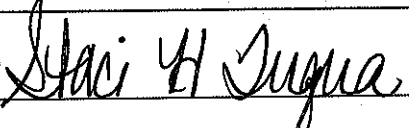



## Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

<b>Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)</b>	University of Tennessee at Martin
<b>Local Education Agency (LEA)</b>	Weakley County Schools
<b>Academic Year of Agreement</b>	2023-2024

EPP Contact/Designee	
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Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
<b>EPP Head Administrator:</b> Staci Fuqua	<b>Title:</b> Director of EPP
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 9-29-23
<b>LEA Head Administrator:</b> Betsi Foster	<b>Title:</b> Asst. Director
<b>Signature:</b> 	<b>Date:</b> 9-29-23

**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.*

One of our current recruitment goals is to increase the number of completers to address the growing teacher shortage, especially completers with high-need endorsements such as special education and ESL. WCS is concerned about the number of special education teachers scheduled to retire in the school district. To increase our output of quality special education-endorsed and ESL-endorsed educators, the EPP has implemented the following recruitment measures:

- A dual endorsement program that allows students in this course of study to obtain endorsements in both PreK-3 and special education.
- Implementation of SPED and ESL licensure bootcamps
- Participation in the TDOE Grow Your Own program, a no-cost apprenticeship pathway to the teaching profession. Participants are professional employees of the school system who become registered teacher apprentices in a classroom under the direction of highly qualified teacher mentors. The aim is to expand local partnerships, increase teacher numbers, and increase demographic representation in the education workforce.
- As part of the Grow Your Own grant, the EPP has implemented online, asynchronous bootcamps for licensed teachers to earn SPED and ESL add-on endorsements.

WCS indicated high school biology, chemistry, math, and Spanish as high need areas experiencing shortages of available teachers in the district. The EPP and WCS will collaborate on recruitment efforts to target candidates for these content areas in particular.

Another shared goal is to increase the number of students from diverse backgrounds and populations admitted into the EPP. As a strategy, the Call Me Mister Program will graduate five African American males each year with degrees in education. WCS helps identify potential recruits from their district who meet the criteria and have interest in the Call Me Mister Program. WCS has the opportunity to meet and recruit these graduates before other districts.

Juniors and seniors from Weakley County high schools visit the campus at UTM. For students interested in teaching or are undecided, the EPP sponsors special events centered around education as a major and provides a campus tour. The EPP faculty and staff will place renewed efforts on visiting Weakley County schools to speak to prospective students about our offerings and opportunities. These efforts include a "recruitment caravan" and a "signing day" to celebrate students' commitment to pursuing entrance to the EPP. WCS invites EPP faculty and staff into classes that teach high needs subjects throughout the district to stimulate student interest in careers in education. Faculty invite WCS district leaders to speak in trainings, seminars, and classes to discuss professionalism and teacher completer expectations.

WCS sponsors the Future Educators Program to generate interest among students who plan to pursue education as a profession. This program provides time for students to observe and be active in district classrooms that match their desired content areas. WCS invites UTM faculty and staff to speak to WCS high school students about entrance into the EPP, professionalism, and ethics. Faculty are invited to monthly literacy meetings to collaborate and ensure candidates are taught the most recent state and local standards and strategies.

The EPP and its Recruitment/Retention committee, through collaboration with WCS and the Advisory Board, will develop a strategy for identifying diverse candidates with specific teaching interests. WCS commits to collecting and sharing student data to help identify candidates.

Another shared goal includes vetting candidates through a quality admissions process that includes a professional interview. WCS principals and supervisors serve on EPP committees that interview candidates before entering the EPP to provide feedback on candidate qualifications. The EPP holds debriefing sessions with WCS principals and supervisors to discuss candidate qualifications as they apply to WCS needs.

Weakley County Schools have been awarded an ESSER grant to fund tutoring and has invited UTM student teaching

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.*

UTM and WCS work closely during field placements to select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider and school-based, who positively impact candidates' preK-12 learning and development. UTM and WCS have reviewed and refined current clinical experience protocols.

Teacher candidates' placement occurs as the placement coordinator collaborates with principals to select clinical mentors (CMs) who have an overall effectiveness score above expectations (4) or significantly above expectations (5) for the previous school year and have a minimum of three years classroom teaching experience. From this group of skilled educators, the principal chooses the teachers with the qualities and skills necessary to serve as CMs to support and evaluate teacher candidates throughout their clinical experiences. Principals will ensure that CMs demonstrate knowledge how to apply TEAM rubric criteria to evaluations. The EPP will review principal recommendations to verify that teachers nominated as CMs meet the selection criteria. Both entities agree to consider the number of candidates any one CM has over time while being sensitive to how many different CMs the students have the opportunity to work with. WCS acknowledges that the CM experience allows veteran teachers to build capacity to hold future leadership roles. The selected CMs offer support and expertise to candidates during the on-site experiences.

UTM and WCS will work to develop a form that allows all teachers within the district to indicate interest in serving as a clinical mentor. This form will allow teachers to self-report their qualifications for serving as a CM, why they want to serve, and what characteristics they possess that would make them quality mentors. Applicants would secure recommendations from their principals as part of the process. This would provide a pool of prospective CMs, including new teachers who do not yet have the years of experience but would be interested in serving as a CM later in their careers.

UTM recruits former educators who have both the experience and the professional dispositions necessary to support and evaluate teacher candidates. UTM provides teacher orientations and seminars to prepare candidates for their clinical experiences in WC schools. UTM also conducts training sessions for both university supervisors (US) and CMs to familiarize them with the procedures and protocols for working with candidates. The EPP commits to expanding these trainings to include mentorship training, as well as remediation training if necessary to retain CMs and help improve effectiveness.

The WCS CMs work one-on-one with candidates to inform, support, and guide them throughout their clinical experiences. The USs frequently meet with the candidates during the student teaching semester to provide additional feedback to reinforce or refine candidate pedagogical skills and evaluate candidate clinical performance. The CMs and the USs use the TEAM rubric to assess candidate performance. The EPP and WCS agreed and selected the TEAM rubric for classroom evaluation for two reasons: 1. to provide a consistent measurement tool and 2. to familiarize candidates further with the tool used to evaluate them as clinical educators in Tennessee. The EPP ensures that all supervising faculty maintain current TEAM teacher evaluator certification.

Candidates provide feedback regarding the quality of support and oversight provided by the CMs and USs. CMs provide input regarding the performance of USs, and vice versa, via electronic evaluations. CMs also provide input via participation in advisory boards. Electronic surveys are used to gather satisfaction information from the candidates, the CMs, and the USs. UTM will provide CM effectiveness data to principals and CMs for the purpose of retaining high-quality CMs and providing remediation where necessary.

Strategies that UTM employs to retain clinical educators and EPP supervisors are compensation and training. UTM provides stipends to CMs and USs for their work. The EPP provides training centered around procedures and materials based on pedagogical best practices to CMs and USs to enhance impact and retention. The EPP and WCS will continue to collaborate on methods for incentivizing teacher participation as CMs.

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.*

Through this partnership, both parties agreed that UTM candidates needed more robust clinical experience in addition to the student teaching experience. This concept of Residency I and II were initially discussed during a regional Northwest Tennessee CORE office meeting of instructional supervisors, including representatives from WCS. This initiative is regarded as a success.

In Residency I (RI), candidates now begin clinical experience when P-12 schools start as part of the "First Days of School" experience, not when college courses start, increasing the duration, the depth, and the breadth of the clinical experience. This experience enables candidates to experience important factors of the teaching profession that they would not have otherwise observed or encountered, including communicating course expectations, establishing effective classroom management systems, participating in emergency preparedness activities, classroom- and school-level organizational concerns, and setting up parental contact methods. Clinical observation time has also increased as a result of the creation of the RI component. As part of the RI component, candidates see their teaching responsibilities gradually increased from pure observation to teaching multiple sections. This method allows them to gain valuable teaching experience and familiarity with their students prior to RII. WCS reported that this joint initiative had made a positive impact on overall student success.

In Residency II (RII), student teaching, students complete clinical experiences in two placements. In Placement I of RII, students continue the work they began in RI by returning to the same classroom and completing nine weeks of active student teaching with that same group of students. Candidates are now able to witness and participate in establishing routines, procedures, rules, etc. from Day 1 of the school year. They can see how those components translate across the course of the year into the second semester. Candidates have stated that this experience is extremely valuable to their preparation to understand the school year in its entirety.

In RII, candidates remain in Placement 1 for nine weeks; immediately after Placement 1 ends, Placement 2 begins and continues for seven weeks. Because candidates complete two placements during Residency II, they can experience greater variety and diversity in their placement settings such as grade level, diverse content in elementary school, and racial and social diversity. WCS understands our candidates' needs and assists us along with other LEAs to ensure this variety. Every effort is made to place students in two diverse placements; diversity may be based on the following criteria: special or regular education, socio-economic status, diversity of administration or cooperating teachers, diversity of academic grades, race, gender, and ethnicity.

WCS schools identified the need for additional methods activities for secondary majors as needing improvement. The EPP and faculty agreed and responded by increasing the number of clinical hours and hands-on activities for secondary majors, thus providing more rigor while moving this group toward a residency model similar to the middle and elementary endorsement areas. WCS also identified the need for additional classroom management training for EPP candidates. The EPP will explore and implement training opportunities for candidates to be prepared to meet the unique needs of modern P-12 students.

WCS and the EPP will collaborate on clinical and curricular experiences to more intentionally incorporate technology into the candidates practices for teaching and learning. This will include experiences for candidates to practice delivering instruction through multiple modalities, including Zoom and asynchronous online learning.

Mrs. Betsi Foster, Assistant Director of WCS, stated that the quality of candidates and completers from UTM surpassed candidates' quality from other institutions entering WCS. She believes that WCS and UTM will continue to be great partners for many years to come.

**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.*

WCS representatives are invited to serve on EPP CAEP accreditation committees, in which they provide collaborative input on program design, evaluation, and decision-making. By serving on these committees, WCS has direct involvement in course development, professional preparation, partnership processes, selection and training of clinical educators, design of clinical experiences, recruitment and retention efforts, evaluation of program impact, and quality assurance efforts for continuous improvement.

The EPP and WCS district stakeholders recently collaborated on the design of the Integrated Early Childhood SAP. The EPP met with WCS district stakeholder to better understand current practices in the field in order to develop the curriculum and field experiences to be mutually beneficial.

WCS representatives are invited to serve on the UT Martin EPP Advisory Board. The Advisory Board meets a minimum of two times per year to discuss opportunities for improvement or innovation and to share data for decision-making.

The EPP will make a renewed effort to hold regular partner meetings at key points each academic year to ensure ongoing collaboration, co-creation, and feedback on program design, evaluation processes, and decision-making for continuous improvement.

The EPP and WCS will communicate opportunities for WCS administrators and teachers to speak as guests on special topics in UTM EPP courses.

**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.*

As part of ongoing cycle of partner meetings and Advisory Board meetings, the EPP and WCS representatives will collaborate and make decisions regularly to ensure candidate preparation is inclusive of LEA curricular content and materials. In recent years, WCS expressed concerns that candidates need more preparation for analyzing and utilizing student data and for making application of HQIM curriculum. Mrs. Betsi Foster has acknowledged that there has been noted improvement among EPP teacher candidates in these key areas since the feedback was offered. WCS also recently identified the need for additional classroom management training for EPP candidates. The EPP will explore and implement training opportunities for candidates to be prepared to meet the unique needs of modern P-12 students.

In response to growing efforts to implement sounds-first foundational skills instruction and a renewed emphasis on disciplinary literacy across the state, multiple UTM faculty have participated as trainers of teachers in early reading and secondary literacy trainings. These efforts have equipped UTM EPP faculty and staff to help prepare candidates for the expectations of WCS curricular content and materials. WCS and the EPP will maintain close communication and collaboration to inform EPP faculty of necessary knowledge and skills, as well as training and licensure expectations, required of EPP teacher candidates. The EPP has also integrated the Tennessee Early Literacy Assessment and the Early and Secondary Literacy trainings into coursework so students pursuing relevant endorsement areas will meet licensure requirements.

EPP faculty frequently meet with WCS district CTs and administration regarding curriculum and materials used by the district. WCS often shares resources so candidates can become familiar LEA content and materials. WCS will include the UT Martin EPP when ordering and distributing physical and online curricular content and materials.

<b>Primary Partnership Outcomes</b>	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.
<p>Short-Term (Fall 2023 semester and ongoing):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Collaborate on EPP Residency I and II handbooks</li><li>Collaborate on training for CTs and USs, including mentorship training</li><li>Recruitment events specific to Weakley County Schools: high school visits, Teacher Bowl, "Signing Day"</li><li>Recruitment efforts specific to high need high school concentrations (biology, chemistry, math, Spanish)</li></ul> <p>Long-Term (Revisit annually):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ongoing development and refinement of collaboration processes</li><li>Establish a process for EPP verification of CT qualifications</li><li>Establish process for providing feedback on CT effectiveness and remediation training</li><li>Development of a high-school-to-classroom educator pipeline between WCS and the EPP</li></ul>	