



# GROW YOUR OWN

## Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship



### High-Quality, Well-Trained Educator Professionals

Tennessee's Grow Your Own (GYO) initiative is an educator preparation strategy focused on developing and retaining teachers from the local community. GYO is used to address teacher shortages by effectively addressing the financial, recruitment, and preparation challenges facing Tennessee's educator workforce.

In January 2022, the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE) announced a new, sustainable Grow Your Own (GYO) model: the Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship. The program is an evolution of the state's initial model, offering a no-cost pathway into the teaching profession with strengthened programmatic supports, high-quality training, and sustainable funding.

### High-Quality Programing for Excellent Educators

A hallmark of Tennessee's Teacher Apprenticeship program is the rigorous approach for educator preparation and development. In the program model – based on best practice and apprenticeship standards – each candidate will:



**Receive On-the-Job, Competency-Based Learning:** The Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship ensures prospective educators learn on-the-job. The nationally registered model is a competency-based apprenticeship program that focuses on the apprentice's ability to demonstrate skills in an observable and measurable way. Under the training and direct coaching of a mentor teacher, apprentices move through related programming upon proficiency rather than time bound semesters. To advance in the program, apprentices are required to demonstrate full proficiency in all areas of Professionalism, Environment, Planning, and Instruction.

#### ✔ What does this mean?

Apprentices experience comprehensive training while working full-time in the district as a teaching aid. They receive real-time feedback and daily coaching, allowing them to not only progress more quickly than a traditional four-year degree, but also far more clinical practice than a typical EPP could offer.



## High-Quality Programing for Excellent Educators (cont.)



### **Streamline Essential Coursework, Earning a Bachelor's Degree in Three Years:**

The minimum term of an apprenticeship is three years of job-embedded learning and related education coursework. Participants receive 6,000 on-the-job learning hours while they earn their four-year bachelor's degree in three-years – or less.

#### ✔ What does this mean?

Since apprentices work full-time in the district, apprentice programs streamline essential coursework and facilitate alternative schedules for summer and evening classes. The model supports best practice and pedagogy, mirroring EPP coursework with a candidate's real-time job experience. Though accelerated, apprenticeship ensures meaningful emersion, deep understanding, and quality performance.



**Experience Deep District Involvement in the Training Process:** Employers are the foundation of every apprenticeship program, and in Tennessee's model, districts play an active role to ensure that participants meet the district's needs and expectations – both during the program and for future employment.

#### ✔ What does this mean?

Apprentices train and grow in the district – and often at the school – they are ultimately hired into. Upon completion, when apprentices step into the classroom for their 'first year,' they already have three years of experience to speak for.

The Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship model is federally recognized, nationally approved, and state monitored. The quality training, educator performance, and professional longevity of apprentice teachers is better supported by the programming and intentional design of the apprenticeship model.

Ultimately, Tennessee Teacher Apprenticeship educators receive stronger training and support to ensure they are best equipped to accelerate their students' academic achievement and future readiness.