



# *Innovative Staffing Models to Sustain Teacher Residencies*

August 2021

## The Challenge

Teacher residencies—year-long clinical experiences that pair teacher candidates with highly effective mentor teachers for immersive training in a K-12 classroom—have proven to be successful models of teacher preparation. Residencies not only provide schools with a pipeline of diverse, well-prepared candidates for the future, but these programs make a difference for students today - when residents co-teach for a full year with carefully selected and trained mentors, there are greater learning outcomes for students.<sup>1</sup> And, those teachers trained as residents are more likely to be retained in the profession.

However, mostly due to financial challenges, teacher candidates do not have equitable access to the high-quality programming that residencies offer. The full-time clinical experience and coursework required for a residency can hinder a candidate's ability to pursue other employment. Many candidates cannot afford to spend a year co-teaching without any income, rendering residencies financially infeasible.

### Additional Sustainability Considerations

While there are grant initiatives that provide some residents with stipends, those funds are usually available to a limited number of candidates for a limited period of time. Given this, residency programs generally remain small and are often unable to fully meet district hiring needs.

## The Opportunity

Overcoming these accessibility and affordability challenges is possible through **innovative K-12 staffing models that allow for sustainable, paid residencies by rethinking school-level roles and reallocating funds** within existing budgets.

Teacher preparation programs and school districts across the country are partnering to develop *paid* teacher residencies through innovative K-12 staffing models. These programs are affordable to teacher candidates, particularly candidates with greater financial need and candidates of color, and are financially sustainable for both programs and districts.

Education First, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, recently organized a Residency Sustainability Webinar Series aimed at spotlighting successful approaches teacher preparation programs and districts have used to develop and implement high-quality, sustainable and affordable teacher residencies. This document provides the highlights from that webinar series.

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<sup>1</sup> Guha, R., Hyler, M.E., and Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). The Teacher Residency: An Innovative Model for Preparing Teachers. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

# Approach #1: Teacher Vacancy Reallocation

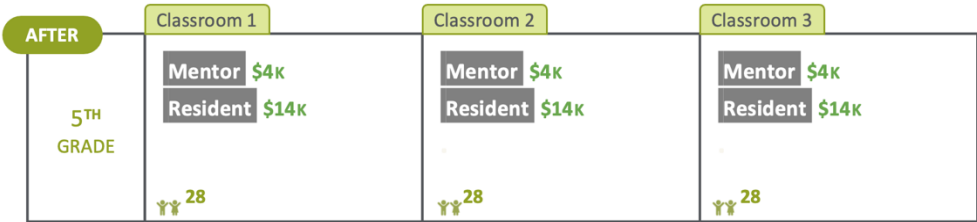
One common approach is for school districts to reallocate teacher vacancy funds. This model uses existing funds in the school budget set aside for vacant full-time teacher positions - or other similar roles such as instructional coaches or assistant principals - and reallocates those funds to support stipends for residents and mentor teachers.

## Example: Teacher Vacancy Reallocation

School “A” has four fifth grade classrooms but only three teachers. The school is struggling to find a highly effective fifth grade teacher to teach in the fourth classroom.



Rather than hire a long term substitute or low quality teacher, the school reallocates the money to pay the stipend of three residents and their mentor teachers. The school then distributes students from the fourth classroom across the three other fifth grade classrooms. With residents in the classrooms, each student has access to a highly effective teacher and a resident teacher.



## Benefits and Considerations: Teacher Vacancy Reallocation

The primary benefit of this model is that residents spend all of their time in the classroom with their mentors, learning directly from highly effective teachers. Additionally, students often have the benefit of two teachers in the classroom. While this model does sometimes lead to increased class sizes, research shows that teacher quality has a greater effect on student learning than having a smaller class size.<sup>2</sup> More specifically, research shows that schools can improve student outcomes by increasing class sizes so they can recruit and retain high quality teachers. One estimate revealed that adding five students to each class allowed the district to provide a 34% raise for teachers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Hanushek, Eric A. (2011). "The economic value of higher teacher quality," Economics of Education Review, Elsevier, vol. 30(3), pages 466-479.

<sup>3</sup> Chingos, M., Whitehurst, G. (2011). "Class Size: What Research Says and What it Means for State Policy," The Brookings Institution.



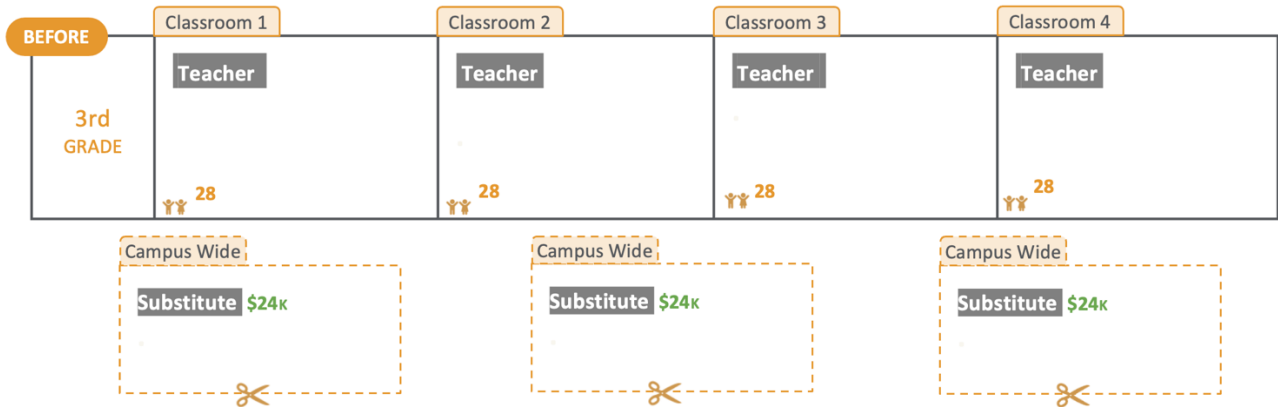
## Approach #2: Substitute Reallocation

Similar to the teacher vacancy reallocation approach, some schools choose to reallocate funds set aside to hire long- and short-term substitutes. The schools then use these funds to pay the resident and mentor teacher stipends.

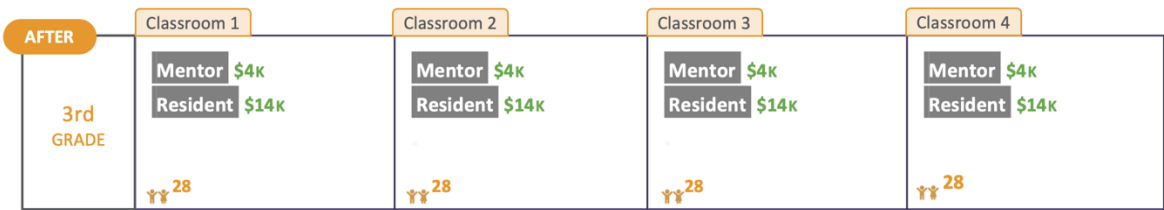
In this innovative staffing model, residents spend part of the week in the classroom with their mentor teacher and part of their week serving as a substitute teacher in a separate classroom on their own. Residents are able to learn from an experienced mentor teacher while also filling the school’s need for substitute teachers.

### Example: Substitute Reallocation

School “B” receives funding to hire three long term subs at their campus.



Rather than hire substitutes, School “B” uses their allotted substitute teacher funds to hire four resident teachers to serve in the absent teachers’ classrooms. Each resident spends one day substituting in other classrooms throughout the school as needed.



Sample Schedule	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
Resident 1	Co-teach * Or sub	Co-teach	Co-teach	Co-teach	
Resident 2	Co-teach	Co-teach * Or sub	Co-teach	Co-teach	
Resident 3	Co-teach	Co-teach	Co-teach * Or sub	Co-teach	
Resident 4	Co-teach	Co-teach	Co-teach	Co-teach * Or sub	University course day

### Benefits and Considerations: Substitute Reallocation

While this model provides a benefit to both the resident and the school, it does require a decrease in the amount of time residents spend learning from their mentor teachers since they spend a portion of their time substitute teaching. Programs address the concern that candidates aren't prepared to substitute teach in different ways. Some schools ensure their candidates have a certain level of readiness before beginning as a substitute teacher. Other schools choose to have their resident stay in the placement classroom with familiar students and have the mentor teacher substitute teach in other classes instead.

## Approach #3: Paraprofessional Reallocation

Some schools reallocate funds set aside for paraprofessionals to fund residents and mentor teachers. In this innovative staffing model, multiple residents can fill the need for a full-time paraprofessional hire. Residents spend part of the week serving as a paraprofessional and spend the remaining time with their mentor teachers.

### Example: Paraprofessional Reallocation

School "C" has two paraprofessionals who have been a part of the school community for years and are interested in moving into full time teacher roles. School "C" therefore creates a model where these two educators spend half of their day co-teaching with their mentor teacher and half of their day providing paraprofessional support to students and teachers

Sample Schedule	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
Morning	Resident 1 co-teaches	Resident 1 co-teaches	Resident 1 co-teaches	Resident 1 co-teaches	University course day
	Resident 2 as para	Resident 2 as para	Resident 2 as para	Resident 2 as para	
Afternoon	Resident 2 co-teaches	Resident 2 co-teaches	Resident 2 co-teaches	Resident 2 co-teaches	
	Resident 1 as para	Resident 1 as para	Resident 1 as para	Resident 1 as para	

### Benefits and Considerations: Paraprofessional Reallocation

Since this model frequently pulls current paraprofessionals, the paraprofessional resident often has deep ties to the community and is likely to stay in the classroom longer. Paraprofessionals also are more likely to be educators of color and teach in hard-to-staff subject areas. However, the resident can spend up to half of their time continuing their paraprofessional duties and therefore might spend less time with the mentor teacher than in other models.

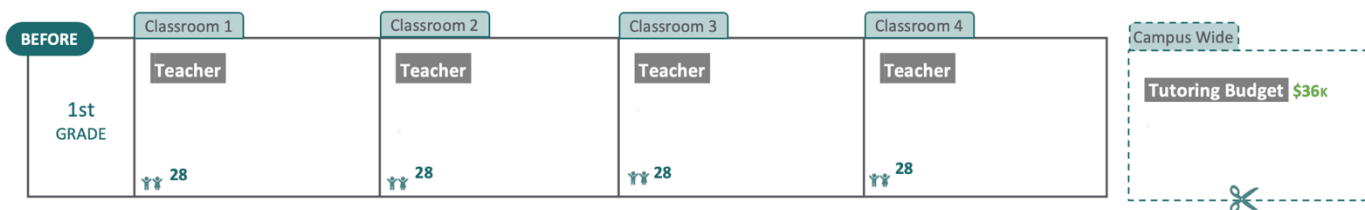
## Approach #4: Tutoring Reallocation

Schools across the country offer supplemental tutoring opportunities in addition to traditional classroom instruction, especially to support students’ post-COVID academic acceleration. This tutoring can be during or outside of the traditional school day.

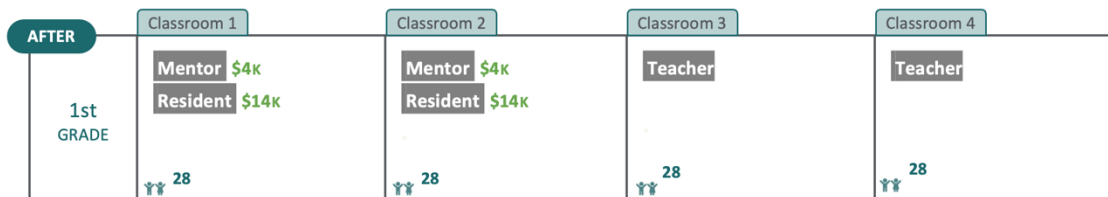
Some schools are allocating funds to pay residents to serve as tutors, under guidance from a mentor teacher. Although it is temporary, and more sustainable funds will need to be identified over time, some schools are using ESSER dollars for this purpose.

### Example: Tutoring Reallocation

School “D” offers supplemental school tutoring during and after the school day for some students and is interested in implementing a residency.



Rather than hire tutors or pay full-time teachers to tutor, School “D” reallocates those funds to hire two residents. Residents tutor students during and after school and work with their mentor teachers during the day.



Sample Schedule	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri
School Day	Residents co-teach	Residents co-teach	Residents co-teach	Residents co-teach	
After School	Residents tutor students across grade bands	Residents tutor students across grade bands	Residents tutor students across grade bands	Residents tutor students across grade bands	University course day

### Benefits and Considerations: Tutoring Reallocation

Like in other models, this approach can serve the dual benefit of filling an immediate school need, namely tutoring for post-COVID academic acceleration, as well as help train future teachers for the district.

## About This Report

Education First, with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, recently organized a Residency Sustainability Webinar Series that highlighted sustainable, affordable teacher residencies and innovative staffing models. To learn more about how the highlighted programs and districts are using innovative staffing models to develop and implement high-quality, sustainable and affordable teacher residencies, you can access the series recordings, presentations, notes and other helpful materials [here](#): These materials include information from the following programs and districts:

- Alder GSE + Pasadena Unified School District and Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
- University of Texas El Paso and El Paso Independent School District
- Arizona State University's Next Education Workforce Teacher Residency + Washington Elementary School District
- Texas Tech University + Muleshoe ISD and Crosbyton ISD
- Chicago Public Schools Teacher Residency
- Boston Teacher Residency
- The Kern Urban Teacher Residency
- Prepared to Teach, Bank Street College of Education
- WestEd
- EducationCounsel

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