

Back-to-School Webinar Series

August 26, 2025

Blueprint for Success: Apprenticeship Best Practices



NC Apprenticeships in Early Childhood

Reminders

- This webinar will be recorded and posted on the BBF web site, as well as the slides.
- Please mute your microphones and turn off your cameras unless speaking.
- Type your name, organization, and apprenticeship role in the chat.
- Ask questions in the chat or raise your hand. We will have breaks to answer them.



Session Overview



NC Apprenticeships in Early Childhood

- Making the Apprenticeship Choice
- Planning
- Apprentices and Mentors
- Partners
- Resources
- Maintaining Success
- Recognition
- Completion
- Success Story

Introduction

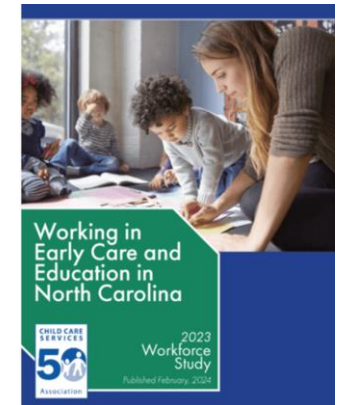
Best Practices:

- Your experiences and ours
- BBF surveys
- Phone calls and emails
- National and state apprenticeship programs outside of NC
- Conferences and connections

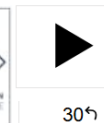


Building Bright Futures:

- BBF assists employers and their partners with apprenticeships!
- Do not hesitate to ask us questions. If we can't answer them, we will find the answer or direct you to a better resource.
- We aren't just a source of funding; we are here to support you along your apprenticeship journey.
- Please share with us your own challenges and best practices.



E17: John Ladd on the Future of Apprenticeship: A Conversation from the 2025 ECEPTS Conference



Choosing Apprenticeship

- Can your **long-term workforce goals** be met by participating in apprenticeship?
- Do you already have a similar type of program at your organization? How can translating this to apprenticeship **improve the experience and outcomes**?
- How much **administrative support** do you need?
- Apprenticeship requires a **progressive wage scale**. How does this fit into your budget and/or current wage scale?
- Are you interested in including **pre-apprentices**?



BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES

Early Childhood Education Apprenticeships

Credentials & Degrees
Earn industry credentials, certificates, and degrees to support your career goals.

On-The-Job Learning
Work paid hours in a child care center with the support of a mentor.

Professional Development
Gain critical knowledge about the field to enhance your skills and employability.

Networking Opportunities
Attend seminars, webinars, and workshops to share experiences and lessons learned.

Financial Support
Receive support for wages, materials, wraparound services, employment and educational costs, and more.

www.ncbce.org/building-bright-futures

NCBCE
Inspire • Imagine • Innovate

Group Program vs. Single Employer

- Look at the existing group programs available both statewide (Early Years AA and BA models) and specific to your regional area. Do they meet your needs?
 - You don't have to recreate the wheel or create a program from scratch.
 - They provide additional administrative support.
 - You have a built-in set of peers to share experiences.
 - They might have additional funding or services available.
- If you want to customize your own program, why? What specific needs do you have that are unique?



Early Childhood Educator Apprenticeship Program

Why Apprenticeship?
The Early Years ECE Statewide Apprenticeship Program aims to provide early childcare programs with opportunities to strengthen the workforce by offering professional pathways to support on-the-job training and supplemental education to ECE teachers.

Building Talent Within
The ECE Apprenticeship Program is an opportunity to grow talent within and recruit new teachers by implementing apprenticeship pathways. Build your best! Now offering ECE Associate and Bachelor Models.

Benefits
You and your Apprentices may qualify to receive financial incentives such as **TEACH Early Childhood® North Carolina Scholarship** opportunities and **Child Care WAGES**. No lengthy application process. Competencies and job skills are already developed for you to use.

Sustainability
Apprenticeship pathways offer sustainability within the ECE profession. Combining employment, on-the-job training, college coursework and individualized mentoring, an apprenticeship program supports a more stable early childhood workforce.

Additional Program Incentives

- ✓ Individualized Mentoring and Coaching
- ✓ Professional Development Webinars
- ✓ NAEYC Competencies and Standard Alignment
- ✓ Free Onboarding and Consultation
- ✓ No Cost Degrees
- ✓ Transferable Degrees
- ✓ Industry Recognized Credentials
- ✓ No Lengthy Application Process to Participate
- ✓ Strong Partnerships with Building Bright Futures, Apprenticeship, and Early Years

TEACH EARLY CHILDHOOD National Center
A Division of Early Years

APPRENTICESHIP NC

BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES
NC Apprenticeships in Early Childhood

For More Information:
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Planning

- Discuss apprenticeship with your administrative team to **get buy-in**.
- Identify **potential apprentices** among your current employees:
 - Already enrolled in classes
 - Motivated but need support
 - Dedicated and hardworking
- Consider whether you need **new positions** filled that could be apprentices.
- Create your **apprenticeship “family”** – those you need on your team outside of your organization to make this a success!
- Put together a **recruitment plan** for incumbent and new hires. Don't forget the BBF web site has materials you can use or replicate!
- Create an **administrative plan and schedule** for maintaining records and tracking apprentices.
- **Educate *everyone*** at the organization about apprenticeship, not just the apprentices and mentors.

Want to make a difference in the lives of young children?



**BUILDING
BRIGHT
FUTURES**
NC Apprenticeships in Early Childhood



**Early Childhood
APPRENTICESHIPS**

Enroll in an apprenticeship and be eligible for educational and other financial support!



**Earn While
You Learn!**

Ask your Center Director about how to sign up today!

Why Apprenticeship?

- Pursue a degree **at no cost** while working paid hours in a child care center
- Gain valuable hands-on experience
- Receive **FREE** professional development and enrichment activities (training, field trips, conferences, speakers)
- Earn industry-recognized credentials
- Receive personalized coaching
- Earn transferable credit toward a Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood

Learn more about careers & educational pathways in early childhood
www.ncbce.org/building-bright-futures



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@NCRCBBF

Instruction

- When thinking about your workforce goals, identify the **instruction and coursework** required for your apprentices to meet those needs
- Create a **scaffolded plan** so that apprentices can see a clear educational and professional pathway.
- Determine **who will provide the instruction**:
 - Community College – which one(s)?
 - Outside Organization – Red Cross, Partnership for Children, Sponsor, etc.
 - Employer
- Consider the **timing and schedules** for each:
 - School application and class registration deadlines
 - Financial aid deadlines
 - School schedules
 - How instruction class times align with expected work hours with the employer



On-the-Job Learning

- Work Process Schedule/Competency Checklist
- Consider other training that will help your apprentice be successful both in and out of the classroom:
 - Digital Literacy
 - Financial Literacy
 - English as a Second Language
 - How to be an ECE Professional
 - Effective Communication
 - Mindfulness
- Professional Development



Office of Apprenticeship
U.S. Department of Labor

Work Process Schedule

Early Childhood Educator
Job Description: Instruct preschool-aged students, following curricula or lesson plans, in activities designed to promote social, physical, and intellectual growth.
RAPIDS Code: 3004HY **O*NET Code:** 25-2011.00
Estimated Program Length: 1 Year
Apprenticeship Type: ☐ Competency-Based ☐ Time-Based ☒ Hybrid

Suggested On-the-Job Learning Outline

Teach life skills.	Approximate Hours
A. Teach basic skills, such as color, shape, number and letter recognition, personal hygiene, and social skills.	-
B. Teach proper eating habits and personal hygiene.	-
Total Hours	-

Provide for basic needs of children.	Approximate Hours
A. Serve meals and snacks in accordance with nutritional guidelines.	-
B. Attend to children's basic needs by feeding them, dressing them, and changing their diapers.	-
C. Assimilate arriving children to the school environment by greeting them, helping them remove outerwear, and selecting activities of interest to them.	-
Total Hours	-

Apprentices

- Discuss **apprenticeship requirements and long-term goals** with potential participants.
- Look at the possible options for credentialing or degree attainment and create a **career pathway plan**.
- Identify the **challenges or barriers** they are facing to participate.
- Discuss how you can support their **work/life balance**.
- **Provide resources** about apprenticeship, for getting started, and for participating in the mentor-mentee relationship:
 - Checklists, guides, and toolkits
 - BBF Mentoring Community of Practice
- Create an **apprentice cohort** where apprentices can share experiences, challenges, and peer-to-peer guidance. If you only have one apprentice, consider collaborating with other apprenticeship participants in your area or within your sponsored agreement.



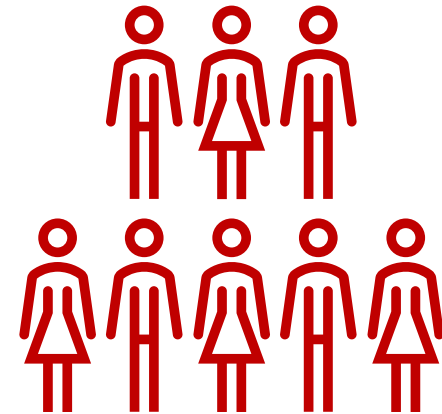
Mentors

- Once you have identified your apprentices, consider in which classrooms they will primarily work. Identify **potential mentors** who will have dedicated time to observe and work with the apprentice.
- Meet with the potential mentor to gauge interest and get **buy-in**. Offer incentives for participation, such as stipends or other benefits.
- **Provide resources** about apprenticeship, for getting started, and for maintaining the mentor-mentee relationship:
 - Mentor checklists, guides, and toolkits
 - Mentor Training
 - BBF Mentoring Community of Practice
- Create a **mentor cohort** where mentors can share experiences, challenges, and peer-to-peer guidance.



Apprenticeship Family

- Your Organization
- ApprenticeshipNC – Apprenticeship Consultant
- Sponsor
- Educational Institutions
 - High School – ECE Teachers, Career and Technical Education Director, and Career Development Coordinator
 - Community College - Apprenticeship Coordinator and ECE Instructors
 - Training Organizations
- DCDEE
- NC Works Career Centers and Local Workforce Development Board
- Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities



Resources

- **Braid Funding, Braid Funding, Braid Funding** – you can use multiple resources at once!
- **Instruction** includes more than just tuition. Apprentices might need assistance with:
 -  Books and Fees
 -  Transportation
 -  Technology
 -  Supplies
- Don't forget your **local workforce boards** – but talk to them early
- Consider individuals with **disabilities**
 - BBF pilot model for adults on the autism spectrum or with mild intellectual disabilities
- Be **patient!**

Timing

- ❖ Registration process with ApprenticeshipNC for program and apprentices
- ❖ College application and class registration deadlines
- ❖ Programs that require extra time for application, eligibility, and approval processes
- ❖ High school, college, and instruction availability and schedules



Maintenance

- Maintain **detailed records**.
- Hold **regular check-ins** with mentors and apprentices to assess progress and adjust as needed.
- **Create a feedback system** for both apprentices and mentors to discuss challenges and barriers that arise.
- **Celebrate and recognize accomplishments** of your apprentices and mentors!
- **Communicate milestones and changes** to your partners as soon as possible.
- Take time to **evaluate your original plan** and adjust as needed.
- **Share your lessons learned and best practices** with the apprenticeship community.



Recognition

- Kick off the apprenticeship with a **signing event**.
- Provide incentives for **important milestones** along the apprenticeship pathway to help motivate the apprentice.
- **Include the mentor** in your acknowledgement.
- Appreciation comes in many forms—gratitude can be expressed through **opportunities and words**
- **Asking, listening, and learning** also shows respect and appreciation for the apprentice's professional growth



Completion

- If you will offer the apprentice a permanent position:
 - Work with them on a new career pathway plan.
 - Consider asking them to be a mentor to a new apprentice.
- If not:
 - Help them network
 - Assist with preparing a portfolio
 - Provide them a reference
- Exchange feedback about your experiences and incorporate into your apprenticeship program going forward.
- Communicate with your support programs:
 - Inform your ApprenticeshipNC Consultant that your apprentice has completed as soon as possible.
 - Complete the BBF Completion Survey.
- Consider your next apprenticeship candidates.





Maggie West



Program Snapshot

- **Sponsor:** Early Years, as a project of Durham PreK
- **Scope:** Durham County, North Carolina
- **Related Instruction:** Durham Tech
- **Started:** October 2023



34 current
apprentices

22 mentors
+20 yrs experience

21 partnering
employers

24 locations

Apprenticeship Program Options

	Certificate Apprenticeship <i>Level 1</i>	Associate Degree Apprenticeship <i>Level 2</i>
Paid On-the-Job Learning Hours Required	*New* 2,000 hours (~1 year of full-time work)	4,000 hours (~2 years of full-time work)
Completion of On-the-Job Learning Checklist	Foundational Competencies	Higher-level Competencies
Related Instruction Required	Preschool Certificate or Infant/Toddler Certificate (16 credit hours)	Associate in Applied Science in Early Childhood Education (65-71 credit hours)

Fulfills CDA training hour requirement



Apprentices that complete the Certificate can seamlessly progress to the Associate Degree Apprenticeship to continue studies

Firmly Centering Apprentice Success:

Intentionally working together to create conditions for success to ensure college education is attainable for early educators

Weekly Zoom
Sessions

Mentor Support

Celebrate
Milestones

In-person
Professional
Development

Site-Specific Registration
Coordination (when possible)

Holistic Support
Through Partners

Full Scholarship:
Tuition & Books
100% Covered

Paid Release
Time*

Compensated for
Progress

Technology
Assistance

Online, In-Person and Bilingual
Course Offerings

Enrollment
Assistance

Our Strategies to Support Mentors

Monthly Communities of Practice

Focus on topics central to mentoring: adult learning; teacher development; OJLs; facilitating learning in the classroom; giving feedback, etc.

Mentor Coach

Mentor Coach provides supports for engaging with apprentices, completing required documentation, and personal supports

OJL Competencies Aligned with Early Childhood Coursework

OJLs completed quarterly, provide documentation of apprentice's progress through competencies; highlights areas of growth and strengths.

Monthly Logs

Constantly Improving Tools for Usability & Accessibility

New Cohort Mentors

Mentors contracted to support sites where qualified journeyworkers not interested in mentor responsibilities



Key Ingredients for Our Community College Collaboration

FERPA Release of
Information

Admissions Support &
Coordination

International Student
Services Collaboration

Biweekly Zoom Sessions
for Apprentices with
Education Chair &
Apprenticeship Manager

Coordinated Advising
for Apprentices
Every Semester

Student Wellness &
Basic Needs
Resource Support

Bonus
Mentor Coach for Early
Years is Adjunct Faculty
at Durham Tech

Open/frequent communication and close collaboration between
apprenticeship program staff and early childhood leadership at Durham Tech

Recent Program Developments

- Launched a bilingual, hybrid Early Educator Academy to better support prospective apprentices new-to-ECE in securing a position with one of our partnering employers
- Continue to align academic plans to bolster peer/cohort model
- Conduct ongoing program evaluation, ensuring we are responsively improving program based on participant feedback

Durham County Early Educator Academy

Info Session
Zoom, Monday
May 12th,
6:30 p.m.

Free 6-Week Training Program leading to a **credential**
and **job opportunities** in early childhood education

**Online course with
in-person training opportunities**

- Free College Course at Durham Tech
- 5 professional certifications, including CPR/First Aid
- Stipends & resources
- NC Early Childhood Credential
- Job opportunities in Durham and support to complete all requirements to obtain a job in child care

Bilingual program:
Offered in English & Spanish



Who Qualifies?

- Authorized to work in the U.S.
- Interested in working in child care in Durham
- At least 16 years old
- High School Diploma, GED, or class of 2025

Academy Dates
June 9, 2025 -
July 21, 2025



START HERE
durhamprek.org/academy

DURHAM TECH **DURHAM PRE K** **Early Years**

Back-to-School Schedule

September
Date TBD

Earn, Learn, Succeed:
Building a Career Through Apprenticeship



Apprenticeship 201: From Learner to Leader
Now Online!

Ready, Set, Learn! All About Pre-Apprenticeship
Online Soon!

For More Information



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