

NCTE Affiliate Creative Pathways Award

Purpose of the Award: This award honors affiliates that intentionally recruit and support educators who are new to the teaching profession—including recently graduated education majors and professionals transitioning from other careers. It recognizes affiliates that go beyond traditional recruitment to create meaningful, sustained support that aligns with NCTE's mission, values, and position statements.

In order to earn the award, the majority of an affiliate’s submission materials must successfully fall into the “Meets Expectations” level of achievement

- An affiliate may have two criteria identified as “Approaching Expectations” and still earn an award as long as all of the other criteria are in the “Meets Expectations” category.
- They may not have any criteria identified as “Working Towards Expectations” or “Not Yet Meeting Expectations.”

Level of Achievement	Success Criteria
<p>Exceeds Expectations <i>The affiliate provides compelling, innovative, and well-documented evidence of programming, professionalism, and policies that demonstrate an exceptional and sustained commitment to supporting new and alternatively certified educators in alignment with NCTE's mission.</i></p>	
<p>Meets Expectations <i>The affiliate provides high-quality, cohesive evidence of the programming, professionalism, and policies that demonstrate they fully support new and alternatively certified educators and NCTE's mission.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The affiliate has established or maintains a clear mentorship structure that pairs new and/or alternatively certified teachers with experienced ELA educators for ongoing professional support. ● The affiliate demonstrates intentional outreach and recruitment efforts that extend beyond traditional preservice pipelines to reach career-switchers, temporarily or alternatively certified educators, and others entering the profession through nontraditional pathways. ● The affiliate designs and implements programming — such as workshops, conference sessions, affinity spaces, or online communities — that specifically addresses the needs of teachers who are new to the profession and/or new to ELA content. ● The affiliate creates deliberate space for new teachers in its leadership structures and committees, ensuring their perspectives are represented in organizational decision making. ● The affiliate communicates consistently and accessibly with new teacher members through multiple channels (social media, newsletters, direct outreach) to ensure they feel welcomed and informed. ● The affiliate demonstrates awareness of and responsiveness to the specific challenges faced by teachers entering through alternative certification routes, including temporary certification holders, and has programming or resources that address those challenges. ● The affiliate's new teacher support work reflects NCTE's values around equity, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring that recruitment and mentorship efforts reach educators from a range of backgrounds and communities. ● The affiliate shows evidence that its support of new teachers extends through the early years of the career, not only at the point of recruitment or initial membership.
<p>Approaching Expectations <i>The affiliate provides adequate evidence of the programming, professionalism, and policies that demonstrate they mostly support new and alternatively certified educators and NCTE's mission.</i></p>	
<p>Working Toward Expectations <i>The affiliate provides minimal and/or unclear evidence of the programming, professionalism, and policies that demonstrate they somewhat support new and alternatively certified educators and NCTE's mission.</i></p>	

Not Yet Meeting Expectations

The affiliate provides insufficient evidence of the programming, professionalism, and policies that demonstrate they support new and alternatively certified educators and NCTE's mission. The affiliate may have missed required pieces of evidence or submitted incomplete materials.