

EDUCATION PROGRAM SNAPSHOT

The S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation envisions children and youth developing the knowledge, skills, and character to explore and understand the world around them, growing into caring, informed, and productive adults. This snapshot, prepared as the Foundation nears conclusion in 2020, documents essential aspects of the Education Program's teacher preparation portfolio.



Teacher preparation portfolio

S. D. BECHTEL, JR.
FOUNDATION
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Recognizing teachers as the single most important contributor to student achievement, the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation invests in high-quality preparation to enhance the skills of new educators as they build practices aligned to California's academic standards.

Goal

Ensure that new teachers are well trained in the Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards, so students across California have access to instructors ready to conduct learning aligned with the standards.

Approach

- ▶ Support partnerships between California State University (CSU) teacher preparation programs and K–12 districts as they reform practices to align with new standards and district needs through the New Generation of Educators Initiative (NGEI).
- ▶ Build capacity to use data for improvement and support data-sharing partnerships to better align teacher preparation practices with district needs.
- ▶ Support advocates for clinical preparation of teachers and data-sharing between teacher preparation providers and K–12 districts.
- ▶ Invest in communications efforts to increase support for high-quality clinical preparation and the use of data for continuous improvement of teacher preparation.

Progress

- ✓ **Ten CSU campuses strengthened partnerships with K–12 districts**, improving candidate preparation aligned with new math and science standards and district needs; a partner learning community was facilitated by ConsultEd.
- ✓ **The CSU system built capacity for data-driven continuous improvement.** WestEd and SRI provided technical assistance and formative evaluation support with an emphasis on growing campus and system-level capacity to use data for improvement.
- ✓ **CSU faculty at many campuses revamped practices with an equity lens**, working with TeachingWorks at the University of Michigan to prepare future teachers to disrupt patterns of inequity in K–12 classrooms.
- ✓ **Many CSU campuses improved clinical preparation**, working with the National Center for Teacher Residencies and local districts to launch year-long residencies for teacher candidates.
- ✓ **Nearly 300 CSU teacher candidates participated in residencies** with support from new scholarships designed to advance the high-quality residency model.
- ✓ **California invested in scaling residencies.** Approaches demonstrated in NGEI were cited by the state in establishing funds; several grantees received support to launch or expand residency programs.



Lessons Learned

- ▶ **Dedicated staff time is essential to building strong institutional partnerships.** Effective university-district collaboration requires individuals with time designated in their roles to coordinate practices across the institutions and lead change.
- ▶ **Build systems and routines to use data for improvement.** Campus-district partnerships, as well as the CSU system, collected new types of data – such as observation rubric and survey data that are available more frequently than end-of-term summative data – to test changes and design strategies to elevate teacher preparation practices.
- ▶ **Provide opportunities for professional and peer learning.** Partners found value in sharing their progress, gaining knowledge and encouragement from others, and addressing challenges common across the Initiative.
- ▶ **Support key stakeholders to inform and adapt to changes.** Improvements to teacher preparation required engaging faculty, university supervisors, district mentor teachers, and residents to adopt new tools and practices; each party has expertise and experience and can provide valuable feedback on proposed changes.

Opportunities

State policies and budgets support strong clinical preparation through high-quality pathways.

Education policymakers, funders, and advocates can continue to incent the development of residencies and other high-quality preparation programs and ensure financial support for teacher candidates to choose these pathways.

Improved access to data is driving programmatic improvement.

Expanded statewide and institutional data systems and data-sharing agreements can enhance efforts to ensure that all students are taught by well-prepared teachers.

Evaluators and practitioners have generated knowledge on how to improve teacher preparation.

Continued support for faculty to research and publish about their improvement efforts can advance the field of teacher preparation.

Resources

- An evaluation of the New Generation of Educators Initiative, conducted jointly by WestEd and SRI International, documented the changes implemented through the Initiative in a series of [reports](#).
- A [reflection](#) captures the S. D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation's perspective, lessons learned, and suggestions for other funders based on the New Generation of Educators Initiative.
- The CSU produced a [final report](#) highlighting perspectives from the campuses that participated in the New Generation of Educators Initiative.

