

Apprenticeship Q & A

Terminology:

1. **Apprenticeship**: US Department of Labor apprenticeships combine paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction to prepare workers for highly-skilled careers. Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway where employers can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience, classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally-recognized credential.
2. **GYO**: Grow Your Own: A collaborative, innovative program providing a pathway to earning a teaching license.
3. **RAP**: Registered Apprenticeship Program: A program approved by the US Department of Labor as one of its official programs that prepares individuals for an apprenticeable occupation.
4. **USDOL**: United States Department of Labor: The Department of Labor administers federal labor laws to guarantee workers' rights to fair, safe, and healthy working conditions, including minimum hourly wage and overtime pay, protection against employment discrimination, and unemployment insurance.
5. **USDOE**: United States Department of Education: The Department of Education fosters educational excellence and ensures equal access to educational opportunities for all.
6. **NDDPI**: North Dakota Department of Public Instruction: The state's department charged with leadership and oversight of the public school system in North Dakota.
7. **ND ESPB**: North Dakota Educator Standards and Practices Board: North Dakota's agency that oversees educator preparation approval, professional licensure, professional development, and professional conduct of educators.
8. **EPP**: Educator Preparation Program: A program approved by the North Dakota Educator Standards and Practices Board to offer instruction making an individual eligible to apply for the state's teaching license.
9. **TC**: Teacher Candidate: An individual who is enrolled in an EPP and is completing coursework and field experiences to be eligible to apply for a teaching license.
10. **LEA**: Local Education Agency: A public board of education or other authority responsible for the administration or control of elementary and/or secondary schools in a city, county, or consolidated area of a state.
11. **Job-Embedded**: Learning that is attained while "on the job."
12. **Mentor**: Also known as a cooperating teacher, an individual who guides and demonstrates quality professional practice to the apprentice.

Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Q: What is a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP)?

A Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) is a proven model of apprenticeship that has been validated by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency.*

Q: What are the types of apprenticeship programs under the U.S. Department of Labor?

Apprenticeship programs may be time-based, competency-based, or a hybrid of time and competency-based.

In addition to the “standard” apprenticeship program for individuals above, such as for paraprofessionals or other adults interested in becoming a licensed teacher, apprenticeships may also include:

Youth Apprenticeship Program: any registered apprenticeship program in which the employer specifies in the apprenticeship agreement that individuals aged 16 and above may participate.*

A 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 include wages or a stipend.*

Q: What are the components of an apprenticeship program?

An apprenticeship program must include on-the-job competencies, related instruction, and a graduated wage schedule that increases as the apprentice gains identified skills.

Q: What are the required roles or components of a registered apprenticeship?

The Sponsor, which for North Dakota is the DPI

The Employer, a local school district

The Related Instruction Provider, an ND EPP

Q: What agency oversees this process?

The United States Department of Labor is the ultimate authority but also works in collaboration with regional and state apprenticeship offices. In North Dakota, the DPI is serving as the applicant in collaboration with other stakeholders.

Q: When did the K-12 Teacher Apprenticeship become an official occupation recognized by the US DOL as an apprenticeship?

The occupation was approved in November 2021. The first program, Austin Peay State University, Tennessee, was registered in January 2022.

Q: Can any program in any state apply to be a RAP?

Yes, the program is open to any state.

Q: What are the main benefits of a RAP?

Apprentices can make a living while they complete their apprenticeship

The state, district, and EPP maintain a high level of quality control

Potential DOL funding opportunities are available

North Dakota Support and How to Apply to Become a RAP

Q: Who is supporting this work?

North Dakota's Superintendent Kirsten Baesler's office is leading this work under the direction of Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke with support from Dr. Rebecca Pitkin, Executive Director of the Education Standards and Practices Board (ESPB).

Barry Dutton, Director of the North Dakota Office of Apprenticeships, is a vital collaborator at the state level as well.

David Donaldson, Founder and Managing Partner of the National Center for Grow Your Own, is consulting. David was the lead author on the first Registered Apprenticeship Program for K-12 Teachers during his service as Chief of Human Capital for the State of Tennessee.

Wayde Sick, Director of the CTE, is an additional partner in this apprenticeship work. Wayde intends to pursue youth apprenticeships in the near future.

Rounding out the team is Dr. Lynn Hammonds, contracted liaison, who facilitates communication among the state offices, consultants, and North Dakota EPPs. Lynn has an extensive background in teacher preparation approval and licensure.

Q: What are the steps to applying to be a Registered Apprenticeship?

North Dakota EPP submits a Letter of Intent to Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke's office. This form will include a list of all of the programs the EPP wishes to include on the state's application to be approved as a RAP. After review and approval, the EPP program(s) will be added to the USDOL Registered Apprenticeship Program dashboard known as RAPIDS.

Q: Can an EPP submit multiple programs?

Yes, an EPP may include all of its programs that may include paraprofessionals in the single Letter of Intent. After initial approval, the EPP may request to add additional programs at a future time.

Q: Where does an EPP find the Letter of Intent?

Contact Assistant Superintendent Laurie Matzke at: lmatzke@nd.gov

Q: Does North Dakota have a resource page?

Yes, the link is www.nd.gov/dpi/educators/grow-your-own

School Districts

Q: What is required of the school district to participate in the RAP process?

The district must agree to be a participant. It will supply the salary schedule showing the progression of apprentice salaries as they achieve new skills while participating in the program. Usually, the human resources office is the point of contact after approval by the Superintendent to participate.

Q: How does an EPP encourage district buy-in?

A: With the current critical teacher shortage, apprenticeship programs allow districts to move those already employed and familiar with students, staff, and schools to advance their careers while being paid and staying in their familiar school site. In working with a new or existing partner district, the EPP can continue to provide a flow of well-prepared teachers who may not otherwise be able to afford to advance.

EPP Information

Q: How do existing EPP programs interface as a RAP?

Many North Dakota EPPs have had grow-your-own and apprenticeship programs in partnership with local school districts. Even after these programs are submitted for approval as a RAP, the EPP will continue to admit, prepare, and evaluate their teacher candidates as they complete all requirements of the program. Nothing is short-changed. The difference is the programs have an additional designation as a USDOL RAP, which will complement their state approval and any national accreditation.

Q: What are common characteristics of successful Registered Apprenticeship Programs?

Successful programs are innovative, flexible, and willing to meet their teacher candidates “where they are” to support them through the preparation program’s apprenticeship pathway.

Q: Does every person enrolled in a particular EPP program have to be an apprentice?

No. An EPP program may have individuals who qualify as registered apprentices because they are employed by a school district as a para-professional and others who are not currently employed by a school in the same program.

Q: Who is eligible to enroll in the EPP RAP?

A wide variety of individuals can be eligible, including:

- Paraprofessionals already employed in a school
- Other school staff who wish to become a teacher. The district and EPP would need to work together to provide the required experiences, such as a transition to a para-professional role within the school.

- Those with or without a college degree understand that if they do not have a bachelor's degree, they will earn their degree while in the RAP.

Q: Why would an EPP want to have its programs become a RAP?

After being approved as a US DOL RAP, new sources of federal, regional, and state funding that have traditionally only gone to other apprenticed occupations will be open to EPP.

What about Principals

Q: Is there an apprenticeship program for principals?

An application has been submitted for a K-12 Principal Apprenticeship Program by the NDDPI. Check back for additional information as the application makes its way through the system!

Resources

What are some existing programs that have already been successful in their application?

- Austin Peay State University (TN), the first RAP approved by the USDOL.
- Dallas College (Dallas, TX)
- University of Florida
- Lipscomb University (private university in Nashville, TN)
- Reach University (California)

What are sites with helpful information?

- www.nd.gov/dpi/educators/grow-your-own
- National Center for Grow Your Own: www.ncgyo.org.

*Definitions from U.S. Department of Labor and apprenticeship.gov