

Teacher Residencies: State and Federal Policy to Support Comprehensive Teacher Preparation

FACT SHEET

What is the challenge?

States continue to grapple with persistent and, for some, deepening teacher shortages. When schools struggle to fill teaching positions, they often turn to short-term solutions, ranging from expanding class sizes or canceling courses to hiring uncertified or underprepared individuals. All these options can undermine student learning. Growing reliance on abbreviated teacher preparation pathways poses a serious challenge to preparing and retaining quality teachers and advancing learning recovery for students.

What is a research-based solution?

Teacher residencies are a strategy for simultaneously improving the quality of preparation and providing a long-term solution to teacher shortages. Modeled after medical residencies, these preparation programs partner with districts to recruit and pay candidates to work alongside expert teachers, often in high-needs classrooms, while they complete highly integrated coursework from a partnering university. Residents repay these investments with several years of service to the partnering district.

What does the research say?

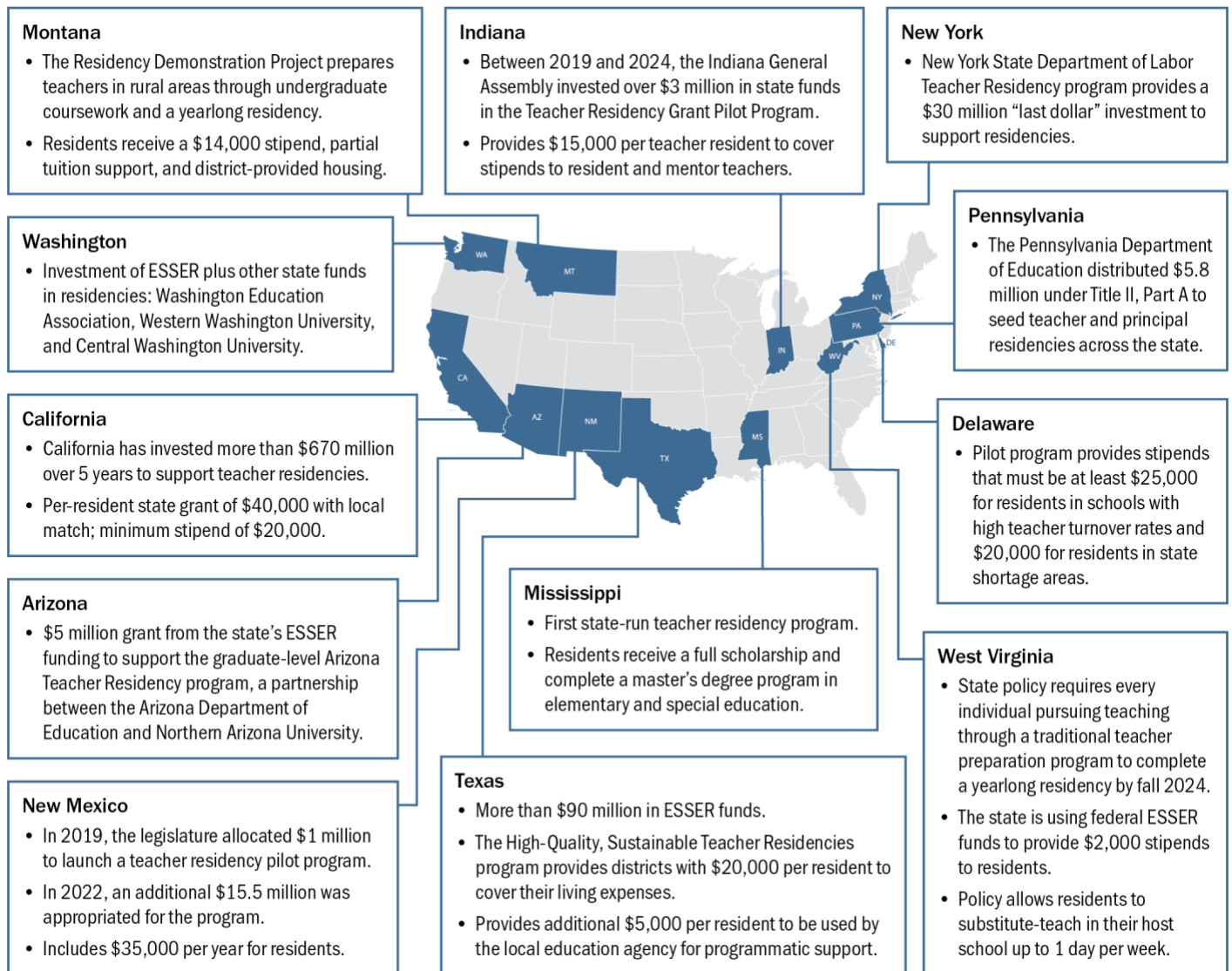
As the number of teacher residencies has grown, so has the research base examining the impacts and outcomes of residencies. Teacher residencies offer a preparation pathway with widespread and lasting benefits for:

- **Schools/Districts:** Reducing turnover is the most important long-term solution to teacher shortages. Teachers' likelihood of staying in teaching and their overall effectiveness are strongly influenced by the quality of preparation they receive, and well-designed residencies have been found to support both outcomes. Studies of teacher residencies also find that they help increase the racial-ethnic diversity of the teacher workforce and address critical staffing shortages in high-need schools and subject areas.
- **Teachers:** Teacher residencies allow candidates to receive financial support during their training, a full academic year of working with an expert teacher before becoming the teacher of record, and induction and mentoring support the following year. Research has found that well-designed residencies support teacher preparedness, effectiveness, and retention. Residency graduates have typically expressed overwhelmingly positive perceptions of the quality of their preparation, and principals who hire residency graduates tend to perceive them as more effective than other novice teachers.
- **Students:** Studies show that teachers prepared through residency programs have a positive impact on student achievement and they stay in teaching longer, which enables them to become even more effective. And because most programs place residents in high-needs schools and residents tend to stay in the same district after they graduate, traditionally underserved students benefit from increased access to well-prepared teachers.

Where is progress being made?

Twenty-two states and the District of Columbia have created or supported teacher residencies in state policy. A recent estimate suggests that by the 2023–24 school year, there were more than 440 teacher residency programs across the nation. States are investing in teacher residency models using both federal and state funds. In addition to COVID-19 relief funds which expire in 2024, federal options include the Teacher Quality Partnership grant program within the Higher Education Opportunity Act; Elementary and Secondary Education Act’s Title II, Part A; Individuals with Disabilities Education Act’s Part D; and AmeriCorps. State approaches include legislatures allocating funding through competitive and partnership grants.

State Support for Teacher Residencies



Source: Saunders, R., Fitz, J., DiNapoli, M. A., Jr., & Kini, T. (2024). *Teacher residencies: State and federal policy to support comprehensive teacher preparation*. Learning Policy Institute & EdPrepLab. <https://doi.org/10.54300/358.825>

Learn more

[Access the full report](#) to understand the growing evidence and policy landscape, including a look at recent efforts to fund and grow high-quality, research-aligned residencies in the 12 states mentioned above.