

**TEACH**  
EARLY CHILDHOOD®

**National Center**

A Division of Early Years



# Early Educator Apprenticeship Annual Report

## FY 2024-2025

TEACH Early Childhood® Educator  
Apprenticeship Network  
powered by Early Years

[www.earlyyearsnc.org](http://www.earlyyearsnc.org)  
[www.teachecnationalcenter.org](http://www.teachecnationalcenter.org)

# OVERVIEW

Apprenticeships provide a unique opportunity to support skill development in the high demand field of early childhood education. Utilizing the unique structure of an apprenticeship, a participant will be able to gain employment and attend institutions of higher education to work toward industry-recognized credentials and degrees.

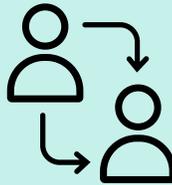


Registered apprenticeship programs have five main components:

## Paid Job



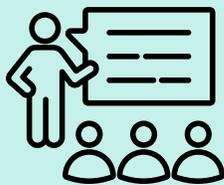
## Mentorship



## Credentials



## Related technical instruction



## On the job training



Blending these key components together is what makes an apprenticeship a unique opportunity to meet a participant where they are and support them in earning credentials and degrees. In addition, the components of TEACH Early Childhood® scholarships for associate and bachelor's degrees have always mirrored the elements of an apprenticeship program. As the early childhood network aims to strengthen career pathways for those entering the early childhood profession, apprenticeship can provide robust and varied opportunities.

The TEACH Early Childhood® National Center supports states through the National Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Network as an industry intermediary developing registered apprenticeship models that coordinate with existing scholarships and systems. While not all states house the TEACH scholarship program, technical assistance and support can be provided to all states. As an industry intermediary, the National Center provides individualized technical assistance to states to develop, recruit and implement early childhood apprenticeship using the approved U.S. Department of Labor registered model. Each apprenticeship program will be unique to the state and community it will serve. The National Center works with a stakeholder team in each state to create a program that will meet the needs of the early childhood workforce.



## NATIONAL STATE DATA

**103**

Apprentices

**5**

Pre-Apprentices\*

**3.35**

Average GPA

**36**

Average age of participants

**956**

College credit hours taken

**71,070**

On-the-job training hours

\*Completed 38 Dual Enrollment College Courses with 3.2 GPA

# STATE HIGHLIGHTS

## ARKANSAS

### Arkansas Apprenticeship Graduates

“Watching these first graduates of the TEACH Arkansas Early Educator Apprenticeship program grow from eager learners to confident educators has been such a rewarding experience. Their journey reminds us that when we invest in teachers, we invest in the future of every child they will teach.”

- **Elizabeth Miller, Apprenticeship Coordinator, Arkansas Early Childhood Association**

*Left to right: Cezirae Thomas, teacher; Elizabeth Miller, apprenticeship coordinator; Kazia Lackey, teacher and Erica Hollins, teacher*



## COLORADO

“I am truly grateful to be a recipient of the TEACH Apprenticeship Scholarship especially for the opportunity to work so closely with my mentor. Through her education and experience, she expertly guides our weekly meetings through discussions about classroom management, curriculum development and best practices. She is well versed in neurodiversity and how to meet the needs of all students. She is an accomplished program manager at her school and offers relevant resources and strategies for building my leadership skills as I pursue my ECE director’s certification. We discuss communicating with families about their child’s development as well as developing active listening skills for managing teachers on my team. I come away from these sessions inspired, encouraged and empowered to teach and lead to the best of my ability.”

- **Lorie Shetter, Boulder Country Day Preschool Program**



## OHIO

“The TEACH Early Childhood® OHIO Scholarship has made a tremendous impact on both my education and my career in Early Childhood Education. Having the opportunity to further my education through a full scholarship provided by TEACH Ohio and supported by my employer has truly been life-changing. This program has lifted the financial burden that often prevents educators like myself from advancing their education, and it has allowed me to focus fully on becoming the best teacher I can be for young children and their families.

Through this scholarship, I have gained not only new knowledge but also a deeper level of confidence in my skills as an educator. The coursework, along with the ongoing support and encouragement provided through TEACH, has strengthened my teaching practices, expanded my understanding of child development, and inspired me to continue growing in this field. I feel more prepared, capable, and driven to create meaningful learning experiences for children.

TEACH Apprenticeship has empowered me to further my education while continuing to work in the classroom, and it has helped me build a strong foundation for a long-term career in Early Childhood Education. I truly believe that this scholarship is shaping me into the teacher I strive to be and allowing me to make a lasting difference in the lives of the children and families I serve.”

- **Alicia French, Over the Rainbow Early Learning Center**



# STATE HIGHLIGHTS

## MINNESOTA

“TEACH really helped me a lot. When I first started, I was a little rusty because it had been awhile since I graduated from college in 2011. As I began my journey, it made me realize that no matter how old you are and where you are in life, you have the ability to keep going. Knowing, you are encouraging others to keep going with hope and confidence. Take the opportunity to further your education. TEACH is very understanding, will work with you and respond in a timely manner with whatever questions you have.”

- **Natasha Miller, Apprentice, New Horizons Academy**

## PENNSYLVANIA

“Workforce-centered apprenticeships are essential in early childhood education because they honor the realities our classroom staff face. By offering flexible, hands-on learning that fits their schedules and builds on their experience, these programs help staff grow while they continue to work. When professional development is designed around the unique needs of our workforce, everyone wins—educators feel supported, families see stronger relationships, and children thrive.”

- **Mary Graham, Executive Director of Children’s Village**



## NEBRASKA

“TEACH is a great opportunity. TEACH has given me the opportunity to go to college, further my education and to help me help the next generation grow and develop. TEACH has given me support after support from my program coordinator and my apprentice mentor. I was given the opportunity to join the National Society of Leadership and Success (NSLS) and without TEACH none of this would be possible! I am extremely grateful for this opportunity.”

- **Eden Peed-Little Disciples Childcare**



## NORTH CAROLINA

I feel the Apprenticeship program is essential to the sustainability of the early education workforce because it brings together experienced professionals and those that are newer to the field, giving them first hand experience that cannot be taught in a classroom or oftentimes even during practicum learning. I also see an advantage when it comes to youth and their interest in the work that we do. When they can experience this field from a point of passion instead of just a job, it makes all the difference in the world.

- **Dustin Brande, Quality Child Care Inc.**



# WHAT'S NEXT

In 2026, Apprenticeship opportunities in early childhood will unveil an even greater collective national presence and approach to early childhood educator apprenticeship pathways. As Associate degree pathway apprentices graduate, early childhood educators in Arkansas and Minnesota will be ready to continue their career pathways in apprenticeship by enrolling in Early Childhood Bachelor Apprenticeship Programs. Using the Early Childhood Educator Level III National Association for the Education of Young Children Competencies and Standards as the job skills checklist, this pathway will support those teachers who will ultimately work towards a 4000-hour on-the-job training program through mentor support and supplemental education.

As apprenticeship opportunities continue to grow nationally, The Mentor Toolkit for Early Childhood Apprenticeships (Mentor Toolkit) will be released in 2026 to those States who are administering registered Apprenticeship Programs in collaboration with the TEACH Early Childhood® National Center. The Mentor Toolkit serves as a living document offering Mentors information and resources to support their roles. State and Program Administrators will personalize the Mentor Toolkit with specific information reflective of system-level requirements, regulations and other unique identifiers. Effective mentoring begins with a relationship based on trust, respect and shared growth. Mentors bring special skills and characteristics that foster comfort, experiences and expertise in order to provide a supportive environment for apprentices. The mentor/apprentice relationship is reciprocal, one in which both individuals learn from one another, benefit from ongoing reflection and engage in open dialogue.



Mentors foster meaningful relationships by consistently engaging in trust, transparency, valuing learning styles and modeling accountability. These relationships lead to apprentices observing and modeling practical strategies, thus improving early childhood education practice.

Lastly, in September of 2025, the National Center launched their first apprenticeship program webinar series in partnership with TEACH Early Childhood® registered apprenticeship network. These webinars serve as a resource for not only those registered with TEACH, but those states who are also exploring apprenticeship programs. No matter where a state is in the development of an apprenticeship program, these webinars will offer insights into program development and successful strategies from experts.

## Partnering State Information

Arkansas- Arkansas Early Childhood Association  
Colorado- Early Childhood Council Leadership Alliance  
Ohio- Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association  
Minnesota- Child Care Aware of Minnesota®  
Pennsylvania- Pennsylvania Child Care Association  
Nebraska- Nebraska Association for the Education of Young Children  
North Carolina- Early Years

## Statement of Acknowledgement for Funders:

Stranahan Foundation  
ECEPTS Early Care & Education Pathways to Success  
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*We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the authors alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of these organizations.*

**For more information: [TEACHnationalcenter@earlyyearsnc.org](mailto:TEACHnationalcenter@earlyyearsnc.org)**