

Registered K-12 Teacher Apprenticeship programs in the U.S.: Expanding high quality preparation to alleviate educator shortages

OECD Apprenticeship Summit

National Education Association

Shannon McCann, Special Education Teacher and NEA Executive Committee

Jim Meadows, Dean & Director, Education Career Pathways Center,
Washington Education Association

Ann Nutter Coffman, Associate Director, Teacher Quality, NEA



Recruiting and retaining a highly qualified, diverse teacher workforce is a challenge globally (U.N, 2024).



Teacher shortage existed in the U.S. before the pandemic.

2023-24 school year -

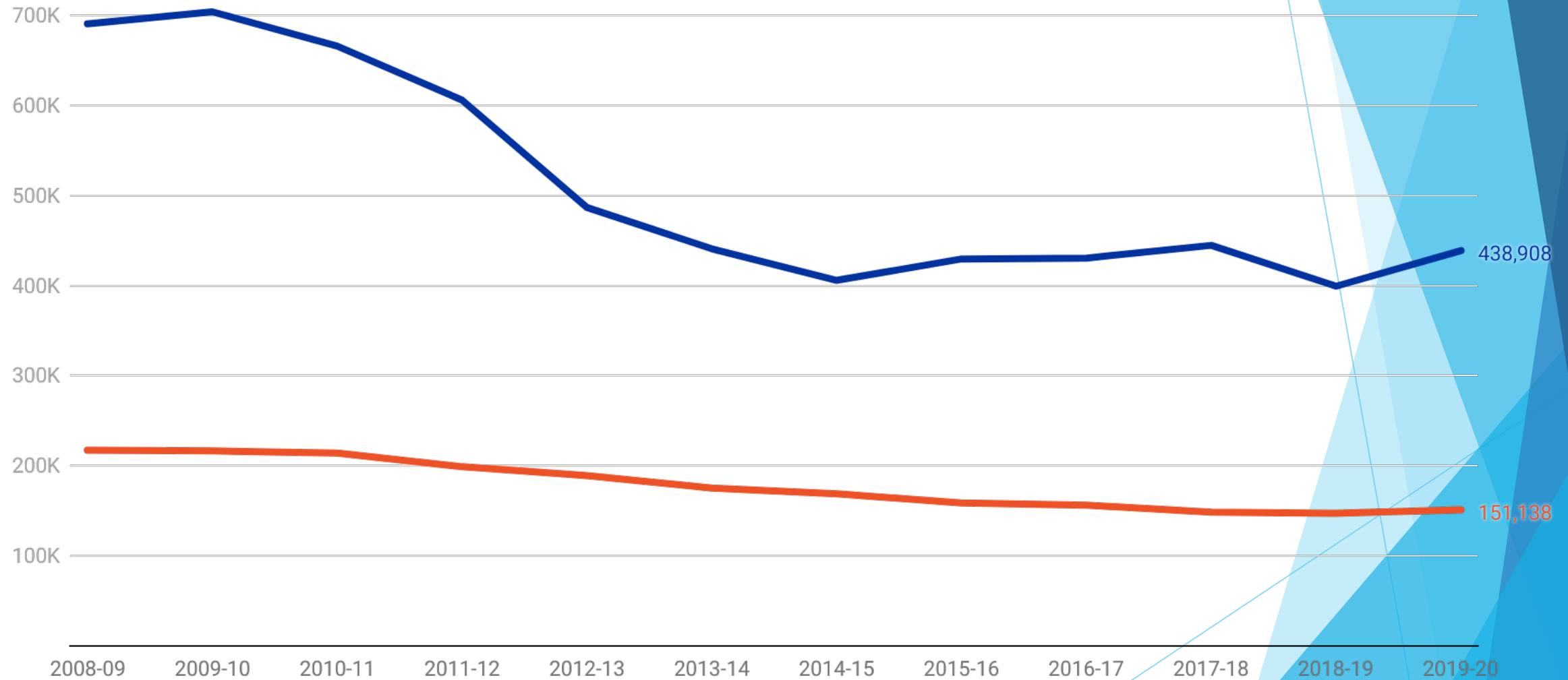
3.8 million teachers in the U.S.

86% of U.S. K-12 schools struggled to hire teachers

- general elementary (71%)
- special education (70%)



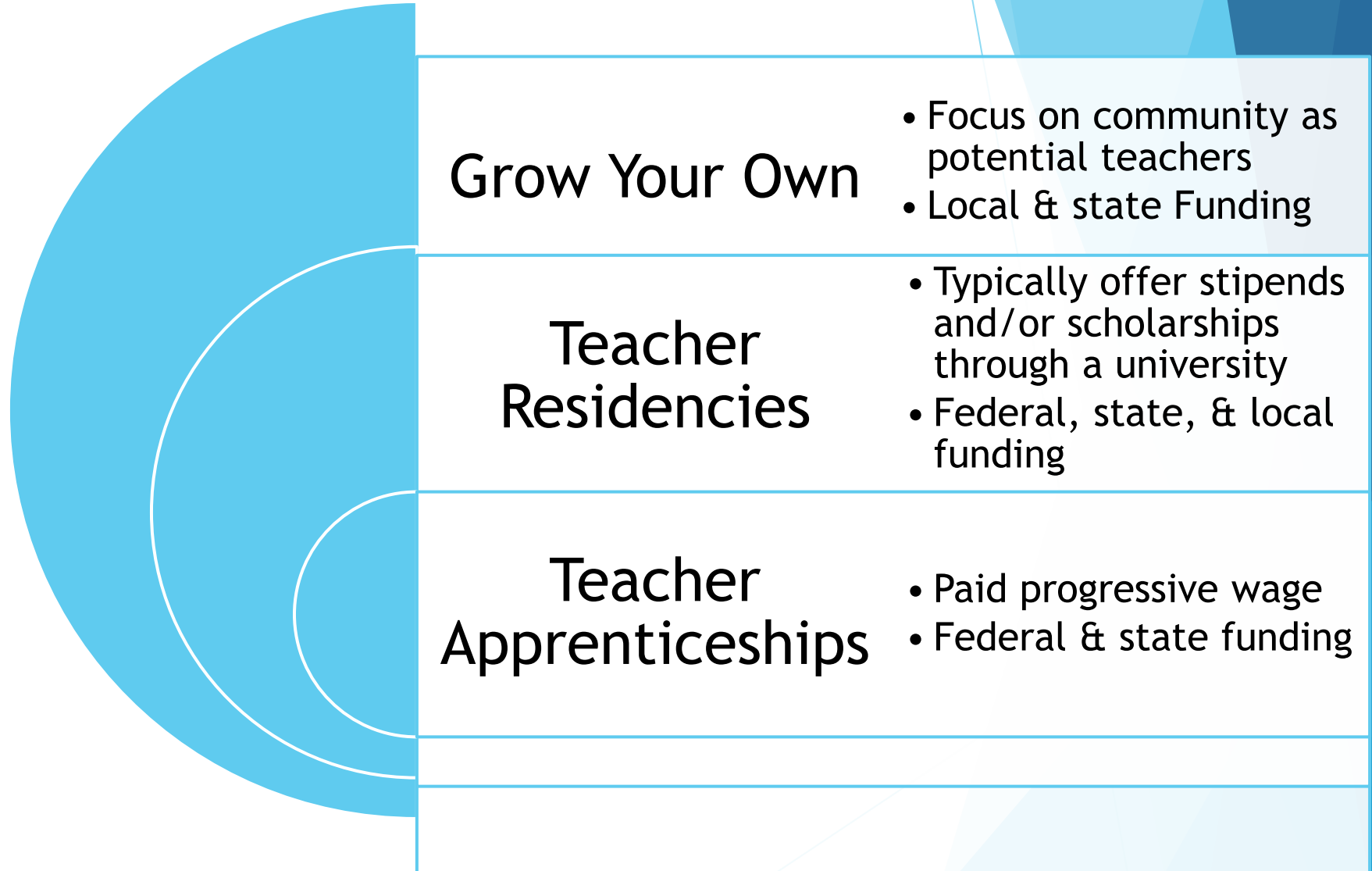
Figure 4. Teacher preparation **enrollments and **completions** were lower in 2019-2020 than a decade ago.**



Source: NEA analysis of U.S. Department of Education 2021 Title II Reports

Types of Teacher Preparation in the United States

- ▶ Traditional teacher preparation at college or university
- ▶ “Alternative” teacher preparation
 - ▶ Through a school district, community organization, state, or union



Literature Review & Methodology

- ▶ Apprenticeships are new in this space, but can apply much of the research from Teacher Residencies and Grow Your Own.
- ▶ Significant positive results in:
 - ▶ Recruitment
 - ▶ Usually focus on non-traditional sources
 - ▶ Retention
 - ▶ Residencies - around 80% retention after 3 years
 - ▶ Diversifying the teaching profession
 - ▶ Student Outcomes
 - ▶ Teachers that complete Residency and GYO programs have a positive effect on student outcomes

Case Study of Washington Education Association Apprenticeship



WEA Apprenticeship Residency in Teaching



- Union-run, educator-designed and led teacher preparation program - first in the U.S.A.
- Certification-only (no degree) program with special education endorsement. Currently, no higher education partner. May add other content areas in future.
- Focus on diversifying teaching profession through Grow Your Own (GYO) model
- Partnership between WEA, school districts, local unions
- Entering apprentices & Requirements:
 - Paraeducators, emergency substitute teachers, others with experience with children
 - Requirements: 1) BA or higher, 2) basic skills & content tests, 3) recommendation letters, narrative responses, 4) program-level review, 5) local selection
- Barrier removal
 - Testing and certification fees
 - Mileage, meals, accommodations, childcare
 - Salary (\$40,000 USD) and benefits (health care, dental, etc.)
- Apprentice tuition: \$5,000 for 2025-26
- Apprentices receive conditional job offer upon completion with a 3-year commitment to sponsoring school district

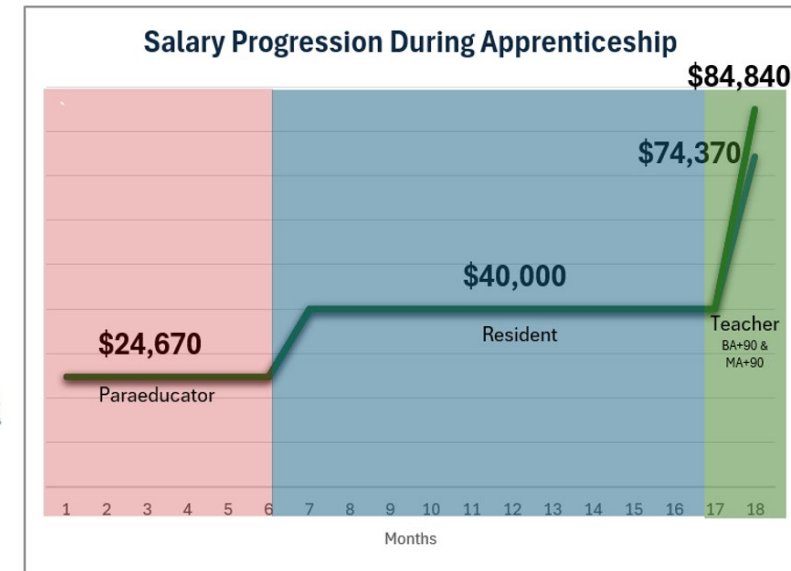
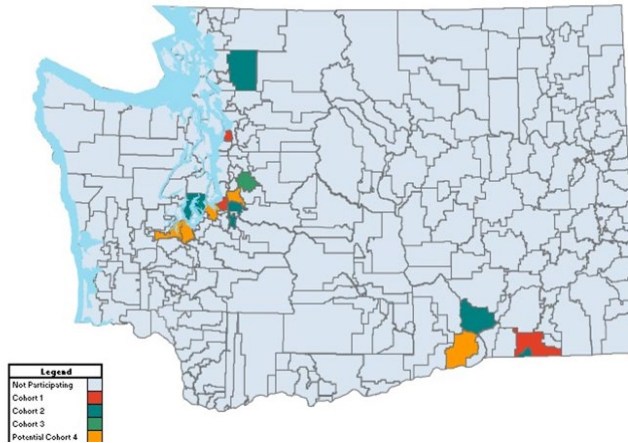


WEA-ART Program Structure

- 18-month program; 3 semesters of field integrated coursework (12 courses) with Summer Institutes
- Clinical rounds rotation structure
 - ❑ Resource/low incidence
 - ❑ Behavior
 - ❑ Intensive support/high incidence
 - ❑ General education/inclusionary practice
- Dual state agency accreditation
 - ❑ 2,000 "On the Job" Training hours
 - ❑ 465 Related Supplemental Instruction (RSI) hours
- Program staff:
 - ❑ Mentors (cooperating teacher)
 - ❑ Field supervisor
 - ❑ Coach
 - ❑ WEA staff
- School District Partners
 - ❑ Return on investment

School Year 1 <i>Paraeducator</i>	Summer	School Year 2 <i>Residency</i>			Summer
Rotation 1 Jan-June	7 weeks	Rotation 2	Rotation 3	Rotation 4	1 week
18 weeks		12 weeks	12 weeks	12 weeks	

WEA Apprenticeship Residency in Teaching
Partner School Districts



WEA-ART: Early Findings & Impact

Cohort 1	Cohort 2	Cohort 3
3 school district Partners	9 school district partners	10 school district partners
16 admitted	29 admitted	21 admitted
13 certified & teaching	<i>Completion: August 2025</i>	<i>Completion: June 2026</i>

Program Evaluation

- National Center for Teacher Residencies Evaluation
 - Apprentice diversity
 - Retention rates
 - Program effectiveness
 - Student outcomes
- State 27-month program review

Anecdotal Impact

- Founding school district partners returned
- Readiness: Well-prepared but need to be set up for success in first year assignment
- Collective bargaining and labor management/collaboration is profound

Conclusions



**MORE RESEARCH FOCUSED ON
APPRENTICESHIPS IN TEACHER
PREPARATION IN GENERAL**



**MUST ENSURE QUALITY OF
TEACHER PREPARATION NOT
COMPROMISED**

Presenter Contact Information

- Ann Nutter Coffman: acoffman@nea.org
 - Associate Director, National Education Association
- Shannon McCann: smccann@nea.org
 - Executive Committee Member; National Education Association
- Jim Meadows: jmeadows@washingtonea.org
 - Dean & Director; Washington Education Association (Educator Career Pathways)