

NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# REPORT 2014



# Teacher Residencies:

## Redefining Preparation Through Partnerships

NEA Center for Great Public Schools  
Teacher Quality Department



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The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing over 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired teachers, and students preparing to become teachers.

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# **Teacher Residencies: Redefining Preparation through Partnerships**

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Issues around teacher preparation are percolating across the education reform movement. The U.S. Department of Education, teacher education accrediting organizations, education non-profits, and teachers unions have all proposed ways to redefine and strengthen teacher preparation and hold programs more accountable for the quality of new teachers. The National Education Association is committed to having students taught by fully trained and prepared teachers because classroom teachers are one of the most important school-based factors influencing student success.

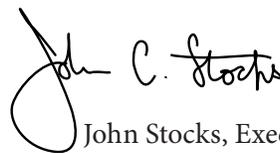
Teacher preparation plays a critical role in ensuring that teachers are prepared to lead and impact student learning from the first day they are responsible for student learning. The best way to ensure that every teacher is “profession-ready” from their first day as a teacher-of-record is for preparation programs to incorporate teacher residencies that go beyond what most consider the capstone student teaching experience. To examine this issue in depth and explore the Association’s potential role in supporting, developing, and implementing teacher residencies, the NEA convened a task force made up of teachers, local Association leaders, state Association leaders and staff, the NEA Student Program Chair, and NEA Center for Great Public Schools Teacher Quality staff to delve into the concept of teacher residencies by addressing these guiding questions—

- What is a teacher residency?
- How might residencies work for all teacher candidates?
- How would preparation programs change if residencies were required before teachers were assigned their own classrooms?
- How would a residency program for a bachelor’s degree student differ from one for a master’s degree student?
- What role might current teachers play in a residency program?
- What should the role of the NEA and its local and state affiliates be in a residency?

This report uses the work of this task force to make recommendations on how best to develop high-quality residency programs that promote more comprehensive preparation systems through the active engagement of stakeholders. We hope this report is useful in generating new thoughts and ideas about teacher preparation. And we hope our efforts in this regard move forward the vision of a great public school for every student.



Dennis Van Roekel, President



John Stocks, Executive Director



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## Introduction

The National Education Association (NEA) has a long history of advocating for quality teacher preparation and robust clinical preparation. Over the years, it has embraced a variety of reforms to improve the teaching workforce. The NEA was a founding member of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Association leaders, members, and staff have served on NCATE, Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), and American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE) boards, panels, and committees to help bridge in-service realities with pre-service preparation and to identify the competencies teachers should be able to demonstrate before completing a clinical, school-based placement (NEA Resolution D-7 1998).

In December, 2011, NEA President Dennis Van Roekel emphasized the critical role teacher preparation plays in America's public schools in ensuring that teachers are prepared to lead and impact student learning from the first day they are responsible for student learning by participating in a teacher residency. Using best practices from effective teachers and feedback from an independent Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching (CETT), NEA's *Three-Point Plan for Reform* (National Education Association 2011) acknowledges both the complexities of teaching as well as the important role current teachers have in making sure beginning teachers have the necessary knowledge and skills to help both schools and students progress. The plan calls for two provisions: 1) Every teacher candidate should have one full year of residency under the supervision of a Master Teacher before earning a full license; and 2) Every teacher candidate should pass a rigorous classroom-based performance assessment at the end of their candidacy.

The NEA believes ensuring that beginning teachers are indeed profession-ready requires participation in a teacher residency program. A teacher residency program is the integration of coursework and clinical experiences prior to becoming employed as a teacher-of-record. A residency allows candidates to prove that they are profession-ready by demonstrating their subject matter and pedagogical content knowledge through a classroom-based performance assessment. A teacher residency also requires an active partnership among teacher preparation stakeholders who determine program operations and selectivity, and collectively build the candidates' clinical experiences to ensure a coherency between theory and practice.

# Teacher Residencies: Redefining Preparation through Partnerships

## What is a teacher residency?

The NEA believes that the best way to ensure that every teacher is “profession-ready” from their first day as a teacher-of-record is for preparation programs to incorporate teacher residencies (see National Education Association 2013 for a discussion of this concept). A teacher residency goes beyond what most consider a student teaching experience. A “traditional” student teaching capstone experience is often a semester (or less) of opportunities to teach and learn with an accomplished, practicing teacher. A teacher residency is a mutually beneficial partnership between preparation providers and districts, one in which the integration of clinical experiences and coursework throughout the preparation program is co-designed to strengthen teacher preparation and improve schools and learning in the partner districts.

The NEA believes “that clinical practice is essential to provide prospective teachers with the experiences necessary to enter the profession and be prepared to teach” (National Education Association 2012). Clinical practice consists of various teaching experiences meant to expose teacher candidates to teaching realities (*i.e.*, tutoring, school-based observations, teaching, community-based experiences, and simulations). These experiences should be substantive enough to ensure that every teacher candidate is prepared for the realities of the classroom they encounter on their first day as the teaching professional responsible for student learning. Meeting this standard of increased-quality clinical experiences requires more than simply expanding the amount of time teacher candidates spend in a student teaching experience.

- Before becoming an independent teacher in their own classroom, candidates must be able to prove they are “profession-ready” by demonstrating their teaching knowledge and skills on a classroom-based performance assessment.
- Every teacher candidate should be required to complete a residency program that provides them the time and opportunities to integrate theory and practice under the guidance and support of accomplished teachers who are active partners in program development.

### **Urban Teacher Residencies**

An Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) is a teacher preparation model created in the early 2000s in Boston and Chicago specifically to meet the needs of those particular urban districts. The UTR model builds on the knowledge and value of higher education providers and school districts, as it recruits and prepares teachers to meet specific staffing needs (subject and location). UTR programs blend a full year of clinical experience with academic coursework. The residents, who enter the program with an undergraduate degree, work alongside veteran teachers for a full school year as full participants in the school community. Residents typically receive a living stipend (*i.e.*, \$10,000 to \$30,000) and pay little or no tuition. In exchange for participating in the program, residents commit to teaching in the sponsoring district for at least three years.

The coursework, typically taken during evenings or weekends, addresses the district’s curricula as well as community and school needs and concerns. Some teacher residents earn certification; others earn both certification and a master’s degree. Many UTR models also include an induction component in which newly hired teachers participate in mentoring and professional learning communities (Berry and Montgomery 2008, Solomon 2009, Urban Teaching Residency United 2013).

The concept of a teacher residency program is not new, and the term “residency” in teacher preparation has been defined in various ways. Many have compared the preparation of teachers to the preparation of lawyers and doctors (*e.g.*, Dewey 1904, Shulman 1998) in that an apprenticeship should be required before the professional may earn a license and practice independently. At its core, a teacher residency is about the integration of coursework and clinical experiences prior to becoming employed as a teacher-of-record.

The NEA believes that some current teacher residency models (*e.g.*, Urban Teacher Residency United 2013) have laid important groundwork for developing a new residency model that not only links aspects of the Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) approach with some of the innovative practices in more traditional teacher preparation programs, but also includes the active participation of all teacher preparation stakeholders (see sidebar). This new approach to teacher preparation is a collective of P–16 stakeholders who are committed to addressing issues related to teacher preparedness.

Through the collective engagement of those invested in improving public schools and those professionals dedicated to training teachers, the potential exists to dramatically improve the preparedness of teacher candidates to teach from day one. Teacher preparation experts have been calling for more integration of teacher preparation and school improvement efforts for decades (*e.g.*, Goodlad 1990), and the NEA

believes that now is the time to bridge the gap between these two concepts. The NEA makes recommendations throughout this report as to how best to develop a high-quality residency program. However, the NEA also believes that local sites that choose to build and implement a teacher residency program should ultimately decide how to individualize the program for local contexts and stakeholders.

## **Why is teacher preparation receiving so much attention?**

Since passage of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act, teacher quality has received unprecedented policy attention at local, state, and federal levels. Federal programs such as Race to the Top and the Teacher Incentive Fund have launched national conversations on the topic, and now more than 36 states have revised state policy in an attempt to improve teacher quality. In the last two years alone, several reports from diverse national stakeholders have offered ideas about improving teacher preparation that support the goals of advancing student learning by building onto existing school improvement efforts. The U.S. Department of Education, teacher education accrediting organizations, education nonprofits, and teachers unions have all proposed ways to redefine and strengthen teacher preparation and hold programs more accountable for the quality of new teachers (U.S. Department of Education 2011, National Council for the Accreditation of Teachers 2010, National Council on Teacher Quality 2013, Council of Chief State School Officers 2012, American Federation of Teachers 2012, National Education Association 2011, Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation 2013).

Public schools are expected to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to be college- and career-ready by the time they graduate from high school. Students deserve teachers who have demonstrated that they are up to the task, and those teachers deserve to be well prepared before taking on the rigors and responsibilities of teaching.

The education labor market has changed over the last 30 years, but the fundamental challenges—attracting, developing, retaining, and supporting high-quality educators—remain the same. These challenges are especially relevant for high-needs schools that have trouble attracting high-performing teachers and for districts that can't find enough qualified individuals in particular subject areas, especially special education, math, and English as a second language. The urgent need to fill such teaching positions has persuaded education policy makers at both state and federal levels to be more receptive to alternatives to traditional four- and five-year teacher preparation programs.

Passage of the 2001 No Child Left Behind Act led to school districts being held accountable for teacher quality for the first time. The federal law, which mandated that every child be taught by a “highly qualified” teacher by the 2005–2006 school year, raised the issue of

teacher quality in the national consciousness and brought about a huge paradigm shift in the thinking around teacher preparation. Higher education institutions were now no longer the only places where would-be teachers received training. New non-profit, for-profit, and district-run preparation programs proliferated. School districts themselves, especially larger ones, became players in the teacher preparation arena as they began articulating their own requirements for what teachers should know and be able to do. Some began questioning the wisdom of hiring inexperienced teachers when teachers' and schools' reputations centered largely on new accountability measures, such as mandates to raise student test scores.

Views about the value, essential components, and rigor of teacher preparation abound in the literature (Cochran-Smith and Fries 2001), but the lack of consistently reliable findings on the nature and impact of teacher preparation programs complicates an already value-laden debate about how to best prepare teachers (Glazerman *et al.* 2006, Walsh 2001, 2007). With little reliable data showing the relationships between pre-service teacher preparation, teacher quality, and student learning, policymakers have begun to question the very purpose of teacher preparation itself. This questioning is most evident in the education-related policies being proposed at state and national levels.

Prospective teachers need school-based experiences before they are put in charge of their own classrooms, and most teacher preparation programs do include student teaching as the capstone experience for teacher candidates. The length or content of student teaching, however, is not equal across programs or states. Some, more traditional programs add additional clinical experiences to the student teaching requirement, whereby teacher candidates spend several hours a week in college courses learning pedagogy and several more observing or working in classrooms at a local school or community center (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005). Research indicates that teachers do find this kind of field work useful in their transition into the teaching profession (Johnson and Birkeland 2008), but the evidence seems to stop there. To date, there are few research-based conclusions available about how student learning is impacted by the length of teacher candidate clinical experiences. Yet, full-year UTRs are accumulating evidence that the kinds of learning experiences facilitated by such programs do positively impact both teacher *and* student learning (Urban Teacher Residency United 2013).

The NEA is increasingly concerned about allowing teachers to simultaneously complete their teacher training while serving as the teacher-of-record. This practice is especially troubling because it is so often concentrated in high-poverty and high-needs schools (Lankforth *et al.* 2002). The NEA is committed to having all students receive access to excellent, profession-ready teachers and, toward that end, the NEA believes that every teacher should be trained in a teacher residency.

## The NEA Residency Task Force

The NEA's call for a one-year residency has led to extensive discussion among members and P-16 stakeholders about the role of clinical preparation and field experiences in light of increased accountability for students and their teachers. To examine these issues in depth and explore the Association's potential role in supporting, developing, and implementing teacher residencies, the NEA convened a task force made up of teachers, local Association leaders, state Association leaders and staff, the NEA Student Program Chair, and NEA Center for Great Public Schools Teacher Quality staff. The NEA Task Force also included representatives from NCATE, ATE, AACTE, and Urban Teacher Residency United (see page 24 for a complete list of task force members).

The NEA Task Force first met in May 2012 to delve into the concept of teacher residencies by addressing these guiding questions—

- What is a teacher residency?
- How might residencies work for all teacher candidates?
- How would preparation programs change if residencies were required before teachers were assigned their own classrooms?
- How would a residency program for a bachelor's degree student differ from one for a master's degree student?
- What role might current teachers play in a residency program?
- What should the role of the NEA and its local and state affiliates be in a residency?

During this meeting, the Task Force also planned visits to six preparation programs across the country. The sites were selected based on a program's work in clinical preparation, recommendations by key stakeholders, and/or the program's engagement in innovative clinical preparation practice. A minimum of four Task Force members visited each site and interviewed program stakeholders—teachers, teacher candidates, principals, program faculty, mentors, and program leaders. The purpose of these conversations was to better understand how the programs operated and to identify areas where NEA local and state affiliates might best leverage their expertise to improve clinical preparation.

The site visits took place between May and September 2012. The full Task Force reconvened in October 2012 to share information on key practices and findings, and to develop initial recommendations for defining and supporting teacher residencies. Listed below are the

essential tenets the Task Force recommended to assist teacher preparation programs with transitioning to substitutive and meaningful residency programs—

### *Teachers and Teaching*

- All teachers should be “profession-ready” from their first day of being responsible for a classroom.
- Teacher candidates should be required to demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and dispositions needed for effective classroom practice.
- Every teacher candidate, regardless of background and education preparation, should participate in a residency program before being hired as teacher-of-record. Because candidates work closely with accomplished teachers to integrate theory and practice, a residency program provides a substantive, meaningful experience in an undergraduate, graduate, or certification-only preparation program.

### *Guiding Principles for Teacher Residencies*

- Teacher residencies should be developed with the goal of not only preparing future teachers but also of serving as a mechanism to drive school renewal and improve student learning.
- Residency programs should be developed by local partnerships that bring together teacher preparation providers, school districts, and other stakeholders.
- Residency partners should decide together what learning experiences—how much time, the kinds of resources, and the quality of clinical experiences—their teacher candidates will need to become profession-ready.
- Residency partners should work together to ensure that the following signature components are in place—
  - A selection, training, and feedback plan for clinical educators—those school-based and provider-based faculty that will be training teacher candidates;
  - A preparation curriculum that coherently integrates all field experiences with coursework;

- Clinical experiences that provide ongoing opportunities for teacher candidates to plan and deliver lessons and then analyze and reflect on their own teaching practice with clinical educators and peers;
  - Frequent assessment and feedback so candidates improve their skills;
  - Coherent systems designed to support improved student learning; and
  - A requirement that residency candidates demonstrate their teaching knowledge and skill by successfully completing a classroom-based performance assessment before they are deemed profession-ready.
- Residency partnerships must develop data systems that support continuous improvement and accountability for both candidates and programs, and that also allow school districts and preparation faculty to exchange information.

## How might a teacher residency be structured?

The Task Force’s teacher residency tenets allow space for preparation programs to maintain their signature components regardless of pathway type and certificate/degree awarded to successful completers (*i.e.*, undergraduate/bachelor’s or post-baccalaureate).

*Undergraduate/bachelor’s-level residency.* In an undergraduate or bachelor’s-level residency program, teacher candidates would not only learn their subject matter but also how to teach their subject. Candidates would have multiple school- and community-based experiences throughout their program, experiences that integrate and build upon the content and pedagogy coursework required for their degree.

*Post-baccalaureate-level residency.* A post-baccalaureate teacher residency program might include either a graduate or master’s-level program or a certification-only program. Upon entrance into the residency, candidates would need to demonstrate a mastery of the subject matter they want to teach. These candidates would spend most of their residency learning about content pedagogy and participating in clinical experiences. Urban Teacher Residency programs, such as the Denver Teacher Residency (see sidebar, page 12), are one example of a post-baccalaureate residency program.

Regardless of the residency pathway, all programs must demonstrate that completers are profession-ready teachers. Candidates must demonstrate both subject matter and pedagogical expertise through required certification assessments and a classroom-based performance assessment. Teacher residency programs must include these candidate

requirements as well as program-level expectations of active partnerships between preparation programs, districts, and stakeholders; program selectivity of candidates; and the development and implementation of clinical experiences to provide a foundation upon which to train candidates.

## What does “profession-ready” mean?

In order to ensure that teacher candidates are profession-ready, the teacher residency must ensure that candidates have mastered both subject and pedagogy knowledge for their area of expertise and demonstrate their knowledge and skills through the successful completion of a pre-service performance assessment.

*Mastery of subject knowledge.* All teacher candidates must be able to demonstrate that they have the subject content knowledge necessary to teach the subject for which they will serve as teacher-of-record and be certified. Ultimately, this should be done through an assessment of content knowledge. Most states currently measure such knowledge through state-specific content assessments or the Praxis II. Counting the number of courses and/or credits candidates have had in a particular subject area does not ensure that they have a mastery of subject knowledge.

*Mastery of pedagogical content knowledge.* All teacher candidates must also be able to demonstrate their pedagogical content knowledge in the subject area in which they will be certified. Possessing knowledge of a subject area means both breaking that knowledge down into the smaller segments and units needed to instruct/guide students in understanding the subject area as well as being able to predict common mistakes that students may make in learning the subject. In addition, pedagogical content knowledge includes teachers’ ability to manage their classrooms in ways that promote student learning in the subject. Candidates must learn these skills through school-based experiences and coordinated, coherent coursework that allows for the integration of theory and practice.

*Classroom-based performance assessment.* Pre-service, classroom-based performance assessments provide opportunities for candidates to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their preparation program’s coursework and clinical experiences. This includes a demonstration of their ability to activate their knowledge of the subject area and develop, implement, and reflect on their teaching and their students’ learning. P–12 students need teaching professionals who know their content and can translate it into practices that promote student learning and success. Classroom-based performance assessments provide the profession with a uniform assessment mechanism that allows candidates, regardless of preparation pathway, to demonstrate that they are indeed profession-ready before assuming full responsibility for the teaching and learning of their students.

## Examples of Pre-service Performance Assessments

### *edTPA*

edTPA (formerly known as the Teacher Performance Assessment) is a classroom-based, pre-service performance assessment process that was piloted in 26 states by numerous institutions across the country and became fully operational in September 2013. The edTPA process is built around three to five continuous days of subject-specific classroom instruction delivered by a candidate, typically at the end of the student teaching or internship experience. By focusing on the act of teaching, edTPA complements existing entry-level assessments that focus on basic skills or subject-matter knowledge. Several states have policies that will require all teacher candidates to complete or pass edTPA as a condition for licensure or program completion. In other states, colleges and universities are voluntarily opting to use edTPA to review and adjust their preparation programs.

### *Oregon Teacher Work Sample*

As part of the documentation in their attainment of required competencies and effectiveness in fostering student learning, pre-service teachers in Oregon are required to submit two samples of their work from their student teaching experience.

Each work sample includes a unit of instruction, evidence about pupil learning within the unit, and use of pupil data for future instructional and reporting plans. A work sample displays, among other things, objectives, instructional and assessment procedures, pupil performance data, and interpretation of the success of a unit of instruction (Oregon Association of Colleges for Teacher Education 2013).

### *Praxis Performance Assessment for Teaching (PPAT)*

Development of the Performance Assessment for Teaching—an exit-level, pre-service assessment for teacher candidates—began in early 2013. This assessment is aligned to the InTASC Model Core Standards and the Common Core State Standards. This task-based, job-embedded assessment uses evidence-centered artifacts and videos to show growth over time. The series of tasks is completed during the clinical experience and has content-specific material embedded into the evidence submitted by the candidate. ETS will conduct a large-scale online field test with teacher candidates in Spring 2014. The PPAT is scheduled to launch in Fall 2014.

## What are characteristics/components of a teacher residency?

While a teacher residency program may occur as a baccalaureate or post-baccalaureate training program, it must include the following elements—

- Active partnerships between preparation programs, districts, and stakeholders;
- Program selectivity of candidates; and
- Academic coursework coordinated with the development and implementation of clinical experiences.

While some parameters of the residency designed to prepare the profession-ready educator may be shaped to fit local needs, these three core components are the building blocks for a teacher residency program.

*Active partnerships between preparation programs, districts, and stakeholders.* Authentic and active partnerships focused on the preparation of teacher candidates must be at the foundation of every residency. Teacher preparation program providers, districts, and practicing teachers must be co-inventors, coming together to identify and develop rich and relevant school-based learning experiences for teacher candidates.

Too often, relationships between teacher preparation programs and districts have been narrowly focused on obtaining permission for the provider to place teacher candidates in the district's schools. This has often meant simply that faculty members reached out to friends or acquaintances in the district to find placements for teacher candidates (National Council on Teacher Quality 2011) without regard to quality. However, with increasingly demanding school and teacher accountability measures now in place across the country, some preparation programs are finding it harder to find placements for their teacher candidates. The need for partnerships has never been greater because research and experience indicate that, when teacher preparation providers and districts work together in truly mutually beneficial ways, candidates have a more coherent preparation experience (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005) and pre-K–12 student achievement rises (Clift and Brady 2005).

The NEA believes that all teacher preparation programs should be engaged in authentic partnerships with teachers and districts where the partners co-construct and co-own all aspects of the profession-ready educator experience, including staffing, funding, accountability, and program improvement. In addition, partnerships should consider the following questions—

- What impact and contribution might partners make in improving student achievement and individual schools?
- How might partners be involved in professional learning at a school for practicing teachers?
- How might teacher candidates assist in meeting a school’s identified school improvement goals?

The NEA believes that the power of active partnerships can better prepare teachers for their professional work while also helping schools improve.

*Program selectivity of candidates.* Partners in a residency program must come to agreement on the criteria that will be used to screen candidates who apply for program admission. While grade point averages, essays, and test scores might be a part of the selection criteria, personal qualities and dispositions (*i.e.*, perseverance and leadership) should also be included for screening selection. Partners must ultimately decide what additional qualities will enable candidates to be profession-ready in their context at the end of the preparation program. Partners must thoughtfully consider the relationship between the candidate selection criteria (*i.e.*, who is accepted), the length of the program, and how it is structured.

Historically, teacher preparation programs have been accused of not being selective enough, and it has been suggested that students accepted into teacher preparation programs have weaker academic credentials (Conant 1963, Hess *et al.* 2004). Some research has found that teachers’ high verbal ability has a positive impact on student learning (Ferguson and Ladd 1996, Murnane *et al.* 1991) and other evidence suggests that non-academic variables can impact teachers’ effectiveness (Harding 2012). Both academic qualities *and* non-academic variables are important for candidates to achieve the high standard of “profession-ready.”

### **Twin Cities Teacher Collaborative**

The Twin Cities Teacher Collaborative (TC2) in Minnesota is an urban teacher residency that recruits, selects, and prepares teachers for science and mathematics positions in Minneapolis Public Schools and St. Paul Public Schools. TC2’s first cohort in 2013 completed a clinically based teacher preparation program that integrates clinical experience and master’s coursework. TC2 is designed to act as an incubator of teacher preparation reform for the six private colleges engaging in the collaborative—Augsburg College, Bethel University, Concordia University, Hamline University, St. Catherine University, and University of St. Thomas—as well as Minneapolis and St. Paul Public Schools. These six private colleges normally compete for teacher preparation candidates and for placements within these two urban public school systems, but through private foundation funding they are working together.

### Denver Teacher Residency

The Denver Teacher Residency (DTR) is a post-baccalaureate urban teacher residency program housed within Denver Public Schools (DPS). DTR combines a year-long intensive classroom-based practicum with a customized master's degree curriculum at the University of Denver. DTR teacher residents are specifically selected and trained to work in DPS, either as elementary teachers with an English Language Learner or special education specialization or as secondary mathematics teachers. To gain entry into DTR, candidates must not only submit an online application with recommendations but also participate in a demonstration day, which includes additional screening activities: interview, teaching demonstration, written reflection, data analysis, group discussion, and a language or content screen. DTR and DPS believe this in-depth selection process ensures that admitted candidates will be able to successfully complete the one-year program and move on to become highly effective teachers in district classrooms.

*Academic coursework coordinated with the development and implementation of clinical experiences.* Project management theory recognizes that, in managing a new project, three variables—cost, schedule, and scope—must be balanced in order to maintain the quality of the project (Newell and Grashima 2003). Changing the level of investment in one requires adjusting the others, or else the quality of the project is compromised. Residency program partners must balance three fundamental factors as they develop and implement the clinical experiences that are to serve at the core of residency teacher preparation and ensure that candidates complete their preparation profession-ready: resources, time, and scope and quality of clinical experiences.

Factor 1: Resources. All stakeholders are expected to contribute both human and financial resources to candidate preparation. This recommendation might be challenging for some teacher preparation programs, especially at colleges and universities with internal revenue structures that make it difficult to revise or expand programming. If resources are limited, finding additional funds to expand or develop more robust clinical experiences might be difficult. Candidate tuition, increased state funding to higher

education institutions, or restructuring the current allocation of monies are possible ways to finance both candidate experiences and faculty remuneration. Partners should consider the use of teacher professional development monies, federal Title II funds, and other regularly issued district monies for teacher recruitment and retention. Also, the fusing of some funds across districts and providers might result in unexpected funding solutions.

From the district perspective, providing additional resources during difficult financial times—especially for an area that may not be traditionally funded such as teacher preparation—may be challenging. It's clear, however, that investing in teacher residencies is a long-term, cost-saving measure. As the NCATE Blue Ribbon Panel stated, "Estimates of savings to school districts of reducing teacher turnover and staff development costs suggest the overall cost effectiveness of this initial investment" (National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education 2010). The bottom line in balancing resources is that all partners must be invested in the teacher residency's resource base in order to reap the benefits of profession-ready teachers and early-career support.

Factor 2: Time. Current research does not tell us how much time it takes to prepare a profession-ready teacher, in part because it is so difficult to isolate the important variables we want to measure. Education reformers have recommended various lengths of time—ranging from six weeks to one year or more. And, unfortunately, the wide variance among state policies cannot provide appropriate guidance on the length of time needed to yield a profession-ready teacher.

In surveys, teachers say their pre-service, school-based experiences were helpful in preparing them for the realities of the classroom (Levine 2006), but it's not clear what specific experiences are most beneficial to their future students' learning (National Research Council 2010). Grossman (2010) sums up the dilemma perfectly: "The research suggests that the value of clinical experience depends at least as much on the *quality* of the experience as the *quantity*." Given that there is no evidence-based answer for the ideal length of clinical experiences, the time candidates spend in these experiences must be balanced with the need for candidates to learn how to be most effective. The less time a program requires for clinical experiences, the more rigorous, quality-rich, and resource-intensive these experiences must be.

The NEA believes that candidate participation in a one-year residency, with high-quality experiences throughout, will more likely ensure that candidates will be able to demonstrate that they are profession-ready. We recognize that some candidates may be able to demonstrate these capabilities earlier and some candidates may require more time. The residency partnership stakeholders must decide how to balance such considerations within their program design.

Factor 3: Scope and quality of clinical experiences. High-quality clinical experiences are at the core of teacher residency training. Not only is the structure and type of experiences important to candidate learning, but the nature of candidates' interactions with content, pedagogy, and accomplished teachers also impacts their ability to meet profession-ready standards. The following signature components must be incorporated into a teacher residency program:

### Montclair State University

Montclair State University in New Jersey has a long history of both preparing teachers and working with districts and stakeholders to improve their programs. It established the Montclair State University Network for Educational Renewal during the early 1990s Professional Development School (PDS) movement, and the network is still working to improve Montclair's teacher education programs and benefit practicing teachers and partner districts. Every district that joins the network pays dues, makes a commitment to its mission and goals, and promises to give Montclair teacher candidates priority in placements. Teachers working in member districts are given the chance to be trained as clinical faculty to work with teacher candidates. Teachers also participate in a wide variety of professional development and technology workshops, conferences, teacher study groups, and action research teams, and they are eligible to receive small grants to work on specific short-term projects. School-based clinical faculty members serve on committees and task forces at the university that focus on the renewal and development of teacher preparation.

### **Eastern Mennonite University**

In Eastern Mennonite University's (EMU) four-year undergraduate teacher preparation program, first-year students who think they want to major in education spend time in structured activities at local schools, beginning with their very first semester at EMU. The University says that, of students who participate in a school-based experience during their first semester, some 30% opt out of the teacher education major by the end of the semester. At the end of each clinical experience, candidates are evaluated by their P–12 practicum teacher. Competency on practicum assessments informs candidates' admission to student teaching. In the last year of college, those who will be student teaching full time at any point during the school year spend the first two weeks prior to the beginning of that school year in their student teaching placements so they can experience the beginning of the school year.

### **West Virginia University**

West Virginia University (WVU) offers a five-year Professional Development School based teacher preparation program. In the third year of study, candidates are assigned to a specific school and work as tutors for two hours a week. In the program's fourth year they observe, tutor, and complete coursework—at the same school—for seven hours a week the first semester and 12 hours a week the second. In their fifth year, candidates spend the first semester as full-time student teachers; in their final semester they work under contract with the school and university. These contract hours allow candidates to serve as substitute teachers, visit other schools, and get more experience in whatever areas they choose—in different kinds of classrooms and at different grade levels.

- a) *A selection, training, and feedback plan for clinical educators.* Over the years, teacher preparation program faculty and staff have come up with different ways to find placements for teacher candidates: establishing relationships with specific schools, obtaining recommendations from district offices, relying on personal relationships with currently practicing teachers, and, sometimes, simply pleading with district personnel. No matter how placements are made, cooperating and directing teachers are rarely consulted about program design or implementation, and typically are excluded from the final decision-making process about teacher candidates' readiness.

The NEA believes that cooperating and directing teachers must play a key role in developing future teachers, and that those who want to serve in this clinical role should undergo a rigorous selection process, be prepared to work with an emerging teacher through professional development opportunities, and receive feedback on their work. Through the residency partnership, stakeholders must reach agreement on qualifications for cooperating teachers, develop a training protocol, and establish an ongoing process for renewal (and dismissal) of such teachers in agreement with school administrators.

- b) *A curriculum that coherently integrates all field experiences with coursework.* Residency program partners should collaboratively develop the various school-based experiences needed to prepare profession-ready teachers. Whether teacher candidates might benefit from having activities and experiences based in a single school or across several schools would be determined as partners assess the capacity of surrounding school districts. The National Research Council (2000) suggests that learning is amplified when key ideas are

reinforced across different kinds of experiences. Creating consistency and coherency should be a central objective of any residency. Research suggests that coherence between academic coursework and school-based experiences provides candidates with opportunities to make connections, and has “a greater impact on the initial conceptions and practices of prospective teachers than [programs] that remain a collection of relatively disconnected courses” (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005).

- c) *Ongoing opportunities for teacher candidates to teach, analyze, and reflect on their teaching and student learning with clinical educators and peers as well as independently, and for them to observe accomplished teaching and practices in different classroom settings.* Learning the habits of mind and practice for effective teaching must be at the heart of a residency’s clinical experiences. There is no single approach that will work for all; it’s up to the partners in each program to determine how best to help candidates integrate practice with theory. At a minimum, pedagogical approaches must include standards-based approaches proven to be effective in improving student learning in the subject area (Ball *et al.* 2008).

All residency experiences should be grounded in the appropriate professional standards (*i.e.*, the National Board for Professional Teacher Standards’ Five Core Propositions, the Specialized Professional Association standards, and InTASC’s Model Core Teaching Standards). Professional standards describe a vision for accomplished teaching and serve as a foundation for candidates’ experiences.

- d) *Regular assessments that use data to inform and improve teaching performance.* Candidates must participate in comprehensive evaluation processes that evaluate their teaching proficiency over time and ensure that they are making steady progress toward teaching standards (*e.g.*, InTASC, National Board for Professional Teacher

### **Mid-Valley Consortium for Teacher Education**

The Mid-Valley Consortium for Teacher Education began in the late 1980s as a coordinated way to recruit and train clinical faculty to work with teacher candidates. Today, the Consortium includes four institutions of higher education—Bridgewater College, Eastern Mennonite University, James Madison University, and Mary Baldwin College—and seven local school divisions, all located in Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley. The Consortium’s goal is to develop a cadre of clinical faculty who are exemplary role models for effective teaching and strong mentors for their student teachers. It aims to develop and nurture leadership abilities in clinical faculty and improve the quality of field experiences for candidates. Consortium leaders point to several factors in their success. First, the teacher preparation programs coordinate field placements across the six districts so the local school districts have a single point of contact. Second, the programs all use the same observation and assessment instrument. Third, districts and teacher preparation institutions make a financial investment each year, which also means they recommit to the process every year. To date, the Consortium has trained over 1,000 clinical faculty members; about 700 are currently active.

### **St. Cloud State University**

At Minnesota's St. Cloud State University, teacher candidates and cooperating teachers work together as co-teachers during their student teaching experience. Teacher candidates say they appreciate the chance to plan, teach, and share reflections with their experienced colleagues. Cooperating teachers embrace this approach too and say they like staying connected to students rather than simply turning their classrooms over to teacher candidates for extended periods of time.

### **Candidate Assessment at Denver Teacher Residency**

Denver Teacher Residency (DTR) has built a candidate assessment system around the Denver Public School teacher evaluation framework—LEAP. Candidates are given monthly performance goals based on the specific LEAP indicators that DTR believes residents should be able to demonstrate. Three times during the program year, teacher residents participate in a formal 360-degree review of their ability to meet LEAP indicators, with the resident, lead teacher, site coordinator, and field manager all sharing feedback. In addition, residents must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their University of Denver graduate coursework. This multi-pronged approach to assessment allows DTR to provide the appropriate support and guidance as residents move through the program and ensure that only residents who have demonstrated their ability to positively impact student learning and achievement go on to become teachers of record in Denver Public Schools.

Standards Core Propositions). These accountability/assessment systems should include pedagogies such as ongoing performance assessments, case analysis, and analyses of teaching through video or microteaching (Darling-Hammond and Bransford 2005).

Creating a residency and incorporating the signature residency components into teacher preparation programs requires sifting and shifting what has historically occurred in many preparation programs across the country. Although some current programs and providers may already be working on pieces of these program-level considerations—active partnerships, program selectivity, robust clinical experiences, and integrated coursework and practice—few programs across the country appear to be effectively addressing all of these pieces in active cooperation with other teacher preparation stakeholders.

## Recommendations

Ensuring high-quality instruction in our nation’s classrooms requires the development of comprehensive preparation systems that yield profession-ready teachers, regardless of background and experiences. Teacher residency programs promote a more comprehensive preparation system through the active engagement of a variety of stakeholders—preparation programs, program approvers, classroom teachers, administrators, school districts, and other state education agencies. Engagement of these stakeholders promotes coordinated efforts to prepare profession-ready teachers and improve schools. Residency partnerships shift preparation from being the sole responsibility of the preparation program to the collective responsibility of programs, practicing teachers, schools, districts, and states. The recommendations provided below suggest some steps these various stakeholders can take in order to be an active part in preparing profession-ready teachers during a residency program.

### *Preparation Program Role*

- Work with associations, school districts, and recent graduates to identify current program strengths and needs with the goal of ensuring that current programs support the development of profession-ready teachers and meet the needs of the local school district partner(s). If current program structures do not support this work, then have the political will within the program to work with other partners to make appropriate changes to programs.
- Provide faculty with the appropriate promotion and tenure award structures as well as release time to work with public school partners to review and revise existing program requirements to ensure the preparation of profession-ready teachers (e.g., program design, candidate selection, and clinical experiences).

### *School District Role*

- Collaborate with preparation programs, local associations, and teachers to build agreement and understanding around the core values, components, structures, and roles in preparing a profession-ready teacher in a residency.
- Collaborate with preparation programs to reallocate funding and provide needed resources (e.g., staffing, funding, and data) to support clinical experiences for teacher candidates participating in a residency.
- Review policies around student teaching assignments and mentor teacher selection and support.

### *State Role*

- Support preparation programs and their partnerships as they transition to residencies to ensure that they are preparing profession-ready teachers. Set deadlines for closing programs that do not meet standards within the allotted time.
- Review and revise program approval standards and certification requirements to reflect expectations for profession-ready teachers.
- Require all candidates to pass a classroom-based performance assessment before receiving an initial license to teach.

### *Federal Role*

- Identify teacher residencies as the national standard for high-quality teacher preparation and acknowledge that teacher preparation is the collective responsibility of all public school stakeholders.
- Continue to provide funding for innovative teacher preparation programs that are attempting to transition to residency programs (e.g., Teacher Quality Partnership grants).

### *NEA State and Local Affiliate Role*

- Reach out to districts and public school partners and identify opportunities for practicing teachers to be involved in training profession-ready educators and developing residency programs.
- Recruit, train, and support practicing teachers who have demonstrated effective teaching to serve as clinical educators.

## What are the NEA and its affiliates already doing?

As with any report, it is very easy to tell everyone else what they must do in order for things to happen and much more difficult to indicate how the recommender is going to move the ideas forward. Since the release of NEA's *Three-Point Plan* (National Education Association 2011), the NEA has been working to create the resources and conditions necessary to support local and state affiliates in the work of teacher preparation.

### *NEA's Center for Great Public Schools Grants*

In 2013, NEA's Center for Great Public Schools awarded over \$1 million in grants to local and state affiliates to pursue local projects around teacher quality and professional issues. Two residency grants were awarded as a part of this work.

- *Seattle Education Association (SEA)*. The SEA received grant funds to support its work with the Seattle Urban Teacher Residency. Specifically, SEA has been working in collaboration with the residency partnership to create a method to select, train, support, and compensate those practicing teacher mentors who will be working with residents during the 2013–2014 school year.
- *North Carolina Association of Educators (NCAE)/Appalachian State University (ASU)*. The NCAE received grant funds to partner with ASU's College of Education to develop six modules of online study intended for cooperating teachers who will be hosting student teachers. The grant supports the development of these modules as well as the compensation of facilitators for this experience. The NEA and NCAE intend for this partnership with ASU to be a pilot experience toward adapting these modules to be used in other places in subsequent years.

### *NEA Great Public Schools Fund*

During the 2013 NEA Representative Assembly, delegates approved a special grant opportunity for state and local affiliates to engage and support ongoing teacher quality and professional issues. Over \$6 million will be distributed in the 2013–2014 school year to support professional issues, and a portion of these funds will likely be used to support teacher residencies and promote profession-ready teacher requirements.

## Conclusion

The NEA recognizes that as an organization we have little leverage to make legislative changes or even to require change among teacher preparation programs. However, the NEA is an organization of over 3 million education professionals fighting for the rights of teachers and students. Students have a fundamental right to be taught by profession-ready teachers, and teachers have a fundamental right to be ready for the realities of teaching. The modal number of years teachers stay in teaching is now one (Ingersoll and Merrill 2010). This teacher turnover causes a number of problems including a loss of institutional knowledge, a loss of potential school capacity building, and the inability of students to learn from teachers who consistently worked together to meet the students' many needs across grade levels. Teachers often cite their unpreparedness for teaching as a significant reason for leaving the profession (Sterling 2004). The NEA believes that these startling statistics are a call to action for our members to be an integral part of building our future teaching profession and making sure that those individuals who enter classrooms are indeed profession-ready from day one.

The signature components of a teacher residency are flexible enough that candidates may prove they are profession-ready at any level of preparation—bachelor's, master's, or a certification-only program. While some preparation programs may already be integrating some of these components into their various programs, the NEA would argue that few programs across the country include all of these residency components because too many districts, schools, and teachers still express concern over the disconnect between teacher preparation and classroom reality.

Practicing teachers must be actively engaged in the establishment of teacher residencies to ensure that existing systems and school norms are appropriately modified to support this work. The skills and expertise of practicing teachers—skills that have been primarily reserved for the capstone, student-teaching phase of preparation—must be redistributed across the preparation system to ensure development of appropriate and aligned program criteria, development and passage of local, state, and federal policies to support this work, and appropriate fusing of resources across P-16 funding coffers. It is the professional responsibility of practicing teachers and the NEA to be actively engaged in the preparation of candidates who will eventually become their future colleagues.

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