

## Welcoming Language for Resident Recruitment

Aspiring teachers begin forming impressions of your program long before they apply. As they navigate your website, review materials, or engage in early conversations, they are often asking themselves: “Will I fit into this space? Can I see myself in this program?” While creating or editing your materials, review the considerations and Language Auditor below to ensure prospective applicants feel a sense of belonging well before they step into their first class.

### Empowering Residents to Share Their Stories

One of the most meaningful ways to share information about your teacher residency is to **elevate residents’ voices** in your materials. Inviting current and graduated residents to tell their stories can inspire people from a variety of backgrounds to want to become teachers and will **help people visualize themselves in your program**. Residents representing themselves and sharing their experiences can naturally enliven your storytelling, communication, and media strategies, while also lending respect to current and former residents. Residents can also shine light on what motivated them to join your program and chances are those motivations will resonate with others.

*“I just love to give back to the community that poured so much into me. After this year-long residency, I can confidently say that I am ready for my own classroom. This is a big dream. I’ll be there in August.”*

— Fernanda G.  
Teacher Resident, Eastern New Mexico University, ‘-24-25

### Inviting Existing Strengths

**Many of our residents are already colleagues** with years of experience in education as paraprofessionals, educational assistants, administrative assistants, etc.

**Recognizing their established foundation in the educational space invites their existing strengths into the teaching force.**

Likewise, prospective teachers who are new to the field also have diverse perspectives to contribute to the profession. Whenever possible, messaging that

conveys, “as an individual, you bring something meaningful to this profession, and we are excited to build with you,” can be incredibly impactful.

*“As a new teacher, my teacher resident brings a lot in that maybe I haven't thought of or it has been a long time since I've thought of it, and so it definitely changed who I am as a teacher and it brought a lot to our classroom.”*

— Allison C.  
Mentor Teacher, Clovis Municipal Schools

## Centering Goals

**The language in recruitment materials shapes how prospective residents see themselves and whether they believe they belong in your program.** Using language and framing that presents a more accurate and complete picture, compared to a deficit frame that centers decontextualized information, helps create an environment that can recruit more prospective teachers.

For example, “John, who didn't complete college,” versus “John, who's always wanted to be a teacher.” Not yet completing college is one factor related to the goal of becoming a teacher, while the point of the statement is John's dream of becoming an educator. **Centering the goal of the individual puts us on a path to achieving that goal, and in our case, motivates people to become teachers.**

*“This resident brings valuable classroom experience from supporting students as a paraprofessional. Her involvement with community and cultural experience helps her build meaningful connections with her learners.”*

— Monika W.  
Director of Residency Initiatives, Central New Mexico Community College (CNM)

**Language Audit & Idea Generator**

Use the questions below while creating or reviewing your materials to ensure prospective residents feel welcomed through the language you use.

<b>1</b>	<p><b>Do your materials include statements from residents?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>Where are there opportunities to add resident perspectives?</b></p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b>Are current or prospective residents described in terms of strengths, experiences, and goals?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<b>4</b>	<p><b>Are current or prospective residents described by their goals instead of perceived deficits?</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes    <input type="checkbox"/> No</p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Find a sentence discussing a current or prospective resident. What information is provided?</b></p>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>If necessary, rewrite the sentence centering the resident’s goals, strengths, and potential.</b></p>

Language that fosters belonging does more than reflect program values—it allows prospective applicants see themselves in your program and encourages them to apply.

*To explore more resources on Recruitment, visit Prepared To Teach’s Guided Toolkit, [Active Recruitment: The Promise of a Paid Residency Pathway](#).*