

# Pathways to Become a Teacher in Minnesota

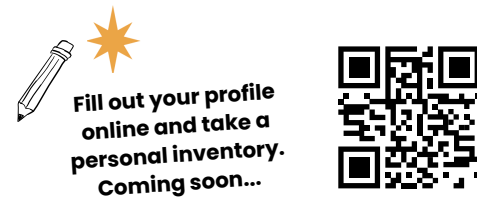
Understanding the journey to becoming a professionally licensed teacher



## 1. Personal Inventory

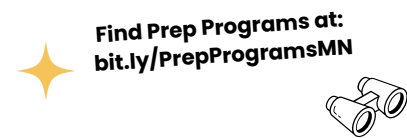
Besides the joy of working with students, the process of becoming a teacher has some additional steps and information to consider.

- What age level do I enjoy working with?
- Do I enjoy teaching a certain content?
- Is there a type of learner I enjoy working with?
- Is there a type of school I want to work in?
- What level of college degree do you hope to attain?



### Academic Experience

While becoming a teacher requires training, education, and meeting state standards, there are different levels of degree attainment and content coursework required depending on your subject. **For a full list of initial licensure programs available visit this site.**



### Job Experience

You can also gain some experience in a classroom first. You could volunteer in different schools for short amounts of time, or you could participate in a longer, organized experience. **Here are some organizations that provide supported experiences for future educators:**

- Americorps
- Breakthrough Twin Cities
- Freedom Schools

## 2. Pick a Pathway

After you have a better idea of what age level and content you may be interested in teaching, you can explore multiple pathways Minnesota offers for you that fit your needs. To become a licensed classroom teacher in Minnesota, you must complete a set of licensure requirements.

### Option A: Learning First

This pathway is for individuals who seek to complete all licensure requirements before working in a school.

### Option B: Work and Learn

This pathway is for individuals who prefer to work in education while completing their licensure requirements.

## 3. Pick a Preparation Program

The most common pathways toward licensure is by completing a teacher preparation program. In Minnesota, licensure programs can be offered by institutes of higher education, school districts, and non-profits. **There are a wide range of programing options, including:**

- Online programs
- Year-long student teaching
- Evening/weekend courses
- Module-based learning
- Residency Programs

**Licensure Exams:** if you complete a preparation program in Minnesota, you are no longer required to take any licensure exams.

### Learn First Options

#### Institutes of Higher Education (colleges and universities)

There are over 30+ teacher preparation providers in Minnesota in Institutes of Higher Education, granting undergraduate and graduate degrees in over 60 different licensure areas.

#### Alternative pathways include non-profits or service cooperatives

There are a number of alternative teacher preparation providers in Minnesota offering opportunities to complete licensure requirements in special education, career and technical education, and elementary education.

## Work and Learn Options

Many preparation programs have funding opportunities for individuals seeking to work in schools while learning. **Here are the primary pathways to work and learn:**

### Work as a teacher with a Tier 1 or Tier 2 license

If you meet certain qualifications, you can work as a Tier 2 licensed teacher while completing your preparation.

### Work as a paraprofessional

Many preparation programs and districts have built "grow your own" programs to support an individual working as a paraprofessional through teacher preparation.

### Work as a substitute

PELSB offers a substitute teaching license that allows you to work in a variety of settings across multiple districts, gaining experience and allowing for more flexibility in your scheduling.

### Teacher apprenticeship programs

Minnesota has recently developed registered apprenticeship programs for teaching. This is an opportunity to work, get trained, and receive comprehensive support while meeting licensure requirements.

## 4. Funding Your Preparation

Millions of dollars have been allocated to support individuals seeking to become a teacher, making funding your pathway much easier than it used to be and reducing significant debt for future teachers.

### Tuition - School Districts

Certain grants are provided through the hiring school district, i.e., the employer.

### Tuition - Preparation Providers

Certain grants are provided through the teacher preparation program.

### Tuition - Student

Certain grants and scholarships are provided directly to the student.

If your household makes under \$80,000 or you are an individual of color, there are multiple opportunities to pay no tuition for your teacher preparation.

## 5. Apply for a Professional License

### TIERED LICENSURE SYSTEM

Minnesota has a Tiered licensure system with four tiers. For individuals enrolled in teacher preparation, you would be able to work as a teacher holding a Tier 2 license while in preparation (with a job offer), and will qualify for a Tier 3 license after completing your preparation.

After completing your preparation you will qualify for a Tier 3 license through Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board. Visit Tiers without Fear for more information on tiered licensure.

## 6. Apply for a Job

Minnesota has an official teacher job board where most jobs in education can be found, sortable by region and licensure area. Each district and charter school will have employment postings on their own websites as well.

## More information

This Roadmap consolidates the pathways to becoming a teacher. There are other lesser used pathways - licensure via portfolio (requires 2 years of teaching experience) and moving from a Tier 2 to a Tier 3 license through experience (requires 3 years of teaching experience). For additional information on adding a teaching license, working outside your licensure area, work with a teacher pathway expert or contact PELSB directly.

