Description

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) describes a "teacher residency program" as a school-based teacher preparation program in which a *prospective* teacher teaches alongside an *effective* teacher while receiving concurrent instruction in the content area in which the teacher will become certified or licensed (ESSA Sec. 2002). Recently, the definition of residency programs has expanded to include programs for other personnel.

Overview

Residency programs recruit candidates to work as **paid apprentices** while completing **integrated coursework** (Arundel, 2020). In contrast to traditional 4-year preparation programs that culminate in a semester-long field experience, residency models **embed clinical experiences** throughout every level of preservice preparation (OSEP Symposium Prepare Panel, 2020).

Most residencies last **the equivalent of one school year**, with a candidate working alongside a **cooperating mentor** throughout the program (Silva et al., 2014). Programs often differ in whether they match candidates with a single mentor for the full year or give candidates experience learning from several mentors (Silva et al., 2014). Additionally, residency programs are characterized by **strong partnerships** between preparation programs and local education agencies (LEAs) as well as other stakeholders (NCTR, 2018).

While 60% of personnel work within 20 miles of where they attended high school, recent data indicate that student teaching placement is more predictive of where novice teachers begin teaching, which often is not in their hometowns (Goldhaber, Krieg, & Theobald, 2017). Residency programs can address this evolving trend by giving teacher candidates the opportunity to gain a strong footing in the **local context** where they will eventually teach.

Residency programs are different from other strategies because the candidates are paid. This helps address the **barrier of affordability** that greatly contributes to shortages of personnel to serve students with disabilities. By addressing the cost barrier, residency programs appeal to a larger prospective candidate pool than "traditional" preparation programs.

Research Findings

Research on residency programs suggests the following:

- Residencies bring **greater gender and racial diversity** into the teaching workforce (Guha & Kini, 2016).

- Teacher candidates who complete clinical experiences through residency models report **greater capacity to work with students with diverse learning needs** than their nonresidency peers.

- Residencies allow candidates to experience **extensive clinical practice**, which is essential to novice teacher effectiveness (AACTE, 2018).

- Through residencies, preservice candidates can gain a deeper understanding of and are better able to implement **evidence-based classroom practices** (Ross & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2015).

- Residency programs were one of several alternative preparation programs that found **success** in recruiting, preparing, and retaining high-quality **Black male special educators** (Scott, 2017).

  - **Stipends** associated with residency programs proved **especially impactful** for Black male special educators preparing to enter the workforce (Scott, 2017).

- The **average retention rate** for educators prepared through a residency program, including those serving students with disabilities, is **greater than** the retention rate for educators from nonresidency programs (NCEE, 2015).

Overview (Continued)

They are also particularly important for **diversifying the education workforce, as personnel of color are more likely to struggle with the costs of preparation** (Fiddiman, Campbell, & Partelow, 2019). Preparing more personnel to serve students with disabilities has a far-reaching impact, as extensive evidence shows that **students of color** experience **positive academic outcomes** when served by personnel of color (Dixon, Griffin & Teoh, 2019).

Part of a Strategic Approach

In a study of 30 residency programs, novice personnel who completed residency programs generally reported feeling **more satisfied with their training** and their jobs than other novice personnel (Silva et al., 2014). Feelings of satisfaction among educators are **linked to increased retention** among novice personnel (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016), Additionally, in 2017, the National Center for Teacher Residencies found that in participating schools, teachers prepared through residencies reported **increased ability to address the rigors of high-need schools, increased student achievement, and increased teacher retention** (NCTR, 2017).

Exemplars

- [Boston Teacher Residency Program](#). This year-long AmeriCorps program places apprentices with experienced mentor teachers while they complete master's level coursework. An in-depth study of the Boston Teacher Residency Program found that 80% of residency graduates were still teaching in their third year, compared with 63% of nonresident teachers (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2016).

- [University of North Dakota's Special Education Resident Teacher Program](#). This 1-year residency program prepares candidates to work in rural localities in North Dakota and western Minnesota by placing future educators with an experienced mentor who serves students with mild or moderate disabilities. In this residency model, the school district or special education unit provides funding for teachers in residence who will be placed in their district or unit.

(Additional exemplars can be found on the [Attract, Prepare, Retain resource page](#).)

KEY IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

Critical Components for Success

(Lists are not sequential)

Setting the Stage

- Institutions of higher education (IHEs) identify programs of study for pilot educator residency programs.

- Each preparation program recruits and selects a trusted community partner to serve as the pilot program's site, as well as other stakeholders to involve in planning the residency program.

- With input from preparation program faculty, LEA and State education agency (SEA) personnel establish a rigorous selection process and criteria for the mentor teachers and the teachers in residence.

- The LEAs implement professional development programs for the mentor teachers.

- The preparation programs identify a validated framework for both program faculty and mentor teachers to observe the teachers in residence practice and to provide feedback accordingly.

- The SEA identifies funding sources (e.g., ESSA, Title II, Federal grants) to incentivize the creation of residency programs.

- The SEA establishes competitive grants to encourage partnerships between preparation programs and LEAs.

Initial Start-Up

- The preparation programs identify and create a formal partnership agreement or memorandum of understanding with the LEAs or schools.

- Programs establish a structure for teachers in residence to receive pay for their role in the schools.

- Convene leaders and faculty to restructure the preparation programs to address essential learning outcomes through residencies.

- Develop training to share with chosen LEA and preparation program leaders.

- Each program brings together the full school community to ensure all personnel are aware of the program, their role in supporting residents, and any impacts on school schedules or routines.

- The programs identify data sources to evaluate program effectiveness.

Related Services

Unlike teacher preparation contexts, residency programs in related service preparation have **not** been widely practiced. Related service professionals work across a large range of ages and student populations, and their preparation programs typically include **internships.** Internships may span across multiple years of a program and occur **in a variety of diverse settings** (Finigan-Carr & Shaia, 2018; Phillippo, Kelly, Shayman, & Frey, 2018). Successful completion of an internship is a program requirement across related service disciplines. Unlike residency programs, **internships are unpaid**. These differences are likely why residency programs have not gained traction among related service preparation programs.

Critical Components for Success (Continued)

Continuous Improvement

- Once successfully piloted, the preparation programs scale up to additional community partners.

- Programs engage former candidates and their administrators to identify gaps in preparation to address through coursework.

- Collaborate with other residency programs to share lessons learned and areas for improvement.

- The LEAs and SEA formally recognize successful residency program mentors as advanced teachers or as teacher leaders and increase compensation accordingly.

Leveraging Lessons Learned

- Convene preparation program, SEA, and LEA personnel to determine the feasibility of sustaining and/or scaling up the use of residencies in educator preparation.

- Share success stories.

- Develop guidance, resources, and tools.

Early Childhood

Alternative routes to certification have been gaining popularity in the early childhood field for some time (Fiechtl & Hager, 2019). Yet, residency programs have only recently begun to be adopted in early childhood contexts. Most of these residency programs are **only available at the master's level**, whereas most early childhood providers begin their careers at a lower level. Many candidates **begin pursuing certification** in early childhood fields **at the community college (associate's) level** (OSEP Symposium, 2019). The contrast between the level at which residencies are offered creates barriers for residency programs to attract candidates.

Additionally, a 2020 focus group with researchers and practitioners from across early childhood professions indicated that residency programs face further barriers.

The focus group highlighted that since residency programs typically take place in a **single clinical setting**, the multiple settings of early childhood and early intervention preparation **may make the residency model harder to adopt**. Such settings include **home visits** and settings in which personnel **serve infants** with disabilities. However, focus group participants noted that residency programs can be used for clinical experiences in which candidates serve populations from **ages 3 to 5** (OSEP Summit Prepare Panel, 2020).

Other Stakeholder Support Required for This Strategy

- **Policymakers.** Policymakers at both the **State and local level**s play a key role in building the capacity of preparation programs to create residency opportunities. Often, policy issues create a large barrier to the implementation of residency programs. For example, several States and localities have legislation that makes it difficult for educator candidates to complete certification requirements while in a paid clinical setting. Policy makers can support the expansion of personnel residencies by passing legislation to remove such barriers as well as legislation that provides additional funding to residency programs. The **National Center for Teacher Residencies** offers a [set of recommendations for State policy makers](#) on how to support residency programs. The recommendations focus on four policy areas: (1) partnership and stakeholder collaboration, (2) recruitment and selection, (3) coaching and feedback, and (4) assessment and evaluation. More information on this and similar reports can be found on OSEP's [Attract, Prepare, Retain resource page](#).

REFERENCES

AACTE (American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education). (2018). *A pivot toward clinical practice, its lexicon, and the renewal of educator preparation: A report of the AACTE Clinical Practice Commission.* Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Retrieved from http://www.nysed.gov/common/nysed/files/cpc-aactecpcreport.pdf

Arundel, K. (2020). *Recruit and retain special educators with real-life lessons from local, district, and state initiatives.* Horsham, PA: LRP Publications.

Dixon, R. D., Griffin, A. R., & Teoh, M. B. (2019). *If you listen, we will stay: Why teachers of color leave and how to disrupt teacher turnover.* Washington, DC: The Education Trust & Teach Plus. Retrieved from https://edtrustmain.s3.us-east-2.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/15140833/If-You-Listen-We-Will-Stay-Why-Teachers-of-Color-Leave-and-How-to-Disrupt-Teacher-Turnover-2019-September.pdf

Fiddiman, B., Campbell, C., & Partelow, L. (2019). *Student debt: An overlooked barrier to increasing teacher diversity*. Retrieved from https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-postsecondary/reports/2019/07/09/471850/student-debt-overlooked-barrier-increasing-teacher-diversity/

Fiechtl, B. J., & Hager, K. D. (2019). A statewide early childhood alternative teacher preparation program delivered via synchronous video conference. *Rural Special Education Quarterly, 38*(4), 210–216. https://doi.org/10.1177/8756870519860069

Finigan-Carr, N. M., & Shaia, W. E. (2018). School social workers as partners in the school mission. *Phi Delta Kappan, 99*(7), 26–30. https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721718767856

Goldhaber, D., Krieg, J. M., & Theobald, R. (2017). Does the match matter? Exploring whether student teaching experiences affect teacher effectiveness. *American Educational Research Journal, 54*(2), 325–359. https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831217690516

Guha, R., Hyler, M. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *The teacher residency: An innovative model for preparing teachers*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teacher_Residency_Innovative_Model_Preparing_Teachers_REPORT.pdf

Guha, R., & Kini, T. (2016). *Teacher residencies: Building a high-quality, sustainable workforce*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Retrieved from https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/LPI-Brief-TeacherResidencies.pdf

NCEE (National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance). (2015). *New findings on the retention of novice teachers from teaching residency programs*. Washington, DC: Institute of Education Sciences. Retrieved from https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED560735.pdf

NCTR (National Center for Teacher Residencies). (2018). *2017 stakeholder perception report.* Chicago, IL: Author. Retrieved from https://3cfo0y21904s2nzumq2v0hq0-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/June-2018_NCTR-Stakeholder-Report-Final.pdf

NCTR (National Center for Teacher Residencies). (2017). *Recommendations for state support for effective teacher residencies*. Chicago, IL: Author. Retrieved from https://3cfo0y21904s2nzumq2v0hq0-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/Recommendations-for-State-Support-of-Effective-Teacher-Residencies.pdf

OSEP Summit Prepare Panel; Maughan, E., Kea, C., Ondrasek, N., Pianta, R., McCray, E., & VanderPloeg, L. (2020). Attract, Prepare, Retain: OSEP National Summit on Improving Effective Personnel for Children With Disabilities, Washington, DC. https://osepideasthatwork.org/federal-resources-stakeholders/attract-prepare-retain-osep-national-summit-improving-effective-personnel-children-disabilities

OSEP Symposium; Benedict, A., Bruder, M. B., Buck, D., Bullock, J, Holdheide, L., Paulsen, K. ...VanderPloeg, L. (2019). *Preparing personnel to serve children with disabilities*. 2019 OSEP Virtual Symposia Series, Washington, DC. https://osepideasthatwork.org/osep-meeting/preparing-personnel-serve-children-disabilities-2019

Phillippo, K. L., Kelly, M. S., Shayman, E., & Frey, A. (2017). School social worker practice decisions: The impact of professional models, training, and school context. *Families in Society, 98*(4), 275–283. https://doi.org/10.1606/1044-3894.2017.98.40

Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Ross, S. W., & Lignugaris/Kraft, B. (2015). Multi-tiered systems of support preservice residency: A pilot undergraduate teacher preparation model. *Journal of the National Association for Alternative Certification, 10*(1), 3–20.

Scott, L. A. (2019). Experience of Black male special education teachers: Are alternative licensure programs the desired route for recruitment and preparation? *Education and Urban Society, 51*(3), 332–350. https://doi.org/10.1177/0013124517719971

Silva, T., McKie, A., Knechtel, V., Gleason, P., & Makowsky, L. (2014). *Teaching residency programs: A multisite look at a new model to prepare teachers for high-need schools.* Washington, DC: National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved from https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20154002/pdf/20154002.pdf