



Department of
Education

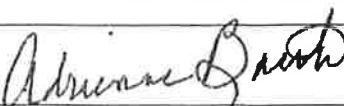
Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	Belmont University
Local Education Agency (LEA)	Metro Nashville Public Schools
Academic Year of Agreement	2026-2027

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Signature: 	Date: 9/29/26

LEA Head Administrator: Dr. Adrienne Battle	Title: Director of Schools
Signature: 	Date: 09/25/2026



**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 Metro Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) actions discussed below will be completed as part of the the primary partnership agreement.

The BU and MNPS partnership developed recruitment goals and supporting strategies through collaboration and the use of shared data. At a minimum, the goals of this partnership are:

- 1) to generate a high-quality pool of educator candidates for the district;
- 2) to increase the diversity of the MNPS teaching force to better reflect the demographics of the student population;
- 3) to strategically target educator candidates for the district's high need content areas (English Learners, Mathematics, Sciences, Special Education, Elementary, Early Childhood); and
- 4) work to determine the district's projected workforce needs to drive recruitment for future enrollment.

Partnership members and other identified faculty and staff meet at least biannually to assess how well the partnership is meeting its recruitment goals and to determine the district's future needs by analyzing district and EPP data (e.g., Human Capital Data, state Annual Reports data and other educator candidate pipeline data). The partnership collaborates and shares data to help partnership members understand each other's needs regarding recruitment of individuals into the EPP's programs and alignment to the goals outlined above. Belmont University provides updates and projections on the current educator pipeline, and MNPS will provide information on its current and projected staffing needs.

The partnership developed a recruitment plan based on student and teacher demographics to meet the district's unique needs. Collaboration on recruitment and selection strategies allow Belmont University and MNPS to strategically target educators who represent the K-12 student population and educators who will teach in hard-to-staff schools in specific shortage areas. Data sharing on current and projected district needs and EPP projections will include high need certification areas and links to the district's on-going recruitment activities. The partnership aligned its goals, action planning, and desired outcomes with CAEP standards as well as state standards and ensure outcomes are in compliance with state and federal law.

The partnership is implementing recruitment strategies to meet defined needs. Strategies include, but are not limited to, targeted social media campaigns, career fairs, Preview Days, virtual graduate information sessions, collaboration with community colleges and MNPS Academies, exploration and interest meetings with local high school students, and engagement with other community partners. Belmont has designated the Director of Clinical Practice and the Education Admissions Coordinator to serve alongside the Dean, Associate Dean, and current recruitment staff, in order to increase efforts of identifying and engaging potential teacher candidates. Recruiting emphasis is placed on the high need areas of mathematics, science, ESL, elementary, early childhood and special education as identified by MNPS. In addition, Belmont has a full-time lecturer to target the needs of the Special Education population in MNPS by supporting and increasing the opportunity for teacher candidates to seek special education licensure.

The MCTE continues to meet regularly to review current needs and develop action steps.

**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.*

Selection - The partnership created a process for identifying individuals to serve as clinical mentors to support consistency in the selection of clinical mentors for MNPS and its school-based administrators. Clinical mentor requirements 1) follow the recommendations of the Tennessee Department of Education which states mentors will hold an active Tennessee license with an endorsement in the area or closely related area where they will be supervising the candidates; 2) have a level of overall effectiveness of above expectations or significantly above expectations for the prior school year; and 3) have a minimum of 3 years of experience as a teacher, school services personnel, or instructional leader as applicable. In addition, clinical mentor requirements include, but are not limited to commitment to training, a positive disposition, effective communication skills, a collaborative and reflective approach, and willingness to carry out the partnership-identified roles and responsibilities. Additional criteria that meets specific educator preparation provider needs and the requirements of Educator Preparation Policy 5.504 will be included in determining placements and creating and implementing a common process for selecting clinical mentors. In addition, through a system co-developed between MNPS and partner EPPs, qualified mentors are identified by MNPS principals and added to a primary spreadsheet for all partner EPPs to request placement for teacher candidates. Belmont University has developed a process for the selection of provider-based clinical supervisors and will obtain MNPS's agreement on the identified process. This process includes reviewing the job description annually with MNPS to allow opportunities for input and soliciting qualified applicants directly from the district. Clinical teaching supervisors are required to have a master's degree or higher, 7 years of combined teaching and school administration experience, which includes supervising instruction, and a valid educator license in the appropriate subject area or grade level of supervision.

Preparation - The partnership created and implements a process for preparing clinical mentors (Mentor Teacher Institute). For the AY 25-26, three all-day institutes are offered to new and returning MNPS mentors. All sessions are facilitated by members of the EPP and MNPS partnership. Content includes, but not limited to, co-teaching; live coaching; roles, responsibilities, and requirements of mentors; hard conversations and feedback; and professional competencies, dispositions, and ethics. In addition to the MTI, Belmont hosts a mentor teacher training twice a year to support MNPS mentors in the roles as mentors. This virtual training provides resources such as the observation calendar, dispositions assessment, and TEAM rubric to ensure all mentors understand how to support and evaluate teacher candidates.

University supervisors attend a one-day in person training every August to re-norm on the TEAM evaluation process, discuss evaluation and feedback structures to be used with candidates, and receive training on supervision technology (e.g., Canvas page, TEAMS communications, Edthena platform).

Evaluation/Observation - The EPP and MNPS core partnership members review observation feedback annually during the Teacher Educator Advisory Council Meetings. The partnership regularly uses satisfaction surveys to review triangulation data between clinical mentors, supervisors, and teacher candidates. These data are shared annually with MNPS. Additionally, TDOE administers the Primary Partnership Inventory every year and the results are shared with all primary partners. This information is used to support continuous improvement in clinical experiences, including how our clinical educators are trained, prepared, and supported.

Support - Ongoing support for clinical educators stems from the EPP/MNPS partnership. After the clinical educator trainings, mentors and supervisors provide informal and formal feedback on their role as a clinical educator and the supports that are put in place to ensure high-quality teacher preparation. Clinical supervisors meet once a month with the Director of Clinical Practice and Residency Director to discuss candidate progress and to continue to develop effective feedback and coaching strategies. One-on-one meeting opportunities with Belmont clinical staff are also provided once a semester to discuss specific candidate concerns and next steps. MNPS clinical mentors are surveyed mid-semester to determine additional needs and supports.

**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/MNPS primary partnership 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 EPP/MNPS partnership ensures the following:

1. Programs meets or exceeds 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 EPP faculty observations, EPP will hold monthly department meetings to facilitate ongoing discussions regarding connection to practice and areas of needed improvement.

Breadth: EPP faculty, with the support of MNPS partners, design and 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.

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.*

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

1. EPPs and MNPS will continue to engage with the Metro Council on Teacher Education to discuss teacher pipeline needs and programmatic changes.
2. MNPS will invite members from their Principal Advisory Council to join EPP/MNPS partnership meets for the opportunity to share outcome data (e.g., Praxis scores, edTPA data (if applicable), TVAAS scores, TN EPP report card) to support programmatic changes and facilitate decision-making.
3. As needed, BU will survey MNPS partners to understand teacher vacancies and needs. Current survey data from MNPS and other partners indicate the priority areas as math, science, elementary, early childhood, special education, and ESL.
4. BU's Teacher Education Advisory Committee includes teachers and administrators from MNPS to support programmatic decision making. This committee meets once a semester 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 MNPS, BU regularly utilizes the mechanisms listed above to improve program offerings to candidates. In 2022, MNPS received approval for a revamped special education K-8 interventionist program. In 2022, initiated by stakeholder feedback from the Teacher Education Advisory Committee, Belmont's entire job-embedded program was revised and offered online. After further feedback, this entire program was revamped again to be offered asynchronously, which launched during the summer of 2025. These efforts supported an almost 200% increase in our graduate MAT program.

In 2025, with support from members of TEAC, Belmont successfully approved and implemented a middle grades licensure program in the areas of math, science, social studies, and English Language Arts and an Integrated Early Childhood and Special Education program. These program were offered for the first time during the AY 26-27.



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

1. During partnership meetings, MNPS I will invite the Executive Officer of Teaching and Learning to partnership meetings to provide curriculum updates (e.g., curriculum map/pacing guide changes, new textbook adoptions).
2. Candidates in clinical practice are required to participate in MMPS professional development opportunities, including those focused on standard 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 MNPS 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 content and pedagogy is streamlined across all sections.
5. University supervisors, Co selected by MNPS 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 fall of 2022, BU faculty partnered with the MMPS literacy coordinator to pilot a new initiative to support our teacher candidates with the implementation of HQIM in preparation. This initiative trains elementary candidates in the ELA adopted curriculum, wit and wisdom , and the Tennessee Foundational Skills Curriculum Supplement . This partnership continues in the 2026-2027 academic year.

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.
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Short Term Goals:

Increase embedded field experiences with MNPS

Early field experiences are a hallmark of Belmont's teacher education programming. Our first short term goal is to continue building embedded field experiences with MNPS schools to support our prospective teachers with application of knowledge and skills. We already have a deep partnership with a local elementary school (Waverly-Belmont and Norman Binkley) in which we regularly place teacher candidates for literacy and foundational field experiences and clinical practice. Last year, we have extended our embedded placements with Robert Churchwell Elementary and Charlotte Park Elementary. Our goal to expand additional embedded experiences in future years.

Joint Planning, Alignment & Professional Learning

Strengthen collaboration between BU faculty and MNPS instructional leaders and teachers (Literacy, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Technology) to align coursework, field experiences, and assessments with district priorities and state standards. Both MNPS and Belmont's COE are participating the SCORE/TNTP The Lead in Literacy network to support with this work in elementary literacy. MNPS and Belmont COE's faculty actively participate in state led initiatives for professional learning and support for pre-K-12 teachers (e.g., EPP Literacy Convening, Social Studies trainings, etc.). Joint partnership around the creation and implementation of a new middle school preparation program.

Instructional, Teacher, and Staff Leader Development

The partnership will continue to collaborate on leadership development programs to prepare teacher leaders, instructional coaches, instructional teams, assistant principals, and principals through mechanisms such as TEAC. Belmont and MNPS will meet to discuss possible opportunities for aspiring leaders and growing this pipeline. Staff development supports may include developing common and clear language for clinical experiences and ensuring teacher pathway options are represented communicated. Developing the MCTE consortium handbook to include these resources is a short term goal.

Data-Informed Continuous Improvement

The partnership will continue to strengthen the processes for selecting and preparing mentor teachers for field experiences and clinical practice and ensuring clear communication and guidelines for all members involved. In addition, the partnerships will continue to use candidate and completer data to revise field placements, mentor teacher training, and program design through TEAC. Review of evaluative data related to mentor teacher and teacher candidate performance and satisfaction.

90 Credit Hour Program

Develop and implement innovative educator preparation pathways that reduce time and financial barriers for prospective teachers, including Belmont's proposed 90-credit bachelor's degree model and associated workforce-focused pathways designed to prepare licensed educators more efficiently while maintaining program quality and rigor.

Long Term Goals

Expansion of the pipeline to recruit and retain educators through multiple pathways such as traditional student teaching, paraprofessionals, substitute teaching, classroom associate positions, and job-embedded and regular partnership engagement regarding joint supports for candidates in these pathways.

Develop a comprehensive "Grow Your Own" model that connects dual enrollment coursework, community college partnerships, undergraduate preparation, graduate licensure pathways, and district employment opportunities into a seamless educator preparation pipeline, increasing recruitment and long-term retention of teachers within MNPS.

