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TN Department of Education

Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency State Recognized Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	University of Tennessee Southern
Local Education Agency (LEA)	Lewis County
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. Tracy McAbee	**Title:** Director of Schools
Email: tmcabee@lewisk12.org	**Phone Number:** (931) 796-3264

Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
EPP Head Administrator: Daniel McMasters	**Title:** Chair of School of Education
Signature: DocuSigned by: Daniel McMasters 28BA7A91B9F9410...	**Date:** 7/14/2026 | 06:54:21 PDT
LEA Head Administrator: Tracy McAbee	**Title:** Superintendent
Signature: Signed by: T McAbee 7F9F415BBFE74AF...	**Date:** 7/15/2026 | 06:26:43 EDT

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

Prompt 1	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.*

1.Clinical supervisors and clinical mentors are agreed upon by both University of Tennessee Southern and the LEA. 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 (or other state approved evaluation system). If a problem should arise with a supervisor, the appropriate district staff will bring concerns to the UTS school 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 University have an open dialogue that allows for discussions to seek resolution.
2.Orientation/training for new and experienced mentors for both Field Experience and Clinical Practice will be conducted by the University. Mentor training will be developed to address coaching and observation of teacher candidates as well as providing actionable feedback.
3.University of Tennessee Southern will work with mentors to determine individual needs throughout the semester and provide coaching. LEA will inform the University when a change is made in the evaluation instrument used by the district. This will allow the Education faculty an opportunity to learn and incorporate these into classes/seminar 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 candidate and how the supervisor can provide additional support. The minimum of four visits (in-person and/or virtual) is conducted during the clinical placements. Others may be scheduled upon request by the mentor, administrator, teacher and/or candidate. 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 occur with student, clinical mentor, and University clinical supervisor. Building administrators may also provide feedback as well. Data from the interviews/surveys will be shared with University 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, 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.

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

Prompt 2	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). The LEA 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 the clinical practice semester. Diverse experiences across the grade band and in different schools/communities will be provided to the candidate.
3. A concerted effort will be made to place candidates in diverse schools/classrooms. Schools with diverse populations based
on ethnicity and poverty will be sought. . The South Central region is a rural area but includes students who live on farms and in small rural communities. There are also parts of the region that are more suburban. 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.
5. 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.
6. 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 Aspiring Teacher Rubric, HQIM and Intellectual Lesson Planning Protocols are essential in this strategy. Lesson plans
are reviewed by the Clinical Educator prior to instruction.

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

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 **Lewis County Schools.**

A. **Purpose**

This MOU is to establish a clinical placement agreement between the Grissom School of Education, University of Tennessee Southern, and **Lewis 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).

Lewis County Schools

Lewis County Schools are pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade coeducational public day school in **Lewis 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, **Lewis 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 Education Division. 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

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

work in collaboration with the **Lewis 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.

D. **Funding involved**

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 **Lewis 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. Janet Hanvy 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.

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

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.
- Complete 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 for feedback 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 to confer with the mentor. A written evaluation of that visit will be completed to gather data for future program assessments within 5 school days.

Lewis 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 the **Lewis 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 **Lewis County Schools.**
- Assume responsibility for managing classroom set-up and supplies at the mentor teacher's request.

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

- 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 **Lewis 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 forms and surveys in Student Learning & Licensure.

Responsibilities of the UTS supervisor

- Provide feedback regarding the candidate's pedagogical and professional development using the Aspiring Teacher Rubric (NIET).
- Solicit feedback from the **Lewis 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**

Lewis 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 **Lewis County Schools** and UTS. These data may include

I. 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 **LEWIS COUNTY SCHOOLS** graduates who have matriculated into UTS to be used for the purposes of recruiting and co-selecting participants in the **LEWIS 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

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

preparation programs; with UTS assisting in the services or functions for which **Lewis 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 **Lewis 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. **Lewis County Schools** and UTS agree to the following system of safeguards:

I. 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 I. The University will hold meetings (at least Ix per semester) to discuss progress and/or needs of the LEA and the University. The MOU will be reviewed yearly for adherence to

Docusign Envelope ID: E0015A3A-643A-8FFF-8181-CB98E70E9483

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: DocuSigned by: Daniel McMasters 28BA7A91B9F9410... **(School Chair)**

Date: 7/14/2026 | 06:54:21 PDT

University of Tennessee Southern, Vice Chancellor of Finance and Administration

By: Signed by: Stephanie Fletcher 3723FFCE07F941F...

Date: 7/14/2026 | 09:29:35 PDT

Lewis County Director of Schools

By: Signed by: J McAbee 7F9F415BBFE74AF...

Date: 7/15/2026 | 06:26:43 EDT