

A Review of Research: Teacher Preparation Models Impacting Retention and Recruitment

Dr. Stephen Danna, Ellen Sullivan, and Colleen McDonald

Declining enrollment in teacher preparation programs and poor retention are leading to a nationwide teacher shortage; teacher turnover is at an all time high (approaching 20% in some states); and the satisfaction of teachers is at a 50 year low with 12% describing themselves as “very satisfied” according to the 2022 MetLife survey (Will, 2022). Clearly there is a crisis in the education workforce.

One promising approach yielding solid research results across the country is teacher residencies and, as in New York, layering residencies in Registered Apprenticeship Programs through the Department of Labor, amplifies the benefits. Teacher residency programs (TRPs) used as Apprenticeships represent a relatively new approach to addressing challenges in staffing schools, including recruiting and preparing new teachers to succeed in classrooms; and retaining these teachers over time. Registered Apprenticeships Programs (RAPs) are new to teacher preparation, engaging the Department of Labor and opening access to additional funding which expands the teacher career pipeline.

Longitudinal research of Registered Apprenticeship programs is in the data collection stage. However results can be surmised, given in NYS, Registered Apprenticeship Programs are nested in teacher residency programs thereby making current research around residencies highly relevant. Recent research shows teacher residency programs can address the challenges facing the educator workforce quite successfully and are more cost effective in the long run for districts due to the retention effect. Residents also benefit students and the school community.

Background:

- 41% of new teachers in NYC hired for the 2011/12 school year left the field within their first five years (Yun and Demoss, 2020).
- Podolsky et al (2016) found three top reasons new educators leave the field: 1) inadequate preparation; 2) lack of support; and 3) challenging work conditions (Podolsky, 2016).
- Teacher attrition and turnover are at historic highs in Washington state, with greatest numbers among new and early career teachers and in high poverty schools (Goldhaber, 2023).

Key Findings:

- “Research suggests that well-designed and well-implemented teacher residency models can create long-term benefits for districts, for schools, and, ultimately and most importantly, for the students they serve. Key benefits include increased teacher recruitment diversity, higher teacher retention, and greater student outcomes” (Guya, et al., 2023).

- 60% of residency students in California are people of color, and residents felt more clinically supported than traditional program students (Patrick, et. al.,(2023)
- TRPs show reduced new teacher turnover. 90% of residents remain in-district after three years. 80-86% of apprentices remain in teaching after five years (Grinstein-Weiss, 2016).
- Greater than 75% of graduates from Teacher Residency Programs remain in their initial placement after 5 years whereas Teach For America completers show a five year retention rate of 15% (Brookings, 2023).
- The costs of teacher replacement range from \$9,000 in rural districts to \$20,000 in urban districts for recruiting, hiring, and onboarding (LPI, 2017).
- “Teachers prepared through a residency program are also more likely to stay in the profession, even in high-need contexts, compared to other novice teachers. 33 Studies consistently document high retention rates of teacher residency graduates, ranging from 80% to 90% after 3 years and 70% to 80% after 5 years” (Yun & Demoss, 2020).
- TRPs increase diversity. “ One national study found that in 2016–17, 41% of teacher residents identified as people of color, compared to 28% candidates of color in traditional programs nationwide in the same year” (Yun & DeMoss, 2020).
 - Debt burden of black college graduates is \$6,975 higher than that of white college graduates (Grinstein-Weiss, 2016).
 - “Latino/a students tend to borrow about as much as white students but default on their loans at twice the rate of white borrowers, suggesting that even the same debt amount presents a greater relative debt burden” (Brookings, 2022).
 - “In 2019-2020, 93 percent of principals reported that hosting a residency program in their schools helped mentor teachers grow into more effective practitioners. 100 percent of mentors agreed that mentoring a resident made them more effective teachers. 99 percent of mentors reported that participation in the residency has made them more effective teachers” (Azar, 2021).
- “Students taught by teacher residents had significantly higher state test scores than those students taught by traditionally prepared student teachers, with the residents’ effect on student achievement growing stronger over time” (DeMoss, 2021).
- Improved student discipline and a 50% decline in suspensions in classrooms with residents (DeMoss, 2021).

The dire situation surrounding the educator workforce in America provides a timely opportunity to redefine teacher preparation from a traditional student teaching model to an Apprenticeship model built on residency programs, deep with experience and applied learning. Though Apprenticeships are new to the education sector, they are built on residencies which have been in place for decades and as such, provide a rich set of data and research citing value. The research on residencies, and thus Apprenticeships, provides the solution to recruiting and retaining new teachers, diversifying the workforce, positively impacting school based teacher educators and school culture, and helping students and schools reach their full potential.

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