

Teacher Quality Partnership Residency Programs

What We Learned Preparing Teachers During the Pandemic

Danny Torres: Hello, everyone. Welcome to the first session in our Teacher Residency Webinar Series. Today's topic, What We Learned Preparing Teachers During the Pandemic. Thank you all very much for joining us to speak about this very important topic. My name is Danny Torres. I serve as WestEd's Senior Manager of Publications and Dissemination. Now, before we move into today's contents, I'd like to take a brief moment to introduce WestEd. WestEd is a national nonprofit, nonpartisan education, research, development, and service agency.

At WestEd, we believe that learning changes lives. Every day we partner with schools and communities across the country to improve outcomes for youth and adults of all ages. Today's conversation is one really important facet of the work that we do at WestEd, and I encourage you to visit us at [WestEd.org](https://www.wested.org) to learn more. Now I'd like to introduce Jaclyn Tejwani, Senior Research Associate and Project Director at WestEd. She'll be introducing the webinar today. Jaclyn, take it away.

Jaclyn Tejwani: Good morning or good afternoon. Thank you so much for joining us today to learn about how teacher preparation programs adopted during the pandemic and what changes will be lasting in the future. The four presenter groups you will hear from are all WestEd's partners and recipients of the Teacher Quality Partnership or TQP Grant from the US Department of Education. TQP grants require an external evaluation that studies both implementation and outcomes of the grant projects. WestEd partnered with these organizations in preparing their grant applications so that our evaluation plans were perfectly aligned to their specific grant projects.

Obviously, the pandemic introduced a host of challenges these grantees could not have foreseen when writing these grant applications. As their evaluators, we watched and studied how the programs quickly pivoted their work, preparing the next generation of teachers to a virtual environment. And we discovered that necessity really is the mother of invention, as these programs were truly innovative in how they adopted their work. We thought these innovations warranted sharing out with the

broader community, so WestEd is providing this platform as a way to amplify the voices of our partners.

During today's session, each group will present, and then we'll have time for one or two questions after each presentation. Any other questions can be posed and will be answered in the chat. Also, like Danny said, we hope you will complete the post survey after the webinar. So, let's get started with our first presenter group. I'd like to introduce Donna Glassman-Sommer and Marvin Lopez from the California Center on Teaching Careers, through the Tulare County Office of Education. They will be representing the Teacher Residency for Rural Education, or the TRRE project, and will be discussing their approach to recruitment during the pandemic

Donna Glassman-Sommer:

Good morning. My is Donna Glassman-Sommer. I would like to also introduce Marvin Lopez who is my partner at the California Center on Teaching Careers, housed at Tulare County Office of Education. We are pleased to be here to be able to present to you some of our lessons learned. Marvin and I, over the past almost 20 years, have been doing recruiting with a number of different programs. We have led a program in teacher preparation, we've been on other TQP projects where we've led recruitment, actually, with some of the presenters here. We wanna share with you how we've taken our model over the years and really adapted it to a Teacher Quality Partnership Grant, particularly in a residency.

What's unique about our residency program is it's a three-way partnership between CSU Bakersfield, Visalia Unified, and the Tulare County Office of Education, housing the Center on Teaching Careers for the state. The uniqueness of the partnership is usually a residency is a partnership between a teacher preparation program and a single school district. We're really trying to look at how in the Central Valley here and in our region, we really can scale that up for more rural participation with residencies. So, you can see here a little bit about our project. We use what we call a which is something that has been built through this center as our one of our recruitment tools for the project.

We do all of our information meetings online so that any prospective candidate can have that material at hand and send them the link so they can follow along, but they also have it where it shows the design, the sequence, the benefits of the program. This is kind of a roadmap that we use. And in this road map, what you see is how we really start. And we take common strategies that we have researched and tested over the

years with our vision of how we really wanna place highly qualified, diverse candidates into classrooms for effective teaching.

We have always had a vision for our teachers to reflect the students that they teach. So, that has been part of our mission since the early 2000s. What we do is we have our platform that we really work from, where we can collect our data. We can house many different resources, as well as even our information that we use for recruiting. Our messaging always is unique to the population that we're trying to reach. We have worked a lot with career changers, and we find that our unique messaging, though, has to be adapted to whatever population we're trying to target, including the content areas we're really looking to recruit for.

So, we really take this approach, and in every project that we work on, really personalize it so that we're looking at our target groups, our messaging. And I'm gonna to turn it over to Mr. Lopez, who can give you a sense of what we do with our platform and messaging.

Marvin Lopez:

Great. Thank you and thanks for being here with us today. As Donna mentioned, we've been part of many other projects through TQP and TTT. And what we've found is that based on the roadmap that we just shared with you earlier, we really need to focus on those target groups. So, based on what the mission and the vision of our project is, then we started looking at those target groups. And I'm sure some of you or most of you have also done the same in that you start with your substitute pool, and then you start looking at those internal groups that you may want to target at first, and then you look outside of your organization. So as you can see here.

The messaging is very important for us as well. I'm sure it is for you. So, we pay close attention to how we're promoting our program and the benefits of the program to attract a large pool of candidates. The platforms, I'm sure you've all used the platforms that you see here. And we always look at data and the ROI, the return on investment, and then go back to the drawing board and figure out which of these platforms we need to continue using and perhaps adjust the frequency of the ads that we're promoting, as well as tweaking the messaging, and then seeing which groups are responding to our advertising.

Just to give you an idea, some samples here. This is probably version number 9 or 10 of our ads because we go back and look at whether the messaging is working, the visuals, the graphics obviously are very important. So, we're constantly looking at, on a monthly basis, what's worked, what hasn't worked, and then we adjust and modify the message, and in this case, the graphics to attract the target groups. Real

quick, I'm going to share with you some results of what we've done this last six months. And as you can see here on my screen, since October, when we started launching our second campaign for cohort two now, which will be enrolled in a program in the next month or so, but the last six months you can see that the number of leads that we created, the number of inquiry forms that were submitted.

And as Donna mentioned earlier, our program is a single-subject teacher residency program. And we're targeting specifically English, math, and science. So, you can see here that we have a number of leads that we attracted for each of those specific areas. We also have data on which of those leads have a degree in those specific areas. And then the last group is, are they from our local area? Because they're very important to us. We wanna grow our local talent. So, you can see here the results of what we've done this last six months.

And of course, now we're starting to recruit for cohort three, and we're gonna go back and look at the data and the analytics and adjust what we've done to make sure that we have a larger group for this next cohort this next year. So, at this point, I am going to turn it over to Jaclyn.

Jaclyn Tejawani: Yeah, and we have a question in the chat for Donna and Marvin. Have you noticed any change in the numbers of individuals interested in teaching that you think are a direct result of the pandemic?

Donna Glassman-Sommer:

You know, we've watched kind of the ebb and flow, as this is the second, I would say we went through the recession, we've gone through times when it's the strongest. I think in the beginning of the pandemic, we did not see A, the interest, and we didn't see that districts even were hiring. So, you know, our start, we were granted our funds in December, I believe, or November of 2019. And then, by the time our budgets and everything was in place, it was February, and then we closed down in March. So, we didn't have a very long recruitment period.

However, as we are, been recruiting for this next cohort, we have seen a tremendous interest of quality candidates. And we're really primarily looking for math, science, and English. So, we feel like either we've, you know, fine tuned our messaging and the way that we're doing things or there still is a real interest in people coming into the field.

Jaclyn Tejawani: Great. Thank you so much to you both. I will go ahead. And the contact information is there, but again, if you have other questions for the Tulare team, please use the chat and we will get those questions answered. Our

next presenters hail from the California Central coastline. and will be presenting on strategies implemented to address clinical practice and co-teaching. I'd like to introduce Dr. Megan Guise and Sarah Hegg from Cal Poly, San Luis Obispo School of Education.

Sarah Hegg:

Thanks Jaclyn. Good morning. We're excited to be here today and talk to you about clinical practice and some of the changes we've made this last year as a result of the pandemic. A little context about Cal Poly, our School of Education credential programs include a year-long clinical practice. We credential multiple subject, single subject, and special education. We place locally in about 9 to 10 different school districts, and we graduate between 150 to 200 new teachers each year. And before we dive in, I just wanted to take a few minutes, Megan and I did, to acknowledge the cooperating teachers, the university supervisors, and our teacher candidates that we work with.

The work we're sharing today is a result of all of their hard work, all of their vulnerability and honesty, their feedback, their willingness to learn new technologies, to try new strategies, to engage in virtual workshops with us, and, really, just their overall respect and commitment to K-12 students locally has been amazing. So, Megan and I are just the representatives today. The real praise goes to these teachers and teacher educators. So a huge thank you to them. And let's dive in. So, I don't need to tell you, since March 2020, clinical practice has looked very different.

And the shift in our schools across our state and here at Cal Poly locally as well from face-to-face, in-person learning to remote learning has brought several changes with it. And these changes have had a lot of impact on clinical practice supervision and the work that we do here. So, we've seen a lot of variety. Variety in the way that districts and schools are moving to hybrid or online formats. We've seen different technologies used, different schedules, different safety measures, and we've also noticed a lot of inequities rise to the surface for different student population groups.

And so, we really wanted to make sure that we were providing an extra layer of support for our university supervisors to navigate and learn new technologies, to be able to build relationships with their teacher candidates, and to make sure that we were giving them flexible options for observations. And so, Megan will share with you some of the strategies we tried.

Megan Guise:

Our first approach was summer 2020 and we had to assemble a team. And so, you can see on the infographic that we had over 30 faculty staff, university supervisors, and district liaisons who were contributing to

develop resources and supports for the next academic year of virtual clinical practice. And on this slide and in the infographic, you can see what some of those supports were. But we realized we had to create a landing page, a home for all of these resources that would be accessible by all of our clinical practice stakeholders. So, I'll navigate now to our clinical practice webpage, which is something that we created, and I will explain a few of the resources that are on this page.

And so, the first one I wanted to highlight was our technology video tutorials. So, we recruited our alumni, our spring 2020 graduates, to develop five to eight minute screencasts on a technology platform, explaining how to use that technology and also how to integrate it into curriculum. And so, you can see on this page, there are a variety. We had Edpuzzle, Google Classroom, Padlet. And so, you can click, and you can expand, and you'll see the screencast with a brief abstract. We also had newsletters. Clinical practice newsletters, these existed pre-pandemic, but during the pandemic, we had a team of university supervisors who wanted to not only include newsletters about co-teaching, but also about topics related to equity and inclusion, social-emotional learning, and teaching in a virtual environments.

And so, this was the page that archived all of our newsletters. And I can click on one, and you'll see that they're hosted in S'more so you can embed video links, articles, websites, things like that. But every other Monday, we would email out one newsletter to our clinical practice stakeholders throughout the whole entire experience. On this webpage, we also have a library of our workshop materials. We have a whole entire page dedicated to co-teaching resources as well. And the other support that I wanted to highlight was we realized that our traditional observation, where a university supervisor reviews a lesson plan, observes the lesson, conducts a post-observation conference with the teacher candidate, might not work for all contexts.

So, we had a committee that developed three different options, and the one I'd like to highlight is professional development. So, our university supervisor and our teacher candidate would engage in PD together. They would attend a webinar together, maybe listen to a podcast, have a common reading, and then they would meet to have conversation. And what was really powerful about this option was it positioned both of them as learners, it still centered on our prioritized skills, which were related to a Danielson-inspired rubric, but it also introduced our teacher candidates to this larger education community that hopefully they're gonna tap into throughout their teaching career.

Sarah Hegg:

So, we've talked broadly about our support for clinical practice supervision and the different stakeholders in clinical practice. And now we wanted to really zoom in on co-teaching and that relationship between the cooperating teacher and the teacher candidates, some of the changes that we had to make in our supports for them as a response to this remote learning in the pandemic, right? So, at Cal Poly, we utilize the co-teaching model which, historically, is really centered around teacher moves and the way that two teachers collaborate in a face-to-face classroom.

There's a whole set of strategies on how you move around the classroom. And co-teaching was just never conceptualized for a virtual reality. So, we needed a new way to redefine co-teaching and to support our pairs to build their relationship together, to collaborate over Zoom. We needed some concrete tools and tips for them to be able to implement co-teaching and to be able to really feel confident in that space.

Megan Guise:

Some of the examples we created. We created a screencast highlighting these concrete examples of strategies for virtually co-teaching, but we also provided it in this document as well. So, I'll briefly show this, but how do you foster that relationship when you're fostering it, you know, from a distance? And so, recommendations for getting to know each other, establishing communication norms. On the next page, we had some examples of how can you engage in co-planning virtually. So, how can you use the backward design planning approach, but also how can you leverage technology platforms to make co-planning more efficient?

On our next several pages of this document, our pairs were teaching synchronously virtually, but also asynchronously, so we organized these recommendations by the co-instructional strategies that they were already familiar with but thinking about what does it look like in the virtual space. And then finally, the last page of this document has some recommendations for co-assessing. How can you reflect on your instruction together? How can you analyze student work? What does it look like when you're doing this remotely? Another highlight of our co-teaching shift was our virtual pair workshops.

We really wanted to send our pairs problems of practice. So, they came to a workshop, they met in a breakout room, they identified what their problem was, and then they were in a new breakout room meeting with pairs from all different districts and grade levels, and disciplines and trying to problem solve together. And I think what was most powerful about this approach is that our pairs felt validated. They felt heard that they were not the only one who was struggling with this challenge, but they also left that session with tangible next steps and things to

approach, and how they could do it collaboratively and solve any kind of challenges.

So, on this slide, we have some additional co-teaching supports that we implemented. And then we also have a quote from a cooperating teacher, really just recognizing what a great value added the teacher candidate was this past year.

Sarah Hegg:

All right, so moving forward, we just have a few sort of silver linings, things we've learned from the pandemic. I won't go through them now 'cause we're already at time. Thank you, Danny. But I did just wanna give a big thank you to WestEd for helping us this whole last year, year and a half. We've been working with Eric and Jaclyn to collect data on all of these changes and new strategies we've tried, and we're really excited, moving forward, that we're gonna have research-based and data-based next steps, and sort of changes to our clinical practice to try out. So, we have a few minutes, I think, to go over questions.

Thank you, Jaclyn. She's chatted out our clinical practice website link. All of the resources we've quickly gone over are on that webpage. You are welcome to use them and try them in your own context. You're also welcome to email Megan and I directly if you have questions. So, thank you so much.

Jaclyn Tejwani:

Thank you so much, Sarah and Megan. So, one question from the chat is, so you've mentioned a number of resources, and thank you so much for providing them for our attendees today. If you were to highlight, you know, one or two as particularly successful, which would they be?

Megan Guise:

Sarah, do you wanna name one and then I'll name one? No?

Sarah Hegg:

Sure. Why don't you go first?

Megan Guise:

Okay. I love the technology video tutorials, and I think why was, it was this space for our alumni to continue being connected to our program for us to showcase their expertise. And it was made available and used by cooperating teacher, district administrators, teacher candidates, and university supervisors. So, I think just like the community that was built and who was making use of, you know, the expertise of our alumni was pretty powerful. And we were able to compensate them. And so, I think as a new teacher just starting out, it was awesome that they had that little bit of money before they started into the teaching career.

Sarah Hegg:

Right, and I think I would say just the flexibility in shifting not only the content of what we were supporting, our pairs and our university

supervisors, but also just the workshops. So, making that space for problems of practice. Making that space for them to talk with each other and just voice. Like, I think it's a combined, right? You wanna to provide as many tools and strategies that you can, but we needed space this year just to talk through what was happening and what we needed support on. And so, I feel like that was something that will probably be part of our workshops, moving forward.

Jaclyn Tejwani: Got it. Thank you so much to both of you. If you have other questions for Cal Poly, please use the chat. Our next presenters are from California State University, Bakersfield, and will be presenting on how they modified professional development to a virtual environment. I'd like to introduce Dr. Brittney Beck and Jesus Esquibel from the Citizen Scientist Project.

Brittney Beck: Thank you, Jaclyn, and good morning, good afternoon, good evening to all of you from wherever you're joining. My name is Dr. Brittney Beck, Assistant Professor of Teacher Education at CSU Bakersfield and the Director of the Citizen Scientist Project. Jesus?

Jesus Esquibel: And the same. My name is Jesus Esquibel. I'm a lecturer here at Cal State University of Bakersfield and I work with Dr. Brittney Beck and the Citizen Scientist Project. I'm the assistant director.

Brittney Beck: All right, so today we're going to talk about how we shifted our approach to professional development to accommodate new and enduring needs of the pandemic. Now, our approach to professional development this past year has been informed by two of our partners: the National Geographic Society and TeachingWorks out of the University of Michigan. Now, National Geographic recently launched a campaign to collect both-and stories from teachers all over the world. Stories that captured the strength and fragility, the limitations and expansions regarding what it means to teach and to learn during a pandemic.

And then TeachingWorks out of the University of Michigan seeks to amplify and operationalize the work of practice-based teacher education, which provides opportunities to teachers, both new and otherwise, to engage in the practice of teaching outside of normal classroom conditions. Now, this type of practice is not authentic teaching and does not mimic the heat and the hesitancy of full classroom instruction. Yet these teacher education pedagogies that they amplify approximate practice in ways that allow teachers to at least demonstrate a baseline level of competency with a high-leverage practice before they engage that same practice with children.

Now, this is an approach that we were seeking to nurture pre-pandemic, yet we found during this time of virtual instruction and this time outside of normal classroom conditions that practice-based teacher education was a huge asset to how we chose to pivot our professional development work with teachers and mentor teachers in the community. And especially given that we, as you know, are preparing and continuing to prepare an entire cohort of teachers for in-classroom instruction who have never set foot in a physical classroom. And so, taken together, our approach to professional development embraces the strength and fragility of our current context.

And we are going to share these stories of approximating practice with our teacher candidates. Now, these are our core initiatives, a bird's eye view of them at least. And our ultimate goal with our Teacher Quality Partnership Grant is to build capacity for citizen science and teacher education. Now, how we operationalize that is building the capacity of teachers and students to apply their budding C-STEM competencies to identify and address issues of community concern in collaboration with local scientists and community agencies. And in doing so, we hope to democratize science by including more diverse voices and question posing, data collection, data analysis, and ultimately data-informed advocacy.

These are all of the professional developments that we've had to pivot this past year, but we are going to select a sample of four to show you how we engage and embrace both-and stories and practice-based teacher education to create enriching experiences that at least enable our teacher candidates to practice the work of teaching and to develop those baseline level of competencies regarding the needs of high-quality, rigorous, relevant, and community-embedded C-STEM instruction.

Jesus Esquibel:

Yeah, thank you. As Dr. Beck was mentioning, we took on one of our initiatives which was Project Lead The Way, and we are pre-service trainers for teachers that go into the classroom with our district partners that teach in Project Lead The Way. So, we're responsible for training K-5 teachers in Project Lead The Way, their launch program. And in this approach, we've done face-to-face training predominantly, and so this was one of the, like, the major pivots that we had to make in response to the pandemic and going virtual. So, we had to re-imagine what that looked like and how we were going to do this.

And several ways that we came up with were, one, we had to kind of preplan, think about what were some of the specific things that they needed, materials, resources that our candidates needed to have in person. And so, we did some of that work, and we would supply our

district partners with these supply, you know, we call them in a box. So, they had all the materials they needed for the trainings, and they would just go by the district offices and pick up these materials that we would use when we did our virtual trainings with our groups.

Some of these things also required us to think a little bit about the collaborative spaces, but also what kind of collaborative tools were available online that allowed us to still give that approximation of practice with our groups and to give them a chance to practice these things. And one of the more intuitive ways that we were able to get our candidates to still work and do some of this practice with students was involving their own families, you know, and bringing their families in on some of these practices. So, that's just one innovative way that we saw that was really powerful, and we were able to still get our candidates to get that practice working with students.

Brittney Beck:

All right, so our next dilemma was to design personal development for both virtual and in-person teaching. And so, the community and student's home became the classroom, which is an oft-spoken goal even during non-pandemic times. And so, we wanted to help teachers and students consider not just the screens in front of them as sites of learning, but exploring students' homes, backyards, what they can see outside their window as a way to expand the classroom to include both their families and the physical spaces that were available to them.

And that's maybe a conversation for a different time, but citizen science lends itself really well to that type of at-home instruction, as students collect, analyze, and visualize data that can be found from wherever they are positioned in the community. Another way in which we wanted to think about strategies that were relevant to both virtual and in-person teaching is how we asked our candidates and our mentor teachers to communicate their work. And so, for this, we wanted to begin to position them as public intellectuals.

And so, instead of traditional assignments that were paper based, we had them communicate their learnings and their lesson plans and their experiences through multimodal storytelling that involved videos, photography, and other forms of digital storytelling, including coding animations that helped to tell the story of their experience in our coursework and in our professional development. And in doing so, I mean, thinking about community-embedded instruction, you don't want that type of lesson to just live and die in the context of a single assignment, but how do you create materials that are public facing and that can be used as catalysts for dialogue and informed action.

And so, instead of traditional paper-based assignments, teachers developed multimodal stories to share their learning. And those stories are ultimately going to be used this summer to begin to cultivate and, well, to begin to visualize their learning and use it as exemplars for others. So, the video resources they created are going to continue to live on in our coursework even during in-person instruction. Now, a different approach to this is PD for both during and after the pandemic.

So, instead of creating these one-and-done professional developments that were only meeting our current needs and might be irrelevant when we go back to in-person instruction, we wanted to leverage our partnerships, and in particular, our partnerships with the National Geographic Society and NASA to build learning modules around local issues that had global implications. And so, we've been working with National Geographic Society and NASA to create these different types of digital resources in the form of infographics, learning modules, and using ArcGIS story maps to create five new lessons that will ultimately live on the NGS and NASA websites, to be translated into different languages, and be made available to teachers all over the world.

And so, we have these digital resources that are helping us to navigate this time, but ultimately, these can be scaled, sustained, and translated into relevant pedagogy for not just our community, but communities throughout California and globally. And so, two of the ones that we're working on right now are one about air quality in the San Joaquin Valley and then work on the Paradise fires in California, and thinking about the connection between air quality, the increase of wildfires in California, and in climate change. And then also, some introductory modules for citizen science teaching and learning, visualizing what that looks like, scaffolding experiences that will ultimately live on the NGS, National Geographic Society learning platform.

Jesus Esquibel:

And I'll quickly end by just saying that this summer we're launching our Supplementary Authorization program in Computer Science, and it's going to be the K-9 band. So, we're looking at, you know, how can we offer these resources in an asynchronous setting versus doing synchronous work, mostly because of the call from the pandemic and the amount of time that people are spending on Zoom already. And so, I think that it actually pushed this project forward, having these restrictions and thinking a little bit more about asynchronous versus synchronous. So, I think that this is one of those positives that's come from this work. So, I'll end at that. I know we're up.

Jaclyn Tejwani: Thank you so much, Brittney and Jesus. We have a question from the chat which is, "What has been the reception from teacher candidates and students to these new virtual PD opportunities that you've developed?"

Brittney Beck: So, speaking about the professional development in box, and then the idea of using the homes as beyond just what's in front of you on the screen as sites of learning, I think it has been well-received, even simple activities. We were engaging in a citizen science professional development with our partners at the UC Davis Center for Community and Citizen Science, and they had students go outside to collect a leaf, and then sketch that leaf in a nature journal. And just the act of going outside and feeling the sunlight and making the familiar strange by looking at their backyard in a different way helped to give them a sense of relief and sense of calm.

And we had a really robust conversation about the social-emotional learning implications of engaging in outdoor instruction. And so, just that moment of relief and calm they felt from going outside was something that they wanna continue to nurture even when they're back in person with their students.

Jaclyn Tejwani: That's great. Thank you so much, Brittney and Jesus. If you have other questions for the Citizen Scientist Project, please use the chat. So, we've heard from a county office of education and two universities. Now, we'll turn our attention to the district perspective. Our next presenters are from Fresno Unified School District and will be presenting on teacher residency and induction during the pandemic. I'd like to introduce Traci Taylor and Jeanna Perry from Fresno Unified.

Traci Taylor: Good morning, everybody, or good afternoon. My name is Traci Taylor, and I'm the director of teacher development. And I'm here with my colleague Jeanna, and I'll let her introduce herself.

Jeanna Perry: Hello, everyone. My name is Jeanna Perry. I'm a manager in teacher development. I oversee residency and student teachers. Nice to meet you all, virtually.

Traci Taylor: So, we're excited today to talk about induction from the district perspective and also tell you a little bit about what we do here in teacher development. So, we'll move quickly to our teacher pipeline. And in teacher development, we do three particular things: recruit, train, and retain teachers. And we service aspiring, new, and existing teachers. So, the vision of our department is to make sure that every classroom has a highly effective teacher where students thrive. And what we've done is develop a coherent continuum of teacher development.

So, you'll see on this continuum that we start with our teacher academy, and it goes all the way through our leaders. And we house in-teacher development all the way through our teacher leadership. So, as you look at this visual, think about this as on-ramping onto a freeway; you can on-ramp at any point in time with any program and get to the same destination, that's to be a highly effective teacher. And TQP, our Teacher Quality Partnership Grants that we have, we've just sunsetted one and we have two more currently, are part of the Teacher Pipeline Program.

So, a little background on our teacher residency. We have three partnerships with three local universities from the district. These are all hard-to-fill areas that we're supporting. In 18 months, our candidates receive a masters and a credential. We do co-teaching and co-planning, which you've heard a lot about from our partners that are on the call with us this morning. We've done district-aligned professional learning and that transition to online and virtual learning this year as well. They receive a financial stipend from 13,000 to 20,000, depending on the partnership.

And then, upon successful completion, they receive a teaching position in Fresno Unified. And if you look to your screen, you'll see the chart on the right. And this shows the diversity. Our goal is to increase teachers that look like our students. So, you see the student population in Fresno Unified as well as all of our residents that we have. So, we have 366 residents that we've placed in Fresno Unified with 70% diversity.

Jeanna Perry:

A large part is not just the recruitment and the training of our candidates, but because we are recruiting diverse candidates, we wanna make sure we retain them. This is a lifelong career we're looking at. And so, during the pandemic, our full-time release coaches that we have in the district for new teacher support went onto a virtual platform, Teams in Microsoft, and did all of their coaching, a minimum of 60 minutes, once a week. What we saw was that they were exceeding their time with their teachers. Teachers were really needing that support of the full-time release coach more than ever this year.

We learned a couple of things. That observations don't always have to be face to face. We can do them virtually. Planning doesn't always have to be face to face. That can also happen in a virtual format. One of the things our coaches are great about is they're all cognitively coach trained and so they sit side by side or virtually with our new teachers, but they're also cohorted at sites. And what that means is you could have one coach with 10 new teachers at one site that they're supporting. And that's very strategic on our part because our coaches are under teacher development.

We sit as a team and we determine which induction coach would be the best fit for that site based on their student needs, based on site admin, but also of the residents that are there at the site and what their needs are. So, it is, multiple measures determine who the coach is for that particular site, but also the rest... We have induction orientations that are strategically designed to onboard all of our individuals into Fresno Unified. Our coaches provide strategic professional learning throughout the year. Sometimes they do that in small groups for their new teachers, sometimes they do that at a larger scale.

They work across departments for the district to make sure that they see that this work is not done in isolation, but it is layers. So, for example, our induction coaches will work with our Department of Prevention or Intervention or our Curriculum and Instruction Department to make sure that our candidates are receiving the best training, but also meeting their needs at that moment in time of where they're at in their first couple of years of teaching. We do clear credentials through our Induction Program.

And so, for the first two years, we use a new teacher center, and we have the Kiano platform where we're using high-leverage tools to ensure that teachers are moving through their first couple of years and growing. And we're collecting that data and refining our practice continuously. With the retention piece, another strategic strategy we have is that we realize that our candidates want to move into leadership positions. And so, while they're in residency, we tell them, "We want you to be highly-effective teachers, but we also want you to be teacher leaders within our system, and hopefully some of you eventually will become administrators."

And so, we're preparing them for that. Within the first three years, what we've had is some data here. 46% have become teacher leaders in our system. And what does that mean, is that they're leading district professional learning. It means that they are becoming teachers on special assignment within our own department. Here we have three of them that are teachers on special assignment leading big bodies of work. We have many that have been admitted into our district administration Leadership Cohort program because they want to become administrators.

Our retention rate for our residency, it's three years plus, is at 81%. So, again, we wanna make sure that our candidates that are ready to move into these leadership opportunities are being trained. Next year, we're starting an Aspiring Leader program with anyone three years plus who's looking to build up their leadership skills, whether they wanna be leaders

at the site, at the district level, or eventually they wanna be administrators. We wanna make sure they're prepared for that.

Traci Taylor:

So, just to close a little bit more about teacher development, here's just an infographic that's been developed about some of the best practices that we have implemented in our department. Again, you see that continuum, the supports that we have for our new teachers, orientations, face-to-face professional learning, as well as virtual learning this past year, job embedded coaching, and credentialing. One of the things that's been really great this year is we've increased from 40% of our hires being from the pipeline to this last year 56% of our new hires came from our teacher pipeline.

And Fresno Unified hires approximately 300 teachers per year. So, we're recruiting them, we're training them, and we're retaining in Fresno Unified. So, we'll turn it back over to Jaclyn for a question.

Jaclyn Tejwani:

Thank you both so much. So, yes, we have a couple of questions, but I'll start off with this one. What has contributed to your program's success in retaining underrepresented TQP residents who have become teachers in your district?

Jeanna Perry:

I think the very first thing is that when we train our candidates from the onset, we give them four hours of professional learning each week that is district specific. So, they're not coming onto the district not knowing our curriculum, our classroom management strategies, all of our logistics that they need to know, you know, the acronyms that nobody tells you about until you enter into a district. They really are like second-year teachers. Their first year they become teachers of record because we've onboarded them through all of our professional learning. They've met many of our district teacher leaders through that learning.

They also do Saturday Pipeline. That's a once-a-month conference style where they can determine what they want and need to learn to be successful first-year teachers. And many of our district leaders are presenting at those things. So, onboarding them from the onset of the program, but then also continuing that support as our teachers of record and leading them into leadership opportunities, building their capacity so that if they want to be teacher leaders at the school site, they can be, and we're training them to do that.

Traci Taylor:

I would just add, too, all of our residents are placed in clusters at particular sites. So, we like to say we're a family in Fresno Unified. So, a site has to have more than one opening in order to receive a resident, so that they're placed together to build that culture and a new culture at a

site if it needs to happen together. If residents have already been placed at a site, we say from the brothers and sisters of their same cohort, then we can add cousins from different cohorts. So, we have some of our sites that have up to 12 residents now at their school sites as teachers of record.

Jeanna Perry: To add to the beauty of this department is also that we work in collaboration with human resource. And so, we know our residents inside out professionally and personally sometimes, and so, we can strategically match our resident to the site needs, but also to who those leaders are on that site and what their strengths are, and how they can grow the residents.

Jaclyn Tejwani: Thank you so much to Traci and Jeanna. And if you have other questions for the Fresno team, please use the chat. Finally, I'd like to introduce WestEd's Senior Managing Director Gretchen Weber for our closing remarks. Gretchen came to WestEd from AIR, where she was the vice president for domestic policy, practice, and systems change, focused on improving educator talent management systems and classroom instruction. She is also a National Board-certified teacher. Please welcome Gretchen.

Gretchen Weber: Thank you, Jacqueline. And thank you to all of our presenters and panelists. I have loved and I know our audience has loved hearing about your programs. We're excited for what comes next for you. I will echo what you said at the very beginning, Jaclyn, that necessity really is the mother of invention. And the hard work of all of the student teachers, cooperating teachers, supervisors, university faculty, and the district staff really has shone through over all of this transformative work that everyone has been working to accomplish this past year. I just will add, as we close out today, that this work really couldn't be more important.

The impact of the pandemic has obviously been significant across the education system and on the teaching profession, including on teacher preparation. We know, at a national level, there's been declining enrollments in teacher preparation since before 2020, though, sometimes local data doesn't always mirror that national look. But the pandemic has certainly impacted teacher recruitment and retention as well. And so, I think every single teacher candidate, every single partnership, every minute of induction, every innovative practice, the clinical practice minutes, and time and hours of professional learning, the observations, it all matters so much more now than ever because every single candidate, every resident, every beginning teacher is just so vital, and we just can't lose any single one.

And all of these innovations and practices you've been implementing, I'm just so excited to see them sustained beyond today. Really, WestEd, I think, has been privileged to share in this work and your journey as the evaluation partner which, for us, is more than just data collection and analysis. We're really about being a thought partner to provide support along the way, ongoing feedback, and to work shoulder to shoulder with all of our partners. So, again, thank you all for such hard work across a challenging year, and I'm really looking forward to future.