



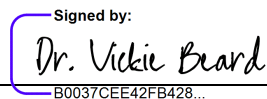
Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	University of Tennessee Southern
Local Education Agency (LEA)	Giles County Schools
Academic Year of Agreement	2026-2027

EPP Contact/Designee	
Name: Janet Hanvy	Title: Director of Teacher Education
Email: jhanvy@utsouthern.edu	Phone Number: 931-363-9852

LEA Contact/Designee	
Name: Dr. Vickie Beard	Title: Director of Schools
Email: vbeard@gcboe.us	Phone Number: 931-363-4558

Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
EPP Head Administrator: Daniel McMasters	Title: Chair, Division of Education
Signature:  28BA7A91B9F9410...	Date: 7/29/2026 10:14:01 PDT

LEA Head Administrator: Vickie Beard	Title: Director of Schools
Signature:  B0037CEE42FB428...	Date: 7/29/2026 09:51:54 PDT



**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.*

1. In order to recruit candidates for the program, UTS will hold events to encourage students' interest in teaching through FAFSA nights, career fairs, fine arts productions, and Teacher Education events, with an information booth to provide information about becoming a K-12 teacher and encourage interest in education as a profession.
2. University of Tennessee Southern students who wish to enter the Teacher Education Program come before an interview committee and are recommended to the Teacher Education Committee. Giles County has 2 representative positions on the Teacher Education Committee along with UTS faculty and representatives from other districts.
3. UTS continues to provide a program to assist paraprofessionals in achieving teacher licensure. TATL (Teacher Assistant to Teacher License) is designed to provide, to currently employed teacher assistants, a pathway to achieving a teaching license. In addition, the Tennessee Department of Education and Tennessee Workforce Development have created an Apprenticeship pathway (RTAPs) to teacher licensure through non-traditional ways. UTS and GCS will collaborate to develop a plan to prepare teachers in high needs areas for the LEA.
4. To be admitted to the Teacher Education Program, a student must have an ACT of 21 or pass Praxis CORE; have at least three dispositions checklists from the student, college faculty and community person; must also pass a background check; and have a GPA of at least 2.75.
5. UTS is partnering with GCS to provide students with Dual Enrollment/Dual Credit opportunities while in high school. These classes will encourage a college-going culture in high schools. UTS will also collaborate with GCS to encourage high school students to pursue education as a profession through their Teaching as a Profession class and the Future Teachers clubs at the high schools. The University will plan time for school counselors to come to campus to learn about resources for students.
6. UTS, through community and state resources, will aid students in need.
7. Ongoing discussions with GCS about their needs will continue to determine the areas of greatest need to encourage those students entering the program to seek licensure in those areas. UTS developed a bachelor's level licensure program for Special Education as well as a Job-embedded pathway for all current licensure programs to meet needs of GCS as well as surrounding LEAs. Data from program enrollment and completion at UTS, data from GCS human capital reports and discussions with GCS staff will determine the needs of the district for high needs endorsements as well as under-represented groups. When data is collected, it will be used to inform students who are interested in attending University of Tennessee Southern, who wish to become teachers, or who are attending the University and have not yet considered teaching as a profession. With this data, students can make decisions about careers in areas of high need. This same data may also be used to inform University faculty in math, science, history, and English departments so that they might identify those students who could interested in teaching in high needs endorsement areas as well as those students who are in underrepresented groups.
8. UTS faculty and GCS meetings with the local local civic groups, school groups and the media will continue to encourage minority students to enter the teacher education program. Teaching as a Profession classes will work to recruit minority males into the profession.



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. <i>NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.</i>
	1. Giles County and UTS have collaboratively developed a process by which clinical educators are selected. Both clinical supervisors and clinical mentors are agreed upon by both UTS and GCS. The University 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 NIET's Aspiring Teacher Rubric and coordinate with the district about Project Coach (district level teacher evaluation). The collaborative process by which clinical mentors are chosen is: A) UTS provides a list of teacher candidates, with areas of licensure, needing placements for the upcoming semester to the Instructional Supervisors of GCS. GCS asks schools for recommendations from building principals and pairs the teacher with the candidate according to licensure area. The list is reviewed by the instructional supervisor to ensure that the teacher mentor is highly effective and is appropriate to mentor a teacher candidate. B) The list is returned to UTS for review. If there are concerns, a discussion is held with the instructional supervisor and/or principal. C) An orientation/training meeting is held with the teacher candidates and clinical mentors to share placements and expectations with placements. 2. Clinical supervisors are full-time and adjunct faculty. All are instructors in the School of Education and are involved in various meetings, professional development, and other activities with Giles County Schools. When other clinical supervisors are hired, input from GCS will be sought by the School Chair/Field Experience Coordinator. Clinical supervisors have K-12 experience, elementary, middle, and high school, and have been trained in TEAM evaluation process. The supervisors are instructors in the EDU program and have worked with the teacher candidates in their coursework, providing feedback as they have progressed through the program. 3. Formal training for new and experienced mentors will be conducted by the University. Differentiation of meeting content for those groups will be determined at the beginning of each semester. The University will provide names of those attending/completing training to the district for Professional Development Points (PDP) as requested. Support for mentors will be provided as needed throughout the placement. 4. Criteria for retention of clinical educator: Surveys, completed by candidates, along with faculty input, help to determine the effectiveness of the clinical educator and whether the educator should continue to be a part of the mentoring process. Clinical educators are compensated for their time during the placements. 5. Clinical Educators will be evaluated through the surveys completed by Teacher Candidates, discussions with Teacher Candidates and Mentors by Clinical Supervisors, observation data, and other anecdotal data that may present itself. Exit interviews/surveys with student, clinical mentor, and UTS clinical supervisor are used to evaluate program/placement strengths and needs. Data from the interviews/surveys read by the Assessment Team and shared with supervisors through school meetings and GCS during partner meetings. Data will be used by the clinical supervisors to improve their interactions with clinical mentors and teacher candidates.



**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.*

1. Field experiences are required for all teacher education candidates. The field experience hours will vary depending on the licensure being sought-- 50-110 hours (P.E., secondary, special education, and elementary). GCS and UTS ensure that the teacher education programs meet minimum expectations for clinical practice as outlined in the educator preparation policy of the Tennessee State Board of Education (5.504). (Clinical Practice Assignments, Clinical Practice Handbook)
 2. Clinical experiences are required for all teacher education candidates. Candidates must complete 15 weeks during their clinical practice semester. Clinical experiences throughout their preparation program span the grade levels of their licensure area and are in schools with diverse student bodies/communities.
 3. A concerted effort will be made to place candidates in diverse schools/classrooms. Giles County Schools' staff assists in placement of Teacher Candidates in schools that are more diverse. Giles County is a rural area but includes students from small and mega farms, small rural communities, with the largest percentage of ethnic diversity and economically disadvantaged in the small town (Pulaski). Teacher candidates complete a diversity questionnaire after each placement for the University to review diversity placements and adjust as needed. UTS uses the diversity categories required and reported on in the state reports and CAEP.
 4. Candidates, at the beginning of their coursework, do more observing and learning from the mentor teacher. For each field experience placement, the candidates observe the first 1-3 hours and reflect on what they see, discussing in class what they saw and how it compares to the methods/techniques discussed previously in class, putting theory into practice. The first few field experiences will culminate in the candidate doing individual or small-group instruction, supervised by the mentor teacher. Observations by university personnel are done to ensure they are using evidence-based practices. As candidates become more proficient, the candidates teach lessons that they plan themselves, using data from assessments, and showing differentiated instruction. They also begin co-assessing assessments with the cooperating teacher. During these experiences they analyze materials, resources, and curriculum, often bringing materials back to the university classroom, to participate in a discussion about what practices work best with the specific student needs in the classroom. Included in the discussion and reflections are the strategies that the candidate observed the clinical mentors use to assist students in learning the vocabulary, and content specific writing (e.g. journal results of experiments, historical writing, narrative/persuasive writing, mathematical writing, etc.), and then communicating their reasoning in class through discussion.
- By the time candidates begin clinical experience, they have become much more proficient in designing lessons and teaching, selecting appropriate instructional materials, and implementing solid instructional practices. They begin the clinical practice by observing the first week and getting to know the students and classroom procedures. They also participate in departmental meetings/grade-level meetings, IEP (Individualized Education Programs) meetings, etc. Lesson plans are developed incorporating student interests and cultural heritage and are relevant to students' prior knowledge. Use of NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric is essential in this strategy. Use of Tennessee's HQIM and lesson preparation Lesson plans are reviewed by the Clinical Educator prior to instruction.



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.*

1. All full-time UTS EPP (Educator Preparation Provider) faculty members shall continue their professional development through direct personal involvement in Giles County Public Schools. Upon request, GCS will provide UTS with professional development activities planned during the year for staff to choose activities appropriate to their teaching assignments.

2. The Teacher Education Committee is an integral part of the EPP and LEA partnership. Giles County has two representative positions on the committee. The committee has the following responsibilities:

- Reviewing candidates desiring to be admitted to the education program
- Admitting candidates to the education program
- Admitting candidates to clinical practice
- Approving candidates for recommendation for licensure from the State of Tennessee
- Approving candidates in alternative license programs (apprenticeships and job-embedded)
- Approving program policy changes
- Approving additional programs
- Discussing and voting on existing program changes/improvements
- Approval of coursework for Admission to the Alternate Routes in licensure areas.
- Hearing and voting on student appeals of program policies
- Discussing and voting on special circumstances as they arise

3. Partnership meetings: These meetings occur throughout the year either as a whole group with all partners as well as individually as needed with districts. These meetings address new needs of the districts, an opportunity to share data with the districts, gather suggestions for current programs, and get input for long range planning. UTS SOE has discussed with the partners that there may be a need to have smaller committees that will report to the TEC about specific issues (e.g, Special Education, Clinical Practice/Field Experience).

4. Surveys from mentor teachers, both in Field Experience and Clinical Practice, regarding the candidates provide data to help the SOE determine the readiness of the candidate either to continue or to be placed in an improvement plan.



Prompt 5	Describe how partners will collaborate and make decisions to ensure candidate preparation is inclusive of LEA curricular content and materials. <i>NOTE: Responses should not exceed one page per prompt.</i>
	Giles County Schools will share information about the curricular materials being used in Giles County classrooms in order to better familiarize teacher candidates with the materials and content chosen by the LEA. This may occur during Partnership meetings or in individual meetings with GCS staff. If available, copies of materials will be made available for use by Grissom School of Education within the professional education courses. Sources of materials will be made available to the SOE, so that materials unavailable for sharing can be obtained by the SOE. Teacher candidates will be able to use these materials to prepare lesson plans, become familiar with HQIM and Intellectual Lesson Planning Protocol, determine strategies to be used during Field Experiences, and create course assignments in Clinical Practice. Teacher Candidates will be completing TN Early Literacy Modules, and Trauma Informed Practices offered by Tennessee Department of 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-- 1. Identify the high needs areas for GCS. 2. Determine how GCS and UTS can work together to meet those needs through GYO-Apprenticeship Long term goals-- 1. Continue human resource review--teacher retention, retirements, resignations. 2. Formulate plans collaboratively to improve new teacher retention. Timeline: September -- Discussion of RTAPS through TN Department of Education October-- Partnership meeting--Discussion of current candidates and licensure areas. How many are potential Giles County employees? Planning a career fair for Teacher Candidates and GCS. Planning for mentor training. Review of requirements in the program. December- TEC meeting--Clinical practice placements, new admits to the program. January Check in--How many candidates are beginning the program? How many GCS students are enrolled in Dual Credit/Dual Enrollment? How many are also in TAPs? February- Check in--Apprenticeship progress. What other offerings are needed? March- Partnership meeting--Data check on apprentices, planning for next year April- Check in--Apprentice progress May/June -Partnership meeting: Partnership agreement for next academic year discussion	



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is made and entered into this 1st day of July 2026 between the **Grissom School of Education of University of Tennessee Southern (UTS)** and **Giles County Schools**.

A. Purpose

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

B. Roles

University of Tennessee Southern. Grissom School of Education

The School of Education provides coursework, field and clinical experiences for candidates seeking Tennessee Department of Education Teacher certification and licensure in Elementary Education (K-5), Secondary Education (6-12), and Physical Education (K-12) and Special Education Interventionist K-8.

The School of Education teacher programs are fully accredited at the state-level by the Tennessee Department of Education (TN DOE).

Giles County Schools

Giles County Schools are pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade coeducational public day school in **Giles 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, **Giles 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's Traditional Clinical Practice and Field Experience

The clinical practice or field experience student has been admitted to University of Tennessee Southern School of Education. Field Experience placements and clinical practice placements shall reflect diverse school communities throughout the program. The University and LEA will work together to ensure that the candidate will have placements to reflect the grade span of the licensure area as well as the different communities making up the district. UT Southern shall provide a college supervisor to assist the candidate's professional growth. The college supervisor will

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN

work in collaboration with **Giles County Schools** (mentors, and shall provide four observations each semester (Fall, Spring) for clinical practice.

The University of Tennessee Southern's clinical practice candidate placements shall run for 15 weeks. Field experiences may run ten hours to 30 hours each placement depending on course requirements. Candidates in each experience will have passed an TBI background check and have liability insurance. 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 and UTS Clinical Practice Handbook.

Candidates accepted into the UT Southern *Grow Your Own Apprenticeship* program, TATL (Teacher Assistant to Teacher Licensure), and the Job-embedded pathway may also be recognized as paid school system employees. The LEA will provide a mentor teacher to its employees.

Funding involved

D.

University of Tennessee Southern's *Traditional Field Experience*

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

University of Tennessee Southern's *Traditional Clinical Practice Program*

Each traditional clinical practice cooperating teacher (mentor) shall be paid \$600 for their services as a clinical practice mentor for a full semester.

- University of Tennessee Southern has no financial obligation to Giles County Schools under this MOU

E. Implementation and Structure

University of Tennessee Southern's 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 before the first FE.
- Communicate to Dr. Daniel McMasters 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 placement to the UTS supervisor.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE SOUTHERN

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 the candidate alone to supervise students.
- Submit all required forms at the conclusion of the FE hours (Data Form, Evaluation) in Student Learning & Licensure.
- In the case of field experience, allow the candidate to teach a mini lesson for evaluation and feedback by education faculty and for reflection by candidate.
- Develop a schedule of class times convenient to both the candidate and the cooperating teacher.
- Allow UTS candidates contact information (phone and/or email).

Responsibilities of the UTS supervisor

Have at least one visit (virtual or in-person) to each placement to observe the candidate serving in the role of teaching Assistant or confer with the mentor teacher. A written evaluation of that visit will be completed to gather data for future program assessments within 5 school days.

Giles County Schools Clinical Practice Placement

Responsibilities of the candidate

- Work each day is determined by the LEA teacher workday.
- Note the school day extends beyond the dismissal of students and is a mutually agreed upon time between the college supervisor and **Giles 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 **Giles County Schools**.
- Assume responsibility for managing classroom set-up and supplies at the mentor teacher's request.



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
SOUTHERN

- Plan and carry out lessons under the mentor teacher's supervision.
- Take part in parent conferences, as allowed.
- Assist with completing quarterly Progress Reports.
- Meet professional evaluation requirements.
- Abide by all policies and procedures of **Giles 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 UT Southern Supervisor for assessment of performance for licensure requirements.
- Submit required surveys and forms in Student Learning & Licensure.

Responsibilities of the UTS supervisor

- Provide feedback regarding the candidate's pedagogical and professional development using the instruments of The Aspiring Teacher Rubric (NIET).
- Solicit feedback from the **Giles County Schools' mentor** on the candidate's skill development in the areas of pedagogy, communication, assessment, and professional development.
- Act as a liaison between the candidate and the classroom mentor.

F. Data Sharing

Giles County Schools and UTS shall provide one another with data concerning teacher candidates, teachers, students, and educator vacancies in addition to any other relevant and available data source. Available data shall be provided in the manner and form as specified by the designated representatives or designee of **Giles County Schools** and UTS. These data may include

1. Data necessary to fulfill partnership agreement requirements and duties,
2. Teacher effect data from tests administered in accordance with ESSA and TCA 49-1-602,
3. Educator evaluation data, to be used for the purposes on improving preparation programs,
4. Student data for GILES COUNTY SCHOOLS graduates who have matriculated into UTS to be used for the purposes of recruiting and co-selecting participants in the GILES COUNTY SCHOOLS/UTS collaborative educator preparation pipeline programs (Grow Your Own), inclusive of program of study, academic performance, and/or status within the university.

The shared data shall be used only for the purposes of providing an evidence-base to inform the creating, designing, evaluating, and improving of collaborative educator



THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
SOUTHERN

preparation programs; with UTS assisting in the services or functions for which Giles County Schools would otherwise use their employees.

UTS will share data related work products via mutually agreed upon secure electronic submission. This data may include personally identifiable information included but not limited to names, gender, and ethnicity as well as status in the teacher education program. Any data received pursuant to this agreement shall be destroyed when it is no longer needed for collaborative improvement processes.

Confidentiality: UTS and Giles County Schools will maintain the confidentiality of any and all data, to the extent allowed by law, exchanged as a part of this agreement. The confidentiality requirements under this paragraph shall survive the expiration or termination of this agreement or any subsequent agreement intended to supersede this agreement. Giles County Schools and UTS agree to the following system of safeguards:

1. Ensuring that all shared data records are kept in secured facilities and access to such records is limited only to personnel who are authorized to have access to said data under this section of the agreement.
2. Secure passwords will be needed to access computer and cloud-based databases used to process, store, transmit, or analyses data provided under this agreement.
3. Good practices or assigning and/or securing passwords will be maintained to ensure the integrity of the systems used to secure computer and cloud-based databases used to process, store, transmit, or analyze data provided under this agreement.
4. Systems that ensure that all confidential data processed, stored, transmitted, and analyzed under the provisions of this agreement shall be maintained in a secure manner that prevents the interception, diversion, or other unauthorized access to said data,
5. Ensuring that any and all disclosures of confidential data comply with FERPA and Tennessee law relating to the privacy rights of students and educators, such as TCA Title 49-Education.

F. Term and Termination

This MOU will become effective at the time of signing and continue until July 31, 2027. 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. The University will hold meetings (at least 1x per semester) to discuss progress and/or needs of the LEA and the University. The MOU will be reviewed yearly for adherence to

UT

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
SOUTHERN

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, Grissom School of Education
~~University of Tennessee Southern, Grissom School of Education~~

By: Daniel McMasters (School Chair)
28BA7A91B9F9410...
Date: 7/29/2026 | 10:14:01 PDT

University of Tennessee Southern, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration
~~University of Tennessee Southern, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration~~

By: Dr. Stephanie Fletcher
3723FFCE07F941F...
Date: 7/30/2026 | 06:57:07 PDT

Giles County Director of Schools
~~Giles County Director of Schools~~

By: Dr. Vickie Beard
B0037CEE42FB428...
Date: 7/29/2026 | 09:51:54 PDT