

COLLEGIATE ACADEMIES

The Collegiate Academies Teacher Residency (CATR) Program: Partnership with TNTP

Collegiate Academies' partnership with The New Teacher Project is designed to support the development, certification, and growth of first year teachers across three schools in the Collegiate Academies (CA) network. Through this partnership, we provide a high-quality development and certification program designed specifically for first-year teachers at CA that focuses on individualized coaching; immediate, actionable feedback; customized development goals; and rigorous content knowledge. Our model supports first-year teachers who are currently enrolled in alternative programs—including Teach for America and teachNOLA—as well as other teachers who are new to the classroom and not yet certified educators. Through our program, these first year teachers are fully embedded within a classroom as a full-time lead teacher while simultaneously participating in extensive development and coaching structures to support quick, personalized development.

The primary focus of our Teacher Residency is to combine true classroom experience with a robust training program to ensure that new teachers become better every day, gaining authentic skills that they can turn into action in their classrooms the following class period. Each CATR teacher is evaluated regularly throughout their one-year residency using teacher rubrics, principal and scholar surveys, and classroom achievement results. At the conclusion of a successful year as a first-year teacher at CA, residents will earn certification. We rely on the following program structures to support this development:

Summer Skills Camp

- Week-long, intensive training, five weeks before students arrive.
- Focus on relationship building, core teaching skills, and overall mindsets on kids and teaching.

Coaching

- Every week: 1 Lesson plan review, Daily observation, and Two debrief or analysis meetings with a 1:1 coach
- Focus on bite-sized action steps and ample practice time

Real-Time Feedback

- In-the-moment non-verbal cues from the back of the classroom to target classroom management.
- As teachers' development progresses, cues become more academic.

Responsiveness to Data

- Quarterly review of data using both observation results and scholar IA data.
- Collaborative meetings to determine trends and make programmatic changes in response.

PD Workshops

- PD sessions twice a week after school.
- Objectives focus on impacting classroom practice the following day.

Authentic Group Practice

- Role-playing in small-group settings to practice classroom management, introductions to new material, and other classroom techniques.
- Teachers rate each other on clarity and engagement.

Building a Cohort

- Intentionality behind cultivating a strong team culture.
- Norms around vulnerability and collaboration to create a supportive environment.

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Staffing

In order to provide the development programs described here, we rely on the following staff members:

- Two full-time Collegiate Academies coaches who each coach 7 first-year teachers and design and implement weekly coaching meetings and 4 hours of professional development each week (2 hours each on Tuesday and Thursday).
- One half-time TNTP Program Coordinator who supports specific professional development activities: lesson plan writing, data analysis, and Common Core integration.
- Support from the TNTP Data Manager to help with ratings, data analysis, and comparison results between CA teachers and other first-year teachers.

Collegiate Academies' partnership with TNTP allows us to devote increased staff capacity to the coaching of our first year teachers while sharing resources and leveraging the strengths of our two organizations. TNTP supports content skill-building and lesson-planning, while CA brings deep strengths in classroom management and classroom culture to our first year teachers' year of development. Additionally, the expanded capacity we devoted to the training and support of these first year teachers allows us to be flexible in providing customized support to teachers; we reassign coaches or focus on new areas of improvement to best meet the needs of each teacher in our building.

Goals and Outcomes:

When we first launched a partnership with TNTP, we set out to ensure the continued growth of CA's teacher development programs and support both CA and TNTP in collecting data to reflect on optimal teacher training and certification processes. We aim to achieve the following outcomes for all first-year residents at CA by the end of the 2014-2015 school year:

- 100% of all CA residents reach their End-of-Course academic goals.
- 80% of all CA residents average a 3.0 on the Compass rubric by the end of the year.
- 80% of CA residents outperform their peers.
- 80% of all CA residents are eligible to receive teacher certification as measured by TNTP's Assessment of Classroom Effectiveness at the end of the year.
- 100% of CA residents report that they have the tools and support to reach their goals.

Though we don't yet have End of Year academic results, we took a mid-year data stepback in January 2015. At that time, CATR teachers were outperforming other TNTP first-years across the city, as measured by the TNTP rubric:

- CATR teachers have an average score of 3.05, compared to 2.83 for all TNTP teachers in New Orleans and 2.67 for high school TNTP teachers in New Orleans.
- 67% of CATR teachers are averaging either "developing" or above, compared with 53% of all TNTP teachers in New Orleans and 33% of high school TNTP teachers in New Orleans. **This is one indicator that teachers are on track to earn certification at the end of the school year.**

Next year, we look forward to honing in on our support for teachers in hard-to-fill areas (especially special education and STEM courses), increasing our academic support for new teachers, and building out resources for coaches and school leaders to best support rookie teachers.