

Apple Teacher at Your School: A Planning Guide



Apple Teacher is a professional learning program designed to support and celebrate teachers. With Apple Teacher, school leadership can offer a free, self-paced learning program that empowers teachers to use Apple products for learning and teaching.

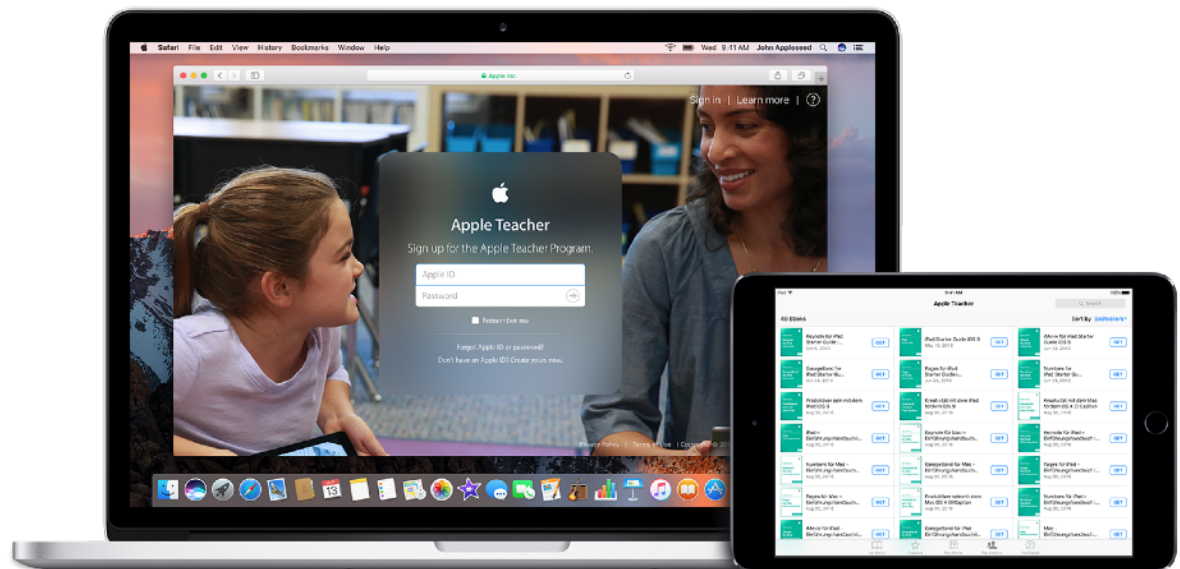
Thousands of school leaders have embraced the Apple Teacher Program because it's a great way to get teachers engaged with the technology you've invested in. And it inspires a teacher community of lifelong learners who create innovative learning experiences on iPad and Mac.

We've gathered some ideas for how you can support your teachers along their learning journeys—from signing up to earning recognition and beyond.

Preparing Your Teachers

Before you introduce Apple Teacher in your school, you can encourage your teachers to sign up and explore the [Apple Teacher Learning Center](#). Here they'll engage with a learning platform that provides teachers with a connection to Apple where they'll receive news, tips, and inspiration.

They can also download and explore the [Apple Teacher Starter Guides](#) from the iBooks Store. These learning materials are designed to inspire new ideas for teaching, while also training teachers on the fundamentals of using iPad, Mac, and built-in apps. Getting familiar with the content will help ensure they have a great learning experience.



Launching Apple Teacher with a Kickoff Event

Schools across the country are holding fun kickoff events to introduce their staff to the Apple Teacher Program in a group setting so that everyone can begin the learning journey together. The goal is to set aside dedicated time, free from distraction, where teachers can get excited about the program and support each other while building momentum for earning recognition. Here are some best practices to consider as you plan your event:



Time

Deciding how long your Apple Teacher event will be depends on your professional learning goals. Some schools use just a few hours of their professional development day or staff meeting to introduce the program, and some spend a full in-service day learning together, providing a more immersive experience.



Format

Choose a format that works best for your teachers. You can have them work independently or in teams—at their own pace or through a friendly, timed challenge.



Location

A large room like a cafeteria or gym works well to accommodate all those attending and provides plenty of room for opening remarks, the event, and a closing celebration. You can use this generous space to set up stations for each badge. Individual classrooms work well too. Either way, teachers can focus on learning one app before moving on to another. Earning the badge becomes a plus!



Staffing

Teachers who are already Apple Teachers or in the process of becoming one can provide encouragement and support to others during the event. [Read](#) how Nikole Blanchard, Apple Distinguished Educator and technology director at The Dunham School in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, mobilized and energized her teachers to earn badges at her kickoff event.



Participants

Think about who should attend the event. It could be a specific department or the entire faculty. Maybe a smaller group setting is better for your staff. Some schools have invited neighboring schools to join them. You might even want to ask your district leadership to hold a districtwide event. Learning with teachers from schools can be exciting and expand the potential of what's possible.



Invitations

We've created the following text you can use to introduce the Apple Teacher Program when inviting teachers to your event:

Apple Teacher is a new professional learning program designed to support and celebrate teachers. You'll earn badges and an official Apple Teacher logo so you can share your achievement with the world. Join us for our Apple Teacher Program Kickoff, where you'll learn more about the program, explore the learning resources, and have the chance to earn badges and Apple Teacher recognition.



Flow for the event

Establish an agenda for the day. Plan for an opening session, a portion of the day where teachers work on learning and earning badges together, and a closing celebration to acknowledge their achievements—whether they earned one badge or all 20.



Opening session

We've created a [presentation](#) to guide you in developing an opening session for your event. It's designed to help you establish goals for the day, explain why you feel the Apple Teacher Program is important to your school's goals for teaching and learning, and set an enthusiastic tone for the day. Feel free to use it as a starting point for preparing your own presentation.



Maintaining Momentum

Once your event is over, it's a good idea to establish a plan for teachers to continue earning badges on their own. To keep the momentum going, consider setting a deadline for when they should earn their next set of badges. Here are a few other ways to keep faculty interested and engaged:

Mentor program

Once a core set of teachers have earned their recognition, launch a mentoring program. This group would provide encouragement and support to others along their journeys to becoming Apple Teachers. Conducting frequent check-ins, sending schoolwide communications, or sharing visible displays of accomplishment like posters and flyers are great ways to encourage others.

Badge Challenge

Roll out an Apple Teacher Badge Challenge so faculty can focus on earning one badge per week. Whether you choose an 8-week challenge that focuses on earning badges for iPad or Mac, or a 16-week challenge that focuses on both, a Badge Challenge is a great way to get your teachers engaged and build momentum. At your next professional learning day, a few teachers could share what they've learned—from something simple like a new feature they've discovered, to a new way of using an app in a lesson.

Study Buddy program

Create an Apple Teacher Study Buddy program in which two or three teachers team up to study for their badges. Bringing together teachers within the same grade level or department can inspire them to discover fresh ways to teach a particular subject. Or encourage diversity of thought and identification of best practices across subject areas by inviting teachers from different departments to buddy up.



Celebrating Your Teachers

We know that teachers are motivated by their accomplishments. Once you've determined how you'll deliver the program in your school, consider a few of these ideas for acknowledging educators who've started earning a few badges or have finished earning their recognition as an Apple Teacher. Then make your own list. Be creative!

- Share what your faculty has achieved on your district website or intranet, at board meetings, or through the district's newsletter.
- Share photos of your teachers earning their badges on your school website, newsletter, learning management system, or social media channels. Be inspired by the [Saint Viator High School Educational Computer Technology Department](#) in Arlington Heights, Illinois, who used their school's Twitter account as a key motivational tool. Or see how [Piedmont High School](#) in Piedmont, Alabama, who also used Twitter to honor their teachers.
- Announce your school's Apple Teacher milestones. A life-size temperature chart is a great way to show the percentage of teachers who've earned their recognition. Update it weekly or monthly, and place it in the front office for everyone to see. Share this good news with your staff, parents, district, and community.
- Plan a celebration for your new Apple Teachers at the next staff event, back-to-school night, PTA meeting, or special school ceremony.
- Have plenty of prizes and rewards to motivate and inspire your teachers—serve the lunch of their choice, offer the principal's parking space, or award gift cards. Or consider making door stickers like those created by Jon Smith, an Apple Distinguished Educator and the technology integration specialist for Alliance City Schools in Alliance, Ohio.

However you celebrate, we encourage you to follow us on Twitter @AppleEDU and use #AppleTeacher to connect with us and share your accomplishments with thousands of teachers around the world.





Awarding Professional Learning Hours

To integrate Apple Teacher into your professional development offering, consider qualifying the Apple Teacher Program for 16 hours of professional development as the baseline for earning recognition. This conservative estimate includes the time an educator needs for reading and completing the activities in the Apple Teacher Starter Guide books and taking each quiz to earn a badge. We calculated this estimate using this formula: 2 hours per badge earned x 8 badges possible for either iPad or Mac path = 16 hours.

You can also offer additional professional development hours with activities that strengthen the skills learned in the program:

- One additional hour for contributing to a professional learning community where educators meet and share their experiences applying the content in their teaching.
- Two additional hours for acting as a peer mentor and helping another teacher with questions and developing ideas.
- Four additional hours for developing, documenting, and sharing a project from the teacher's own curriculum that demonstrates the core skills taught in two or more of the Apple Teacher Starter Guide books.

If you're in a school or state where professional learning hours are determined locally, or if you're in a private school, you can determine how many hours each badge is worth based on your expectations and how you execute the program. Choose an appropriate format for teachers to demonstrate further learning after they create the project required to earn each badge. See how teachers in [Barrington 220 School District](#) in Barrington, Illinois, were able to earn up to 10 professional hours with the Apple Teacher Program.

If you're in a school where the state determines how professional learning hours can be earned, consider submitting a request for the Apple Teacher Program to become an approved professional learning opportunity. Be inspired by educators at [Berwyn South School District](#) in Berwyn, Illinois, who successfully implemented this idea, and start a movement in your own state.

Going Further

Apple believes that authentic technology integration is a journey from skill acquisition to instructional innovation. We provide a range of rich resources beyond the Apple Teacher Program to meet the needs of educators—whatever their skill level—including Apple Store offerings, Apple Professional Learning Providers, and Apple Professional Learning Specialists.

Apple Store

Encourage your teachers to visit your local Apple Store for an amazing learning experience. With “Today at Apple” in-store programs just for educators, you can take your teachers on a Field Trip to focus on a specific Apple app, such as Keynote or Pages. Teacher Tuesdays, regularly scheduled hands-on sessions for teachers, help you unlock the magic of iPad and Apple apps—enhancing productivity and boosting creativity with students. Teachers can then go further in the Apple Teacher program and earn badges. Schedule a Field Trip or sign up for a session [online](#).

Apple Professional Learning Provider

Bring in [EdTechTeam](#) to help you and your faculty get started. EdTechTeam offers online courses, workshops, and conferences built around the Apple Teacher Program that introduce teachers to iPad, Mac, and Apple creative apps.* Sessions are led and supported by [Apple Distinguished Educators](#) or exemplary Apple Teachers who teach and lead from their own experiences. EdTechTeam also hosts their own Apple Teacher online community—a place where members can connect with others and get ongoing support as they build skills, earn badges, and work toward receiving their Apple Teacher recognition.

Apple Professional Learning Specialists

Educators tell us that the most effective professional learning includes coaching and mentoring experiences from trusted professionals they work with. Once your teachers have acquired the core skills offered in the Apple Teacher Program, they’re ready to focus on instructional practice innovation with the help of Apple Professional Learning Specialists. These experts work shoulder-to-shoulder with teachers to build the confidence they need to make innovations in their instructional pedagogy. This approach reflects Apple’s belief that instructional transformation depends on a relationship that’s built over time. To learn more, email apls@apple.com.

To learn more about the Apple Teacher Program, visit www.apple.com/education/apple-teacher.

*EdTechTeam events and services are fee-based. See www.edtechteam.com/apple for more information.

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