

## **Urban Teacher Residency Program: The Development of a Clinically-Rich Teacher Preparation Program**

### **Overview of the Best Practice Session Including Purpose/Objectives:**

The Urban Teacher Residency (UTR) program recruits, prepares, places and retains highly qualified new math and science teachers in high-need middle schools (grades 6-8) and high schools (9-12) in the high-need Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD). This UTR began with its first cohort in Fall 2010, and this summer began its third cohort. Each cohort has between 20 – 30 residents participating.

The partnership creates a third pathway for the preparation of urban teachers, in addition to the traditional student-teaching and university intern options. This new pathway blends the rigor and theory of a master's degree in curriculum and instruction with the practice and pragmatism of the single-subject (secondary) credential program in math or science, combined with a year-long residency in our partner schools. The residents complete a single-subject teaching credential in math or science in 12 months, are hired by LAUSD or district charter schools as probationary teachers, and awarded a master's in 18 months. LAUSD and THE UNIVERSITY collaborate in providing a sustainable two-year induction program featuring well-qualified support providers, professional development, and ample support from a professional learning community—resulting in a full credential. THE UNIVERSITY then incorporates UTR reforms into all teacher preparation programs.

In recruiting, two university programs are leveraged in order to provide financial and academic support to undergrads who plan to become secondary math or science teachers, thus creating a pipeline to UTR: the MSTI (Math Science Teacher Initiative) Scholars, funded by the state, and Noyce Scholars, funded by the National Science Foundation. These programs enable THE UNIVERSITY students, many of whom are low-income, to complete their degrees with math or science focuses and enter UTR to earn their credential. Noyce and MSTI Scholars must teach math or science in high-need schools for four years, which coincides with the three-year UTR requirement.

THE UNIVERSITY has gained considerable knowledge about recruitment incentives, course scheduling and the accelerated preparation of career-changers and recent graduates so they can become high-quality teachers in low-performing schools from our successful Transition to Teaching programs. We have also developed solid partnerships with districts and schools.

The UTR project increases the number of highly qualified secondary math and science teachers who have been well-prepared for the challenges of teaching in high-need, hard-to-staff urban schools. These new teachers will increase achievement in math and science for all students. By the end of the grant period, THE UNIVERSITY and LAUSD will institutionalize UTR reforms in teacher preparation and induction, and will have strategies in place to sustain the project.

**Purpose/Objectives of the Presentation:** This presentation seeks to shed light on what we have learned from our more than two years experiences of implementation. We will base our presentation on the following questions: *What about the TRIAD? – The student teacher, the university supervisor, and the cooperating teacher?*

1. *How are cooperating teachers recruited and selected to work with student teachers?*
2. *How do universities support, and reward clinical faculty and cooperating teachers?*
3. *How might we, as professional teacher educators, define the most effective approaches to supervising student teachers?*

The session will begin with an in-depth presentation of the THE UNIVERSITY/LAUSD UTR Program, followed by a question and answer period. The presentation team will include:

- a participant from last year's cohort who recently earned his teaching credential and is now hired as a full-time first-year classroom teacher;
- the mentor who worked with him when he was a resident;
- a university participant; and
- a participant from LAUSD.

The intention is to activate the attendees, as opposed to having them passively sit and listen.

**Rationale: Significance to the field of Teacher Education:** The problem of providing high quality math and science teachers for our public schools is an enduring problem that teacher education programs struggle with. It is difficult to recruit top-quality math and science majors into the field because beginning salaries for public school teachers is significantly lower than what most math/science college graduates can earn in other fields. Compounding the problem are the challenges that schools with high-poverty populations have retaining teachers, in general. Add to this the pedagogical challenges for beginning teachers to teach children, who are English Language Learners, and who are impacted by the cultural social issues endemic to South Los Angeles. Teachers, who lack the appropriate training, too frequently teach math and science in these schools, resulting in a revolving door of teachers, and students who are at high risk of failure and dropping out. LAUSD has consistently conducted outreach, recruitment and partnership, including with THE UNIVERSITY, to increase its pool of highly qualified math and science teachers. However, it is very difficult to attract and retain qualified new teachers to very high-need, urban schools in math and science, without targeted programs like UTR.

**Analysis of the Impact: Key Elements of Practice, Conclusions/Point of View:** We have provided the basic description and sequence of the UTR program. In addition notable features of UTR are Lesson Study, teacher action research, a professional learning community, and development of mentors teachers who are

specialists in supporting beginning math and science teachers, thus increasing capacity in the partner schools. UTR also will revise teacher education curriculum at THE UNIVERSITY to include additional research-based strategies for English learners, students with special needs, content literacy, and technology in the classroom. As a result, the partner schools will have a new supply of approximately 120 highly qualified math and science teachers, who have skills matched to students' needs and a commitment to urban schools. The teachers will raise student achievement versus students of comparison teachers. THE UNIVERSITY and LAUSD will institutionalize UTR reforms.

Lessons Learned: The UTR contracts with an outside evaluator, Vital Research, to conduct periodic reports. These reports guide us as we seek continual improvement. This session will explore the ways and the quality of how the residency prepares beginning teachers for their first teaching experience, in particular the need for more preparation in classroom management. We will explore how relationships develop, impacting the mentor, the resident, and their students.