

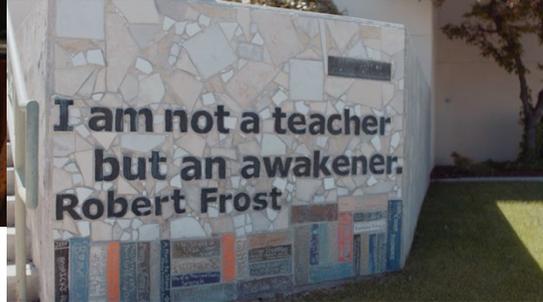


Prepared To Teach marks 10 years of impact, advancing teacher preparation through high-quality, sustainable, paid teacher residencies.

When Prepared To Teach—then known as the Sustainable Funding Project—launched in late 2015, the work focused on establishing funding models to make paid residencies possible. At the time, our goal was clear and urgent: address hiring challenges, reduce financial barriers for aspiring teachers, and create stronger partnerships between schools and universities. Over the past ten years, that work evolved alongside the field itself. What began as a focus on funding models for individual residencies grew into a systems-level effort to reshape how teachers are prepared, supported, and retained at scale.

Through close collaboration with committed partners across the country, Prepared To Teach contributed to meaningful shifts in the teacher preparation landscape and the education system more broadly. These changes included the widespread growth of teacher residency programs; innovative, paid work-based preparation models such as apprenticeships; broader adoption of preservice co-teaching to support learning for both residents and the students in their placement classrooms; and expanded thinking about what it means to learn—and work—as a teacher. As lessons emerged from local partnerships, Prepared To Teach expanded its mission to the state and national level, with the long-term aim of making sustainable, paid clinical practice opportunities the norm rather than the exception.

Successful paid teacher residencies, new apprenticeship approaches, and emerging earn-while-you-learn programs are gaining momentum as a scalable strategy for tackling teacher shortages and improving outcomes. As we reflect on our ten years of experience facilitating this work, our commitment to strengthening capacity on the ground and transforming preparation systems has only grown. This brief shares some of the efforts Prepared To Teach has had the privilege of supporting and leading, with an eye on those that are shaping the future of teacher preparation. Thank you to all of our partners over the years—this would not be possible without you!



SUPPORTING THE FIELD

to scale local and statewide change

From backing individual partnerships to adding capacity at the state level, our work is grounded in changing the status quo for teacher preparation.

Preparation Partnerships Across the Country

Prepared To Teach has long supported the formation and strengthening of preparation partnerships and statewide coalitions dedicated to paid teacher residencies, always grounded in a shared vision for accessible, high-quality pathways into teaching.

From South Carolina to Washington, partners build momentum by aligning districts, educator preparation programs, and state leaders around common goals. In Washington State, Western Washington University joined Prepared To Teach’s national network alongside Ferndale Public Schools. Together, they developed braided funding strategies to support cohorts of residents participating in a rigorous co-teaching model—work later highlighted in [Co-Designing Residencies: Sharing Leadership, Finding New Opportunities](#).

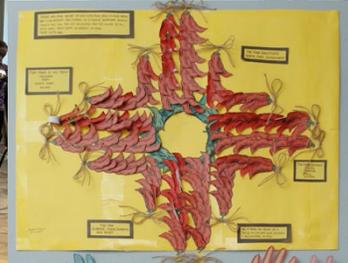
In Wisconsin and Georgia, coalition-building began with the teacher candidate financial burden survey, which provided a concrete, data-informed way to open conversations about how aspiring teachers are financially supported. In South Carolina, a federal Education Innovation and Research (EIR) grant brought districts and educator preparation programs together to position residencies as a whole-school improvement strategy.

In 2024, coalitions from Wisconsin, Georgia, Texas, and South Carolina convened in Albuquerque to learn from New Mexico’s experience building a statewide residency system. There, they heard from educator preparation programs, districts, and the state education agency about how they cooperated to align policy, practice, and funding to scale paid residencies statewide—lessons each coalition brought to their continued work towards financially accessible pathways to the classroom.



“We would not be where we are without the support from Prepared To Teach. It’s absolutely invaluable.”

-Reid Wessels
Former Teacher Residency Coordinator
New Mexico Public Education Department



New York State Residency Certificate

From 2018 to 2022, Prepared To Teach convened more than 100 education leaders from higher education, schools and districts, and professional organizations through the New York State P-20 Collaborative. Together, this group articulated a shared vision for equitable access to high-quality, affordable, residency-stay teacher preparation pathways and advocated for policy change to support that vision.

In July 2022, their efforts resulted in the New York State Board of Regents adopting new regulations that formally established teacher residencies as a recognized preparation pathway and created a residency certificate for teacher candidates. The regulations set statewide standards while allowing flexibility for programs to design models responsive to their local contexts. Critically, the residency certificate enabled candidates to be paid for their work as residents while co-teaching alongside mentor teachers.

These policy changes strengthened the field by bringing consistency, legitimizing paid clinical practice, and accelerating the growth of high-quality, funded residencies across New York State to advance both diversity and instructional quality.

“The work of the partnership was really inspiring—it seemed groundbreaking at the time, thinking of a residency as something that could be self-sustaining. To have that fieldwork happening while you’re taking coursework is great, especially without the pressure of being teacher of record.

It pushed our thinking. We focused on having everything that they needed in the residency year, and then continuing that learning as they moved into teaching.”

- Deirdre Armitage
Director of Field Work
College of Staten Island
P-20 Collaborative Member

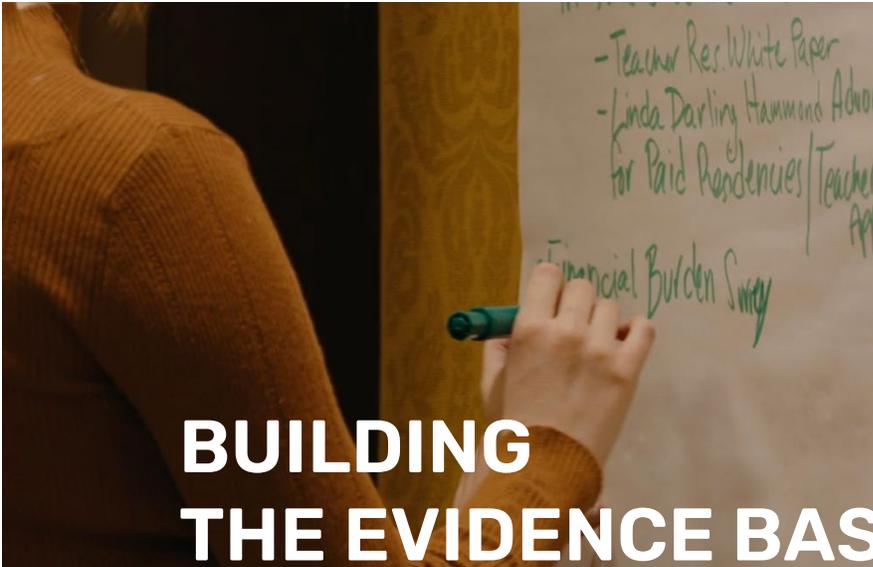


New Mexico’s Transformed Educator Preparation System

Prepared To Teach’s ongoing partnership with New Mexico has demonstrated what is possible when teacher residencies are centered within a vision for a cohesive statewide educator preparation system. Over several years, the state of New Mexico has made deliberate investments in year-long, paid residencies that position them as a key factor in educator readiness, retention, and instructional coherence in the education landscape.

Prepared To Teach has served as an intermediary partner throughout the process, supporting New Mexico in [building a system where high-quality residencies increasingly are seen as the norm](#). Legislative action ultimately secured significant, stable funding for both residents and mentor teachers, enabling paid residency programs to take root statewide. Since that bill was enacted in 2022, hundreds of aspiring educators entered the profession with rigorous clinical preparation and meaningful financial support in the form of a [\\$35,000 minimum stipend](#).

New Mexico’s experience illustrates the impact of aligning policy, practice, and funding: improved placement and retention rates, stronger district/preparation partnerships, and a shared vision for residencies as a key component in a strong and diverse educator workforce.



BUILDING THE EVIDENCE BASE

to make the case for funded clinical practice

Identifying, documenting, and sharing promising practices is core to scaling high-quality teacher preparation. From the beginning, we have prioritized growing the knowledge base about clinically rich preparation.

Sustainable Financial Models for Full Year Residencies

Some of Prepared To Teach's earliest contributions focused on identifying, documenting, and sharing sustainable funding models for paid, year-long residencies. This work explored strategies such as integrating residents into school staffing structures as substitutes or paraprofessionals, reallocating funds from fast-track preparation models, and placing residents into cohorts to maximize efficiency.

These approaches were first shared in our 2018 report, [Clearing the Path](#), and later expanded through the "3Rs" case studies published in 2021, which highlighted strategies for [reallocation of funds](#), [reduction of costs](#), and [reinvestment of savings](#). Together, these resources helped partnerships move from short-term solutions to durable funding structures.



"The residency stipend let me continue my education. I didn't have to go into debt. It allowed me to focus solely on being in the classroom."

- [Alicia Gallegos](#)
Teacher Resident
University of New Mexico



Residency Partnership Domains for Continued Collaboration

Prepared To Teach also articulated a framework for deepening and sustaining residency partnerships that has shaped our work in the field, initially introduced in the report [Five Domains for Teacher Preparation Transformation](#). This framework emerged from work with partners in 2019-2020, and identified five core domains critical to partnership-based residencies: mindset shifts, educator roles, labor market alignment, school improvement, and deeper learning.

Prepared To Teach documented how existing partnerships explored these domains in practice, strengthened collaboration, and expanded the benefits of residency models. Findings from this and continued work on the domains emphasized that lasting systems change must be rooted in justice and equity to ensure educator preparation pathways serve all communities.

64%

of FBS respondents reported significant **worry about monthly bills and expenses.**

42%

of respondents reported significant **worry about tuition costs.**

>50%

of respondents reported a **difficulty to cover an unexpected \$200 expense**

“Having support during student teaching will be incredibly beneficial to focus on learning and growing to be a good educator. I will be able to focus on the classroom and learning. I will not have to worry about working 25+ hours a week to pay rent or buy groceries. Receiving this support will make such a large impact on my life and decrease the amount of stress about basic needs.”

- Anonymous Teacher Candidate
*from 2024 Financial Burden Survey

Teacher Candidate Financial Burden Survey (FBS)

Since 2019, Prepared To Teach’s teacher candidate financial burden survey became a cornerstone contribution to the field. Administered across 28 institutions of higher education in 11 states and reaching more than 2,100 respondents, the survey provides a detailed look at the financial realities aspiring teachers face during preparation.

Findings consistently show that cost-of-living expenses often create more anxiety than tuition, that debt frequently increases during unpaid clinical practice, and that many candidates work 15 to 30 hours per week alongside full-time clinical placements—even when programs discouraged outside employment. Results also demonstrated that state-level funding for clinical practice reduced financial stress and lowered barriers for candidates from underrepresented backgrounds.

Survey findings have been used by individual institutions, statewide coalitions, and advocacy organizations to build the case for paid residencies as a primary pathway into teaching. Prepared To Teach published a [comprehensive brief in 2021](#) and a [summary report in 2024](#), and the survey continues to inform policy and practice as it expands to new sites and states.





CREATING MOMENTUM

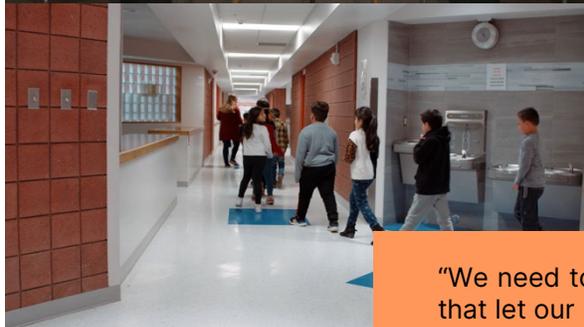
for a better system

Growing public support for a better education system brings true transformation within reach. A key component of our work has always been building a narrative to gain widespread support for high-quality, financially accessible pathways to teaching.



Conversation with Secretary Cardona on the Future of the Teacher Workforce

Prepared To Teach has also elevated national conversations about the teacher workforce. On June 9, 2022, the initiative welcomed U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona to the Bank Street Education Center for a [public discussion](#) on recruiting, supporting, and retaining high-quality teachers.



Following his remarks, Secretary Cardona joined Prepared To Teach's former Executive Director, Karen DeMoss, for a fireside conversation about the challenges facing educators and the systems needed to help people enter—and remain in—the profession. The dialogue underscored the importance of strengthening teacher pipelines, expanding residency models, and deepening connections between higher education and K-12 systems.

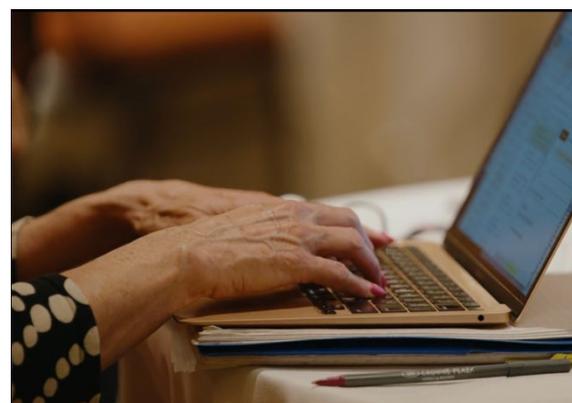
“We need to see more teacher pipelines. We need more programs in our high schools that let our students see themselves as potential teachers in the future. We need to do a better job connecting our higher ed institutions with our K-12 institutions so that there is a marriage there that produces teachers, social workers, psychologists.”

-Secretary Miguel Cardona
in conversation with Karen DeMoss, former Executive Director of Prepared To Teach

National Learning Network Virtual Communities of Practice

Founded in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic, Prepared To Teach's National Learning Network created space for partnerships across the country to learn together virtually. Over a two-year progression, more than 30 partnerships engaged in sustained communities of practice focused on building high-quality, sustainably funded residency programs.

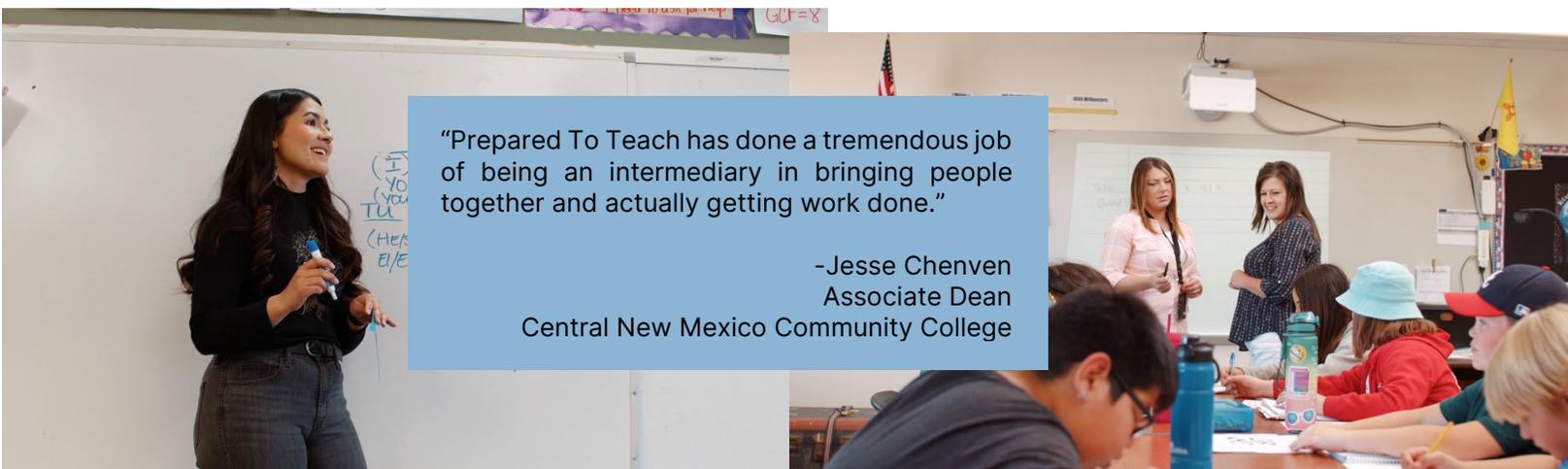
Participants explored shared challenges and solutions across key strands including mindset shifts, staffing, mentoring, curriculum, labor market alignment, and deeper learning—reinforcing the collective knowledge needed to scale effective residency models.



Open Webinar Series

In 2023, Prepared To Teach launched the Foundations to Futures webinar series, a free six-part exploratory series that covered the essentials of creating and growing quality, sustainable, and equitable teacher residency programs. Each webinar featured voices from the field and resources from Prepared To Teach designed to spark action in a variety of focus areas, including school readiness, sustainability, and building political will.

Across these six webinars, hundreds of participants heard from the Prepared To Teach team as well as leaders and teacher residents from the University of Colorado Denver, Fresno Unified Teacher Residency, the New Mexico Public Education Department, the University of Alaska, and the University of New Mexico. Prepared To Teach also shared a number of resources to support teacher residencies such as [Recruitment Campaign Guidance](#) and [Designing and Advocating for Policies That Support Ecosystem Shifts](#).



“Prepared To Teach has done a tremendous job of being an intermediary in bringing people together and actually getting work done.”

-Jesse Chenven
Associate Dean
Central New Mexico Community College

Prepared To Teach’s public-facing work began early. In July 2016, the project’s founding Executive Director published a New York Times op-ed, [Train Teachers Like Doctors](#), articulating the core belief that teaching—like medicine—requires sustained, mentored clinical practice. The piece accompanied our first report, [For the Public Good: Quality Preparation for Every Teacher](#), and helped introduce residencies to a broader national audience.

The argument remains relevant today: if the nation is serious about improving public education, it must invest in aspiring teachers by ensuring they receive real-world practice, expert mentoring, and financial support. Over the past decade, Prepared To Teach amplified this message through webinars, reports, video stories, newsletters, and ongoing dialogue with the field.

In ten years of partnership, research, and advocacy, Prepared To Teach has demonstrated that paid residencies are not only the best way to prepare teachers, they are within reach. By aligning funding, policy, and practice, financially accessible residencies serve to strengthen teacher readiness, improve retention, and expand access to the profession. As the field continues to evolve, Prepared To Teach remains committed to advancing systems that support teachers from preparation through practice—because a stronger, more equitable future for P-12 education depends on getting teacher preparation right.

