



# GROW YOUR OWN

## Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship



### Pre-Service Opportunities

Tennessee has set a new path for the educator profession as the top state to become and remain a teacher. Tennessee's Grow Your Own work has supported partnerships between Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs) and school districts to provide innovative, no-cost pathways to the teaching profession and will continue to create pipelines of qualified teachers and school district professionals.

Paving the way for teaching and educator workforce development nationwide, the Tennessee Department of Education (the department) announced in January 2022 a new way to develop teacher pipelines and was the first state to be approved by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to establish a federally recognized Grow Your Own model. Tennessee is the first state nationwide to sponsor Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship

programs between school districts and EPPs, which will further the state's and nation's efforts to extend the teacher pipeline and address teacher shortages.

Districts can leverage multiple recruitment populations for Registered Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship Programs, including but not limited to high school students, recent graduates, college students, school-based staff (i.e., paraprofessionals, educational assistants, nutrition workers, front desk staff), retirees, and career changers.

As districts work to develop localized programs that serve high school and recent high school graduates, the department has created this one-pager—with reference to a prior [glossary of terms](#) related to Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAPs)—for clarification and support.

### What is Youth Apprenticeship?

**Apprentices and Career Seekers:** Youth apprenticeships provide registered apprenticeship opportunities for students ages 16 to 21 in high school and postsecondary education. Apprenticeship programs for high school students combine academic and technical classroom instruction with work experience through a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP). It provides the foundation for students to choose among multiple pathways after high school—to enroll in college, to enter an apprenticeship program, begin full-time employment, or a combination.

### What is Pre-Apprenticeship?

**Apprentices and Career Seekers:** Pre-apprenticeship is a program or set of strategies designed to prepare individuals for entry into Registered Apprenticeship Programs (RAP) or other job opportunities. Pre-apprenticeships may last from a few weeks to a few months and may or may not

# Pre-Service Opportunities *(cont.)*

include wages or stipends. Pre-apprenticeship programs have varied program elements, and there is no age requirement. However, at the core, pre-apprenticeships place an individual on a pathway to employability through a RAP, giving the employer an opportunity to observe and prepare the apprentice before starting a RAP. Quality pre-apprenticeship programs can play a valuable role in providing work-based learning to help people prepare for an entry-level RAP.

While pre-apprenticeship programs have varied designs and approaches, the Department of Labor has outlined the elements of a quality pre-apprenticeship program that can place an individual on the potential career pathway to employability through a RAP:



**Approved Curriculum:** Training that is based on industry standards and approved by a RAP partner



**Simulated Experience:** Hands-on training that does not displace paid employees



**Facilitated Entry:** Agreements with RAP sponsors for participants to enter programs directly



**Increased Diversity:** Recruitment and preparation for underrepresented populations to be successful in a RAP



**Supportive Services:** Wrap-around services or referrals to help participants complete the program



**Sustainable Partnerships:** Collaborative promotion of Registered Apprenticeship Programs to other employers

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- **Can Teaching as a Profession (TAP) CTE programs become registered as Youth Apprenticeships or designed as a Pre-Apprenticeship?** Yes, TAP programs can shift their programming and register as formally recognized youth apprenticeship, or designed as a pre-apprenticeship, ensuring students have clear pathways and can recognize credit and experience from high-school placement and coursework.
- **Do youth apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeship participants receive compensation?** RAPs require a structured wage progression, meaning all youth hired in a youth apprenticeship must be paid. However, payment is not required in a pre-apprenticeship program, though districts are allowed to pay stipends in they choose.

### Additional Resources

- Pre-apprenticeships (Apprenticeship TN site): [tn.gov/apprenticeshiptn/pre-apprenticeship.html](https://tn.gov/apprenticeshiptn/pre-apprenticeship.html)
- TN Certified Pre-Apprenticeship application: [tn.gov/apprenticeshiptn/employers-sponsors/pre-apprenticeship.html](https://tn.gov/apprenticeshiptn/employers-sponsors/pre-apprenticeship.html)