




Department of
Education

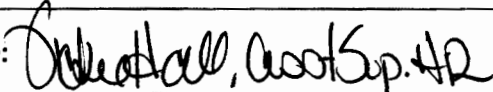
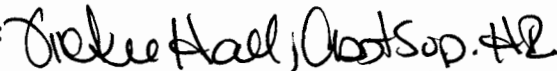
Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	Belmont University
Local Education Agency (LEA)	Williamson County Schools
Academic Year of Agreement	2024-25

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Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
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Signature: 	Date: 615-460-6505 10/1/24

LEA Head Administrator: Jason Golden	Title: Superintendent
Signature: 	Date: 



Prompt
1

Identify goals for recruiting high-quality candidates, including candidates from a broad range of backgrounds and diverse populations, and how evidence will be collected, shared, and used to increase the educator pipeline. *NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.*

Belmont University (BU) and Williamson County Schools (WCS) actions discussion below will be completed as part of the the primary partnership agreement.

1. Review current recruitment and selection goals identified by BU in their 2020 Recruitment plan informed by data on national teacher shortage areas and enrollment in teacher education programs from the Education Commission of the States (ECS), local and regional data on teacher shortage areas and Teacher Education enrollment provided by TDOE and institutional enrollment data. Determine if the identified goals encompass the needs of WCS and/or if additional goals are needed based on WCS Human Capital Data Report (HCDR) and/or other district data. Proposed goals included, but are not limited to:
 - a) increase the number of teacher candidates (undergraduate and graduate) pursuing licensure in the College of Education (COE);
 - b) increase the number of teacher candidates pursuing licensure in identified high needs areas in COE programs.
 - c) increase and maintain racial/ethnic diversity of teacher candidates pursuing licensure in COE programs.
2. Review recruitment strategies and develop additional strategies to focus on agreed upon goals. BU's current recruitment strategies include attending career fairs and events, collaboration with community colleges, hosting monthly informational sessions for both graduate and undergraduate prospective students, exploration and interest meetings with local high school students, engagement with churches and other community partners, individual phone calls and campus visits. Beginning in the fall of 2022, university faculty regularly facilitate weekly admission tours and meet with prospective candidates. Additionally, BU hosts monthly virtual sessions for prospective graduate students to provide information for and answer questions about the job-embedded and MAT programs.
3. Meet biannually to monitor the effectiveness of the recruitment and selection plan strategies. Data from WCS HCDR and BU's admission, completer, and retention data from the current year will be used to evaluate the plan and determine if new goals or strategies are needed.
4. Place a minimum of 50% of general education intern and student teacher placements per academic year in WCS. Resident and job-embedded placements are determed by the hiring district and not the EPP.

Evidence will be collected, shared, and used in the following ways:

- BU will survey WCS partners to understand teacher vacancies and needs. Priority areas include, but are not limited to, secondary math, special education, and world languages. Survey data are used to inform programmatic decision making (creation of new program offerings, grant opportunities, etc.).
- BU facilitates steering committee meetings with WCS district partners to determine next steps.
- WCS regularly shares any BU recruitment and marketing advertisements/opportunities/resource widely across the district.



Education

Prompt
2

Describe the strategies and actions in place to co-select clinical educators and collaborate to prepare, evaluate, and support high-quality clinical educators, both provider and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and pre-k-12 students. *NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.*

Clinical educators will be selected in collaboration with BU Clinical faculty and WCS representatives,

According to TN Educator Preparation Policy 5.504, minimum criteria for school based clinical educators include:

- 1) hold an active TN license with an endorsement in the area or closely related area where are will be supervising the candidate,
- 2) have an overall effectiveness of above expectations or significantly above expectations for previous school year,
- 3) have a minimum of 3 years of experience as a teacher, school services personnel, or instructional leader as applicable.

In addition, clinical educators requirements include, but are not limited to:

- 4) collaborative and reflective teacher,
- 5) positive dispositions,
- 6) effective communication skills, and
- 7) completion of clinical educator training.

Minimum criteria for provider based clinical educators (supervisors) will include:

- 1) master's degree or higher
- 2) seven years of teaching or school administrative experience, and
- 3) holding a valid educator license in the area or closely related area, and/or grade level of supervision.

The partnership will include a process for selecting school based clinical educators (mentors) who meet the identified criteria. At a minimum, this process will include WCS to assist in the selection of identifying teachers to serve as clinical educators and for BU to request placement for teacher candidates. Provider based clinical educators (supervisors) selection will include 1) reviewing the job description annually with WCS to allow opportunities for input, 2) inviting a member of WCS to serve on the interview panel alongside Belmont faculty and administrators.

The partnership will create and implement a common process for preparing clinical educators. This will include collaboratively developed mentor training that all must complete. This training includes online and in-person meeting and is facilitated by members of the partnership. Content will include areas of agreed upon need as identified by the partnership and will include, but is not limited to overview of handbooks, effective mentoring, edTPA requirements, co-teaching models, and BU evaluation forms designed to provide feedback to candidates to ensure they are receiving positive feedback, as well as constructive feedback to improve their teaching.

The partnership will develop a protocol for a conversation between clinical mentors and clinical supervisors that focuses on ways clinical educators can best support teacher candidates. The partnership will continue use of satisfaction surveys to review triangulation data between clinical mentors, supervisors and teacher candidates to identify areas of growth needed and improve clinical educator support. This data will be shared annually with WCS.

Prompt
3

Describe the design and implementation of clinical experiences, utilizing various modalities, of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on pre-k-12 students (For instructional leader programs, ensure how clinical experiences allow opportunities for candidates to practice applications of content knowledge and skills.). *NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.*

The BU/WCS Teacher Education Affiliation agreement addresses its design of clinical experiences to ensure educator candidates demonstrate developing effectiveness and positive impact on students' learning/development aligned with CAEP, TN Standards and the TEAM Evaluation. The agreement will be maintained on file with the Director of Clinical Practice and reviewed annually by the district and EPP.

The BU/WCS partnership ensures the following:

1. Programs meet minimum expectations for clinical practice as outlined in the educator preparation policy (5.504).
2. Educator candidates have regular and consistent opportunities to experience clinical experiences, including the minimum number of hours or days (as required) for both field experiences and the clinical practice, for all programs.
3. Educator candidates have regular and consistent opportunities to observe and practice in a variety of settings (within and across schools, during different times of day, across different types of instruction and school/classroom composition) to adequately cover the breadth of the endorsement.

Depth: Educator candidates will have opportunities to observe; tutor (through both individual and small group delivery); deliver instruction; and review/collect assessment data in frequent, varied, and intentionally planned experiences.

Coherence: Attention to the goals of each field/clinical experience will be sequenced to ensure developmental progression of the educator candidate across the continuum of their program. Based on evaluation data from clinical educators and BU faculty observations, BU will hold monthly department meetings to facilitate ongoing discussions regarding connection to practice and areas of needed improvement.

Breadth: BU faculty, with the support of WCS partners, will design/develop field and clinical experiences that include teaching and professional experiences reflecting appropriate content and pedagogical models across diverse school/classroom communities and curriculum.

Duration: Field and clinical experiences are designed and varied regarding the time in multiple settings based on the goals of preparing successful first-year teachers.

Diversity: Candidates will have regular opportunities to observe and practice in a variety of settings (across different schools, classrooms, types of instruction, times of day,) to adequately cover the breadth of the endorsement and ensure exposure to varied school communities, including suburban and rural.

All candidates placed in WCS receive a WCS email address which allows access to all curriculum and technology resources available to WCS in-service teachers. This access allows for adaptation to different modalities of teaching and observing (e.g., virtual) should circumstances require this change.



Education

Prompt
4

Describe the process partners use in the program design, evaluation, and decision-making for continuous improvement. *NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.*

BU and WCS are active partners in determining needs and actionable steps to improve program design, evaluation, and decision-making for the purposes of continuous improvement.

1. BU surveys WCS partners to understand teacher vacancies and needs. Survey data is instrumental in determine changes that need to be made to existing programs as well as additional programming that may be needed to address shortage areas. Recent survey data from WCS and other partners indicate the priority areas as secondary math, special education, and ESL.
2. BU engages with WCS district partners in various different capacities to interpret survey data, discuss additional needs and determine programmatic next steps. Examples of engagements include panels discussions with WCS teachers and administrators (recently conducted to support development of the approved special education interventionist program) and steering committee meetings with WCS HR administration to determine challenges and opportunities related to teacher vacancies and staffing (e.g., Math Residency Grant Steering Committee)
3. BU's Teacher Education Advisory Committee includes teachers and administrators from WCS to support programmatic decision making. This committee meets quarterly throughout the academic year, both in-person and virtually, to review survey data patterns and trends and feedback from district engagements and facilitate decision-making and actionable next steps.

In partnership with WCS, BU regularly utilizes the mechanisms listed above to improve program offerings to candidates. In 2021, BU received a \$2 million grant to increase the number of secondary math and ESL candidates. In 2022, initiated by stakeholder feedback from the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, Belmont's entire job-embedded program was revised and offered online. This supported an almost 200% increase in our graduate program. This year, BU launched its new instructional leader program (see separate instructional leader PPA with Williamson County). In addition, BU is in process of seeking state and university approval for the integrated early childhood pre-K-3 program.

**Prompt
5**

Describe how partners will collaborate and make decisions to ensure candidate preparation is inclusive of LEA curricular content and materials. *NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.*

BU and WCS collaborate to ensure candidate preparation is inclusive of LEA curricular content and materials in the following ways:

1. All candidates placed in WCS receive a WCS email address which allows access to all curriculum and technology resources available to WCS in-service teachers.
2. Candidates are required to participate in all WCS professional development opportunity, including those focused on standards changes, curriculum adoption training, technology use, etc.
3. BU faculty participate in LEA curricular professional development (e.g. Early Reading Training) to ensure connection making in university classrooms.
4. BU collaborates with WCS to recruit adjunct teachers from the field to teach university courses. Adjunct teachers from the field bring a wealth of knowledge regarding current curriculum implementation. This engagement also allows the university faculty to engage with the adjunct teachers when planning for courses to ensure the content and pedagogy is streamlined across all sections.
5. University supervisors, co-selected by WCS and BU, regularly engage with candidates in the classroom when observing lessons, often crafted from the required LEA curriculum. Supervisor feedback supports any changes that may need to be made in methods courses to ensure high-quality candidate preparation.

In the spring of 2023, BU faculty collaborated with the WCS math coordinator to inquire about how to support our candidates with the newly adopted LEA math curriculum.



Education

**Primary
Partnership
Outcomes**

As partners work together to develop and implement the primary partnership agreement, describe the desired EPP and LEA short-term and long-term outcomes of the partnership agreement. Include a timeline if applicable.

Short Term Goals:

BU received approval from SACSCOC and the state of Tennessee to launch a new instructional leadership program, beginning in fall 2024. BU will continue to collaborate with WCS partners to co-construct the MEd and EdS pathways. The focus of the collaboration will include: admission requirements, recruitment, candidate evaluation, coursework, and clinical experience.

Long Term Goals:

Continue recruitment efforts by promoting new program offerings and scholarship opportunities (e.g., 30% tuition reduction for graduate programs) to increase pipeline efforts.

Collaborate to expand teacher residency options for candidates to include additional high needs areas (e.g., World Language).