



# Building Strong Teacher Residency Programs

In support of sustaining a diverse, community-based teacher workforce

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Traditional teacher preparation pathways begin with a teacher preparation program based in an institution of higher education (IHE) and often include a student-teaching component at a local education agency (LEA). Historically, the IHE and LEA operate relatively independently of each other. The IHE offers a theoretical base for teaching while the LEA provides practical experience in the classroom to student teachers (usually a few months in duration) and induction support for new teachers.

Teacher residency programs, on the other hand, offer an alternative pathway rooted in partnerships between IHEs and LEAs. Inspired by the medical residency model, future teachers, called “residents,” simultaneously pursue coursework in an IHE and complete a yearlong residency with a mentor teacher in a school. Residencies involve greater coordination between IHEs and LEAs in order to strengthen the connection between the coursework and the clinical experience for residents and to meet the needs of both IHEs and LEAs. A strong and sustainable partnership between IHEs and LEAs is therefore at the core of teacher residency programs.

*Roughly 70% of teachers are prepared through traditional pathways nationally.<sup>1</sup>*

*Despite recent growth, teacher residencies prepare less than 10% of teachers.<sup>2</sup>*

But what makes a strong and sustainable partnership? In this paper, we explore the characteristics of teacher residency partnerships, examining several examples between one IHE, the Alder Graduate School of Education (Alder), and LEAs in California. We begin by providing an overview of residency programs in general and aspects of Alder’s model specifically. Then, drawing on a rich collection of data, we explore considerations of how partnerships may be effectively established, implemented, and sustained.

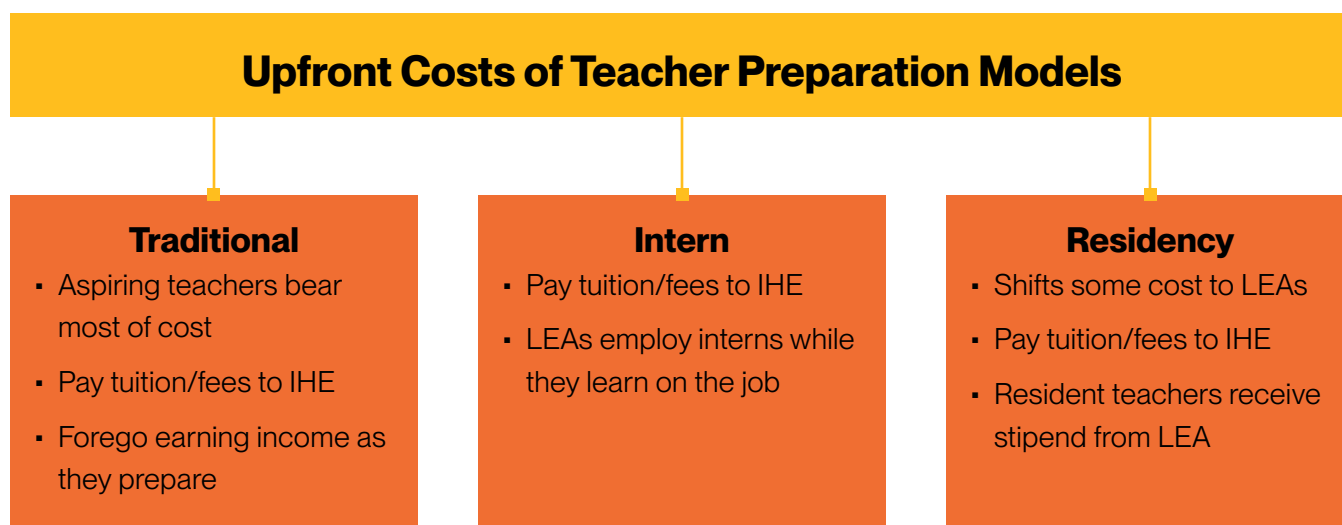
## What is a teacher residency program?

According to The Pathways Alliance, a national coalition of organizations supporting teacher preparation pathways, teacher residencies have several key aspects:<sup>3</sup>

- They are *anchored in partnership*. IHEs and LEAs collaboratively set the curriculum, leading to an integrated experience for residents as they learn both the theoretical foundations and practical skills needed to be a successful teacher.
- They are *affordable* and *high-quality*. This creates access for residents who cannot afford the costs of more traditional pathways and opens the profession to diverse candidates who are currently underrepresented in teaching fields.
- They address the *instructional and staffing needs of local schools and districts*. Residents are recruited specifically to fill areas of highest need, such as STEM fields and special education.
- Residents are *embedded in classrooms with mentor teachers over the course of a year*, longer than in traditional pathways. Residents gain a deep understanding of how to successfully run a classroom.

## How do the costs of a teacher residency compare with other models?

To understand how teacher residency programs differ from other teacher pathways, it is important to consider who bears the costs of teacher preparation, both in terms of upfront costs as well as potential long-term savings. In the three models for teacher pathways—traditional, intern, and residency—the two potential bearers of costs are LEAs and aspiring teachers.<sup>4</sup> The diagram below details key similarities and differences in the upfront costs of these three models.



## What motivates LEAs to invest in teacher residency programs?

Despite greater upfront costs, LEAs may decide to invest in teacher residency programs as better teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention may lead to long-term cost savings and improved outcomes for students.

- Residencies allow LEAs to recruit for specific credentials that are in the highest demand, creating a reliable hiring pathway of teachers to populate hard-to-fill positions.<sup>5</sup>
- Residencies recruit within local communities, leading to a pool of applicants who better reflect the diversity of students, understand the LEA culture, and are more likely to stay.<sup>6</sup>
- Because of the full-year placement, residencies may produce teachers who are better prepared to teach than those from traditional pathways, potentially leading to increased teacher retention and better student outcomes.<sup>7</sup>
- Residencies lead to two teachers in a classroom throughout the year, which may contribute to an improved learning experience for students.

Ultimately, the upfront costs of the residency model may be offset by savings, making the cost burden for LEAs similar to that of the traditional and intern models. In the long run, teacher residencies can lead to savings if residency program graduates are hired and retained for some time. These savings might include reduced recruitment and onboarding costs—and potentially lower professional development costs for new teachers given the depth of the preparation that residency programs afford.

Further, the residency model may contribute to higher-quality teaching. Residencies can provide meaningful leadership opportunities for mentors, which may in turn improve their practice and improve retention. Also, if the residency model leads to more effective first-year teachers, it could provide a greater benefit to LEAs.

## The Alder teacher residency program

Alder's mission is to create opportunity and cultivate success for every student by recruiting and educating excellent teachers and leaders who reflect schools' communities. Alder's teacher residency model aims to prepare excellent teachers who will remain in the profession by providing LEAs with deep preservice supports for teachers. Alder's teacher residency model prioritizes six design features:<sup>8</sup>

- Recruiting aspiring teachers from local communities to expand and diversify the teaching population.
- Providing preservice teachers with an immersive, yearlong clinical placement under an expert mentor teacher with frequent job-embedded feedback and support.
- Integrating a rigorous curriculum of theory and research-based coursework.
- Training teachers in the schools in which they will work.
- Providing priority hiring.
- Ensuring a living stipend for residents.

Importantly, Alder’s model incorporates a “residency director,” jointly employed by Alder and the LEA partner, who serves as a critical bridge between the two partnership organization. Alder shares funding with partner LEAs to support their employment of the residency director (see box).

Partnerships begin with LEAs determining hiring needs, and then working with Alder’s recruitment team to set goals. Residents then complete a yearlong residency in a school while also completing coursework. Upon program completion, residents agree to work in the partner districts. Alder helps with recruitment of residents who meet the staffing needs of LEA partners, prioritizing existing district staff, LEA alums, and residents from underrepresented groups.

Alder began its first teacher residency program in 2010 and today has 41 partnerships across the state of California. To date, Alder has worked with 65 LEA partners and has prepared almost 1500 teachers.<sup>9</sup> Other program successes include:

- 95% of graduates are hired as teachers.
- in 2023/24, 82% of residents were non-white.
- Alder alumni have an 87% one-year retention rate in partner LEAs, compared to 69% for other first-year teachers in those LEAs.
- 90% of hiring principals agree that Alder-trained teachers are more or much more effective than their peers in both their first and second years of teaching.

**The residency director is employed by and embedded in the district and therefore knows the district culture and community well and can advocate for the program.**

In addition to leading the recruitment of residents and mentor teachers, the residency director becomes an Alder instructor, running a weekly seminar for residents and a monthly seminar for mentors. Residents and mentors regularly report that they found these seminars to be valuable, as they provide time to share and problem solve with the residency director and peers. Residency directors may supplement Alder curriculum to adjust the content to align with district context.

## The 2020 Alder Teacher Quality Partnership grant

The partnership work highlighted in this paper is the result of a 2020 Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. The TQP grant program aims to improve student achievement; improve the quality of prospective teachers by improving preparation of prospective teachers; and recruiting highly qualified individuals, including those from underrepresented groups, into the teaching profession.<sup>10</sup>

Through the TQP grant, Alder and its partner LEAs formed three regional residency partnerships. Two of these partnerships engage smaller, more rural LEAs in a “root and branch” model (see box). The third partnership engages a network of schools within a large, urban LEA. Through these partnerships, Alder

aimed to expand the flow of well-prepared teachers into both urban and rural schools—settings that often struggle to recruit and retain high-quality teachers, particularly those in high-need credential areas.

## A study of the Alder model

The federal TQP grant program requires grantees to contract with an independent research organization to study the implementation and impact of TQP programs. For the 2020 TQP grant cycle, Alder contracted with SRI Education to meet this requirement. By examining the three partnerships Alder formed under the grant, the SRI study seeks to understand how to build strong and sustainable partnerships in support of teacher residency programs.<sup>11</sup> Four research questions guided SRI's inquiry:

- How are partnerships established?
- What preparation activities are critical for building strong residencies?
- What implementation activities contribute to a residency's success?
- What is important for a partnership to have long-term success?

To answer these questions, SRI conducted 42 interviews across a host of program participants and gathered programmatic data from a variety of sources. See the Appendix for details on data sources and methods. The following sections offer key takeaways and findings from the study of the Alder model.

### **Combining multiple LEAs using a “root and branch” model may increase access to teacher residency programs for smaller or more rural areas.**

For some LEAs, implementing a teacher residency program may not be feasible. For example, the Alder model needs approximately 20 residents in each cohort to make the economies of scale work, but some smaller LEAs do not need that many new teachers each year and could not recruit that many residents anyway. However, residencies hold promise for rural LEAs because they can provide a supply of teachers in hard-to-staff areas.

To solve this problem, smaller LEAs can be combined into a single residency program, with one LEA serving as the “root” and its neighboring LEAs serving as “branches.” The “root” LEA is the main LEA in terms of the relationship with Alder. This means the residency director is an employee of the root LEA, and the root LEA will typically host most of the residents. The “branch” LEAs can enroll a smaller number of residents into the program but still get the benefits of developing residents in their own districts without the administrative burden of being the root LEA.

The root and branch model also provides an opportunity for cross-district collaboration: mentors from different districts may share practices, and educators may be hired across districts.

## Establishing partnerships

**A vetting process for potential partners ensures Alder and an LEA are investing in a partnership that has the potential to be successful and sustainable.** For example, Alder starts by making sure potential LEA partners are aligned with its mission of serving students who are situated furthest from opportunity. Practically, this means an LEA partner should serve a student body in which at least half of students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. Additionally, an IHE and LEA should look for a good culture fit. For Alder, this means looking for LEAs that value culturally responsive pedagogies and are interested in diversifying their teacher workforce.

The financial feasibility of a partnership is another key consideration, as an LEA in financial distress may not be able to maintain its responsibilities as a partner for the long term. Alder relies on public records of LEA budget approvals and fiscal reporting to ascertain the fiscal health of an LEA before making an investment in a new partnership. Alder also talks with LEA finance representatives to help the LEA determine whether it can meet the financial obligations of the program. Once a partnership is deemed financially feasible for both parties, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) is created.

**Open lines of communication across “role-alike” relationships between the two partner organizations facilitates efficient collaboration.** Alder is flexible on where the residency program is seated within an LEA. However, it is important to build relationships across the LEA, including the human resources, fiscal services, and curriculum and instruction departments. Alder facilitates relationships through targeted communication to each department from an Alder staff member with expertise in that area.

For example, Alder’s senior director of partnerships leads coordination with an LEA’s human resources department, which is often where the residency program is seated. This role works closely with the human resources representative to discuss staffing needs, think through the logistics of the program, and facilitate communication about the program more broadly. At the same time, Alder’s chief financial officer engages the fiscal services department. In addition to establishing systems for paying stipends to residents and mentor teachers, Alder supports LEAs in applying for grants to fund those stipends. Also, Alder’s senior director of academic programs engages with the curriculum and instruction department. Initial outreach from Alder includes interviews and surveys of curriculum and instruction leaders in order to understand the LEA’s instructional vision and how to tailor Alder’s coursework to support that vision. Additionally, Alder connects with special education department leads to understand how special education services are delivered in the district.

Interviewees pointed to the importance of open lines of communication as critical to the success of the partnership.

**“Everything was very relationally driven. Feels like you’re part of this community ... and when I had questions, [I] didn’t feel like I was bothering anyone.”**

**— Residency director**

## Preparing for the residency

**Deep and authentic efforts at community engagement lay the groundwork for recruitment and generate buy-in more broadly.** Community engagement efforts start with Alder and LEA leadership, but they do not end there. Once an MOU is established, Alder works with LEA partners to engage the community more broadly and get the word out about the partnership. Alder engages in community-based research in order to understand the organizations in the area that could be source of Alder residents. Community engagement spreads the word that the LEA is so interested in having their teaching workforce reflect the community that they are creating a teacher residency program with Alder.

Alder also relies on district guidance to determine if and when it is appropriate to reach out to local teachers unions. When appropriate, union representatives are invited to participate in the resident selection process, and once the residency is up and running they may be invited to visit a seminar to discuss the benefits of collective bargaining with resident teachers. Teachers unions tend to support the residency program because it provides leadership opportunities for current teachers to serve as mentors while also generating potential new recruits.

Alder also continues to build buy-in within the LEA. In addition to further conversations with LEA leaders, Alder encourages residency directors to leverage their relationships with staff, especially principals, to generate excitement about the program. Establishing relationships early in the process makes recruitment efforts easier down the road.

**Resident recruitment should be a collaborative process that targets the specific credentialing needs of partner LEAs and members of the local community.** Residency directors lead recruitment efforts with support from Alder's recruitment team. Alder's role in recruitment is tailored to each LEA's context so that LEAs with fewer recruitment resources receive more support than those with more resources.

Each year, the recruitment process begins by developing a sense of the LEA's highest areas of need. Alder has conversations with human resources leads to determine what grade levels and subject areas will be most in demand in the coming year. Based on these conversations, residency directors and Alder's recruitment team collaborate on a plan to recruit for those grade levels and subject areas. One LEA's human resources lead explained, "They ask us every year: What do you need? What do you want us to recruit for? ... I don't have time to do all that, [so] I'm really grateful for the recruitment team."

Recruitment targets members of the local community. Residency directors leverage their networks within their LEAs, especially their connections with principals, to reach classified staff, substitute teachers, alumni, and families. Alder's recruitment team reaches out to local universities and local government and provides info sessions and marketing materials. This approach has several advantages. First, residents from the community have a better understanding of the students they will be serving and can support those students more effectively. Second, residents already rooted in the community are at a lower risk of turning over. Finally, it is easier to recruit locally than from distant states and sometimes even other countries.

**“What I really like a lot about the program is that it empowers some of the staff that are already part of the district. So they’re really looking at classified staff members that are looking to ... take that next step within their own life for their educational journey. ... I really like that piece ... because they know the community ... They know the students. They know the staff. ... The residency program is really empowering and lifting up those staff members that are already part of the community, and they just hit the ground running.”**

**— Principal**

Program data from the partnerships in this study reveal success in recruiting residents from the community. Over the past 3 years, 82% of residents self-identified with a historically underrepresented group (Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Indigenous, Asian, or Alaska Native/Pacific Islander), and 54% of residents were either current/former employees or former students of the LEA.

**Residency directors benefit from a full year of learning about the teacher residency program, building program support, and recruiting the first cohort of residents and mentor teachers.** Residency directors play a vital role in preparing for the first year of a residency program, so it is important that they have ample time to learn about the program and set the stage for implementation within their LEA.

As the residency director becomes more knowledgeable about the program, Alder shifts some responsibilities for communication with key community groups to the residency director. This gives the executive board, school board, fiscal services and teachers unions a familiar face within the LEA to go to when questions arise.

In addition to building awareness of the program, the residency director spends the year prior to the beginning of the program recruiting residents and mentors. The residency director and a member of Alder’s recruitment staff meet every two weeks during the recruitment period and Alder provides customized support. Alder also trains residency directors on how to evaluate candidates through the use of interview questions, tasks, and rubrics. Importantly, Alder staff is supporting rather than leading the interview process

**Robust financial supports broaden the pool of potential applicants.**

Financial aid and resident stipends provide powerful incentives for applicants who could not afford a traditional teacher preparation experience. Alder supports residents in seeking a variety of federal, state, and institutional financial aid, with nearly all residents receiving considerable support. For instance, in 2023-2024, 94% of Alder residents received a state scholarship grant, while 84% received a scholarship from Alder. Resident stipends are the largest expense of a teacher residency program for an LEA, but they are also critical. The difference between a nominal stipend and one that helps cover the cost of living is important. On average, residents in the partnerships we studied received a yearly stipend of \$23,750. A human resources lead explained, “A lot of people wouldn’t be able to become teachers, but because of that stipend it alleviates the burden for at least thirty to forty percent of our residents.” This may be especially true in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities or for candidates who are already earning a paycheck as a paraprofessional.



and the decision to select any given candidate is made jointly by both Alder and the LEA partner. Alder provides admissions criteria and a rigorous application review and scoring process while the district partner, represented by both the residency director and other instructional leaders serving as interview panelists, judge a candidate's potential fit within their local context.

The success of the program depends on the ability of the residency director to find high-quality resident and mentor candidates—with support from Alder's recruitment team in facilitating recruitment events— and having a full year to accomplish this task is key.

**“It’s super crucial to have that implementation time built in for directors to really onboard with Alder, and to really get a grasp of going through ... the interview process onboarding that first cohort. ... It’s a lot to wrap your head around ... so there’s a lot of trial and error on that ... [so] having that time to kind of plan those things out is super important.”**

— Residency director

## Implementing the residency

**A focus on cultivating and retaining strong mentor teachers contributes to the success and sustainability of a program.** Having strong mentor teachers who return year after year leads to better outcomes for residents, builds institutional knowledge of the program, and generates buy-in from a critical group. Although the Alder model ostensibly focuses on developing residents, mentor teacher support and development is a key part of the program. Across the last three years, roughly 95% of mentors in the partnerships we studied agree or strongly agree with statements regarding the positive impact of the program on student outcomes, mentor growth, and mentor retention.

The residency director leads mentor teacher development, which consists largely of a monthly seminar with a scope and sequence provided by Alder. During this seminar, mentor teachers learn what residents are covering in their coursework, develop their own coaching strategies, and connect with other mentors on problems of practice. Outside of the seminar, the residency director maintains an open line of communication with mentors and provides additional support as needed.

While stipends provide some incentive, they are only part of what attracts mentor teachers to the program. Some mentors find that the opportunity to develop as an instructional leader, learn from colleagues, and have a second person in their classroom is even more of an incentive than the stipend. Ensuring mentors have a positive experience is critical.

**“Our mentors love being a mentor, and I think within our context ... it has to be that way because they don’t have to do it ... I’m trying to get the cream of the crop in terms of teacher leaders, and mentors. ... They can do a lot of other jobs, and make the same amount of money, if not more. But yet they’re deciding to prioritize being a mentor.”**

— Residency director

Principals also see the value of developing mentor teachers' capacity as leaders and look to mentors to fill other leadership roles. For example, one principal explained that three of their four mentors are on the school site leadership team and one mentor has transitioned to become the site math coach. For the latter, the principal explains that being a mentor “really helped her ... to transfer those skills, to be able to work with multiple teachers and even more seasoned ... veteran teachers.”

**Maintaining a culture of collaboration and flexibility fortifies partnerships and allows the program to address local needs.** Residency directors have robust supports from Alder when it comes to running seminars and managing teachers, but the support is not prescriptive. For example, residency directors receive slide decks for resident and mentor teacher seminars, but they can revise and augment those slide decks as they see fit.

**“What I loved ... was I still had autonomy. It wasn't like implement this way, or else. And so in some ways having those tools, but yet still having creative freedom, helped me to customize [a] residency that I felt would be really effective in our schools, and I think that's at the heart ... within California there's so many different subcultures and sub-pockets ... [what] it means to be culturally relevant and community-based, all look different, based on your context, and so having the ability to customize it was super helpful. ... Had they come in [and said] do it this way, or else, I don't think it would have been effective in [our district].”**

**– Residency director**

Alder also allows some flexibility in how residents spend their time, with care not to sacrifice the rigor of the program. For example, one cohort of residents struggled to pass the required tests for certification, so the residency director adapted the curriculum to introduce the test requirements earlier in the year. This gave residents the opportunity to take the test a second time if needed. Ultimately, remaining nimble allows the program to adapt in a way that best supports the development of residents.

## **Ensuring long-term success**

**Soliciting feedback and continually messaging the success of and need for the program is a key component of sustainability.** Alder collects feedback from residents, mentors, residency directors, principals, and other stakeholders through a variety of methods. For instance surveys administered at the end of each seminar ask residents and mentors about how to improve the program. The feedback from these surveys provides residency directors with timely suggestions on how to customize the program to better meet the needs of participants. One residency director, for example, described changes such as providing food, having more “turn and talk” moments, and providing more work time within the seminars, based on feedback from the surveys.

Numerous participants note the importance of maintaining strong principal and district leaders support for ensuring long-term success. An annual principal survey asks principals to evaluate the effectiveness of Alder graduates who have just completed their first year as teachers of record. Alder presents feedback from these surveys to district leadership along with statistics about the program in an annual “impact report” (see box).

Messaging the success of the program is more than a one-off event. Residency directors provide monthly updates on program progress to superintendents. Additionally, residents are invited to school board meetings to share their experiences with the program. Implementation data suggests that Alder has plenty of success to celebrate. In the past three years, residents in all three partnerships were hired into their respective partner LEAs at a rate of 86% or higher.

**Conversations about financial sustainability lay the groundwork for creative LEA problem-solving.**

The partnerships described in this brief benefitted from federal and state grants that offset most of the costs of the program in the initial years. As grant funds sunset, LEAs must grapple with how to continue to fund the program, especially the resident stipend which represents the largest LEA

expense. As discussed earlier, offering a robust resident stipend is key for attracting resident candidates who are choosing between a paid position and the residency. Ultimately, LEAs may need to consider ways to reallocate funds, for instance by combining training opportunities, removing low-priority programming, or reducing the use of substitute teachers when existing staff could be tapped. LEAs may also seek additional funding from philanthropic or other sources, or look to reallocate Title funding.

While Alder does not have a simple solution to the funding problem, it supports LEAs by making clear how the residency model compares with other methods of hiring and onboarding teachers. In the long run, Alder argues, the return on investment of the residency pathway is better than other pathways. Although teacher residencies may seem more expensive at first because of the resident stipend, over a longer time frame the cost is comparable to that of an alternative pathway. For example, teachers working on an emergency credential are more likely to need additional support in their first years of teaching and more likely to leave the profession. As a result, the teaching position may need to be filled multiple times over a relatively short amount of time, increasing recruitment costs. So if the costs between the two pathways are comparable, the question is which pathway is the best investment.

**Annual impact reports, delivered by Alder staff to LEA leaders, make the case for continued investment in the program.**

At the end of each year, Alder puts together an impact report for each partnership. When possible, Alder’s chief executive officer delivers this report in person, signifying its importance. The report covers the trajectory of the partnership over the last year, including how many residents were recruited, credentialed, hired, and retained. Importantly, the report also illustrates the financial components of the program and makes the case that sustaining the program is a good return on investment. These reports not only provide evidence of program success, but also kick-start conversations around how to financially sustain the program once grant funds expire.

**“If residents are more diverse, more reflective of your student communities, better tied into the community, more effective in the classroom, promoting stability at the school because they’re sticking around longer ... We try to convince them that residencies have the best return on investment.”**

**— Alder staff member**

## Phases of Partnership Building

<p><b>Establishing partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A vetting process for potential partners ensures Alder and an LEA are investing in a partnership that has the potential to be successful and sustainable.</li> <li>▪ Open lines of communication across “role-alike” relationships between the two partner organizations facilitates efficient collaboration.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Preparing for the residency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Deep and authentic efforts at community engagement lay the groundwork for recruitment and generate buy-in more broadly.</li> <li>▪ Resident recruitment should be a collaborative process that targets the specific credentialing needs of partner LEAs and members of the local community.</li> <li>▪ Residency directors benefit from a full year of learning about the teacher residency program, building program support, and recruiting the first cohort of residents and mentor teachers.</li> <li>▪ Robust financial supports broaden the pool of potential applicants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Implementing the residency</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A focus on cultivating and retaining strong mentor teachers contributes to the success and sustainability of a program.</li> <li>▪ Maintaining a culture of collaboration and flexibility fortifies partnerships and allows the program to address local needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ensuring long-term success</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Soliciting feedback and continually messaging the success of and need for the program is a key component of sustainability.</li> <li>▪ Conversations about financial sustainability lay the groundwork for creative LEA problem-solving.</li> <li>▪ Annual impact reports, delivered by Alder staff to LEA leaders, make the case for continued investment in the program.</li> </ul>

## Conclusion

Teacher residencies represent a small but growing pathway to education. Their promise to increase the flow of effective educators into subject areas and communities that need them the most rests on developing a deep, sustained, and collaborative partnership between an IHE and LEA. As documented in this paper, the process of developing such a partnership starts well before a resident ever steps into a classroom, and hopefully continues long after the original funding source for the residency sunsets.

The teacher residency pathway is still relatively new compared with traditional teacher preparation pathways, and the field is still testing out innovative approaches to building strong partnerships. The approaches of the Alder model presented in this paper offer promise to the field, and other IHEs and LEAs that are considering teacher residency programs may wish to test them as well. Many of the unique aspects of the Alder model—including residency directors, root and branch structures, generous stipends, and impact reports—warrant further examination to better understand how these practices may affect alumni and student outcomes, as well as program sustainability and replicability more broadly.

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## Appendix: Data Sources and Methods

Findings from this study are derived from two data sources: interviews and programmatic data. From spring 2021 through spring 2024, SRI conducted 42 individual or group interviews with Alder Graduate School of Education leaders and staff, residency directors, local education agency leaders, principals, mentor teachers, and resident alumni. Participants were selected in collaboration with Alder based on their ability to provide insight into their respective partnerships. Interviews focused on perspectives of partnering with Alder, implementing the residency, Alder support, and early perceptions of the extent to which the residency programs are successful and sustainable.

The SRI research team analyzed interview data using both a deductive and inductive coding process. After completing interviews and focus groups, the team developed a database in Quickbase, chunked interview responses by question, and assigned responses to one of four key topics aligned with the research questions (establishing partnerships, preparing for the residency, implementing the residency, and ensuring long-term success). Team members then read responses associated with each of the key topics and did a second round of inductive coding to capture emerging themes. Each topic was coded by two members of the study team. Once the second round of coding was complete, each member of the team created a summary of key takeaways for each key topic. The team then met to discuss the takeaways and developed a common summary document based on the conversation.

To understand program implementation and compliment these qualitative data, SRI collaborated with Alder to develop a set of fidelity of implementation measures, which defines the key indicators for complete implementation of the model and the methods, data sources, and time frames for assessing the indicators. Data sources included administrative data (e.g., rates of resident graduation and placement) and key questions from programmatic surveys that Alder administers to residents and their mentor teachers.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). Number and percentage distribution of persons who were enrolled in and who completed a teacher preparation program, by program type and state or jurisdiction: Academic year 2019–20 (Table 209.05). *In Digest of Education Statistics*. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22\\_209.05.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d22/tables/dt22_209.05.asp).
- <sup>2</sup> According to the National Center for Education Statistics, 8.5% of teachers are prepared through alternative, IHE-based pathways that include residencies and internships. Another 21.9% are prepared through alternative, non-IHE-based pathways. These non-IHE-based pathways often attract people switching careers and vary considerably in structure across states. Although they produce a substantial portion of teachers, non-IHE-based pathways are not discussed in this paper due to their variability and resulting difficulty in generalizing across them.
- <sup>3</sup> Pathways Alliance Teacher Residency Workgroup. (2022). *Towards a national definition of teacher residencies*. The Pathways Alliance. <https://nctresidencies.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Pathways-Alliance-Towards-a-National-Definition-of-Teacher-Residencies.pdf>.
- <sup>4</sup> State and federal governments may also bear some costs, although this funding often comes in the form of grants to either the LEA or aspiring teacher.
- <sup>5</sup> Guha, R., Hyler, M. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *The teacher residency: An innovative model for preparing teachers*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-residency>; Kemper Patrick, S., Darling-Hammond, L., & Kini, T. (2023). *Educating teachers in California: What matters for teacher preparedness?* Learning Policy Institute. <https://doi.org/10.54300/956.678>; Papay, J. P., West, M. R., Fullerton, J. B., & Kane, T. J. (2012). Does an urban teacher residency increase student achievement? Early evidence from Boston. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 34(4), 413–434. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373712454328>.
- <sup>6</sup> Guha et al. (2016); Papay et al. (2012); Silva, T., McKie, A., & Gleason, P. (2015). *New findings on the retention of novice teachers from teaching residency programs* (NCEE 2015-4015). U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/pubs/20154015/pdf/20154015.pdf>.
- <sup>7</sup> Kemper Patrick et al. (2023); Papay et al. (2012); Sloan, K., Blazevski, J., & Rockman et al. (2015). *Hunter College Urban Teacher Residency: Measures of success*. New Visions for Public Schools. [https://www.newvisions.org/page/-/UTR\\_Year%205%20Final%20Evaluation\\_03.31.2015.pdf](https://www.newvisions.org/page/-/UTR_Year%205%20Final%20Evaluation_03.31.2015.pdf); Tennessee Higher Education Commission. (2014).
- <sup>8</sup> Alder Graduate School of Education. (n.d.). *About Alder Graduate School of Education: The Alder model*. <https://aldergse.edu/about/>.
- <sup>9</sup> Alder Graduate School of Education. (n.d.). *Together we've accomplished*. <https://aldergse.edu/impact/>.
- <sup>10</sup> Office of Elementary & Secondary Education. (2024). *Teacher Quality Partnership program*. Retrieved July 17, 2024, from <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/effective-educator-development-programs/teacher-quality-partnership/>.
- <sup>11</sup> The full evaluation also studies the impact of the program on graduate retention and student achievement using a quasi-experimental design, which is still in progress and not discussed as part of this paper.



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