



***Program is Nation's First Registered Apprenticeship Program in Special Education***

Thursday, September 29, 2022

Holly Lawson

Deputy Director of Communications

(317) 232-0536

[hlawson2@doe.in.gov](mailto:hlawson2@doe.in.gov)

**INDIANAPOLIS** – The state of Indiana today joined local leaders to celebrate the federal approval of Indiana's first [educator-focused federal registered apprenticeship](#). The registered apprenticeship will help more Hoosier students pursue a pathway to teaching and is the first-of-its-kind program in the nation concentrated on special education.

"As the global economy continues to evolve, it is essential that we begin to re-envision the high school experience for our students by blurring the lines between K-12, higher education, and the workforce so students have opportunities to engage in careers during their 11th and 12th grade years," said Dr. Katie Jenner, Indiana Secretary of Education.

"Through this innovative partnership, Indiana students will participate in high-quality, work-based learning opportunities starting in high school that will help them earn credentials, save money and jumpstart their careers as difference-making educators. I applaud the strategic work of the partners who came together to find a solution which ensures students can explore the educator profession during high school and seamlessly transition into classrooms of their own."

This program, which uses the popular Grow Your Own model, recently received approval from the U.S. Department of Labor (U.S. DOL). Students participating in the program – which is first launching at Noblesville High School and will be available to scale at other Indiana schools – will graduate from college a year early with a bachelor's degree in elementary education with a concentration in special education from Ball State University.

"This tremendous and first-ever education apprenticeship initiative for Indiana will develop an educator pipeline for today and tomorrow," said Indiana Commissioner for Higher Education Chris Lowery. "It's a clear win for future educators to begin their apprenticeship in high school, gain hands-on experience in the classroom and earn a bachelor's degree at the conclusion of the five-year apprenticeship."

To participate, students can enroll in the five-year apprenticeship program beginning their junior year of high school. Participating apprentices will receive instruction from Ball State



## Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

---

University during their time in high school through dual enrollment courses, which are easily transferable and align with the [Next Level Programs of Study](#).

At the same time, the student will work at the Boys and Girls Club of Noblesville, earning tangible, hands-on experience. Students participating in Indiana's first registered educator-focused apprenticeship program will also earn multiple education-related certifications.

Through this new educator-focused registered apprenticeship program, Indiana's high school students will have the opportunity to connect with industry partners and meet workforce demands while growing and sustaining the state's current and future educator pipeline.

"I am grateful our University will provide this unique opportunity for high school students in our state," Ball State President Geoffrey S. Mearns said. "Educating the next generation of teachers is the foundation upon which Ball State University was built, and it is an ongoing priority for our University. This pathway extends our reach while preparing high school students with a tangible, high-quality experience."

Registered apprenticeship programs in Indiana are overseen by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) through the [Office of Work Based Learning and Apprenticeships \(OWBLA\)](#), which has been a key partner in shaping not only Indiana's, but the country's first registered apprenticeship supporting the educator pipeline.

"Increased participation in registered apprenticeship programs is not only important to the future of our students, but also the future of our businesses, communities and the state of Indiana," said David Adams, Commissioner of DWD. "By continuing to work together – between Department of Workforce Development, Commission for Higher Education, Indiana Department of Education and local schools and employers – we can help more students find their calling and prepare them to meet the ever changing needs of Indiana's employers. We are all in this together."

Nationally, [apprenticeships have grown by 64%](#) since 2012, with two million more apprentices participating over that same time.

This first-of-its-kind registered apprenticeship for future educators is powered through a partnership with [Ball State University](#), Noblesville Community Schools, the Boys and Girls Club of Noblesville, the [Pursuit Institute of Hamilton County](#) (formerly known as the Hamilton County Center for Career Achievement) and the Region 5 Workforce Board.

"This program is a true representation of innovation and collaboration across multiple partnerships," said Carrie Lively, executive director of The Pursuit Institute. "The



## Indiana Department of Education

---

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

opportunities afforded to students and families through this registered apprenticeship program are unlike any other across the country. I am proud that The Pursuit Institute was the visionary leader in the development of this transformative program, and we anticipate enrollment in the apprenticeship program to scale rapidly.”

More information about this program is available [here](#).