



GROW YOUR OWN

Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship

Alternative Funding Sources

Tennessee is the first state in the country to sponsor Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship programs between school districts and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs). Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship model aligns leading practices in educator preparation and development with the rigors of the national registered apprenticeship process. The Tennessee Department of Education (the department) currently operates as the sponsor for a program's review and approval as a registered apprenticeship.

The vision and future scale of Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship model is designed to welcome collaboration from multiple partners and education stakeholders who identify educator workforce needs, develop and implement apprenticeship strategies, and enlist financial support for long-term sustainability. **Within this ecosystem, school districts can design and register Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship Programs with an EPP partner, leveraging third-party funding sources for program costs and apprentices' wages.**

Alternative Funding Sources *(cont.)*

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- **Can third parties be included in a registered teacher apprenticeship program?**
Foundationally, the apprentice must be an employee of the school district (district or public charter school). Given the on-the-job training for future placement and employment, the apprentice must receive a progressive wage as an employee of the school district. Further, as long as the apprentice's wage structure is progressive and meets the minimum wage requirements, the salary's funding source can come from alternative sources (e.g., AmeriCorps, philanthropic organizations, etc.). If so, the department recommends partners (i.e., school districts, EPPs, third parties) to maintain an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with language that articulates the agreed upon roles, responsibilities, and funding mechanisms for these apprentices.
- **What paperwork is required to document the partnership and the parties involved?** As the apprenticeship sponsor, the department requires paperwork from the employer (school district), employee (apprentice), and provider of Related Training Instruction (EPP) to submit to the U.S. Department of Labor submission hub, called RAPIDS, to register apprentices. While there is no paperwork required to establish third-party partnerships, the department does request that any MOU established for an approved apprenticeship program is submitted to the department's Grow Your Own team to maintain on file with approved applications.
- **If the individual is an AmeriCorps candidate, apprentices would "pay" the sum of their AmeriCorps balance to meet program costs. Is this approach allowable since it is not a personal expense to the apprentice?**
Yes, while apprentices may not pay out of pocket costs, apprentices may use AmeriCorps funds to cover program costs. Apprentices can be asked to pay for supplemental pieces to their training; however, programs should be designed as zero-cost.

✔ Additional Resources

- For more information on Tennessee's Grow Your Own strategic initiative, please visit tn.gov/education/grow-your-own.
- For more information on Tennessee's Grow Your Own Center, offering technical assistance, please visit growyourown.tennessee.edu/.

