

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, comprising over 80 partner organizations](#), including higher education institutions, schools, districts, and national, state, and local organizations representing educators, was launched in October 2021 and is led by InnovateEDU. The alliance has actively worked to support the implementation of effective and affordable educator preparation programs by creating connective tissue among organizations to drive cohesion, resources, and knowledge sharing in this vital field. This effort includes 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 [in collaboration with the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Labor](#) to develop comprehensive guidelines for high-quality teacher apprenticeships. The group created the [National Guidelines for Standards for K-12 Teacher Apprenticeships \(NGS\)](#) released by the U.S. Department of Labor, and now scaled to 48 states. The NGS outlines the requirements and responsibilities that apprenticeship programs must meet, and includes a comprehensive work process schedule that outlines the professional and pedagogical skills of apprentices. The NGS is based on an evidence-based approach to educator development and training, developed in partnership with field-based programs, which underpins these guidelines.



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SEE IT IN ACTION: A COMPENDIUM OF PROGRAMS

SEE IT IN ACTION: BALL STATE



**BALL STATE
UNIVERSITY**

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 WorkforceDevelopment'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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/teachers-college>

Email: jessie.clark@bsu.edu

Phone: (765) 285-8560



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: classroomacademy.org or edhubny.org

Email: Colleen Lester clester@wswheboces.org or Colleen McDonald colleen@teachmeducation.org

Phone: (800) 528-6208

Promotional Materials:

classroomacademy.org or edhubny.org to find out more about the growing number of educator apprenticeship throughout NYS

SEE IT IN ACTION: COLUMBIA COLLEGE



**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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.columbiasc.edu/academics/undergraduate/apec>

Email: twest@columbiasc.edu

Phone: (803) 786-3871



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. The program is supported by the South Dakota Department of Education and the Department of Labor & Regulation. 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: The program targets paraprofessionals who are already familiar with the school environments and communities they serve.

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.

[Click here for more details about the program and its impact.](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://dsu.edu/admissions/undergraduate/paraprofessional-apprenticeship-pathway.html>

Email: education@dsu.edu

Phone: (888) 378-9988



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](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.dallascollege.edu/resources/>

Email: sherriwilliams@dallascollege.edu

Phone: (972) 860-8911



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.ectorcountysd.org/our-district/district-news/headlines/~board/headlines-ector-county-independent-school-district-84/post/ecisd-becomes-first-in-texas-with-registered-apprenticeship-program-for-k-12-principals-26990-51>

Email: teach@ectorcountysd.org

Phone: (432) 456-0000



SEE IT IN ACTION: FORT HAYS STATE UNIVERSITY – REGISTERED TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (KANSAS)



Fort Hays State University (FHSU) offers a registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program designed for aspiring K-12 educators. Participants work in non-teaching roles (such as paraprofessionals or teaching assistants) within Kansas school districts while completing their Bachelor's degree in Education. The program integrates paid, on-the-job training with structured academic coursework and mentorship. FHSU core components include:

- At least 2,000 hours of supervised classroom experience
- A minimum of 144 hours of related academic instruction annually
- Mentorship from licensed teachers

Moreover, the wraparound services in Fort Hays State University's Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program are designed to support apprentices academically, professionally, and financially as they earn their teaching degree.

These services include:

- Mentor support from experienced educators within the apprentice's school district, academic advising, and online learning support from FHSU faculty.
- Scholarships and tuition assistance, including eligibility for Kansas state funding and reduced tuition rates.
- Structured coaching and supervision during student teaching, including feedback from both university staff and district mentors.
- Progress-based wage increases are tied to competency milestones throughout the program.

These supports help ensure that apprentices, especially those in rural or under-resourced communities, can successfully complete the program while working and advancing toward teacher certification.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.fhsu.edu/teachereducation/academic-programs/apprenticeship-program>

Email: vlzelenka@fhsu.edu Dr. Valerie Zelenka

Phone: (785) 628-4204



SEE IT IN ACTION: GEORGIA REGISTERED TEACHING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (GARTAP) PARTNERS



The Georgia Registered Teaching Apprenticeship Program (GaRTAP), established in 2023 by the Georgia Department of Education, is building a statewide network of teacher apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships.

Funded through a State Apprenticeship Expansion Grant and federal Apprenticeship Building America funds, the program allows school districts to develop earn-and-learn teaching pathways targeting high school students, paraprofessionals, and career changers.

Apprentices engage in paid on-the-job learning while completing licensure coursework with higher education partners. Districts receive state funding to cover mentor stipends, classroom support, and supportive services. GaRTAP focuses on rural and underserved communities and is currently scaling across more than 300 Georgia districts.

GaRTAP also supports pre-apprenticeships for high school students interested in becoming educators and assists with their transition into registered teaching apprenticeships after completing high school. There are multiple entry points, and registered apprentices do not have to have been pre-apprentices to be hired as apprentices.

While early in implementation, success indicators include apprentice completion, licensure outcomes, mentor quality metrics, and educator retention in rural schools.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://mypsc.gapsc.org/Home.aspx>

Email: gartap@doe.k12.ga.us

Phone: (404) 232-2500

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://workforce.iowa.gov)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://workforce.iowa.gov/apprenticeship/funding/tpra>

Phone: (515) 281-5294



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: https://www.isd917.org/teacher_apprenticeship_program

Email: Gina Boots at gina.boots@brightworksmn.org

Phone: (651) 423-8229

SEE IT IN ACTION: MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY**Missouri State**

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 Information:

Website: <https://education.missouristate.edu/Apprenticeships/default.htm>

Email: pathsforparas@missouristate.edu

Phone: (417) 836-5000



SEE IT IN ACTION: MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY (NJ)



Montclair State University inaugurated New Jersey's first U.S. Department of Labor (US DOL)- registered Teacher Certification Apprenticeship Program in November 2023, with apprenticeships launching in Fall 2024. The program targets paraprofessionals from Wayne Township Public Schools and beyond, combining employment and real-time teaching practice with academic coursework.

The program is backed by federal apprenticeship funding via the USDOL's Office of Apprenticeship. Additionally, Montclair State offers financial incentives and scholarships, particularly for students majoring in STEM fields.

More than 30 paraprofessionals signed on even before the first cohort launched, a clear indication of how much the program is needed and valued. At its core, this initiative is about recognizing the talent already present in schools and providing paraprofessionals with the support they need to transition into full-time teaching roles. Year-one apprentice placements are underway in partnership with Wayne Township Public Schools.

Program Highlights and Support Features:

- Apprentices maintain full-time employment while earning certification.
- Mentor-led competency development and field-based learning.
- Emphasis on addressing teacher shortages in high-need districts.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.montclair.edu/newscenter/2023/11/14/tackling-the-teacher-shortage-montclair-launches-first-nj-apprenticeship-program-backed-by-department-of-labor/>

Email: TEadmissions@montclair.edu

Phone: (973) 655-4262



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.nd.gov/dpi/educators/grow-your-own/registered-principal-apprenticeship-program>

Email: North Dakota DPI: dpi@nd.gov

Phone: (701) 328-2260



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](#)).

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](#)).

Program Success: 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 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.

For more information about the program, visit Northeastern Illinois University's Teacher Licensure Programs ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University](#)) ([Northeastern Illinois University Catalog](#))

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.neiu.edu/academics/teacher-apprenticeship>

Email: teacherapprenticeship@neiu.edu

Phone: (773) 442-5500



SEE IT IN ACTION: OHIO – REGISTERED TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (RTAP)



Ohio officially recognized K-12 teaching as a Registered Apprenticeship in August 2023, becoming the 22nd state to do so. This initiative allows local school districts and educator preparation providers to collaborate on "earn-and-learn" pathways for aspiring teachers including paraprofessionals, career changers, and high school graduates.

Apprentices participate in structured on-the-job learning (minimum of 2,000 hours) and 145 hours of related technical instruction (RTI) per year. RTAP programs align with national guidelines and apprenticeship quality standards, emphasizing flexibility, local workforce needs, and reducing entry barriers.

Funding Highlights: Grow Your Own (GYO) Scholarships: Eligible apprentices may receive up to \$7,500/year for four years toward tuition and licensure preparation. Programs are approved by the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE) and supported by the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS). Some districts and EPPs receive additional federal and state apprenticeship funds, especially for program development and wage incentives.

Support Services: Structured mentorship from licensed teachers. Dual credit opportunities for high school participants. Wage progression based on demonstration of teaching competencies. Credit for Prior Learning (CPL) is recognized, accelerating degree completion for paraprofessionals and career changers.

Program Successes: Early momentum across multiple school districts and higher-ed partners. RTAP design accommodates various entry points, ranging from dual-enrolled high school students to degree-holding professionals. Embedded retention strategies (e.g., commitment to serve in high-need Ohio districts) help sustain educator pipelines and improve regional workforce alignment.

Sources:

- [Ohio Department of Higher Education: Educator Apprenticeship Programs](#)
- [Fordham Institute: Overview of Ohio's New Teacher Apprenticeship Program](#)
- [Ohio HCRC: Grow Your Own Educators – Main Hub](#)
- [Governor DeWine Announces New Teacher Apprenticeship Program](#)
- [RTAP Federal Policy Report – Conch Iris \(PDF\)](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://education.ohio.gov/Topics/Teaching>

Email: teacher.apprenticeship@education.ohio.gov

Phone: (614) 466-6000



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.

Program Success: 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 71, and 100% of district partners continue their partnerships.

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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://reach.edu/>

Email: info@reach.edu

Phone: (877) 732-2406

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>

Program Contact Information:

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

Email: vbugni@sisd.cc

Phone: (989) 399-7473



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](#)).

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](#)).

Program Success: The program aims to attract 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 \(DFI\)](#)).

For more details about the program and its impact, visit [Texas A&M's Teacher Certification Program](#) and [Educational Administration and Human Resource Development \(EduAdmin & HRDev\)](#) ([ESC19](#)) ([Texas A&M University-Commerce](#)) ([Education and Human Development](#)) ([Home](#) | [Deans for Impact \(DFI\)](#)).

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://education.tamu.edu/degrees-programs/>

Email: teacherapprenticeship@tamu.edu

Phone: (979) 845-5311



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://uca.edu/cced/2020/08/11/apprenticeships-a-tried-and-true-concept-reemerges/>

Email: <https://uca.edu/education/teacher-apprenticeship/>

Phone: (501) 450-5000



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 or visit education.ucdenver.edu.

Program Contact Information:

Website: education.ucdenver.edu

Email: education@ucdenver.edu

Phone: (303) 315-6300

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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://engineeringtech.louisiana.edu/research-innovation/apprenticeship-program>

Email: teachproject@louisiana.edu

Phone: (337) 482-1000

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.

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 Success: 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.

For more information about the program, [visit University of North Georgia's Degrees and Programs](#).

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://ung.edu/degrees/index.php>

Email: teacherprep@ung.edu

Phone: (706) 864-1440

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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://carolinacred.org/what-we-do/featured-programs/carolina-collaborative-for-alternative-preparation-carolinacap/>

Email: cap@sc.edu

Phone: (803) 777-6732



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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.usd.edu/the-south-dakotan/usd-develops-teacher-apprenticeship-program-addressing-teacher-shortage-in-the-state>

Email: teacherfellows@usd.edu

Phone: (605) 658-5000



SEE IT IN ACTION: GOLDEN EAGLE TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM – UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI



Established in 2024, the [Golden Eagle Teacher Apprenticeship Program](#) at the [University of Southern Mississippi \(USM\)](#) received a \$3.8 million Apprenticeship Building America grant from the U.S. Department of Labor.

Focused on preparing K-6 teachers in rural Mississippi, apprentices work as paid paraprofessionals in partner districts Perry County and South Pike while pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. The first cohort launched in Fall 2024 with 50 apprentices, and the program plans to serve over 400 in the next four years.

The curriculum combines semester-based online coursework, mentor-guided applied practice in classrooms, and comprehensive support services, including scholarships, paid Praxis fees, technology assistance, and AmeriCorps-funded service experiences.

Highlights & Supports:

- Earn-as-you-learn model, mentor stipends, district incentives, and extensive wraparound services and ongoing professional development.
- The program tracks apprentice completion, licensure rates, and district mentor feedback through formative and summative assessments, aligned with national performance standards.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.usm.edu/education-human-sciences/mcare/apprenticeship.php>

Email: goldenapprentice@usm.edu

Phone: (601) 266-1000

SEE IT IN ACTION: UTAH – U-RAPT (UTAH REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM FOR TEACHERS)



Utah's U-RAPT (Utah Registered Apprenticeship for Teacher Preparation) officially launched in 2025, marking a significant milestone in the state's effort to strengthen the K–12 educator workforce. Established under Utah Board of Education Rule R277-333, the program offers two tailored pathways: a pre-apprenticeship track for individuals without a college degree and a full apprenticeship track for those who have completed an associate's degree. Each pathway is designed to remove financial and structural barriers while providing real-world teaching experience under the guidance of a mentor.

Apprentices are employed in school settings while completing their education and licensure requirements. Pre-apprentices earn up to \$4,000 annually, while full apprentices receive up to \$10,000 per year for up to three years, helping to offset tuition and living costs. Tuition assistance, structured mentorship, and progressive pay are key components of the program, creating a sustainable and accessible “earn-while-you-learn” pipeline into the teaching profession.

U-RAPT is primarily supported through federal Department of Labor apprenticeship funding, which helps underwrite stipends and tuition assistance. The program also benefits from strong state backing through board policy and local education agency (LEA) partnerships, making it a collaborative effort across K–12 districts, higher education institutions, and state agencies.

Since its launch, the first cohort in April 2025, enrolling 18 pre-apprentices and 6 full apprentices, interest is rapidly expanding across the state. The program is already being recognized for its potential to reduce teacher shortages and bring new, more representative voices into Utah's classrooms—especially in hard-to-staff schools and rural communities.

Support Services and Key Features:

Paid, mentored classroom experience, Tuition assistance (\$4K–\$10K annually), Free or low-cost pathways toward full licensure, Competency-based guidance and performance benchmarks, Clear transitions between pre-apprenticeship and full apprenticeship phases, Career coaching and support for Praxis preparation and Strong district-university collaboration.

U-RAPT's early design emphasizes long-term sustainability, community-based recruitment, and strong alignment between preparation and practice. With active cohorts in place and growing demand from districts, U-RAPT is poised to become a foundational piece of Utah's educator pipeline infrastructure, particularly in its focus on reaching underserved populations and career changers.

Sources:

- [Utah State Board of Education PDF \(Dec 2024\)](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://apprenticeship.utah.gov/>

Email: urapt@schools.utah.gov

Phone: (801) 538-7500

SEE IT IN ACTION: VIRGINIA – GROW YOUR OWN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (GYO RAP)



Launched in the 2023–2024 school year, Virginia’s Grow Your Own Registered Apprenticeship Program represents a bold statewide commitment to expanding the teacher pipeline. Currently active in 28 school divisions, the program creates structured, paid pathways into teaching for high school students, paraprofessionals, and career changers—particularly those from underserved communities. Apprentices work full-time in school-based roles while pursuing licensure, supported by experienced mentor teachers and district-sponsored tuition assistance. High school students can dual-enroll in college-level education coursework and gain hands-on classroom exposure, setting them on an accelerated track toward certification.

The initiative was launched with \$1.78 million in funding from the U.S. Department of Labor through a federal Apprenticeship Expansion grant. Building on that momentum, Virginia allocated an additional \$6 million in combined state and federal funds to expand program reach, develop pre-apprenticeship models, and fund critical wraparound services, including mentorship stipends, tuition coverage, and job-embedded supports. These funds empower districts to keep their apprentices local and foster intentional career growth within their communities.

One district already seeing powerful results is the Isle of Wight County School Division, where five paraprofessionals are currently earning accelerated bachelor’s degrees—completely tuition-free—while working in classrooms. These individuals have committed to returning as certified teachers in their home district, exemplifying the program’s mission to cultivate homegrown educators. Statewide, Virginia projects up to 170 apprenticeship slots across 80 additional divisions as partnerships with higher education institutions continue to grow.

Virginia’s model prioritizes retention and community-driven workforce development—proving that when you invest in the educators already rooted in schools, you build a stronger, more sustainable future for students.

Sources:

- [Virginia Department of Education Awarded \\$6 Million to Expand Teacher Apprenticeship Opportunities](#)
- [Isle of Wight County Schools Joins VDOE’s Grow Your Own-Registered Apprenticeship Program to Strengthen Teacher Pipeline](#)
- [Virginia Department of Education Announces \\$1.52 Million in Grow Your Own Grants](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.doe.virginia.gov/teaching-learning-assessment/teacher-residency-and-apprenticeship-programs>

Email: growyourown@doe.virginia.gov

Phone: (804) 225-2023

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. The program has demonstrated strong outcomes in fostering 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 increases, 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.

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 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.

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.washingtonea.org/events-training/residency/>

Email: wea-art@washingtonea.org

Phone: (253) 765-7000



SEE IT IN ACTION: WEST VIRGINIA – GROW YOUR OWN TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP PATHWAY



West Virginia's Grow Your Own (GYO) Teacher Apprenticeship Program officially launched in May 2022 and has since grown into a promising statewide model that bridges high school education and teacher certification. By embedding teacher preparation into the high school and college experience, the program creates a seamless, wage-earning pathway for aspiring educators while addressing teacher shortages in rural and underserved communities.

During the inaugural 2022–23 school year, the program began enrolling high school juniors from 7 counties into a structured, wage-earning field experience that continues through college completion. This early-entry model significantly shortens the timeline to licensure while allowing students to earn and learn in their local communities. By Spring 2023, the program had expanded to include 11 registered apprentices across 8 counties, with broader GYO recruitment and engagement reaching 37 counties statewide.

In June 2023, the West Virginia Department of Education secured a State Apprenticeship Expansion Formula (SAEF) grant, bringing in approximately \$465,000 annually from the U.S. Department of Labor. This funding—renewable for four years—helps districts reimburse up to 50% of apprentice wages and also supports essential wraparound services, including technology, licensure exam preparation, and structured mentorship. These supports are essential as tuition assistance, dual credit opportunities in high school, and free laptops are key features that eliminate economic barriers for participants and increase access.

Apprentices are paid starting \$9/hour, with wages increasing annually as they progress through their academic milestones. This incentivized structure is paired with strong mentorship from local educators and performance-based tracking, including GPA, licensure benchmarks, and teacher retention data to assess success and guide continuous improvement.

The program has already demonstrated success in cutting college degree completion timelines by a year or more, while building community-based educator pipelines. With a solid funding foundation and a clear focus on early commitment, West Virginia's model is reshaping how rural states grow their teacher workforce—starting right in their high schools.

Support Services Include: Free or reduced college tuition, paid classroom field experience, dual credit in high school, laptops and tech access, PRAXIS prep and test vouchers, stipends and wage reimbursement for districts, mentorship and academic coaching, and community resource referrals.

Sources:

- [ERIC PDF \(2024\)](#)
- [WVDE DOL apprenticeship news \(May 2022\)](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://wvde.us/educator-staff-development/become-teacher>

Email: growyourown@k12.wv.us

Phone: (304) 558-2681



SEE IT IN ACTION: WILLIAM PATERSON UNIVERSITY



William Paterson University's Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (T-RAP), launched in April 2023, is formally recognized by the U.S. Department of Labor. The program offers paraprofessionals and teacher aides an earn-while-you-learn model by embedding them in full-time roles within district classrooms. Apprentices participate in structured mentor-supported work and complete licensure coursework aligned with state and federal standards.

This program is made possible through a combination of benefits from federal apprenticeship grants administered by the Office of Apprenticeship, alongside a \$1.6 million Hawkins Centers of Excellence grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Additionally, participants have access to support funds covering housing, transportation, childcare, tutoring, certification assessments, and more.

Launched in Spring 2023 with pilot cohorts across high-need districts in the state, such as Bloomfield, Clifton, Paterson, and Passaic, the program is currently onboarding its first full cohort.

Program Highlights & Support Features:

- Full-time employment as paraprofessionals while earning certification and a bachelor's or post-baccalaureate degree.
- Case management and induction support to aid successful transition to teaching roles.
- Comprehensive wraparound services (e.g., childcare, housing, assessments) are accessible

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://www.wpunj.edu/home/index.html>

Email: edprep@wpunj.edu

Phone: (973) 720-2000



SEE IT IN ACTION: WYOMING – WYOMING TEACHER APPRENTICESHIP (WTA) PROGRAM



Launched in Fall 2023, the Wyoming Teacher Apprenticeship (WTA) Program is helping to transform how rural communities grow their teacher workforce. Piloted in school districts like Fremont and Teton, the program offers paraprofessionals and other school-based staff a structured pathway to licensure, allowing them to earn. At the same time, they learn in the same communities they already serve.

Through a Registered Apprenticeship model, WTA combines paid, on-the-job classroom experience with university coursework and mentorship. Apprentices complete between 2,000 and 6,000 hours of supervised clinical experience, guided by licensed educators, while progressing through academic programs toward certification. Funding Highlights:

- U.S. Department of Labor Registered Apprenticeship designation, enabling federal wage and training support
- State-supported tuition waivers, ensuring cost is not a barrier to entry
- Competency-based wage progression, incentivizing continued growth and mastery

Program Successes:

Now active across multiple school districts, the WTA pilot has apprentices embedded in real classroom roles while completing their licensure requirements. These individuals are not only gaining valuable experience but are also being compensated for it, bringing dignity and sustainability to the educator pipeline. Districts report strong community interest and early successes in retention and career progression. Apprentices are growing into full-time teachers without stepping away from the communities where they already have strong relationships with students and families. For rural and remote areas, this “homegrown” model presents a promising solution to the long-standing issue of educator shortages.

Support Services:

- Free tuition via university partnerships and state investment
- Paid teaching roles while in training, eliminating the unpaid student teaching barrier
- Structured mentorship from experienced K–12 teachers and university faculty
- Wage increases based on demonstration of competencies and progress toward licensure
- Ongoing academic and wraparound support, including access to test preparation and technology where needed

Sources:

- [IES blog](#)
- [Wyoming legislative interim committee documents](#)

Program Contact Information:

Website: <https://edu.wyoming.gov/>

Email: wyteacherapprenticeship@wyo.gov

Phone: (307) 777-7675

