



Scaling High Quality Teacher Residencies

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About This Report

Funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and in partnership with Education First, leaders from five innovative Teacher Preparation Transformation Centers developed this report to support teacher residency programs seeking to scale. This report recommends a series of strategies to scale teacher residencies and identifies case studies that can serve as models.

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WHY SCALE

High-quality teacher preparation plays a critical role in dismantling racial and economic inequities in education. Regardless of how they pursue their teaching certification, teacher candidates must be adequately prepared to be highly effective instructors on day one of becoming a teacher of record. This high-quality preparation is especially important for Black and Latino students and students experiencing poverty. These students are more likely than white and higher-income students to be taught by a new teacher¹, and new teachers are generally less effective than their more veteran peers.²

Teacher residencies have [proven](#) to be a successful model of teacher preparation, but not all candidates have access to the high-quality programming that residencies offer. Oftentimes, only a small number of teacher candidates go through the residency model, while teacher preparation programs continue to maintain other, lower-quality pathways or program components. Exacerbating the problem of limited access to high-quality preparation is program affordability for candidates. Oftentimes, the full-time clinical experience and coursework required for a residency hinders a candidate's ability to pursue other employment, rendering the program financially infeasible to some candidates. In addition, residency programs often have financial models that rely on philanthropy, which places them at risk for sustainment when grant funding is not available. Some residencies have proven difficult to scale, which means that they generate fewer candidates than needed and district hiring demands cannot be met. Alternatively, some candidates choose to enroll in teacher preparation programs that are of lower quality because they do not require candidates to leave their current jobs and are thus more affordable. And in many states, policies to address teacher shortages have enabled these lower-quality programs to grow. This creates an inequitable access problem among teacher candidates: Some teacher candidates have access to high-quality teacher preparation, while many others do not.

What are teacher residencies?

A teacher residency is where a teacher candidate is paired with an experienced mentor teacher for a full-year of clinical training/co-teaching in a K-12 classroom. Residencies take place at the post-baccalaureate level, and as undergraduate student teaching residencies. In some cases, residents receive a stipend during the year-long residency. Teacher residencies have proven to be a successful model of teacher preparation. They often create long-term benefits for districts, schools and the students they serve.

For example, a [study](#) of the Boston Teacher Residency indicates that residency graduates are more effective than other new and even veteran teachers in mathematics by the fourth year of teaching. A second study showed that New Visions Hunter College Urban Teacher Residency graduates outperformed other new teachers in 16 out of 22 comparisons of state Regents exam scores.

But we have seen successful scale strategies of teacher residency programs. We—a group of leading Teacher Preparation Transformation Centers—are working together to expand access to high quality programming to all teacher candidates. For the past year, we have met to grapple with the most vexing challenges facing our preparation programs, such as how to define the practices of teacher educators, how to use data across different contexts to drive change and how to forge strong partnerships that strengthen preparation programs and communities. We ground our work in a shared vision and criteria for teacher preparation transformation that believes if teacher preparation programs implement sustainable, quality programming at scale, then

¹ Cardichon, J., Darling-Hammond, L., Yang, M., Scott, C., Shields, P. M., & Burns, D. (2020). Inequitable opportunity to learn: Student access to certified and experienced teachers. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

² Ingersoll, Richard M, et al. Seven Trends: The Transformation of the Teaching Force. CPRE Research Reports, 2018, Seven Trends: The Transformation of the Teaching Force.

more teachers will be better prepared to positively impact outcomes for Black and Latino students and students experiencing poverty.

In this report, we suggest that focusing on scale—which we define as high-quality programming that is implemented with *all candidates* trained by a teacher preparation program—can help address the challenge of inequitable access to the high-quality programming of teacher residencies. We recommend a series of strategies for how teacher residencies can scale their high-quality programming and identify examples that can serve as models to inform other programs’ efforts to scale. In the final section, we also include a tool designed to guide teacher preparation programs and Centers who are interested in scaling a high-quality teacher residency.

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HOW TO SCALE

We have identified three main components to scale: method of scale, program fidelity and funding.

1 Method of Scale

There are many approaches to scaling up high-quality teacher residencies. As we have supported our member programs to scale, two approaches have emerged as especially effective methods to ultimately reach 100% of program candidates across all aspects of programming. Teacher preparation program leaders should choose the approach that best fits their context, taking into consideration variables such as program size and readiness conditions that promote change management.

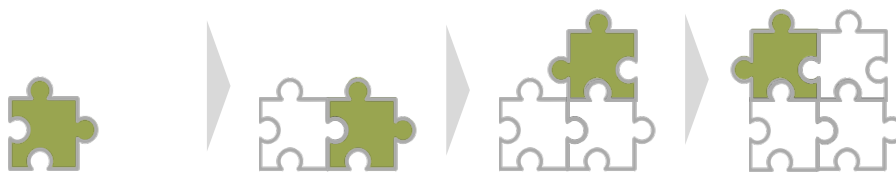
PILOT-TO-SCALE APPROACH



This approach features a staged implementation in which a delivery model is piloted with a smaller set of candidates but with an explicit goal and incentives for scaling using pilot lessons to improve the model. This can be an effective scale method both for programs that are new and for existing programs that are scaling new program components or licensure pathways. For example, when the [University of Houston \(UH\)](#) transitioned from a single semester to full year student teaching experience, it did so with scale in mind. With the goal of requiring a full-year student teaching residency as a graduation requirement for all teacher candidates, UH began with a pilot of one cohort of candidates, and expanded the model each year over a 3-year period until they reached 100% of candidates. Similarly, before [Texas Tech University \(Texas Tech\)](#) implement and scale its year-long residency, it reinvented its approach to partnership. Built on the Professional Development School model, Texas Tech reinvented its scattered, ill-defined approach to partnerships into a structured model with carefully defined Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) that encouraged data sharing, accountability and understanding of roles and responsibilities, all with an eye towards scaling. This new approach to teacher preparation-district partnership better positioned Texas Tech to implement and scale its residency.



COMPONENT BY COMPONENT



A teacher preparation program may choose to gradually scale up its programming. For example, a teacher preparation program may seek to scale by piloting one or more new program components with 100% of candidates, and then moving to the next component. Examples of program components include early field experience, the clinical experience of the residency, coursework, district partnership models, etc. The major difference with component-by-component versus pilot-to-scale is that the program is testing out one aspect of the program at scale versus testing out an entirely new program model with a subset of candidates. The University of Texas-Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV) sought to scale its data system first as a foundation for scaling other transformation components, such as candidate competencies or the clinical experience, believing in a data-driven approach for improvement. For UTRGV, once its data system operates at scale, the data will then inform the nature, direction and speed of scaling other components.

An enabling condition for either approach is a commitment to apply program improvements to 100% of the candidates being trained. Planning for a high-quality program that will be delivered to all candidates is different from planning for a high-quality program that will only be delivered to some candidates. Ultimately, teacher preparation programs should first assess their commitment to impacting all candidates through their improvement efforts, and then identify the best approach to scale their program vision.

In its quest to become the strongest institution of higher education in the state, the University of Houston (UH) sought to transform its teacher preparation program so that more teachers were ready for the classroom on day one. Wanting to provide teacher candidates with deeper hands-on teaching experiences, UH redesigned its teacher preparation program and did so with scale in mind. The program transformed its single semester clinical experience to a year-long student teaching residency while also deepening relationships with partner school districts.

Method of Scale:
Pilot-to-Scale



The UH program redesign included a new year-long student teaching residency as a graduation requirement for ALL teacher candidates. The program added this new program component—a year-long student teaching residency -- with scale in mind. By 2020, all undergraduates completed a year-long clinical teaching experience. This programming redesign has included a deeper partnership with school districts, better training for mentor teachers to be effective instructional coaches, more ongoing observation and actionable feedback for teacher candidates, and stronger performance-based mechanisms for assessing whether teachers are effective instructors.

Fidelity

To ensure fidelity to a new model that would be applied across the entire program, UH planned with scale in mind. It created new faculty positions that would work in district partnership sites, trained faculty throughout the change process and engaged in shared governance with district partners (where they regularly analyzed data together).

Funding

UH had a small amount of grant funding at the start of the transformation to support the transition from the existing model, but they ultimately reallocated their own resources to grow and sustain the residency model. Additionally, UH engages in cost-sharing with district partners. For example, one local district, Tomball Independent School District, reallocated one of its administrative staff members to serve as its own site coordinator.

2 Fidelity

Scaling high-quality teacher residencies can be challenging. We recognize that as a teacher preparation program plans to scale up its high-quality programming, there may be unintended and undesired impacts to program quality. To counteract potential challenges, we identified three strategies teacher preparation program leaders can pursue to help maintain program quality as it scales.

- **Pre-scale planning:** Adequate planning for scale up can help a program maintain its quality. During the pre-scale planning process, a teacher preparation program might identify potential risks to quality, such as the availability of fewer high-quality mentor teachers, and identify new, innovative solutions to address those risks.
- **Training:** A teacher preparation program should provide training for staff and others with a significant role in scale up to ensure these educators have the information, tools and resources needed to effectively fulfill their new and expanded responsibilities. For example, moving all pathways towards a full year of clinical experience will require UH to ensure that all faculty understand the implications for candidate support and coursework. For example, the UH faculty are intimately involved in the residency, working directly in schools with mentors and students.
- **Data-driven decisionmaking:** [Data informed decisionmaking](#) can also help a teacher preparation program maximize program fidelity. A teacher preparation program can regularly gather and assess data (such as candidate attrition) to identify real time effects on program quality and adjust to minimize negative impacts. For example, UTRGV transitioned from a culture of compliance to a culture of inquiry by first scaling its data system. Doing so ensures that any efforts to improve the programs are based on quality, actionable data, leading to program improvement.





Case Study: Texas Tech University

Historically, Texas Tech operated as a traditional teacher preparation program that ran independently from local districts. In 2010, Texas Tech implemented a new model of teacher preparation partnership to place and train student teachers in a way that better meets local district needs.

Method of Scale: *Pilot-to-Scale*



Before Texas Tech could implement and scale its year-long residency, it reinvented its approach to partnership. Built on the Professional Development School model, Texas Tech reinvented its scattered, ill-defined approach to partnerships into a structured model with carefully defined MOUs that encouraged data sharing, accountability and understanding of roles and responsibilities, all with an eye towards scaling. This new approach to teacher preparation-district partnership better positioned Texas Tech to implement and scale its residency.

Fidelity

Texas Tech’s teacher preparation-district partnerships allow for adequate pre-scale planning and encourage data-driven decision making. For example, Texas Tech carefully develops MOUs with district partners that define clear expectations, protocols, and a shared vision for producing high-quality teachers. Additionally, Texas Tech implemented “Data Days,” which are held twice a year. Data Days reinforce its commitment to using data for continuous improvement and help keep the focus on impact. During these Data Days, program faculty and district leaders come together to assess candidate performance and create plans for how to adjust the clinical experience to improve impact.

Funding

This new model was not funded by external grants. Starting in 2010, Texas Tech began to transform its teacher preparation program, by deepening district partnerships and revising coursework aligned to the instructional framework used in the clinical experience. This and other program transformations were funded internally. To do this, it advocated for new university funding but also strategically reallocated existing funding. For example, traditional student supervisor roles were replaced with specialized Site Coordinator roles.

3 Funding

As with any change effort, how the change effort will be funded long-term should be a consideration. While there has long been a perception that teacher residencies are inherently more expensive, there are now many examples of programs that have successfully scaled residency programs using sustainable funding sources. An upcoming report by [Prepared to Teach](#) at Bank Street College of Education, in partnership with WestEd, will dive deeper into the relationship between scale and sustainability, or high-quality, scaled programming that continues without reliance on grants from philanthropy, state or federal agencies or others. The report will share sustainability best practices, review case studies and share tools to help programs sustainably scale high-quality teacher preparation. The report is expected to be complete by December 2020. Here are some strategies we identified to allow for scaling quality residencies:

- **Reallocate existing funding:** We recommend that programs first consider how to support scale within the program’s existing financial capacity. If existing resources are insufficient, a program can seek or develop new funding streams that are also [sustainable](#) (i.e., they come from revenue sources that are long-term, such as tuition or fees, rather than one-time grant support dollars). Programs may also seek to create or enhance existing systems that result in the program growing increasingly less dependent on external funding. For example, starting in 2010, [Texas Tech](#) began to transform its teacher preparation program, including deepening district partnerships, through internal funds. To do this, it advocated for new university funding but also strategically reallocated existing funding —as an example, traditional student supervisor roles were replaced with specialized Site Coordinator roles.
- **Catalytic grant opportunities:** We have witnessed that teacher preparation programs do not always scale up with sustainability in mind. Rather, scaling often occurs as a result of temporary, multi-year philanthropic or public sector grants. For example, [Southeastern Louisiana University](#) (SLU) began its efforts to scale with a grant from the state’s Board of Elementary and Secondary Education. In grant-funded scaling, programs should use grant funds to develop a plan and build capacity for future sustainability after the grant ends. SLU is in the process of doing just that since the state grant ends in a few years and it is still in the process of scaling its residency.
- **Cost-sharing:** To scale residencies, teacher preparation should explore cost-sharing with their district partners. In Louisiana, [Southeastern Louisiana University](#) shares costs with district partners. SLU’s partner district, St. Charles Parish Public Schools, commits \$30,000-50,000 annually to stipends for mentors. Elsewhere, Tomball Independent School District reallocated one of its administrative staff members to serve as its own site coordinator in a partnership with the [University of Houston](#). Often, programs try to keep program cost affordable to the candidate, acknowledging that in a yearlong clinical experience, residents cannot earn a livable wage due to the time required to complete the residency. In a few regions in Texas, preparation programs and districts are working together to solve this challenge. The University of Texas-Permian Basin, in partnership with Ector County Independent School District and Midland Independent School District, worked together to [design and pilot a new model](#) that compensates teacher candidates using sustainable district funding. As a result, in the 2020-21 pilot, 15 teacher candidate residents are receiving *sustainably funded* stipends of approximately \$24,000 plus benefits. This structure meets the immediate personnel needs of the school districts, ensures high-quality development of novice teacher candidates, and establishes a sustainable, scalable staffing model that positively impacts student achievement. We believe that to [sustain quality and](#)

scale over time, programs should both reallocate existing funding sources and seek one-time support. Otherwise, limited resources can be a barrier to effective scaling and a teacher preparation program may become susceptible to a tradeoff between scale and program quality.

Non-financial resources are also critical to scale. We recommend that a teacher preparation program examine its resource capacity overall -- such as staffing, time and other resources -- and take steps to ensure sufficient capacity exists prior to scale up. For example, if a teacher preparation program seeks to scale up its clinical experience, it may benefit from first ensuring that it has sufficient mentor teachers to support all of its candidates.



A central goal for the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley’s College of Education and P-16 Integration was transitioning from a culture of compliance to a culture of inquiry. Doing so ensures program redesign efforts are based on actionable data leading to program improvement. The transition necessitated scaling the college’s data system with the infusion of four processes: (1) developing new and strengthening existing partnerships within and beyond the college and institution; (2) engaging faculty in reviewing program data and taking part in substantive discussion on what the data reveal; (3) identifying data necessary to meet state and accreditation requirements and determining program specific questions that may better support redesign efforts; and (4) conceptualizing a way to centralize data and make it available as close to real time as possible.

Method of Scale:
Component-by-Component



UTRGV sought to scale its data system first as a foundation for scaling other transformation components, such as candidate competencies or the clinical experience, believing in a data-driven approach for improvement. For UTRGV, data is the foundation upon which to build stronger partnerships with PK-12 partners and drive the nature, direction and speed of scaling other components.

Fidelity

UTRGV believes in a data-driven approach to program improvements. Several lessons emerged from UTRGV’s efforts to scale data. It is essential to include key stakeholders in the process of data review and reflection. This allows for multiple perspectives to be heard and ensures improvement efforts attend to district and college needs. Additionally, making data easily accessible to program faculty in as close to real time as possible makes it more likely for faculty to become active participants in program improvement efforts. While this work is an ongoing process, the progress that has been made over time is significant. Faculty now request data on a regular basis, participation at the Data Summit increases each year, district partnerships are becoming reciprocal relationships, and program redesign is data informed.

Funding

Both internal and external funds have supported UTRGV’s efforts to scale its data system. Funding for additional support staff was requested and approved at the institutional level. Dean enhancement funds were strategically distributed to provide professional development to faculty and help build capacity in data literacy. Improvement efforts were systematic, and the UTRGV was able to demonstrate incremental success in and commitment to the use of data for program redesign and improvement. As a result, external funding was received to help support the development of a centralized data repository.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCALE

In addition to the three main components of scale, we have also identified a number of other critical factors that may be helpful for a teacher preparation program to consider before scaling. These factors may enable or hinder a program's ability to scale up effectively.

- **Leadership:** Leadership commitment to scale can be critical to a program's success. [Daring leaders](#), for example, are those who are willing to take risks to lead the teacher preparation programs to positive change. When a daring leader establishes and effectively communicates a commitment to implementing high-quality programming at scale and across all pathways, a program is better positioned to have the resources needed for effective scaling. For example, when Robert McPherson stepped into the role of Dean at the [University of Houston's](#) College of Education, he saw a need to transform teacher preparation so that more teachers were ready for the classroom on day one. He was intent on integrating deeper hands-on teaching experiences for the College's teacher candidates while also maintaining the ability to scale up the program to meet Texas demands. McPherson's daring leadership resulted in a deep partnership with the Houston Independent School District. The partnership resulted in significant changes to the preparation program, including the implementation and gradual scale up of a year-long residency program. The year-long residency program now operates at full scale.
- **Partnerships:** Prior to scale up, a teacher preparation program may seek to identify and pursue opportunities to [partner](#) with other stakeholders, such as K-12 school systems and community organizations, who can support effective and efficient scale up. For example, a teacher preparation program may wish to [partner or strengthen existing partnerships with local K-12 districts](#) to develop a common vision and set of resources to scale up and implement high-quality clinical experience for its teacher candidates. Partnerships help to set clear expectations, define protocols, and create a shared sense of clarity among partners on goals, purpose, and level of commitment. The University of Texas at El Paso, for example, develops carefully defined MOUs with district partners that define clear expectations, protocols, and a shared vision for producing high-quality teachers.
- **Market impacts:** When a teacher preparation program scales up, program costs may increase and some candidates may seek to attend another program to avoid higher costs. A candidate may even choose to attend a lower quality preparation program in exchange for lower program costs. As a program begins to scale, it may consider how it might respond to these market impacts and whether there are action steps it could take—such as creating new scholarships and adjusting recruiting practices to enroll candidates earlier in their pathway to the profession—to mitigate against decreased demand.
- **Time:** Scaling a teacher preparation program is a multi-step process that includes planning, reinvention, piloting, evaluation, adaptation and iteration, all of which takes time. Programs should scale up only as quickly as is feasible and without unnecessarily risking program quality or implementation success.

SCALABILITY TOOL

This tool is designed to guide teacher preparation programs interested in scaling a high-quality teacher residency. It matches the strategies outlined above and will help programs identify a method of scale, how to maintain program fidelity and how to address other critical considerations, such as funding.

Method of Scale

There are many approaches to scaling up high-quality teacher residencies. As we have supported programs to scale, two approaches have emerged as especially effective methods to ultimately reach 100% of candidates across all aspects of programming. Teacher preparation program leaders should choose the approach that best fits their contexts, taking into consideration variables such as program size and readiness conditions that promote change management.

Method of Scale (circle one or both):	Pilot-to-Scale	Component-by-Component
<p>Description <i>What method of scale is right, given the context? Why?</i></p>		

Program Fidelity

Scaling high-quality teacher preparation can be challenging. As a residency plans to scale up its high-quality programming, there may be unintended and undesired impacts to program quality. Consider these strategies for maintaining program fidelity.

Strategy 1: Pre-Scale Planning

Please identify potential risks to quality and brainstorm possible solutions to address those risks.

Strategy 2: Training

Who needs to be trained, and what training is needed to maintain program quality?

Strategy 3: Data-Driven Decision-making

How will this residency use data to inform its scale efforts? What data is needed, and how will it be collected and analyzed?

Funding

Funding is critical for both quality and scale. To sustain quality and scale over time, programs should both reallocate existing funding sources and seek one-time support.

Strategy 1: Reallocate Existing Funding

What funding sources currently exist to support scale efforts? What funding could be reallocated to support scaling and/or to create efficiencies?

Strategy 2: Catalytic Grant Opportunities

What grant opportunities exist to support scale efforts? How will scale efforts be sustained after grant funding ends?

Strategy 3: Cost-Sharing

Who are the local partners (especially school districts) and what opportunities for cost-sharing exist?

Consideration 4: Non-Financial Resources

What resources currently exist that may support or hinder the residency's ability to scale up effectively? What additional resources are needed and/or what resources can be shifted or reallocated?

Other Considerations for Scale

There are additional considerations that may enable or hinder a residency's ability to scale up effectively.

Consideration 1: Leadership

Is the program leader committed to scale? If so, how? What additional leadership support is needed?

Consideration 2: Partnerships

What existing partnerships might be leveraged? What additional partnerships might the residency seek to develop?

Consideration 3: Market Impacts

What are possible market impacts and what strategies will address those impacts?

Consideration 4: Time

What is a reasonable and feasible timeline for scale?