

# Education

States and schools are facing significant challenges in attracting and retaining fully qualified teachers and school staff such as bus drivers, paraprofessionals, nurses, and mental health professionals. In addition to the critical demand for new jobs in education, there is a rising need to replace teachers and staff who are retiring or have left the field, resulting in more than 850,000 openings each year.<sup>1</sup> To meet increased demand, states and school districts are increasingly turning to Registered Apprenticeship as part of a comprehensive approach to recruiting, preparing, and retaining fully qualified teachers, especially in critical areas such as special education; bilingual education; science, technology, engineering, and math; career and technical education; and early childhood education. In 2024, there were nearly 13,000 registered apprentices served in the education industry, a 425 percent increase over the past 5 years.

## WHAT IS REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP?

Registered Apprenticeship is an industry-driven, high-quality career pathway through which states and school districts can develop and prepare their future workforce, and individuals can obtain paid work experience with a mentor and receive progressive wage increases, rigorous and relevant classroom instruction, and a portable, nationally recognized credential. Registered Apprenticeships are industry-vetted and approved by the U.S. Department of Labor or a State Apprenticeship Agency.

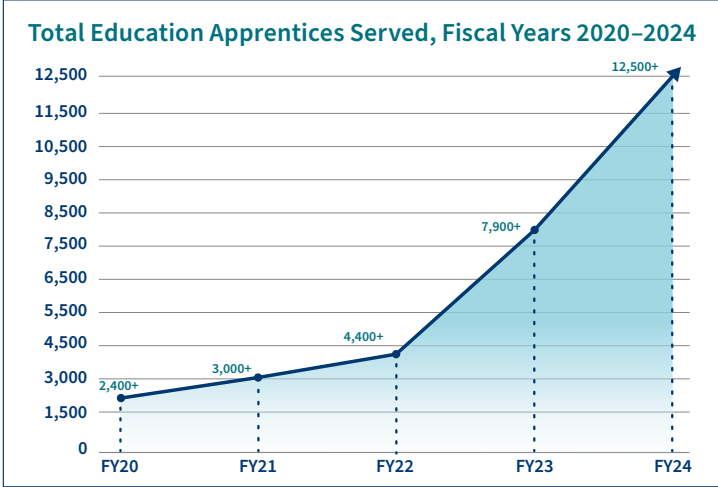
## THE NEED FOR REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP IN EDUCATION

Teachers and school staff prepare and inspire the next generation of leaders who are critical to our country's future well-being and our economy. Registered Apprenticeships can help address common challenges to preparation and pathways in the education sector, including:

- ▶ A shortage of qualified teachers with the education, skills, and appropriate credentials who also represent the increasingly diverse population of students in today's schools.
- ▶ Insufficient opportunities for on-the-job learning experiences prior to becoming the teacher of record, which results in gaps between theory and practice.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Low retention among new teachers and high attrition for experienced teachers that are affected by an aging workforce and pandemic-related issues.

<sup>1</sup> Bureau of Labor and Statistics, "Occupational Outlook Handbook: Educational Instruction and Library Occupations." (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh/education-training-and-library/home.htm#:~:text=About%20929%2C900%20openings%20each%20year,for%20all%20occupations%20of%20%2445%2C760>)

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Labor & U.S. Department of Education "Dear Colleague Letter." (<https://www.apprenticeship.gov/sites/default/files/22-0119-joint-dcl-signed-ed.pdf>)



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- ▶ A lack of affordable, high-quality pathways into the teaching profession.
- ▶ A need for opportunities for teacher mentorship and support, leadership and advancement, and professional development.

These workforce challenges impact teacher quality, efficacy, and student outcomes. A robust and sustainable diverse teacher workforce is essential to educating and supporting our children, youth, and adult learners. This is not possible without a commitment to recruiting, preparing, developing, and retaining fully qualified teachers.

The good news? There is a strategy to help meet critical talent needs: **Registered Apprenticeship**, which is an industry-driven training model that can provide a critical talent pipeline for the education system.

### REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP: A TOP TALENT DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR STATES AND SCHOOLS

As states and school districts look for affordable, high-quality pathways into the profession, many have turned to Registered Apprenticeship to recruit, prepare, and retain teachers. Registered Apprenticeship is an effective preparation model for skills-based hiring and for removing potential barriers to early-level careers for qualified teachers.

### HOW CAN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP HELP STATES AND SCHOOLS ADDRESS LABOR SHORTAGE CHALLENGES?

States and school districts that hire teachers and other school staff realize a number of benefits from implementing Registered Apprenticeship programs. Through Registered Apprenticeship, education systems can:

- ▶ Partner with institutions of higher education, states, and districts to establish teacher preparation programs that emphasize classroom-based experience through on-the-job training, a key element of effective programs.
- ▶ Recruit, prepare, and develop a diverse and highly skilled workforce, which includes strengthening the pipeline into the profession.

*“The Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program provides an inclusive career pathway, which honors individuals from diverse backgrounds, and understands the value diverse apprentices bring to addressing the needs of America’s multicultural K–12 student body. The Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program changes lives and builds capacity so America can meet the needs of K–12 students!”* —**Mary J. Ford, Ed.D., Director of Inclusive Career Pathways, National Collaborative for Digital Equity**

- ▶ Establish an affordable pathway into the profession with an “earn and learn” model that leads to a nationally recognized credential.
- ▶ Provide robust clinical experiences with an experienced mentor teacher.
- ▶ Improve productivity, reduce turnover, and retain qualified talent.
- ▶ Scale up teacher residency and Grow Your Own programs.
- ▶ Create opportunities for teacher advancement and leadership, including earnings, additional certifications in high-demand areas, and opportunities to serve as mentors.

### SNAPSHOT: SOME OF THE MOST COMMON APPRENTICEABLE OCCUPATIONS IN EDUCATION

- ▶ K–12 Teacher
- ▶ Teacher’s Aide
- ▶ Early Childhood Educator
- ▶ Childcare Development Specialist
- ▶ Early Childhood/PRE-K Teacher
- ▶ K-12 Principal
- ▶ Teaching Assistant

Partner with the Office of Apprenticeship, a [U.S. Department of Labor Industry Intermediary](#), or your respective State Apprenticeship Agency to access a nationwide network of expertise, customer service, and support. Our apprenticeship team creates business solutions and helps you quickly achieve workforce results.

## Explore Registered Apprenticeship Today!

Want to learn more? Visit the U.S. Department of Labor’s one-stop source for all things apprenticeship: [www.apprenticeship.gov](http://www.apprenticeship.gov) or email us at [apprenticeship@dol.gov](mailto:apprenticeship@dol.gov).

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