

# National Center for Teacher Residencies

#3 in a series of ERN issue briefs on innovative approaches to teacher preparation

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*Pictured: Chaslyn Reynolds, a mentor teacher (r) and resident Cynthia Fitz-Wilson co-teach a student in their Dallas classroom.*

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR) launched in 2007 to develop, aid, and promote practical learning, hands-on experience, and support for beginning educators through teacher residencies. This includes co-developing new residency programs, disseminating best practices, and supporting a network of residency programs. NCTR's network has prepared more than 3,650 teachers and currently includes 41 residencies in 17 states.

NCTR's residency partners operate programs across the country that share core design features. NCTR network programs are at least one year in length and include a full-year classroom apprenticeship with aligned and sequenced education course work. Residency programs operate as partnerships between public schools, both traditional and charter, and institutions of higher education. There is often a state education agency, teacher association, or non-profit organization also involved. Program completers earn their initial teaching license as well as, in many locations, a master's degree.

Some NCTR partner programs focus on specific certification areas, such as special education, math, or bilingual education, while others offer a wider selection of content areas. All NCTR partners work with high-need schools, with 97% of graduates teaching in a Title I school. Program participants earn a stipend of, on average, \$25,000 while serving as residents and commit to teaching in their districts for three or more years once they complete the residency. Residency programs provide additional support to program completers for one to three years while they teach full time. For any program completers unable to fulfill their teaching commitment, many programs require repayment of some type, either of the residency stipend or any provided tuition support.

<b>Location</b>	Albuquerque	New Castle, DE	<b>Program Length</b>	At least 1 year
	Atlanta	New Orleans	<b>Credential Awarded</b>	Initial teaching license Bachelor's degree Master's degree
	Bakersfield	New York City		
	Boston	Norfolk	<b>Cost to Participants</b>	\$15,000 (average)
	Buffalo	Oakland		
	Chattanooga	Philadelphia	<b>Annual Enrollment</b>	860
	Chicago	Richmond		
	Dallas	Rochester	<b>Total Program Graduates</b>	> 3,650
	Denver	Sacramento		
	Fresno	San Francisco	<b>Completion Rate</b>	93%
Jacksonville	Schenectady, NY			
Kansas City, MO	Seattle			
Los Angeles	St. Paul			
Memphis	Turlock, CA			
Minneapolis	Washington, DC			
Monterey, CA				

## ADMISSIONS

Program applicants undergo rigorous selection processes, which include written applications, phone and in-person interviews, sample teaching lessons, and screening for key characteristics such as growth mindset, persistence, and ability to be reflective. Other admissions criteria include a bachelor's degree, any required state exams, background clearances, and any additional criteria the partner college or university may require, such as GPA and SAT/ACT. Over half of program residents identify as people of color, and 41% are career changers.

## SCOPE AND SEQUENCE

Residency programs follow a cohort model, grouping residents with peers in training sites and for coursework and providing support and collaborative learning throughout the residency experience. Program curriculum focuses on gaining extensive clinical experience, linking theory to practice, and helping residents make meaningful connections between daily classroom experiences and education theory and research. Courses begin the summer before the classroom apprenticeship experience and continue throughout the school year one day per week and in the evening. Coursework is designed to inform and enrich residents' apprenticeship experience and explicitly incorporate an equity stance that puts student learning at the center of training. Course topics include classroom management, instructional strategies, assessment, and subject-specific strategies.

## FIVE ELEMENTS CRUCIAL TO NCTR RESIDENCIES:

**Recruitment and Selection:** The selection process for both residents and mentors is rigorous and intentional, to assess candidates for the characteristics known to produce strong outcomes for students.

**Coursework and Seminars:** Relevant and rigorous coursework for residents and mentors is built around the classroom experience and aligned to what matters for students.

**Coaching and Feedback:** Structured coaching and feedback systems ensure that residents engage in a meaningful and mindful classroom teaching experience.

**Assessment and Evaluation:** An evaluation system that focuses on continual improvement — for residents, mentors, and the residency program itself.

**The School and School System:** The host school systems and schools possess certain characteristics that reflect the same values of the residency programs: a collaborative culture, clear teacher effectiveness rubrics, and a growth mindset.

Residents serve in a year-long classroom apprenticeship with co-teaching duties alongside an effective, experienced mentor teacher in a high-need public school. Mentor teachers must complete an application and selection process that includes an interview, classroom observation, and screen for key characteristics. Residents spend four days per week in classrooms, completing approximately 1,400 hours of training. As the school year progresses, residents gradually take on more classroom responsibilities, with extended lead teaching experiences. Residents receive regular formal and informal coaching and feedback from mentor teachers, graduate school faculty, and program directors.

Throughout the year, residents complete performance-based assessments, including use of the district's teacher observation tools and expectations. Residents must also successfully complete gateway or benchmark assessments throughout the program and satisfy all requirements for licensure and/or degrees. Assessments are typically co-designed and developed by district and university partners, evaluating resident progress and mastery and ensuring only residents demonstrating abilities to impact student learning and achievement graduate from the program. Residency programs are authorized to certify teachers either directly by the state education agency or department or through their partnerships with institutions of higher education.

After successfully completing the residency year, program completers receive continued coaching, mentoring, and professional development for an additional one to three years.

## **COST**

Costs vary by program. Total costs per program resident range from \$35,000 to \$65,000, including resident tuition, placement fees, recruitment, training, and stipends. The average resident tuition in NCTR network programs is \$15,000. Residents are eligible for financial aid through partner graduate programs. Some residents are also eligible for AmeriCorps education awards.

Partner districts and schools often share some of the costs, and may cover resident tuition with a commitment of service after the program. Partner universities may offer the program at a reduced cost. Many programs also raise philanthropic funds to cover costs. Participants earn a stipend during the residency year, averaging \$25,000 among NCTR network programs. After completing the residency year, participants earn a teacher's salary.

*“It doesn't help to just put somebody in that classroom who is not prepared, because they're going to roll right back out. It'll be a revolving door. So it's better to spend money up front for screening people that are really serious about this as a career and have a heart and a passion for working with students in our challenged schools, and then making sure they're well prepared and supported.”*

— TERRY DOZIER, DIRECTOR OF RTR  
(FORMERLY CALLED THE RICHMOND  
TEACHER RESIDENCY)

## OUTCOMES

The majority of program completers earn certification in high-demand areas, including STEM, English as a second language, and special education. Three years after completing the program, 83% of graduates are still teaching in their residency district.

Certification Area	Percent of Participants
Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math	33%
English as a Second Language	30%
Special Education	22%
Other	15%

Principals in partner districts rate residency graduates highly — 94% would recommend hiring a residency graduate and 91% agree that residents outperform teachers prepared through other pathways.

Program graduates also give programs high marks. Over 90% agree that they entered the classroom with more effective skills than the typical new teacher and report that the residency program design effectively prepared them to teach.

In its *2018 Teacher Prep Review*, a national ranking of teacher preparation programs, the National Council on Teacher Quality rated seven NCTR network programs in the 85th percentile or higher — Richmond (99th), Memphis (98th), Boston (97th), Jacksonville (97th), New York City (91st), Chattanooga (89th), and Los Angeles (85th). More specifically:

- In 2019, the Memphis Teacher Residency earned the highest rating possible on the state’s annual evaluation of teacher preparation programs — “Level 4” — one of fewer than 10 programs to achieve that distinction.
- Researchers examining the Urban Teacher Residency at New Visions for Public Schools in New York City concluded that students of UTR-trained teachers outperformed those who had teachers developed through other pathways. The UTR group’s performance was higher 89 percent of the time. Evaluators also found that student achievement grew stronger as UTR-trained teachers gained more experience in the classroom.
- In San Francisco, 70% of residents in the San Francisco Unified School District received one of the top two ratings on the district’s five-tier scale.

*“Our coursework directly mirrors what we are practicing in the classroom, so this platform really is an opportunity for us to take the skills from the textbook and the lectures that we attend during the week, and take those skills and directly practice them in our classroom every day with our mentors, and then receive feedback from our mentors on how to improve.”*

— ANGELICA MCGHEE, DALLAS,  
RESIDENT TEACHER

## SOURCES

National Center for Teacher Residencies  
(<https://nctresidencies.org>)

National Council on Teacher Quality. (2018).  
*Teacher Prep Review*.