



Teacher Apprenticeship Programs

Education entities and states around the country are considering and implementing a particular grow your own model, teacher apprenticeship programs, to build a talented and diverse educator pipeline. Teacher apprenticeship programs are a pathway into the teaching profession that include (a) on-the-job learning (OJL) and mentoring, (b) progressive wage increases, (c) coursework, and (d) strong partnerships between education entities.

There is no one model of teacher apprenticeship; programs vary based on state licensing requirements and local context and needs. This brief will provide an overview of the **Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)** model recently made available for K–12 teachers.¹ U.S. Education Secretary Miguel Cardona has [called on](#) states and entities to leverage federal relief funding to establish registered apprenticeship programs.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

The National Apprenticeship Act, signed into law in 1937, [established](#) the RAP model that exists to this day. RAPs are a workforce solution used by many industries and offer training in thousands of occupations. Apprenticeship is a proven training model that upholds rigorous standards and qualifications for approval.

U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) RAPs have the following [five core components](#):

- **Business involvement:** Employers are the foundation and play an active role in running and designing the program.
- **Progressive wage increases:** An apprenticeship is a job, and apprentices receive wage increases as they gain skills and knowledge.
- **Structured OJL:** This provides hands-on experience working with a skilled mentor.
- **Classroom training:** This is related directly to the occupation hand and complements OJL.
- **National occupational credential:** Each apprentice earns a national, portable credential.

RAPs can benefit K–12 employers and future educator workforce talent. Such programs unlock federal and state funding opportunities and help individuals earn credentials while they receive

¹ As of August 11, 2022, special education teacher is not a registered apprenticeship occupation. Entities interested in RAPs for special education would follow steps and apply to make special education an apprenticeship occupation.

training and knowledge alongside a mentor. Compared with other inroads to professions, RAPs are more affordable, time-efficient doors to industries and occupations.

K–12 Teacher RAPs

In 2022, [Tennessee](#) became the first state or entity to register the K–12 teacher occupation with USDOL. The approval opened the door for other states and entities to register for K-12 teaching apprenticeship programs, and [Iowa](#), [West Virginia](#), and [Dallas College](#) in Texas (see more details on each program in Exhibit 1) received approval shortly after.

State and entities looking at developing a teacher apprenticeship must consider and plan to fulfill the five components and meet outlined federal and state requirements and standards to become a registered apprenticeship.

States and entities looking to move forward with RAPs should [determine](#) whether the USDOL Office of Apprenticeship or state apprenticeship agencies will approve and oversee the RAP in their state and reach out to the appropriate office for support when going through the development and approval process.

Benefits of Teacher Apprenticeship Program

Becoming a registered apprenticeship program unlocks benefits to support the recruitment and preparation of teachers. Federal and state workforce dollars and grants become available to support the programs. A teacher apprenticeship may also shorten the length of time it takes to complete certification given apprentices can work and take coursework at the same time.

It is too early to evaluate the effectiveness of K–12 teacher apprenticeship programs, but many states and entities see this as a promising lever to build the teacher pipeline and potentially a more diverse workforce while still retaining standards.

Diversifying the Teacher Workforce using RAPs

Teacher apprenticeship programs may be a potential solution to diversifying the K–12 teacher workforce if designed intentionally with that goal in mind. Though none of the approved programs have this specific focus, it will be beneficial to design a program with the following considerations in mind:

1. **Leverage education preparation programs as partners** and work with [minority-serving institutions](#) (e.g., historically Black colleges and universities, tribal colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Asian American and Pacific Islander Serving Institutions), or other educator preparation programs with high enrollments of candidates of color (use [Title II Teacher Preparation Report data](#) to help locate those programs).

Make sure the apprenticeship **includes the population with the most diverse candidates in your pipeline** (e.g., paraprofessionals, high school student population) and supports communities and schools that have **greater [teacher diversity gaps](#)**.

Other Resources

[Iowa Earn and Learn](#) details and resources

[Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship](#) details and resources

[TN Teacher Apprenticeship](#) process for implementation (slides 24–30)

[Teach WV Grow Your Own](#) details and resources

[Classroom Academy NYS Apprenticeship](#)

[USDOL Active Grants and Contracts](#)

[USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program](#)

[USDOL Federal Resources Playbook for Registered Apprenticeship](#)

[U.S. Department of Education teacher shortage fact sheet](#)

Contact Information

If you're interested in learning more about how the Region 1 Center can support you with Teacher Registered Apprenticeships, please reach out to [Cheryl Krohn](#) or [Lois Kimmel](#).

The contents of this brief were developed under a grant from the Department of Education. However, those contents do not necessarily represent the policy of the Department of Education, and you should not assume endorsement by the Federal Government.

Exhibit 1. K-12 Teacher RAP Program Details

	Tennessee	Iowa	West Virginia	Dallas College	New York
Sponsor	Tennessee Department of Education	Iowa Department of Education	West Virginia Department of Education (WVDE)	Dallas College	SUNY Plattsburgh at Queensbury (founding partner of Classroom Academy)
Partners	Tennessee Labor and Workforce Development, local school districts, community colleges, 4-year institutions (Clarksville-Montgomery County School System and Austin Peay State University were the first model)	Iowa Workforce Development, and approved local school districts, community colleges, and 4-year institutions	West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission	Richardson Intermediate School District (RISD) and Upward Education	New York State United Teachers, Washington-Saratoga-Warren-Hamilton-Essex Board of Cooperative Educational Services, local school districts, and local colleges
Candidates	High school students, paraprofessionals	High school students, paraeducators	High school students	High school students	Classroom Academy teacher preparation master’s students
Funding	Federal and state workforce dollars	American Rescue Plan Act state and local emergency relief funds	WVDE and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funds	USDOL grant	Unknown
Other Details	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed from the state strategic plan for education and pilot Grow Your Own programs. Focused on district shortages in elementary and special education. Coursework is completed in the evenings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school students completing the paraeducator certification or associates degree receive up to \$40,500 over 3 years. Paraeducators completing the bachelor’s degree model are provided up to \$47,000 over 2 years. Funding supports tuition/fees, hourly rate wages. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Piloting the teacher apprenticeship model in 3–5 counties in fall 2022 West Virginia Apprenticeship Model 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprentices in the first cohort receive \$30,000 each in a yearlong residency. They serve as residents 3 days a week, tutor or sub 1 day, and take courses 1 day. RISD offers full-time positions upon completion, with 3-year commitment to district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive \$22,000 per year living stipend (through Classroom Academy) and are eligible for \$5,000 in SUNY tuition assistance In the summer before placement, residents take master’s-level courses. Mentor teachers receive a \$4,500 stipend. Classroom Academy was developed from 2016 National Education Association \$738,000 grant. Expanded in 2019 to include two more higher education partners and additional school districts.



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