



Case Study: The Brazosport ISD Registered Apprenticeship Program

Daniela Bailey, featured above, joined the BISD Registered Apprenticeship program in January 2023 as a Resident Apprentice. Prior to becoming an apprentice, Daniela worked as an administrative assistant at Brazosport High School. She completed the program in December 2023 and is now a first-grade teacher at a BISD elementary school.

Photo credit Joseph Bradford



EDUCATE TEXAS
at COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION of TEXAS

June 2024

INTRODUCTION

Brazosport, TX is a coastal community located south of Houston, with a school district of about 11,000 students. Brazosport ISD (BISD) continuously worked to recruit and retain highly-qualified teachers, a challenge faced by many districts, especially during the pandemic. In 2020-21, BISD experienced a 13.2% turnover rate, and in 2021-22, that rate rose to 15.4%.

As an employer, BISD is dedicated to recruiting, developing, and retaining a highly-effective staff, with a vision to set the standard in educational excellence. The district's Board of Trustees consistently supports and advocates for innovative strategies that meet the evolving needs of the district, fostering an environment where forward-thinking initiatives can prosper.

In 2021, to help address talent challenges, BISD implemented innovative HR strategies, including building a tuition benefit program for incumbent employees, and paid clinical teaching assignments. These initiatives reflect the Board of Trustees' commitment to innovation, and their proactive approach to overcoming recruitment and retention challenges. Although both programs made significant strides, they could not achieve the scale and impact of a registered apprenticeship. Building on this momentum, BISD launched the K-12 Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Program, enrichED Pathways, in Fall 2022, following initial approval by the US Department of Labor, further enhancing the district's commitment to developing highly-effective staff.

enrichED Pathways promotes local decision-making and control and increases program access and equity in pivotal ways, expanding the candidate pipeline and maximizing positive outcomes:

Recruiting "In the Gap": Many districts try to improve recruiting and hiring practices by expanding the depth and scope of an existing teacher preparation program to attract applicants already in the pipeline, or by working to increase the marginal completion rate of teacher candidates in their final year of training. BISD works to attract new talent to the profession. Program administrators look for qualified workers in previously unexplored places - on the job, in the community, or in training and degree programs unrelated to education. Often, these individuals were interested in teaching but never had the resources to pursue that career. By focusing on previously untapped groups, BISD increases the number of people who see teaching as a viable career option.

Makes Pathways to Teacher Certification Visible: BISD's model supports teacher candidates from every level of academic and professional background to see a path forward into the teaching profession. Anyone from a recent high school graduate to an adult career changer has the opportunity to engage and progress through enrichED Pathways.

Career and Economic Mobility: Apprentices have opportunities to advance to higher-level positions with increased compensation throughout the program. Rather than working through years of preparation without pay, BISD apprentices are employed and paid throughout their journey, with wages increasing as skills and responsibilities grow, along with benefits and retirement.

Reduces Barriers: Barriers such as high tuition costs, loss of wages while completing clinical teaching, and limited access to financial and academic resources can inhibit individuals from pursuing a teaching career. enrichED Pathways removes those barriers. Apprentices are paid to work in the classroom while preparing to become certified teachers. Beyond offering eligibility to more people, the program also provides resources (financial, academic, and wraparound services) to support apprentices throughout their journey.

Sustainability: The program supports the development of sustainable talent pipelines with sustainable funding. Providing extensive training and support during the apprenticeship and extending that support to first-year teachers increases the likelihood that employees will remain in the district. Sustainable funding is essential for the school district to maintain apprentices throughout each year of the program. BISD achieves this goal by braiding federal, state, and local resources and implementing reallocation, reduction, and reinvestment strategies. Working at scale, BISD also negotiates training fees and maximizes the college credit apprentices gain through on-the-job learning, saving resources typically spent on subsidizing tuition and fees.

INNOVATION AT WORK

All apprenticeships center employer needs. In the education field, many teacher apprenticeship programs are led and administered by education providers or state agencies. Colleges and universities and agencies then partner with school districts, the employer, to develop effective opportunities for apprentices to gain work-based and academic experiences and fulfill the requirements of their degrees and certification.

To our knowledge, BISD was the first district-led teacher apprenticeship program in the nation. With Kristi Kirschner, former BISD Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) and now President of Gateway Education Partners, the program sponsorship is transitioning to the new non-profit organization. Gateway Education Partners will continue to champion the enriched Pathways program. The organization aims to provide technical assistance to school districts in Texas and across the nation, supporting the sustainable launch of employer-driven teacher apprenticeship programs.

Through the enrichED Pathways program, the district sets priorities, selects education and training providers, and coordinates the apprentices' progress. The benefits of this model to school districts are clear:

- Districts can create a predictable talent pipeline for their own hiring needs - as the employer, the district can determine how many teachers it will need, and plan for the future.
- Districts can target apprenticeships toward specific high-need roles, primarily supporting apprentices studying toward teaching positions where talent cannot be easily found through typical recruiting efforts, including STEM, bi-lingual, secondary core content, and special education.
- Districts can be creative and flexible with apprenticeship work roles and experiences by having apprentices function as instructional aides, substitutes, and residents, complementing the existing teaching workforce.
- Employers have a vested interest in ensuring that their future workforce has the specific skills and competencies they need to thrive in their roles. As the key decision-maker in the apprenticeship program, the district enables apprentices to meet requirements for their certification and to develop the specific competencies that make them a great fit for BISD.

Kirschner commented, “We are flipping the script. We aren’t waiting to see what comes out of the teacher education pipeline. Apprenticeship can meet district needs. When apprentices get accepted by the employer, that is because the employer’s goal is to fill a gap in the district. We’re able to target talent development to meet future hiring needs. You can’t do that with the traditional model. Using apprenticeship, we can align our teacher talent pipeline with the critical need certifications the district requires.”

ON-RAMPS TO SUCCESS

The BISD model prioritizes a long-term talent pipeline for the district, creating teaching talent beyond next year, and meeting individual apprentices where they are in their educational journeys. Because career mobility is the primary objective for apprentices, the BISD program has multiple entry points and established pathways for apprentices to follow into their next stage. The program supports four “on-ramps” for apprentices:

- **On-Ramp 1** supports teacher candidates who have less than 30 college credit hours. Apprentices are employed with BISD at Paraprofessional Apprentice Level 1, and work full-time as classroom paraprofessionals, clerical staff, and substitute teachers. Apprentices are enrolled with a partner college and take can coursework asynchronously or in real-time (courses cannot conflict with the apprentices’ assignment at BISD) while also gaining credits through on-the-job training and BISD provided microcredentials. Apprentices starting at On-Ramp 1 take about four years to complete their program.
- **On-Ramp 2** engages apprentices who have between 30 and 60 credit hours. They are employed full-time with BISD at Paraprofessional Apprentice Level 2 and continue their college studies while also ramping up learning through on-the-job training and microcredentials provided by BISD success coaches. This on-ramp is typically the largest group of apprentices, as the program attracts people who have

started college but who have not completed a degree – in Texas, nearly 13% of adults fall into this category.

- **On-Ramp 3** engages apprentices who have completed an associate degree or who have earned between 60 and 90 credit hours. Apprentices are employed with the district at Paraprofessional Apprentice Level 3. Apprentices' responsibilities and accountability continue to increase as they complete both college coursework through their Education Preparation Provider (EPP) and district-provided training.
- **On-Ramp 4** supports those in their final year of college, as well as apprentices who have already completed a bachelor's degree. These Resident Apprentice Level 4 employees work directly with a mentor teacher in their Residency, while completing college courses required by their degree plan and studying toward certification, which will be gained either through the EPP or through an alternative certification provider (ACP) that has been vetted for quality by the district. Apprentices who start the program at On-Ramp 4 will take one year to complete and gain their certification.

Andrea Dickson, Director of Talent Acquisition at BISD, commented, "Each apprentice completes seven microcredentials per year. These are bite-sized, easily consumed training courses that are immediately applicable in the teaching environment, and they build on each other – skills stack on top of each other. We want to see On-Ramp 1 skills demonstrated in On-Ramp 4. They're never built to a burden – apprentices have a full-time job and are going to school. This is never designed to be homework; the training is meant to be engaging and relevant."

BISD microcredentials are developed and delivered by success coaches and district staff, who have determined the specific skills and competencies, over and above what is required for certification and degree completion, that are important to the district as the employer. Training is delivered in-person with each cohort and focuses on teaching specific processes and procedures. The skills acquired and demonstrated through the microcredentialing process are stackable, building upon each other, and are directly relevant to the increasing skills and responsibilities required of apprentices as they progress through program. Microcredentials focus on skills from classroom management and building rapport with students to effective instructional practices, lesson planning and delivery, as well as assessment practices. After apprentices learn the course content and do class activities, they will demonstrate the practice in the classroom. Success coaches and mentors provide feedback to the apprentice. Apprentices keep practicing based on the feedback, and once they are confident in their understanding and ability, apprentices provide proof of mastery through various skills-based assessments, including video demonstrations of newly learned skills. Success coaches review against an established rubric, and once mastery is gained, the student earns the microcredential. Apprentices do not earn the microcredential until the skill has been demonstrated to required levels.

Dickson commented, "Apprentices love to reflect on how much they've grown from the first time they worked with kids on these skills to the last time. This model has been very

successful. We've received positive feedback that the skills are useful, relevant, and applicable on a day-to-day basis, and mentors have given good feedback because apprentices are bringing these new skills to the classroom."

Apprentices across all the on-ramps received individualized and cohort support designed to meet both apprentices' unique needs and create community. BISD employs apprenticeship success coaches who are strategically hired for their deep experience and expertise across the entire teaching and instructional design spectrum. One coach works with apprentices across On-Ramps 1, 2, and 3, while another coach works exclusively with On-Ramp 4 Resident Apprentices in their final year. Coaches are responsible for communicating with, supporting, and monitoring every apprentice through one-on-one engagements, cohort sessions, and observation experiences. Success coaches also work with EPPs and ACPs to ensure that apprentices remain on track to complete their degrees and gain certification.

BISD's focus on the full preparation pipeline and individual apprentice success requires that the district work with multiple education providers, recognizing that no single institution can meet every apprentice's needs or all the employer's workforce needs. Many apprentices start their education journey at Brazosport College, the area's community college which offers affordable, high-quality education in modalities that fit the apprentices' needs. BISD also partners with Stephen F. Austin University and Grand Canyon University, which offer online programming, and with the innovative Reach University, a national provider of apprenticeship degrees. In identifying education partners, BISD prioritizes:

- Flexible learning modalities, including asynchronous and online coursework, recognizing that apprentices work full-time and cannot leave their jobs to take courses in the middle of the day.
- Cost, acknowledging that a scaled program that fully covers the costs of apprentices' tuition as well as wages is not possible at many traditional four-year institutions.
- Business practices, recognizing that apprentices should have streamlined experiences, and focus only on their learning and work. BISD requires all EPPs and training partners to direct bill the district, never the apprentice, and ensure that coursework can be completed on schedule to meet degree plans.
- Progressive recognition of learning policies, recognizing that many apprentices are entering the program with significant college credit. Partner institutions accept credits from other colleges and work to determine the most efficient pathway to degree completion for the individual apprentice.
- Student advising and information sharing, noting that the district and success coaches, as well as apprentices themselves, must know exactly where apprentices stand in their coursework, as passing a course and meeting GPA requirements ultimately affects the district's timeline and costs. Apprentices allow the district to view their progression data, and partner providers have learned to share it readily.

In addition to college programs, BISD utilizes alternative teacher certification programs, which are designed to support people who already have bachelor's degrees outside the education field to gain their certification. ACPs are an efficient way for career changers to become certified without needing to go back to college and complete another degree program.

More than half of all new teachers in Texas are hired from alternative certification programs, a statistic unique to Texas, which “produces 60% of the nation’s alternatively certified teachers,” according to the University of Texas at Austin’s [Teacher Educator Preparation Pathways Study](#). The study dives into the implications of alternative certification writ-large, including higher attrition of alternatively certified teachers and negative impacts on student performance.

BISD addresses limitations of ACP models through the apprenticeship, which both prepares students for certification through the ACP program and enables at least one year of full-time teaching experience, mentorship, and training before ever entering the classroom as a teacher of record. Kirschner commented, “We have to have this. Alternative certification is a big part of this model because we are meeting people where they are. Typically, people from an alternative certification program would go straight into the classroom, but in our program, they’ll have a year of residency whether their program required it or not. Any candidate in our program, regardless of their pathway to On-Ramp 4, their first day of teaching is actually day 188. We have apprentices in the program who could go be a teacher of record right now, but they chose to be a part of this program because they realized how it could help them better prepare for a longer career in education.”

She added, “If you are questioning the quality, it’s up to us to get the quality built in. At the end of the day, this is where 60% of the new teachers are coming from in Texas. As an employer, we now get to invest in helping those teachers become better prepared teachers.”

CREATING A SUSTAINABLE PROGRAM

The BISD model is, ultimately, financially sustainable because it is within the control of the district, which can adjust participation and costs based on available funding. Rebecca Kelley, Chief Financial Officer at BISD, emphasized the importance of HR and Finance collaborating to ensure the program’s sustainability. “By working together, we can create a robust funding framework that supports our apprentices and ensures resources are maximized to provide quality learning experiences for students with highly-effective staff.”

BISD employs what [Prepared to Teach](#) calls the “[three Rs](#)” of sustainable funding for teacher preparation:

- Reallocation, which involves redesigning work roles and staffing budgets;
- Reduction, which involves cost minimization efforts, including EPP selection;
- Reinvestment, which shifts dollars to permanently build apprenticeship funds into district budgets.

Kelley elaborated, “Our approach is to continuously integrate reallocation, reduction, and reinvestment strategies. We strive to ensure that we, as an employer, are positioned to meet the needs of our apprentices in terms of wages, tuition and training costs, and wraparound supports. It’s about finding ways to stretch our funding to fully cover these areas.” Wraparound supports include professional clothing, gas, childcare, groceries, and other necessary resources that can create barriers.

To pay apprentice wages, BISD utilized a variety of reallocation strategies in their first year. This included shifting federal dollars through the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), which aim to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access, supporting teacher development, class size reduction, and supplemental services. Funding can be used to cover wages for apprentices who are working alongside certified teachers in student support roles. BISD has also reallocated existing budgeted funding from vacant positions, substitute teachers, and paraprofessional support positions toward apprentices who are serving in those roles as full-time employees eligible for benefits and teacher retirement.

BISD reduces costs by maximizing student financial aid resources and applying those funds appropriately, helping apprentices avoid student loans. Additionally, BISD works primarily with low-cost, high-quality education providers that can keep tuition costs affordable. By building strategic partners, BISD maximizes available funds from these collaborations, ensuring financial resources are used efficiently and effectively.

BISD is committed to reinvesting, ensuring at all times that the district’s budget can accommodate apprentices working in all four on-ramps of the program now and into the future, folding ongoing costs into the district’s budget to ensure the sustainability of the program.

Program funds beyond existing district dollars come from various sources including Pell grants, which support tuition and fees for eligible apprentices, state and federal workforce funds, US Department of Labor resources, and philanthropic support. The BISD program has garnered financial support from the Houston Endowment. Kirschner notes the importance of knowing exactly how certain dollars can be applied. “Wage reimbursements allow us to reallocate local budget dollars to other program related costs. DOL funds can’t pay for wages, but they can support training. It is crucial to understand funding mechanisms to maximize their impact.”

BISD is approved on the Texas Workforce Commission’s Eligible Training Provider List, enabling it to support training costs by working with the local workforce board. Robust partnerships also enable the program to leverage funds available to college partners, such as Adult Education and Literacy Funds, and other resources like RAPIDS, the federal apprenticeship tracking database, all based on eligibility. Kelley commented, “Partnerships allow BISD to access available funding and customize resource allocation for each apprentice, considering their varying financial backgrounds and changing eligibility.”

Finally, BISD is avoiding costs associated with new teacher hires. The [Learning Policy Institute](#) estimates that urban districts spend about \$20,000 for each new teacher hire, including costs for separation, recruitment, hiring, and training. Apprentices, already BISD employees, transition into teaching roles without additional recruitment or training expenses, leading to higher retention and long-term savings.

Kelley commented, “Our collaborative efforts in reallocating, reducing, and reinvesting funds are crucial to not only sustaining but also expanding the program. This ensures we can continue to support our apprentices and meet our district’s educational goals effectively.” By aligning financial strategies with HR initiatives, BISD ensures the longevity and effectiveness of the apprenticeship program, demonstrating a model of financial and educational excellence.

In addition to financial sustainability, districts must consider the human capacity behind the program. A district-driven registered apprenticeship program is as much a Human Resources endeavor as an education endeavor, requiring dedicated district HR leadership and staff.

Kirschner, with her HR leadership background in the oil and gas industry now finds passion in developing human capital within the education industry. “I love what I do. I love HR, and I’m passionate about the people and the function itself. The HR function is developing people and human capital where I live. It is a dream to bring people into the profession and provide life-changing opportunities.”

The BISD model is effective, even elegant, but it is not easy. The program needs significant peoplepower, including several full-time employees to support apprentices and administer the program. It also requires the creativity and ingenuity of program leaders who are willing and able to make tough decisions, and who understand how to minimize costs while maximizing quality.

“We’ve developed a strategy to build a pipeline to solve teacher vacancies, offering both short and long-term solutions,” commented Kirschner. “The apprenticeship model, being employer-driven, is addressing needs my internal clients (my principals and superintendent) have: how can I put candidates in front of them and make their lives easier? I had an administrator call me and tell me that she needed a paraprofessional and wondered if I had an apprentice who could come over. Before, campus administrators would have had to start recruiting, reviewing resumes, interviewing. Now, we can bring candidates to the campus, and administrators welcome us with open arms. The HR team is now positioned to be a service. HR gets a bad reputation at times – we can be seen as naysayers. But now it’s truly a service-driven partnership, helping stakeholders in the district and removing barriers that create challenges for them, especially around recruiting and retention.”

APPRENTICE PROFILE – CARA PRIMM

After earning her bachelor's degree in health services coordination, Cara worked as a medical assistant and then shifted into education with BISD, serving as a paraprofessional in Life Skills classrooms. Cara Primm joined enrichED Pathways as a Resident Apprentice at the start of the 2022-23 school year. Cara completed her Resident Apprentice year and shifted into her current role as a teacher of medical terminology and principles of health science at Brazosport High School, where she just completed her first year.

What drew you to education from a career in healthcare?

It was just one of those opportunities. The job opening came open, and someone thought I would be a good fit for it. I thought, working in a school? No way. But the more I thought about it, I would still be providing hands-on medical care. I got the role, and I loved it. I worked as a paraprofessional for three years, and as I got deeper into it, people kept telling me I needed to go back to school and get my certification. But how could I do that? I needed to work full-time, and I needed a paycheck. The apprenticeship program came about and gave me that wonderful opportunity. I can work and learn at the same time.

How did you first learn about the program?

The program leaders did a big push email out to the staff telling us that they were starting this new program, and they held an interest meeting at the beginning of the summer where we could learn about it and ask questions. The one thing that really piqued my interest was that I'd be able to work full-time and earn my certification at the same time. That was the selling point.

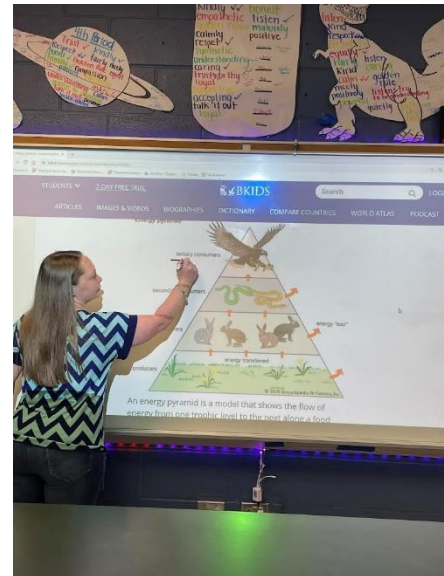
What can you share about your time as an apprentice?

For me, this was the perfect blend. I did my studies online through the alternative certification program, but the apprenticeship placed me into a classroom with a certified mentor teacher in the area I was being certified in, and I walked with her every day, seeing the ins and outs of everything and I was able to put into play what I was learning online. I couldn't have gone straight from my certification into the classroom without doing that year. Growing and learning from my mentor teacher, that was the biggest lifechanging part of the program. I got a full year with a certified teacher, and I got constant feedback every day. That has been most imperative to my success.

Now that you've completed your first year as a teacher, what is going through your mind?

Going through the apprenticeship program prepared me. I had a better first year, and I can see myself staying in teaching for the long term. If someone had told me five years ago that I'd be teaching in a high school classroom, I'd have said no way. I do feel a sense of joy, and I'm proud and honored to be a part of it. And compared to what I was making as a paraprofessional, this is more than double the pay. It has absolutely taken major financial strain off my family.

Being a part of this apprenticeship program was the best decision I could have made for my family and my life and professional journey. Being in the program was no smooth journey, but it is the most empowering choice I've ever embraced. Ever. This experience was lifechanging. I've emerged more resilient and assured and equipped with the wisdom and confidence to walk in on that first day. I've been able to successfully complete my first year with grace and determination and I'm ready to tackle year two.



MEASURING IMPACT

BISD has reached an impressive scale in the last two years, establishing a pipeline that will produce teacher talent through 2027. In 2023-24, the district employed 97 apprentices across all four on-ramps:

- On-Ramp 1 – 19 apprentices expected to complete 2026-27
- On-Ramp 2 – 22 apprentices expected to complete 2025-26
- On-Ramp 3 – 20 apprentices expected to complete 2024-25
- On-Ramp 4 – 36 apprentices expected to complete 2023-24

Over the program’s timeline, BISD has served 117 apprentices, and supported 54 teachers to complete the program in two years. 51% of apprentices represent diverse backgrounds. To support apprentices, BISD has raised nearly \$5M in funding through state, federal, and philanthropic grants and other funding sources.

95% of program completers remained with the district after completion of the apprenticeship program.

With more than 50 teachers retained in full-time roles with the district, BISD has likely saved \$1 million in recruiting and hiring costs.

CONSIDERATIONS AND LESSONS LEARNED

Program leaders see great potential in building more models that center district needs and create sustainable teacher talent pipelines. To get started and make measurable progress, they note the following considerations.

Defined Partnerships

Kirschner and Dickson noted that the strength of the partnership is directly aligned to the strength of the apprentice experience. “I wish I knew back at the beginning the way that partnerships need to be designed to truly share information, so we can all circle around the apprentice and help them,” commented Kirschner. Establishing roles and responsibilities, clarifying data and information sharing requirements, and codifying rules of engagement with apprentices has resulted in deeper trust between the partners themselves and improved experiences among apprentices.

Provider Knowledge

Aligned to improvements in information sharing, enabling the district as the employer to keep up with apprentice progress in their studies, BISD leaders also encourage establishing a single point of contact at the college or education provider. “It has been so much better since we established a point of contact at the college. Don’t send apprentices to the financial aid office or to a random advisor. The apprentices will go in and say, ‘I’m an apprentice,’ and not everyone at the institution is up to speed on how the program works,” commented Dickson. They recommend building a deep relationship with someone who will

be in regular contact with the apprentices, and who apprentices know they can go to with issues. This person should understand the ins and outs of the program and know who to contact when questions arise.

Be Ready to Adapt

The employer-driven apprenticeship model is one that must constantly adapt to meet the changing needs of the employer, and the changing needs of apprentices themselves. For BISD, that meant some difficult conversations with EPPs and training providers, both current partners and institutions seeking partnership. BISD had to center its needs: flexibility, affordability, and recognition of work-based learning, and make partners adapt, which is not always easy.

Create Space for Career Changers

The BISD apprenticeship program has an on-ramp for everyone, from recent high school graduates to those with a bachelor's degree. That said, the number of young people nationwide who are seeking education degrees continues to decline, and there is a pervasive narrative that teaching is not an attractive career. "A lot of young people are not seeing education as a primary degree. They may get a degree in another field and then decide they want to be a teacher. Many people come to the realization a little later that they want to teach," commented Dickson. For these people, ACP is the most efficient route into a teaching career - BISD ensures that every teacher who reaches the district's classrooms has the experience and expertise they need to thrive, even if they come to the profession later in life.

BISD notes, however, that because the apprenticeship program is removing barriers and creating real pathways, applications from young students to enroll in the program are increasing.

Center Apprentice Needs

Once an individual becomes an apprentice, BISD is making a literal and figurative investment in their success. Program leaders prioritize apprentices in the model, rather than education providers or even the district, because for the program to succeed financially and in terms of pipeline development, apprentices must make progress and complete their training. If they struggle or stop out, the district's investment is sunk. BISD supports apprentices' academic and work experiences and provides wraparound services to make sure that apprentices' personal lives stay on track, and that they have the support they need when they need it, including mental health services, transportation, childcare, housing, healthcare, and other services.

Apprentices Win, Too

BISD recommends clear communications to students and candidates about how the apprenticeship program will benefit them. Beyond the typical program structures, including paid work, covered education expenses, and deeper work-and-learn experiences,

BISD are full-time employees of the district. They receive benefits, they accrue paid-time-off, and they get credit toward teacher retirement. They earn progressive wage increases as they advance in the program. Further, for apprentices who start in on-ramp 1 and work as paraprofessionals, they will get credit for working in that role in the district's compensation schedule and will make more money in their first year as a teacher of record than a non-apprentice hire.

CONCLUSION

In two years, BISD's apprenticeship program well on its way toward creating a robust teacher talent pipeline for the district, while maintaining approximately 100 apprentices working across all four on-ramps toward their certification. The district is addressing root causes of the teacher talent shortage, creating real opportunity for highly qualified teacher candidates to reach the classroom debt-free and with years of experience and expertise.

- enrichED Pathways is **affordable** for apprentices, with no out-of-pocket costs for education, and no opportunity costs for lost wages during training. Apprentices earn a progressively increasing wage, in addition to benefits and vesting in retirement, during their training. The program is accessible to any teacher candidate from any background.
- enrichED Pathways is bringing **new talent** to the profession, opening opportunities for people to work in paraprofessional fields who want to teach but cannot afford the time or resources required from a traditional training model, and career changers who do not want to go back to college but who need training and experience before leading a classroom.
- BISD is making **strategic investments** in the talent it needs, focusing on the skills and specializations that the district would struggle to meet otherwise. The district is able to move beyond typical "post and pray" recruiting and hiring approaches and toward proactively creating the talent supply to meet demand.
- As noted above, BISD apprentices often have years of **experience and expertise** before they ever lead a classroom. Apprentices gain the confidence and competencies to become highly effective teachers and will likely stay in the profession longer, creating significant impacts on student achievement.

As enrichED Pathways continues to mature, and as other districts and entities adopt effective strategies through the new national non-profit organization that has emerged from the BISD model, Gateway Education Partners, it seems likely that the impressive results we see are just the beginning. By addressing the real root causes of the teacher talent shortage, creating an accessible, affordable, and equitable model that enables teacher candidates to become masters in their field, this model is poised to make a transformational difference for districts and students.