



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN

Memorandum of Understanding

Grissom School of Education, University of Tennessee Southern

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made and entered into this 15th day of July, 2021 between the **University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education and Williamson County Schools.**

Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency State-Recognized Partnership Agreement

Prompt 1: Identify mutually-agreed upon strategies to **select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators**, both provider and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates' development and pre-K–12 student learning and development.

University of Tennessee Southern (UTS) understands that working together with area LEAs to recruit and select the best candidates for the Teacher Education Program is of great benefit to both the College and the LEA. The following areas have been selected and mutually agreed upon for strategies and goals:

1. In order to recruit candidates for the program, UTS will be available to attend College/Career Fairs held for middle and high schools. College staff will provide attendees with information about becoming a K-12 teacher and encourage their interests in education.
2. University of Tennessee Southern will host high school and middle school counselors on campus to provide information about college offerings and financial aid.
3. UTS continues to provide a program to assist paraprofessionals in achieving teacher licensure. TATL (Teacher Assistant to Teacher License) is designed to provide support to currently employed teacher assistants a pathway to achieving a teaching license.
4. In order to be admitted to the UTS Teacher Education Program, a student must have an ACT composite of 19 and pass CORE; have at least three dispositions assessments from the student, college faculty and student advisor/mentor. The student must also pass a background check.
5. UTS, through community and state resources, will aid students in need.
6. Ongoing discussions and surveys regarding needs of participating LEAs will continue to determine the areas of greatest need to encourage those students entering the program to seek licensure in those areas. Data from program enrollment and completion at UTS, data from LEA human capital report and discussions with the LEA staff will determine the needs of the district for high needs endorsement as well as underrepresented groups.

Prompt 2: Identify mutually agreed upon **design of clinical experiences of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence and duration** to ensure that candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on all students' learning and development.

1. Both clinical supervisors and clinical mentors are agreed upon by both University of Tennessee Southern and the LEA. Because of the small numbers of UTS educator staff, clinical supervisors are determined by UTS staff with knowledge of the LEA. The college will continue to seek to recruit staff who have the skills to provide feedback to the clinical practice students as well as to the clinical mentors. The clinical supervisors shall have appropriate training in TEAM (or other state approved evaluation system). If a problem should arise with a supervisor, the



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appropriate district staff will bring concerns to the UTS department chair to rectify. Because the LEA is more familiar with the teachers and schools, the district recommends placements for the Teacher Candidates. The LEA chooses the clinical mentors with an effectiveness score of 4 or 5 in the previous year, they are licensed to teach in the area they are supervising and have at least 3 years of experience as a teacher. As with the clinical supervisors, should an issue develop, the LEA and the college have an open dialogue that allows for discussions to seek resolution.

2. Orientation for new and experienced mentors for both Field Experience and Clinical Practice will be conducted by the College. Differentiation of meeting content for those groups will be determined at the beginning of each semester. Professional Development Points (PDP) will be offered to those in attendance. An online orientation is being developed in order to meet the needs of mentor teachers.

3. University of Tennessee Southern will work with mentors to determine individual needs throughout the semester and provide coaching. LEA will inform the College when change is made in the evaluation instrument used by the district. This will allow the College Education faculty an opportunity to learn and incorporate these into classes as appropriate.

4. Discussions will be held with mentors throughout the clinical experience to discuss further needs and concerns. The supervisor and the mentor will discuss the needs and successes of the student and how the supervisor can provide additional support. The mentor and supervisor will have conversations about the effectiveness of the coaching provided to the Teacher Candidate. There will be a minimum of five visits (in-person and/or virtual) during the clinical placements. Others may be scheduled upon request by the administrator, teacher and/or student. UTS will work with the LEA to develop a plan for providing clinical mentors Professional Development in the areas of coaching and evaluation in order to observe, evaluate and give feedback. Data from surveys will be used to determine other PD topics needed to support mentors. An important component of the plan will be to increase the number of clinical mentors in the district as well as retaining current mentors.

5. Exit interviews/surveys with student, clinical mentor, and College clinical supervisor. Building administrators may also provide feedback as well. Data from the interviews/surveys will be shared with College Education faculty and LEAs. Data will be used to inform improvements in the program.

6. Clinical Mentors will be evaluated through the surveys completed by Teacher Candidates, discussions with Teacher Candidates and Mentors by Clinical Supervisors, TEAM observation data, and other anecdotal data that may present itself. Should a Clinical Mentor not meet the expectations of the EPP, a discussion will be held with the LEA to decide about future placements and/or additional coaching.

A. Purpose

This MOU is to establish a clinical placement agreement between the University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education and **Williamson County Schools**. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the roles, services, and structure of this clinical placement agreement.

B. Roles

University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education

The Grissom School of Education provides coursework, field and clinical experiences for candidates seeking Tennessee Department of Education



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teacher certification and licensure in Elementary Education (K-5), Secondary Education (6-12), and All-Grade Education (K-12). The Education Division's teacher programs are fully accredited at the state-level by the Tennessee Department of Education (TN DOE).

Williamson County Schools

Williamson County Schools are pre-kindergarten through 12th grade, coeducational public day school in **Williamson County, TN**. The schools promote academic excellence and inspire students to be intellectually curious, to use their talents to the fullest, to be people of integrity and to be contributors to society. In addition, **Williamson County Schools** are recognized by the TN DOE as an approved clinical site for candidates seeking TN DOE certification and licensure.

C. Services provided by the MOU

University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education Clinical Practice and Field Experience

The clinical practice or field experience student has been admitted to UTS Grissom School of Education. Per the requirements of UTS, clinical practice dual placements will be required. The second placement will be at a different grade level and different school. UTS shall provide a college supervisor to assist the candidate's professional growth. The college supervisor will work in collaboration with the _____ **Schools'** mentors, and shall provide five observations each semester (Fall, Spring) for clinical practice. The University of Tennessee Southern's clinical practice candidate placements shall run for 15 weeks (8 one placement and 7 the second). Field experiences may run five hours to 30 hours each placement depending on course requirements. Candidates in each experience will have passed an FBI background check and belong to STEA. In addition, Clinical practice candidates will have passed all Praxis II exams required by the state of Tennessee. In accordance with Tennessee State Board Policy, Teacher Candidates will complete edTPA. UT Southern will require edTPA in the first placement of the clinical experience.

D. Funding involved



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University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education Field Experience

This is a placement for 5 to 30 hours with a mentor classroom teacher.

A stipend of \$5.00 an hour will be paid to the cooperating teacher.

University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education Clinical Practice Program

Each clinical practice cooperating teacher (mentor) shall be paid \$300 for their services as a clinical practice mentor.

Payment will be made to Williamson County Schools for disbursement to the teacher.

E. Implementation and Structure

University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education Field Experience

Responsibilities of the candidate

- Keep appointments or give advance notice to both the principal and cooperating teacher.
- Introduce themselves to the principal and cooperating teacher in advance of the first FE.
- Communicate to Dr. Grace Meier for a different cooperating teacher than assigned, so the details can be confirmed with the LEA.
- Be flexible to assigned different situations.
- Prepare and submit *Field Experience Reflection Journal*, follow the class instructor's guidelines.
- Submit an evaluation at the conclusion of each FE block of 5-10 hours to the University of Tennessee Southern supervisor.

Responsibilities of the classroom mentor teacher

- **Minimize candidates' *sit and listen*** time by allowing them to serve the classroom in the role of **teaching assistants** working closely with you (mentor) to enhance content presentation or drill and practice scaffolding with individuals, small groups, or whole classes as needed.
- Discuss and establish classroom participation and activities with the candidate.
- Do not leave candidate alone to supervise students.
- Mail (in the envelope supplied) all required forms at the conclusion of the FE hours (W9, Data Form, Evaluation)



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- Allow the candidate to produce a video of a teaching presentation for edTPA. In the case of field experience, allow the candidate to video a mini lesson for evaluation by education faculty and for reflection by candidate.
- Develop a schedule of class times convenient to both candidate and the cooperating teacher.
- Allow UTS candidates contact information (phone and/or email).

Responsibilities of the University of Tennessee Southern supervisor

- Have at least one visit (virtual or in-person) each placement to observe the candidate serving in the role of teaching assistant. Candidate may video a mini lesson to submit to instructor with reflection. A written evaluation of that visit will be completed to gather data for future program assessments

Williamson County Schools Clinical Practice Placement

Responsibilities of the candidate

- Work each day determined by LEA teacher work-day.
- Note the school day extends beyond the dismissal of students and is a mutually agreed upon time between the college supervisor and the **Williamson County Schools'** mentor(s).
- Use the requirements of the *Clinical Practice Handbook* as the frame of expectations for successful completion of the clinical practice.
- Attend all professional development days as required by **Williamson County Schools**.
- Assume responsibility for managing classroom set-up and supplies at the mentor teacher's request.
- Plan and carry out lessons under the mentor teacher's supervision.
- Take part in parent conferences under guidance of mentor.
- Assist with completing quarterly Progress Reports.
- Meet professional evaluation requirements.
- Abide by all policies and procedures of **Williamson County Schools**.

Responsibilities of the classroom mentor teacher

- Provide supervision of the candidate's performance.
- Mentor the candidate in the areas of pedagogy, communication, assessment, and professional development.
- Provide feedback to the University of Tennessee Southern Supervisor for the purpose of assessment of performance for licensure requirements.

Responsibilities of the University of Tennessee Southern supervisor

- Provide feedback regarding the candidate's pedagogical and professional development using TEAM.



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- Solicit feedback from the **Williamson County Schools'** mentor on the candidate's skill development in the areas of pedagogy, communication, assessment, and professional development.
- Act a liaison between the candidate and the classroom mentor.

F. Term and Termination

This MOU will become effective July 15, 2021 and continue until June 30, 2022.

Upon expiration of the term this MOU will be renewed for one-year terms unless either party gives notice of intent to terminate at least by March 1 of the ending term. The College will hold bi-annual meetings and use surveys to discuss progress and/or needs of the LEA and the College. The MOU will be reviewed yearly for adherence to Tennessee State Board of Education Policy.

This MOU may be terminated by either party at any time upon not less than 30 days prior written notice to the other party. This MOU may be terminated immediately if either party fails to meet their obligations contained within this MOU.

University of Tennessee Southern

By: Grace A Meier
(Chair, Grissom School of Education)

Date: 7-21-21

By: Robby Shelton
(Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration)

Date: 7-21-21

Williamson County Director of Schools

By: [Signature]

Date: 8/12/2021