



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Paradigm Schools to Launch One of Pennsylvania’s First PK–4 Teacher Apprenticeship Programs

Philadelphia, PA – Dec. 3, 2025 – [American Paradigm Schools](#) (APS) has earned state approval from the Pennsylvania Apprenticeship and Training Council (PATC) to launch its PK–4 Elementary Teacher Post-Baccalaureate Registered Apprenticeship Program, making it one of the first charter management organizations in the Commonwealth to receive this designation.

At a time when Philadelphia and districts statewide continue to face a [significant teacher shortage](#), APS’s new apprenticeship program offers a proactive solution: a paid, two-year pathway enabling current uncertified teaching staff to earn their Pennsylvania Level I PK–4 Instructional Certification while working full time in APS schools. The initiative is designed to strengthen the educator pipeline across APS’s four schools and ensure students have consistent, qualified educators in their classrooms.

“Pennsylvania’s shrinking educator workforce is a crisis that directly impacts our students,” said Ashley Redfearn, Chief Executive Officer of American Paradigm Schools. “By becoming a state-registered apprenticeship sponsor, we can develop our own teachers from within our school communities. We are committed to the people who already know our students, know our neighborhoods, and are deeply committed to our mission.”

Pennsylvania’s [sharp decline](#) in newly certified teachers has forced many schools, especially in urban communities, to depend on long-term substitutes and emergency permits. APS’s newly approved Registered Apprenticeship Program will allow it to build a sustainable internal teacher pipeline, reducing reliance on temporary certifications, strengthening instructional quality across its schools, and opening accessible, affordable pathways into the profession for diverse and non-traditional candidates.

“This designation is a game-changer for our talent strategy,” said Scott L. Kramer, Chief Talent Officer at APS. “Aligning our program with state and federal apprenticeship standards enables us to support our own staff in becoming certified teachers and expand our eligibility for workforce and apprenticeship funding that can immediately benefit our schools.”

As a state-registered apprenticeship, the APS program is positioned to compete for key workforce development resources, including:

- Pennsylvania Apprenticeship & Training Grants
- U.S. Department of Labor apprenticeship expansion initiatives
- Local workforce development board funding



The program also deepens APS's commitment to equity, staff diversity, and community-rooted hiring by removing financial and structural barriers that often prevent talented individuals from entering the educator profession.

"With this Registered Apprenticeship, we are reinforcing our belief that talent already exists in our classrooms, offices, and communities," Redfearn added. "Our responsibility is to build pathways that help our current staff grow into fully certified teachers because our students deserve highly qualified, committed educators every single day."

About American Paradigm Schools

American Paradigm Schools (APS) is a nonprofit charter management organization that supports and serves four charter schools in North and Northeast Philadelphia. These schools are: First Philadelphia Preparatory Charter School; Lindley Academy Charter School; Memphis Street Academy; and Tacony Academy Charter School. For more information, visit www.ap-schools.org.

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