

Brief Insights | Bilingual Teacher Residencies in California

Bilingual Teacher Residencies (BTRs) in California offer a preparation pathway that can address the bilingual teacher shortage to help meet state and local multilingual goals through innovative district-university partnerships. Residents engage in a year-long program with experienced mentors, fostering a pipeline of qualified educators deeply connected to the communities they serve. LMU-CEEL researchers conducted interviews with BTR grantee program leaders to capture and analyze their perspectives based on their implementation phase and local context. This Brief Insight highlights the study aims and growing knowledge around BTRs, including policy and practice recommendations.

Research Question 1: What are the experiences and perspectives of a sample of bilingual teacher residency program leaders?

Research Question 2: What are the implications of those findings for policy and practice?

Key Findings:

- 1 BILINGUAL TEACHER RESIDENCIES BUILD ON COMMUNITY CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC WEALTH.**
- 2 BILINGUAL TEACHER RESIDENCIES FOCUS ON CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE AND SUSTAINING TEACHING.**
- 3 STRONG DISTRICT-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIPS FACILITATE COLLABORATIVE PROGRAM DESIGN AND PROBLEM SOLVING.**
- 4 CANDIDATES IN BTRS FACE GREATER FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO BECOMING TEACHERS THAN OTHER TEACHER RESIDENCY CANDIDATES.**

“...[Bilingual teachers] bring that linguistic and cultural repertoire of the community with them and it’s a big priority for us to foster and support students who are from this community to become teachers in this community... it’s a ‘grow your own’ model.”

Why Does This Matter?

- Addressing the Bilingual Teacher Shortage:** California faces a critical shortage of bilingual teachers, especially in schools serving English learners. BTRs aim to build a strong pipeline of qualified educators to meet these communities' needs.
- Cultivating Culturally Responsive Educators:** BTRs prepare teachers with critical consciousness, awareness of systemic inequalities, and an appreciation for diverse identities. This approach fosters inclusive classrooms that affirm students' backgrounds and support their academic and personal success.
- Empowering Local Communities:** By recruiting candidates from within the communities they serve, BTRs adopt a "grow your own" model. This approach strengthens cultural understanding, reflects student diversity, builds trust, and uplifts local communities.
- Improving Outcomes for English Learners:** Research shows that qualified bilingual teachers improve English learners' academic performance. BTRs help ensure more students have access to these opportunities, enhancing educational outcomes and future success.
- Promoting Bilingualism as an Asset:** BTRs embrace bilingualism as a strength, using strategies like translanguaging to empower students. This asset-based approach fosters inclusion and equity in education.

Recommendations

Our findings and key takeaways from the existing literature on bilingual teacher residencies have generated a set of recommendations for policy and practice to ensure California's BTRs can serve as a vehicle for addressing bilingual teacher shortages at the state and local levels.

Ensure systemic coherence and information sharing across agencies and efforts.

Build on the efforts of the California Teacher Residency Lab (The Lab) as well as the newly formed State Regional Technical Assistance Center (SRTAC) to provide differentiated, high-quality technical assistance/supports.

Ensure sustainability of BTRs into the future through funding and knowledge building.

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