

# Define, Identify, and Fund Nontraditional Pathways Into the Teaching Profession: A Resource for Michigan Districts



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## Introduction

Districts can employ nontraditional pathways to the teaching profession to recruit, retain, and recognize effective and diverse educators. The three selected pathways here are investments in the community. They work to fill long-term vacancies. They likely won't immediately solve staffing challenges but will create a means for maintaining a full staff and developing staff through recruitment and retention. Each of these nontraditional pathways address challenges that revolve around workforce diversity, teacher retention, special education shortages, and rural teacher shortages.

- **Workforce diversity:** In 2018/19, 34% of Michigan's student population was students of color, whereas only 4% of the teacher workforce identified as teachers of color.<sup>1</sup> Extensive research demonstrates that teachers of color contribute to improved academic achievement and college attainment for students of color. Teachers of color are in a specifically unique position; on average, they can produce more favorable academic results than White colleagues on standardized test scores, attendance, retention, advanced-level course enrollment, and graduation rates often for all students, and especially for students from diverse backgrounds.<sup>2</sup>
- **Teacher retention:** Michigan school districts experience a high attrition rate for teachers in both public schools and public school academies. According to a 2021 report from Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest, the "average annual teacher retention rates among Michigan's local education agencies ranged from 33% to 100% in the 6-year period. The likelihood that teachers would remain teaching in their [district] was higher in [districts] that served lower percentages of students who were economically disadvantaged, higher percentages of students who were White, and higher percentages of students proficient in English language arts" (p. 1).<sup>3</sup> Teacher turnover is costly. It impacts student achievement and disproportionately impacts low-income students and students with disabilities. On average, a district can spend more than \$20,000 on each new hire. The investments don't pay off if the effective teacher leaves in the first couple of years.<sup>4</sup>
- **Special education shortages:** Each year, Michigan continues to express a shortage of effective special education teachers. This shortage is likely to persist given the decline in special education graduates from educator preparation programs in Michigan coupled with the increase in students needing special education services.<sup>5</sup> Research has shown that special education services including strong special education teachers improve outcomes for students with disabilities.<sup>6</sup>
- **Rural teacher shortages:** Michigan ranks among the top 10 states for the number of rural students. More than 200,000 students in Michigan live in rural areas (29%).<sup>7</sup> Rural schools experience unique difficulties attracting and retaining effective teachers. The limited supply of teachers in rural areas is further exacerbated by high rates of teacher turnover due to lower salaries, professional isolation, and limited support in the classroom.<sup>8</sup> Research has suggested that rural students nationally experience the consequences of teacher shortages.<sup>9</sup>

Pathways to a profession typically include a highly structured, scaffolded, and connected program map. In the education profession, Grow Your Own (GYO), teacher residencies, and pathways such as alternative route to teacher certification often are associated with improved teacher retention and an increase in workforce diversity. These nontraditional pathways the profession address shortages in high-need subject areas such as special education and improve access to effective teachers in rural communities.

## How to Use This Guide

This guide is intended for school district leaders and teams as an introduction to high-retention nontraditional pathways into the teaching profession. The guide includes highlighted resources in call-out boxes as well as a series of engagement activities to prompt reflection. The guide is broken into three main sections:

- **Section 1: Definitions of Selected Nontraditional Teacher Pathways.** This section provides short summaries of three nontraditional paths into the teaching profession: Grow Your Own programs, teacher residencies, and alternative routes to certification. It includes selected resources, reports, or research that can further explain the definition of the pathway.
- **Section 2: Elements of Nontraditional Teacher Career Pathways.** This section lists a series of elements necessary for the successful design, implementation, and sustainability of a pathway. These elements are determined by research and promising practices. The section also provides an opportunity to explore examples of the pathway, reflect on key elements, and apply lessons learned to your own context.
- **Section 3: Funding.** This section offers an inventory of funding sources and opportunities for nontraditional pathways from federal sources, private institutions, and Michigan-specific opportunities.

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*This guide focuses on three nontraditional pathways: Grow Your Own, teacher residencies, and alternative routes to certification. The three selected pathways work to fill long-term vacancies rather than immediately solve staffing challenges. They create a means for maintaining a full staff and developing staff through recruitment and retention.*

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The three nontraditional pathways highlighted in this guide have a strong research foundation and evidence of effectiveness in diversifying the teacher profession, improving retention, addressing special education teacher shortages, and advancing equity in rural communities. These three nontraditional pathways were selected based on consultation with the Michigan Department of Education and experts from REL Midwest

## **Pre-Reading Questions**

Illustrate the various career paths of the teachers in your districts.

- What do you notice about the various career paths?
- What barriers do teachers encounter?
- Who helps teachers through challenges?
- What is unique about the career path?
- How do the paths differ by teacher?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for students to draw or write their responses to the pre-reading questions.

## Section I: Definitions of Selected Nontraditional Teacher Pathways

This section includes definitions of three selected nontraditional pathways into the teaching profession. Having a common language around pathways can help districts articulate on their vision for the teacher pipeline. It is especially useful to have a common definition when partnering with a college, alternative route provider, or university or implementing a new program. Each pathway also includes selected resources that provide additional background information for further exploration.

### Grow Your Own

GYO programs focus on preparing and supporting local residents to teach in their communities. Most teachers prefer to work near the location in which they attended high school and to teach students who share their personal demographic characteristics. GYO is an approach to developing a pipeline of educator candidates to meet specific workforce needs.<sup>10</sup> GYO programs focus on recruitment of high school students, career changers, paraprofessionals, nonteaching school faculty, and community members. Districts and universities collaborate to reduce obstacles that have historically prevented these candidates from entering the profession.



### Key Resources

- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). (2020). *Attracting personnel: Grow Your Own*. <https://osepideasthatwork.org/sites/default/files/A2-Grow-Your-Own-508.pdf>
- Motamedi, J. G., Leong, M., & Yoon, S. Y. (2017). *Strategies for designing, implementing, and evaluating Grow-Your-Own teacher programs for educators*. REL Northwest. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/northwest/pdf/strategies-for-educators.pdf>
- Burnett, R., Espinosa, V. H., & Spies, P. (2019). Minnesota Grow Your Own policy spotlight: Organizing a coalition for systems change. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 46(1).
- Gist, C. D., Bianco, M., & Lynn, M. (2019). Examining Grow Your Own programs across the teacher development continuum: Mining research on teachers of color and nontraditional educator pipelines. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 70(1), 13–25.
- Valenzuela, A. (2017). *Grow Your Own educator programs: A review of the literature with an emphasis on equity-based approaches*. Intercultural Development Research Association. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED582731.pdf>

## Teacher Residencies

Teacher residencies are school-based teacher preparation programs in which a prospective teacher teaches alongside an effective teacher while receiving concurrent instruction in the content area in which the teacher will become certified or licensed (ESSA Sec. 2002). The residency model has a strong emphasis on clinical experience and local hiring needs. High-quality residency programs “are co-designed between the district and the university to ensure residents get to know the students and families in the communities in which they will be teaching and are rigorously prepared to teach in those communities and school contexts” (p. 6).<sup>11</sup>



### Key Resources

- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). (2020). *Preparing personnel: Residencies*. <https://osepideasthatwork.org/sites/default/files/P2-Residencies-508.pdf>
- Guha, R., Hyler, M. E., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *The teacher residency: An innovative model for preparing teachers*. Learning Policy Institute. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/teacher-residency>
- REL Mid-Atlantic. (2017). *What are teacher residency programs?* [https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/infographics/pdf/REL\\_MA\\_FACTSheet\\_What\\_are\\_teacher\\_residency\\_programs.pdf](https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/infographics/pdf/REL_MA_FACTSheet_What_are_teacher_residency_programs.pdf)

## Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification

Alternative routes to teacher certification are designed for individuals who have already obtained a bachelor’s degree (or higher) and are interested in pursuing teaching but do not have a school-based background. Often programs are designed for people to become certified in the area in which they already have expertise or background (for example, a history major becomes a social studies teacher). In alternative route programs, candidates receive an Interim Teaching Certificate, which allows them to complete requirements for full certification while working full-time in their schools. The structures of alternative route programs vary, but all programs feature core elements of pedagogical coursework, mentoring by both school-based mentors and program faculty, extensive induction support, and regular observations.

### Key Resources

- Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP). (2020). *Attracting personnel: Alternative routes*. <https://osepideasthatwork.org/sites/default/files/A1-Alternative-Routes-508.pdf>
- Yin, J., & Partelow, L. (2020). *An overview of the teacher alternative certification sector outside of higher education*. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/overview-teacher-alternative-certification-sector-outside-higher-education/>
- Michigan Department of Education. (n.d.). *Alternative routes to Michigan certification or endorsement*. [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Alternative\\_Routes\\_to\\_Certification\\_706110\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Alternative_Routes_to_Certification_706110_7.pdf)

## Section 2: Elements of Nontraditional Teacher Career Pathways

Section 2 lists a series of elements necessary for the successful design, implementation, and sustainability of a pathway. The three parts of this section correspond to the three nontraditional pathways highlighted in this resource.

### Part I: Grow Your Own Career Pathways

#### Elements to Consider

Based on a review of literature, existing GYO programs, and conversations with national experts, this section presents common elements to consider when designing, implementing, or evaluating a program.

**Theory of action.** A theory of action is a simple chart outlining (a) how a program or activities are designed and implemented and (b) how a program or activities lead to change over time. A theory of action can help communicate clearly and simply about the pathway and its intended impacts. In addition, it can organize various plans and strategies into one clear overview to guide the work. The theory of action connects the inputs that lead to outputs and then ultimately short- and long-term outcomes.

**Partnerships.** The key pieces of a partnership for most career pathway programs include a shared purpose, flexibility, geographic proximity, and a regularly engaged liaison. Partnerships with local [teacher preparation programs](#) in Michigan (including faculty, staff, deans, coordinators) improve the quality of pathway program, create a guided pathway for students and candidates, and can provide credit-earning opportunities.<sup>12</sup>

**Student recruitment and candidate selection.** The program has to recruit the “right” candidates to ensure a highly skilled educator workforce. The right candidates exhibit the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of effective educators; have a personal connection to the work; are more effective in their jobs; and are more likely to stay in the profession.<sup>13</sup>

**Curriculum and field placements.** The foundation of the pathway is the scope and sequence of the curriculum. Field site experiences are essential to creating student engagement and investment in the program by making the learning “real” for them. In addition, teachers need strong curricular resources that are engaging, rigorous, and relevant to their students.

**Teacher recruitment and program management.** Students and teachers need support and someone to coordinate the program. What is the management structure of the program? The program manager must work with elementary and middle school principals to recruit and identify field-site teachers. In addition, the management should consider logistics such as transportation and materials.

**Evaluation and Improvement.** We are always learning what works and what contributed to a program’s success. As such, it is essential to frequently collect quantitative and qualitative data as indicators for program successes and challenges. Through a collaborative data inquiry process, the team will use evaluation findings to alter the program to better target teacher recruitment and retention.

## Selected Examples

The list below contains examples of GYO programs that have demonstrated initial success. As you review the examples, we encourage you and your team to use the note-taking template on the following page to capture your thoughts. Within each box, write how the program approached the specific key element of a successful pathway program. You might not have enough information to complete all the boxes and will have to leave some blank. The final column can be used to guide your initial thoughts related to your district's context.

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### Example 1: The Brashear Teaching Academy

“The Brashear Teaching Academy Magnet is located within Pittsburgh Brashear High School (Pittsburgh Public Schools). It recruits potential future teachers into an introductory and exploratory experience designed to help students develop “a clear self-image and the ability to evaluate their own suitability for any career.” The program includes opportunities to observe teachers, plan lessons, tutor younger students, and teach classes, all while students are building their communication skills and developing a commitment to their broader community. Founded in



1989 as the Langley Teaching Academy and later moved after Langley High School closed, the program has been in existence for more than 30 years. One of the key features that sets the Brashear Teaching Academy apart from other high school programs is a recent partnership with Pittsburgh Public Schools. In 2019, the Pittsburgh Federation of Teachers and the Pittsburgh School Board reached an agreement to incentivize students' participation in the program and teaching careers. Beginning in the 2023–24 school year, program graduates will be guaranteed a job with Pittsburgh Public Schools after completing a college-level and state-approved teacher preparation program and receiving their teaching certification. Leaders at Pittsburgh Public Schools, like Brian Glickman, Director of Talent Management, see the work of the Brashear Teaching Academy as a key strategy in helping the district address an overall shortage of teachers and as a means of diversifying its teacher workforce. He says, “It’s a very commonsense approach to look at the students that we (already) serve.” In the 2018–19 school year, the academy served more than 100 students in grades 9 through 12, and 84 of those identified as Black.”<sup>14</sup>

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from *Building a Strong and Diverse Teaching Profession: The Teaching Profession Playbook*. The Teaching Profession Playbook was produced for the Partnership for the Future of Learning by the Learning Policy Institute and the Public Leadership Institute in collaboration with 26 organizations and five individual experts.

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### Example 2: Recruiting Washington Teachers—Bilingual Educator's Initiative

“In 2018, Washington launched a Bilingual Educator's Initiative (RWT-BEI) to prepare and mentor bilingual students of color to become future teachers, building a teaching corps that is more aligned with the state's growing Latinx and immigrant student populations. Through this program, competitive grants, ranging from \$50,000 to \$175,000, have been awarded to six school districts and district consortiums across the state. Students learn about the bilingual teacher shortage; engage in a curriculum that addresses

stereotypes; encourage positive, multilingual identities; complete fieldwork; and visit college campuses. RWT-BEI is expanding, with \$10,000 mini-grants awarded to six additional Washington school districts in November 2019. The grants support program planning, including visits to established sites and participation in professional development, to lay the foundation for future academies...Although the program structure varies by site, RWT is grounded in five curricular themes: healthy learning community, culture and identity, equity and opportunity, equity pedagogy, and college access. All sites include an internship component that provides students with the opportunity to shadow an elementary or middle school teacher.”<sup>15</sup>

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from *Building a Strong and Diverse Teaching Profession: The Teaching Profession Playbook*. The Teaching Profession Playbook was produced for the Partnership for the Future of Learning by the Learning Policy Institute and the Public Leadership Institute in collaboration with 26 organizations and five individual experts.

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### **Example 3: Washtenaw Intermediate School District (WISD) and Eastern Michigan University (EMU)**

“The pilot [Grow Your Own partnership] was approved by the Michigan Department of Education [in fall of 2021]. It gives Washtenaw County’s 1,200 paraprofessionals an option for getting ahead. There are three different groups currently in the program, which requires participants to have earned at least 58 college credit hours. Many paraeducators already have earned an associate’s degree...Many already had been pursuing a teaching degree. Interested candidates filled out an application to enter the program, with slots for the groups prorated based on the number of special education students each school district enrolls...Candidates were selected based on if they were thought to be a good fit based on their level of discipline, if they had good attendance and if they possessed the potential to be a good teacher. [According to the Interim Deputy Superintendent], “we know that paraeducators who are already working in the classrooms are passionate about working with students... We’ve had a lot of conversations with them where they said, ‘I’ve always wanted to become a teacher, but I’ve never been able to afford it.’ Looking at it through our equity lens, we asked ‘How do we take our lowest-paid employees and help them to become a teacher?’...“Classes are offered through EMU, which provides a 30% discount on enrollment. The program is funded from special education millage revenue dedicated to supporting the entire county left after services for special education students are reimbursed. Program participants are asked to pay \$25 per credit hour...to ensure they have “some skin in the game.”<sup>16</sup>

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from Slagter, M. (2021, November 04). Schools will grow their own special education teachers in this Washtenaw County program. *MLive*. The excerpt is reprinted with permission from the publisher.

## GYO Note-Taking Sheet Activity

Element	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Your Own
Theory of action				
Partnerships				
Student recruitment				
Curriculum and field placements				
Teacher recruitment and program management				
Financial supports				
Evaluation and Improvement				

## Reflection Questions (3, 2, 1)

3. What are three common themes you noticed across the programs?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. What are two things you would like to learn more about?
  - a.
  - b.
1. What is one next step the team will take?
  - a.

### Featured Resource:

#### ***Growing the Teaching Profession: A Blueprint to Establishing a Place-Based Grow Your Own Program***

PDK International and Educators Rising worked with experts to create a step-by-step guide to creating and implementing a place-based grow your own program, helping you improve your efforts to recruit, support, and develop teachers that come from and reflect your communities.

<https://educatorsrising.org/grow/>



## Part II: Teacher Residency Career Pathways

### Elements for Consideration

Based on a review of literature, existing residency programs, and conversations with national experts, this section presents common elements to consider when designing, implementing, or evaluating a program.<sup>17</sup> The core of these considerations stem from REL Mid Atlantic’s (2017) Fact Sheet. This list of examples is not comprehensive, but rather it includes suggested elements to consider when designing, implementing, or evaluating a program.

**Strong district/university partnerships.** Strong collaboration, coordination, and common goals between the district and a university is essential. High-quality residency programs are “co-designed between the district and the university” (p. 6).<sup>18</sup> This element often emerges as the most important feature of effective programs.

**Rigorous and intentional recruitment and selection.** A good residency program runs aggressive marketing campaigns, avoids barriers to entry such as prerequisite coursework, and offers generous incentives. The program typically targets and selects candidates who are committed to the profession, are coachable, and who fill high-needs positions.

**Coursework aligned to classroom experience and students’ needs.** The clinical component is what is most special about residencies. Residencies “invest much more heavily in practice-based training than most traditional or alternative preparation programs” (p. 7).<sup>19</sup> Coursework interweaves pedagogy and practice-based opportunities. Program instructors are often district staff ensuring that coursework parallels district practice.

**Structured coaching and feedback from an expert mentor.** Residency programs consider both effectiveness and mind-set when selecting. Mentor teachers selection typically considers both effectiveness and mind-set. Mentors must be enthusiastic about teaching, be invested in the next generation of teachers, and exhibit excellent practice. Residents and mentors are co-teachers from the beginning of the school year. The program typically provides time for feedback and gives mentors explicit guidance on how to offer feedback and tie it to district expectations.

**A focus on continuous improvement with ongoing mentoring and support for graduates.** To improve and grow, residents participate in rigorous assessment based on data from coursework, assessments, and observations. Those who do not meet expectations participate in improvement plans. If a resident continues to fail to improve, they are asked to leave the program. The programs also evaluate mentors with the intention of improvement. Program staff use data and informal feedback to assess the performance of the program itself and to guide improvements.

**Financial support for residents.** Residency programs typically offer financial incentives to attract high-quality candidates from diverse backgrounds and experiences in addition to providing them intensive preparation. These incentives include living stipends, student loan forgiveness, and/or tuition assistance in return for a commitment to teach in the district for a specified period of time.

**Cohorts.** Strong residency programs place candidates into cohorts to create a stronger support network and foster collaboration between teachers. Cohorts are essential in supporting learning and development. It is especially important to offer affinity groups as well for candidates from underrepresented backgrounds.

## Selected Examples

We have included a selected series of residency programs that have demonstrated initial success. As you review the examples, we encourage you and your team to use the note-taking template on the following page to capture your thoughts. Within each box, write how that program approached that specific key element of a successful pathway program. You might not have enough information to complete all the boxes and will have to leave some blank. The final column can be used to guide your initial thoughts related to your district’s context.

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### Example 1: University of South Dakota Teacher Residency

“With support from the Bush Foundation, the University of South Dakota created the University of South Dakota Teacher Residency (USDTR), a 4-year undergraduate program that includes a 1-year teaching residency. Initiated in 2009, the program specifically prepares participants to teach in rural schools and represents a unique partnership between a college of education and rural school districts. The program’s core values center on a need to prepare effective teachers who can serve all students in diverse cultural contexts through cultural responsiveness, differentiation, and the use of instructional technology. USDTR relies on residency instructors to bridge the gap between the university and the district. Residency instructors are veteran k–12 teachers employed as clinical faculty and are responsible for teaching much of the coursework during the residency year. Also, residency instructors build relationships with candidates, mentor teachers, and partner schools as they observe candidates in the field, further expanding their influence and building their leadership skills beyond their classroom. In fall 2016, USDTR placed more than 100 residents across 22 districts and had prepared more than 400 candidates since its inception.”<sup>20</sup>



SOURCE: Information is excerpted from *Building a Strong and Diverse Teaching Profession: The Teaching Profession Playbook*. The Teaching Profession Playbook was produced for the Partnership for the Future of Learning by the Learning Policy Institute and the Public Leadership Institute in collaboration with 26 organizations and five individual experts.

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### Example 2: Northern Michigan University (NMU) Secondary Teacher Education Program for the Upper Peninsula (STEP UP)

Started in 2018, NMU partnered with 12 rural school districts to improve recruitment and retention in rural Michigan schools, especially in the secondary English, mathematics, social studies, and science. The program recruits candidates who hold a college degree, interested in secondary education, want to work with children, and have served as a para-educator or non-certificated substitute teacher. Once candidates join the program, they complete graduate-level coursework as they work to earn both a master’s degree

and secondary teaching licensure. One of the programs strengths is the collaboration between the candidate and an academic advisor that beginnings during the application process and continues through the experience. Alumni of the residency program who currently teach in rural Michigan districts cite the collaborative cohort of classmates and supportive mentor teachers as the most valuable part of the residency program. The residency program secured funding through the Global Campus at NMU, Upper Peninsula Center for Educational Development, and the Michigan Department of Education. According to the program, “there is an 87% completion rate for those who have gone through this program in the past at NMU”<sup>21</sup>

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### Example 3: Boston Teacher Residency (BTR)



“BTR’s mission is to recruit, prepare, and sustain excellent teachers in and for the Boston Public Schools (BPS). ... BTR is currently preparing 75 teachers per year and plans to grow to prepare 120 teachers per year, which represents an estimated 30% of the total teachers Boston hires each year. BTR locates teacher preparation in classrooms rather than in the academy. BTR is highly selective and recruits talented and committed people from diverse backgrounds who want to be urban teachers. These aspiring teachers, called Teacher Residents, spend a full school year working with a skilled, experienced Mentor teacher (who is also trained and supported by BTR) in a BPS classroom 4 days each week. BTR clusters cohorts of Residents in host schools that have applied to serve as BTR preparation sites. BTR hires half-time, school-based Site Directors, who are themselves excellent veteran teachers or instructional coaches, to supervise Residents and Mentors. Residents participate in a curriculum, tailored to becoming a teacher in Boston, on Fridays, after school, and in summer sessions before and after the school year. During the preparation year, Residents earn a Massachusetts Initial Teacher License in their primary academic content area, partial credit toward dual licensure in special education or English as a Second Language, which they complete the following year, and a master’s degree in education from the University of Massachusetts/Boston. During this year, Residents receive a modest living stipend to help defray living expenses and incur no cost for the degree or licensure; in return, they commit to teach for at least 3 years in the BPS. BTR continues to support its graduates for at least their first 3 years as teacher of record, helping them develop from novice teacher to teacher-leader with the goal of building a critical mass of like-minded, effective teachers equipped to bolster school and district improvement efforts.

In its first seven cohorts, more than half of all BTR Residents have been people of color and more than half of all middle and high school Residents teach in the high-needs areas of mathematics and science. BTR has placed more than 95% of all graduating Residents in BPS teaching jobs. BTR graduates are being retained at an 86% rate within the BPS over their first 3 years, compared to a 53% rate overall for BPS teachers. In a recent survey, principals/headmasters considered 88% of their BTR-prepared teachers as or more effective overall than other first-year teachers at their school and considered the majority (55%) to be “significantly more effective.”<sup>22</sup>

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from Solomon, J. (2009). The Boston teacher residency: District-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60(5), 478-488. The excerpt is reprinted with permission from the author.

## Residency Note-Taking Template

Element	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Your Own
Strong district/university partnerships—with placement in “teaching schools”				
Rigorous and intentional recruitment and selection				
Coursework aligned to classroom experience and students’ needs				
Structured coaching and feedback from an expert mentor				
A focus on continuous improvement				
Financial support for residents				

### Reflection Questions (3, 2, 1)

3. What are three common themes you noticed across the programs?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. What are two questions you are still wondering about?
  - a.
  - b.
1. What is one next step the team will take?
  - a.

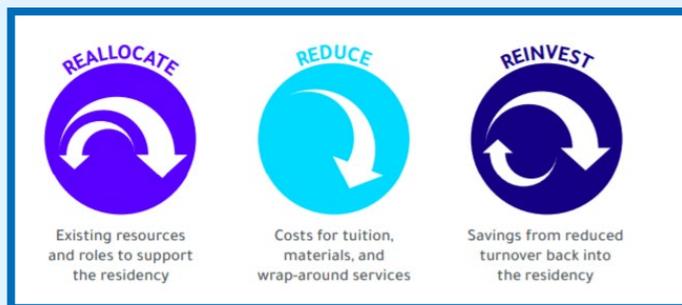
#### Featured Resource:

#### ***Sustainable Strategies for Funding Teacher Residencies: Lessons From California***

The Learning Policy Institute's 2020 report shares promising practices for funding high-quality residencies with strong partnerships and strong vision. Residencies require significant start-up costs which state funds can support in launching the program. However, to sustain a successful program, districts need to use the "3 R's" to more sustainably continue to fund residencies: reallocate resources, reduce costs, and reinvest savings.

[https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/EPL\\_CA\\_Teacher\\_Residencies\\_2020\\_REPORT.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/EPL_CA_Teacher_Residencies_2020_REPORT.pdf)

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## Part III: Alternative Route to Teacher Certification

### Elements for Considerations

This list includes elements to consider when designing, implementing, or evaluating a program. The list is based on *The National Quality Indicators for Nontraditional Teacher Preparation Programs* from the National Association of Alternative Certification and is not comprehensive.<sup>23</sup>

**Recruitment of candidates.** Alternative route candidates typically are either recent college graduates or experienced career changers. Marketing strategies typically target and recruit applicants to meet the local partner district's staffing needs. Effective recruitment efforts include state-of-the-art technological approaches to broaden the candidate pool.

**Selection of candidates.** Program criteria for candidate selection that meets diversity, equity, and partner staffing needs should be developed, implemented, and publicly communicated. The selection processes typically are implemented and are fully aligned to program policies by staff. When selecting career changers, consider high-potential candidates who have related experience, a connection to the community, and an existing skillset.<sup>24</sup>

**Preparation of candidates.** Program curricula are based on the developmental learning needs of diverse candidates and align with local, state, and national regulations and standards of content and quality. Program design is specific and targeted to the needs of candidates. For example, career changers typically require training that emphasizes initial classroom survival, the opportunity to develop community, and offer ongoing coaching.<sup>25</sup> Similarly, program delivery is designed to meet the needs of candidates and leverages technology to enhance instruction. Furthermore, candidates are often assessed based on demonstrated knowledge and application of subject matter, pedagogical skills, and professionalism with the intention of growth and development.

**Support and mentoring for candidates.** Ongoing supports and personalized mentoring are especially important for new teachers prepared through alternative routes. Effective support and mentoring plans are implemented in a way that connects support processes and procedures to regulations and standards. Furthermore, the program identifies resources, people, money, and time to support mentors and candidate collaboration as well as appropriate training for personnel who support candidates.

## Selected Examples

We have included a selected series of alternative routes to certification programs that have demonstrated initial success. As you review the examples, we encourage you and your team to use the note-taking template on the following page to capture your thoughts. Within each box write how that program approached that specific key element of a successful pathway program. You might not have enough information to complete all the boxes and will have to leave some blank. The final column can be used to guide your initial thoughts related to your district's recruitment and staffing goals.

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### **Example 1: Georgia Teacher Academy for Preparation and Pedagogy (GaTAPP)**

“This alternative preparation program aims to create a pipeline for career changers as well as recent graduates who have earned a bachelor’s or a higher degree but have not yet completed a teacher preparation program. The GaTAPP program provides opportunities for candidates to develop and demonstrate competence while being supported by their own candidate support team. Special education candidate participants complete additional instruction and receive supplementary induction supports. Successful completion leads to a recommendation for certification but not a degree.”

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from OSEP. (2020). *Attracting personnel: Alternative routes*. <https://osepideasthatwork.org/sites/default/files/A1-Alternative-Routes-508.pdf>. The excerpt is reprinted with permission from the authors.

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### **Example 2: New Paradigm For Education (Detroit area, Michigan)—PLANNED**

“New Paradigm will offer a residency-based alternative route to teacher certification program to recruit, train, and retain high quality educators, particularly teachers of color and male teachers of color, for careers in teaching in Michigan schools. New Paradigm proposed a program focused on increasing the diversity of Michigan's educator workforce, particularly in greater Detroit, to reflect more closely the diversity of our public-school students.

“[The] recruitment places an explicit focus on candidates of color, with an emphasis on African American males, because...being taught by teachers that share [a student’s] racial identity has a positive impact on academic outcomes and social-emotional well-being for Black, Latinx and other children of color. While working full time in schools, candidates will be given time and training to prepare for and practice the craft of teaching under a mentor educator before fully taking over a classroom...New Paradigm's program is grounded in research-based, core teaching practices and will offer ongoing, job-embedded professional learning and coaching for early-career teachers—all of which is in alignment with MDE's program standards. Unique among Michigan's alternative routes, this program will provide a full year of paid work in schools under the close mentorship of certified teachers. It will provide candidates extended time to become familiar with the school setting and demonstrate effective classroom practices before they earn certification and become teachers of record in their own classrooms. New Paradigm plans to partner with Black Male Educator Alliance of Michigan, Detroit Children's Fund, In Demand, Urban Teachers' Black Educators Initiative, the Skillman Foundation, and the National Center for Teacher Residencies.”

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from Michigan Department of Education. (2021, May 6). *MDE approves second program to provide alternative route to teacher licensure*. [https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818\\_34785-558705--,00.html](https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140-37818_34785-558705--,00.html)

### Example 3: University of Michigan—Ann Arbor’s Michigan Alternative Route to Certification

The M-ARC Initial Certification Pathway is an avenue into the teaching profession for candidates who hold a bachelor’s degree but have not completed an educator preparation program. “In this program, candidates begin with a pre-service induction period that includes self-paced online coursework and a summer practicum experience working with children in an educational setting. Once this pre-service induction is complete, candidates begin teaching under a Michigan interim teaching certificate and receive ongoing, practice-focused, content-specific training and development for three years to earn their Michigan standard teaching certificates. Candidates are responsible for securing appropriate employment in any K–12 school in the State of Michigan.



The M-ARC Initial Certification pathway includes 3 components:

- **Field Instruction:** Experienced educators work one-on-one with candidates in their classrooms through observations of teaching practice, coaching conversations, and assessment of growth and proficiency across program standards.
- **Seminar:** Experienced educators facilitate collaborative practice-focused learning experiences for grade level/content-area cohorts. These online seminar groups meet about two evenings per month during the first 2 years of the program.
- **Portfolio Assignments:** M-ARC advisers guide candidates in the compilation of artifacts and reflections from their teaching practice in a professional learning inventory as evidence of their proficiency in program outcome areas.

The cost to participate in the M-ARC Initial Certification Pathway is \$3,000/year (that is, \$750 due at enrollment; \$250 per month for the duration of a 3-year program).<sup>26</sup>

SOURCE: Information is excerpted from The University of Michigan School of Education. (2021). *Other certificates and endorsements: Michigan alternate route to certification*. <https://soe.umich.edu/academics-admissions/degrees/other-certificates-endorsements/michigan-alternate-route-certification#tab3> The excerpt is reprinted with permission from the program director.

Inventory of existing Michigan alternative routes to teacher certification in Michigan:

[https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Alternative\\_Route\\_Providers\\_612012\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/Alternative_Route_Providers_612012_7.pdf)

## Alternative Route to Teacher Certification Note-Taking Template

Element	Example 1	Example 2	Example 3	Your Own
Recruitment				
Selection				
Preparation				
Support and mentoring				

### Reflection Questions (3, 2, 1)

3. What are three common themes you noticed across the programs?
  - a.
  - b.
  - c.
2. What are two questions you are still wondering about?
  - a.
  - b.
1. What is one next step the team will take?
  - a.

### Quality Indicators for Nontraditional Teacher Preparation Programs

The *National Quality Indicators for Nontraditional Teacher Preparation Programs* provide a framework to assist programs in conducting self-assessment. The rubrics are designed to guide existing alternative routes to certification programs to understand the scope and breadth of nontraditional teacher preparation. It is important to use the quality indicators as a formative measure. At this time, the purpose is to provide a tool to assist programs in their development.

[http://alternativecertification.org/?page\\_id=11966](http://alternativecertification.org/?page_id=11966)



## Section 3: Funding for Teacher Pathways

Whether your district is considering starting a new pathway, creating a new pathway partnership, or improving or evaluating an existing pathway, creative, strategic, braided, and sustainable funding is essential to maintaining a pipeline of effective and diverse teachers. Luckily, multiple sources are available to support recruiting and retaining teachers. They span federal sources, private foundation sources, and Michigan sources. This section provides a high-level overview of various funding opportunities to support your educator staffing work.<sup>27</sup>

### Federal Funding Sources

- **Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High-Quality Teachers and Principals: ESEA, Title II-A.** Title II-A provides funding for activities that increase academic achievement by improving the quality and effectiveness of teachers and leaders. Annual entitlement grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education. Local education agencies submit an application to state education agencies. State education agencies must reserve a portion of the state allocation for statewide activities.
  - Guidance: <https://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/essa/essatitleiipartaguidance.pdf>
  - Program information: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/teacherqual/index.html>
- **Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grants: ESEA, Title II-B, Subpart 4, Section 2242.** The SEED grant program supports the increase of highly effective educators by supporting the implementation of evidence-based preparation, development, or enhancement opportunities for educators.
  - Program information: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-discretionary-grants-support-services/effectiveducator-development-programs/supporting-effective-educator-development-grant-program/>
- **Rural and Low-Income School (RLIS) Program: ESEA Title V, Part B.** The purpose of the RLIS program is to fund initiatives in rural local education agencies focused on increasing academic achievement. RLIS funds may be used for any activities authorized under ESEA Title IA, IIA, III, and IVA.
  - Program information: <https://oese.ed.gov/offices/office-of-formula-grants/rural-insular-native-achievement-programs/rural-education-achievement-program/rural-and-low-income-school-program/>
  - Program webinar: <https://www2.ed.gov/programs/reapsrsa/reapwhatleasneedtoknowinfy2019presentation.pdf>
- **Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century: Carl D. Perkins V.** Perkins V provides funding for career and technical education activities that support student preparation for career success.
  - Program information: <https://cte.ed.gov/>

## Foundation Funding Sources

- **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation:** Grants for organizations or programs that prepare or train teachers and leaders to better serve underserved student populations.
  - Educator preparation: <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/our-work/programs/us-program/k-12-education>
- **Carnegie Corporation of New York:** Grants for improving systems that prepare, recruit, and develop teachers and leaders to serve the needs of diverse learners.
  - Leadership and teaching: <https://www.carnegie.org/programs/urban-and-higher-education/>
- **Hewlett Foundation:** Grants that support teacher and leader preparation and retention.
  - K12 teaching and learning: <https://hewlett.org/programs/education/>
- **The Louis Calder Foundation:** Grants for programs that identify and develop the qualities of highly effective teachers and leaders.
  - Teacher and leadership development: <https://www.louiscalderfoundation.org/grant-program/teacher-leadership-development/>
- **The National Education Association Foundation:** Grants for teachers and leaders to participate in high-quality professional development and groups including mentoring experiences.
  - For districts: <https://www.neafoundation.org/for-districts/>
- **Wallace Foundation:** Grants and support for principal recruitment, training, and supervision and principal preparation programs.
  - Leadership: <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/pages/default.aspx>

### Resource Highlight: *Investing in Talent Development: A Funding Guide for Supporting the Teacher Workforce With Federal, Private, and State Funds*

This funding guide provides districts a series of options for funding sources related to teacher talent management systems. It includes a high-level snapshot followed by specific details, including eligibility requirements, mechanisms to apply or use the funding, informational resources, and the specific activities authorized within the funding stream.

[https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/TDF\\_Funding%20Guide\\_06\\_16\\_20.pdf](https://gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/TDF_Funding%20Guide_06_16_20.pdf)

## Michigan Funding Sources

- **Southeast Michigan Community Foundation:** A multifaceted, full-service philanthropic organization leading the way to positive change that supports improving the lives of people in Michigan.
  - Grants information: <https://cfsem.org/for-nonprofits/>

- **Future Proud Michigan Educator:** The Michigan Department of Education is providing resources that facilitate recruitment into the profession for an existing pool of candidates to address short-term school vacancies and long-term staffing needs in the state of Michigan.
  - Information: <https://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,4615,7-140--475817--,00.html>
- **Skillman Foundation:** A children's philanthropy that works to ensure Detroit youth achieve their highest aspirations.
  - Grants: <https://www.skillman.org/grants/>
  - How to apply: <https://www.skillman.org/how-to-apply/>



**Future Proud  
Michigan  
Educators**

**Funding Resource Highlight: Future Proud Michigan Educators**

Several financial support options are available for completing your preparation, either as a first-time teacher or for certified teachers seeking to expand the content areas in which they can teach.

- Michigan Reconnect: Connects candidates over the age of 25 to in-district community college partnerships.
- CLEP Tests and Courses: Offers course credits for adult learners.
- TEACH grant: Assists with college tuition.
- T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Michigan: Provides tuition support to early childhood education personnel.
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness: Outlines loan forgiveness programs.
- Michigan National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (MINGSTAP): Offers college tuition assistance.

<https://www.michiganteacher.org/become-a-teacher/financial-support/>

## Conclusion

Districts are looking to identify sources of excellent teacher candidates. Nontraditional routes to the profession can contribute to building a comprehensive district staffing plan. The purpose of this guide is to build awareness and understanding of the definitions and funding sources available to support comprehensive staffing plans.

Consider whether there is a pathway you would like to explore more for your district. With your team, discuss:

- What components of this element do we already have in place?
  - If they are not strong, how can we strengthen them?

- What components of this element will we need to develop?

- Whom do we need to engage?



### Social media connection

Share how your district is incorporating nontraditional pathways into your staffing plan.

Tag @mieducation and #ProudMichiganEducator

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