



# GROW YOUR OWN CENTER EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (TENNESSEE GROW YOUR OWN REGISTERED APPRENTICESHIP)

**GRANT CLOSE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2025**

Tennessee launched the nation's first state-sponsored Registered Teacher Apprenticeship (R-TAP) in 2022, aligning educator preparation with the rigor and funding of a nationally registered apprenticeship through partnerships among the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE), Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and Educator Preparation Providers (EPPs). The University of Tennessee System, via a \$20M interagency grant, stood up the Tennessee Grow Your Own Center as the statewide technical-assistance hub to implement and scale the model. As the grant project ends, staff in the center have prioritized a strong handoff of teacher apprenticeship to TDOE to sustain the momentum. The University of Tennessee will maintain access to the grant-funded resources that were developed from 2022 to 2025 through the University of Tennessee's Grow Your Own website.

This document provides a high-level summary of the outcomes of the partnership.

### **Enrollment, Retention and Completion** (As of August 30th, 2025):

- 1,118 total program enrollments were recorded across the teacher apprenticeship and the instructional-leader residency programs
  - 464 registered teacher apprentices are still enrolled in RAPIDS
  - 73 pre-apprentices are enrolled in the community-college pipeline
  - 277 teachers have completed licensure
  - 190 enrollees withdrew before completion
  - 318 instructional leaders completed the program
- Retention from enrollment to completion (total program enrollments - withdrawals / total): 86%
- Tennessee registered more teacher apprentices than any other state (2022-25)
- Non-repayable sources with flat rate GYO Scholarships covered tuition and fees at \$5,000/year for undergraduates and \$2,500/year for post-bac candidates. All teacher apprentices from 2022-25 attended at no cost to the learner.

### **Reach and Partnerships**

- 96 LEAs (plus 2 charters) completed the application process and were approved to employ apprentices.
- 14 University partners completed the application process and were approved to provide related instruction for apprentices
- Programs were approved in 69 of 95 counties
- The GYO Center team doubled the number of statewide LEA partners in one year
- The GYO Center delivered differentiated technical assistance statewide.
  - 708+ engagements (i.e. meetings, group events, presentations)
  - 8,700+ individuals learned about GYO teacher apprenticeship from center staff.
  - 5,611+ individuals with interest in the program completed the GYO Center's profile form.
- Convened a group of cross-functional Tennessee leaders (legislators, TDOE, UT, APSU, Lipscomb) for a strategic planning process from September 2023- June 2024, designing strategies for the future of GYO in TN.

### **Capacity Built for Quality and Sustainability**

- **State Funding-** Developed and tested a funding model with EPP & LEA partners that aligned with the governor's allocation of \$5M in funds annually, enrolling 600 teacher apprentices on a path to licensure at no cost to them.
- **Return on Investment-** Collaborated with LEAs to evaluate a potential ROI for investing in teacher apprenticeship as a way to realize cost savings from reduced turnover (see case stories revealing positive ROI for LEAs).
- **Federal Funding-** In collaboration with the national Educator Registered Apprenticeship (ERA) intermediary, the GYO Center was awarded funds from US DOL so that districts would receive startup support;
  - ERA awarded \$81,000 to assist 39 LEAs and
  - Funding for ~128 apprentices to cover tuition, fees, and mentor stipends
- **Digital Apprenticeship Infrastructure-** After piloting two platforms, UT led a procurement process and selected BuildWithin for apprentices and Craft for pre-apprentices. These platforms included digital 671 enrollment workflow, statewide training, and EPP/LEA implementation. A digital platform is essential to provide a shared space for university and school district personnel to collaboratively share information with and about apprentices.

- **Program Quality and Technical Assistance-**

- The Center codified the Hallmarks for High-quality Teacher Apprenticeship along with an annual timeline and scoring process for EPPs to apply for funds
- Deployed a Mentor Toolkit and wrote a grant that was awarded. It focused on bolstering future mentor teacher development programs and resources
- Procured \$1.8M in grant funding to develop a state-of-the art online, open educational resource, competency-based curriculum that all EPPs can incorporate to improve affordability without reducing quality
- Provided Praxis exam preparation software at no charge to all apprentices through a partnership with Study.com
- Met at least bi-weekly with TDOE to reconcile enrollment, withdrawal and completion data to maintain accurate records in RAPIDS.
- Developed over 50 custom resources (i.e. job aids, playbooks, guides, one-pagers, recorded webinars, email templates) to assist with program implementation
- Developed and launched [TeachBridge Pathways](#), a competency-based, OER curriculum aligned to InTASC standards and inclusive of virtual, performance-based assessments.

#### **What This Means for Tennessee**

The UT-TDOE partnership to launch the Tennessee Grow Your Own Center demonstrated that apprenticeship can expand access, reduce cost barriers, and strengthen retention for working learners, especially in rural and high-needs fields. This model provides a strong ROI for districts to design sustainable, employer-driven pathways that fill vacancies with well-prepared, locally rooted educators. With statewide partnerships established, digital infrastructure in place, aligned quality standards, and strong completion/retention indicators, the Tennessee Grow Your Own Center's 3 years of technical assistance and innovation have built a strong foundation.