

**PR Award #:** S423A220088

**Reach University**

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**Absolute Priority:** 1

**Competitive Preference Priorities:** 1, 2, 3.

**Project Title:** The Reach to Teach Project

**Project Description:** During the Project activities, the Project team will be gathering quantitative and qualitative data that it expects will demonstrate the inherent value of apprenticeship-based degree programs in sectors that have been traditionally excluded (i.e., the teaching profession) to address short-term and long-term workforce needs. The Reach to Teach! Project presents a seamless and supportive BA-to-certification pathway for talented—but historically excluded—local community members. To achieve the Project goals, the Project leverages local Associates Degree holders to enter the teacher preparation pathway, earning their bachelor's degree and teacher certification in just three years. This approach removes a significant barrier—the requirement that candidates already have BAs when they enter preparation programs—for high-potential individuals who already live and work in the communities in which they will teach.

**Project Expected Outcomes:** Reach to Teach! Project goals include (1): Increasing the number of high effective licensed teachers in high-need Baton Rouge LEAs by preparing, graduating, and placing 268 high-quality, fully-certified teachers in high-need schools served by LEA partners by the end of the grant period, and 551 by the end of project year 5; recruit a diverse candidate pool from local community colleges; ensure that at least 50% of program completers identify as BIPOC; develop a pipeline of fully-certified teachers who are qualified to teach in high-need schools and subject areas, such as math, English language arts, and science, in schools serving high percentages of socioeconomically disadvantaged students and minority students. (2): Scale the Reach to Teach! Project's impact by forming partnership with additional high-need LEAs in Louisiana that are experiencing teacher shortages, especially those in rural areas. (3): Retain highly effective teachers in their 'home' districts by establishing partnership agreements with LEAs that include hiring commitments so that at least 90% of teachers are hired by their 'home' districts and are retained for at least three years. (4): Increase overall student achievement in LEAs served by the Project by providing robust content and methods courses with embedded culturally relevant and sustaining practices, that promote both increases in academic achievement and decreases in adverse behaviors by supporting social-emotional growth in students (and teachers!). (5): Build an innovative, nontraditional pathway into the teaching profession centering around local/regional community colleges, in addition to other community pathways (e.g., partial BA completers, high school graduates), especially in rural areas by realizing an untapped talent pool of local teacher candidates who can earn their BA and teacher certification with no student loan debt.

**Project Partners:** Reach University, in partnership the Louisiana Resource Center for Educators, New Schools for Baton Rouge, and four Baton Rouge LEAs representing more than 6,200 students, present the Reach to Teach!