TN Department of Education

Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency State Recognized Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	Belmont University
Local Education Agency (LEA)	St. Bernard Academy
Academic Year of Agreement	2026-2027

EPP Contact/Designee	
Name: Dr. Annie Insana	**Title:** Director of Clinical Practice
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LEA Contact/Designee	
Name: Margaret Richards	**Title:** HOS
Email: mrichards@stbernard.org	**Phone Number:** 615-385-0440

Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
EPP Head Administrator: Dr. James P. McIntyre, Jr.	**Title:** Dean, College of Education
Signature: James P McIntyre	**Date:** 10/30/26
LEA Head Administrator: Dr. Margaret Richards	**Title:** Head of School
Signature: Margaret Richards	**Date:** 10/28/26

TN Department of Education

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.*

Clinical educators will be selected in collaboration with Belmont University Clinical faculty and St. Bernard Academy representatives.

According to TN Educator Preparation Policy 5.504, minimum criteria for school based clinical educators (mentors) 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.

This partnership includes a process for selecting school based clinical educators who meet the identified criteria. At a minimum, this process will include St. Bernard to assist in the selection of identifying teachers to serve as clinical educators and for Belmont University to request placement for teacher candidates. Provider based clinical educators (supervisors) selection will include reviewing the job description annually with St. Bernard to allow for recruitment and retention discussions.

Clinical educators participate in an online training facilitated by members of the partnership. Content includes areas of agreed-upon need as identified by the partnership and includes, but is not limited to overview of handbooks, effective mentoring, edTPA requirements (if applicable), co-teaching models, and EPP 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 utilize 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 St. Bernard and will include discussion on retention of clinical educators.

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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.*

The BU/St. Bernard 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/St. Bernard 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 St. Bernard 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.

AFFILIATION AGREEMENT CONCERNING PLACEMENT OF BELMONT UNIVERSITY TEACHER EDUCATION STUDENTS

This Agreement is made by and between St. Bernard Academy, a local education agency of the State of Tennessee ("LEA") and Belmont University an institution of higher education accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges to award baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral degrees ("University"), and sets out the respective rights and responsibilities of the LEA and the University with regard to any University student who is assigned as a Teacher Candidate, Practicum Student, as those terms are defined below, in the LEA.

1. DEFINITIONS

"Cooperating Teacher" shall mean a teacher in the LEA to whom the Teacher Candidate is assigned and who directs the work or the activity of the candidate while in the LEA. Only teachers who hold the Professional or Proficient License or its equivalent, and who have had at least three years' successful teaching experience and/or the recommendation of a building level administrator are eligible to serve as Cooperating Teachers.

"Mentor Teacher" shall mean a teacher in the LEA to whom a Practicum Student or group of Practicum Students is assigned for pre-Co-Teaching or pre-Student Teaching experiences. The LEA and the University may mutually agree that a teacher who does not hold the Professional or Proficient License or its equivalent may serve as a Mentor Teacher.

"Practicum Student" shall mean a student enrolled at and assigned by the University to teach for a practicum assignment in the LEA as part of the pre-clinical practice requirements.

"Teacher Candidate" shall mean a student enrolled at and assigned by the University to teach in the LEA, as part of preparation for entering the teaching profession.

"University Supervisor" or "Special Area Supervisor" or "Course Instructor" shall mean the University person who is in charge of the course of study or specific experience for which the student is assigned to the LEA.

2. REPRESENTATIVES

a. The University shall, with regard to placement, assignment, and change or termination of assignment of Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students be represented by coordinators from the School of Education, Watkins College of Art, and/or the College of Music and Performing Arts.

b. The University shall, with respect to conduct of Teacher Candidates, and Practicum Students, be represented by a University Supervisor, Special Area Supervisor, or Course Instructor.

c. The LEA shall be represented by its Director of Schools or by such other administrative personnel, as he/she shall designate.

d. Each party shall provide timely notice to the other party as to the name, mailing and email address, and telephone number of the contacts referenced above.

3. PLACEMENT OF TEACHER CANDIDATES AND PRACTICUM STUDENTS

a. The placement process shall be a cooperative venture involving both the University and the LEA.

b. The University shall initiate the placement of a Teacher Candidate by filing an application for each proposed assignment setting out the background of the student and the type of assignment appropriate. The request may be accompanied by suggested names of teachers of the LEA, who would be recommended by the University as a Cooperating Teacher. The final assignment of Teacher Candidates shall be made by the LEA after consultation with the Cooperating Teacher and Principal under whom the assignment will be completed.

c. The University may request placement of Practicum Students for either an individual student or a group of students. The request will identify the particular student, or a composite description of the group of students to be placed in terms of background, the type of assignment requested, objectives of the assignment, and activities suggested as appropriate to the requested assignment.

4. CALENDAR

Teacher Candidates and/or Practicum Students will follow the calendar of the LEA and the daily schedule of the individual school in which the experience is taking place. Any proposed deviation must be approved in advance by the Cooperating Teacher, the Principal (if applicable), and the University.

5. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

a. Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students will be advised that they are required to conform to standards of professional decorum that are consonant with prevailing standards in the school community and the education profession as a condition of the placement and its continuation.

b. Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students specifically agree that, during the time they are placed in the LEA, they will:

1. Maintain professional, legal and ethical conduct at all times;

2. Respect the privacy of children, families and school personnel and protect the confidentiality of academic or personal information that they encounter;

3. Maintain professional demeanor and appearance in accordance with the standards of the LEA and site where they are placed;

4. Be on site when and where they are expected and/or follow proper notification procedures to inform appropriate individuals in advance if they cannot attend or will be late;

5. Complete their assigned tasks, duties and responsibilities on time;

6. Interact and communicate in a positive and professional manner with students, peers, school and university personnel and others;

7. Avoid bias, prejudice or lack of fairness toward individuals or groups of people;

8. Act in a safe and responsible manner and avoid action that might put students, peers, or any school or university personnel at physical or emotional risk;

9. Remain committed to student learning at all times; and

10. Refrain from making offensive or demeaning comments about students or their abilities to learn or about teachers or their abilities to teach.

6. CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECKS AND COMPLIANCE WITH ZACHARY'S LAW

Nothing in this Agreement is intended to or shall be construed to relieve the LEA of its statutory responsibility to obtain criminal background checks or to comply with the requirements of Zachary's Law. However, University shall assist the LEA as follows:

a. Criminal Background Check

1. University requires Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students to obtain and submit to a full criminal history check prior to beginning their placement pursuant to T.C.A. § 49-5-413 and §49-5-5610. It shall be the Teacher Candidate's or Practicum Student's responsibility to make timely arrangements for the background check and to pay all costs associated with such checks.

2. University provides students the appropriate forms for the criminal background check. University shall inform any Teacher Candidates or Practicum Students excluded from clinical or field experiences on the basis of a criminal background check of a review or appeal process available pursuant to the Fair Credit Reporting Act or any other law or policy, if any.

b. Zachary's Law

1. University will advise its students that persons who have been convicted of a felony that results in their inclusion on the Tennessee Sex and Violent Offenders Registry or Tennessee Abuse of Vulnerable Persons Registry shall not, in the long term, be eligible for a license to teach or to hold a teaching position in the State of Tennessee and, in the immediate term, be accepted for placement in any LEA.

2. University will immediately notify the LEA and shall terminate its activities with regard to placing a prospective Teacher Candidate or Practicum Student or shall offer its assistance in removing a currently placed Teacher Candidate or Practicum Student from the placement if a coordinator from the Education Department learns that a Teacher Candidate or Practicum Student is on the Tennessee Sex and Violent Offenders Registry or the Tennessee Abuse of Vulnerable Persons Registry.

7. NON-DISCRIMINATION

The parties shall comply with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disability Act of 1990, and the regulations related hereto. Neither party shall discriminate in the choice of schools, Cooperating or Mentor Teachers, or Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students, on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, genetic information, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, or status as a veteran.

8. TEACHER CANDIDATE AND PRACTICUM STUDENT SUPERVISION

Students shall be subject to the rules and regulations of the LEA and under the direction and control of the Cooperating or Mentor Teacher, Principal, and other administrative personnel while they are on the premises of the LEA or acting in behalf of the LEA in locations other than the premises. The following points have specific reference to the various types of supervisory responsibility:

a. A Cooperating Teacher may leave the classroom with a Teacher Candidate in charge of the class, but a Cooperating Teacher shall, at all times, retain the responsibility for control of the class and the program of instruction.

b. A Mentor Teacher shall not leave the classroom with a Practicum Student in charge of the class.

c. University students who are not licensed shall not be used as a substitute for a Cooperating or Mentor Teacher or for any other licensed personnel. Planned exceptions to this item may be considered and authorized by the respective designated administrative personnel of the LEA and the University.

d. University Students, with the exception of certain licensed interns, may not be compensated for any responsibilities that constitute all or a part of the required field experiences program.

e. Cooperating and Mentor Teachers shall file such reports as are prescribed by the University.

f. The University Supervisor or other designated representative of the University shall have access, at all reasonable times, to visit the classroom(s) to which the student is assigned for the purpose of observation and supervision.

g. In the event that the school to which a student is assigned is subject to jurisdictional

dispute between a teacher association and the LEA, the student will occupy a position of neutrality which means:

1. The student will immediately report any such dispute to his/her University Supervisor of Course Instructor and be guided by his/her instructions.

2. The student will not report to the assigned school until such time as directed by the University Supervisor or Course Instructor.

3. The student will not by any overt action render support to either party to the dispute.

9. TERMINATION OR CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND PROJECTS

Either the LEA or the University may, at any time, change or terminate the assignment of any Teacher Candidate or Practicum Student or any cooperatively developed project which involves field experience students. However, before either change or termination, all parties shall make reasonable efforts to consult with each other.

10. STATUS OF TEACHER CANDIDATES, PRACTICUM STUDENTS, AND PARTICIPANTS

LEA retains primary responsibility for the educational experience of its pupils and for the orderly conduct of its school. Teacher Candidates and Practicum Students shall be under the direction and control of the LEA as represented by the Cooperating or Mentor Teacher, Principal, and other administrative personnel while they are on the premises of the LEA or acting in behalf of the LEA in locations other than the premises.

11. HONORARIUM/RECOGNITION

The University shall pay an honorarium for consulting service directly to the Cooperating Teacher for participating in the program. The honorarium amount shall be mutually agreed upon by the LEA and the University and may be modified each academic year upon agreement by both parties. If the sum paid by the University should ever be lawfully determined to be a wage rather than an honorarium by an instrumentality of the United States, then the University, for purposes of Social Security and tax withholding only, shall be deemed to have been the Cooperating Teacher's part-time employer.

12. TERM AND TERMINATION

The term of this Agreement begins on August 1, 2026 and ends May 31, 2029. The Agreement shall automatically renew for renewal periods of one year unless cancelled by either party upon 30 days written notice. In no event shall this agreement exceed 3 years.

This Agreement may be terminated at any time either by the LEA or the University by giving the other party thirty (30) days prior written notice. Any student already placed shall be allowed to

finish.

13. LIABILITY

Each party agrees to accept liability for any injuries or damages arising from the negligent or intentional acts or omissions of its officers, employees, and/or agents, including participating students as applicable, in connection with the performance of this Agreement, unless, in the case of participating students, such acts or omissions are the result of negligent supervision, instruction, or direction of the LEA, its officers, agents, or employees. It is the express intention of the parties hereto that neither should bear liability for injury, loss, and/or damages caused by the other party.

14. TECHNOLOGY

Belmont University faculty, Teacher Candidates, and Practicum Students may use certain technologies in the classroom, such as audio recordings, video recordings, or artificial intelligence tools, which capture or communicate the voice, handwriting, and/or coursework of P- 12 students, but should not capture or communicate education records involving personally identifiable student information without the written consent of the student or parent as appropriate. Use of technology should comply with FERPA and applicable state law.

15. CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

All educational records created, disclosed, or maintained pursuant to the terms of this Agreement are confidential and shall be created, disclosed, and maintained pursuant to the provisions of the Family Educational Right to Privacy Act, also known as FERPA (20 U.S.C.A. §1232(g)) and its regulations.

16. NOTICES

All notices shall be properly given if they are sent by first-class mail to the appropriate LEA and University personnel.

17. MODIFICATION OF CONTRACT

This Agreement may be modified only be written amendment executed by all parties and their signatories hereto.

18. PARTNERSHIP/JOINT VENTURE/EMPLOYMENT

Nothing herein shall in any way be construed or intended to create a partnership or joint venture between the parties or to create the relationship of principal and agent between or among any of the parties. None of the parties hereto shall hold itself out in a manner contrary to the terms of this paragraph. No party shall become liable for any representation, act, or omission or any other kind will be created by this Student Teaching experience. No compensation will be paid to any student pursuant to this Student Teaching experience by the Board.

19. GOVERNING LAW

The laws of the State of Tennessee shall govern the validity, construction, and effect of this Agreement and any and all extensions and/or modifications. Tennessee law shall govern regardless of any language in any attachment or other document that the University may provide.

SUSPENSIONS OF PLACEMENTS DUE TO EMERGENCY

In the event of an unforeseen emergency (e.g. pandemic influenza) the LEA or University will be notified of the suspension of the placement contract. The effective date would be when the emergency was declared by either the LEA or University. Both parties will collaborate to reinstate the placement contract at the appropriate time.

20. ENTIRE AGREEMENT

This Agreement sets forth the entire Agreement between the parties with respect to the subject matter herein and shall govern the respective duties and obligations of the parties.

In witness whereof, the parties, through their authorized representatives, have affixed their signatures below.

By: Margaret Richards

Title: Head of School

Date: 10/28/26

By: James P Monty Jr

Title: DEAN

Date: 10/30/26