



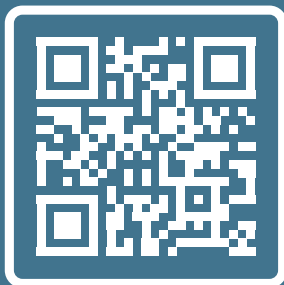
GROW YOUR OWN CENTER

*Strengthening the educator pipeline*



# TEACHING AS A PROFESSION PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PILOT PROGRAM

Playbook & Evaluation Plan



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A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SYSTEM  
AND TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With the establishment of the Tennessee Grow Your Own Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship Program—including an initial investment of \$20 Million by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE)—the Tennessee Grow Your Own Center (TN GYOC) was tasked to define and implement a Teaching as a Profession Pre-Apprenticeship Pilot Program for the Fall of 2023. This program can serve as one of the entry points to the teacher talent pipeline through partnerships between local high schools and local community colleges with the goal to produce highly qualified candidates to enter the Tennessee Grow Your Own Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship Program for aspiring teachers.

This playbook and evaluation plan has been designed to provide an overview of the pilot program and program evaluation to address questions from multiple stakeholders, including the TDOE, the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, the Tennessee General Assembly, the Governor, the University of Tennessee System, and other colleges and universities in the state.

# PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

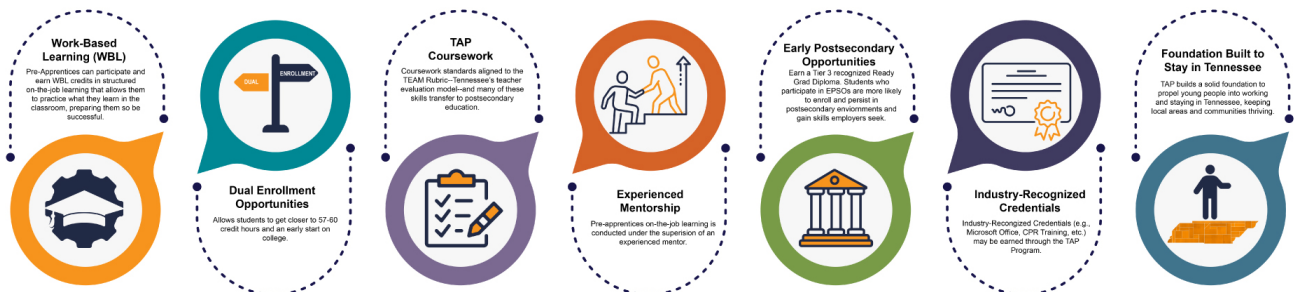
## Program background

The Teaching as a Profession (TAP) Pre-Apprenticeship Program is designed for high-school students interested in becoming an educator. In this program, coursework covers the components of instruction, teaching strategies, types of assessments, student learning, special populations, educational technology, classroom management, lesson planning, and professionalism. TAP participants participate in an internship—a field experience with a mentor teacher—and build a professional portfolio to prepare for advanced training as future educators. Starting at age 16, junior and senior high school students can enroll in a pre-apprenticeship and earn dual enrollment credits through a sequence of TAP courses. This sequencing allows for pre-apprentices to work towards a bachelor’s degree while in high school while gaining practical hands-on classroom experience in their local school district.

The goal of any pre-apprenticeship program is for individuals to have an entry point for a Registered Apprenticeship Program (RAP) and serves as a recruiting tool for employers.<sup>1</sup> The goal for TAP would be for individuals to finish the program and then enter the Tennessee Grow Your Own Teacher Occupation Apprenticeship Program (TN GYO). Therefore, Local Education Agencies (LEA) must be a Registered Apprenticeship Provider (RAP) to have a TAP Pre-Apprenticeship. Figure 1 displays the benefits of a state-certified TAP program.

Figure 1 - Benefits of a State-Certified TAP Program

## BENEFITS OF A STATE-CERTIFIED TAP PROGRAM



<sup>1</sup> For more information, please visit Apprenticeship TN’s website at <https://www.tn.gov/apprenticeship/tn/pre-apprenticeship.html>.

## Benefits of a State-Certified TAP Program

- Introduction to the teaching profession.
- Work-Based Learning (WBL): Pre-apprentices can participate and earn WBL credits in structured on-the-job learning that allows them to practice what they learn in the classroom, preparing them to be successful.
- Dual Enrollment opportunities: allows students to earn up to 60 credit hours (Early start on college).
- TAP Coursework includes standards that align to the TEAM rubric, Tennessee's evaluation model. Many of these foundational skills transfer to post-secondary opportunities, preparing students for the workforce or college.
- Mentorship: Pre-apprentices on-the-job learning is conducted under the supervision of an experienced mentor.
- Early Post Secondary Opportunity (EPSO) for students: Tier 3 recognized Ready Grad Diploma. Students who participate in EPSOs are more likely to enroll and persist in post-secondary environments and gain skills employers are looking for.
- Industry-Recognized Credentials may be issued during the TAP program (Microsoft Office, CPR training).
- Students will receive a State-Certified Pre-Apprenticeship Certificate of Completion.
- Foundation to catapult young people into working and staying in Tennessee, keeping local areas and communities thriving.

The implementation of TAP programs by school districts as a talent development strategy result in various advantages. TAP programs assist employers in finding and building a solid pipeline of students with the specialized knowledge, abilities, and competencies required for job success. Additionally, employers that provide TAP programs see a set of students who will be prepared to interview for entry into a RAP while working in the district as teaching assistants or similar positions.

Recruitment and turnover expenses in the educational sector can be very expensive for LEAs. The issue of teacher non-retention costs the country more than \$8.5 billion annually. According to a study by The Learning Policy Institute, every teacher who quits costs the school district \$20–30,000 in turnover costs. The overall cost of non-retention plus new hiring may equal 150% of the compensation of a departing teacher.<sup>2</sup> According to recent studies, the retention rates for new teachers who finish preparation programs with substantial clinical placements and training alongside experienced mentor teachers range from mid-70% to low-90% after three or more years. Implementing TAP programs with these high-quality elements can increase teacher retention and decrease turnover, which has a favorable effect on LEAs finances.

<https://www.opportunityculture.org/2022/02/21/losing-our-teachers-high-turnover-shortages-burnout-are-a-problem-for-our-schools-and-children/>

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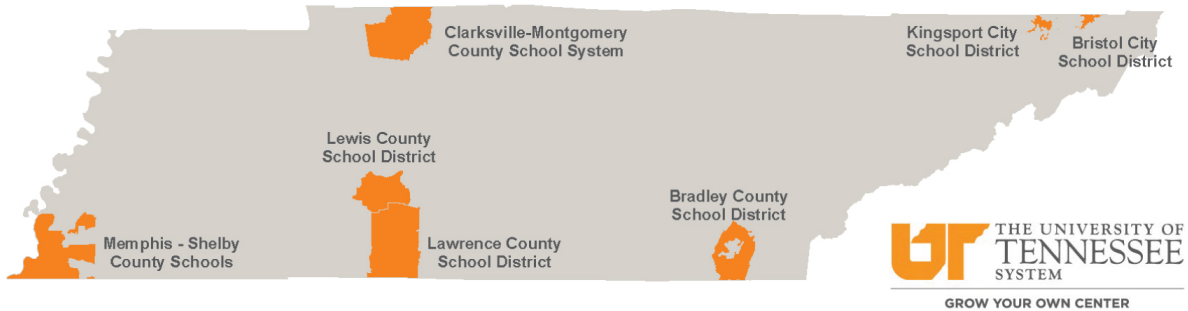
<sup>2</sup> To see the complete article visit <https://www.opportunityculture.org/2022/02/21/losing-our-teachers-high-turnover-shortages-burnout-are-a-problem-for-our-schools-and-children/>

## TAP Pilot Locations

The TDOE and the TN GYOC worked with seven LEAs across the State of Tennessee to pilot the state-certified pre-apprenticeship program for TAP program students. The partnering LEAs are Kingsport City, Bristol City, Lawrence Co, Lewis County, Clarksville Montgomery, Memphis-Shelby County Schools, Bradley County.

Figure 2 – Tennessee TAP Pilot Programs & Grow Your Own Regions

### Teaching as a Profession (TAP) Pilot Districts



## Program Organization

The TAP Pilot Program began in the Fall of 2023. To become a state-certified pre-apprenticeship for the TAP Pilot Program, students must be a Junior or Senior in high school. To successfully complete the state-certified pre-apprenticeship, students must have an ACT Score of 21 and a minimum 2.75 GPA.

Each participating LEA will complete a pre-apprenticeship application with TDOE and a memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the LEA (the employer) and the placement school (the work-based learning partner).

To express interest and receive these forms, interested LEAs should complete the [Teaching as a Profession \(TAP\) State Certified Pre-Apprenticeship School District Interest Form](#).

Participating districts will select one of four pilot options found in Table 1.

## TAP Pilot District Support Offerings

- Quarterly meetings including the TN GYOC, TDOE, LEA, Community Colleges, Office of Apprenticeship, Office of Pre-Apprenticeship
- Innovative School Models (ISM) School Report Card Designations
- Built in Research and Evaluation
- Support with completion and submission of TAP application
- Community college support

## TAP Work-Based Learning Opportunities

These are activities that occur in the workplace through which youth gain the knowledge, skills and experiences needed from entry into a particular career field.

Students that participate in courses that include WBL gain hands-on knowledge and skills that will give them an advantage as they begin their career.

### PURPOSES OF WBL

- Engage and motivate students in learning by connecting classroom work to student's personal and career interests.
- Reinforce and improve academic learning.
- Develop career and technical skills.
- Expand social networks and access to opportunities.
- Enhance student's workplace competencies, such as teamwork, communication and project planning.
- Enable career exploration through breadth of exposure at the worksite.
- Enhance student's understanding of careers through depth of experience.

### WBL EXAMPLES

- Lesson Planning
- Read Alouds focused on text-based questions and wait time
- Observing instructional environment and organization of materials
- Help with and/or observe diagnostic assessments
- Go through curriculum and supplemental resources with guidance (what are the materials and how to use them)
- Provide 1-on-1 student support
- Provide small group instruction
- Complete TDOE-approved tutoring modules
- Receive RTI training and provide small group support
- Receive behavior training and provide student support
- Attend BOE meeting
- Attend after-school PL/PD
- Plan and implement centers
- Plan Science or Social Studies project
- Learn about assessment data
- PLC Learning - the importance of teamwork

Figure 3 – Jobs for the Future Work-Based Learning Framework



To learn more about Jobs for the Future, visit <https://www.jff.org/idea/framework/work-based-learning/>.

# DIAGNOSTIC QUESTIONNAIRE

## Introduction

To prepare high school students, present them with exploratory options related to the teaching field, and even shorten the path to a four-year degree, several LEAs have developed and implemented TAP programs. If this is a viable option for their own district, other LEAs are taking it into consideration. The TAP program can be set up in a variety of ways to best suit the needs of the employer because the TAP model and structure is flexible and scalable by design. Because of this flexibility, various decisions on the structure of a TAP program must be made, and these decisions must be made in collaboration with all partners.

## Purpose of the Diagnostic Questionnaire

Although there is not a single TAP model to follow, this self-assessment tool offers a key set of questions a LEA should consider when deciding whether a state-certified TAP program would be a good addition to the district's Career Technical Education (CTE) programs. Districts that have already launched TAP as part of their CTE program for high school students might serve as models or points of inspiration for other districts. Leaders may find it beneficial to adopt parts of another district's TAP model in their own district if it fits within their needs and context after carefully examining their district's needs and existing TAP model. Overall, districts should be prepared so that development of a state-certified TAP program for high school students will be a process that requires decisions to be made through strong partnership and collaboration with a variety of stakeholders.

## How to use the Diagnostic Questionnaire

The self-assessment tool has questions intended to start conversations between the LEA and other important partners who would need to be involved in creating a state-certified TAP program for high school students. Directors and their leadership teams, CTE directors and their staff, and the TN GYOC Regional Manager should all work together to complete the diagnostic questionnaire.

Prior to completion of the diagnostic questionnaire, the LEA should gather and analyze data on the current and future teacher pipeline (looking ahead 5-10 years), as well as projected demand for teachers over the same period. This data will be a useful reference point during completion of the diagnostic questionnaire as it related to data on the teacher pipeline.



**Table 1 - Tennessee TAP Pilot Options**

Pilot Type	Abbreviation	Description	Diagnostic Questionnaire
TAP Curriculum	TC	<p>TAP students learn from TAP curriculum and coursework, but do not leave the classroom. On-the-Job Learning (OJL) can still be evaluated.</p> <p>Teaching as a Profession courses are for students interested in learning more about becoming a teacher, school counselor, trainer, librarian, or speech-language pathologist.</p> <p>Courses may cover the components of instruction, teaching strategies, types of assessments, student learning, special populations, and educational technology, classroom management, higher order thinking concepts, differentiation, and effective planning. Students will conduct observations of educators at work and create artifacts for a course portfolio. Upon completion of these courses, proficient students will have a fundamental understanding of instructional strategies needed for becoming an educator and be prepared to take the capstone TAP III course.</p> <p>Teaching as a Profession (TAP) Practicum is a capstone course for students interested in applying the knowledge and skills learned in previous courses toward becoming a teacher, school counselor, trainer, librarian, or speech-language pathologist. The course covers classroom professionalism, ethics, policies, communications, and career requirements in education and training fields. In addition, students will complete an internship and continue to create artifacts for their student portfolios. Upon completion of this course, proficient students will be prepared to pursue advanced training at a postsecondary institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do students leave the classroom for WBL?</li> <li>• Has your district or school adopted and implemented a TAP curriculum?</li> <li>• What resources have you used to identify the industry needs for educators in your area? (Local Comprehensive Needs Assessment)</li> <li>• How do you identify students who will enroll in your school's TAP program?</li> <li>• How do you plan to train and support the selected TAP instructor?</li> <li>• How do you market your TAP program to students, families, and the community?</li> <li>• To what extent is the curriculum aligned with the state's evaluation rubrics?</li> </ul>

**Table 1 - Tennessee TAP Pilot Options (continued)**

Pilot Type	Abbreviation	Description	Diagnostic Questionnaire
TAP Curriculum + Dual Enrollment	TCDE	In addition to TAP curriculum and coursework, students take dual enrollment classes. Dual enrollment allows students to progress closer towards 57 hours, or an associate degree, allowing them to enter a RAP more quickly. High school students can use blocks of high school time to earn college credit. This allows them to ease into college-level coursework and experience a college environment before attending college as a full-time student. Dual enrollment options are a way to streamline the path from high school to the workforce or quicken the path to a bachelor's degree.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What universities or community colleges have you partnered with to facilitate early post-secondary opportunities (EPSOs)?</li> <li>• How well is your TAP program's curriculum aligned with your university partner's Department of Education's program of study?</li> <li>• How well are your dual-enrollment options for students aligned with your university partner's Department of Education's program of study?</li> <li>• How are students and families made aware of the enrollment requirements of the Educational Professional Program (EPP)?</li> </ul>
TAP Curriculum + Work-Based Learning	TCWBL	Work-Based Learning (WBL) allows students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills learned from their TAP curriculum in a workplace setting. These opportunities include hands-on experiences working with younger students under the supervision of an experienced teacher. Students can earn WBL credits each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do you select and train mentors for TAP students?</li> <li>• What skills will students have the opportunity to practice during their WBL?</li> <li>• What are the structures in place to guide conversations between mentors and TAP students?</li> <li>• How do you pair students with WBL opportunities?</li> <li>• Can students have the opportunity to earn high school credits for WBL?</li> <li>• Are there wrap around services available to ensure WBL are equitable for all students?</li> </ul>

**Table 1 - Tennessee TAP Pilot Options (continued)**

Pilot Type	Abbreviation	Description	Diagnostic Questionnaire
TAP Curriculum + Dual Enrollment + Work-Based Learning	TCDEWBL	<p>In addition to TAP curriculum and coursework and dual enrollment courses, students participate in WBL as a course. Students leave the building for one or two periods for a placement in a classroom with a mentor teacher. During WBL, they have practice writing lesson plans with mentors, teach courses, and learn foundations of strong, effective teaching practices.</p> <p>As students cover Related Technical Instruction (RTI) in their classes and practice OJL in the classroom, this prior learning can be entered into RAPIDS and students will receive credit for this prior learning once they are in a RAP.</p>	Describe how you conduct data-informed conversations with students regarding licensure pathways?

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## 1. Is there a job requirement for a state-certified pre-apprenticeship?

- a. No. Pre-apprentices may or may not be employed with a partnering school district.

## 2. What are the required documents to establish a state-certified pre-apprenticeship?

- a. Cover Letter with Checklist
- b. Application
- c. MOU between LEA & school site

## 3. What are the roles and responsibilities of a state-certified pre-apprenticeship?

- a. The LEA is the potential employer who agrees to interview successful candidates within 2 months of completion of the pre-apprenticeship.
  - i. In the MOU, the LEA will outline the requirements to successfully complete the pre-apprenticeship.
- b. The school site (TAP program) is the training provider for the state-certified pre-apprenticeship.
  - i. Each school will apply and outline on the MOU the coursework pre-apprentices will complete while enrolled in the TAP program.

## 4. What is the role of the TN GYOC in establishing our TAP program?

The TN GYOC plays a multifaceted role in establishing state-certified TAP pre-apprenticeship programs across Tennessee.

- a. **Providing Resources and Support:** The TN GYOC offers a variety of resources to help LEAs state-certify their TAP programs as pre-apprenticeships. This could include:
  - i. **Case studies of program models and effective practices** from successful TAP programs in other districts.
  - ii. **Guidance on compliance** with state and federal regulations related to employing minors or alternative pathways to teacher certification.
  - iii. **Connection to potential partners** such as universities or workforce that could collaborate on the program.
- b. **Technical Assistance:** The TN GYOC offers technical assistance to LEAs during the implementation process. This could involve:
  - i. **One-on-one meetings with LEA leaders** to determine whether a state-certified TAP program would be a good addition to the district's CTE programs using our Diagnostic Questionnaire.
  - ii. **Helping districts complete the required paperwork** that will certify their TAP program as a state-certified pre-apprenticeship program.
  - iii. **Facilitating communication and collaboration** between districts and potential partners.
  - iv. **Providing ongoing support** to districts as they refine and improve their TAP programs.
- c. **Promotion and Advocacy:** The TN GYOC promotes state-certified TAP pre-apprenticeship programs across the state. This could involve:
  - i. **Sharing success stories** from districts that have implemented state-certified TAP pre-apprenticeship programs effectively.

- ii. **Organizing workshops and conferences** to raise awareness about TAP programs and their benefits.
- iii. **Advocating for policies** that support the development and expansion of TAP programs.

By contacting the TN GYOC directly, you can gain a clearer picture of the specific ways we can assist your district in establishing and running an effective state-certified TAP pre-apprenticeship program.

## CASE STUDIES: TAP PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PILOT PROGRAMS

This section of the document presents a comprehensive collection of case studies highlighting the diverse and impactful TAP pilot programs from across the state. Each case study captures unique challenges, innovative solutions and the tangible outcomes achieved by LEAs across Tennessee. Explore these case studies to gain deeper insights into the efforts and achievements by the TN GYOC, LEAs, EPPs and partners across Tennessee. The following matrix shows which of the four TAP pilot types each case study exemplifies.

Pilot Type	Abbreviation	LEA
TAP Curriculum	TC	Lewis County
TAP Curriculum + Dual Enrollment	TCDE	Memphis-Shelby County
TAP Curriculum + Work-Based Learning	TCWBL	Lawrence County
TAP Curriculum + Dual Enrollment + Work-Based Learning	TCDEWBL	Bradley County Bristol County Kingsport City Clarksville-Montgomery County

## Pilot Program Type: TCDEWBL

# Case Study: Bradley County Schools' TAP Program— Cultivating Future Educators Locally

Bradley County Schools, nestled in the heart of east Tennessee, serves a diverse student body comprising over 10,490 students across 17 schools. One of the district's standout achievements is its steadily rising graduation rate, a testament to its unwavering commitment to student success. Bradley County Schools takes immense pride in empowering students to achieve their full potential and graduate ready for college, career, and beyond, with a motto of Growing Students - Building Futures.

Additionally, Bradley County Schools recently inaugurated the PIE Innovation Center, a cutting-edge facility dedicated to Career and Technical Education (CTE). This state-of-the-art center provides students with hands-on learning experiences and real-world skills training, equipping them for diverse career pathways in high-demand industries.

Bradley County Schools' innovative CTE TAP program offers a state certified pre-apprenticeship experience for high school students aspiring to become teachers. This case study explores the program's structure and its connection to the district's Grow Your Own (GYO) registered teacher apprenticeship program, highlighting the perspectives of TAP students, teachers, Ms. Pope and Ms. Kersey, and CTE Director, Arlette Robinson.

## Planting the Seeds: The TAP Curriculum

The TAP program provides a foundation for a successful teaching career, structured as follows:

- **Introduction to TAP:** This course sparks students' interest in education by exploring child development, classroom management, and lesson planning.
- **TAP 1 & 2:** Students delve deeper, creating portfolios, observing classrooms across grade levels, and interviewing experienced teachers. Emphasis is placed on building strong relationships with students through empathy exercises and interaction opportunities.
- **Focus on Practical Application:** Hands-on experiences solidify theoretical learnings.

## The Power of Experience: Pre-Apprenticeship

The pre-apprenticeship component allows students to gain valuable insights:

- **Shadowing:** Students observe teachers across the district, experiencing different teaching styles and grade levels. Weekly reflections help them process their observations.
- **Service Learning:** Connecting with the community, TAP students participate in service-learning projects, fostering social responsibility and leadership skills.
- **Exploring Interests:** Students gain exposure to potential career paths within education, from elementary to high school levels.

## A Seamless Transition: GYO Registered Teacher Apprenticeship

The TAP program acts as a bridge to Bradley County's GYO registered teacher apprenticeship program:

- **Preparation for Apprenticeship:** TAP equips students with the knowledge, skills, and experience necessary to thrive in the GYO program.

- **Reduced Barriers:** The pre-apprenticeship experience allows students to explore teaching before committing to the formal apprenticeship.
- **Building a Local Pipeline:** The program prioritizes cultivating future educators from within Bradley County, addressing the teacher shortage with qualified local talent.

## Perspectives from the Field:

- **Ms. Paige Pope, TAP Teacher:** “The TAP program is more than job shadowing. It provides real-life experiences that help students solidify their passion for teaching and prepare them for the GYO program.”
- **Makayla, TAP Student:** “TAP classes have emphasized the importance of student relationships. Shadowing teachers has confirmed my desire to become a special education teacher.”
- **Makenna, TAP Student:** “The program allows us to explore different grade levels. Through service learning with second graders, I discovered a passion for elementary education.”

## Leadership and Vision:

- **Arlette Robinson, CTE Director:** “The TAP program is a strategic investment. By nurturing local talent through pre-apprenticeship experiences, we’re building a pipeline of passionate, well-prepared educators who are invested in our community.”

## Challenges and Adaptations:

- **Matching Student Interests:** Careful placement ensures alignment between student aspirations and shadowing/service-learning experiences.
- **Mentorship Opportunities:** The program is actively seeking to increase the number of mentor teachers within the district to provide additional support for apprentices.
- **Financial Aid Awareness:** TAP instructors work with students to identify financial aid and scholarship opportunities to support their educational pursuits.

## Conclusion

Bradley County Schools’ TAP program serves as a model for fostering future educators through a pre-apprenticeship experience. By providing a comprehensive curriculum, practical experiences, and a clear pathway to the GYO registered teacher apprenticeship program, the initiative addresses the teacher shortage while investing in the future of the district. The program’s commitment to continuous improvement ensures its effectiveness in nurturing a local pipeline of passionate and qualified educators.

For more information, please reach out to the CTE Director, Arlette Robinson, at [arobinson@bradleyschools.org](mailto:arobinson@bradleyschools.org).

## Pilot Program Type: TCDEWBL

# Case study: Bristol City Schools' TAP Program— Nurturing Future Educators Through Grow Your Own

Bristol City Schools, nestled in northeast Tennessee, educates approximately 4,029 students who benefit from a close-knit learning environment. Bristol Tennessee High School, offers a comprehensive and rigorous academic program. Their robust CTE program equips students with industry-relevant skills and certifications, preparing them for high-demand careers.

Bristol City School's Teaching as a Profession Program at Tennessee High School began in 2020. The program currently serves 17 students in TAP 1 and 14 students in TAP 2. This is the first year offering TAP 3 and TAP Practicum, or Work Based Learning (WBL). Tennessee High School runs on a block schedule, so each course is one semester long and students progress through the courses sequentially.

The goal of Bristol City School's TAP program is to encourage students to become aware and explore a career in teaching while in elementary and middle school grades, then gain skills and knowledge throughout the high school years to solidify their choice to become a teacher and enter post-secondary with a plan for success.

Bristol City Schools' innovative TAP program offers a unique pathway for high school students interested in becoming teachers. This case study explores the program's structure and its connection to the district's Grow Your Own (GYO) Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP), highlighting the perspectives of TAP students, the TAP teacher, Mr. Brad Morelock, the CTE Director, Deidre Pendley, and HR Director, Jennifer Padilla.

## Growing Passion: The TAP Curriculum

The TAP program ignites a passion for teaching by providing a multi-faceted curriculum:

- **Intro to TAP:** Interactive lessons introduce students to the teaching profession, exploring topics like classroom management and lesson planning. Mr. Morelock, the TAP teacher, uses personal stories to connect with students and make learning relatable. They also explore the history of education and how education has evolved into what we experience today.
- **TAP 1 & 2:** Students delve deeper, creating and presenting content lessons in front of their peers. They are able to record student lessons on a Swivl camera, then do a self-reflection with a rubric. This hands-on experience allows them to discover their teaching style and preferred grade level.
- **TAP 3:** This advanced course focuses on classroom management strategies, a crucial skill for new teachers. Students develop their own classroom rules and consequences, preparing them for real-world challenges. Each student teaches multiple content lessons while being filmed and graded on the TEAM rubric.

## Bridging Theory and Practice: Work-Based Learning

The TAP program incorporates Work-Based Learning experiences to solidify classroom learning:

- **Second Grade Placement:** Students like Makayla gain valuable insights into elementary education by working with students at Haynesfield Elementary.



- **Special Education Exposure:** Students like Eli shadow teachers in SPED classrooms, discovering a passion for working with students with special needs.
- **Service-Learning Projects:** These projects provide opportunities for peer tutoring and interaction with students from diverse backgrounds, fostering empathy and leadership skills.

## A Pathway to Licensure: The GYO Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program

The TAP program seamlessly transitions students into the GYO RTAP program:

- **Preparation for Apprenticeship:** The TAP curriculum equips students with the knowledge, skills, and practical experience required for the GYO RTAP program.
- **Early Discovery:** The program allows students to explore teaching before committing to a formal apprenticeship, reducing potential roadblocks.
- **Local Pipeline Development:** By cultivating future educators from within Bristol City Schools, the program addresses the teacher shortage with qualified local talent.
- **Community College Partnerships:** Students are able to take online dual enrollment through Northeast State Community College that will apply to the apprenticeship pre-requisite of obtaining an Associates Degree prior to enrolling with Austin Peay’s online Registered Apprenticeship program.

## Perspectives from the Field:

- **Mr. Morelock, TAP Teacher:** “The TAP program is more than a class; it’s about igniting a passion for teaching. My goal is to help students discover their strengths and ensure they enter the profession for the right reasons.”
- **Students:** Students across various grade level placements (elementary, SPED, middle school, high school) highlight the program’s effectiveness in helping them discover their ideal teaching path.
- **CTE and HR Director (combined perspective):** “The TAP program is a strategic investment in our future. By partnering with the GYO RTAP program, we’re building a pipeline of passionate and prepared educators who are invested in the success of our students and community.”

## Conclusion

Bristol City Schools’ TAP program serves as a model for cultivating future educators through a comprehensive curriculum, practical experiences, and a clear pathway to the GYO RTAP program. The program not only benefits students by providing early exploration and career preparation, but also benefits the district by addressing the teacher shortage with a pipeline of local talent. The program’s commitment to continuous improvement ensures its effectiveness in nurturing a future generation of passionate and qualified educators for Bristol City Schools.

For more information, please reach out to Brad Morelock, TAP Teacher, at [morelockb@btcs.org](mailto:morelockb@btcs.org); Deidre Pendley, CTE Director, at [pendleyd@btcs.org](mailto:pendleyd@btcs.org); or Jennifer Padilla, Chief Human Resources Officer, at [padillaj@btcs.org](mailto:padillaj@btcs.org).

## Case Study: Clarksville–Montgomery County School System’s TAP Program—Cultivating Future Educators

Clarksville-Montgomery County Schools (CMCSS) in Montgomery County, Tennessee, serves a diverse demographic in both urban and suburban settings. Montgomery County has an approximate population of 235,000 residents and covers an area of 543 square miles. The school district is one of the largest employers in the region, with approximately 5,500 staff members serving over 38,000 students. CMCSS has a continuous demand for educators, administrators, and support staff. The economy of Montgomery County is diverse, with a significant presence in military, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors, providing a rich context for the educational system.

The Clarksville-Montgomery County School System’s (CMCSS) Teaching As a Profession (TAP) program at West Creek High School began in 2019. The program offers a unique pathway for high school students interested in becoming educators. The goal of the TAP program in CMCSS is to help students better understand how their individual aptitudes align to their interests so that they can make informed decisions about their plans. CMCSS believes that if they give students the opportunity to dabble in the wide variety of careers that exist in the field of education, connect them with mentors in the careers that they find most interesting, and show them the pathways that exist to get into the field post-high school, then they increase the chance that they will be successful educators in the future.

This case study explores the program’s structure and its connection to the district’s teacher residency program (Grow Your Own Registered Teacher Apprenticeship, GYO R-TAP), highlighting the perspectives of TAP students, teacher, James Sensabaugh, Director of Federal Projects, Lisa Baker, and the Director of CTE, Dr. Dayna Paine.

### Building a Foundation: The TAP Curriculum

The TAP curriculum is designed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the teaching profession. TAP students progress through the sequence of classes. Here’s how it unfolds:

- **TAP 1 & 2:** These foundational courses built from state curriculum introduce students to teaching standards, lesson planning, and classroom management. Students gain practical experience through observations at elementary schools.
- **TAP 3:** Dual enrollment through Nashville State Community College allows students to take college-level courses while engaging in subject-specific observations and working in middle and elementary schools. Students complete Introduction to Education and Introduction to Special Education. Lisa Baker noted, “Our district has a great connection with Nashville State. The classes articulate from Nashville State to APSU.”
- **TAP 4:** Students participate in a year-long practicum, working with elementary students. They analyze data, create mini-lessons, and gain valuable hands-on experience. In TAP 4, students complete coursework from state curriculum and dual enrollment through Nashville State, including Educational Psychology.

### Beyond the Classroom: Practical Exposure

The TAP program goes beyond theory, providing students with real-world experiences:

- **School Visits:** Students observe classrooms across different grade levels, gaining insights into

various teaching styles and student demographics. TAP student Heavenly shared, “Being in TAP has given me more information on what being a teacher is like. Going to the elementary school for WBL has reinforced that I want to work with kids.”

- **Guest Speakers:** Professionals from Human Resources, curriculum development, and job fairs offer students a wider perspective on the education field.
- **College Exploration:** TAP students visit Austin Peay State University (APSU) to experience college-level education classes and interact with professors.
- **Work-Based Learning (WBL):** Seniors participate in WBL placements, assisting teachers in elementary schools and gaining practical teaching experience. TAP student Savannah shared, “I really like how they involve us going to the elementary school and getting to work with kids, one-on-one. This experience has helped me know for sure I want to work with kids.”

## A Pathway to Licensure: The Teacher Residency Program (GYO R-TAP)

The TAP program seamlessly connects to CMCSS’s teacher residency program, a three-year pathway to teacher licensure. Here’s how it works:

- **TAP students are well-prepared for residency program interviews** due to their experience and guidance from TAP teachers. Lisa Baker stated, “Our TAP students are more prepared for the teacher residency interview and they share their experiences from WBL during the interview process. They also complete the paraprofessional exam when they are seniors so they are ready to be hired when they complete the program.”
- **The district provides ongoing support to residents,** including professional development sessions, Praxis exam prep, and coaching on navigating academic challenges.
- **The program prioritizes staff development,** with a focus on supporting teacher assistants (classified staff) who wish to become licensed teachers.

## Challenges and Adaptations

The TAP program acknowledges the challenges of attracting and retaining future educators:

- **Public perception of the teaching profession** can discourage students from pursuing careers in education.
- **Work-life balance** during the residency program can be demanding, leading some students to opt for traditional routes.
- **Matching students with appropriate placements** is crucial for their success in the program.

## Continuous Improvement

CMCSS actively seeks feedback and implements improvements in the TAP program:

- **Revamping WBL experiences** to expose students to different grade levels throughout their TAP journey.
- **Enhancing support for TAP students** by providing transportation assistance. Some TAP students drive to WBL placements at local elementary schools. The district discovered a common barrier for some students was lack of transportation. To overcome this, they added a van for TAP students to get to their WBL placement. The teacher drives the students there and stays on site while students complete their WBL hours.
- **Enhancing support for residents** by providing coaching, academic, and social-emotional support. Lisa Baker shared, “Our Educator Pipeline Facilitators provide coaching and

immediate wrap around support for residents. We also use professional development days for Praxis support.”

- **Building stronger partnerships** with colleges like APSU to ensure a smooth transition for TAP graduates.

## Conclusion

The Clarksville-Montgomery County School System’s TAP program serves as a successful model for cultivating future educators. By providing a comprehensive curriculum, practical experience, and a clear pathway to licensure, the program addresses the teacher shortage while ensuring a pipeline of well-prepared educators for the district. The program’s commitment to continuous improvement ensures its effectiveness in attracting and retaining future generations of passionate teachers.

For more information, please reach out to Program Lead, James Sensabaugh, at [james.sensabaugh@cmcss.net](mailto:james.sensabaugh@cmcss.net) or Program Administrator, Mandy Frost, at [mandy.frost@cmcss.net](mailto:mandy.frost@cmcss.net).

## Pilot Program Type: TCDEWBL

# Case Study: Cultivating Future Educators— Kingsport City Schools' Work-Based Learning Solution

**Challenge:** Kingsport City Schools faced a critical shortage of qualified Instructional Assistants (IAs) in Special Education (SPED) classrooms. Filling these positions was particularly challenging due to the specialized nature of the role and job market.

**Solution:** The district implemented a creative Work-Based Learning (WBL) program in collaboration with the Department of Labor (DOL). This program leveraged the talent and aspirations of high school students interested in becoming teachers.

## The Eastman Model

Kingsport City Schools partnered with Eastman Chemical Company, a local employer with a successful WBL program. This model served as a blueprint:

- High school students worked in pairs, splitting the workday into two blocks (7:30 AM - 10:30 AM & 11 AM - 3:30 PM).
- Combined hours between two students fulfilled the requirements of a full-time IA position.

## Building a Pipeline

The program targeted high school seniors who:

- Demonstrated strong academic performance.
- Possessed college credit in education-related courses through ETSU.
- Expressed a desire to pursue careers in education.
- Already had experience interning with general education students.

## Compliance Considerations

**Age Restrictions:** High school students were under the minimum age requirement (18) for traditional IAs. The district collaborated with the DOL to ensure compliance with child labor laws.

- Students were not assigned one-on-one duties with high-needs students.
- Tasks were modified to exclude activities prohibited under child labor laws, such as diaper changing.

## Job Description Adjustments

- The original "SPED IA" job description was revised to comply with regulations for employing minors.
- The revised title, "SPED Intern," placed the students under the direct supervision of a qualified teacher and removed the requirement for a high school diploma.

## Program Integration

To ensure a smooth transition, all student employees participated in a comprehensive onboarding process coordinated by the district's HR department. This included:

- Orientation sessions covering HR policies, benefits, and workplace expectations.
- Completion of mandatory online training modules, including OSHA 10 certification for workplace safety awareness.
- A dedicated meeting with the Special Education Assistant Director to discuss student roles, classroom protocols, and dress code guidelines.

## Program Outcomes

- The pilot program, spearheaded by Claire Arbaugh, WBL Coordinator for Kingsport City Schools, proved highly successful.
- Three students exceeded expectations due to their educational background and prior experience.
- The first two graduates returned as IAs the following year, demonstrating the program's effectiveness in cultivating future educators.

## Benefits

- **Cost-Effectiveness:** Hiring students offered a cost-effective solution to the IA shortage. Funding for students placed in these positions came from the district's typical staffing budget, allocated through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). This aligns with the normal process for hiring other staff members on the Human Resources (HR) side.
- **Quality Support:** Students' knowledge and enthusiasm made them valuable assets to SPED classrooms.
- **Teacher Pipeline:** The program nurtured future educators by providing them with hands-on experience in a supportive environment.

## Sustainability

- The WBL program has expanded to include after-school tutoring roles filled by high school seniors.
- This innovative approach continues to address the ongoing need for qualified classroom support while fostering future generations of passionate educators within Kingsport City Schools.

## Lessons Learned

- Collaboration with external partners like universities and businesses can lead to creative solutions for staffing challenges.
- Modifying job descriptions and responsibilities can increase opportunities for students while ensuring compliance with regulations.
- Providing high school students with practical experience can ignite their passion for education and create a strong pipeline for future teachers.

## Pilot Program Type: TCDEWBL

# Case Study: Cultivating Future Educators in Kingsport City Schools— A Work-Based Learning Pipeline

Kingsport City Schools, located in northeast Tennessee, serves students in both Sullivan and Hawkins counties. They serve over 7,784 students, with their one high school, Dobyms-Bennett, serving approximately 2,514 students. The district boasts a high graduation rate, indicating its success in preparing students for college and careers.

Kingsport City Schools' innovative work-based learning (WBL) program, coupled with its Grow Your Own (GYO) Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP), offers a unique pathway for high school students to explore and prepare for careers in education. This case study examines the program's structure, its connection to the GYO RTAP, and the perspectives of students, the WBL coordinator, and the CTE and HR Director.

## Learning by Doing: The WBL Program

WBL is a strong part of the culture in Kingsport City Schools. WBL opportunities are offered for students in many areas of employment, including teaching, food service, custodial, manufacturing, business and marketing, law, and IT. The WBL program provides students with valuable hands-on experiences in real classrooms:

- **Classroom Placements:** Students like Laci, Sarah, Sophie, and Savannah gain practical experience working with students in elementary, SPED, and pre-K classrooms. Students can participate in WBL placements for up to three blocks per day.
- **Diverse Assignments:** Responsibilities range from assisting teachers and tutors to observing lessons, building relationships with students, and helping with administrative tasks.
- **Dual Enrollment Opportunities:** Students like Savannah and Laci can earn college credit while gaining classroom experience through dual-enrollment courses in Foundations of Teaching, Exceptional Learners and Educational Psychology.

## Financial Benefits and Flexibility

- **Paid Positions:** Several WBL placements offer paid opportunities, allowing students like Laci and Sophie to gain work experience while earning income. Sophie shared, "I saw the WBL opportunity and found out I got paid to learn, meet new people, see different things and what different people do. I love it here. It has made me consider different options in teaching and in the school system."
- **Scheduling Considerations:** The program accommodates student schedules, allowing students to work during the day and attend community college classes in the evenings. High school students still take classes on campus toward a traditional diploma during the school day.

## From Exploration to Commitment: The GYO RTAP Connection

The WBL program seamlessly connects to the GYO RTAP, offering a clear path to teacher licensure:

- **Early Exposure:** Early classroom exposure allows students like Sarah to discover a passion for SPED education. As Sarah shared, "I worked with a kindergarten classroom and two nonverbal students. That placement opened my eyes to becoming a special education teacher. I now want to go to college for a degree in special education."

- **Informed Decisions:** The program helps students make informed decisions about their career paths before committing to a registered apprenticeship.
- **Local Talent Pipeline:** By fostering local educators like Laci and Savannah, who desire to stay in Kingsport City Schools, the program addresses the teacher shortage with a qualified local workforce. Savannah shared, “I want to stay close to home. The elementary school where I complete WBL is near and dear to my heart. It is my dream to teach 3rd grade there.”

## Perspectives from the Field

- **Students:** Students across various placements highlight the program’s effectiveness in providing practical experience, building relationships with other students, and solidifying career goals.
- **WBL Coordinator (Claire Arbaugh):** Explains the program’s collaboration with ETSU to offer dual-enrollment courses.
- **Chief Academic Officer, Associate CTE Director and HR Director (Brian Cinnamon, Nathan Bailey and Jennifer Guthrie):** Emphasize the program’s role in growing future educators and the connection to the GYO RTAP, noting their desire to retain local talent in Kingsport City Schools.

## Beyond the Classroom: Dobyons-Bennett High School’s BUDS Program

Dobyons-Bennett High School’s Buddies Understanding Different Students (BUDS) program, led by the school’s SPED teachers and program, complements the WBL program by offering a unique peer tutoring experience:

- **Reverse Inclusion:** BUDS pairs typically-developing students with students in special education, fostering understanding and building relationships.
- **Career Exploration:** The program has inspired students to pursue careers in education, with many graduates entering the field.
- **Mentorship and Support:** BUDS offers opportunities for leadership and personal growth, as evidenced by the program’s alumni returning to mentor current participants.

## Conclusion

Kingsport City Schools’ work-based learning program and its connection to the GYO RTAP program provide a comprehensive approach to cultivating future educators. Through practical experiences, paid opportunities, dual-enrollment options, and clear pathways to licensure, the program not only benefits students by offering exploration and career preparation, but also benefits the district by addressing the teacher shortage with a pipeline of passionate and local talent. The program’s commitment to student success and its innovative features like the BUDS program ensure its effectiveness in nurturing a future generation of educators for Kingsport City Schools.

For more information, please reach out to CTE Director, Bo Shadden, at [bshadden@k12k.com](mailto:bshadden@k12k.com) or Associate CTE Director, Nathan Bailey, at [dbailey@k12k.com](mailto:dbailey@k12k.com).



## Pilot Program Type: TCWBL

# CASE STUDY: Cultivating Homegrown Educators— Lawrence County Schools' TAP Program and the GYO RTAP Pipeline

Lawrence County Schools in Lawrence County, Tennessee, serves a diverse demographic in rural southern middle Tennessee. With a total population of approximately 46,000 residents, the county covers an area of 618 square miles. The district employs around 700 staff members and serves over 5,500 students. Lawrence County Schools is the primary employer in the region, with a significant need for educators, administrators, and support staff. The economy is largely reliant on agriculture, manufacturing, and healthcare services, providing a unique backdrop for the educational system.

Lawrence County Schools' innovative approach to teacher recruitment and development is centered around their **Teaching as a Profession (TAP)** and its seamless connection to the **Grow Your Own (GYO) Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP)**. This case study examines the program's structure, its impact on students, and the perspectives of TAP teachers, students, and school administrators.

## A Pathway to Teaching

The TAP program offers a unique blend of classroom exploration and practical experience, preparing students for careers in education:

- **Work-Based Learning (WBL):** Students gain valuable experience through placements at elementary schools, like South Lawrence School and Ethridge Elementary School.
- **Teacher Assistant (TA) Opportunities:** Recent graduates like Hope Jones and Gracie Kelly are hired as TAs at Ethridge Elementary School, working while attending Columbia State Community College. Gracie Kelly shared, "I love my job. I get to experience different experiences with different teachers." Hope Jones shared, "I've always wanted to work with younger grades. This job has helped me decide that."
- **Dual Enrollment Goal:** The district is actively working to integrate dual enrollment opportunities, allowing students to earn college credit while in high school.

## Benefits for All

The TAP program provides a win-win situation for students, schools, and the community:

- **Student Benefits:** Students gain valuable hands-on experience, receive substitute training, and can earn a stipend while pursuing their teaching degrees. This experience helps them solidify their career choices while developing essential skills.
- **School Benefits:** Schools benefit from a pool of qualified teacher assistants who are familiar with the district and passionate about education. These TAs provide valuable support to teachers and students. As principal Shannon Snider shared, "I hired a teaching assistant who is in college to be a teacher through the GYO program. This is a win-win. It helps them be better prepared and benefits us because they already have the knowledge and are more motivated. An added benefit is they get experience everyday on the job and know they want to become a teacher before going into the classroom. The GYO experience is one you can't get from just limited field experience."
- **Community Benefits:** The program helps address the teacher shortage by cultivating a pipeline of local talent who are invested in the community's success.

## Voices from the Field

- **Students:** Students like Mia, Eric, and Blakely highlight the program's effectiveness in providing practical experience, solidifying career goals, and offering insights into the realities of teaching. A TAP student named Eric shared, "I work in SPED classes. I enjoy seeing how students grow and I get to work with different assistants and the main teacher. That has been a great learning experience. I want to be a SPED assistant and eventually a SPED teacher."
- **TAP Teachers:** Teachers like Kaylee Blade and Lauren Hallmark play a crucial role in curriculum development, field trip coordination, and student mentorship.
- **Human Resources:** Robin Thompson emphasizes the importance of the program in attracting and retaining qualified educators within the district. According to Robin Thompson, "The district hosts a meeting in April for those interested in the TAP pre-apprenticeship. Students dress up and engage in substitute training. We provide an overview of pathway options, the application process, and students then have the opportunity to apply as an educational assistant. We share that teaching is a great career and we acknowledge and celebrate our students who choose this pathway."
- **Principals:** Principals like Christy Crews at Ethridge Elementary and Shannon Snider at South Lawrence School value the program's contribution to their schools by providing them with motivated and knowledgeable teacher assistants. Christy Crews states, "The GYO opportunity gives more insights for when you become a teacher. I can't think of a better opportunity."

## Program Structure Across Schools

The case study explores the program's implementation across the district's three high schools. All three high schools have students participate in "Major Clarity" to identify career interests, and the TAP program serves as a natural progression for those interested in teaching.

- **Summertown High School:** This school boasts the longest-running TAP program in the district and serves as a model for others. Students complete a portfolio in class and then use the portfolio in their college coursework.
- **Lawrence County High School:** This school offers TAP classes and integrates WBL experiences to expose students to various teaching environments. Students shared, "TAP classes helped me understand the process of becoming a teacher; how teachers prepare for class and lesson plans, and keep up with student files."
- **Loretto High School:** In its first year back with the TAP program, Loretto High School is focusing on observation opportunities and developing a strong foundation in education theory.

## Conclusion

Lawrence County Schools' TAP program exemplifies a successful approach to cultivating future educators. By providing a comprehensive blend of coursework, practical experience, and clear pathways to licensure, the program benefits students, schools, and the community at large. As the district continues to refine and expand the program, it positions itself to address the teacher shortage with a pipeline of talented and passionate local educators.

For more information, please reach out to Hope Thomason, at [hope.thomason@lcss.us](mailto:hope.thomason@lcss.us).

## Pilot Program Type: TC

# Case Study: Lewis County Schools' CTE TAP Program

Lewis County Schools, located in Lewis County, Tennessee, serves a predominantly rural demographic. Lewis County has an approximate population of 12,500 residents and covers an area of 282 square miles. The school district employs around 250 staff members and serves approximately 1,700 students. As the primary employer in the area, Lewis County Schools has a continual need for educators, administrators, and support staff. The economy of Lewis County relies mainly on agriculture, forestry, and small-scale industries, offering a distinct context for the educational system.

Lewis County Schools' innovative TAP program is a prime example of how educators can leverage resources to cultivate future teachers. The goal for the TAP program in Lewis County is to prepare aspiring educators with the necessary knowledge, skills, and experience to excel in the teaching profession. Their common objectives are to:

- Provide candidates with comprehensive training in pedagogy, curriculum development, and instructional strategies to effectively teach diverse student populations.
- Deepen candidates' understanding of the content area(s) they will be teaching, ensuring they have a strong foundation in the academic subjects they will be responsible for teaching.
- Equip candidates with techniques and strategies to create a positive and inclusive learning environment, manage student behavior effectively, and foster a culture of respect and engagement.
- Teach candidates how to design meaningful assessments, analyze student data to inform instructional decisions, and track student progress towards learning goals.
- Promote cultural awareness and prepare candidates to work effectively with students from diverse backgrounds.
- Instill a strong sense of professionalism, ethics, and responsibility in candidates, emphasizing the importance of integrity, confidentiality, and ethical conduct in the teaching profession.

This case study explores the program's first year through the perspectives of TAP students, teachers, Grow Your Own Coordinator, Brandi Feichtinger, and the CTE director, Trina Weeks, highlighting the crucial role of the TAP instructor, Ms. Hamm, and the strategic use of Innovative School Model (ISM) funds.

## The Power of Inspiration: Ms. Hamm's Role

Lauren Hamm, the passionate TAP teacher, whose dedication is evident in her efforts to:

- **Create a nurturing environment:** Students like Sophie and Carson point to Ms. Hamm's ability to foster relationships as a key influence. Ms. Hamm encourages them to see teaching as a team effort and emphasizes the importance of empathy. TAP student Sophie noted, "Ms. Hamm is an inspiring person. She is good at her job and is a good role model to follow to go into teaching."
- **Provide practical learning:** The program offers a blend of classroom instruction and real-world experiences. Students create portfolios, shadow teachers across the district, and participate in service learning. These activities solidify their understanding of the profession.
- **Develop future leaders:** Ms. Hamm actively promotes the program, speaking with schools and counselors. She empowers students to share their experiences with others, potentially igniting a passion for teaching in a new generation.

## Strategic Investment: Using Innovative School Model (ISM) Funds Wisely

The CTE director, Trina Weaks, and Brandi Feichtinger, Grow Your Own Coordinator, recognized the teacher shortage and identified TAP as a strategic solution. Using ISM funds, the program was able to:

- **Equip Ms. Hamm:** The allocated funds provided essential resources for the TAP teacher's center, and TAP textbooks, ensuring a well-equipped learning environment.
- **Ensure Sustainability:** By aligning the program with Perkins and Perkins Reserve funding, the initiative has a clear path forward, fostering long-term growth. CTE Director Trina Weaks noted, "With Innovative School Model funding, we wanted to add the TAP program. We did not have many programs to help with the teacher shortage, so we focused on TAP as an area to grow. By starting TAP with ISM, we will be able to sustain the program with Perkins and Perkins Reserve."

## Building the Pipeline: A Grow Your Own Approach

Lewis County's TAP program directly addresses the teacher shortage by:

- **Sparkling Interest:** The program introduces students to the world of education, piquing their curiosity and challenging their initial impressions. Students like Carson and Sophie acknowledge gaining a deeper understanding of the profession's complexities.
- **Providing a Clear Pathway:** The TAP curriculum equips students with the foundational knowledge and practical skills needed to pursue teaching careers. Students are exposed to childhood development principles and Educational Professional Program (EPP) requirements.
- **Encouraging Local Talent:** The program prioritizes keeping future teachers within the Lewis County district. Students like Sophie express a desire to stay local, potentially filling crucial roles in the coming years.

## Conclusion

The Lewis County Schools' TAP program serves as a model for fostering future educators. In its first year, the TAP program enrolled 41 students and the district expects an increase of students in the 2024-25 school year. By combining a passionate instructor, strategic resource allocation, dedicated support from the district, and a focus on local talent development, the program positions itself to make an impact on the teacher shortage. The program's success hinges on the continued dedication of Ms. Hamm and the district's commitment to supporting this vital initiative.

For more information, please reach out to CTE Director, Trina Weaks, at [tweaks@lewisk12.org](mailto:tweaks@lewisk12.org); Workforce & Career Development Specialist, Brandi Feichtinger, at [bfeichtinger@lewisk12.org](mailto:bfeichtinger@lewisk12.org); or TAP instructor, Lauren Hamm, at [lhamm@lewisk12.org](mailto:lhamm@lewisk12.org).

## Pilot Program Type: TCDE

# Case Study: Cultivating Future Educators— Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ TAP Program and the GYO RTAP Pathway

Memphis Shelby County School (MSCS) District is the largest public school district in Tennessee and one of the 25 largest in the United States. Serving the greater Memphis area, it comprises a diverse community with a rich cultural tapestry. With over 100,000 students, the Memphis Shelby County School District offers a comprehensive and diverse curriculum, including Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), and Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, preparing students for both college and career pathways. The district has a very diverse student population and is home to students from over 100 different countries, speaking more than 140 languages and dialects. Although the district serves a broad economic spectrum, with a blend of urban, suburban, and rural communities, over 75% of the students qualify for free or reduced-price lunch programs. MSCS comprises approximately 200 schools, including traditional, charter, and optional schools, providing students and families with a wide array of educational choices.

Memphis-Shelby County Schools’ innovative Teaching as a Profession (TAP) offers a promising pathway for high school students to explore and prepare for careers in education. This case study examines the TAP program’s structure, its connection to the Grow Your Own (GYO) Registered Teacher Apprenticeship Program (RTAP), and the perspectives of students, TAP teachers, Ms. Washington and Ms. Harden, and the CCTE Advisor, Linda Campbell.

## Learning by Doing: A Hands-On Approach

The TAP program immerses students in real-world classroom experiences:

- **Lesson Plan Development:** Students like Evelyn and Trinity create lesson plans aligned with state standards and differentiating for students with special needs (SWD).
- **Teaching Practice:** Students gain practical experience by leading small group activities, reading to students, and assisting teachers at elementary schools in partnership with Junior Achievement. Ms. Harden shared, “The main thing students love is going to the elementary schools to do small groups, read, grade papers, decorate rooms, and help in the cafeteria. The teachers also love it. Our students lead classes for the elementary teachers.”
- **Industry Exposure:** Field trips and guest speakers, like representatives from the Academy for K-2 STEM, broaden students’ understanding of educational opportunities.

## Building Skills for Success

- **Dual Enrollment:** The program integrates dual-enrollment opportunities in Special Education and Technology, allowing students to earn college credit while gaining valuable knowledge.
- **Certification Preparation:** Students work towards certifications like OSHA, CPR, and Paraeducator exams, enhancing their employability in the education field.
- **Leadership Development:** Activities like presenting lessons to peers and students and volunteering cultivate leadership skills crucial for future educators.

## From Inspiration to Action: Student Voices

The case study explores student motivations for entering the TAP program and the impact it has had on their career aspirations:

- **Evelyn:** Inspired by a supportive elementary teacher, Evelyn desires to become a science teacher. The TAP program has provided her with valuable classroom experience and a summer job tutoring opportunity.
- **Darieesha:** Motivated by a fun and engaging fifth-grade teacher, Darieesha wants to create a similar learning environment for students. The program has boosted her confidence and social skills.
- **Trinity:** Influenced by caring high school teachers and her own passion for math, Trinity aspires to become a math teacher. The program has solidified her career choice by providing practical experience and exposing her to the realities of teaching.

## Teacher Mentorship and Program Development

TAP teachers like Ms. Harden and Ms. Washington play a critical role in shaping student experiences:

- **Curriculum Development:** Teachers design engaging curriculums that encompass lesson planning, classroom management strategies, and discussions about the teaching profession. Ms. Washington stated, “I really enjoy the TAP program. To teach kids to want to go into this profession, it’s the next step. This is rewarding for me.”
- **Field Trip Coordination:** Teachers arrange field trips to elementary schools allowing students to observe classrooms and interact with younger students. Ms. Washington shared, “Their participation in Junior Achievement has built up their leadership skills because they go in and teach lessons. Students are supposed to be volunteers and they love it so much, they become the leaders and the volunteers follow their lead.”
- **Certification Guidance:** Teachers provide guidance on obtaining certifications that enhance career prospects for aspiring educators.

## Aligning with CTE Goals: The CTE Director’s Perspective

The CTE Director highlights the program’s alignment with broader CTE goals and strategies for attracting students:

- **Teacher Shortage Bridge:** The TAP program aims to address the teacher shortage by cultivating a pipeline of qualified local talent. CTE Advisor Linda Campbell shared, “TAP and GYO bridges the gap in the teacher shortage. Students go through TAP courses, become teaching assistants in our district as they go through coursework at the University of Memphis, and then return to our district as teachers.”
- **Dual Enrollment Integration:** The program leverages dual-enrollment opportunities to provide students with college credit and a head start on their education careers. As Linda Campbell shared, “Dual enrollment is a big deal and we offer credentials at every level. We prepare Ready Graduates coming out of the program.”
- **Recruitment Strategies:** The CTE Director emphasizes the need for diversified recruitment strategies, including school presentations, family nights, and collaboration with feeder schools.

## Conclusion

The Memphis-Shelby County Schools' TAP program serves as a model for cultivating future educators. Through hands-on experiences, dual-enrollment opportunities, and dedicated teacher mentorship, the program equips students with the skills and knowledge necessary for successful careers in education. The program's alignment with CTE goals and focus on attracting a diverse pool of future teachers positions it as a valuable tool in addressing the teacher shortage and ensuring a brighter future for MSCS students.

For more information, please reach out to CTE Advisor, Linda Campbell, at [campbelll@scsk12.org](mailto:campbelll@scsk12.org) or Senior Academic Manager, Regina Nichols, at [nicholsre@scsk12.org](mailto:nicholsre@scsk12.org).