

Teacher Residencies & Fellowships

- **The National Center for Teacher Residencies** has programs spread all across the nation (CA, CO, DC, FL, IL, MA, MN, MO, NY, PA, SD, TN, TX, VA, WA) to help non-education majors pursue a future in education. These programs are typified by a year being a “resident” in a school alongside a master teacher before becoming a teacher of record. Visit <https://nctresidencies.org/>
- **Urban Teachers** believes that “qualified, highly effective teachers who stay in the classroom can empower students through learning. Our teachers develop the skills, hands-on experience and knowledge to ensure every child receives an equitable education.” Visit <https://urbanteachers.org/teacher-certification/>
- **ACE Teaching Fellows** “forms talented, faith-filled college graduates to renew and transform Catholic school classrooms.” Visit <https://ace.nd.edu/teach/>
- **The Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship** “seeks to attract talented, committed individuals with backgrounds in the STEM fields—science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—into teaching in high-need secondary schools in Georgia and New Jersey.” Visit <https://woodrow.org/fellowships/ww-teaching-fellowships/>
- **NYC Teaching Fellows** focuses on developing great teachers for New York City, with an emphasis on “critical-need subject areas, including English, special education, and math.” Visit <https://nycteachingfellows.org/our-history>
- **The Mississippi Teacher Corps (MTC)** “selects exceptional college graduates to teach in high-poverty public schools in Mississippi. MTC provides training, support, certification, and a full scholarship for a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) from the University of Mississippi.” Visit <https://www.mtc.olemiss.edu/about-us/>

What distinguishes a teacher residency/fellowship program from other alternative certification routes?

- Not technically a residency/fellowship program but still a good pathway to teaching
- For students (and career changers) who have not majored in education who are interested in pursuing a career as a teacher
- Longer commitments—typically from 4 to 5 years
- Location specific—looking for effective teachers to stay in specific cities and districts for the long haul

- Continuing education—the majority of these programs involve earning a Master’s Degree in Education/Teaching or taking Master’s courses to be certified to teach
- Very rigorous—these programs involve taking classes alongside spending time in the classroom as a “resident”
- Extensive experience—spend an entire year alongside a master teacher in the classroom to effectively learn the ropes before becoming the teacher of record
- Support networks—the first year of teaching is hard. These programs have built strong support networks, from mentors to fellow cohorts, which are in place throughout and after the residency year, as well as upon completion of the program.
- Financial assistance—these programs often offer discounted tuition rates and a stipend for the residency year

What questions should you ask when examining and/or comparing alternative certification programs?

- Partnering Higher Education Institution
 - Is it a real, **accredited** program? Some programs of this type will promise you a degree from a legit-sounding university, but further research may demonstrate that these “universities” have been set up by a charter school system to funnel new teachers only into those schools. If you’re going to earn a Master’s Degree, you want it to be transferable to situations outside the one described by the program. Just do a quick Google search!
 - Search the university on <https://ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.aspx> to determine whether or not it is accredited.
 - Example of an unaccredited “university”: Charles Sposato Graduate School of Education
 - See if the university is ranked *at all*. If the program is technically accredited but there is little-to-no information about it outside of its own website, there may be better options.
 - Example of this type of university: Relay Graduate School of Education
 - Are the classes on-line or in-person? Do you have a preference?
 - Will you have completed an entire Master’s Degree upon completion of the program or just enough classes to be certified to teach? Do you want a Master’s Degree out of this program?
- Teacher Retention
 - How many of the previous participants in the program have 1) finished the entire program and 2) continued teaching in the district? Low retention rates mean that the program may not be a great pathway into a career in education.
- City and District
 - Do you like the city enough to stay there for 4-5 years?

- How is the district that you'd be teaching in? Are they working on continually improving and progressing?
- Available Tracks
 - Do you want to teach elementary or secondary students? Not all programs have tracks to help certify you for the subject and/or age range you'd like to teach. Make sure to determine what sort of teacher you'd like to be and then look for programs to help you get there. There are also several programs offering tracks in special education.
- Partnering Schools
 - What kind of schools will the program place you in? Do you have a preference between working in traditional public schools, private schools, and charter schools? If the program places you in a charter school, check to see how long the school has been open and whether or not it seems stable. You don't want to be working at a school and suddenly have it shut down.
- Leadership Opportunities
 - Does the program offer any support or tracks to enter into leadership roles after fulfilling the teaching requirement? Is this something that interests you? Have any members of previous cohorts gone on to pursue leadership/administrative positions?
- Financial Assistance
 - What stipend does the program offer? This will definitely be below a full-time teacher's salary, but will you be able to live off it for a year?
 - Does the program assist with tuition costs? Are there any scholarships you can apply for?
- Testing Qualifications
 - What qualifications do you need to apply to the program and teach in the state?
 - Do you need to take a Praxis Test?
 - Have you taken the GRE?
 - Is there another regional test you need to take?
 - Does the program have a reimbursement fund for the cost of these tests?
- Housing Assistance
 - Will the program help you find housing or roommates?
 - Are there resources through the partnering university to help you find housing/roommates?