

Governor Walz and Lieutenant Governor Flanagan's 2025 Budget Statewide Registered Teacher Apprenticeship



Statewide registered teacher apprenticeship grant

The governor recommends \$5 million in FY26 and \$2 million in FY27 from the workforce development fund to support establishment of a statewide registered apprenticeship program for teachers. Funds will be used to support the development of a statewide registered teacher apprenticeship program, creating additional pathways into the teaching profession through this earn and learn model, benefiting children throughout the state and their educational achievement.



Credentials

Registered apprenticeship

Registered apprenticeship is a time-tested, employment-based training system that combines job-related classroom instruction with structured, on-the-job learning. Apprentices are paid a progressive wage schedule as they gain new skills and are supervised by a journeyworker (mentor) at the worksite. At the completion of their program, apprentices earn a nationally recognized credential for their occupation. Minnesota has more than 11,000 active registered apprentices in the state across more than 200 program sponsors. The Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry is responsible for regulating registered apprenticeship programs in Minnesota.



Registered teacher apprenticeship programs (RTAPs)

RTAPs for K-12 education require 6,000 hours of on-the-job learning and at least 144 hours of classroom instruction each year. Competencies for on-the-job learning are based on the Minnesota Professional Educators and Licensing Standards Board's (PELSB's) 2023 Standards of Effective Practice. Related classroom instruction is provided by PELSB-approved teacher preparation providers to ensure completion of the apprenticeship program results in Tier 3 licensure. There are currently three RTAPs in Minnesota serving 45 apprentices. Apprentices in these programs earn special education licensures upon completion. Additional occupations in additional licensure areas can and likely will be included in RTAPs.



Statewide approach to RTAPs

The development and approval of each registered teacher apprenticeship program require a significant amount of coordination between the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry (DLI), the Minnesota Department of Education and the Minnesota Professional Educators Licensing and Standards Board, as well as coordination between school districts, local unions and teacher preparation providers. Currently, the program development process for each RTAP takes approximately 18 months. Multiple school districts across the state have expressed an interest in RTAPs but have indicated they lack the resources to successfully register and maintain a single employer program. An RTAP that can serve school districts across the state provides increased capacity and program sustainability for school districts and ensures a more standardized, high-quality experience for apprentices. A statewide approach will not impact RTAPs already operating in the state, nor will it preclude other school districts and charter schools from pursuing their own programs or seeking other federal and state apprenticeship resources.



Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC)

Three types of entities that are eligible to administer registered apprenticeship programs are defined in Minnesota Statutes section 178.011. These entities, known as program sponsors, include employers, employer associations and apprenticeship committees (also known as joint apprenticeship training committees, or JATCs). When apprenticeship programs involve a unionized workforce and multiple employers, as a statewide RTAP would, a JATC is the qualifying entity to serve as the program sponsor. JATC membership is made up of equal representation by employers and employees and the committee is responsible for the overall oversight of the apprenticeship program. Union-led JATCs, such as those typically found in the building and construction trades, have been the premier model for registered apprenticeship programs in Minnesota and have demonstrated success in other industries for more than 80 years. Similar statewide JATCs for RTAPs have been successfully implemented in Washington and Oregon in the past year.



Education Minnesota

An overwhelming majority of school districts that will participate in RTAPs in the coming years will involve a unionized workforce. Union involvement and leadership in statewide registered apprenticeship programs is essential to the success of the model. Education Minnesota's relationship with more than 477 local union affiliates in the state, along with its long history of providing meaningful professional development for educators, makes it uniquely suited to lead efforts in developing a statewide RTAP. Moreover, Education Minnesota's involvement in the development of a statewide RTAP mirrors the registered apprenticeship program model found to be most successful in other industries in the state.



Employer involvement

While the governor's proposal directs funding to Education Minnesota to develop and launch the statewide RTAP, school district involvement and leadership is instrumental to the success of the model. Within RTAPs, school districts identify teacher openings that need to be filled and drive the demand for apprentices. School district administrators also serve as members of the RTAP joint apprenticeship training committee and provide input about the operation of the RTAP.



Administration of funds

The Minnesota Department of Labor is the regulatory agency for registered apprenticeship in the state, responsible for developing registered teacher apprenticeship programs and ensuring compliance with state and federal regulations, as well as administering multiple grant programs for registered apprenticeship programs. Administering this grant funding through DLI streamlines processes for RTAPs, ensures program compliance with state and federal regulations, and increases access to technical assistance. DLI meets monthly with the Minnesota Department of Education and PELSB to ensure program alignment and collaboration across agencies to create a more user-friendly experience for participating school districts.