

## MTDLI T RAP RFP Questions and Answers

Q1. Why are Teacher RAP competencies aligned to the Danielson Framework and not the PEPPS? The RFP states that competency alignment with Danielson is required. Why Danielson, and why is this not reflected as a scored evaluation criterion?

A1. Teacher Registered Apprenticeship competencies are aligned to the Danielson Framework because it is a research-based, practice-anchored, and nationally recognized framework that translates directly into observable and assessable on-the-job teaching practice.

Montana superintendents have consistently indicated that the Danielson Framework is a preferred teacher evaluation framework across Montana school systems. Aligning Teacher RAP competencies to Danielson, therefore:

- Aligns apprenticeship expectations with existing district evaluation systems
- Establishes a shared instructional language among administrators, mentor teachers, and apprentices
- Ensures apprentices are developing the same instructional competencies that districts already define as effective teaching practice

With respect to evaluation, alignment to the Danielson Framework is a baseline program requirement, not a competitive scoring differentiator. Proposals that do not meet this requirement would be deemed non-responsive. As such, it is not separately scored within the evaluation rubric.

While Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) play a critical role in preparing apprentices through coursework, the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship model intentionally differentiates instructional preparation from work-based competency assessment. Consistent with registered apprenticeship design, competency mastery is assessed by qualified workplace mentors rather than academic faculty.

Q2. What is the Department's position regarding currently emergency-authorized teachers? Are they eligible to participate?

A2. Yes. Up to 20 percent of participants in this grant program may be emergency-authorized teachers (post-baccalaureate). This limitation is intentional to ensure the program supports a broad Grow Your Own pipeline and does not function solely as a mechanism to license emergency-certified teachers.

Q3. May participants work as teachers under an emergency authorization while enrolled in the apprenticeship?

A3. Yes. Up to 20 percent of participants may be employed under an emergency authorization while participating in the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program. However, apprentices may not serve as the Teacher of Record. Consistent with the registered apprenticeship model, participants are learning to do the work of teaching through structured, supervised on-the-job training—not independently performing the full responsibilities of the role. Emergency-authorized teachers who remain the Teacher of Record should refer to MTOPI for information on additional licensure pathways outside of the apprenticeship model.

Q4. Not all emergency-authorized teachers hold a bachelor's degree. How will this be addressed?

A4. Applicants must adhere to all licensure requirements established by the Montana Office of Public Instruction (MTOPI). For additional information on emergency-authorized teachers who do not hold a bachelor's degree, applicants should refer directly to MTOPI guidance. Emergency-authorized teachers are eligible to participate in the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program (TRAP) to pursue full licensure; however, they may not serve as the teacher of record while participating in the program.

Q5. The RFP states that mentor teachers must receive a \$6,000 stipend. Is this expected to be paid with grant funds or district funds?

A5. The mentor teacher stipend is the responsibility of the district. The \$6,000 represents compensation over the full duration of the apprenticeship, not an annual amount. For example, in a two-year apprenticeship, the district would provide \$3,000 per year to the mentor for compensation.

Q6. Could an Educator Preparation Program (EPP) include mentor stipends in its proposal budget to reimburse districts?

A6. Districts are responsible for mentor compensation.

Q7. Can a district be included in multiple proposals submitted by different EPPs?

A7. Yes. Districts may be included in multiple proposals submitted by various EPPs.

Q8. What costs are Local Education Agencies (LEAs) expected to cover during the grant period?

A8. The primary district costs are:

- Wages for the apprentice, and
- Mentor teacher stipends

Q9. The Proposal Summary Table shows 15 apprentices for \$100,000 (\$6,666 per participant). Are grant funds used for tuition and education-related costs?

A9. Yes. The figures shown are illustrative placeholders. EPPs must submit proposals in \$100,000 increments, with all EPP-incurred costs (including tuition and education-related expenses) included within that amount. EPPs may submit multiple proposals.

Q10. Is the \$100,000 award amount for one year or the full project period?

A10. The \$100,000 represents funding for the entire life of the proposal, not per year. Applicants may request multiple \$100,000 increments through separate proposals.

Q11. Can a student participate in both the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program and the Montana Teacher Residency Program?

A11. No. The Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program is intended to serve as an additional, distinct pathway into the educator profession and may not be combined with participation in the Montana Teacher Residency Program. Concurrent participation in both programs is not permitted.

Q12. Is funding available for mentor training?

A12. Yes. Funding for mentor professional development is an allowable and eligible expense under this RFP. Applicants may request funds to support mentor training activities that are directly aligned with the implementation and quality of the apprenticeship program.

Q13. What is the difference between a “program” and a “proposal”?

A13. Applicants may submit a single application that includes multiple proposals. Each proposal represents a distinct, clearly defined program to be implemented with grant funds. While the application reflects the applicant’s overall submission, each proposal is evaluated independently based on its specific program design, cost structure, and alignment with RFP requirements.

Q14. Can mentors receive additional compensation beyond the \$6,000 stipend through grant funds?

A14. Yes. Any additional compensation provided to mentor teachers beyond the required \$6,000 stipend is at the discretion of the local education agency, subject to local policy and funding decisions.

Q15. In rural areas, many individuals with extensive substitute or aide experience lack college coursework. Are they eligible?

A15. Yes. The Department strongly encourages EPPs to work with districts to ensure that individuals in rural and frontier communities have access to this opportunity, regardless of prior college experience.

Q16. How does the Department envision a three-year program if apprentices must complete by June 2028?

A16. The Department recognizes that candidates may enter the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program with varying levels of prior coursework and classroom experience. It is the responsibility of the Educator Preparation Program (EPP) and the district partner to collaboratively design innovative pathways that enable candidates to complete program requirements by June 2028. These pathways may include, but are not limited to, credit for prior classroom or instructional experience, accelerated or summer coursework, flexible scheduling, and other locally designed strategies that support timely completion while maintaining program quality and alignment to licensure and apprenticeship requirements.

Q17. Is a two-year college eligible to participate if it has an articulation agreement with an EPP?

A17. Yes. A proposal structured in this way is eligible, provided the application clearly documents a formal partnership that includes:

- A Montana LEA (or eligible employer sponsor), and
- An Educator Preparation Program (EPP)

In this model, a two-year institution may provide initial coursework, with apprentices transferring to the EPP to complete upper-division coursework and licensure requirements.

Q18. Why are out-of-state EPPs eligible to apply?

A18. Given limited funding, the Department seeks high-quality, cost-effective proposals. Allowing out-of-state EPPs expands the pool of applicants and supports Montana's diverse rural and frontier educator workforce needs.

Q19. Does the cost per participant include the \$6,000 mentor stipend?

A19. No. The mentor stipend is a district responsibility and is not required to be included in the per-participant cost.

Q20. Where can EPPs find the list of interested districts?

A20. Information is available via [growingteachers.mt.gov](http://growingteachers.mt.gov).

Q21. If a paraprofessional is already employed, can they remain in their role while participating?

A21. Yes. Paraprofessionals may continue in their existing roles and are considered ideal candidates for this program.

Q22. May districts use external agencies to provide mentors?

A22. Yes. Districts may use external agencies to provide mentors. Applicants must clearly describe in their application how mentors provided through external agencies will deliver intensive, job-embedded support so that the apprentice experience is comparable to that of apprentices whose mentors are located in the same building. This description should address the frequency, structure, and methods of support (e.g., coaching cycles, observation and feedback, co-planning, and communication protocols) to ensure alignment with the apprenticeship model.

Q23. Where can presentation slides and written responses be accessed?

A23. Slides and all official Q&A responses are posted on the Department of Administration Procurement Bureau website associated with this RFP.

Q24. Who should applicants contact with additional questions?

A24. Please direct questions to:

- For general Teacher Registered Apprenticeship questions not specific to this RFP opportunity, contact Logan Klein at [loganklein@mt.gov](mailto:loganklein@mt.gov)
- For questions specifically about the RFP, direct your questions to Rhonda Peters at [rhonda.peters@mt.gov](mailto:rhonda.peters@mt.gov)

Q25. Do districts need to partner with multiple Educator Preparation Programs (EPPs) to ensure emergency-authorized teachers can participate?

A25. No. Districts are not required to partner with multiple EPPs; however, districts may express interest in as many EPPs as they choose. Doing so allows districts to compare program designs and cost structures and select partnerships that best meet their local needs. Districts are encouraged to complete the interest survey available at [growingteachers.mt.gov](http://growingteachers.mt.gov) to communicate their needs broadly to EPPs.

Q26. Will EPPs contact districts based on survey responses, or should districts initiate contact with EPPs directly?

A26. EPPs will use survey information to conduct outreach to interested districts. Districts are also welcome to contact EPPs directly. Completion of the survey is intended to streamline communication, but does not limit or replace direct engagement.

Q27. Are individuals who are currently enrolled at an eligible EPP eligible to transition to becoming a teacher apprentice under this grant?

A27. Yes. Individuals who are currently enrolled in an eligible Educator Preparation Program (EPP) may transition into the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program, provided all apprenticeship requirements are met. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Employment in a student-facing support role (e.g., paraprofessional, instructional aide);
- Participation in a progressive wage schedule aligned to the apprenticeship framework;
- Assignment of a qualified mentor teacher who provides ongoing coaching and supervision; and
- Completion of required on-the-job learning and related instruction as outlined in the registered apprenticeship standards.

Participation must align with all applicable licensure and program requirements.

Q28. Describe the roles and responsibilities of mentor teachers (journeyworkers) in the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program, including how mentor engagement and support of apprentices will be documented (e.g., coaching activities, logs, observations, and feedback).

A28. Each teacher apprentice is paired with a trained mentor teacher (journeyworker) for a minimum of one year as part of a structured, competency-based on-the-job learning (OJL) model. Mentor teachers serve as the primary instructional coach and professional guide, ensuring apprentices receive job-embedded, continuous support that aligns with evidence-based instructional practices and licensure requirements.

Mentor teachers are responsible for supporting apprentices as they gradually assume increased instructional responsibility and for monitoring progress toward the required apprenticeship competencies. To demonstrate effective mentorship and apprentice growth, mentors are required to maintain documentation that includes regular coaching and observation logs, written feedback, and records showing how the apprentice is working toward meeting the established apprenticeship competencies. This documentation is used to support formative feedback, monitor progress, and ensure program quality and accountability in collaboration with the EPP and participating LEA.

Q29. The RFP requires a minimum of one year of on-the-job learning. Say someone with an emergency license is going to use this teacher apprentice program and they will take 2 years to complete - could they in the first year continue to be a TOR while they are completing their initial set of courses at an EPP and in year two, transition into the "on the job" component and give up the TOR role for just that year?

A29. No. Teacher apprentices may not serve as the Teacher of Record at any point during their participation in the apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship is structured as a supervised, mentored, earn-and-learn model designed to support skill acquisition under the guidance of a qualified mentor teacher. Serving as Teacher of Record is inconsistent with the apprenticeship framework, which is intended for individuals who are learning to perform the full scope of instructional responsibilities rather than independently holding primary accountability for the classroom.

Q30. What are the required district financial and employment responsibilities for participation in the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship grant?

A30: District Cost Share and Employment Responsibilities

Participating districts are required to contribute \$6,000 per mentor teacher as part of the local cost share. Districts must serve as the employer of record for each apprentice and are responsible for hiring, onboarding, and supervising the apprentice throughout the duration of the registered apprenticeship. In addition, districts must assign a qualified mentor teacher to each apprentice. For the purposes of this grant opportunity, mentor teachers must be compensated a total of \$6,000 over the duration of the apprenticeship to recognize the time, coaching, and instructional support provided.

Q31: Are apprentices required to remain employed in the sponsoring district after completing the Teacher Registered Apprenticeship and earning licensure?

A31: The Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program is designed to recruit, prepare, and retain educators from local talent pools. Evidence from grow-your-own and

apprenticeship models indicates that candidates who complete preparation within their home district are significantly more likely to remain employed in that district.

However, there is no contractual requirement or employment guarantee that obligates an apprentice to remain with the sponsoring district after earning licensure. Once licensed, individuals may pursue employment opportunities consistent with their professional goals, including positions in other districts.

Q32: What is the required completion timeline for apprentices in this program?

A32: Apprentices are expected to complete all program requirements within a two-year period. To meet grant expectations, each apprentice must be eligible to serve as a teacher of record in Montana no later than June 30, 2028.

Q33: If the partner EPP does not offer a fully online program, will districts be required to release paraprofessionals during the school day to attend coursework?

A33: The Grantor does not mandate a specific method of course delivery. Educator Preparation Programs and districts have flexibility to design an instructional model that best supports apprentice success, including in-person, online, hybrid, evening, weekend, or other innovative formats, provided all licensure and program requirements are met.

However, the clear intent of this opportunity is to expand access, particularly in rural and frontier communities. Offerors must demonstrate how their proposed delivery model will increase geographic accessibility, minimize barriers for working candidates, and extend high-quality preparation pathways to communities that have historically lacked local access to educator preparation programs.

Q34: May one teacher serve as the mentor for two apprentices? What is the required stipend?

A34: Yes. One teacher may serve as the mentor for up to two apprentices. The total mentor stipend is \$6,000, regardless of whether the mentor supports one or two apprentices.