Community Feedback and Mentorship

> [Throughout their training, candidates] have their small groups and cohort, they have one mentor teacher, they have faculty that's going out to support them during that experience, and so even though it's a tough transition for some, it's highly structured, highly supported.

EDDIE PARTIDA
Claremont Graduate Program

Creating community learning and mentorship opportunities can support candidates, especially those of color,[1] through the completion of their credentialing program. This includes providing spaces within seminars, classes, and peer groups for candidates to apply problem-solving strategies to real-world challenges that arise in clinical settings and discussing pedagogical issues. It also means hiring experienced faculty and teachers in clinical and academic settings and training faculty to support teaching in diverse classrooms.

Some of the programs we spoke to as part of our *Seen, Heard, Reflected: Building and Sustaining a Diverse STEM Teacher Pipeline* research shared specific promising practices they engage in to support community learning and mentorship:

STRUCTURED FACULTY MENTOR PROGRAMS

Program administrators create one-on-one and small-group mentorship opportunities for candidates to connect with faculty. In some cases, these small groups target candidates of color; however, this is a generally effective practice from which all candidates benefit. Leaders carefully place candidates with faculty mentors who reflect their lived experiences and backgrounds in education. Candidates receive ample support as they navigate their first clinical experiences.

INTENTIONAL FACULTY-CANDIDATE FEEDBACK LOOPS

Faculty provide authentic feedback and coaching, and students give feedback to their peers. These feedback loops help candidates and faculty to develop meaningful relationships, cultivate self-awareness, and foster community.

SPOTLIGHT
CLAREMONT GRADUATE PROGRAM

BACKGROUND

Claremont Graduate University is a small private university in Los Angeles County. In 2018, the university enrolled 219 credential students, 68 percent of whom were people of color.[2] From 2016-2018, Claremont's three-year average program completion rate for STEM candidates was almost four times the state average. Claremont's credential program consists of three academic terms and supports both the intern and residency credential paths.

FEEDBACK & MENTORSHIP

Claremont supports teacher candidates by working diligently to pair them with expert teacher mentors credentialed in the candidates' field and assigning them a faculty mentor who is credentialed in the same field and can teach methods. In both pathways, experienced mentor teachers are actively engaged in academic and clinical training and support. Candidates move through the program as a cohort with a faculty advisor who guides them through both their academic and clinical experience as they take on more instructional responsibility. By the end of the program, candidates from Claremont gain around 1,200 hours of clinical experience — twice the minimum number of hours required by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

REACH INSTITUTE FOR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2006 in Oakland, Reach Institute for School Leadership is a private institute accredited by CTC. In 2018, Reach enrolled 23 credential students, 52 percent of whom were people of color. From 2016-2018, Reach's three-year average program completion rate for STEM candidates was 17 percent (compared to the state average of 11 percent).[3] Reach supports candidates pursuing the intern and clear credential paths; when candidates enter the program, they are already in the classroom.

FEEDBACK & MENTORSHIP

To support ongoing learning, faculty create multiple opportunities for discussion and feedback. First, candidates engage in biweekly coaching sessions where they receive direct feedback on their classroom teaching. Faculty undergo two years of training on this coaching model, which is one of the hallmarks of Reach's program. Faculty also model gathering and applying feedback. Seminar classes end with structured feedback opportunities, such as sharing "pluses and deltas," which faculty use to analyze and shift their own instruction. Candidates also take this opportunity to discuss the usefulness of various pedagogical approaches.

1. Pour-Khorshid, Farima. "Cultivating sacred spaces: A racial affinity group approach to support critical educators of color." Teaching Education 29, no. 4 (2018): 318-329.

2. For the purposes of this analysis, we include Black, Latinx, Native American, and Pacific Islander candidates in the "people of color" definition since of the groups for which data is publicly reported, they are most often underrepresented and underserved in our education systems.

3. This figure was derived from ETW's analysis of Title II Federal Data, Teacher Prep Program Enrollment and Completion, 2013-2018.