



## **REACH UNIVERSITY INTEGRATES EDWELL'S WELLNESS COACHING INTO TEACHER TRAINING TO ENHANCE EDUCATOR PREPAREDNESS, RETENTION, AND SUCCESS**

*REACH LAUNCHES EDUCATOR WELLNESS PILOT FOR ENROLLED TEACHER CANDIDATES; EDWELL PIVOTS ITS FOCUS TO EXPANDING U.S. REGISTERED TEACHER APPRENTICESHIPS*

(OAKLAND, California) – July 11, 2024 – Reach University, the accredited nonprofit university dedicated to advancing job-embedded degrees and credentials, and Edwell, a nonprofit educator wellness and social-emotional learning coaching provider, today announced a strategic transaction to integrate Edwell's well-being coaching solutions into Reach's on-the-job teacher preparation program. The transfer of assets, which includes Edwell's coaching framework, research, and data, will be used to launch a Reach undergraduate and graduate-level wellness pilot beginning on September 1, 2024.

Edwell's governance and programmatic efforts will now transition to building the "well" of teacher talent through K-12 Teacher Registered Apprenticeship Programs to support school districts develop a high-quality pipeline of teachers. As Edwell pivots its programmatic focus, the remaining entity has retained its name, branding, and marketing platforms. This reorganization allows Edwell to continue its founding mission of "being well and teaching well," while expanding the impact of its educator solutions through Reach University and its reconstituted leadership and efforts.

"As Reach and its partners address our nation's teacher shortage, we approach talent solutions holistically, from recruitment to training and longer-term retention," said Joe E. Ross, President of Reach University. "In integrating Edwell's wellness solutions, we stand as one, if not the only, training program offering well-being coaching to prepare classroom-ready teachers. Just as every Reach candidate graduates with liberal arts and STEM skills, they will now also graduate with the mental health resources to thrive in the day-to-day experiences of teaching. We are eager to witness the results of this pilot and will seek opportunities to collaborate with Edwell as it focuses on expanding the 'well' of teacher talent through registered apprenticeships."

Reach's 2024-2025 academic year pilot is offered to all enrolled candidates at no additional cost. Although recommended for candidates throughout the Reach Teachers College, the pilot will place the greatest emphasis on first-year, foundational candidates and higher-risk candidates, such as those with multiple jobs or caregiving for family members. Candidates can select from confidential coaching sessions, consisting of 1:1 individual and/or longer-form, topic-focused forums. Each session is led by an Edwell-trained coach who is either a current or former educator specialized in self-reflection and social-emotional learning.

"As a former educator and instructional coach, I saw firsthand that professional development isn't enough to ensure educators stay and thrive in and out of the classroom," said Nicola Fleischer, Co-Founder and former Executive Director of Edwell and Reach University alumna. "To teach well, teachers have to be well. I am confident that we can amplify the original mission of Edwell through Reach University's growing and impactful footprint, while also expanding the



definition of teacher wellness through Edwell’s new programmatic focus. Edwell’s mission will undoubtedly reach new heights in this next phase of impact.”

In recently released [RAND findings](#) on teacher well-being and intentions to leave the field, twice as many teachers are experiencing “frequent job-related stress or burnout” and roughly “three times as many teachers reported difficulty coping with job-related stress” compared to other working adults. Female teachers also reported “significantly higher rates of frequent job-related stress” than their male counterparts. [Seventy-seven percent](#) of U.S. public school teachers are female.

“In working with an Edwell coach, I’ve learned so much both personally and professionally,” said Elena Turner, Teacher and Department Chair at California’s Birmingham Community Charter High School. “On a personal front, I’m managing my emotions and negative thoughts through mindfulness practices. As a department chair, I’m refining my leadership skills, leading to greater faculty collaboration and outcomes. As an educator, I am connecting with my students on a much deeper level, fostering more engagement and learning. Work is no longer just a job; it’s now a place of growth. By cultivating my own mindful confidence, I’ve fostered a welcoming and supportive classroom environment where students thrive, resulting in improved well-being and academic performance for both myself and my students.”

The reconstitution of Edwell is currently underway, led by Kristi Kirschner, formerly Chief Human Resources Officer at Texas’s Brazosport Independent School District. In her former role, Kirschner led the launch of the state’s first registered teacher apprenticeship program.

“Teacher apprenticeships are rapidly expanding across the country, and a growing number of K-12 districts are now able to successfully build a high-quality teacher pipeline of local, qualified, and representative educators,” said Kirschner. “In this new focus, Edwell will redefine its inaugural mission of ‘being well and teaching well’ to ensure every aspiring educator, K-12 school, and state agency can launch and expand a no-cost/low-cost registered teacher apprenticeship program. Together, we’ll build a ‘well’ of teacher talent, promote employer sustainability, and foster economic mobility for aspiring educators. Our goal is to bring accessible on-the-job teacher training to every U.S. classroom and community.”

To learn more about the integration of Edwell’s coaching solutions into Reach, please visit [www.reach.edu](http://www.reach.edu). To learn more about Edwell’s reconstituted focus on high-quality and federally-sponsored teacher apprenticeship programs, please visit <https://edwell.org>.

## **ABOUT REACH UNIVERSITY**

[Reach University](#) is a regionally accredited, nonprofit university dedicated to advancing job-embedded degrees and credentials. Reach is actively solving America’s teacher shortage by creating fully-embedded pathways for high-potential individuals to earn degrees, credentials, and jobs as teachers within their own communities. By focusing on low-income, urban, and rural regions, offering online tutorials and classes, and rendering academic credit for on-the-job experience, Reach University is eliminating barriers to entry in high-need professions, and

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building untapped pipelines of locally representative talent. Reach University currently operates in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and Tennessee.

Media Inquiries:

**For Reach University:**

Lauren Bauml

(512) 923-6136

[LBauml@reach.edu](mailto:LBauml@reach.edu)

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