



# BUILDING EFFECTIVE TEACHING APPRENTICESHIP MODELS

## OVERVIEW

The [Pathways Alliance](#) is an uncommon coalition of leading organizations from across the K12 and higher education ecosystems dedicated to supporting and implementing diverse and inclusive educator preparation pipelines, including teacher residency and apprenticeship programs. This [coalition of over 40 partner organizations](#), including teacher residency programs, higher education institutions, schools, districts, and national organizations representing educators, was launched in October 2021 and is co-led by InnovateEDU and The Learning Policy Institute. The alliance has actively worked toward supporting the implementation of effective, affordable educator preparation programs by creating connective tissues among organizations to drive cohesion, resources, and knowledge sharing in this important field, including the development of a [comprehensive resource library](#) and a [common definition of teacher residency](#).

## SUPPORTING AND BUILDING TEACHING APPRENTICESHIP MODELS

In August 2022, federal, state, and local workforce and education leaders gathered to set a benchmark for high-quality teaching apprenticeship programs. This initiative was launched by [First Lady Jill Biden at the White House in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor](#) to develop comprehensive guidelines for high-quality educator apprenticeships based on field data. The group created the [National Guidelines for Standards for K-12 Teacher Apprenticeships \(NGS\)](#), released by the U.S. Department of Labor. They outline the requirements and responsibilities apprenticeship programs must meet. In addition, they provide a comprehensive work process schedule outlining apprentices' professional and pedagogical skills. An evidence-based approach to educator development and training, developed in partnership with field-based programs, underpins these guidelines.

SEE IT IN ACTION: A COMPENDIUM OF PROGRAMS



## SEE IT IN ACTION: DALLAS COLLEGE



Founded in 1965, Dallas College comprises seven campuses: Brookhaven, Cedar Valley, Eastfield, El Centro, Mountain View, North Lake, and Richland. The college serves more than 125,000 credit and continuing education students during the fall and spring semesters. Students in partner high schools and early college high schools throughout Dallas County can also earn dual credit at Dallas College.

Dallas College is the first community college in Texas to be approved to offer a bachelor's degree in early childhood education and teaching. The bachelor's degree program welcomed its first cohort in the fall of 2021. This group of students began their final year of their bachelor's degree in the fall of 2022, which is also when Dallas College launched the teacher residency apprenticeship program. In partnership with local school districts, Dallas College's School of Education offers a hands-on training program modeled after successful apprenticeship programs in other professions. Under the apprenticeship program, students earn up to \$30,000 to serve as residents in classrooms three days per week and tutor or serve as substitute teachers one day per week. The students also participate in weekly cohort meetings and receive frequent coaching from Dallas College faculty.

Among Dallas College's apprentice programs partners, Richardson Independent School District was the first to enroll to address educator shortages and to build a sustainable talent pipeline. Joining Richardson, Uplift Education hosted current students enrolled in Dallas College's bachelor's degree and placed them in schools that need additional educators. More than 200 future educators will be placed in partnering school districts throughout Dallas County through the apprenticeship pathway. Dallas College is the first institution in Texas to receive the Department of Labor's recognition as a registered teacher apprenticeship with this innovative program. The Department of Labor grant provided approximately \$150,000 to Dallas College to cover students' college tuition during the program's inaugural year.

More information regarding Dallas College's program can be found below:

- [EdSurge - A New Feature of Teacher Prep Programs? Compensating Future Educators for Their Time](#)
- [PBS NewsHour - Schools Hope Apprenticeships Will Alleviate Teacher Shortage](#)
- [Dallas College - Earn a Bachelor's Degree in Education](#)

## SEE IT IN ACTION: AUSTIN PEAY STATE UNIVERSITY



The Eriksson College of Education at Austin Peay State University is a national leader in preparing students to be successful teachers and working with school districts to address teacher shortages. With the start of the Austin Peay State University and Clarksville-Montgomery County School System Teacher Residency program in January 2022, the country's first [registered apprenticeship program](#) for teaching was born - The Tennessee Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship program. Teacher residents at APSU obtain initial licensure in Elementary K-5, with an endorsement in Special Education Interventionist K-8.



It is a three-year program open to high school graduates, classified employees, and members of the community without a bachelor's degree. The school district is the first point of contact for applications. The applicant works as a teacher resident in the district once accepted into the program. A teacher resident is paid a salary by the school district and receives free college tuition and books.

In the three-year residency program, teacher residents are paired with a mentor teacher in their school and receive wraparound support from APSU faculty and staff. APSU master clinicians observe teacher residents often in the classroom, preparing them for the edTPA, a certification assessment for educators. Residents earn an Associate of Science in Teaching degree at a local community college before transferring to Austin Peay to complete their bachelor's degree.

Since launching Grow Your Teacher Residency, Austin Peay has partnered with school districts in five counties and two community colleges. There are more than 190 teacher residents enrolled in existing cohorts. About 40 students graduated from the program's first cohort in August 2022.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: BALL STATE



The Ball State University Teachers College has launched a registered apprenticeship program in Elementary Education to address teacher shortages and support educator preparation pipelines. They are turning to local high schools to do it. Noblesville Community Schools, the Boys & Girls Club of Noblesville, Pursuit Institute of Hamilton County (formerly Hamilton County Center for Career Achievement), and Region 5 Workforce Board collaborated on this new program overseen by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development's (DWD) Office of Work-Based Learning and Apprenticeships (OWBLA). These multi-sector partners aligned education, workforce, and career pathways to address their communities' needs and create an economically viable pathway for earning an undergraduate degree.

A five-year course of study based on the Grow Your Own model was first introduced at Noblesville High School, where students earn multiple education-related certifications and gain valuable hands-on experience. As early as their junior year of high school, students can enroll in the apprenticeship program and complete coursework through dual enrollment. In addition, students can graduate from college a year early after completing their elementary education degree from BallState.

As part of Ball State's registered apprenticeship program, high school students gain valuable experience while building their networks by interacting with industry professionals and mentors. Through education-related certifications and work opportunities at after-school programs such as the Boys & Girls Club, the program also helps students prepare for the educator workforce.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: BRAZOSPORT ISD/ESC4



In response to Texas's teacher shortage, the United States Department of Labor approved a new apprenticeship model that will allow teaching apprentices to earn state teacher certification. As a result, the first K-12 Teacher apprenticeship program in Texas, a registered apprenticeship program, was created through a partnership between Brazosport Independent School District (BISD), Brazosport College, and INSPIRE TEXAS | Educator Preparation by Region 4.

The apprenticeship program offers aspiring teachers the opportunity to earn a salary in BISD while working towards their bachelor's degree at Brazosport College. Apprentices in the program work under the guidance of a certified teacher and complete the requirements to be an accredited teacher with INSPIRE TEXAS. The program addresses employer-driven needs focusing on high-growth, high-demand, high-skill, and high-wage career opportunities. In addition, selected apprentices will access benefits that support tuition and fees, professional development, on-the-job training, and needs-based wraparound services.

The partnership actively explores and applies for grants and funding to support the program's sustainability. As a result, apprentices will have access to all required resources within Brazoria County. Dr. Vincent Solis, President of Brazosport College, emphasized the role that Brazosport College will play in support of future educators.

The apprenticeship model offers multiple on-ramps into the field of education and higher retention of teaching apprentices, contributing to the partnership's goal of quality educator preparation from start to finish. In addition, this collaborative effort will tap into asset-based community development and highlight the strengths and opportunities within each partner entity.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: ECTOR COUNTY ISD



Ector County ISD's newly approved Registered Apprenticeship Program for Teachers marks a transformative step in Texas teacher education anchored in meeting rural school districts' needs. This initiative, unique in its approach, aims to revolutionize the way teachers are trained, addressing both educational and financial barriers.

The program offers aspiring teachers a comprehensive learning journey that goes beyond the scope of traditional student teaching programs. Apprentices in this program work alongside experienced educators for an extended period, gaining invaluable classroom experience, mentorship, and practical skills essential for a successful teaching career. This hands-on approach is integrated with rigorous academic coursework, preparing participants for a seamless transition into their teaching roles.

A vital feature of the ECISD Registered Apprentice Program is the financial support it offers. Apprentices have full tuition and fees covered, allowing them to earn a bachelor's degree in education without financial stress. Additionally, they receive a paycheck while gaining experience in the school district, making it a financially viable pathway to a teaching career.

This initiative is part of ECISD's broader strategy to combat teacher shortages and enhance the quality of education. By collaborating with Odessa College and the University of Texas Permian Basin, ECISD leverages expert resources to enrich the apprenticeship experience. This partnership is a testament to these institutions' commitment to addressing the community's educational needs and nurturing the next generation of skilled educators.

With the U.S. Department of Labor's endorsement, ECISD's Registered Apprenticeship Program for Teachers is a pioneering model, demonstrating a proactive and innovative approach to teacher development. This initiative not only elevates the standard of teacher training but also represents a significant advancement in ECISD's ongoing efforts to recruit, retain, and reward top-quality educators.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: COLUMBIA COLLEGE



The Alternative Pathways to Educator Certification (APEC) Center at Columbia College is a beacon of teacher education innovation. Launched in 2018, APEC provides alternative routes for district employees to obtain teacher certification. A testament to its success, APEC has prepared 88 teachers to lead classrooms in partner districts across South Carolina since its inception. In June 2022, the U.S. Department of Labor honored APEC as a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) in recognition of its success and unique teacher residency. This distinction marks APEC as the first RAP for teachers in South Carolina.

APEC is distinguished by its focus on recruiting, preparing, and retaining quality teachers in critical-need schools and districts in South Carolina. The program stands out with its innovative approach to teacher certification, combining a year-long paid teacher residency with comprehensive mentoring and graduate coursework. This approach provides practical classroom experience and supports participants academically and professionally, ensuring their success as educators.

The heart of the APEC Program is the Teacher Residency. This residency requires fellows to spend a year in a classroom under the guidance of a certified mentor teacher, aligning with their area of certification. During the preservice year, professional learning workshops and course modules bolster this immersive experience. Furthermore, fellows can advance their education by pursuing a master's degree at Columbia College.

Columbia College's APEC Program exemplifies a forward-thinking and practical approach to addressing teacher shortages. It empowers passionate individuals to give back to their communities. It paves the way for a new generation of educators equipped with the skills and knowledge to thrive in the classroom.

APEC's most recent milestone was the celebration of 20 APEC Fellows on September 14. These dedicated individuals completed the rigorous APEC residency and were awarded their Department of Labor certificates. Dr. Marla Sanders, the APEC Director, expressed pride in their achievements and acknowledged their hard work and preparation to lead classrooms effectively.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: NORTH DAKOTA



The North Dakota Teacher Apprenticeship Program is an education initiative that addresses the state's critical teacher shortage. In December 2022, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction's application for a Registered Apprenticeship Program for Teachers (RAP-T) was approved, making it the official sponsor of all RAP-T programs in the state.

This innovative program was bolstered in July 2023 when North Dakota was one of only seven states to be awarded a U.S. Department of Labor grant to expand the National Apprenticeship system. The RAP-T initiative in North Dakota offers a unique pathway for paraprofessionals working in local school districts. It enables them to become licensed teachers through a practical "earn and learn" model, with no cost to the individual. This approach efficiently tackles the state's pervasive teacher shortage, providing a practical solution to fill teaching positions in local schools.

The program includes partnerships with four educator preparation programs and eleven local school districts nationwide and is funded by federal dollars.

The North Dakota Teacher Apprenticeship Program stands out for its commitment to providing paraprofessionals with a practical pathway to teacher certification. Through this program, participants gain hands-on classroom experience while continuing their education, all without financial burden. This initiative addresses the immediate need for qualified teachers and invests in the long-term quality of education in North Dakota.

The North Dakota Teacher Apprenticeship Program is shaping the future of education in the state by offering an innovative and accessible route to teacher certification. It's a model of how collaboration, federal support, and practical training can effectively address teacher shortages and enhance the quality of education.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY



The Pathways for Paraprofessionals Registered Apprenticeship Program at Missouri State University is designed for individuals working as paraprofessionals who want to advance their careers in special education. This program provides the necessary training, skills, and certification to support students with diverse learning needs in K-12 settings. With a curriculum focused on practical experience, mentorship, and special education practices, participants gain hands-on knowledge to prepare for roles as special educators.

The program offers flexible learning options, including fully online courses and web-conferencing, making it accessible for working professionals. Additionally, partnerships with school districts allow participants to complete a portion of their coursework at no tuition cost. While tuition for courses at Missouri State University is the student's responsibility, school districts cover the cost of courses taken through local district cohorts, and several grant programs are available to assist with tuition expenses.

The program is open to experienced paraprofessionals and those new to the field, providing a pathway to initial certification as a Missouri K-12 Special Education teacher. Currently, the program includes 273 apprentices and collaborates with 172 school districts across Missouri. In December 2023, the first cohort of 24 students successfully graduated. Depending on the school district, participants can expect a competitive salary, typically ranging from \$16 to \$18 per hour.

Upon completion, graduates receive certification as Missouri K-12 Cross-Categorical Special Education teachers, equipping them with the credentials and expertise to make a meaningful impact in their schools and communities.

Program Contact: [pathsforparas@missouristate.edu](mailto:pathsforparas@missouristate.edu)

Webpage: <https://education.missouristate.edu/SELPS/SpEd/pathways-for-paraprofessionals.htm>



## SEE IT IN ACTION: REACH UNIVERSITY



The Reach University Apprenticeship Program transforms teacher preparation by combining work-based learning with academic progression. Dr. Mallory Dwinal-Palisch is Reach's Chancellor and Craft Education System's CEO.

### Program Enrollment and Completion:

- **Enrollment:** Reach University currently has 1,000 apprentices across five states. Growth Projection: The program will grow to 10,000 apprentices over four years.
- **Completion Rates:** Reach's students persist through the program at rates equal to those of traditional college students from middle and affluent backgrounds, despite many coming from low-income, first-generation, or working-parent backgrounds.
- **Ensuring Apprentices Are Not Teachers of Record:** Reach University has confirmed that apprentices need to work as record teachers during their apprenticeship year. This ensures they receive the necessary mentorship and support, providing reassurance about the program's commitment to their success.

**The Reach Method:** The program's apprenticeship degrees are stackable, allowing students to earn:

- A 30-credit Early Childhood Educator Certificate after the first year.
- A 60-credit Associate's Degree after the second year.
- A Bachelor's Degree, followed by a Master's Degree and teaching credential over four years.

This stackability ensures continuous professional growth and incremental earning potential.

**Faculty Model:** Reach employs a unique faculty model where 100% of the educators are classroom teachers. Half have been recognized as distinguished educators, and a quarter are state Teachers of the Year. These clinical faculty members continue to work in K-12 schools while teaching, creating a dual benefit of higher pay and professional development.

### Program Success:

- **Diversity:** Over 50% of apprentices are teachers of color, and 90% are low-income, first-generation, or working parents.
- **Praxis Pass Rates:** Apprentices pass the Praxis exams at twice the state average and three times the average in their specific geographies.
- **District Satisfaction:** Reach has a net promoter score of 71, and 100% of district partners continue their partnerships.

**Future Impact:** Reach University aims to catalyze the national movement for teaching apprenticeships. With federal support from the Departments of Labor and Education, states are increasingly adopting these methods. This movement is expected to address teacher shortages and improve teacher quality nationwide.

Reach University's Apprenticeship Program stands as a testament to the success of this model in teacher education. It ensures the production of high-quality, diverse, and well-prepared teachers for the future. The innovative approach and promising results underscore the potential for nationwide adoption and the long-term impact on the education system, instilling confidence in its effectiveness.



## SEE IT IN ACTION: DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY



The Teacher Apprenticeship Pathway at Dakota State University (DSU) addresses teacher shortages by providing paraprofessionals with a pathway to earn their teaching certifications. Multiple state agencies support this initiative and offer a blend of academic coursework and hands-on experience.

### Program Enrollment and Completion:

- **Enrollment:** The program started with its first cohort and has now expanded to a second cohort, with up to 90 apprentices participating.
- **Growth and Support:** The program, supported by the South Dakota Department of Education and the Department of Labor & Regulation, aims to significantly reduce the number of unfilled teaching positions in the state. Participants complete the program in two years, culminating in a bachelor's degree in education.

During the apprenticeship, participants continue to work as paraprofessionals. They do not serve as teachers of record, ensuring they receive adequate support and mentoring while gaining practical experience.

**Funding and Support:** The program is funded in part by the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation, which helps keep costs low for participants. This support is essential for making the program accessible and affordable, allowing paraprofessionals to continue working while they complete their coursework and transition into fully certified teaching positions.

### Stackable Apprenticeship Degrees:

The program is structured to provide:

- A bachelor's degree in elementary, special, or secondary education over two years.
- Virtual coursework is offered at convenient times, allowing participants to work while studying.
- Mentorship from experienced teachers and university advisors throughout the program.

DSU's program involves experienced educators who serve as mentors. These mentors provide one-on-one support to apprentices, helping them transition from paraprofessionals to certified teachers. This model helps retain talent within the community and ensures apprentices receive practical guidance from seasoned professionals.

### Program Success:

- **Diversity and Inclusion:** The program targets paraprofessionals who are already familiar with the school environments and communities they serve.
- **Academic and Practical Balance:** Participants must have a full course load each term, with classes and student-teaching experiences designed to fit their work schedules. This integration of work and study helps ensure a smooth transition to full-time teaching roles.
- **The Teacher Apprenticeship Pathway** is part of a broader effort to create sustainable solutions to teacher shortages. The program aims to build a robust pipeline of well-prepared educators committed to their local communities by turning paraprofessionals into certified teachers.

Dakota State University's Teacher Apprenticeship Pathway is a forward-thinking initiative that blends academic learning with practical experience. By supporting paraprofessionals in their journey to become certified teachers, the program addresses critical shortages and strengthens the educational workforce in South Dakota.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: TEXAS A&M



The Teacher Apprenticeship Program at Texas A&M University is designed to address the teacher shortage by providing comprehensive training and certification for aspiring educators through a blend of academic coursework and practical, in-classroom experience.

### Program Enrollment and Completion:

- **Enrollment:** Texas A&M University offers various pathways for teacher certification, including the Teacher Education Residency Model (TERM) and the Alternative Teacher Certification Program.
- **Growth and Support:** These programs are supported by multiple state and national initiatives, including partnerships with local school districts and funding from the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership grant ([EduAdmin & HRDev](#)) ([Education and Human Development](#)).

Participants in Texas A&M's programs are not teachers of record during their apprenticeship period. Instead, they work under the guidance of experienced mentors while completing their certification requirements, ensuring they receive the necessary support and practical training without the full responsibilities of a lead teacher.

The programs are funded through various sources, including the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant. This funding helps keep the program accessible and affordable for participants, allowing them to work and study simultaneously. There is no specific mention of funding from the Department of Labor for Texas A&M's teacher apprenticeship programs ([EduAdmin & HRDev](#)) ([Home](#) | [Deans for Impact \(DFI\)](#)).

Texas A&M offers stackable certification programs:

- **TERM:** This model provides a year-long clinical residency, allowing participants to gain hands-on experience in high-need school districts. Upon completion, candidates may be offered teaching positions in the districts where they trained.
- **Competency-Based Alternative Certification:** This program allows participants to complete their certification online at their own pace, typically within 1 to 1.5 years. It is designed for working professionals and includes a mix of coursework and practical teaching assignments ([ESC19](#)) ([Texas A&M University-Commerce](#)).

The program involves a collaborative effort between Texas A&M's faculty and local school districts. Experienced teachers serve as mentors, providing one-on-one guidance to apprentices. This model ensures that participants receive continuous support and practical insights from seasoned educators.

### Program Success:

**Diversity and Inclusion:** The program aims to attract a diverse group of participants who reflect the communities they will serve. **Academic and Practical Balance:** The combination of online coursework and in-classroom experience ensures that participants are well-prepared for their teaching careers ([EduAdmin & HRDev](#)) ([Education and Human Development](#)). The Teacher Apprenticeship Program at Texas A&M is part of a broader effort to create sustainable solutions to teacher shortages. By training and certifying new teachers through practical, work-based learning, the program aims to build a robust pipeline of well-prepared educators who are committed to their local communities ([EduAdmin & HRDev](#)) ([Home](#) | [Deans for Impact \(DFI\)](#)).

Texas A&M University's Teacher Apprenticeship Program exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to educator preparation. By integrating academic learning with practical experience, the program addresses critical shortages and strengthens the educational workforce in Texas.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: NORTHEASTERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY



Northeastern Illinois University's (NEIU) Teaching Apprenticeship Program offers a blend of academic coursework and hands-on classroom experience. The program is highlighting its commitment to accessible and effective teacher education.

### Program Enrollment and Completion:

- **Enrollment:** NEIU offers various certification paths for Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education with Bilingual Endorsement, Middle-Level Education, and Secondary Education. The program has seen numerous participants, though specific numbers are not detailed publicly ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).
- **Support for Students:** The program caters to new students and professionals with degrees in other fields who wish to become certified teachers in specific subjects ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).

**Role of Apprentices:** Participants do not work as full-time teachers during their apprenticeship. Instead, they receive mentorship from experienced teachers while completing their certification requirements, ensuring they get the support and practical training needed ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).

The Department of Labor funds the program, which helps keep participant costs low. This funding ensures that apprentices can work and study simultaneously, gaining academic knowledge and practical classroom experience.

**Program Structure:** Teacher Licensure Program (TLP): This includes professional education sequences for Early Childhood Education, Elementary Education with Bilingual Endorsement, Middle-Level Education, and various Secondary Education subjects. The flexible courses allow participants to balance their studies with practical teaching experience ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).

The program involves collaboration between NEIU's faculty and local school districts. Experienced teachers mentor the apprentices, providing guidance and practical insights. This model ensures that participants receive continuous support from seasoned educators ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).

**Program Success:** Diversity and Inclusion: The program aims to attract a diverse group of participants who reflect the communities they will serve. It includes specialized courses to prepare teachers for bilingual and culturally diverse classrooms ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)). Balanced Learning: Combining coursework with in-classroom experience ensures that participants are well-prepared for their teaching careers. Student teaching is vital to the program, providing full-day teaching experience under supervision ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)).

NEIU's Teaching Apprenticeship Program is part of a more significant effort to create sustainable solutions to teacher shortages. The program aims to develop a strong pipeline of well-prepared educators committed to their local communities by training and certifying new teachers through practical learning.

NEIU's Teaching Apprenticeship Program offers a practical and supportive approach to becoming a teacher. By integrating academic learning with real-world experience, the program helps address teacher shortages and strengthens the educational workforce in Illinois.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: UNIVERSITY OF NORTH GEORGIA



The University of North Georgia (UNG) offers a Teaching Apprenticeship Program combining academic coursework and hands-on classroom experience. This program began in 2017 and is funded by the Department of Labor, highlighting its commitment to making teacher education accessible and practical.

### **Program Enrollment and Completion:**

- **Enrollment:** The program includes several cohorts each year.
- **Support for Students:** The program caters to new students and professionals with degrees in other fields who wish to become certified teachers in various subjects.

UNG's Teaching Apprenticeship Program participants are not teachers of record during their apprenticeship period. Instead, they work under the guidance of experienced mentors while completing their certification requirements, ensuring they get the support and practical training needed without the full responsibilities of a lead teacher.

The Department of Labor funds the program, which helps keep participant costs low. This funding ensures that apprentices can work and study simultaneously, gaining academic knowledge and practical classroom experience.

UNG offers various certification programs, including the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT). This program is designed for individuals with degrees in fields other than education who wish to become certified teachers. The MAT program includes field-based courses and extensive classroom experience to ensure practical learning. **Program Duration:** The program typically lasts one year, beginning in the summer, and consists of a yearlong, full-time field experience during the fall and spring semesters. **Upon Completion:** Graduates receive a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) and initial teacher certification. This includes certifications in P-12, middle grades (Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, or Social Studies), and secondary education areas such as Biology, Chemistry, Earth Science, English, History, Mathematics, Music, and Physical Education.

The program involves a collaborative effort between UNG's faculty and local school districts. Experienced teachers mentor the apprentices, providing guidance and practical insights. This model ensures that participants receive continuous support from seasoned educators.

**Program Success: Diversity and Inclusion:** The program aims to attract a diverse group of participants who reflect the communities they will serve. It includes specialized courses to prepare teachers for bilingual and culturally diverse classrooms. **Balanced Learning:** Combining coursework with in-classroom experience ensures participants are well-prepared for their teaching careers. Student teaching is vital to the program, providing full-day teaching experience under supervision.

The Teaching Apprenticeship Program at UNG is part of a larger effort to create sustainable solutions to teacher shortages. The program aims to develop a strong pipeline of well-prepared educators committed to their local communities by training and certifying new teachers through practical learning.

UNG's Teaching Apprenticeship Program offers a practical and supportive approach to becoming a teacher. By integrating academic learning with real-world experience, the program helps address teacher shortages and strengthens the educational workforce in Georgia.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: CLASSROOM ACADEMY



The Classroom Academy serves rural, suburban, and urban districts across the Capital District region of NYS. It is operated through the Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex County Board of Cooperative Education Services (WSWHE BOCES) as a graduate level, 2-year residency and Registered Apprenticeship program serving career changers, graduate students, and underemployed school community members. The program provides a paid learning pathway while earning initial NYS teacher certification. The Classroom Academy program was originally launched in 2017 using step-in assistance through the National Education Association's Great Public Schools grant program and is currently sustainably funded by school districts, in local taxpayer budgets, as part of a BOCES contract for shared service. This allows individual school districts to recoup a percentage of the program cost through the BOCES aid formula the following year, making the program affordable and sustainable. In May of 2021, Classroom Academy became the first registered apprenticeship program for teachers in the nation, offering access to additional funding supports for both candidates and districts.

Since 2017, NYS school districts have employed 88% of graduates of the program. School and union leaders as well as the apprentices themselves report, the Classroom Academy program makes them much more classroom and career ready when they begin their professional journey as the teacher-of-record. Their voices are captured here in [Apprenticeship Successes: Addressing the Teacher Workforce Crisis](#).

In the Classroom Academy, Resident Apprentices (graduate-level IHE students) work 1:1 with an experienced, certified educator and never serve as the teacher-of-record. The experienced educators take part in the "matching process" to best align candidates with the classrooms and school communities they will serve. Resident Apprentices are taking graduate-level coursework, leading to a Masters degree and initial NYS teacher certification, through IHE partners and applying that coursework daily with students. They are also guided and mentored through both instructional and non-instructional aspects of the career, providing a true 360-degree view of the profession. It allows them to understand the value and establish a strong professional network within the school community. The RAP allows the program sponsor to apply for state Dept of Labor funding to help offset tuition costs for both private and public IHE candidates as well as leverage the State University of New York Apprenticeship fund to provide SUNY enrollees with an automatic \$6,000 of tuition assistance greatly reducing the barrier of cost.

Classroom Academy Contact Information:

Colleen McDonald [colleen@teachmeducation.org](mailto:colleen@teachmeducation.org)

Colleen Lester [clester@wswhiboces.org](mailto:clester@wswhiboces.org)

Promotional Materials:

[classroomacademy.org](http://classroomacademy.org) or [edhubny.org](http://edhubny.org) to find out more about the growing number of educator apprenticeship throughout NYS

## SEE IT IN ACTION: MINNESOTA STATE UNIVERSITY (MSU)-MANKATO (PARTNERED WITH FOUR INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICTS (ISDS))



To combat local shortages of SETs in specific areas of specialization, Minnesota State University (MSU)-Mankato partnered with four Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, and union leaders and staff to develop and implement the Intermediate District Teacher Residency Apprenticeship Collaborative (ITRAC). ITRAC is a Registered Teacher Apprenticeship program preparing special education teachers to teach students with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and emotional and behavioral disorders (EBD). Several schools in the partner ISDs serve students with low-incidence disabilities, students with multiple disability classifications and needs, and students who need innovative, specialized, and coordinated support at a Federal Setting IV level (i.e., public separate-day school facility greater than 50 percent of the school day). With the non-profit educational cooperative, BrightWorks, serving as the sponsor, the ITRAC program was designed to provide a no-cost pathway to teaching for paraprofessionals. These individuals serve as apprentices through two years of job-embedded learning in partnering ISDs and receive related technical instruction (i.e., supplemental education) from MSU-Mankato. ITRAC program partners are committed to ensuring all positions are filled by highly qualified staff, retaining and leveraging the expertise of current staff, and diversifying the educator workforce. The ITRAC program operationalizes these endeavors, reducing or removing identified barriers into teaching, in general, and into high-needs areas of special education, in particular. Throughout the ITRAC program, apprentices are provided a variety of field experiences involving students from birth through high school, intended to engage them in authentic environments and providing high-quality, job-embedded training in the necessary skills to teach students with ASD & EBD successfully. Apprentices are mentored by journeyworkers—Tier 4 educators licensed in ASD and/or EBD in Minnesota. To complete the ITRAC program, apprentices must meet the 2023 Minnesota Standards of Effective Practice, content standards for both ASD and EBD, and apprenticeship program requirements. Apprentices will earn a Bachelor of Science in Special Education: ASD/EBD from MSU-Mankato and licensure in both EBD and ASD.

The first cohort of apprentices began the ITRAC program in June 2024.

Contact information: For more information about the ITRAC program, please contact Gina Boots at [gina.boots@brightworksmn.org](mailto:gina.boots@brightworksmn.org)





## SEE IT IN ACTION: THE TENNESSEE GROW YOUR OWN (GYO) CENTER



The Tennessee Grow Your Own (GYO) Center is a statewide initiative designed to combat teacher shortages by establishing a sustainable pipeline of qualified educators. As one of the nation's first Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Programs (RTAPs), it serves as a model for other states looking to develop similar workforce solutions. The program is structured to support aspiring educators, including paraprofessionals, career changers, and recent high school graduates, by providing a fully funded, earn-while-you-learn pathway to becoming a licensed teacher.

Through a combination of state, federal, and institutional non-repayable aid, apprentices can complete their degrees and certification requirements at zero cost for tuition, books, fees, and testing as long as they remain continuously enrolled and make satisfactory academic progress. Local school districts often supplement this funding structure to ensure accessibility and long-term sustainability. Participants receive paid classroom experience while concurrently completing their required academic coursework, allowing them to develop essential teaching skills in real-world settings.

Tennessee's GYO initiative provides multiple pathways to licensure, beginning with a pre-apprenticeship track for paraprofessionals and teaching assistants seeking an Associate of Science in Teaching (AST) at a community college. From there, apprentices can transition into registered apprenticeship roles, continuing their education towards a Bachelor's Degree in Education at a four-year institution. Additionally, post-baccalaureate candidates who hold degrees in other fields can enter an alternative licensure track through a streamlined one-year licensure-only apprenticeship program. These structured pathways ensure that individuals at various career stages can access a flexible, financially viable route into the teaching profession.

Collaboration is at the heart of the GYO model, with local school districts, higher education institutions (HEIs), and community colleges working together to align training and licensure requirements with district workforce needs. This strategic partnership framework ensures a seamless transition from preparation to employment, particularly in rural and underserved communities where access to educator preparation programs is often limited. By removing financial barriers, streamlining pathways to licensure, and prioritizing mentorship, Tennessee's Grow Your Own Teacher Apprenticeship Program is building a stronger, more sustainable educator workforce for the future.

Tennessee Grow Your Own Center Website: [Tennessee GYO](#)

### Contact Information:

- Dr. Kate Hall – Director, Tennessee Grow Your Own Center - [katehall@tennessee.edu](mailto:katehall@tennessee.edu)
- Dr. Charlene Russell – Middle Tennessee Regional Manager - [charlenerussell@tennessee.edu](mailto:charlenerussell@tennessee.edu)



## SEE IT IN ACTION: SAGINAW INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (MICHIGAN)



The Saginaw Intermediate School District (SISD) in Michigan has initiated a comprehensive Teacher Apprenticeship Program to address the state's teacher shortage by developing a pipeline of qualified educators within the region. This program is a collaborative effort involving the Michigan Department of Education (MDE), the Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO), ten school districts in Saginaw County, Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU), and the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL). The initiative aims to provide an alternative pathway into the teaching profession, allowing participants to "earn while they learn" by combining paid classroom experience with academic coursework. Apprentices work under the mentorship of experienced teachers, gradually taking on more responsibilities as they progress through the program. The program targets candidate pools, including current school district support staff, community volunteers, career changers, and students interested in pursuing a State of Michigan teaching certificate. Funding is secured through a combination of federal, state, and local sources, ensuring that college courses are paid for by the employing school districts, thereby reducing financial barriers for participants. The program's success is measured by its ability to prepare competent educators who meet state certification standards and effectively contribute to the educational community. Upon successful completion of the program and passage of certification exams, apprentices in Saginaw Public Schools are guaranteed a full-time teaching position and required to commit to teaching in the district for three to five years. This policy strengthens teacher retention efforts, allowing district leadership to plan strategically for long-term staffing needs. Moving forward, the program aims to expand specialized teaching certifications, enhance mentorship and support systems, and create a scalable model for other Michigan districts. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on diversifying the teaching workforce, particularly through the recruitment of teachers of color and candidates from low-income backgrounds.

### Program Highlights:

- **Collaborative Partnerships:** The program is a joint effort among the Michigan Department of Education, Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, local school districts, Saginaw Valley State University, and the U.S. Department of Labor.
- **Diverse Candidate Pool:** Targets current school district support staff, community volunteers, career changers, and students interested in pursuing a State of Michigan teaching certificate.
- **Comprehensive Support:** Provides paid classroom experience, mentorship from experienced teachers, and covers college coursework costs through various funding streams.

### Promotional Materials

<https://www.sisd.cc/page/teacher-programs>

### Contact Information:

VIC BUGNI Executive Director of Instructional Services

Email: [vbugni@sisd.cc](mailto:vbugni@sisd.cc)



## SEE IT IN ACTION: IOWA TEACHER/PARAEDUCATOR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM



The Iowa Teacher/Paraeducator Registered Apprenticeship Program is an initiative designed to address teacher shortages in the state by creating a streamlined pathway for paraeducators and individuals interested in the teaching profession. Participants in the program engage in paid, on-the-job training within Iowa school districts while completing the necessary coursework to obtain a teaching license. The program emphasizes mentorship, pairing apprentices with experienced educators to provide guidance and support throughout training. Funding for the program is sourced through state and federal grants and partnerships with local educational institutions. The program's success is measured by the number of apprentices who successfully transition into full-time teaching roles within Iowa's education system. The TPRA 2.0 initiative has been widely implemented across multiple school districts in Iowa, each tailoring the program to their local workforce needs. Through these partnerships, TPRA 2.0 directly supports paraeducators transitioning into teaching roles, with apprentices receiving progressive wage increases as they move toward full licensure. The program ensures that participating school districts can develop their workforce pipelines, retain teachers in local communities, and reduce dependence on external hiring.

### Program Highlights:

- **Career Advancement:** Provides paraeducators and aspiring teachers with a clear pathway to full teacher certification.
- **Financial Support:** Offers paid apprenticeship positions, reducing financial barriers for participants.
- **Mentorship:** Pairs apprentices with experienced educators to enhance learning and professional development.

[Apprenticeship.gov](https://www.apprenticeship.gov)

**Contact Information:** For more information, interested individuals can contact the Iowa Department of Education at (515) 281-5294 or visit their official website.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: WASHINGTON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION APPRENTICESHIP RESIDENCY IN TEACHING (WEA-ART)



The Washington Education Association Apprenticeship Residency in Teaching (WEA-ART) is a unique pathway designed for individuals who hold a Bachelor's degree or higher and wish to obtain a full teaching certificate with a Special Education endorsement. As the only union-led teacher apprenticeship program in the nation, WEA-ART focuses on diversifying and strengthening the educator workforce to ensure every student has access to highly skilled Special Education teachers.

The program is financially supported by multiple sources, including a state legislative allocation, two U.S. Department of Labor SAEF grants, Alternative Route Block Grants from the Professional Educator Standards Board, grants from the National Education Association, and internal WEA funding. To ensure sustainability, WEA is developing a braided funding strategy, which may include establishing a training trust or foundation.

The program has demonstrated strong outcomes in fostering diversity and supporting teacher retention. In its first cohort, 38% of enrollees were candidates of color and/or Hispanic/Latinx, a significantly higher percentage compared to the statewide teacher workforce, which consists of only 15% teachers of color and/or Hispanic/Latinx. The second cohort saw even greater diversity, with 54% of enrollees coming from these backgrounds. Importantly, candidates of color and/or Hispanic/Latinx are completing the program at the same or higher rates as their white counterparts. Additionally, mentors report that co-teaching with resident apprentices has revitalized their own teaching practices and commitment to the profession.

Regarding specific program outcomes, the first cohort consisted of 16 individuals, 13 of whom successfully completed the program. All of these graduates are now fully certified and employed as teachers within the districts where they were trained. Given the ongoing shortage of Special Education teachers in the state, WEA-ART ensures that all program graduates receive endorsements in this high-need area. Additionally, partner districts must demonstrate a local demand for Special Education teachers as part of the application process.

The program offers several key benefits. Resident apprentices receive a living wage and benefits while completing over 2,000 hours of hands-on training with experienced mentors in the school districts where they plan to teach. They gain experience across different Special Education service settings and work with students from elementary through high school. Upon completing the program, graduates earn a full teaching certificate and Special Education endorsement, with the potential for immediate job placement in their training district. Additionally, they start at a salary level equivalent to a Bachelor's degree plus 90 credits, earning significantly more than the average first-year teacher. In return, they commit to teaching in their residency district for at least three years.

For those interested in learning more, potential apprentices can contact [admissions@washingtonea.org](mailto:admissions@washingtonea.org) or visit the program's application page on the Washington Education Association website. Districts or local partners seeking collaboration can reach out to Cindy Rockholt at [crockholt@washingtonea.org](mailto:crockholt@washingtonea.org).

## SEE IT IN ACTION: UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH DAKOTA



The University of South Dakota (USD) launched its Teacher Fellows Registered Apprenticeship Program in Fall 2023 to address the state's teacher shortage by providing paraprofessionals and aspiring educators with a pathway to certification. Participants, known as Teacher Fellows, engage in a yearlong paid residency within their home school districts, gaining practical classroom experience while completing academic coursework. Upon completion, graduates earn a bachelor's or master's degree in elementary, secondary, or special education, a South Dakota teaching certificate, and a certificate of apprenticeship from the Department of Labor and Regulation. The program includes financial incentives such as \$6,500 in eligible tuition reimbursement per year and stipends for job-related expenses, making it accessible to diverse candidates. USD collaborates with K-12 partner school districts across South Dakota to create these paid teacher residency positions, eliminating economic barriers for students who might otherwise be unable to afford an unpaid, yearlong residency experience. This initiative is part of USD's broader commitment to developing the state's educator workforce, including the Teacher Pathway program launched in 2018 with the Sioux Falls School District.

## SEE IT IN ACTION: UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE – TEACH PROJECT



The University of Louisiana at Lafayette, in collaboration with the Louisiana Department of Education and the Board of Regents, launched in November 2024 the TEACH (Teacher Education Alliance for Community Hiring) Project to provide a registered apprenticeship pathway for aspiring teachers, particularly paraprofessionals and nontraditional candidates. Funded by a \$3.1 million grant from the U.S. Department of Education's Teacher Quality Partnership program, the initiative focuses on creating sustainable, diverse, and highly skilled teaching workforces. Key partners include South Louisiana Community College, public school systems in Lafayette, Vermilion, St. Martin, St. Landry, and St. Mary parishes, as well as organizations like Steady State Impact, the Pugh Family Foundation, PDK International, and the Louisiana Workforce Commission. The program is part of the state's broader initiative to address teacher shortages and improve the educator workforce.

Participants work as apprentices in partner school districts while completing their degree and certification requirements at UL Lafayette. The program integrates academic coursework with paid, mentored teaching experience and offers stipends and tuition assistance through funding from the U.S. Department of Labor and state education grants. TEACH is designed to reduce barriers to entry, especially for candidates of color and those already working in schools. Apprentices are not teachers of record and receive sustained coaching throughout the program. The program is designed to identify and address barriers that hinder potential educators from entering and remaining in the profession, with a particular emphasis on expanding existing Grow Your Own programs and creating new pathways for aspiring teachers, especially those from underrepresented communities. It is expected to impact over 69,000 pre-K-12 students by preparing a new generation of teachers to meet the needs of local schools.

Website: <https://education.louisiana.edu>  
Email: [education@louisiana.edu](mailto:education@louisiana.edu)

## SEE IT IN ACTION: UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL ARKANSAS (UCA)



The University of Central Arkansas (UCA) launched its Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program in 2023 with a focus on rural and high-need communities. This program creates a structured, earn-while-you-learn pathway for paraprofessionals and career changers already working in schools to become fully certified teachers. Apprentices remain in their local districts, gaining paid classroom experience while completing licensure-aligned coursework through UCA. The program supports pathways to elementary and secondary education certification and includes wraparound support such as mentorship, Praxis exam preparation, and coaching. Funding is made possible through federal and state workforce grants and district partnerships, helping reduce or eliminate tuition costs. The program also emphasizes diverse recruitment and aims to retain talent within the communities it serves. UCA supports this initiative by aligning its educator preparation programs with the apprenticeship model, providing a pathway for aspiring educators to earn their credentials while gaining practical experience in the classroom. For more information, contact UCA's College of Education at [teach@uca.edu](mailto:teach@uca.edu) or visit [uca.edu/education](https://uca.edu/education).

## SEE IT IN ACTION: UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER (CU DENVER)



The University of Colorado Denver (CU Denver) offers a Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Residency that serves nontraditional teacher candidates, including bilingual individuals, working parents, and first-generation college students. Apprentices work as paid paraprofessionals or teaching assistants in partner districts while completing evening, weekend, or online coursework through CU Denver's School of Education and Human Development. The program offers elementary, secondary, ESL, and special education licensure pathways. It strongly focuses on mentorship, job-embedded learning, and quality-driven practices. Funding is provided through state education grants, district support, and philanthropic partners, and participants are eligible for tuition stipends and scholarships. This apprenticeship residency offers a flexible and financially sustainable model to grow a more diverse and well-prepared teacher workforce. For additional information, contact [education@ucdenver.edu](mailto:education@ucdenver.edu) or visit [education.ucdenver.edu](https://education.ucdenver.edu).

## SEE IT IN ACTION: THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA'S CAROLINA COLLABORATIVE FOR ALTERNATIVE PREPARATION (CAROLINACAP)



The University of South Carolina's Carolina Collaborative for Alternative Preparation (CarolinaCAP) provides a structured, earn-while-you-learn pathway for individuals seeking to become certified educators. CarolinaCAP is a collaborative initiative involving the University of South Carolina, the Center for Teaching Quality, and various school districts across the state. The program targets paraprofessionals, career changers, and other non-traditional candidates, allowing them to gain paid classroom experience while completing the necessary coursework for teacher certification. The program combines rigorous coursework, competency-based preparation, and coached classroom experience over three years. Candidates begin teaching immediately while receiving support through micro-credentials, professional development, and mentorship from trained coaches. Since its inception, CarolinaCAP has expanded to partner with 38 school districts across South Carolina. Candidate placements have increased by 83%, with participants serving over 5,000 students in 78 schools.

Participants are employed full-time in partner schools, working under the guidance of experienced mentor teachers. Simultaneously, they engage in related technical instruction aligned with state certification requirements. The program emphasizes serving high-need subject areas and schools, aiming to build a diverse and well-prepared teacher workforce committed to long-term careers in education. For more information about CarolinaCAP, <https://carolinacred.org/what-we-do/featured-programs/carolina-collaborative-for-alternative-preparation-carolinacap/>