A TEACHER CHASM IN THE GRAND CANYON STATE: ASSESSING ARIZONA'S EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE AND THE POTENTIAL OF A TEACHER RESIDENCY

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ORGANIZATIONAL ENDORSEMENTS
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Arizona is in the midst of an enduring teacher shortage, one that has only been exacerbated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. As a result, one in four classrooms are either vacant or filled by an individual who does not meet the state’s basic qualifications for teaching. Given that Arizona has the highest rate of teacher turnover in the nation, there is no end in sight to this shortage. The implications of this situation are profound, for both students and for the future of our state, since teachers have more influence over students’ academic and life outcomes than any other school-level factor. Therefore, the state must explore new ways to recruit, prepare, support, and retain high quality teachers for our local schools. Today’s students are tomorrow’s citizens and employees.

Most major cities across the country have established successful graduate teacher residency programs to improve the pipeline of teachers. Teacher residency programs – inspired by the medical residency model – offer a “third way” to educate teachers that attempts to improve upon the shortcomings of both traditional (higher education based) and fast-track alternative post-baccalaureate preparation programs. These graduate-level programs offer a year of pre-service residency in the classroom with one or more skilled mentors, coupled with integrated coursework toward certification and a Master’s degree. Residents receive free or highly-subsidized tuition and a living stipend in the residency year, and then commit to teaching in local schools for at least three years after their residency. Research indicates that this model promotes teacher diversity, teacher retention, and student achievement, especially in Title-1 schools. However, Phoenix – the fifth largest city in the nation – and Arizona writ large, lack a centralized teacher residency program.

This report draws on interviews with 69 local leaders, a survey of 3,000 undergraduate students in local universities, and interviews with four different teacher residency leaders in other states to assess the educational landscape in Arizona and explore whether, and under what conditions, it would be possible to establish a new teacher residency program here. Findings indicate:

1. Leaders across Arizona are greatly concerned about the teacher “crisis” in the state, as it affects both district and charter schools, urban and rural schools, and appears to have resulted in an overall reduction in teacher quality. Many connected this shortage to low education funding, uncompetitive teacher salaries, and lack of respect for the profession.

2. Leaders also recognized great potential in new pathways to recruit, prepare, support, and retain educators in the state. In fact, 66/69 leaders interviewed expressed support for the creation of a teacher residency program as one solution to addressing the teacher shortage, especially the shortage of teachers of color, and advancing the professionalization of teaching in the state.
3. There is an untapped pool of potential teachers in our state who have (or will attain) bachelors in non-education majors that includes people of color, men, and STEM majors. Master’s level teacher preparation pathways like teacher residencies that offer financial incentives including free or highly-subsidized tuition and a living stipend, coupled with a host of other desirable components, may have the best chance of attracting them into the profession.
   a. The survey asked “If a local graduate teacher residency program were to be created, one that included many (if not all) of the components you selected as attractive, would you consider applying?” Approximately 72% of the nearly 3,000 undergraduates surveyed responded “Yes” (26%) or “Possibly” (46%).

4. There is a great deal of interest in starting a residency in the Phoenix-Metro area, where most feel a program could thrive. However, many leaders felt it was imperative to consider an extension to rural areas in the near future because of the acute need there.

5. While residencies are not inexpensive, there are a variety of funding sources available for these programs, both nationally and locally, which may include the Arizona Teachers Academy, Title-1 and Title-2 money from districts, federal grants and Americorps funding, and local philanthropic funding.

6. In order to succeed, a residency will have to strategically select institutional partners, school placements, mentor teachers, and residents who can collectively advance program goals. It will also have to keep an eye on the factors that impact the retention of its graduates, as local conditions contribute to high rates of attrition among teachers from existing programs.

This report offers a comprehensive assessment of the teacher shortage in Arizona from the perspective of local leaders, provides guidance on the incentives that are likely to attract new individuals into the teaching profession, documents broad support for the creation of a residency program in Arizona, outlines a number of strategies to advance the success of a residency program in this local context, and explores the financial sustainability of the model. Ultimately, the report concludes that establishing a local teacher residency is one promising solution to addressing the teacher shortage and should thus be a priority for the state.
Arizona is enduring one of the worst teacher shortages in the nation, which has resulted in thousands of vacancies and overall reduction in teacher quality. There is also a notable shortage of teachers of color in the state. Because teachers have more influence over students’ academic and life outcomes than any other school-level factor, the implications of this shortage are profound. We urgently need more highly qualified teachers, more teachers of color, and more teachers who will remain in the classroom. Establishing a new teacher residency program in Arizona would support these goals.

One of the greatest potential levers to advance the recruitment and retention of high quality teachers is through thoughtful, context-specific pre-service teacher preparation. Teacher residency programs – inspired by the medical residency model – are an especially promising approach to graduate-level teacher preparation that offers one year of pre-service apprenticeship in the classroom with one or more skilled mentors, coupled with integrated coursework toward certification and a Master’s degree. The program provides participants free or highly subsidized tuition and a one-year living stipend in exchange for their commitment to teaching in a partner school for at least three years after the residency. Research indicates that this model promotes teacher diversity, teacher retention, and student achievement, especially in Title-1 schools.

While most major cities across the country now have an established graduate teacher residency program, the Phoenix metropolitan area does not; and nor does Arizona have a centralized residency for hard-to-serve areas. The question is, given the state’s unique context – where per-pupil education funding and the attractiveness of the teaching profession are both among the lowest in the nation – could such a program succeed here?

To address the feasibility of establishing a teacher residency program in Arizona, this report assesses the
educational landscape in the state. First, to evaluate whether and under what conditions qualified individuals would be willing to enter the teaching force through a residency, researchers conducted nine pilot interviews with undergraduates followed by a broad survey of approximately 3,000 undergraduates from both ASU and NAU. Additionally, to better understand the need and evaluate existing sources of institutional and financial support for a residency, researchers interviewed 69 leaders in education and related fields across the state. Finally, to explore how other successful residency programs navigated challenges to become successful, researchers spoke with leaders from four renowned programs and the National Center for Teacher Residencies.

In the following pages, this report:
- Assesses the teacher shortage in Arizona from the perspective of local leaders
- Explores what incentives are likely to attract new individuals into teaching
- Documents broad support for the establishment of a residency program in Arizona
- Outlines a number of strategies to advance the success of a residency program in this local context
- Considers the financial sustainability of the model in Arizona

Ultimately, the report concludes that a teacher residency would offer a promising and worthwhile solution to addressing the teacher shortage; and thus, establishing and sustaining such a program should be a priority for the state.
The U.S. is facing a real teacher shortage. Enrollments in teacher preparation programs are down 35% and there are over 100,000 more open teaching positions across the nation than there are qualified teachers to fill these positions. This shortage is largely driven by teacher attrition, which averages about 8% a year nationally. However, the situation is especially dire in Arizona, where teacher attrition is higher than any other state in the nation at 19%. This attrition is heavily driven by early-career teachers who are far from retirement. As a result, one in four teaching positions in the state is either vacant or filled by an adult who does not meet the basic qualifications to teach.

It is thus unsurprising that leaders across Arizona are extremely concerned about the teacher shortage. Of 69 local leaders who were interviewed for this study, 67 different individuals brought up the challenges associated with the teacher shortage (43), teacher recruitment (44) and/or retention/turnover (49). When asked about the challenges facing Arizona’s P–12 Education system, many local leaders cited the teacher shortage as the most concerning issue. For example, Ylenia Aguilar, President of the Osborn School Board, responded, “I really think that the teacher shortage, it’s number one.” Wes Brownfield, Executive Director of the Arizona Rural Schools Association, also cited the teacher shortage as the primary challenge facing our state’s education system, characterizing it in terms of teacher recruitment and retention: “I’m trying to decide if retention is greater, or recruitment is greater. I think they go together so much.” Several leaders went on to call this shortage a “crisis” for our state. For example, Vince Yanez, the Senior Vice President for Arizona Community Engagement at Helios Education Foundation, explained, “We have a true crisis, and I do not use that lightly,
in teacher flight.” According to the leaders interviewed, the teacher shortage is a significant concern for Arizona.

While it has now reached “crisis” levels, the teacher shortage is not new. Rebecca Gau, Executive Director of Stand for Children Arizona, recounted, “I actually first wrote about the teacher shortage when I was at the Morrison Institute. I think it came out in 2000 or 2001, and that was two decades ago and it's gotten worse.” Petra Pajtas, Chief Operating Officer for BASIS Education, identified the shortage as “an ongoing plague in Arizona for the last 10 years.” Although the deficit of qualified teachers in our state’s schools has been deepening over the last 10–20 years, the COVID-19 pandemic has fiercely exacerbated this trend. As Justin Wing, Director of Human Resources for Washington Elementary and former President of Arizona School Personnel Administrators Association (ASPAA), explained, “I’ve had folks ask me, ‘oh is COVID the reason for the ultimate teacher shortage?’ The answer is ‘no, there's been a teacher shortage, it just has worsened.’” The data from the survey of schools that Wing helps coordinate for ASPAA indicates that hundreds more teachers have left this year than in previous years, many citing the pandemic in their reasoning. Thus, an already troubling situation has become increasingly dire, with Arizona districts now reporting thousands of unfilled teacher vacancies.

"Districts are desperate for teachers regardless, but they're especially desperate for quality teachers."

Arizona seems to be especially short on quality teachers. Chris Kotterman, Director of Governmental Relations for Arizona School Boards Association, reported, “Districts are desperate for teachers regardless, but they're especially desperate for quality teachers.” Several administrators from across the state who were interviewed for this study described situations where they were not able to differentiate hires based on teacher quality because they only had “two people applying for a job” and had to choose the “lesser of two evils” because they needed adult “bodies in the building, just for the purpose of daycare.” As many districts have been unable to fill all of their teacher vacancies, they cannot afford to be selective in their hiring. As a result, the teacher shortage has reduced the quality of teachers in our schools – the single most important school-level factor in student outcomes.

Charter schools are experiencing the same challenges with the teacher pipeline as district schools. Ashley Berg, Executive Director for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools explained, “The teacher pipeline is definitely a concern. I think not having a consistent workforce and a workforce that is skilled in actually teaching students is very difficult.” Julia Meyerson, the Founder and Director of Vista College Preparatory charter schools, also expressed serious concerns about the shortage: "I deeply believe that talent and the talent pipeline is by far going to be one of our biggest
barriers. We are hoping to...grow into two more schools next year and we are worried that we can't staff them.” In fact, even BASIS Education (whose schools rank among the top in the state) has had trouble filling teaching positions over the last few years, especially in Economics and Latin, according to Petra Pajtas. The teacher shortage impacts most schools across the state, and thus most children, making it a fairly universal concern.

Across schools in Arizona, the shortage of teachers is most acute in particular subject areas. Michelle Udall, Arizona State Representative for District 25 who is also a local teacher, described “big shortages” of teachers “in areas like math, science, [and] Special Ed,” as well as school counselors. Dr. Andi Fourlis, Superintendent of Mesa Public Schools further emphasized the need for special education teachers: “We have 26 vacancies right now. And the majority of those are in special education.” And Dr. Heather Carter, Executive Vice President of Greater Phoenix Leadership and former State Senator, drove home the need for STEM teachers: “Physics teachers in Arizona are almost extinct, there's only like 150 of them left statewide.” While there is a need for teachers in all subject areas and levels across the state, Special Education and STEM teachers are harder to find.

Like other states, Arizona also has a shortage of teachers of color, as approximately 75% of teachers are white and more than half of school children are people of color. Many local leaders lamented this mismatch. Dr. Suzanne Zentner, Director of Talent and Recruitment for Phoenix Union High School District, explained “We want our workforce to more directly mirror our student body and that, while it sounds very practical, it is very challenging.” Dawn Wallace, Vice President for Civic Leadership at the Flinn Foundation who formerly led the Governor’s education policy agenda, provided more context on the importance of teachers of color:

> We can't address our achievement gap without having teachers in the classroom that children and their families can identify with, that understand the cultural aspects of their living environments, their learning environments. And frankly, I think that you will have better attendance, you will have better parent teacher collaboration, you'll have more respect, I think the students will feel safer [with teachers of color].

Extensive research indicates that teachers of color meaningfully advance the academic achievement of students of color, and also benefit white children in important ways, and thus it is important to find ways to recruit and retain a more racially diverse teaching force. However, that is not happening now in Arizona.

The teacher shortage also disproportionately impacts Title-1 urban and rural schools. Nationally, rates of teacher turnover are 50% higher in Title-1 schools and 70% higher in schools that serve predominantly students of color. And while one in five students attends a rural school in the U.S., it is harder to recruit and retain teachers in rural areas. Arizona seems to follow this trend. Rebecca Gau described how the parents she serves in the greater Phoenix-metro area have “witnessed firsthand what it means to be in a low-income community with low property wealth” by observing the “revolving door of human bodies, regardless of quality, skills, certificate, credentials, training” in
their schools. Rural schools, too, have also been “hit...incredibly hard” by the shortage in Arizona, as Christine Marsh, State Senator for Local District 28 and 2016 Arizona Teacher of the Year, observed. State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman reaffirmed that the rural areas are where she sees “the greatest challenges,” from infrastructure to teacher recruitment. The urban and rural school administrators who were interviewed for this study corroborated the acute need for quality teachers in their schools.

To address the teacher shortage, leaders will have to find new ways to attract people into the teaching profession in Arizona. As Erin Hart, Senior Vice President and Chief Impact Officer of Expect More Arizona, noted, “There’s a big need obviously to recruit more teachers, but I think specifically many teachers of color, we [also] need men representing the communities that we’re serving.” But because teaching is considered less desirable in Arizona than any other state in the nation, recruiting diverse and qualified teachers – including men and people of color – will not be an easy feat. In the survey of nearly 3,000 undergraduates done for this study, 42% responded that the job of a public/charter school teacher in Arizona was “not appealing at all.” Of the aspects of teaching they considered “least appealing,” undergraduates overwhelmingly selected “pay not as high as other professions,” followed by “not always having control over what you teach,” and “perceived lack of support from higher ups.” Given this perception of teaching among undergraduates, it is unsurprising that fewer are entering the profession than in the past.

While recruitment is half the battle, the other half is retention, especially for new teachers. In Arizona, 42% of teachers leave within their first three years of teaching, and 22% leave after only the first year. Dr. Andi Fourlis described a common situation: “We take our most vulnerable teachers with the least amount of experience, then we give them the most difficult courses with the most difficult kids with the least amount of resources, and then we say, ‘why don’t they stay?’” Working conditions can be particularly difficult for new teachers, and we may expect too much of them, especially given that many have not had much preparation for what they will encounter in the everyday work of teaching. Melissa Trujillo, Co-Founder and Executive Director of Be A Leader Foundation, reflected, “I understand why teachers burnout after a few years, because we asked them to do so much, not just teach our kids, but they feed our kids. They counsel our kids, they’re there for not just the learning, but the social emotional learning.” New teachers are rarely fully prepared for the professional realities of teaching, especially in our underserved schools, which can impact their retention. But other factors also contribute to Arizona’s staggeringly high rate of teacher attrition.

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Another powerful factor that contributes to turnover is the increasing deprofessionalization of teaching in Arizona. Dr. Mina Bhagdev, Hamilton high school teacher, warned: “It’s the deprofessionalization of our profession. It’s that whittling down of the importance of what we do, and yet every individual we talk to says how important teachers are, but systematically I feel like the profession is being eroded...I think that's the biggest challenge.” Likewise, Lloyd Hopkins, Executive Director of the Million Dollar Teacher Project, attributed this lack of professionalization to the systemic devaluation of teachers. He explained, “We think just anybody can do it and that's not the case. Not just anybody can do it... once we can turn that mindset around, we’ll have a stronger, healthier teaching profession, and if we really want to have healthy communities, if we really want to have healthy schools, it starts with having a healthy teaching profession. That's where it begins.” Addressing deprofessionalization is just one of many elements that may ameliorate the current teacher shortage.

School leadership also plays a role in the retention of all teachers; but Arizona seems to have a school leadership crisis, too. Multiple leaders interviewed for this study emphasized the role the school principal plays in retaining teachers, in part because the principal influences working conditions. Dr. Pam Roggeman, Dean of the College of Education at the University of Phoenix, explained, “What the research has really shown for professional development, and also for school effectiveness, is the power of the building principal, and that is something really that I think districts are starting to realize...teachers don't leave the profession, they leave their building, they leave their building because of leaders.” Unfortunately, the teacher shortage may be contributing to a shortage of quality school leaders, as many administrators begin as teachers. Christine Thompson, former CEO and President of Expect More Arizona, observed, “We've been seeing recently there's a lot of turnover at the principal and superintendent level, and teachers are the main talent pipeline for education leadership. Because the teacher recruitment and retention crisis has persisted, you start seeing a school leadership crisis.” Dr. Mark Joraanstad, Executive Director of the Arizona School Administrators Association, corroborated this point, emphasizing the need for the “recruitment and retention of skilled educators at all levels,” from “classroom aides” and “bus drivers” to “teachers, principals, [and] superintendents.” Arizona seems to be suffering from these intertwined educator shortages more than other states.
Educator shortages are inextricably linked to school funding. With some of the lowest per pupil spending for education in the country, schools in Arizona rarely have sufficient funds to pay teachers competitive wages, hire the best principals, lower class sizes, or update infrastructure. And thus teacher recruitment and retention is in many ways related to school funding. As Tim Carter, Yavapai County School Superintendent, described: “Teacher recruitment and retention is obviously a huge issue and it's probably right there next to funding, and it is probably in many ways attributed to the lack of funding.”

Of the school leaders who were interviewed for this study, more than two-thirds of interviewees (49) discussed limited school funding, and for good reason. Arizona has repeatedly ranked last for school funding: both in funding level and effort. A 2020 report from the Education Law Center emphasizes that Arizona’s current per pupil expenditures are nearly $6,000 lower than the national average, even after accounting for regional differences. This, in turn, challenges school leaders to meet their achievement goals with fewer resources. In speaking about his own experience as Superintendent of the Holbrook Unified District, Dr. Robbie Koerperich stated, “Clearly the overall funding commitment from the state legislature really is not adequate. It doesn't match the goals for educating students in Arizona, neither the state goals for K-12 or even the district goals.” Limited funding impacts a school’s ability to meet goals for students, and it also impacts which teachers they are able to hire and retain.

“Clearly the overall funding commitment from the state legislature really is not adequate. It doesn't match the goals for educating students in Arizona, neither the state goals for K-12 or even the district goals.”

Teacher pay is likely the greatest deterrent to those considering entering the teaching force in Arizona. As noted above, undergraduates who took the survey for this project identified “pay not as high as other professions” as the least appealing aspect of teaching. Mary Jane Rynd, CEO of the Piper Charitable Trust remarked on this phenomenon: “Part of the challenge of attracting people to the teaching profession is a feeling of lack of being appreciated. That’s directly tied to compensation and the many things that one teacher is expected to accomplish.” Steve Larson, Director of Educator Recruitment and Retention at Arizona Department of Education, reported: “Every time we talk to anybody or anything comes out, [it] always is salary... That’s the number one reason that people are struggling with going into the profession. It's been that way for a long time and it continues to be that way.” When adjusting for cost of living, teachers in Arizona are paid less than they would be in any other state in the nation, which limits who will consider entering the profession here.
Low teacher pay also impacts teacher retention. Kim Graham, Executive Director of the Arizona Educational Foundation explained, “We have the unfortunate distinction in Arizona, of being at the top for teachers leaving the profession. A lot of that has to do with years worth of disrespect and a lack of importance placed on incentivizing teachers to remain in the profession. Providing teachers with a basic living wage is not an incentive.” As a result of pay, which is often associated with respect and social standing, some teachers are leaving the state or profession well before retirement. Dr. Paul Koehler, Senior Director of Leadership Development and Outreach at WestEd, observes: “Teachers leave Arizona to go to other places, because they make more money.” However, pay is not the only reason teachers are leaving the profession in Arizona.

School funding also impacts teachers’ working conditions – leading to large class sizes, crumbling infrastructure and insufficient materials – another important factor in teacher retention. Kim Tobey, Director of Field and Student Teaching Experiences at Rio Salado College, described the challenge of class sizes this way: “Class size continues to be a concern. There are families out there right now struggling to keep just one child engaged at home during the pandemic and yet as a society we expect a teacher to engage all 35 learners on their own; no other industry requires a 1 to 35 ratio of employee to customer!” And then there is the actual infrastructure of schools, as Dawn Wallace explained, “Many of our school buildings need significant repair and renovation, they also need retrofitting to accommodate learning environments that are so important to young kids today.” Large class sizes, insufficient resources, and outdated infrastructure make the work of teaching less sustainable, leading to increased turnover, especially at the least resourced schools.

Funding inequities further exacerbate turnover trends. Of leaders interviewed for this study, 46 mentioned funding disparities between schools across the state, particularly between affluent and non-affluent schools. Arizona is one of only eight states that does not account for poverty in funding distribution, which means that poorer districts do not receive additional state funding and must find ways to supplement per pupil expenditures to meet the unique needs of their students. Many of the more affluent districts pass bonds and/or overrides, and solicit tax credit donations to augment funding, but this strategy is not as productive for lower-income districts, where nearly all families qualify for Free and Reduced Lunch. As Rich Nickel, CEO and President of College Success Arizona explained, “even when you have...lower income neighborhoods who are willing to tax themselves, they just can’t produce the volume needed to supplement their schools at the same rates because their tax base isn’t high enough.” Jim Swanson, CEO of Kitchell Corporation, observed these disparities when he served as co-chair of the “Classrooms First” initiative through Governor Ducey’s office:

Many of our areas where we need to invest the most, they have the least amount of additional resources... Schools where I live are able to pass bonds and overrides and often schools in ethnic, poor or rural communities or urban communities don't have the resources or the tax base to get additional funding. It's a significant issue and one that needs to be addressed to continue to tackle equity.
Moreover, Dr. Michael Robert, Superintendent of Osborn Unified, described the way that the state’s results-based funding exacerbates these inequities by “rewarding those [districts] that are doing well [on state tests] and those that are doing well are predominantly in higher socioeconomic neighborhoods.” Research confirms that socioeconomic status largely predicts students’ standardized test scores. 

Therefore, affluent districts have multiple additional sources of funding at their disposal that high-poverty districts do not. There are also funding disparities between schools serving mostly white students and those serving students of color. In fact, a recent report by EdBuild found that across Arizona, districts serving predominantly children of color receive 46% less funding (or $7,613 per pupil), on average, than districts serving mostly white students; this disparity in funding between schools serving mostly white students and schools serving mostly students of color is much higher than any other state in the nation (the average is $2,226 per pupil). Thus, while low income districts and districts that serve mostly children of color may have greater and different needs than affluent and mostly white districts, they also have fewer resources to care for students and provide various opportunities for growth. This makes teaching in these districts particularly challenging, especially if teachers have not been prepared to make do with less.

“\n"In addition to leading their classrooms, teachers often carry the additional responsibility of meeting students’ needs in and out of school...leading to higher levels of teacher burnout, and therefore, turnover."

As a result of these inequities, Arizona schools that most need high quality teachers have more turnover. The Executive Director of Teach for America in Arizona, Katie Tennessen Hooten, has seen this play out across districts. She said:

"To ensure all students have access to the educational opportunities they deserve, schools need to be able to meet students’ multifaceted needs and create safe and healthy learning environments for everyone in their school. This requires funding and additional resources, and schools in our lowest-income neighborhoods are often underfunded. This means that in addition to leading their classrooms, teachers often carry the additional responsibility of meeting students’ needs in and out of school, investing their own money and time well beyond the traditional school day, and leading to higher levels of teacher burnout, and therefore, turnover."

Ideally, districts that serve under-resourced students would be able to retain quality teachers who are able to adapt and meet their needs, but that is often not the case. Rebecca Gau explained how funding inequities are the root of this turnover: “The state funding just doesn’t make up for the difference in local property wealth. And so they just can’t pay teachers enough to drive there, work there, there’s no place to live there...so there’s this kind of perverse incentive, or kind of flipped incentive in that...
space where...the best teachers go to the places that need them less.” In this way, funding inequities lead to staffing inequities which deeply impacts the student experience, especially in lower-income districts.

It is clear from this report, like others that have preceded it, that there is a persistent need to invest more money in the education system in Arizona. This would be especially beneficial for students at low income schools where it is harder to attract and retain teachers, as research repeatedly indicates that better school funding results in better outcomes for low-income students. However, the state must also attend to its teacher pipeline, identifying and supporting research-based approaches to teacher recruitment, preparation, support, and retention because the teacher shortage has become a true crisis for Arizona. As Dr. James Zaharis, Executive Vice President of the Arizona Business and Education Coalition, noted, “The truth is, we need a teacher core. There's a huge gap between what we need and what we have and so we have to be open to all possibilities of getting great people teaching our children.” Therefore, leaders must act now to address the teacher shortage from every angle, and a promising place to start would be recruiting new teachers into preparation pathways that support retention.
Given that the teacher shortage has reached crisis levels, Arizona must find new ways to recruit and retain teachers. However, the circumstances discussed above make attracting competitive candidates a challenging feat. As Dr. Camille Casteel, former Superintendent of Chandler Unified asked, “How do we get the right makeup and the best individuals to come into this profession, when there's so many more choices out there, especially for females?” Therefore, this study sought to understand whether and under what conditions current undergraduate students would consider pursuing teaching in the state.

Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of undergraduates who were surveyed for this study identified “pay/salary” as one of their primary considerations when selecting a career. In fact, 48% “somewhat” or “strongly” agreed with the following statement: “salary is the most important factor in my career considerations.” One respondent explained, “I don't really come from a family with a lot of money. I need to know that I can support my own family in the future and also help support my parents and siblings if needed.” However, “personal fulfillment” closely tailed this consideration, followed by “job security,” and “contributes to social good or social change.” One student noted, “A livable wage is obviously nice, but mostly I want to do something that has a positive, practical, and tangible effect on the community.”
While teaching does not pay well in Arizona, it is often associated with personal fulfillment, job security, and contributing to social good in the community. Relatedly, while 42% of undergraduates responded that teaching was “not appealing at all” – largely because they believed the pay was not as high as other professions – 57% of students responded that the job of a public/charter school teacher in Arizona was “quite admirable” (33%) or “extremely admirable” (24%), with another 22% considering it “moderately admirable.” One undergraduate elaborated, “I love children and helping them learn. I think that education is one of the most undervalued fields. People don’t realize how important a teacher or an educator can be in a child’s life and how far their
actions can change a certain person.” There were several aspects of the teaching profession that respondents did find attractive.

When asked to select all the aspects of teaching that most resonate with them, undergraduates largely selected the responses below (in order):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASPECT OF TEACHING THAT RESONATES</th>
<th># OF RESPONDENTS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Sharing your love of a particular subject matter with others&quot;</td>
<td>2,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Helping support and guide students to follow their own dreams&quot;</td>
<td>2,217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Shaping future citizens as society starts in the classroom&quot;</td>
<td>2,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Facilitating those 'aha' moments when students learn something new&quot;</td>
<td>2,056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Forming meaningful relationships with young people and their families&quot;</td>
<td>1,971</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

These ideas correspond with the highly-rated career considerations of personal fulfillment and advancing social good. In fact, 67% of respondents had considered becoming a teacher themselves, despite the fact that only 16.5% had ever taken a university course in education and fewer than 2% were enrolled in a teachers college or school of education. Many of the respondents were potentially open to becoming an educator, but were not actively pursuing it in their undergraduate studies.

The majority of teachers in the U.S. are prepared through undergraduate teacher education pathways. However, the undergraduate students in this study – most of whom were juniors or seniors – had chosen not to enter one of these pathways. One undergraduate explained, “It's difficult to know at 18/19 what you actually want to do for a living.” And many others stressed the importance of having flexibility to pursue their passions in college, which they felt the required undergraduate teacher preparation coursework limited. Thus, when asked which pathway into teaching was most attractive, only 27% of respondents selected the undergraduate pathway, while 61% of undergraduates responded that the graduate teaching degree (29%) or alternative post-baccalaureate program (32%) were the most attractive pathways (12% selected entering teaching without any preparation). One student explained why she selected the graduate pathway, “[I] will be at an older age when entering the classroom—more time out in the world, better sense of self, more time learning in a variety of environments and with different types of people.” Another undergraduate who selected the alternative pathway as most attractive added, “I think it would be important to get a
degree in a subject that you are passionate about because my favorite teachers were the ones who loved the subject they taught.” These responses indicate that while undergraduates may be less interested in pursuing teacher preparation in college than they were in the past, graduate and alternative programs have the potential to access a unique pool of qualified candidates that has not yet been tapped.

The challenge then becomes how to draw individuals into one of these pathways to pursue a profession they consider admirable, but not attractive, mostly because the pay is lower than in comparable fields. When asked to select all incentives that might tempt them to apply to a program, undergraduates’ top responses were:

- Living stipend given to you during the first year while you complete your apprenticeship in local schools
- Completing teacher certification through the program without having to pay any tuition
- The option to complete a Master’s degree through the program in the following year without having to pay tuition (because it is highly subsidized through loan-forgiveness or grants)
- Job placement support through the program, with nearly guaranteed employment in a local school after the first year

These are primarily financial incentives. Many respondents described the “stress” of completing coursework while having to work to pay for tuition and the increasing cost of living. One respondent added, “if I was in a program that would relieve that stress and still allow me to get my degree I would be so elated.” Another respondent explained, “A stipend would make it more doable for those who have lower incomes and would either not be able to do it at all, or would struggle to get through the program otherwise. Lots of programs like these offer great parts to them, like prestige and a promising job outlook, but not many of them offer anything monetary.”

Moreover, respondents associated guaranteed job placement with financial “stability” and a “protection” of the time/money they invested in the program. Although salaries in the teaching profession may be lower than other fields, this data suggests that teacher education pathways can attract and retain candidates by lowering the financial burden of entering the profession.

Undergraduate respondents also appreciated many non-financial program components. These included (in order): a year of preparation under a skilled mentor
before teaching, continued support through induction, racial diversity among peers, explicit focus on equity, and leadership and advocacy training and networking. Respondents felt that both thorough preparation prior to teaching and induction support would help them be successful in their work. One respondent explained, “A year of preparation under a skilled mentor is key to succeeding as a teacher since you get to experience first-hand the techniques and resources used to be a good teacher.” Another added that continued support through induction would help sustain them in the profession because they would feel “like I’m not alone.” Undergraduates also emphasized the importance of a program prioritizing equity and diversity to advance social good. One respondent explained, “I want to leave the world better than I found it, and firmly believe that the future generations are the answer to greater equity, equality, and tolerance.” And a different undergraduate reflected, “I strongly believe that it is very important for students to see teachers from all backgrounds.” Finally, respondents felt that leadership and advocacy training could help improve teachers’ impact on students and their community. For undergraduates, program components like the above corresponded with their non-financial career goals by making them feel better able to achieve personal success and advance social good.
When asked to select just the MOST desirable incentive, the Master's degree ranked highest (23% of respondents selected this option). One respondent wrote, “Although finances are not a primary reason for career choice for me, the cost of school is an important factor for me...since I am a low-income student. The ability to get a graduate degree is important to me and for low to no-cost is appealing.” Another suggested that the challenge of teaching in Arizona seems to require advanced education: “I feel like teacher's [sic] have to get a master's degree to survive in Arizona.” A Master's degree can also lead to higher pay by allowing teachers to move up the pay scale in schools. Many of the undergraduates surveyed for this study were looking toward the future with an eye on graduate school and the hope of pursuing a personally fulfilling career that contributed to social good, but they were largely concerned about how to pay for it.

As the pandemic recedes, thousands of Arizona classrooms remain unfilled by a qualified teacher. But students need caring and highly-skilled teachers more than ever. And many of the local leaders interviewed for this study agreed that Arizona needs what Stephanie Parra, Executive Director of All in Education, called “an all hands on deck approach” to recruiting and retaining more teachers. Leaders generally felt that teacher preparation pathways play an essential role in this process. And according to the results of the survey conducted for this study, Master's level teacher preparation pathways that offer financial incentives like free-tuition and a living stipend, coupled with a host of other desirable components that advance a teacher's ability to be personally fulfilled and contribute to social good, may have the best chance of attracting highly competitive candidates who might not otherwise enter teaching. The teacher residency model is a highly successful example of this type of program, one that has a lot of potential for Arizona.
Inspired by the medical residency model, teacher residency programs are an especially promising approach to graduate-level teacher preparation. Residency programs offer a “third way” to educate teachers that attempts to improve upon the shortcomings of both traditional higher education based and alternative post-baccalaureate preparation programs. Just as medical residents are paired with an attending physician at a teaching hospital to learn through experience, teacher residents are placed at a partner school and paired with one or two carefully-selected mentor teachers who support the resident’s slow and deliberate development of teaching skills and practice. Teacher residents also take coursework in their residency year that revolves around their teaching experience and includes a focus on equitably serving local students, instead of being “overly-theoretical” or disconnected from practice. During this year, residents receive a living stipend and subsidized tuition toward their teacher certification and Master’s degree. Some residencies are run by Local Education Associations (LEAs), universities, or even the local department of education, but many other successful residency programs operate as a local non-profit, which allows them to be more responsive to needs and interests of local schools, parents, and students. Residencies serve Title-I schools by requiring graduates to teach in these schools for a minimum of three years after their residency year, which reduces the enormous costs associated with teacher turnover. Residencies also often focus on recruiting teachers of color and teachers for high needs subject areas like special education, math and science to supply teachers for what are often hard-to-fill positions in Title-I schools. As a result, residencies sit at the junction of graduate and alternative programs, making them appealing to recent college graduates and mid-career switchers – including those who would otherwise not consider entering the teaching profession.
Over the last 20 years, the teacher residency model of preparation has garnered widespread support across the country. The Department of Education under President Trump awarded Teacher Quality Partnerships Grants to support the creation of new residency programs, and now the Biden administration seeks to expand funding to teacher residencies under The American Families Plan. Much of this bipartisan support is likely due to the encouraging research that has been published on residency programs. These programs effectively recruit a more racially diverse teaching force; in fact, 62% of residents from programs affiliated with the National Center for Teacher Residencies identify as people of color. Residencies boast a higher teacher retention rate than any other model, with approximately 80% of residency graduates still teaching after 5 years. Over time, residency graduates also advance student achievement more than teachers from other programs. Finally, research suggests that the residency experience itself not only improves the teaching quality of the resident, but also the mentor teacher. Therefore, teacher residency programs have been widely embraced as an important solution to improving teacher quality and addressing the national teacher shortage.

There are more than 50 formal graduate teacher residencies throughout the county and most major cities have at least one such program (e.g. New York City, Chicago, Los Angeles, Houston, Philadelphia, San Diego, Dallas, San Jose, Jacksonville, San Francisco, Seattle, Denver, Washington, D.C., Boston, Nashville, etc.). However, Phoenix - the 5th largest city in the nation - does not; nor does Arizona more broadly have a unified residency program that reaches hard-to-serve areas of the state.

**WHAT IS A TEACHER RESIDENCY***?

1-2 year graduate teacher education program committed to serving local Title-1 schools with equity focus

Year 1: apprenticeship with a highly-qualified expert teacher + coursework toward certification (during which resident receives a cost of living stipend)

Year 2: full-time teacher of record with induction, sometimes more coursework for Master's degree (tuition subsidized)

Generally affiliated with a university (or two), which grants the Master's degree, often managed by another organization

Intentional recruitment of people of color, recent college graduates, mid-career switchers, and teachers for high needs subject areas

Residents commit to teaching for a minimum of 3-5 years in local schools

*Description of teacher residency here is based off the model established by Boston Teacher Residency and supported by the National Center for Teacher Residencies.*
Most teachers are prepared through either traditional undergraduate programs or post-baccalaureate programs like Teach for America (TFA) and those offered by state-approved community colleges and districts. Teacher residencies are notably different from these two models in important ways [See Table below]. The Director of Memphis Teacher Residency characterized the difference between TFA and residencies this way: "I would just say it's a different model, I might categorize TFA as a teacher recruiting organization, where residency is more of a teacher training organization, I think that's a big distinction... also the commitment, we're committed to four years in a classroom, TFA's committed to two years, so in essence you're doubling your investment."

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<th><strong>HOW RESIDENCIES COMPARE TO OTHER PROGRAMS NATIONALLY</strong></th>
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<td><strong>TRADITIONAL</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RACIAL DIVERSITY OF TEACHER CANDIDATES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>COURSEWORK</strong></td>
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<td><strong>REQUIRED COURSEWORK</strong></td>
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Locally, Arizona State University has implemented a full-year undergraduate teacher residency program that employs some of these structures. This program has many benefits, but it is not able to recruit undergraduates who do not want to dedicate their studies to teacher preparation in college, or mid-career switchers who decide to pursue teaching later in life. In addition to TFA, Arizona has a number of other post-baccalaureate programs (some of which are even called residencies) that are led by community colleges, universities, and districts under the state’s alternative teaching certificate, alternative pathway program, and classroom-based program. These programs, too, are part of the solution. However, they are notably different from classic teacher residency programs because candidates become teachers of record just as they begin to receive training through the program, which does not allow for pre-service preparation. There are also traditional Master’s degree programs at the state’s universities that offer one-semester of student teaching. The closest program to a
graduate residency in Arizona is University of Arizona’s “Teach Arizona” Master’s degree program with a full-year of student teaching; however, this program is small, university-based, and mostly limited to Tucson (with a small extension in Chandler).

Different programs are right for different teacher candidates. As the Director of Kansas City Teacher Residency observed, “There are people who view Teach for America as the right program for them, and there are people that see the residency model as the right program for them and there’s space for both and for us in the south. The selling point I share with them is that people want that longer runway...they want to have the ability to learn, see somebody do it well and be confident [before becoming a teacher of record].” Undergraduates in this study had similar responses. Nearly half of survey respondents identified a year of preparation under a skilled mentor prior to becoming a teacher as a desirable program incentive, favoring that longer runway. Some of these respondents perceived TFA as “extremely stressful.” One student explained their perception this way: “I have heard that programs like Teach for America do not properly prepare people for teaching positions. They likewise tend to put teachers into lower graded schools with students that are harder to manage from the start.” However, others were drawn to TFA and planned to apply. In Arizona, TFA has a great deal of success recruiting teachers, many of whom later become leaders, but the program is not for everyone. Some people will want to enter teaching through a traditional (higher education based) teacher education pathway, some through TFA or another alternative post-bac program, and others still, might only become a teacher if there were a local graduate teacher residency.

The survey of nearly 3,000 undergraduates substantiated this point. When asked “If a local graduate teacher residency program were to be created, one that included many (if not all) of the components you selected as attractive, would you consider applying?,” approximately 72% of undergraduates who took the survey responded “Yes” (26%) or “Possibly” (46%). In this sample, the “Yes” answers alone amounted to 755 potential teachers. A statistical analysis of the data found that men were just as likely to consider applying for a residency as women. Undergraduates who identified as Latinx/Hispanic, Black, and/or Native American/American Indian were slightly more likely to consider applying for a residency than white and Asian/Asian American identifying
undergraduates, but this difference was borderline statistically significant. STEM majors were less likely to consider applying to the program, but hundreds still replied “yes” to the question. First-generation college students and those who reported growing up in lower income households were also more likely to consider applying to a residency program than those from upper and middle class backgrounds. One first-generation college student of color who participated in a pilot interview for this study explained why she would apply for a residency program:

If this is happening, can it happen soon so it'll be ready for when [I'm] considering a graduate program because... I'm realizing how important children are to me and I'm realizing how critical education [is] in creating social change, which is really what I want to do and... if this program was ready by then, including all these things, I would jump in very quickly.

This study indicates that undergraduates from underrepresented groups would be particularly likely to enter the teaching profession in Arizona through a residency. In other words, if this program were to be created, it would have a deep and diverse pool of applicants from which to choose, including men and people of color.

Given the research on teacher residencies, the vast majority of leaders interviewed for this study (66/69) expressed support for the establishment of a graduate teacher residency program in Arizona. Some focused on the benefits a residency could provide for teacher recruitment. Dr. Amanda Burke explained, “I feel like the residency program can really help on the recruitment and the initial support, which is often lacking.” Jaime Molera, Chair of Education and Public Affairs at the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce and former Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction and President of the Arizona State Board of Education, said that a residency would correspond with the work the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce is doing around “how do you try and attract individuals into areas where they can have a profound impact both on themselves, as well as for the students and for the community that they’re serving.” School leaders agreed that it would be incredibly helpful to have support with recruitment through a residency program. For example, Dr. Scott Menzel, Superintendent of Scottsdale Unified, said, “I do think it's an idea that is definitely worth pursuing, from my perspective, because we have to find multiple on-ramps for people to come into the profession.” And Petra Pajtas from BASIS added, “I think a residency would be great. The queue of individuals who want to pull from the residency would be large.”

Local leaders were also quite hopeful about the potential of a teacher residency to advance teacher retention, immediately following the residency year and into the future. Kim Graham explained, “I think it's a great thing for school districts. If they know that these three or four pre-service teachers or residents in each classroom will potentially stay and work for us. I think that's definitely a great draw.” Residency graduates commit to staying in local partner districts for at least three years after their residency, or they have to pay back a portion of their incentives. However, residency graduates often continue to teach well beyond these years, due in large part to their extensive pre-service preparation and support. State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman observed, “A teacher residency program potentially can really help prepare teachers in a way that can help with retention, so I do see that as a benefit.” And Rachel Yanof,
former Executive Director of Achieve60 added, “We burn people out before we give them a chance... So that’s where I think a residency is going to win.”

“We burn people out before we give them a chance...
So that’s where I think a residency is going to win.”

Many leaders were particularly excited about the prospect of a residency recruiting and retaining more teachers of color. Christine Burton, Co-Founder of the Burton Family Foundation and a member of the State Board of Education, said, “I think we have a shortage of teachers of color and I think we need to do everything we can to incentivize students of color to become teachers. If that means debt free college and debt free teacher prep, then I think that is a good investment for our state.” Residencies usually focus on serving Title-I schools (because they have the hardest time retaining teachers) and intentionally recruit and retain residents who better reflect the community and meet district hiring needs. Dr. Kathy Wiebke, Executive Director of the K-12 Center, added, “Arizona just keeps getting more and more diverse and we really need to make sure that our teachers mirror the students they teach.”

Some of the leaders were also supportive of the potential of a residency to further professionalize teaching. By uplifting teaching as a challenging and admirable career that requires not only extensive pre-service preparation and support, but also benefits from graduate education, residencies begin to shape new dialogue about the nature of the profession. Their existence alone contradicts the common misunderstanding that just anyone can come in and teach. Jackie Norton, President and CEO of the Rodel Foundation, said, “What I’d love to see happen is it becomes another sort of voice advocating for the value of teaching as a profession, but also the professionalism of teaching.” Marisol Garcia had similar ideas: “So for us, it would be a natural expansion: trying to support programs to hire professionally qualified educators that are committed to our core...beliefs.” By elevating the profession as a whole, a residency could contribute to changing the conversation about what it means to be a teacher in Arizona.

Overall, there was a strong sense of urgency from local leaders to establish a residency program, as many characterized it as not just feasible, but “needed.” Dr. Heather Carter explained, “I hope this gets done, I really do. I hope we do it because we need to do everything we can to continue to produce more highly qualified teachers, not just more teachers.” Kim Tobey echoed this point: “Let's create this because I think it's needed.” Dr. Robbie Koeperich stated, “That's exactly what we need, to be honest with you.” And Lloyd Hopkins added, “I think it’s feasible. I think there would be interest. Also, it’s necessary, we really don't have a choice. We have to do it.” Given the dire teacher shortage, leaders felt that a residency program was needed and should be created expeditiously.
Throughout the interviews, many leaders also identified areas where their organizations might be able to support the work of a residency. For example, Dr. Kathy Wiebke, Director of the Arizona K-12 Center stated, “I would love to see how we could support this endeavor, because what we are about is practice, helping a teacher move their practice forward, looking at students and pre-service and then making that bridge from pre-service to in-service. I just think we’re well equipped to support this work.” Jaime Molera described how this work would correspond well with the work the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce was doing around getting more highly qualified and racially diverse candidates into “areas that are not being served very well,” and suggested the chamber might be able to help cultivate “business backing” and advance “policy changes” that could support a residency program’s success. A number of organizations like All In Education might be able to provide leadership training to residents that will help them better serve the communities in which they work. Moreover, Zel Fowler, President of the Arizona Alliance of Black School Educators, shared that organizations like hers could facilitate a support system for residents of color, so they could “go to someone that can actually help support them,” thereby helping retain teachers of color in Arizona. And this represents just a small cross-section of potential support that leaders envisioned for a residency.

While it made sense to most of the local leaders to start a residency in Phoenix, many insisted that the program should consider expanding to serve rural and tribal communities in the not-so-distant future because of the distinct need for teachers in these areas. Wes Brownfield explained, "I'm really sure you can make this work in urban areas, but if you always have in the back of your mind, how can we transfer this to rural and based on the conversations I've had with rural leaders, these are the kind of things we need to be thinking about. Then you make it work in urban areas with the stated goal of getting out to rural areas. I think that's the way I would go." Travis Lane, Assistant Director of the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, made a similar point, suggesting the program would be an “easy sell” in Phoenix, but added, "We have the largest reservation land base than any other state in the United States. I'd like to see how we could bring this program to our tribal communities and have people trained there and live there and continue to work there." Title-1 schools in the greater Phoenix-Metro area have a demonstrable need for more high quality teachers, and it will likely be easier to initially establish a residency program in the Valley, where it can prove its merit. However, it would be irresponsible for a teacher residency not to consider how it could strategically expand to serve rural and tribal communities, too, where the need may be even greater.

Leaders across the state overwhelmingly supported the creation of a teacher residency program in Arizona. In fact, leaders not only supported it, but many also characterized it as an urgent need and considered offering various forms of support or partnership to help it succeed. Undergraduate survey responses further corroborated the potential of a program like this to recruit those who might not otherwise enter teaching. These findings, coupled with the compelling research on and broad support for residency programs nationally, suggest that a teacher residency program would be an important addition to the existing teacher education landscape in our state. The next section considers how a residency could be constructed to best serve communities in Arizona.
Teacher residencies are different from other programs in a number of ways: they are graduate programs, feature a yearlong pre-service apprenticeship prior to teaching, and offer a variety of incentives for residents like a stipend and highly subsidized tuition. Jake Logan, President and CEO of the Arizona Charter Schools Association, reflected on these features, “This does sound different, and it sounds very exciting to me.” However, another difference is that residencies are usually local community-centered programs. Instead of existing as an extension of a national organization, residencies are created in response to local concerns and run by a local organization. Their structures are determined by the needs of the communities they serve, and are set up to be nimble in the face of changing needs, because this ensures they can provide assistance where it is most necessary. Local leaders had ideas about how to successfully serve Arizona communities.

In interviews, local leaders emphasized the need to center local communities in a residency. Debora Colbert, Executive Director of the Black Mothers Forum, explained why uplifting the education in local communities is so important: “Our community depends on education. Education is the bedrock of any community and without education, your community, your economy fails, your laws fail, nothing works well.” But in order to meaningfully serve the community, a residency should first listen to local needs. Tim Carter, Superintendent for Yavapai County, explained how he operates by the following motto: “We have a simple little motto that we use: listen, innovate and serve. So we don’t tell districts and
charters and libraries what they need. We listen to them tell us what they need. Once they've done that, our job is to innovate the solution and to try to find a way to resolve whatever that need is.” The residency itself is already an innovative solution to a need that is being communicated across the state of Arizona; nonetheless, such a program must also listen carefully to the specific communities and LEAs it ends up serving in order to design a program that best meets the unique needs of these spaces.

IDENTIFYING PARTNER LEAS

Although committed to serving Title-1 schools, a residency program in Arizona must be strategic about which Title-1 LEAs it serves. In other cities like Boston or Los Angeles, there may only be one central district; but in Phoenix, for example, there are many districts and charter schools that serve the city. As local leaders pointed out in the interviews, school and district leadership are likely to be incredibly important for a program’s success. Laura McBride, Senior Program Officer for Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust, observed, “You have to have the right leadership in place in the district, to be able to really embrace it and see the benefits.” This point was echoed by Dr. Michael Troop, Associate Superintendent at Legacy Traditional Schools who formerly worked with Chicago Teacher Residency; he added, “The biggest hurdle that is found in these programs is training the whatever school district is part of this partnership; making sure that they have the right systems in place, making sure that they have the right leadership in place and making sure that they have the right teachers.” A residency program in Arizona must consider partnering with leaders who are particularly passionate about and supportive of the residency program, who are willing to devote some funding to resident and mentor stipends, and who are already supporting instructional quality at school sites.

Within districts or charter organizations, a residency program should find schools that already have a supportive culture and a sufficient number of high quality teachers to serve as mentors. For just as medical residents learn best at “teaching hospitals” that have excellent attending physicians and the resources to support residents’ learning, teacher residents learn best under the supervision of skilled and reflective educators at schools that place value on their presence on campus. Superintendent Scott Menzel from Scottsdale Unified emphasized this: “So those placements matter, the mentors matter, the culture and climate in the building matters...if we're going to attract and

“So those placements matter, the mentors matter, the culture and climate in the building matters...if we’re going to attract and retain diverse talent, they need to know that they’re valued for who they are, and what they bring to the table.”
retain diverse talent, they need to know that they’re valued for who they are, and what
they bring to the table.” But ultimately, a leader in Chicago Teacher Residency
explained, “the linchpin of this whole thing is the mentor teacher.” In order for a
program to be successful, it must find schools with a supportive culture and skillful
teachers to serve as mentors. A residency program must also assess LEA needs (e.g.
how many positions are likely to be open, and in which grade–levels or subjects) in
order to determine if both the LEA and the residency program have the capacity to
partner in mutually beneficial ways.

The same kind of calculus would be necessary when considering which rural areas a
program might best be able to serve; but adding to the list above, a residency would
have to identify areas that have some existing local infrastructure in place to support
new teachers, as well as the ability (in both need for teachers and resources) to support
a small yearly cohort of residents so residents could move to rural areas with a built–in
support network. There are a number of rural districts and counties that have worked
hard to establish the infrastructure to prepare and mentor new teachers, including
Yavapai County, Holbrook Unified, and Lake Havasu Unified. For example, Jaime Festa–
Daigle, Director of Personnel and Technology for Lake Havasu Unified School District,
described her experience designing local structures to support the work of preparing
new teachers:

> What I’ve noticed as a school district, we’ve taken on a lot of that
> responsibility... I’m actually in the process of working for us to be able to certify
> our own teachers like Vail and Washington. I’m really proud of the work that we
> do, but it’s now work that the districts are taking on without being funded for it.
> I would love to see universities partner with schools to support teachers in the
> classroom.

Even with the impressive work rural districts have put in place to prepare and support
teachers, they still struggle with recruitment and could use university partners to
support this work. A residency could identify rural districts with existing
infrastructure but recruitment and support needs, then could bridge the gap and
provide additional preparation to advance teacher success and retention.

Once the program selects LEAs to partner with, it should then connect with local
community organizations and parent groups because teaching is ultimately about
serving the community. Community–based organizations can establish a strong
relationship between schools and a residency because they often intimately understand
the culture and environment of their community. Janelle Wood, Founder of Black
Mothers Forum in Phoenix, also recommended including a community mentor for
residents because by “getting to know them, [residents] can meet the needs of that
community and they start to build those relationships earlier on... [to help residents]
understand the dynamics of the cultural stuff that they’re going to be addressing.”
Rebecca Gau echoed this idea, suggesting “parents would adopt these resident teachers
and bring them food and invite them over” in order to foster genuine connection
between the program and community. Dr. Lisa McCray Cannon, Principal of Falcon Hill
Elementary School, suggested working with an organization like the Hispanic
Leadership Institute who “bring community members... police, fire education,
educators... through a leadership training around... understanding the culture in Mesa”
to foster more community connections for residents. Similar to medical practitioners
who have found team-based health care is vital in providing high-quality care to
patients, a teacher residency could draw upon a team of individuals who are qualified
in different areas to facilitate residents’ connections to the community, as well as
depth their understanding of their students.

MENTOR SELECTION AND SUPPORT

Mentor teachers are the “lynchpin” of any residency program. In residencies across the
country, residents either spend one semester with one mentor and another with a
different mentor, or spend the whole year with a single mentor. As a result, the quality
of instructional support that mentors can offer is essential for a resident’s
development. But the most experienced or most successful teachers do not always
make the best mentors; as 2021 Arizona Teacher of the Year, Sara Wyffels reasoned:
I think you do need to be very strategic about which teachers are involved in
this. The reason I'm thinking that is because I do think that some veteran
teachers have an attitude that they really do know what's best. I think the right
person, the right type of educator to participate is somebody who knows they do
things well, but who also knows they're still learning all the time and that you
can be open to learning and collaborating with somebody who's brand new.

How mentors are selected is critical in the success of a residency. The Director of
Memphis Teacher Residency explained, “If you can't get your residents into a
classroom with a high quality mentor, you're sunk. And so one of our non-negotiables
with the district was...we have to have a recruitment, an application process for our
mentors and we get to pick our mentors.” Similarly, Chicago Teacher Residency looks
at student achievement data and asks prospective mentors to undergo a “fairly
intensive interview process” prior to being selected. A residency program in Arizona
could build upon the best practices of other residencies, while also finding ways to
include the local community.

A first step could be to initiate a community nomination process where school leaders,
teachers, students, parents, and members of community organizations could nominate
outstanding teachers who they feel are committed to growing in their practice.
Nominated teachers who were interested in becoming mentors could then complete an
application form. From these applications, the program could select teachers to
interview and observe in their practice, while also consulting with the school principal
about student growth metrics for these teachers. After considering all of this
information, the program could select the teachers whose beliefs and practices best
align with residency goals. All selected mentors should receive recognition and be
provided with a stipend and training in order to serve in their new roles. This is critical
because, as Dr. Wendy Nance, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources at
Chandler Unified, observed, “Our teachers have a lot on their plate so it's becoming
more and more difficult to get teachers to take on those mentor roles without some
support for them as well.” A residency program could partner with other community
organizations to recognize the outstanding teachers it selected to serve as mentors.
Recruiting for and from a particular community has been shown to be one of the more effective retainment strategies for residencies. When residents are recruited from the community they eventually teach in, Dr. Bruce Johnson, Dean of Education at University of Arizona, pointed out that “there’s a much better chance they’re going to stay in the profession.” However, it is not always possible for residencies to fill all open positions with local candidates. Therefore, residencies also intentionally recruit teachers who reflect their student demographics and/or are deeply committed to serving local communities. A residency should pledge to recruit a cohort that is at least 50% people of color, and more representative of the student population in gender as well. Christine Burton highlighted the potential a representative workforce has to do good for students, “The research is pretty sound that if a student of color has a teacher of color, just one, their chances of graduating high school and going on to college are dramatically improved.” Therefore, community-centric recruitment sets residencies up to sustainably and effectively meet students’ needs, first through their residents, and eventually through the teachers of record they produce.

“Recruiting diverse, local, and committed teachers remains no small feat, but a little bit of creativity can go a long way. A leader in Chicago Teacher Residency has learned this lesson, explaining their recruitment “includes everything from universities to churches to early childhood centers that people might be working at. Our paraprofessionals within the network and our teachers who are typically more reflective of the students we serve have also been recruited and come through the residency program.” Leaders in Arizona had similar ideas. For example, Dr. Felicia Ganther, Associate Vice Chancellor for the Student Affairs Office at Maricopa Community Colleges, also offered creative recruiting strategies: “Community connectedness is important. You will be surprised how churches are a good connector place...You’ve got to go to the churches, you can’t just be expecting people to come, you have to give context and you need
other people to advocate for you." Recruiting from particular programs at local universities may also help. Intentional recruitment leads to new pathways for members of the community to enter the teaching force.

In conjunction with thoughtful recruitment methods, residencies typically offer attractive incentives and benefits to prospective residents. These frequently include a living stipend, a Master's Degree, thorough preparation, and support from peers and mentors. Among the aforementioned incentives, the most highly rated on the student survey were the Master's degree and the living stipend. Respondents selected the highly subsidized Master's degree as the most attractive incentive because they felt it would further their education and lead to future salary increases; but the stipend was the most popular on the select all question. This stipend is provided by residencies to help entrants pay for housing and other living costs during their first year. According to an Arizona State University Graduate Student Cost of Attendance Estimate for the 2021–2022 school year, the combined cost of housing, meals and transportation is estimated at $14,988. Therefore, an appropriate living stipend for residents would be around $15,000. This amount is comparable to other residencies across the country. Kansas City Teacher Residency offers a $15,000 stipend. In Memphis Teacher Residency, participants receive $1,600 per month for rent and other living expenses. Betsy Fowler, Executive Director of Special Projects at ASU Prep Digital spoke about how the stipend could change the trajectory of involved students: “The opportunity to pay student teachers is huge, that is such a burden on college students, and just think about additional loans... I think it may help to drive their commitment to staying.” And Dr. Minerva Pargas, Chief of Staff at Maricopa Community Colleges, seconded the power of a residency’s financial incentives, particularly for first generation college students: “It definitely makes it viable for people that have not considered teaching. For example, in my...personal experience as a first generation student, I didn't know that I wanted to go into education, I never really considered it as a viable option.” A residency’s financial incentives not only make the residency year more feasible for participants, but would also be competitive with other residency programs across the U.S.

Once prospective residents apply, the selection process by residency leaders begins. Each residency has its own process, but generally, application steps include a written essay, letter of recommendation, phone call or video interview, and a sample piece of teaching. Locally, leaders like Petra Pajtas of BASIS Charter Schools noted that administrators at partner schools might want to be involved in the selection of residents for the program. This type of application and selection process would help to certify that every resident chosen is the best for each respective position as a member of the community, cohort, and classroom.

**RESIDENT PLACEMENTS**

The bulk of residents’ preparation occurs through an immersive year-long apprenticeship in classrooms. Residents usually spend four to six hours a day, four days a week, in their mentors’ classrooms, where they have the opportunity to slowly...
ramp up their classroom responsibilities: moving from observing their mentor, to supporting their mentor’s instruction, to co-teaching with their mentor, to leading the instruction and eventually teaching days and weeks without the mentor’s intervention. Manuel Silvas, Talent Director at Phoenix Union High School District, explained that there is a “big difference” when teachers have a full year of pre-service preparation, adding that they feel, “I open school, I close school, I know what this takes now.” Throughout this year, residents also have the opportunity to form a meaningful relationship with their mentor teacher, which can serve them for years to come. Dr. Robbie Koerperich spoke highly of the potential a teacher-resident partnership offers: “I will guarantee you that program will work, it will work and you will get long term teachers out of it, because they build that relationship. You’re not trying to instruct 30 people, you’re trying to instruct one person, you build them, one at a time.” Nearly 1,500 student survey respondents selected working under a mentor as an attractive incentive for preparation programs, as they felt it would provide them with a sense of “security” and “guidance” while trying out the role of a teacher.

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In an Arizona program, residents could be observed multiple times in their placements by a field coordinator from the residency program, who would provide additional feedback and support to supplement the mentor teacher’s feedback and ensure that residents progress in line with program goals. Residents’ focus should be on their classroom practice, and building and managing relationships with students, which Monique Tsosie, Project Analyst for the American Indian Research Center for Health, called a “great” component of the program. But in addition to teaching, residents could also devote approximately eight hours a week to performing other roles that are necessary at the school, including: technology coordinator, parent/community liaison, restorative justice assistant, interventionist, FAFSA support, and/or after-school tutor. District leaders like Dr. Michael Robert at Osborne helped come up with these additional responsibilities, which not only allow the resident to get a sense of the many roles teachers play in their work, but also enable them to immediately provide value to their school community, helping schools justify the expense of their living stipend. San Diego Teacher Residency has implemented a similar structure where residents have eight “service hours” a week to devote to a “menu of options” at their school site.

Residents should also be placed in schools and districts with a small cohort of other residents. This fosters a sense of community within the organization and ultimately offers a built-in support system for residents. More than 900 student survey
respondents selected the cohort model as an attractive aspect of participating in a residency program. One student explained “the cohort model might give time to form meaningful relationships with a group of [people with] diverse background[s], interests, and ability, but all with the common purpose.” As a district leader, Megan Gestson, Executive Director for Leadership and Learning at Roosevelt School District, sees the value of a cohort model. She has implemented a cohort model for the school leaders she supports, something she described as her “favorite thing.” She explained that it offers a space, “where collectively they’re the experts. Engaging in that type of almost inquiry based learning, I think, is really, really powerful and it helps with building those relationships as well.” Upon joining a residency program, participants enter a community in which they can learn alongside their peers, from whom they yield additional support and encouragement.

“The cohort model might give time to form meaningful relationships with a group of [people with] diverse background[s], interests, and ability, but all with the common purpose.”

**COURSEWORK AND REQUIREMENTS**

Although a unique program, a teacher residency would still have to meet the state’s requirements for teacher certification. The state of Arizona requires a bachelor’s degree, passing a subject-test, and “teaching experience.” All residents entering into a residency in Arizona would be held accountable to these standards. Coursework for the program would occur in partnership with a local university, after school and one full day a week, and address a variety of topics. Based on state requirements and interviews with local leaders, topics should include: support for students with special needs and multilingual learners, social and emotional learning, culturally responsive teaching, restorative classroom management, connecting with students and families, instructional methods and differentiation, professional leadership, and the science of reading. For example, Erica Maxwell, author, independent consultant and first and former Superintendent of Diversity and Inclusion for the state, stressed the importance of preparing residents in culturally responsive teaching “to address the needs of students where the outcomes continually are not positively comparable.” Similarly, Janelle Wood and Debora Colbert emphasized the importance of recruiting equity consultants who can relate to the community and help design coursework to uniquely support local students.

Furthermore, this coursework should revolve around residents’ teaching experience, correspond with mentor and field coordinator feedback, and be taught by those with a unique understanding of this. Practitioners who work in the field could fill teaching roles by registering as adjuncts with the university; they could also fill field
coordinator roles. The Director of Memphis Teacher Residency suggested this strategy helped shift their program from having “a huge disconnect between coursework and practice” to having “incredibly tightly aligned” coursework and practice. Acclaimed practitioners like the Arizona Teachers of the Year could serve as “guest” lecturers or “instructor[s],” according to 2020 Arizona Teacher of the Year Lynette Stant. When a residency designs its own curriculum in conjunction with the schools and communities served, and employs excellent practitioners to deliver it, residents are more likely to become qualified and attentive teachers who understand how to best serve their students.

**INDUCTION**

Program support for residents should not end when they complete their residency year, however. In conjunction with the Arizona K-12 Center, the program should establish a thorough plan for induction support that aligns with Arizona’s new induction standards and complements the LEA’s existing induction program. Mesa Superintendent Andi Fourlis appreciates the new “well-thought out” and “well-researched” induction standards, but insists that programs need to “change up” the way they approach induction to establish new models that address the isolation of teaching. A teacher residency in Arizona could work toward this ideal by first continuing to nurture connections between mentors and their former residents. As State Senator Christine Marsh recalled, her former mentors are what enabled her to sustain herself in the teaching profession for so long. Mentors should receive an additional small stipend (perhaps $500) the following year or two to cover time spent corresponding with their former residents each month over the phone or email. Provided they have a new resident to cover their classes, mentors could also take a few days each year visiting the classes of their former residents to offer feedback. The program should also work with partners to establish an entirely separate role in the form of an induction coach to provide weekly feedback on new teachers’ beginning practice for their first two years of teaching. Finally, residency graduates could remain connected to the program through residency events where they can reconnect with their cohort mates, meet the new residents, and talk with community leaders and residency staff. As Dr. Lisa Rollins, Executive Director of Educators Rising in Arizona, noted, “There’s got to be a support system in place.” In these ways, a residency program could seek to limit the isolation new teachers often experience, and provide support while helping them grow in their teaching practice.

As some of the leaders mentioned, graduates of a residency program would still have to contend with the same challenges with underfunded schools, large class sizes, outdated infrastructure, and a lack of public respect as teachers from other programs – which could impact their retention. A residency could significantly help teachers sustain themselves and their instructional practice amidst challenging circumstances by providing more pre-service preparation in the very schools where residents ultimately teach, reducing the student debt incurred to become a teacher, and structuring thoughtful induction and a built-in support network. Residency graduates in other states remain in the classroom long after they graduate from their programs; but as
noted above, Arizona has a host of unique challenges that lead to the highest teacher turnover in the nation. The residency can work on the front end of this challenge: it can prepare professional educators with the tools to sustain themselves, serve their students, and advocate for their communities. Eventually, this might help shift the conversation around teaching in our state, uplifting the profession as one that requires thorough preparation and advanced education. Perhaps the residency can ultimately become another voice that advocates for teachers. But ultimately, the state, too, will have to do more to support teachers.
Leaders across Arizona believed that establishing a teacher residency was both feasible and necessary, but acknowledged that funding the program would likely be the primary challenge. Chris Kotterman explained that there should be no regulatory challenges: “We’ve had the infrastructure in place for years. The ability to do this has been there, like you shouldn’t have encountered anybody who’s telling you that there are large, regulatory barriers to doing this in Arizona, because I think the infrastructure in terms of certification is already here.” Then he added, “It’s just, no one has ever put the resources behind it, to put it together.” Leaders agreed that securing financial resources might be the hardest part. When asked what barriers a residency program might face, Elena Zee, President and CEO of the Arizona Council of Economic Education, responded, “Besides funding? No. Funding, funding, funding…”

In order to attract high-quality, racially and socioeconomically diverse applicants, teacher residencies offer a number of financial incentives that reduce the barriers to entering the teaching profession, including a living stipend and highly subsidized tuition. However, these incentives also mean that the program is not inexpensive. In other states, residencies are funded by a combination of federal, state, and LEA funding, coupled with local philanthropic dollars. Memphis Teacher Residency, Kansas City Teacher Residency, Chicago Teacher Residency and many others began with significant grant funding from local and national foundations. In the interviews, some of the local leaders characterized Arizona’s philanthropic sector as a “small pool” or a “narrow base” with “the same 20 funders” when compared to other states; thus, they were concerned about a program’s ability to secure substantial local funding. However, others were more optimistic. Rachel Yanof said the local philanthropic community was “not very deep, but it is generous.” And multiple leaders felt like local philanthropy would be eager to get a program like this off the ground to address the teacher shortage, but that it would need other sources
of funding to become sustainable. Adriana Murrieta explained, “I think to get it off the ground it could be done with local funding,” but added that it might eventually need more “national” funding. Stephanie Parra suggested, “I’m thinking...maybe on the front end, the first three years have to be funded by philanthropy, but you can get creative about how you transition into a more sustainable model.”

Multiple leaders suggested establishing a “public-private partnership” in order to make a teacher residency sustainable. Dr. Amanda Burke spoke from her own experience at the Center for the Future of Arizona: “We’ve had success with public-private partnerships or clearly defined multipronged funding where everyone has a little skin in the game.” Pearl Chang Esau echoed this idea, adding, “It would need to be a public-private partnership of sorts. And so all the partners, the state, the university, probably some private funding to help it get going. But ideally it would actually become more embedded at the public level.” The state is a key partner in this work. As Vince Yanez explained, “If AZ starts going down this road to try to get something off the ground, the state needs to be a partner in this effort, in how it becomes sustainable.”

“"It would need to be a public-private partnership of sorts.... But ideally it would actually become more embedded at the public level.”

States like California have begun providing support for residencies at the state level, but some of the leaders interviewed for this study doubted that the Arizona state legislature would be willing or able to do so. However, Arizona already has a program in place that could potentially provide significant support to a teacher residency program: The Arizona Teachers Academy. This innovative program was created by the Arizona Board of Regents and community colleges in 2017 in response to Governor Ducey’s challenge to create a plan that reduced the debt new teachers take on to enter the profession; later, it was passed by the legislature. The Teachers Academy includes $10,000 a year for two years of graduate university tuition and is not restricted to a single institution of higher education. In exchange, the recipient of this funding must remain in the classroom for the number of years for which they received funding. Since teacher residencies partner with a local university to provide coursework and the Master’s degree, and because residents already commit to remaining in the classroom for three years after their residency year, a teacher residency could become a prime candidate for this funding. State Representative Michelle Udall discussed the potential of funding a residency through this program:
We've put some money in the Teachers Academy, but our budget isn't looking fantastic right now, obviously. However, both 208 and 207 have dollars going towards the Teachers Academy. So I think we'll see a significant bump in the Teachers Academy money that's available. Something like this would certainly fall within that realm of possibility and would be automatically funded without having to continuously go back to the legislature desk for more.

While there is some uncertainty around whether there would be sufficient funding in the Teacher's Academy program to support a cohort of residents each year, this program could possibly become a tremendous source of sustainable funding for a residency.

There is also the potential for federal funding to help sustain a residency program. Many other residency programs draw upon the federal AmeriCorps program. For example, Memphis Teacher Residency has become an AmeriCorps Sponsor Organization and receives 50 Americorps memberships a year, for which they receive $13,000 per resident; the Director explained “And that's how we pay their living stipend.” Residents in Memphis are also eligible to apply for an Americorps Education Award as part of the program, which covers any part of the tuition for which they might be responsible. Kansas City Teacher Residency is also an AmeriCorps program and so they, too, can use this money for stipends, salaries, and other approved “buckets” within the residency. Many teacher residencies across the country benefit from these federal funds to sustain their program and a residency in Arizona could, too. In the past, residencies have also been supported by federal Teacher Quality Partnership grants; and given President Biden’s expressed support for teacher residency programs, there are likely to be other federal grants and programs available to support the development and sustainability of teacher residencies.

Finally, LEAs are critical partners in funding these programs. In Memphis, the district pays the residency $5,000 each year for the three years for which the resident is committed to them, amounting to $15,000 for each resident. This, coupled with the Americorps funding, helps cover a significant chunk of the cost to prepare each resident. Chicago Teacher Residency receives funding from Chicago Public Schools for each resident, too. And in San Diego Teacher Residency, partner LEAs cover $5,000 of the $8,000 stipend per resident. In Arizona, it looks like a similar structure might be possible through the use of Title-1 and/or Title-2 funds at the local level. As Dr. Scott Menzel of Scottsdale responded to the proposition of covering the resident stipend, “That's not a number that scares me...if we had to pay 50,000 and the cost of a teacher, that's a different ballgame.” Most district or LEA leaders who were interviewed for this study believed they could provide at least part of the stipend for residents. In exchange, LEAs would benefit from reduced costs in teacher recruitment and training, and their students would benefit from the retention of high quality teachers who meaningfully improve their learning year after year.

As other cities and states have come to realize, teacher residencies are well worth the investment. The teacher shortage has been, and will continue to be, extremely costly. Nationally, it is estimated that it costs some districts more than $20,000 per lost teacher in recruitment, hiring, and training costs.” Although there is no breakdown on
the cost of teacher turnover in Arizona, it is likely reflected in the rising costs for instructional support (which include professional development and training for new or uncredentialed teachers) and administration (which includes Human Resources).

Across the state, the total price tag for hiring and training so many new teachers every year is likely exorbitant. However, the impact of the teacher shortage on students is much more concerning. Research indicates teacher turnover has “marked, and lasting, negative consequences for the quality of the instructional staff and student achievement,” including significant declines in students’ standardized test scores in math and reading. Teachers are the most influential school-level factor in student outcomes, and when students do not have a stable and highly qualified teacher to serve them, their growth suffers, and so does the future economy in our state. As Dr. Heather Carter observed, “Arizona is underproducing graduates.” In fact, a report by the Arizona Board of Regents notes that 20% of high school students do not graduate on time and predicts that at our current pace, only 17.2% of ninth graders will graduate college within 10 years. High school and college graduates significantly contribute to the economy, and the lack of such graduates likely amounts to millions of dollars in lost opportunity for the state.

While teacher residency programs are not the cheapest approach to preparing teachers, they get results in teacher retention, teacher diversity, and student achievement – areas where Arizona critically needs additional support. There are a variety of potential sources of funding available to sustainably support these programs. However, a new residency will require ample seed funding to get up and running, as it will take time to secure the other funding sources. Ultimately, any investment in a local residency program is likely to be well worth it in the long run.
The teacher shortage in Arizona has become a true crisis. Thousands of teaching positions remain vacant, and thousands more are occupied by individuals who do not meet even basic qualifications to teach. Students are the ones who suffer the impact of this shortage, as their lives are powerfully shaped by the educators they see every day. But our state suffers, too. The future of Arizona would undeniably benefit from citizens and employees who have had access to quality teachers in their lives. To mitigate the exorbitant costs associated with the teacher shortage, the state should invest both in P-12 education, and in creating new pathways to recruit, prepare, support, and retain teachers.

As this study finds, there is a great deal of support for the establishment of a teacher residency in Arizona, both from the perspective of local leaders, and from potential teacher candidates who might only enter the profession through a residency. A residency could recruit and retain a whole different cohort of teachers for classrooms in our state, including teachers of color and teachers for high-needs subject areas. It could help retain teachers by providing extensive pre-service preparation coupled with aligned induction and a built-in support network. It could also help elevate teaching as a profession that is challenging and admirable and requires a great deal of preparation, as is the case with doctors, lawyers or other skilled professions. There are many strategies that could be employed to set a residency up for success in Arizona and to make it financially sustainable. It is not only feasible, as many leaders indicated, but needed.

We need to fill our teacher chasm with new, passionate, highly qualified teachers who are more likely to stay in the classroom, even amidst challenging circumstances. A teacher residency in Arizona can help. However, Arizona must also work on addressing the circumstances that chase so many from classrooms in our state, so our new teachers can comfortably build lifelong careers in our communities and serve generations to come.
This study employed a mixed methods approach with qualitative interviewing and survey design to address the following research questions:

1. Are undergraduates who are not currently enrolled in a teacher certification pathway willing to consider teaching as a profession? If so, under what conditions would these students consider pursuing teaching?
2. Do local education leaders support the creation of a teacher residency program here? If so, in what ways and under what conditions are they willing to offer their support?
3. How do other successful residency programs operate and sustain themselves?

The first question was addressed through nine pilot interviews with undergraduates and survey responses collected from more than 3,000 non-education majors at Arizona State University and Northern Arizona University. The survey was administered online using Qualtrics. An invitation to participate and link to the survey was sent via email to 24,353 students at ASU, including all students enrolled in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, and 6,000 students at NAU. Although students were not offered formal incentives to participate, the survey completion rate of nearly 10% is typical for online surveys. Student responses for each question were included in the data regardless of whether they managed to complete the entire survey (listwise deletion).

The second and third questions were assessed through 60-minute, semi-structured interviews. The lead researcher (Theisen-Homer) conducted 62 formal interviews with 69 different leaders across Arizona (some interviews had two participants). Theisen-Homer also conducted 4 formal interviews with 4 different residency leaders across the country and an informal interview with the leader of the National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR). The local and residency leaders were recruited through both purposeful and snowball sampling strategies. Both sets of interviews were uploaded into the online qualitative analysis software Atlas.Ti and analyzed separately. All three researchers (including D’Antuono and Zuñiga) engaged in both inductive and deductive coding strategies using thematic analysis to analyze this data. First, we each coded different interviews to establish an initial list of inductive codes, and then identified a series of deductive codes that stemmed from our research questions. Next, we re-coded the interviews that another researcher had coded, compared and refined codes, wrote analytic memos, and discussed the process in order to establish inter-rater reliability and ensure trustworthiness across our coding. We engaged in an iterative process of coding for the remaining interviews, continually refining our initial code list, and revisiting previously-coded interviews to add new salient codes. After completing this coding process, the researchers began to collectively identify initial theories, which they discussed with informed insiders to ensure validity.

From these various methodological and analytical strategies, researchers identified the findings and drew the conclusions represented in this report.
**ABOUT THE AUTHORS**

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**Celesté Zuñiga** is an undergraduate research assistant for this project. She is a senior in Barrett, The Honors College at Arizona State University, studying Philosophy and Justice Studies. If a teacher residency program were to be created here in Arizona, she would be extremely interested in applying.


4. Here, we define major cities by population, including the top 25 in this assessment.


https://www.expectmorearizona.org/progress/indicators/teacher-pay/


https://educate.bankstreet.edu/occasional-paper-series/vol2011/iss25/4


