



Rialto USD Receives Grant to Launch Innovative Teacher Residency Program

November 18, 2024 - *Rialto, CA* - Rialto Unified School District (Rialto USD) has taken a bold step to address the teacher shortage and improve educational outcomes of underserved communities by securing a transformative grant from the Commission on Teacher Credentialing. This funding will fuel the launch of an innovative teacher residency program, designed to prepare a new generation of educators and elevate all students' learning quality. This initiative aligns with Rialto USD's strategic mission to connect students to their future aspirations by ensuring a team of exceptional educators who meet students' diverse needs and foster academic excellence.

Rialto USD has a well-established partnership with local Institutions of Higher Education (IHE), particularly California State University, San Bernardino, and Alder Graduate School of Education, through the comprehensive "Teach Rialto" initiative. This program offers multiple pathways into teaching, including opportunities for high school students to gain early exposure to the profession through the Career Technical Education pathway, as well as Project Impact, which supports District employees — especially males of color — in completing their bachelor's degree and earning teaching credentials.

With the establishment of the Rialto USD Teacher Residency Program, a third pathway is introduced under the "Teach Rialto" umbrella. This new initiative aims to address teacher shortages further while improving the quality of preparation for a diverse group of future educators.

"The launch of this residency program marks a major step forward in our efforts," said **Roxanne Dominguez**, Lead Personnel Services Agent. "We are not only filling the teacher pipeline but ensuring that our educators are equipped with the practical experience and mentorship needed to succeed in the classroom." Under Ms. Dominguez's leadership, the program will be supported by Program Specialists LaVees Best and Alycandria Johnson.

The Rialto USD Teacher Residency Program will immerse aspiring educators in hands-on training by placing them in classrooms under the guidance of experienced mentor teachers. Throughout a full academic year, residents will develop crucial teaching skills through personalized mentorship and real-time feedback. The program integrates rigorous coursework that combines theory with practice, focusing on culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, and innovative instructional strategies.

"By investing in this innovative residency model, we are not only preparing the next generation of teachers but also directly addressing educational equity in our schools," said **Dr. Rhea McIver Gibbs**, Lead Strategic Agent. "This program will help us build a teaching workforce as diverse and dynamic as the communities we serve."

According to RUSD Acting Superintendent, **Dr. Edward D'Souza**, the program is set to launch its first cohort of 25 to 30 residents in the 2025/2026 school year, with plans for growth and sustainability over the next five years and beyond. He said, "Financial stipends will help alleviate the cost of tuition and living expenses, ensuring accessibility to a diverse range of teacher candidates. Here at the Rialto USD, we are committed to recruiting residents from varied backgrounds to reflect the diverse student population they will serve."

For more information please visit www.rialtousd.org or contact the program at rialtoresidency@rialtousd.org.

