

THE POWER OF PARTNERSHIP IN TEACHER PREPARATION

Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California

BRIEF #1 | APRIL 2018



This brief seeks to describe and inform effective collaboration between California State University (CSU) campuses and K-12 school districts with shared interest in preparing teachers for success in the 21st-century classroom.

It cites important characteristics of partnerships gleaned through the experience of CSU campuses and local districts, and illustrates these characteristics in application via the Kern Urban Teacher Residency—one of several innovative collaborations taking place across the state.

This document invites all CSU campuses and school districts to reflect on the strengths and opportunities inherent in their partnerships. It also encourages all to share perspectives and examples that can enrich mutual efforts to prepare teachers to lead instruction that meets the needs of students, schools, and communities today.

This brief was developed through the Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California Initiative (NGEI). Please see the appendix to learn more about this Initiative.

PARTNERSHIP FUNDAMENTALS

What components are vital to vibrant partnerships between CSU education programs and school districts?

The answer to this question is rooted in local contexts. Each partnership is shaped by its region's demographics, geography, and economy. Partnerships are informed by advances in understanding of human development and improvement science, and enabled by new technologies. Today, the approaches of institutions across the state and the research of experts in the field point to several characteristics of productive partnerships.

Shared vision and complementary goals

Partners work toward the same result, striving for mutual success while advancing their respective institutional aims.

Defined focus for collaboration

Partners act from a clearly expressed intent that guides all investments and activities.

Commitment of human and financial resources

Partners believe that the outcomes and approaches identified merit sustained investment of time as well as dollars.

Accountability and clear responsibilities

Partners define the critical expectations for their shared efforts, articulate their respective roles, and fulfill their agreements.

Active involvement of institutional leaders

Partners are represented by officials with the authority to set direction for their organizations—and the passion to be visible advocates for the work.

Alignment of instructors and administrators

Partners engage and equip participants in their respective institutions to effectively implement strategies and activities.

Structure that enables success

Partners establish a mechanism for collaborative decision-making, coordinated action, and ongoing communication that fits their collective effort.

Means to learn and improve

Partners create a data-sharing agreement and collect, analyze, and apply data on an ongoing basis to steadily advance the quality of their efforts.



KERN URBAN TEACHER RESIDENCY

CSU Bakersfield and Bakersfield City School District are building a pipeline of prepared teachers

This is a collaboration attuned to local context.

Bakersfield City School District (BCSD) is a Pre-Kindergarten to 8th-grade public school district. It contains 43 schools serving 30,000 students, 89 percent of whom qualify for free or reduced lunch.

CSU Bakersfield (CSUB) primarily serves students from the Central Valley, a majority of whom are Hispanic or Latino—this demographic group comprises 58 percent of the student population today. The CSU Bakersfield Department of Teacher Education includes approximately 300 candidates pursuing multiple- or single-subject credentials. Many of these candidates intend to work in the places where they grew up and are passionate about the teaching profession as a means to contribute to their home communities.

The university and district share a long and productive collaboration. However, as enrollment in Bakersfield City School District climbed and as a number of teachers retired or moved into district jobs outside of the classroom, the demand for well-prepared teachers grew beyond the level that could be readily supported by CSU Bakersfield. Many prospective teacher candidates were unable to dedicate the time, navigate the requirements, and cover the costs needed to obtain a Preliminary Credential in the year following graduation.

Historically, if you look at teacher preparation, it's very university driven and the responsibility is in the hands of the university faculty. And in this type of a residency model it's a shared vision and a joint responsibility.

Dr. Kristina LaGue
Department Chair, School of
Social Sciences and Education,
CSU Bakersfield

As a result, between 2014 and 2016, the number of teachers hired in the district with an Intern Credential, a Provisional Intern Permit, or a Short-Term Staffing Permit increased dramatically.

The Kern Urban Teacher Residency (KUTR), funded through the Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California Initiative and Bakersfield City School District, provides a vehicle for addressing the shortage of qualified teachers while deepening the relationship between the district and the CSU in a way that can benefit students and teachers in Bakersfield.

The Residency is designed to deliver a more intensive, cohesive, and engaging experience compared to the traditional clinical model in Bakersfield. For example, the traditional model involves 600 hours of clinical practice; the Kern Urban Teacher Residency program involves 1,380 hours.

RESIDENTS AND MENTORS

Residents are selected through a competitive application process. Each has a bachelor's degree and participates in a one-year program featuring instruction and credential completion through CSU Bakersfield synchronized to training and co-teaching with mentor teachers in Bakersfield classrooms. Residents commit to teaching in the district for three years if offered a contract following completion of the program.

I like this program because we both learn from each other. We also meet with the district and university people who come in to observe. We all sit down after an observation. We discuss what's been going well or what problems we have in the classroom. It's just a win-win situation for everybody.

Matthew Rotherham
Mentor Teacher

The Residency program began in the 2016-17 school year. The 12 residents who completed the program and received a Preliminary Credential were offered contracts and are working in the district now. A total of 17 residents are participating in the 2017-18 school year.

Resident teacher responsibilities and expectations for performance are defined in a handbook presented to all applicants. Residents receive a stipend of \$800 per month. They co-teach in the classroom four days a week, and have ability to supplement their income and gain additional experience via substitute teaching on the fifth day.

Residents are paired with a mentor teacher. In the current school year, most residents co-taught with a mentor teacher in one classroom fall semester, then moved to another grade, classroom, and mentor for the second semester.

Mentor teachers also apply through a competitive process. Their responsibilities and expectations for performance are defined in a handbook presented to all applicants. Each mentor commits to an added workload to instruct, coach, provide feedback, and co-teach with their resident teacher. Mentors receive a stipend of \$1,500 per semester as well as professional learning opportunities.

Mentors are jointly selected by program leaders for the district and university.

While these leaders recall making significant effort to recruit the first cohort of mentor teachers in 2016, the Residency program is well known and well regarded today and generates applicants for mentor positions across school sites.



Mentor teacher Matthew Rotherham and resident teacher Patricia Burk-Davis share responsibilities in their Kindergarten classroom at Fletcher Elementary School in Bakersfield.

PROGRAM ATTRIBUTES

This Residency features a set of attributes tailored to its local circumstances and intent.

Prioritized skills. All parties focus on helping residents develop a set of prioritized skills—these skills are identified collaboratively by Bakersfield City School District administrators and CSU Bakersfield education faculty. These prioritized skills include competency to instruct to the new California Common Core Math Standards and Next Generation Science Standards as well as English Language Arts. Prioritized skills also involve abilities to engage students in their learning and effectively manage classroom dynamics; for example, creating an environment of respect and rapport.

Monthly professional development. Residents and mentor teachers participate in professional development each month. The content of these sessions directly supports the development of prioritized skills, and is synchronized between the two groups. Residents meet together early on a Monday morning to review rubric-based data on an aspect of their current performance and then learn about and practice a prioritized skill area to be emphasized in their clinical placements and coursework in the coming month. Residents then transition to their assigned classrooms, where they lead instruction while their mentor teachers travel to participate in professional development. The mentor group reviews the data as well as the skills training that residents received earlier that morning. Mentors then participate in exercises to enhance their observation, feedback, and coaching of residents related to these skills.

Coherence in candidate preparation. The district and CSU combine approaches to provide residents with a cohesive experience that connects coursework and clinical preparation. Residents are ready to practice prioritized skills and know what to expect as they enter the classroom. This coherence is achieved in multiple ways. In credential program methods courses for math and science, residents are co-taught by a district instructional specialist and a CSU faculty member. Residents participate in a Saturday STEM lab, receiving intensive instruction co-led by a district instructional specialist and university faculty member over five weeks. For the next ten weeks, 80 fifth graders from Bakersfield City School District are bused to the campus on Saturday mornings and co-taught by residents in tandem with the district and university instructors. Other vital dimensions of coherence include the monthly professional development sessions described above, as well as the ongoing, calibrated feedback described on the following page.



From top: Resident teachers review performance data and learn new skills in monthly trainings with Holly Gonzales, Kern Urban Teacher Residency program coordinator and lecturer for CSU Bakersfield. Mentor teachers then participate in training with Brandon Ware, coordinator of curriculum and instruction for Bakersfield City School District, preparing them to coach residents in practicing new skills and strengthening their performance. Brandon and Holly are in continual contact as the program coordinators for their respective institutions.

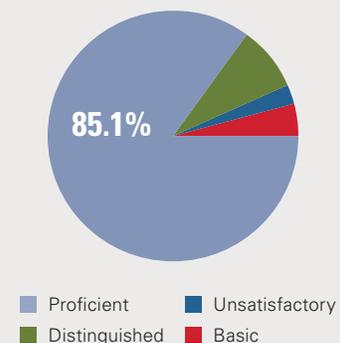
Continual, coordinated feedback. Residents receive feedback on an ongoing basis from their mentors. These co-teachers spend time together each morning before students arrive, and also meet for a “sacred hour” of coaching each week. In addition, residents receive feedback from their university supervisor, the district curriculum coordinator, and their school principal; these parties all conduct periodic observations of the resident instructing in the classroom. Observers use portable computers to input remarks and suggestions in real time for viewing by all people involved in a resident’s development. Feedback is coordinated among all parties and aligned to a rubric selected for this Residency—the Danielson Framework for Teaching.

Learning and improvement. The partners co-design and implement information-gathering processes. They collect, analyze, and use data continually to inform residents, mentors, and program leaders in the district and university of candidate progress toward prioritized skills, to identify program gaps and opportunities to enhance resident preparation, and to assess whether changes are having the desired effect on program quality. For example, it is typical for monthly resident and mentor professional development sessions to begin with a review of resident performance in a given skill area. This use of data is part of an ongoing improvement effort that helps the partners gain insights into critical dimensions of the Residency, including its strengths and areas requiring attention.

Using data to provide feedback and support resident performance.

The Kern Urban Teacher Residency includes collecting and applying data to support teacher preparation. This example describes residents’ performance in creating an atmosphere of respect and rapport in the classroom, one of the prioritized skills in Bakersfield.

CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF RESPECT AND RAPPORT



Structure and leadership. The district and university each dedicate a half-time position to the Residency program—the district curriculum coordinator and the university program coordinator staff these roles. These positions are well placed in their institutional structures, and supported by the district’s assistant superintendent of educational services and the university’s education department chair, respectively. These parties are in frequent contact, with the dedicated staff members in daily communication. Monthly meetings involving all of these leaders are held to assess progress, plan for effective implementation, and address challenges.

AT WORK IN BAKERSFIELD

The partnership between CSU Bakersfield and Bakersfield City School District contains key ingredients for success, as illustrated by the snapshot below.

Shared vision and complementary goals	<i>The partners have a joint intent to create a pipeline of quality teachers in Bakersfield, with coherence between the instruction candidates receive through CSU Bakersfield and the knowledge and experience they gain in the Bakersfield City School District.</i>
Defined focus for collaboration	<i>The partners designed a Residency program emphasizing specific skills prioritized as highly relevant in Bakersfield, featuring instructional abilities aligned with Common Core Mathematics Standards and Next Generation Science Standards as well as skills for classroom management and student engagement.</i>
Commitment of human and financial resources	<i>Each partner has allocated a .5 full-time equivalent position to manage the program. Residents and mentors receive stipends. Residents and mentors participate in monthly professional development. The district is developing a financial sustainability plan.</i>
Accountability and clear responsibilities	<i>The partners have created a Memorandum of Understanding to guide their collaboration and define their primary individual roles. Each partner understands and can articulate the responsibilities of the other. Partners operate and solve problems in ways that demonstrate commitment to mutual success.</i>
Active involvement of institutional leaders	<i>The partners each have an identified champion for the Residency program, in the district superintendent's office and the university education program, respectively. These parties are vocal and visible in their ongoing support and demonstrate commitment to the success of the program and its participants.</i>
Alignment of instructors and administrators	<i>The partners involve faculty and administrators throughout their institutions—for example, involving district instructional specialists and university faculty to co-teach residents, and engaging district school principals in understanding the program's benefits and requirements.</i>
Structure that enables success	<i>The partners have processes for collaborative decision-making, including joint mentor selection and integrated action such as monthly trainings for residents and mentors. Communication between the program coordinators is continuous.</i>
Means to learn and improve	<i>Partners have co-designed and are implementing data collection and program improvement processes continually; they participate in formative evaluation to fuel reflection and generate insights to strengthen program approaches.</i>

Visit the Kern Urban Teacher Residency website: www.kernurbanteacherresidency.org.

PREPARING A NEW GENERATION OF EDUCATORS FOR CALIFORNIA INITIATIVE

Quality instruction is more vital than ever in California. Today's teachers must be experts in helping all students succeed with Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards, conduits for social-emotional learning, and champions for equity and inclusion. It's a big job, and every teacher needs the abilities—and confidence—to enter the classroom ready to succeed.

Students, communities, and teachers all benefit when the best possible training takes place prior to a new educator's first days and years as a classroom leader. In addition, emerging research shows that better prepared teachers are more likely to stay in their careers—bringing years of experience to the classroom and helping schools avoid the high cost of recruiting and onboarding new faculty.

The Preparing a New Generation of Educators for California Initiative is a dynamic collaboration between California State University campuses and a diverse set of school districts to transform teacher preparation. Together, these parties are redefining the way teaching candidates become teachers by piloting a timely, replicable approach featuring five key elements:

- 1 Forming deep partnerships between campuses and districts** that begin with a shared vision of effective K-12 instruction and take shape through a cohesive learning experience for candidates that spans pre-service through induction
- 2 Collaboratively defining prioritized skills**—the abilities that are most vital to teacher preparation based on the needs of local students and instruction aligned with Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards
- 3 Preparing through practice in school sites**—candidates have high-quality opportunities to enact prioritized skills via hands-on instruction in the classroom supported by thoroughly prepared teacher mentors
- 4 Creating a culture of feedback for teacher candidates** that is data-driven, specific, and actionable; it features ongoing, coordinated inputs from CSU faculty, supervisors, and teacher mentors
- 5 Using data** to measure progress toward proficiency as well as gaps in prioritized skills; providing timely information to drive continuous improvement for both candidates and institutions delivering educator preparation programs

CSU prepares more of the state's teachers, preschool through grade 12, than all other institutions combined. As Initiative practices are adopted and adapted across more campuses, implemented in partnership with local districts, and infused with the University's signature teacher preparation pedagogies, the positive impact on California students, communities, and teachers will grow.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

The Initiative began in 2014 with several CSU campuses and a K-12 partner whose experiences and contributions formed the foundation for this approach. Today, partnerships are underway in 11 regions of the state.

- CSU Bakersfield with Bakersfield City School District
- CSU Channel Islands with University Preparation Charter School and Ocean View School District
- Chico State with Chico Unified School District
- CSU Dominguez Hills with LAUSD Local District South
- Fresno State with Fresno Unified School District, Sanger Unified School District, and Central Unified School District
- CSU Fullerton with Anaheim Union High School District, Orange Unified School District, and Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District
- CSU Long Beach with Long Beach Unified School District
- CSU Monterey Bay with Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- Sacramento State with Sacramento City Unified School District
- CSU Poly San Luis Obispo with Lucia Mar Unified School District
- Stanislaus State with Ceres Unified School District and Turlock Unified School District



For more information, visit calstate.edu/ngei.

INITIATIVE SUPPORT

This Initiative is led by California State University Office of the Chancellor with support from the [S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation](#). It features a learning community of teacher preparation and district participants as well as evaluation services and technical assistance. Initiative partners include [ConsultED Strategists](#), [National Center for Teacher Residencies](#), [SRI International](#), [TeachingWorks](#), and [WestEd](#).

