays to attend class at the university. At the same time, participants who are ready for their field experience fill in for those attending class.
	Weingardt Program	The program provides tuition assistance through grants ranging from half to full tuition costs.
	Project 29 Pathways Program	The program provides tuition assistance through grants ranging from half to full tuition costs.
	Futures in Quality Education	Participants receive financial assistance and may qualify for a state program for tuition remission. The program also provides for academic expenses such as books, supplies, and academic courses or exam reviews.
	Migrant Special Education Training Program,	The program provides living stipends and textbook vouchers.
Outreach Strategies and Inclusive Admission Policies	**Pathways to Teaching Careers Program**	Staff members have access to district human resources personnel information systems and scan those data to identify potential candidates and send out individualized recruitment letters.
	SUNY New Paltz program	The program developed a video featuring four graduates who share their own experiences with the program, outline the courses and fieldwork, describe the impact the program has had on their careers in education, and make recommendations for those interested in applying. The program has also created other communications tools, such as websites and newsletters, to attract applicants.
Inclusive Admission Policies	**Pathways to Teaching Program**	Applicants are interviewed by a screening committee and submit a written essay, recommendations, and transcripts. They are assessed on personality, level of commitment, and oral reading performance, in addition to academic history.
	Migrant Special Education Training Program	Admissions process to evaluate prospective students in terms of their cross-cultural experiences, as well as their commitment to work with students with disabilities and culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Teacher Preparation Supports

	Program	Components
Academic Advising & Monitoring	**California Paraprofessional Teacher Training Program**	The program provides test-preparation workshops and individual support for the credential exams.
	Illinois GYO Initiative	The program provides test-preparation workshops and individual support for the credential exams.
	Project Nueva Generación	The program offers developmental math, writing, and English as a Second Language classes for students who need to refine their skills. It also offers a study skills course. In addition, Project Nueva Generación helps applicants obtain foreign transcripts and translate them, as necessary.
	Project 29	The program designed and implemented an advising component to address the needs of individual students. The program director performed a preliminary analysis of each student's transcripts to develop an individualized plan of study to meet the requirements for certification and the master's degree. She identified courses that might be transferred, as well as courses needed to fulfill general education requirements, and provided each student with a written plan.
	Migrant Special Education Training Program	Faculty meet periodically to monitor students' academic progress, discuss personal situations that may be affecting their performance, and identify strategies to address their needs. Students who need assistance with writing skills are provided with tutors or referred to the university's writing center. The university's counseling center also offers psychological services to students. Students with disabilities are eligible for services from the university. Students also receive specific feedback on assignments and have the opportunity to make revisions to address these comments.
	Pathways to Teaching	Teacher candidates in the program with a grade point average below 2.5 or whose average dropped below 2.5 are required to receive counseling from the program director, enroll in a four-hour "How to Raise Your GPA" workshop, and outline a plan of action.
Social and Emotional Supports	**Project Nueva Generación**	The program creates peer support networks by having students take classes together.
	Kūkuluao and Ka Lama Education Academy	The program pairs new candidates with alumni who can offer support and advice.
	Bilingual Paraeducator Career-Ladder	The program schedules ongoing meetings between candidates, counselors, and academic advisors to help candidates negotiate emotional stress and family, job, and academic demands.
	Project 29	The program facilitates groups of six to eight students that meet regularly throughout the program to discuss academic and social issues that may arise in their schools or lives. This advisory model has helped create a cohesive sense of identity as bilingual teachers and solidify peer-to-peer support
	ATE-TALC	The program convenes weekly sessions where counselor interns assist teacher candidates with personal issues. By identifying the various challenges, the counselor intern can assist the teacher candidates in choosing the best intervention in order to meet the immediate and long terms needs of the student, including referrals for academic support.
	Academy for Teacher Excellence	The program requires candidates to attend a summer institute, which prepares candidates for teaching and academic support for their university courses.
	Kūkuluao and Ka Lama Education Academy	The program provides novice teachers with mentoring and coaching to help them model culturally relevant teaching strategies and lessons.
	Pathways to Teaching Careers Program	The program supports candidates through monthly cohort meetings with a coordinator to help build participants' awareness of academic major and credential requirements, timelines, and sponsored peer-study groups.
Responsive Curriculum	**Project 29**	Participants enrolled in "Teaching and Learning in a Bilingual Classroom" and other courses that address the needs of English language learners (e.g., dual language instructional issues, accommodating children with varying language proficiency levels, creating learning environments for children with large gaps in previous schooling, mainstreaming issues). Each student is also asked to write an autobiographical paper helping them understand the strengths of their current K–8 students and themselves.