



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Nebraska Expands Innovative Teacher Apprenticeship Program Ahead of National Apprenticeship Week**

Governor Jim Pillen and the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE) have announced a multi-million dollar expansion of the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program aimed at addressing the teacher shortage crisis in the state. This groundbreaking initiative was launched in April 2023, following the enactment of LB705 and the NDE utilized a \$1 million investment from the legislature to bolster the recruitment and training of educators across Nebraska earlier this year.

The program will now be expanding with another \$6 million in grants from the U.S. Department of Labor. This investment will allow the NDE to distribute more than \$2. Million this year to eight different colleges that will funnel down to apprentices at more than 19 school districts. The NDE plans to initiate a second and third grant cycle in 2025.

"This is another good example of why our administration is working hard to identify appropriate federal funding opportunities and use those investments for the benefit of Nebraska," said Gov. Pillen. "In this case, we are able to expand those apprenticeship programs that will allow us to recruit, train and retain high-quality educators for our students."

The grant announcement involving Gov. Pillen, NDE and the Nebraska Department of Labor was made in the library of Paddock Road Elementary School. The Westside School District currently provides apprenticeship opportunities as part of partnership with Midland University.

"The expansion of the Nebraska Teacher Apprenticeship Program is amazing," said Nebraska Commissioner of Education Brian Maher. "By fostering strong partnerships between education providers, districts, and now state agencies we're not just addressing the immediate need for more teachers; we're investing in a future where every Nebraska child has access to highly qualified educators committed to their success."

Unlike other para to teacher programs, teacher apprenticeships capitalize on hands-on training, allowing apprentices to work alongside their supervising teachers directly within the classroom. At the same time, apprentices benefit from education and training provided by partnering higher education institutions, while also being employed by the district.

"Registered Apprenticeships are a vital work force solution to addressing all kinds of employer and work force needs in Nebraska," said Elliott Cain, the reemployment program coordinator with the Nebraska Department of Labor. "Registered Apprenticeships utilize an 'earn while you learn' model that provides Apprentices the necessary tools to become fully competent in the occupation that the respective program is registered for, as well as employment opportunities that otherwise may not have been available to them."

This ambitious program represents the strength of key partnerships across state agencies and a critical step forward in

ensuring equitable, quality education for all students in Nebraska, solidifying the state's commitment to excellence and innovation in education.

All of this happens on the brink of a national celebration. The week of November 17 is known as National Apprenticeship Week across the nation. Gov. Pillen has signed a proclamation noting the occasion with the NDE, the Nebraska Department of Labor, and the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Registered Apprenticeship.

More information about the Teacher Apprenticeship Program can be found online.

[Original Teacher Apprenticeship Program Launch Announcement](#) March 27, 2024

[Federal Announcement of Grant Funds](#) July 12, 2024

The following is the list of colleges, universities, and school districts and organizations included in the Teacher Apprenticeship Program.

## **Colleges and Universities**

**Chadron State College**

**College of St. Mary**

**Midland University**

**Peru State College**

**University of Nebraska—Lincoln**

**University of Nebraska—Kearney**

**University of Nebraska—Omaha**

**Wayne State College**

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