

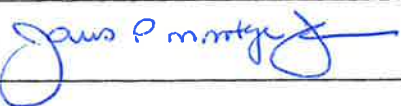


Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

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

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Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
EPP Head Administrator: Dr. James McIntyre	Title: Dean, College of Education
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LEA Head Administrator: Leigh Webb	Title: Superintendent
Signature: 	Date: Sept 28, 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 Williamson County Schools (WCS) actions discussion below will be completed as part of the the primary partnership agreement.

The BU and WCS 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 strategically target educator candidates for the district's high need content areas (e.g., English Learners, Mathematics, Sciences, World Languages, Special Education); and
- 3) work to determine the district's projected workforce needs to drive recruitment for future enrollment.

Members of the partnership work together in an interactive process to create and implement recruitment strategies to meet current and projected needs.

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 WCS 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 WCS 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 , 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

This partnership also agrees to place a minimum of 50% of general education intern and student teacher placements per academic year in WCS. Resident and job-embedded placements are determined by the hiring district and not the EPP.

Evidence will be collected, shared, and used in the following ways:

- BU will survey WCS partners to understand teacher vacancies and needs. Priority areas include, but are not limited to, secondary math, special education, and world languages. Survey data are used to inform programmatic decision making (creation of new program offerings, grant opportunities, etc.).
- BU facilitates steering committee meetings with WCS district partners to determine next steps.
- WCS regularly shares any BU recruitment and marketing advertisements/opportunities/resource widely across the district.

**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.*

Clinical educators will be selected in collaboration with BU Clinical faculty and WCS representatives,

According to TN Educator Preparation Policy 5.504, minimum criteria for school based clinical educators include:

- 1) hold an active TN license with an endorsement in the area or closely related area where are will be supervising the candidate,
- 2) have an overall effectiveness of above expectations or significantly above expectations for previous school year,
- 3) have a minimum of 3 years of experience as a teacher, school services personnel, or instructional leader as applicable.

In addition, clinical educators requirements include, but are not limited to:

- 4) collaborative and reflective teacher,
- 5) positive dispositions,
- 6) effective communication skills, and
- 7) completion of clinical educator training.

Minimum criteria for provider based clinical educators (supervisors) will include:

- 1) master's degree or higher
- 2) seven years of teaching or school administrative experience, and
- 3) holding a valid educator license in the area or closely related area, and/or grade level of supervision.

The partnership will include a process for selecting school based clinical educators (mentors) who meet the identified criteria. At a minimum, this process will include WCS to assist in the selection of identifying teachers to serve as clinical educators and for BU to request placement for teacher candidates. Provider based clinical educators (supervisors) selection will include 1) reviewing the job description annually with WCS to allow opportunities for input, 2) inviting a member of WCS to serve on the interview panel alongside Belmont faculty and administrators.

The partnership will create and implement a common process for preparing clinical educators. This will include collaboratively developed mentor training that all must complete. This training includes on-line and in-person meeting and is facilitated by members of the partnership. Content will include areas of agreed upon need as identified by the partnership and will include, but is not limited to overview of handbooks, effective mentoring, edTPA requirements, co-teaching models, and BU evaluation forms designed to provide feedback to candidates to ensure they are receiving positive feedback, as well as constructive feedback to improve their teaching.

The partnership will develop a protocol for a conversation between clinical mentors and clinical supervisors that focuses on ways clinical educators can best support teacher candidates. The partnership will continue use of satisfaction surveys to review triangulation data between clinical mentors, supervisors and teacher candidates to identify areas of growth needed and improve clinical educator support. This data will be shared annually with WCS.

**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/WCS Teacher Education Affiliation 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 BU/WCS partnership ensures the following:

1. Programs meet 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 BU faculty observations, BU will hold monthly department meetings to facilitate ongoing discussions regarding connection to practice and areas of needed improvement.

Breadth: BU faculty, with the support of WCS partners, will design/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, including suburban and rural.

All candidates placed in WCS receive a WCS email address which allows access to all curriculum and technology resources available to WCS in-service teachers. This access allows for adaptation to different modalities of teaching and observing (e.g., virtual) should circumstances require this change.

**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.*

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

1. BU surveys WCS partners to understand teacher vacancies and needs. Survey data is instrumental in determine changes that need to be made to existing programs as well as additional programming that may be needed to address shortage areas. Recent survey data from WCS and other partners indicate the priority areas as secondary math, special education, and ESL.
2. BU engages with WCS district partners in various different capacities to interpret survey data, discuss additional needs and determine programmatic next steps. Examples of engagements include panels discussions with WCS teachers and administrators and steering committee meetings with WCS HR administration to determine challenges and opportunities related to teacher vacancies and staffing.
3. BU's Teacher Education Advisory Committee includes teachers and administrators from WCS to support programmatic decision making. This committee meets quarterly 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 WCS, BU regularly utilizes the mechanisms listed above to improve program offerings to candidates. In 2022, BU 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 WCS collaborate to ensure candidate preparation is inclusive of LEA curricular content and materials in the following ways:

1. All candidates placed in WCS receive a WCS email address which allows access to all curriculum and technology resources available to WCS in-service teachers.
2. Candidates are required to participate in all WCS professional development opportunity, including those focused on standards 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 WCS 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 the content and pedagogy is streamlined across all sections.
5. University supervisors, co-selected by WCS 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.

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 Outcomes:

1. Strengthen the educator candidate pipeline through clinical partnerships and recruitment efforts by increasing student teaching, internship, and job-embedded opportunities within Williamson County Schools, particularly in identified shortage areas including special education, English learners, mathematics, science, and world languages.
2. Expand the instructional leadership pipeline through collaborative program development and recruitment. Belmont University received approval from SACSCOC and the State of Tennessee to launch a new Instructional Leadership Program beginning in Fall 2024. Belmont and WCS will continue collaborating to refine and support the M.Ed. and Ed.S. pathways, including program recruitment, admissions processes, candidate evaluation, coursework alignment, and clinical experiences that prepare future school leaders for the district.
3. 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.
4. Strengthen recruitment and support of paraprofessionals and nontraditional candidates by promoting Belmont's Adult Degree Program and other flexible pathways that enable candidates to complete bachelor's degrees and teacher licensure requirements while addressing district staffing needs.
5. Establish a structured educator pipeline for WCS high school students through collaboration around dual enrollment, community college articulation agreements, and accelerated degree completion pathways that encourage local students to pursue teaching careers and return to serve in Williamson County Schools.
6. Collaborate on grant, scholarship, and philanthropic opportunities that increase affordability and accessibility of educator preparation programs. As part of this effort, WCS will provide a letter of support for Belmont's federal special education grant application, which seeks to increase scholarship funding and expand the preparation of future special education teachers.

Long-Term Outcomes

1. Continue recruitment efforts by promoting new program offerings and scholarship opportunities, including reduced-tuition pathways and other financial incentives that increase access to educator and leadership preparation programs while strengthening the educator pipeline for Williamson County Schools.
2. Establish a sustainable pipeline of highly qualified teachers and school leaders who are prepared to meet the evolving needs of WCS schools, particularly in high-need certification areas such as special education, English learners, mathematics, science, and world languages.
3. Strengthen the educator pipeline through paraprofessional advancement pathways. Over the next three to five years, Belmont and WCS will collaboratively support paraprofessionals in completing or earning a bachelor's degree through Belmont's Adult Degree Program at a reduced tuition cost. This initiative is designed to:
 - Increase access and affordability for WCS paraprofessionals seeking teacher licensure;
 - Establish a sustainable pipeline of teacher candidates from diverse backgrounds by providing a direct transition into Belmont's MAT job-embedded program after bachelor's degree completion;
 - Expand targeted recruitment efforts that address the specific needs of paraprofessionals, ensuring they are intentionally recruited, supported, retained, and successfully progress through licensure and employment.
4. Expand scholarship, grant, and philanthropic support for future educators, with a particular focus on increasing the number of candidates entering high-need fields such as special education. Through joint advocacy, partnerships, and external funding opportunities, Belmont and WCS will work to reduce financial barriers to teacher preparation and increase access to high-quality educator preparation pathways.
5. 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 Williamson County Schools.

