



NEW MEXICO TEACHER RESIDENCY

What State Investment
Makes Possible



BUILDING A HIGH-
QUALITY TEACHER
WORKFORCE THROUGH
ACCESS, PARTNERSHIP,
AND PRACTICE

 **PREPARED TO
TEACH**

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Executive Summary

“An investment in teacher preparation is critical for the welfare of our students.”

— School Principal

The New Mexico Legislature’s investment in Teacher Residencies grew from two fundamental questions: ***What clinical preparation does every aspiring teacher need to be effective in New Mexico’s diverse classrooms? How can New Mexico ensure every future teacher has access to that preparation?***

These questions take on particular urgency in the context of *Martinez/Yazzie v. State of New Mexico*. In 2018, the court found that New Mexico was failing to meet its constitutional obligation to provide a sufficient education to Native American students, English learners, students with disabilities, and students from low-income families (*Martinez v. State of New Mexico*, 2018). The court’s decision underscored the importance of effective educators in meeting that obligation. New Mexico’s response has required attention not only to teacher shortages, but also to how teachers are recruited, prepared, and supported to serve the state’s diverse students. The state’s commitment to teacher residencies has been one key element of that response: creating a more accessible pathway into the profession while providing aspiring educators with sustained, classroom-based preparation alongside experienced teachers before they become teachers of record. At its core, this work is about ensuring that educators across New Mexico have equitable access to the high-quality preparation they need to effectively serve the students and communities at the center of *Martinez/Yazzie*.

With House Bill 13 in 2022, the Legislature made a substantial investment in teacher residencies— building a statewide approach to preparation grounded in yearlong clinical practice alongside expert mentors, evidence-based co-teaching, strong partnerships between programs and districts, alignment between coursework and practice, and structures for collaboration and continuous improvement. **That investment was intended to strengthen preparation and extend high-quality clinical practice opportunities across the state, so that aspiring educators in every community could enter the profession with the experience and support needed to succeed.**

Since 2022, New Mexico has transformed teacher residency from a promising preparation model into a statewide system. Early evidence suggests that the investment is beginning to translate into stronger workforce outcomes. High completion rates and a growing reach across the state point to a system that is not only expanding access to stronger preparation, but also helping New Mexico build a more stable locally rooted educator workforce.

New Mexico's investment in Teacher Residencies was supported in part through the Government Results and Opportunity (GRO) Trust Fund, with Teacher Residencies among the early initiatives funded through this approach. The GRO Fund was designed to support multi-year pilot programs while pairing public investment with a formal evaluation of implementation and results. For Teacher Residencies, this created an opportunity to sustain and expand the model over a three-year period, as well as examine how the investment was being implemented and what early evidence suggested about its impact.

At the conclusion of the GRO funding period, the New Mexico Public Education Department (PED) conducted a formal evaluation of the Teacher Residency investment, providing statewide evidence on implementation, program quality, and early outcomes (PED, 2026). The early evidence is encouraging. Annual residency completers increased from 184 in FY23 to 306 in FY26¹, while residency graduates entered New Mexico public schools at higher rates than comparable student-teaching completers. Principals reported that residency-prepared first-year teachers arrived better prepared across nearly every area measured, and mentor teachers reported growth in their own instructional, reflective, and leadership skills. Importantly, the evaluation also found that New Mexico was able to maintain the core components of high-quality residency as the model expanded.

This report is additive to that evaluation. Rather than duplicating PED's analysis, it draws on the experiences and perspectives of residents, mentor teachers, P–12 leaders, educator preparation faculty, and state partners to provide additional context for understanding what the investment has made possible. Together, the PED evaluation and this report offer complementary perspectives: the evaluation documents statewide implementation and early outcomes, while this report helps illustrate how those results are experienced in classrooms, preparation programs, partnerships, and communities across New Mexico.

The perspectives in this report come from interviews, implementation activities, and reflections connected to the state's Teacher Residencies work. They were not collected through representative or systematic sampling and are not evaluative findings, but provide context by illustrating how those directly involved in the work have experienced the investment.

Across the state, an early story is emerging:

Teacher Residencies are expanding access to high-quality preparation.

Paid clinical practice is creating a viable pathway into teaching for aspiring educators who may not otherwise be able to afford a year of intensive preparation, broadening who can access the state's strongest model of

¹ FY26 numbers are considered internal and not yet final. The Public Education Department is in the process of confirming the number of completers.

clinical preparation and supporting New Mexico's goal of developing a more diverse educator workforce.

Teacher Residencies are helping districts develop educators locally. Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) and local education agencies (LEAs) can identify candidates earlier, prepare them within local schools, align placements with anticipated workforce needs, and build a pipeline of educators who already know their students and communities.

Residency graduates are entering classrooms better prepared than non-residents. Principals participating in the statewide evaluation rated first-year residency graduates more favorably than other beginning teachers they had supervised across nearly every domain measured.

Evidence-based co-teaching is creating authentic practice for residents while increasing instructional capacity for students. The GRO Evaluation found the model was implemented with a high degree of fidelity across participating programs.

The investment is building statewide infrastructure. Common expectations for residency design, mentor preparation, co-teaching, technical assistance, ongoing evaluation, and a statewide Community of Practice are helping EPPs learn and improve together while maintaining the core elements of high-quality preparation as residency expands.

Looking forward, the next phase for New Mexico **should sustain the conditions and funding that have made residencies possible while expanding access to regions and communities that have not yet benefited from the model.**

Teacher Residencies By The Numbers

184 → 306 | Annual Teacher Residency completers, FY23 to FY26

80% | of residency completers entered teaching positions in New Mexico public schools, compared with 61% of comparable student-teaching completers

65% | of residents for the 2025-26 school year identified as people of color

61 | LEAs hosted residents in the 2025-26 school year

9 | EPPs offering residency in the 2026-27 school year

Making the Case for Residency

TEACHER SHORTAGES REQUIRED MORE THAN A SHORT-TERM STAFFING RESPONSE

"I saw an opportunity to make a bigger difference for New Mexico kids, since so many teachers were coming through non-traditional routes underprepared for the classroom."

— Dean, Institution of Higher Education

New Mexico's investment in Teacher Residencies emerged from interconnected challenges:

- barriers in access to high-quality preparation;
- persistent educator workforce needs; and
- inequities in educator quality across the state's schools and communities.

For many aspiring educators, traditionally unpaid clinical practice requirements create a financial challenge. Candidates are expected to spend substantial time in classrooms—often over 30 hours a week—while simultaneously completing coursework with little or no compensation. Prepared To Teach's New Mexico Candidate Financial Burden Survey found that **approximately 44% of undergraduate candidates' educational debt and 67% of graduate candidates' educational debt accumulated during clinical practice.**² Those barriers also have implications for New Mexico's goal of developing an educator workforce that reflects and can effectively serve the state's diverse student population.

At the same time, districts face continuing pressure to fill classrooms quickly, contributing to a growing reliance on alternative preparation pathways and other pathways that quickly fill vacancies with teachers who are just beginning their preparation. Although these pathways address immediate staffing needs, they often place underprepared educators into classrooms serving the highest-need students and contribute to continued workforce instability (Prepared To Teach, 2021).

In a workforce experiencing high rates of turnover, the state recognized that addressing shortages sustainably required expanding access to the profession while improving preparation for candidates, including those from nontraditional pathways:

"The reason the state invested is because we had a huge teacher shortage. We also know a lot of folks who become teachers are not being prepared to enter schools."

— Dean, Institution of Higher Education

² Analysis of data collected through the Aspiring Teachers' Financial Burden Survey, estimating debt accrued during clinical practice as a share of respondents' total reported debt. For more, see *More Learning, Less Debt* (Mansukhani & Santos, 2021). <https://www.preparedtoteach.org/resources/morelearninglessdebt-voices-of-aspiring-teachers-on-why-money-matters>

New Mexico's investment in Teacher Residencies responds to three closely connected needs: expanding access to high-quality preparation, helping districts build a stronger and more stable educator workforce, and ensuring new teachers have the opportunity to develop the knowledge and skills they need before taking responsibility for a classroom on their own. These challenges cannot be addressed in isolation. Expanding access only matters if aspiring teachers are entering a preparation model designed to equip them to succeed. Stronger preparation has greater impact when it is connected to the workforce needs of local schools and communities and districts are better positioned to retain educators when new teachers begin their careers with meaningful practice, support and experience. Together, these priorities provide the foundation for a more sustainable approach to developing New Mexico's educator workforce.

Expanding Access to High-Quality Preparation

"We have people across the state who've always wanted to be teachers. I just spoke with a student who wasn't able to finish her program because they couldn't afford the full-time student teaching. Now she can. She's coming back, and she's going to get her license."

— Educator Preparation Program Leader

Research consistently demonstrates that well-designed teacher residency programs better prepare novice teachers for classroom practice, improve teacher retention, strengthen staffing in high-need schools and shortage fields, and support high-quality clinical preparation through strong partnerships between educator preparation programs and local education agencies (Saunders et al., 2024). Aspiring teachers need opportunities to learn alongside experienced educators, work with students, plan and teach lessons, assess learning, build relationships with families, and understand broader classroom responsibilities. When clinical preparation is unpaid, however, participation depends on who can afford to spend months without meaningful earnings.

New Mexico's paid Teacher Residencies bring high-quality preparation within reach. For educational assistants, parents, career changers, first-generation college students, and others already supporting themselves or their families, financial support can make the difference between wanting to become a teacher and having a viable pathway for doing so. The effect is tangible at the program level as well:

"We've been able to offer students financial support to sustain themselves through that year. And therefore, our enrollment has increased, and we're able to produce more teachers for the state of New Mexico."

— Dean, Institution of Higher Education

In districts, leaders see the positive impact of residencies on recurring shortages and turnover issues. In one district experiencing significant special education shortages, a leader described prospective candidates "coming out of the woodwork" once they realized a pathway existed that allowed them to prepare for teaching while continuing to meet basic financial obligations.

Financial support broadens who can realistically participate in New Mexico's highest-quality model of clinical preparation. In doing so, the state's investment not only expands access for

aspiring educators, but also supports the development of a workforce that better reflects the racial, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity of New Mexico's students—and is prepared to meet the needs of students and communities that have historically experienced inequitable access to educational opportunity.

Practice-based preparation requires a significant time commitment that can make it difficult for aspiring teachers to earn income while completing their preparation. New Mexico sought to reduce this barrier by providing living expense stipends, helping candidates balance the demands of preparation with their basic financial needs. At the same time, EPP-LEA partnerships help align preparation with local instructional and workforce needs (Pathways Alliance *et al.*, 2022). For many residents, this financial support accompanying the program made a pathway into teaching possible. One former Educational Assistant (EA) had aspired to teach for years:

“As an EA I have always dreamed of having my own classroom but could not afford to pursue school full time and support my family. The generous stipend provided by the residency program has given me the financial freedom to complete my degree. This has changed the trajectory of my entire family. My daughter and I will graduate together this spring and because of the opportunities provided by the residency program, she has now decided to pursue a career in education as well.”

— Teacher Resident

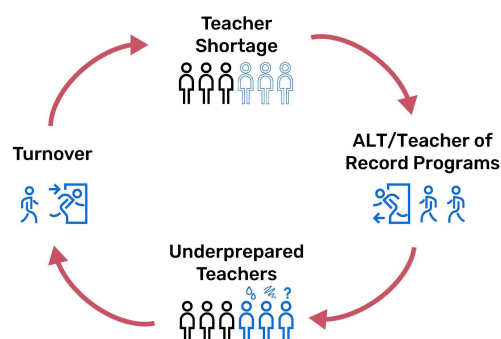
Meeting District Workforce Needs

“The value of hosting residents is that it helps the district plan for its future. We have a steady stream of quality teachers and can look at where they will fit where we have gaps or openings.”

— Human Resources Leader, District

Teacher shortages often place districts in a reactive cycle:

A vacancy opens → the district searches for a candidate → when a fully-prepared teacher is not available, the district hires a candidate on an alternative license → the candidate becomes the teacher of record while still completing preparation → the candidate is overwhelmed and leaves the profession.



Residency allows EPPs and districts to identify prospective educators earlier, prepare them within local schools, align their placements with anticipated workforce needs, and observe their development throughout an entire academic year. Instead of meeting a candidate for the first time during a hiring interview, schools know how that individual works with students, responds to feedback, collaborates with colleagues, and contributes to the school community.

New Mexico is extending this grow-your-own pipeline through its PED-sponsored Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). Registered apprenticeships create an employment-based pathway that begins as early as high school and continues through educational assistant roles, residency, and ultimately licensure, creating multiple entry points into the profession while allowing individuals to earn a salary and benefits as they progress. Together, residency and apprenticeship provide districts with a different approach to workforce development: instead of filling the vacancies as they occur, they identify,

develop, and invest in future educators from within their own communities.

Early numbers suggest the state's investment is already producing results. As documented in NMPED's GRO Evaluation, **80% of residency completers began teaching positions in New Mexico public schools, compared with 61% of comparable student-teaching completers.**

Residency completers are also contributing to areas of documented workforce need, including special education (PED, 2026). District leaders describe the model as giving them an opportunity to move from simply filling vacancies to building a vetted pipeline of future educators.

For some communities, that pipeline is explicitly local. Districts host residents who are alumni of their schools, live in the community, and want to stay close to home. Others are beginning to think about residency placements in anticipation of retirements rather than waiting until a vacancy occurs. Districts feel the value of residency within the local context:

"With the teacher residency, I think one of the greatest appeals was that we could grow our own through that method, and we knew who was out there—many of them are alumni—they want to stay home, they want to serve the community they live in."

— Human Resources Leader, District

Residency can be especially powerful to develop educators for hard-to-fill positions. Districts have an extended opportunity to see their growth, strengths, and readiness for future employment—an experience one principal described as a "year-long interview."

For another principal, that opportunity helped address a persistent special education need. The district placed a resident for the full year in a special education classroom alongside a highly accomplished, supportive mentor teacher. The

resident gained sustained experience in the role while the school was able to intentionally develop a potential future hire:

"This residency gave us the opportunity to put a resident in one of those classrooms with a National Board Certified teacher who was super supportive and stayed the whole year in there. Not only did we get a resident hire, but we got a hard-to-fill position resident hire out of that."

— School Principal

In rural areas, proximity itself can be a workforce challenge that residencies address:

"We invited Teacher Residency into our schools because we are far away from EPPs and need access to new teachers."

— School Leader

When a district can fill a position with a residency graduate, it gains a highly qualified applicant who has spent a year practicing in the role, learning alongside an accomplished mentor, and becoming part of the school community—a teacher who is more likely to remain in the classroom. The proactive, partnership-focused residency model is already helping shift the state's strategy from recruiting teachers after vacancies occur to developing educators in partnership with the communities that need them.

Residency graduates form a pipeline of effective educators who have been prepared in their own schools and communities. Combined with the earlier entry points created through Registered Apprenticeship, residency allows districts to move from reacting to vacancies toward intentionally growing, preparing, and retaining the educators their communities need.

Building the Foundation for a Strong Start in Teaching

"We hire graduated residents because they have proven themselves as educators— they need less onboarding and have a deeper understanding of the school's frameworks and cultures."

— District Leader

Teacher Residencies give aspiring educators the time and support to develop the competencies they need before becoming teachers of record, while expanding the pipeline of well-prepared candidates for districts.

Across participating programs, residents spend a full academic year alongside an accomplished mentor teacher, experiencing the full arc of teaching—from establishing routines and relationships to planning instruction, assessing student learning, communicating with families, managing the classroom, and adapting as students' needs evolve throughout the year.

PED's GRO Evaluation found that programs consistently implemented the full-year residency expectation and that residents received structured mentoring, supervision, and feedback (PED, 2026). The statewide principal survey provides an important early indicator of what that

experience produces. Principals consistently rated first-year residency graduates more favorably than other beginning teachers they had supervised across nearly every domain measured, including (PED, 2026):

- instructional planning,
- classroom management,
- differentiation,
- collaboration,
- professional responsibility, and
- overall readiness for classroom responsibility.

District leaders describe the difference similarly in conversation:

"There is a high value of hiring graduated residents because they have spent a full year honing their craft."

— Human Resources Staff, District

Rather than acting as a passive observer, residents actively participate in the daily work of the classroom, gaining hands-on experience that will ultimately better serve districts and students. A teacher who arrives having already spent a full year practicing in a school can begin their career from a different starting point than someone learning many foundational practices for the first time while simultaneously teaching students.

Residency Benefits In Schools And Communities

STRENGTHENING CLASSROOMS, EDUCATORS AND PARTNERSHIPS

"Teacher residency adds value to our school by providing support to our veteran teachers and growing talented teachers into mentors and coaches."

— School Leader

The benefits of Teacher Residencies extend beyond preparing an individual aspiring teacher. Because residents learn within schools alongside accomplished educators, the model can strengthen the broader environment in which teaching and learning take place. Evidence-based co-teaching supports residents' development while adding instructional capacity for students; mentoring creates opportunities for accomplished teachers to deepen their practice and exercise instructional leadership; and sustained partnerships between educator preparation programs and districts connect preparation more directly to local students, schools, and workforce needs. Together, these elements position residency as an investment in the instructional capacity and professional community of schools in addition to a quality pathway to the classroom for aspiring teachers.

Co-Teaching: Strengthening Preparation and Student Learning

"The students benefit because right away, having another person in the classroom reduces the student-to-teacher ratio. Immediately, you can reach more students, and their academic gain is phenomenal."

— Mentor Teacher

At the center of New Mexico's Teacher Residency model is evidence-based co-teaching, an approach developed and studied at St. Cloud State University. In this model, the mentor teacher and resident share responsibility for planning, organizing, delivering, and assessing instruction rather than transferring the classroom entirely to the resident. A four-year study of the St. Cloud model found statistically significant gains in reading and mathematics achievement among elementary students in

co-taught classrooms compared with students in traditional student-teaching settings (Bacharach & Heck, 2015). Residents and mentors plan, teach, assess and reflect together. This shared approach to instruction creates benefits on both sides of the classroom; it gives residents a structured practice as they develop the competencies necessary for independent teaching while also expanding instructional support available to students.

For residents, co-teaching creates a structured environment for learning the work of teaching through practice. Residents have repeated opportunities to plan, teach, assess, and respond to student needs while their accomplished mentors remain actively engaged in their classrooms. As residents develop and demonstrate key competencies, they gradually assume greater responsibility (Bacharach & Heck, 2015). This creates an intentional

progression toward independent teaching, rather than a more abrupt transition that can occur in traditional student-teaching placements where clinical experiences may be shorter and expectations for quality, practice, and progression are less consistently defined.

At the same time, co-teaching can expand the instructional capacity of the classroom. With two educators actively engaged in teaching and learning, students can work in smaller groups, receive more individualized support, revisit concepts when needed, or extend their learning when they are ready to move ahead (Heck & Bacharach, 2015). Co-teaching also allows educators to use multiple instructional approaches and flexible groupings to better respond to individual student needs.

PED's GRO Evaluation found that co-teaching was implemented with a high degree of fidelity across participating residency programs (PED, 2026). Stakeholder conversations collected to better understand New Mexico's Teacher Residencies story reinforce the impacts of co-teaching. Educators frequently described greater opportunities for differentiation, stronger student-teacher relationships, and increased student engagement in co-taught classrooms.

"We're better able to meet the students where they are because there are two of us."

"Student engagement has been much more effective this year, having a co-teacher. Because we've been able to work together we can individualize everything."

"Our students have made a lot of progress this year. Especially within our literacy block. It's been an excellent experience. And it's been so beneficial for the students."

— **Mentor Teachers**

In addition to anecdotal evidence from educators' lived experiences, New Mexico is

building the empirical evidence base for co-teaching through a federally funded Education Innovation and Research (EIR) randomized controlled trial. The study compares student outcomes in residency co-taught classrooms with outcomes in comparable non-residency classrooms. Over time, this research will help determine whether—and how—the instructional benefits educators describe translate into measurable outcomes for students (PED, 2026).

In the meantime, these experiences help illustrate an important feature of New Mexico's residency model: preparing future teachers and supporting students are not separate activities. **Co-teaching creates a structure in which residents can practice and develop the competencies of teaching under the guidance of an accomplished mentor while simultaneously adding instructional capacity to the classroom.**

Strengthening Instructional Culture and Leadership

"We're not just investing in the teacher resident, we're investing in the cooperating teacher's learning as well. We encourage them to come to co-teaching trainings, we encourage them to learn new skills, and that gives them an option for a different way to look at their own teaching."

— **Educator Preparation Program Leader**

Teacher Residencies are designed primarily to prepare beginning educators, but its benefits extend to the accomplished teachers who mentor them. Recent research examining mentor teachers in yearlong residency programs found that **mentoring can provide experienced educators with opportunities for professional learning and growth, additional classroom support, and a meaningful role in developing the next generation of teachers** (Oh et al.,

2024). Residency provides ample opportunities for experienced teachers to demonstrate leadership, positioning them to share their expertise while continuing to grow professionally within the classroom.

Mentors go beyond supervision in their work with residents. They make instructional decisions visible, model effective practice, co-plan and co-teach, provide feedback, examine student learning, and gradually release responsibility as residents develop. In doing so, mentors are also asked to make their own practice more explicit and reflect on the decisions they make every day:

"Having someone else in the room you're modeling for makes you think harder about things like classroom expectations."

— Mentor Teacher

Mentors also describe residents bringing new perspectives, instructional ideas, and another professional with whom to share the work. In one particularly striking example, an EPP/residency leader described a mentor who had been considering retirement but decided to remain another year after mentoring a resident because the experience had "re-energized" her.

In this way, residency creates a form of classroom-anchored teacher leadership: accomplished educators can extend their expertise, contribute to the development of the next generation of teachers, and continue growing professionally without leaving the classroom. This matters not only for preparing new teachers, but also for recognizing, developing, and retaining the experienced educators already serving New Mexico's students.

Deepening Partnerships Between Preparation Programs and Districts

"It's our responsibility as a district to develop and prepare candidates. We are one of the only employers, most people have to commute. Education is the foundation for all other careers."

— District Leader

One of the most important structural changes created through Teacher Residencies is the relationship between educator preparation programs and the districts that employ their graduates. Under New Mexico's model, EPPs and LEAs work together to recruit candidates, identify and prepare mentors, coordinate placements, provide supervision and feedback, and connect clinical experiences with local workforce needs. Districts play a role in preparation before a candidate applies for a job, while giving EPPs much closer connection to the schools and communities where their graduates will work. As a result, demand for residents—both during their co-teaching year, and after graduation—has increased across the state:

"We have vacancies due to retirements, so developing a teacher residency program is a proactive approach for maintaining effective teachers for our students."

— District Leader

Districts gain the opportunity to communicate anticipated needs while candidates are still preparing. EPPs gain real-time information about the contexts in which their graduates will teach. Residents gain preparation rooted in authentic school environments, and district staff see the value:

"When interviewing for a recent job opening, the resident candidates demonstrated such insight and rich knowledge. Residents are already a part of the district fabric and that cuts the time to get the teacher in the classroom."

— *School Principal*

In our schools, we need local residents, we need people who speak Spanish, we need people who know the community, who want to teach there, who maybe already live there."

— *District Leader*

These partnerships also create opportunities for districts and EPPs to **develop an educator workforce that is more responsive to the linguistic, cultural, and community contexts of the students they serve.** As a result, the traditional boundary between teacher preparation and workforce development is slowly being erased. Preparing future teachers is increasingly becoming a shared investment between the institutions that prepare educators and the communities that will employ them.

DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES	EPP RESPONSIBILITIES
Candidate Recruitment & Selection Identify local workforce needs; help recruit candidates who reflect the community; participate in resident selection and placement.	Candidate Recruitment & Selection Recruit and admit qualified candidates; ensure candidates meet program and licensure requirements; partner with districts on selection and placement
Mentor Selection & Support Identify strong mentor teachers; provide time and conditions for mentoring; reinforce mentor expectations and development.	Mentor Preparation & Support Prepare mentors for co-teaching; coaching and feedback, provide ongoing training and support throughout the residency year.
Clinical Placement & School-Based Support Provide high-quality placements aligned with district needs; ensure residents are integrated into the school community and have meaningful teaching responsibilities.	Clinical Preparation & Supervision Coordinate the residency experience; provide supervision, coaching and feedback; connect coursework to residents classroom practice.
Workforce Planning & Hiring Share anticipated vacancies and staffing priorities; create pathways for successful residents to transition into district teaching positions.	Program Alignment & Continuous Improvement Use district feedback and workforce data to strengthen coursework and preparation alignment.
Shared Responsibility Communicate regularly with the EPP about resident progress, mentor support, placement quality and emerging district needs.	Shared Responsibility Communicate regularly with the district about candidate progress, program expectations, placement quality and opportunities for improvement.

Building a Statewide System Around Quality

FROM INDIVIDUAL RESIDENCY PROGRAMS TO SHARED INFRASTRUCTURE

"We've been able to come together, understand everyone's programs, and know that we're all working toward the same goal. None of us is as strong as all of us, and the collaboration has created stronger programs across the state."

—Dean, Institution of Higher Education

The experiences described throughout this report are the result of residency programs, but they are not possible without the infrastructure New Mexico has intentionally developed around high-quality clinical preparation. That includes:

- common expectations for residency design,
- year-long clinical practice,
- mentor qualifications and preparation,
- evidence-based co-teaching,
- technical assistance and implementation guidance,
- ongoing evaluation, and
- a statewide Community of Practice.

PED's GRO Evaluation found that these core components of Teacher Residencies remained largely consistent and were implemented with fidelity even as participation expanded, showing that New Mexico has been able to scale residency while maintaining quality.

The statewide Community of Practice has been key to supporting quality as Teacher Residencies have expanded. The Community of Practice creates a shared space for EPPs, districts, and state leaders to learn from implementation, exchange effective practices, solve common challenges, develop guidance, and examine data together. The Community of Practice has supported a culture of shared learning and continuous improvement across institutions.

One state leader reflected that they initially expected residency programs to operate more competitively, with institutions developing their own approaches and being reluctant to share what they were learning. Instead, shared investment, ongoing collaboration, and the Community of Practice helped create a more collaborative statewide approach:

“Residency in New Mexico has allowed for increased and more qualitatively rich collaboration between different institutions. We know each other, we work together, but I think the work that’s happened in residency has allowed all of these programs and the people that work in these programs to really become collaborators.”

— Dean, Institution of Higher Education

“Community and mutual support for others are very important to folks in New Mexico. New Mexicans are very proud, and they often consider themselves underdogs. So, when New Mexico engages in public policies that are getting national attention, there’s a lot of pride.”

— University Faculty

This shared learning infrastructure has helped New Mexico move beyond a collection of individual residency programs toward a more connected statewide approach to scaling Teacher Residencies with quality. The Community of Practice creates a space where EPPs and school districts can build relationships, identify and prepare mentors, implement co-teaching, integrate coursework and clinical practice, and solve local implementation challenges.

A statewide learning network allows newer partnerships to benefit from what established programs have already learned. By developing, supporting, and growing this coalition of excellent, aligned programs, New Mexico has begun building a statewide preparation system organized around a shared expectation for quality. As that system continues to evolve, its strength will depend on continued collaboration among partners to learn from implementation, respond to emerging needs, and continuously strengthen practice across the state.

Identifying What We Know and What We Are Learning

“The Teacher Residency is important to our district and schools because vacancies are hard to fill and we want effective teachers—our students deserve it.”

—Human Resources Staff Member, District

New Mexico now has early evidence across several important dimensions of Teacher Residencies. PED’s evaluation indicates that:

- **Statewide implementation reflects the key components New Mexico established for high quality teacher residencies.** Programs are providing full-year clinical practice, co-teaching, qualified mentors, supervision, and structured support.
- **Residency completers enter New Mexico public schools at higher rates.** Eighty percent entered New Mexico public-school teaching positions compared with 61% of comparable student-teaching completers.
- **Principals report residents have stronger preparedness.** First-year residency graduates were rated more favorably across nearly every professional-practice domain measured.
- **Early workforce stability is encouraging.** PED findings indicate that more than 90% of residency completers remained employed in New Mexico public schools during their first year of teaching (PED, 2026).

At the same time, the state should be clear about what is not yet known. Because the statewide initiative began in 2022–23, and data systems were still being developed, most graduates have not yet been in the workforce long enough to assess the three- and five-year retention

outcomes commonly used to evaluate educator workforce stability. Longer-term questions—including teacher retention, instructional effectiveness, career development, and student outcomes—will require continued longitudinal data collection.

WHAT WE KNOW	WHAT WE'RE STILL LEARNING
Residency is scaling while maintaining its core quality components.	How continuous improvement and shared learning through the Community of Practice can continue to strengthen implementation as residency grows.
Residency completers enter New Mexico public schools at higher rates than comparable student-teaching completers.	Whether residency graduates remain in New Mexico classrooms at higher rates over three, five, and more years compared with teachers prepared through other clinical pathways.
Principals report stronger preparedness among residency-prepared beginning teachers.	How these early indicators of preparedness develop over time and what continued survey and evaluation data tell us about graduate effectiveness.
Educators describe instructional benefits for students in co-taught residency classrooms.	Whether and how those experiences translate into measurable student outcomes, including findings from the ongoing EIR randomized controlled trial.
Early workforce stability among residency graduates is encouraging.	What longer-term retention data reveal and how expanding residency into regions that have not yet benefited from the model can contribute to workforce stability statewide.
New Mexico has built statewide infrastructure to support high-quality clinical preparation.	How lessons from Teacher Residencies can inform other pathways into teaching and expand access to the high-quality clinical practice experiences that are central to strong preparation.

Defining the Next Phase

"The funding, the accessibility, the Community of Practice, and the willingness of institutions to share their best practices and ideas with one another have allowed the work to become what it is today. Supporting students was consistently the North Star."

— State Education Leader

Five years into the statewide initiative, New Mexico can see both how far Teacher Residencies have come and what remains unfinished. Annual completers have grown substantially. PED's evaluation indicates that core elements of the model have been implemented with consistency. Residency graduates are entering New Mexico public schools at higher rates than comparable student-teaching completers, and principals report stronger

preparedness (PED, 2026). But access remains uneven. Many districts—particularly rural and geographically isolated communities—still experience workforce shortages without residency partnerships of their own (PED, 2026). At the same time, much of the infrastructure that has helped programs implement and improve residency—including Communities of Practice, statewide technical assistance, mentor development, implementation coaching, continuous improvement, and evaluation—has relied on time-limited funding. The next phase will require sustaining and expanding the conditions that make high-quality clinical preparation accessible across the state, while continuing the deep work that is already underway.

1. SUSTAIN FINANCIAL ACCESS

Paid clinical practice remains central to the model. Aspiring teachers need a way to participate in a year of intensive preparation without assuming the full financial burden themselves. **Continued investment** is necessary to preserve meaningful financial support and ensure that high-quality preparation remains accessible to a broad range of aspiring educators. Just as important, the state can strengthen the structure and predictability of that investment. **A sustainable, recurring funding mechanism**—such as a non-reverting fund—could provide greater flexibility to respond to changes in resident enrollment, placement needs, and program growth from year to year.

With greater visibility into the number of incoming residents, where they will be placed, and the resources needed to support them, funding can be aligned more closely with actual program demand. A more predictable and flexible funding structure would allow programs and districts to plan ahead, expand responsibly, and sustain high-quality residency opportunities over time.

2. SCALE TO WORKFORCE AND REGIONAL NEED

New Mexico has an opportunity to **extend residency into regions and communities where shortages persist** and access to preparation remains limited.

Expansion should increasingly be shaped by strong LEA and EPP partnerships that are responsive to LEA recruitment needs, geographic access, and high-need certification areas, helping more communities develop educators locally rather than relying primarily on external recruitment.

3. **PROTECT THE INFRASTRUCTURE THAT SUPPORTS QUALITY**

The success of New Mexico's Teacher Residencies program to date has depended not only on direct financial support for residents, but on the system-wide infrastructure required to implement residency well and sustain quality over time.

Much of that infrastructure was initially built through time-limited funding. Yet the systems, partnerships, and supports created through those investments have become essential components of New Mexico's residency model. They include:

- strong EPP–LEA partnerships
- accomplished and well-prepared mentors
- co-teaching training
- statewide technical assistance
- Communities of Practice
- implementation guidance
- shared quality expectations
- continuous improvement, and
- evaluation and longitudinal data systems.

Together, these functions create the conditions for consistent, high-quality implementation across programs and regions. They help partners identify challenges early, learn from one another, strengthen practice, and use data to improve outcomes over time.

As New Mexico looks to sustain and expand Teacher Residencies, **continued investment in this infrastructure** will be critical. Growth without the systems that support quality risks creating greater variation in implementation and weakening the very features that have made residency effective. Sustaining these shared supports allows the state to expand access while preserving quality, strengthening accountability, and continuing to improve the model as it grows.

4. **CONTINUE LEARNING AND EVALUATING RESULTS**

Some of the most important student outcomes and workforce outcomes—including teacher retention, instructional effectiveness, and career development—will require continued longitudinal data collection and take additional time to understand. Clear expectations for PED, EPPs, and school districts and charter schools along with continued **investment in longitudinal evaluation** will allow policymakers, preparation programs, and districts to better understand retention, educator effectiveness, workforce mobility, and eventually student outcomes.

Conclusion

BUILDING THE EDUCATOR WORKFORCE NEW MEXICO'S STUDENTS DESERVE

"The investment in residency has been transformational for our workforce and our pipeline, especially around removing barriers to entry into the profession."

— State Education Leader

New Mexico's investment in Teacher Residencies represents a commitment to a different way of developing the educator workforce. Residencies are built around the idea that aspiring teachers should have substantial opportunities to practice before taking responsibility for classrooms, that financial circumstances should not determine who can access high-quality preparation, and that districts and preparation programs should share responsibility for developing the educators communities need and, ultimately, that every student deserves access to an effective, well-prepared teacher, regardless of where they live or the school they attend.

Early evidence indicates that the investment has made a significant impact:

- Annual residency completers have grown from 184 in FY23 to 306 in FY26
- Residency graduates enter New Mexico public schools at higher rates than comparable student-teaching completers
- Principals report that residency-prepared first-year teachers arrive better prepared across nearly every area measured
- Teacher mentors report that their instructional, reflection, and leadership skills are positively impacted by hosting residents

In addition to the benefits to residents, teachers, and schools, New Mexico has shown that the core components of high-quality residency can remain in place while the model expands to classrooms across the state (PED, 2026).

Perhaps equally important, the investment has changed the relationships surrounding teacher preparation. Educator preparation programs are learning with and from one another. Districts are becoming partners in developing educators rather than just employers. Accomplished teachers are taking on leadership roles as mentors. Aspiring educators who could not afford unpaid preparation are finding viable pathways to pursue teaching. Communities are beginning to use residency as a strategy for developing the teachers they will need in the future, and interest in careers in teaching is growing as residency expands:

“The most foundational and important part of our residency program is that it gives respect to the profession.”

— State Workforce Leader

Even still, some regions of New Mexico lack access to residency. Important long-term outcomes still need to be studied. And many of the statewide supports that helped build quality and collaboration have been dependent on temporary funding.

The next phase offers an opportunity to build on what New Mexico has learned:

- **Sustain financial access**
- **Expand residency in response to local and regional workforce needs**
- **Maintain the infrastructure for quality**
- **Build toward long-term sustainability**
- **Continue evaluating long-term outcomes**

With continued support, Teacher Residencies have the potential to become one of the state’s signature education policy accomplishments: a locally driven, collaborative model built around a shared expectation for quality. In doing so, they can help address the educational inequities identified in the *Martinez/Yazzie* consolidated lawsuit by expanding students’ access to well-prepared educators and building a workforce that increasingly reflects and responds to the communities it serves.

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