

Establishing Partnerships in the Central Valley to Expand the Teacher Residency Model

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Abstract

A university in the California Central Valley and three rural district partners designed and implemented a rural teacher residency (RTR) to address the urgent need to prepare and increase retention of qualified educators serving students in rural communities. The RTR program prioritized building partnerships through data use and continuous improvements to refine the residency model. These significant, data-driven program improvements led to establishing a successful residency model for the university, which includes fidelity to the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR) Framework that focuses on the initial establishment of strong partnerships for a successful residency. RTR attracted more diverse candidates than the traditional program at the university and, due to their high-quality preparation, program completers are staying in the classroom longer than most new teachers. As a result of RTR's success, other districts in the Central Valley witnessed the value of collaborating with a teacher preparation program and sought out partnership to develop

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their own residencies, and now five additional residencies with seven new district partners are in place. This paper describes the RTR successes, the development of a residency model for the university, and the process of building strong community relationships to expand the residency model throughout the Central Valley.

Key words: teacher residency, rural education, partnership

Introduction

Teacher preparation is a complex process that is best informed through collaborative partnerships between the preparation provider and local districts. As the need for teachers continues to grow throughout the nation, teacher preparation programs must consider how to best address that issue. One way is to foster partnerships through teacher residency programs that unify the district and the preparation provider to best serve the local community and student population.

The California Central Valley has a high need for well-prepared teachers. In recent years, the number of teachers hired with an Intern Credential, a Provisional Intern Permit, or a Short-Term Staffing Permit dramatically increased. According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, Central Valley new hires (teachers in their first year of service in their district) working with an Intern credential increased by 35.6% since 2017-2018 and those working under a short-term staffing permit increased by 53.5%. This has been an upward trend since 2014. Local districts and the main university in the Central Valley have a long-standing collaborative relationship that works toward the goal of decreasing attrition and putting highly qualified teachers into all classrooms, but these institutes are still unable to meet the demand for new teachers. In the service area, the high teacher demand is due to increased student enrollment, veteran teacher retirements, promotions, and decreased classroom sizes.

Rural Teacher Residency

The Rural Teacher Residency (RTR) was a practice-based teacher preparation program at the university in the Central Valley built on partnerships with three local, rural school districts and an educational nonprofit research, development, and service agency. The program was funded through a Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education.

Persisting academic achievement gaps, high rates of teacher turnover, and increasing disparities in the diversity between students and teachers, prompted a reconceptualization of how teachers are prepared

in the United States. This is especially the case in rural and urban school districts, where low salaries and poor working conditions contribute to the difficulties of recruiting and retaining quality teachers (Loewenberg, 2018). RTR attempted to reduce the number of teachers with substandard credentials in rural districts throughout the Central Valley. Established in 2014, RTR was committed to ensuring that children living in the rural communities of the Central Valley receive the highest quality educational experience to become successful and productive leaders that foster future positive change in their community and the world.

According to The Center for Public Education (2018), rural schools are likely to employ a critically high percentage of new teachers (defined as more than 17% or more of the teaching staff) due to high turnover rates (Lavalley, 2018). Additionally, teachers from rural areas are less likely to have a master's degree than teachers from a metropolitan area (Lavalley, 2018). There is a 10% gap in master's degree attainment between suburban and rural teachers, and the difference in access to high quality professional development for teachers is even more stark (Barrett, 2015). In rural designated areas, only 18% of teachers reported having access to professional development focused on English Learner strategies, compared to 38% of their urban counterparts (Player, 2016). An effective teacher preparation program must consider the type of student population the future educator will be teaching. Past studies on the effects of residencies show that teacher residencies provide the needed systematic transformation of teacher preparation by establishing a program that sifts through the micro-level consequences of macro-level social forces to create a program that addresses the needs of a particular area and those that live there (Guha, et al., 2017). This can be seen in the deep and persistent poverty and racial inequality manifesting into lower attendance rates, higher suspension numbers, as well as academic rhetoric that contradicts the students' lived experience, producing student skepticism of teacher and school motives.

Prior to recruiting residents for RTR, a leadership team was created that included partner district principals and superintendents, school site teacher leaders, university faculty and the grant Principal Investigator. Monthly meetings allowed the team to determine the mission and vision of the program, how the workload would be shared, and how the program would address the needs of the partner districts and their students. This team would continue to be involved in all aspects of the residency program from interviewing potential residents, to preparing mentor teachers, and continuous improvement of the program to review strengths and areas of growth throughout the life of

the program. A teacher residency is a mutually beneficial partnership between a university and local school districts, co-designed to strengthen teacher preparation for candidates and fulfill the partner districts' hiring needs (Coffman & Patterson, 2014). The partnership between the Institute of Higher Education (IHE) and Local Education Agency (LEA) within RTR was characterized by shared goals for the program and collaborative decision-making for many of the residency program policies. The joint effort to execute and implement programmatic decisions created a strong sense of partnership and investment in both parties.

Program Design

Teacher residency programs seek to address some persisting issues in teacher preparation by incorporating the best of both traditional and alternative approaches to teacher education and certification (Guha et al., 2016). RTR was grounded in extensive preparation through LEA and IHE partnerships, whereby residents were paid a stipend while learning to teach in a full-year co-teaching placement. At its core, a teacher residency is about the integration of coursework and clinical experiences prior to becoming employed as a teacher-of-record (Coffman & Patterson, 2014). Residents were teamed-up with an expert TK-6 teacher, an LEA mentor, and highly qualified university supervisor. During the year, residents had the opportunity to practice teaching and management strategies in a supported environment, receiving ongoing feedback on their practice, while simultaneously taking the theory courses required for a preliminary teaching credential.

RTR residents began the credential program during the summer in a STEM focused summer program for 4th to 8th grade students from the local partner districts. During the school year, residents co-taught with their mentor teacher Monday through Thursday for the duration of the academic year and attended courses at the university campus on Fridays. Residents then designed an inquiry-based curriculum for their second summer working within the summer program. The opportunity to design and implement STEM curriculum that integrates the Engineering Design Process and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) was a unique feature of the RTR Program. This facet of the program was intentionally designed based on the need of rural students to be exposed to STEM curriculum at an early age. Within five semesters, residents earned a multiple subject teaching credential and master's degree that offered specialized professional development with a STEM integration focus tailored to rural teachers' needs.

RTR Program residents were simultaneously exposed to the IHE

credential program curriculum and theory of practice within their courses and the concrete classroom application of those theories as co-teachers in authentic TK-6 grade classrooms. RTR built partnerships and a community of practice through employing cohorts and providing mentor teachers as means of support. RTR infused the cohort model and had all residents participate in professional learning communities (PLCs), in fact renaming it as a Residency Learning Community (RLC) that encompassed both horizontal (educators of the same grade level and content) and vertical (teachers of different grade levels) connections. Using a cohort model for the residency program allows for peers provided critical support throughout their residency and beyond (Guha, et al., 2017).

Within the RLCs, residents read and applied the precepts of “Mindset: The New Psychology of Success” by Carol Dweck and “How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character” by Paul Tough. Both these books were used as the basis for group discussions around the residents’ experiences. Residents explored their own mindsets through discussion and activities, they also began the process of learning how to promote a growth mindset within their classrooms and how to encourage their students to move from a fixed to a growth mindset. These two themes of Mindset and Grit continue as threads throughout the entire program.

The guidance and support provided by mentor teachers and university supervisors was essential to the success of the RTR Program. RTR leadership from the IHE and LEA jointly selected mentor teachers. This joint selection process allowed for a cohesive message about program goals and foci. University supervisors assigned to RTR residents were knowledgeable of the demands of rural educators through years of teaching experience and professional development. Both parties used the Danielson Framework for Teaching (FFT) to observe and provide formative feedback to the residents throughout their clinical experience. The residency leadership team chose the FFT as it supports development and growth of instructional practice rooted in Danielson’s philosophical approach to fostering and advancing great teaching and learning. Mentors and supervisors attended monthly professional development and calibration on the Danielson observation tool.

The University Residency Model

The university developed a solid data-based model of teacher residency implementation based on RTR. The model includes fidelity to the NCTR Framework and the development of strong partnerships

with their districts, which included having university faculty and district staff plan and teach methods courses together and having a faculty member serve as the residency coordinator. One member of the RTR leadership team noted it is critical to have that “specific faculty that focus on each residency, so they develop that relationship and get a deep understanding of the students and community.”

To ensure program quality, the university’s teacher residency programs adhere to the definition of residency informed by NCTR; within a teacher residency a resident will hold a co-teaching apprenticeship for a full academic year (minimum of 3 days per week). Credential program coursework is co-constructed and co-taught with university faculty and district leaders and delivered in district school sites in a cohort model. University and district leaders collaboratively establish criteria for joint selection of placement sites, mentors, and residents. The residency programs provide financial support to residents that may be used for tuition and/or living expenses, and mentors are also financially compensated. Residents commit to teach in the district if they are offered a teaching position.

The RTR Program recognized that the smaller partner districts associated with the 5-year grant funded program did not have the hiring need to continue a residency model, but the model established and developed throughout the grant could be used as the archetype for future residencies in the area. At the same time, in the final years of the RTR Program, buy-in for residency programs in the Central Valley organically took place as districts saw the quality of teachers the program created. For example, a local non-partner district recognized they had ultimately hired 28% (19 residents) of RTR completers. In turn, five districts partnered with the university to establish residency programs using a similar model established by RTR, making modifications for their specific needs.

Residency Expansion

Due to RTR’s success, other districts in the area developed their own residencies. These other districts partnered with the university to develop programs and now five additional residencies with three new district partners have been created. These residencies are fully sustainable given district commitments to fund mentor teacher stipends, resident stipends, a program coordinator, and instructional specialists to co-teach credential program courses on-site using district Local Control and Accountability Plan funds. One administrator noted it was a “key piece—having a [university] staff member to work in tandem,

work hand in hand” with the district. Each semester approximately 35-50% of teacher candidates at the university are currently being prepared in a residency pathway.

Prior to the RTR fully ending its tenure the RTR program coordinator and lead faculty of each new residency program created the Teacher Residency Consortium. The consortium’s goal is to build and sustain a community of practice for professional learning and collaboration regarding residencies in the Central Valley and teacher preparation across all pathways. At the quarterly meetings each residency program shares a promising practice that they feel would be useful/beneficial to the other residency programs. There are also opportunities for discussion and problem solving with the group.

Each of the five residency programs developed in partnership with the university address the specific needs of the partner district and its student population. Below is a description of the five residency programs established after the RTR Program:

(1) *Urban Teacher Residency (UTR)*: UTR began in the fall of 2016. UTR began by addressing the need for teachers knowledgeable with working in urban settings that vary from affluent to high need. The program began as a multiple subject preparation program with a STEM and urban focus. In the last few years, residency leadership reevaluated the needs of the district and added a single-subject math and science preparation cohort along with a pathway for all participants to receive their bilingual authorization.

(2) *Single-Subject Teacher Residency (SSTR)*: SSTR began in the fall of 2018 and partnered with the largest high school district in California and the 17th largest overall district in California. SSTR is a single-subject teacher residency. Participants can earn their credential in any content area offered at the university in order to address the district’s desire to have all partner district students taught by a highly qualified, well-trained, and diverse teaching staff, who provide rigorous and engaging instruction that connects students for success at the next level of learning. With 25 campuses and over 40,000 students, the partner district has a great need for new teachers every year.

(3) *Multiple-Subject Teacher Residency (MSTR)*: MSTR began in the spring of 2018. MSTR is dedicated to recruiting and retaining diverse individuals with the cultural competency to connect with the partner district community, a rural community, and make a significant impact on preparing students socially, emotionally, and academically for the 21st century. Although the partner district has a high retention rate for teachers, they are dedicated to having a “home-grown” staff that reflects their student population and are willing to invest in teachers from the onset to ensure they are trained properly for a rural setting.

(4) Single-Subject Rural Teacher Residency (SSRTR): SSRTR began in the summer of 2020. SSRTR is a TQP grant-funded program for students seeking to obtain a single subject credential with a focus in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), earn a master's degree in education with an emphasis in curriculum and instruction, and participate in high quality professional development in computer science from the university. The partner district has a need for recruiting and retaining teachers in their rural community.

(5) DEI Teacher Residency (DEITR): DEITR began in the spring of 2022. DEITR is dedicated to recruiting and retaining diverse individuals with an emphasis on Afrocentric cultural competency. DEITR strives to connect with the partner districts' communities and to make a significant impact on preparing students socially, emotionally, and academically for the 21st century. Residents earn a multiple subject credential and can add a single subject authorization of their choice. DEITR is the only residency program at the university that is partnered with more than one district and holds all courses online.

Table 1
University Residency Program Details

<i>Program</i>	<i>Date Established</i>	<i>Credential Earned</i>	<i>Focus Area</i>	<i>Number of Completers</i>
Urban Teacher Residency (UTR)	Fall 2016	MS *Opportunity for supplemental authorization	Urban Education	111
Single-Subject Teacher Residency (SSTR)	Fall 2018	SS	Secondary Education	71
Multiple-Subjects Teacher Residency (MSTR)	Spring 2018	MS	Rural Education/ Growth Mindset	79
Single-Subject Rural Teacher Residency (SSRTR)	Summer 2020	SS +Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction	Rural Education	18
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Teacher Residency (DEITR)	Spring 2022	MS *And opportunity for supplemental authorization	Afro-centric cultural competencies	4

Method

The evaluation partner for the RTR conducted a comprehensive longitudinal evaluation of the rural residency. The mixed-methods evaluation combined formative and summative components. The formative component was used to provide ongoing data to grant leadership to improve the RTR. The summative component of the evaluation focused on assessing teacher preparedness and retention. The research questions to guide this study include the following: How do the RTR activities, such as mentoring, the STEM focused summer program, and professional learning, prepare residents? To what extent does the RTR support resident efficacy to teach STEM? How prepared do residents feel to teach in rural schools? How prepared do residents feel to teach STEM? To what extent are RTR completers remaining in teaching?

To study implementation and outcomes of the RTR, the external evaluation team employed a variety of data collection methods, including surveys, focus groups, interviews, document review, and extant data analysis. Survey participants included RTR completers, current residents, and partner district administration. Focus group and interview participants included RTR completers, current residents, program leadership, and partner district administration.

The purpose of the focus groups was to gather an understanding of participant experiences in the program to both support program improvement and provide further context to explain the quantitative results derived from survey and extant data. Narrative data from focus groups and interviews were analyzed qualitatively, with researchers engaging in a process of data coding and identification of overall emergent themes across respondent groups (Miles et al., 2014).

To assess STEM self-efficacy, 65 residents completed a teaching STEM self-efficacy scale derived from the Science Teaching Outcome Expectancy scale instrument (STERT) before beginning and then again at completion of the program (Riggs & Enochs, 1989). Researchers calculated mean scores for the pre-test and posttest and analyzed the means using t-tests of significance. To assess resident level of preparedness, researchers analyzed Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) exit survey data by comparing RTR residents to traditional teacher candidates at the university, as well as the statewide average for the items. Program leadership tracked placement and retention of their completers, yielding data to assess those outcomes.

Program Outcomes

After five years of implementation, the RTR saw several promising outcomes, including the diversity of the residents, the preparedness reported by the residents and completers to teach, and the retention of RTR completers in high-need, rural districts. It is important to clarify that these findings are based on correlations as the study methods used were non-experimental.

In terms of diversity, RTR attracted more diverse candidates than the traditional programs at the university. Of the 74 RTR completers, 67% self-identified as “non-white” compared to 50% of the non-residency track of the multiple-subject students. This outcome is consistent with other grow-your-own teacher programs that have shown progress in diversifying the teacher workforce (Guha et al., 2016). Understanding the students and their backgrounds and the local community context are important contributors to teacher effectiveness and retention (Warner & Duncan, 2018). In addition, teachers matching their students demographically is an important contributor to student academic achievement (Loewenberg, 2018).

As previously noted, resident beliefs toward STEM teaching and learning were assessed using a STEM self-efficacy scale (Riggs & Enochs, 1989). The theory supporting the scale development posits behavior as a product of self-efficacy. Applied to teacher effectiveness, the idea is that teachers who have confidence in their teaching ability (self-efficacy), should yield more successful teaching and learning outcomes. Residents from the last three cohorts took the assessment, and results for all three cohorts showed a statistically significant improvement from pre to posttest $t(102) = -5.6, p < .001$. These results suggest that participation in the residency positively impacted resident confidence to teach STEM subjects. Findings each year showed improvements for all items assessing STEM self-efficacy. Improvements were most notable for the items that assessed knowing the steps necessary to teach STEM concepts effectively and understanding STEM concepts to effectively teach them at an elementary school level.

In the annual surveys, 100% of completers across the three years who were surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they felt prepared to teach STEM subjects and prepared to integrate technology effectively in the classroom. During focus groups, residents and completers detailed their appreciation for the technology focus of their residency experience. One resident explained, “It’s been my favorite part of this program. I was out of school for a long time, so coming back to this I got so much from the technology part.” Another resident noted, “I learned a lot of new ways to implement new technology and I am ex-

cited to bring these things into my own classroom next year.” RTR residents and completers were considered the technology experts in their schools, in some cases leading staff development on new technology. As one resident noted, “There’s no tech person in our rural district, so now we’re the tech support.” A RTR graduate reported introducing technology solutions to teachers, “We design curriculum using Google apps and do almost everything with Google classrooms. The teachers in our grade level were using it minimally so our principal asked us to bring it in and teach others to use it.”

As another measure of preparedness, the CTC administers an exit survey to teacher program completers to gather data on their perceptions of the program and their level of preparedness. Year after year, RTR completers consistently rated themselves as more prepared for teaching on most dimensions than the statewide average for the items. For example, for the item, “How prepared are you to meet the instructional needs of English learners?” 99% of the RTR completers rated themselves as *well prepared* or *very well prepared*, compared to 75% at the state level. As another example, for the item, “How prepared are you to engage in culturally responsive teaching?” 91% of the RTR completers rated themselves as *well prepared* or *very well prepared*, compared to 80% at the state level. In terms of opportunities to engage in clinical practice, a larger percentage of RTR residents reported that the teacher preparation program afforded them the opportunity to engage in science and mathematics pedagogical practices during their clinical practice compared to the statewide average. Finally, compared to the statewide average, a higher percentage of RTR residents felt prepared to teach all content areas and more prepared to integrate technology.

A RTR graduate explained that although the program was intense, they would recommend the RTR to other interested candidates, “It’s worth it, the program was difficult, and it helped prepare us for our first year of teaching. We’re more prepared than traditional teachers.” Residents reported feeling prepared to be a STEM teacher thanks to residency supports. As one resident noted, “I already felt strong in subject matter knowledge, now I feel like I have tons of tools and strategies and resources and people to be a STEM educator thanks to the program.”

Partner district administrators expressed a high degree of satisfaction toward the RTR completers’ preparation, and saw the completers as assets to their schools, both in terms of filling vacancies and in bringing new knowledge about effective STEM integration and instructional approaches. Principals spoke about the advanced support residents received which led to developing teachers who were ready to teach in rural settings. An administrator at one district, the largest

employer of RTR completers, reported that she and others in the district can easily tell which of their new teachers are completers of the RTR, as she noted, “The difference between the rural residency and traditional new teachers is night and day. Their experience outweighs their years in the classroom. Confident, organized, and good classroom management. They’ve had good training.”

Completers attributed their high level of preparedness to the many components of the RTR, including their hands-on university supervisors, their mentor teachers’ ongoing feedback and guidance, and the numerous experiences they had in their clinical practice. One graduate noted, “You have to collaborate, pick and choose your curriculum and break apart the standards. You become a teacher and you’re not even noticing until you’re in the classroom doing it by yourself.” Another graduate commented, “The experience and the prep that this program gives you, the district knows the [RTR Program] and knows it creates residents that are prepared. When I say I was in this program, they know what I can do because they know how rigorous the program is.”

Evidence of the effectiveness of RTR completers’ teaching is demonstrated by the ability of teachers to be hired and continue working in high-need schools. RTR Program completers accepted positions in 14 local school districts. Eighteen completers (26%) took positions in the RTR partner districts: partner district 1 employed seven completers (10%); partner district 2 employed eight (12%); and partner district 3 employed three (4%). A local, non-partner district hired the most RTR completers, employing 19 program completers (28%). An administrator from one of the RTR partner districts noted, “Two major districts pass any resident teacher from our district straight through the interview process because they know between the university and our district, they have been well trained to take on the challenges of teaching.” Due to their high level of preparation and clinical practice experiences, RTR completers have a three-year retention rate of 93% and a five-year retention rate of 86%, much higher than the national average (Valente, Tejwani, Pedroza, & Cartznes, 2022). These retention rates are consistent with rates found in other residencies (Guha, Hyler, & Darling-Hammond, 2016; Yun & DeMoss, 2020). The rates may be attributed to the higher quality of preparation for residents, who acquire over 1,000 clinical hours, compared to traditional candidates who only obtain 600 hours. Furthermore, these findings may be attributed to a higher caliber of candidates compared to those in traditional programs, as they are selected through a combination of self-selection and selection processes from the IHE and LEA.

Data-Driven Improvements

Over the years, RTR leadership made several adjustments to improve the experience for each new cohort. As the residency model was new to the university and their district partners, they had to learn how to structure the work to align with the NCTR residency framework, which required developing and adjusting some of their processes and tools. For example, after attending the NCTR Institutes, the university faculty adjusted their mentor teacher selection process to be a joint process with the university and district partners. They also created manuals for the mentor teachers and residents, with detailed expectations for the year.

Program leadership prioritized data use and made improvements based on feedback collected through the external evaluation. On an annual basis, leadership met with the external evaluation team to engage in a data reflection exercise to discuss the findings from the study of participant experiences and consider the RTR implementation implications. The most notable implications included adding ongoing mentor teacher development workshops, moving to a placement switch during the residency, defining the target number of residents per cohort, and improving communication from the program. RTR leadership decided on programmatic changes, oftentimes in consultation with the district partners, and were based on the findings from the evaluation and best practices in residency implementation. RTR leadership often consulted with NCTR when making changes, such as the placement switch and residency cohort size.

To improve both the quality of instructional feedback residents received from their mentor teachers and the communication between mentor teacher and the program, RTR leadership created the Mentor Teacher Collaboratives – a monthly meeting for mentor teachers on providing feedback using the Danielson observation rubric. In addition to the improved mentor coaching and support provided, mentor teachers acknowledged that the meetings fostered improved communications and relationships with the university supervisors and a forum for communication among mentors.

Another data-driven improvement example was the adjustment to the placement schedule. Residents wanted to experience more than one classroom and work with more than one mentor teacher and suggested a placement switch at some point during their residency. Leadership decided to pilot different placement schedules, enabling residents to move to a different classroom setting with a new mentor mid-year. The placement switch allowed residents to experience a new mentor with

different instructional styles and strategies and another grade level as part of their clinical experience. Residents and mentor teachers participating in the pilot viewed the switch as a positive addition and it was made permanent for future cohorts.

Another important data-driven redesign was in relation to the number of residents prepared each year. In years 1 and 2, the RTR supported seven residents and nine residents, respectively. In year 3, the program expanded to prepare 29 residents. The increase in the number of residents led to implementation challenges, such as insufficient numbers of qualified mentors to support the residents and supervisors not having enough time to meet and observe the residents' teaching. In year 4, the RTR Program decreased the size of its resident cohort, admitting 21 teacher residents, thus finding a balance between coaching more residents and the ability to meet all the residents' needs.

Finally, a notable suggestion from RTR Program partners throughout the grant period was to improve communication. Residents and mentors requested clearer and more frequent communication about program timelines, course expectations, professional development requirements, and policies and procedures. The program remained cognizant of this request and worked to improve communication. Survey findings from the last year of the residency reflect the communication improvements, as 100 percent of cohort 5 residents rated program communication favorably.

Conclusion/Implications

Despite the RTR Program ending, RTR's legacy lives on through the five new residencies, through the network of RTR completers teaching in numerous districts throughout the county with many rising into positions of leadership in their districts, and through the sustainable partnerships strengthened as a result of the program. The RTR Program was unable to continue given the small staffing needs of the original partner districts, however the new residency programs are sustainable given the resources provided by the district partners and the commitment the IHE must providing residency programs to teacher candidates. Within these expansion residencies many of the elements of the RTR program have been embedded, including but not limited to joint selection of mentors and residents, monthly mentor meetings, and the RLCs.

The residency model developed by the RTR Program is an example of how teacher preparation can be adaptive to the needs of a community, produce effective and impactful relationships between an LEA

and IHE, lower attrition, and create efficacy for first year teachers. Each of the university's residency programs have leadership meetings that bring university faculty and district leadership to the table to discuss the best ways to prepare future teachers. This collaborative and co-generative production of best practices enhances all residency programs. By establishing strategic partnerships, teacher residencies develop robust teacher pipelines with improved teacher retention and, ultimately, student outcomes—especially for those with disabilities and English language learners (National Center for Teacher Residencies, 2019). As a result, partner districts have been able to staff their schools with qualified, experienced teachers while relying less on external recruitment. One partner district administrator spoke about the extraordinary partnership between the university and partner districts in their development and implementation of the RTR, saying, “The RTR Program... shows true collaboration, and especially for sustaining the partnership across five years, that is something to be commended for.”

The Central Valley was an ideal geographical area for the expansion of teacher residencies. Within the Central Valley there are 48 districts that range from small-rural, to large-urban, and suburban. The fidelity of implementation across residencies provided for the ability to share resources, like mentor teacher meetings, RLCs, and program documents. As faculty in the Teacher Education Department at the university became more ingrained with residency work, a culture of practice-based education and extended clinical practice as modeled by the teacher residency programs has become the new norm not only in the Teacher Education Department but also in other credentialing programs. The Special Education program housed in the Advanced Educational Studies Department now has two running residency programs and works alongside all five Teacher Education residency programs as they develop.

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