# Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)</th>
<th>Middle Tennessee State University</th>
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<tr>
<td>Local Education Agency (LEA)</td>
<td>Rutherford County Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term of Agreement</td>
<td>2020-2021</td>
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</tbody>
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**EPP Contact/Designee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Bobbi Lussier</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Executive Director</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email Address</td>
<td><a href="mailto:bobbi.lussier@mtsu.edu">bobbi.lussier@mtsu.edu</a></td>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>615-898-2628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LEA Contact/Designee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dr. Andrea Anthony</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Asst. Superintendent Human Resources</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Email Address</td>
<td><a href="mailto:anthonya@rcschools.net">anthonya@rcschools.net</a></td>
<td>Phone Number</td>
<td>615-893-5812</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Other Key Staff**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Dr. Robyn Ridgley</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Associate Dean</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Tyra Pilgrim</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>CTE Coordinator</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Dr. Cheryl Hitchcock</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Assessment Coordinator, Professor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Rebecca Murphy</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Rutherford County Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td></td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>EPP Specialist</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Certification (signatures verify partnership)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EPP Head Administrator</th>
<th>Name: [Signature]</th>
<th>Date: 11/10/2020</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Interim Dean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEA Director of Schools</th>
<th>Name: [Signature]</th>
<th>Date: 11/9/20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Director of Schools</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>
MTSU and RCS will collaborate and co-develop a formalized recruitment plan to address the recruitment of diverse candidates and candidates in high-need areas by Fall 2020. Implementation of the recruitment plan will begin Spring 2021.

Enrollment data, including diversity and enrollment in high-need areas, will be reviewed annually each Spring with RCS. RCS will provide feedback on recruitment efforts and enrollment processes for teacher preparation. Specific strategies for recruitment will be revised based on the data with updated measurable outcomes identified.

RCS and MTSU will hold bi-annual (Fall and Spring) data share meetings to identify the needs and progress of the district and EPP in order to assess and revise goals and processes for greater outcomes. Next meeting scheduled December 3, 2020.

MTSU and RCS will:
- co-create a teacher candidate profile for incoming and graduating candidates by Spring 2021
- co-review criteria for admission to the teacher education program by late Spring 2021
- co-develop and implement an interview process for a pilot group of candidates applying for the teacher preparation program by Fall 2021

The Career and Technical Education division of RCS will continue the Educators Rising career path for Teaching as a Profession (TAP) students. MTSU and RCS will continue to co-host the Educators Rising competition for RCS TAP high school students: Spring 2019, 2020 (COVID postponed), 2021 (virtual). This is an opportunity for MTSU and RCS to recruit future teacher candidates.

MTSU and RCS will expand the Dual Credit option for Teaching as a Profession students in the RCS CTE programs for 2021-2022. MTSU faculty will connect with CTE programs for future teachers, student experiences, and recruitment efforts throughout the teacher preparation program in RCS schools.

MTSU faculty in the education preparation program, including administrators, will be highly visible in our partner schools and directly involved with LEA teachers, staff and students through a variety of activities and events (i.e. career day, class presentations, committee work, instruction) annually.

Preference will be afforded to Rutherford County TAP students when applying for scholarships, and for students choosing to teach in a high-needs education discipline, such as special education or ESL.
Prompt 2: Identify how entities will collaborate to select, prepare, evaluate, support, and retain high-quality clinical educators, both provider and school-based, who demonstrate a positive impact on candidates’ development and pre-K-12 learning and development. (500 words)

**Selection:** The EPP and LEA will meet annually to review the credentials and selection of prospective clinical mentors to ensure the established selection criteria is met. Only appropriately licensed mentor teachers, rated highly effective by the TEAM evaluation model and receive a Level of Effectiveness of 4 or 5, will be considered for selection as recommended by the LEA. University supervisors must hold a master’s degree, minimum of 4 years teaching experience, established record as a successful licensed educator with recommendation from former school district.

**Preparation and Support:** Annual training, professional learning opportunities, and supports will be provided to mentor teachers and university supervisors related to university initiatives (e.g., edTPA, co-teaching model) and school district initiatives (e.g., curriculum approaches, TEAM evaluation). Coaching, feedback, and support will be provided for mentors and supervisors to ensure they use evidence-based practices for effectively supporting the development of teacher candidates. University supervisors are required to be certified as a TEAM evaluator through annual training and testing by NIET. Online modules for Co-Teaching and Supporting Student Teachers are available Spring 2021. Webinars on edTPA 101 and supporting candidates with edTPA are available for clinical mentors through Pearson Fall 2020 and Spring 2021.

**Evaluation:** The current evaluation process of clinical mentors will be co-reviewed and revised annually based upon input from the LEA and university partners. Teacher candidates evaluate both the school-based and university clinical mentors each semester through LiveText. The LEA mentor teachers are additionally peer-evaluated by the school’s administrator and RTI coaches. If specific areas for improvement are noted, strategies for supporting the improvement of the clinical supervisors will be identified. The data collected from these evaluations will be co-reviewed annually by RCS and MTSU with specific action steps identified. Additional evaluation instruments have been developed to collect information from the university supervisors regarding the mentor teachers’ support of the development of the teacher candidate, as well as, collecting information from the mentor teacher regarding the support of the university supervisor. Collection of this additional data begins Fall 2020.

**Retention:** Evaluation information will be used to determine retention of clinical educators and need for targeted professional development. Incentives for “master” school-based mentor teachers will be created in addition to the compensation received from the university. Both partners will pursue dually funding a position at RCS to coordinate trainings, selection, and placements of mentor teachers. The trainings will be promoted as an incentive for serving as a mentor teacher. Other incentives for retaining clinical mentors will be explored and identified. MTSU will utilize RCS to gain input on recruitment and hiring of EPP supervisors.
Prompt 3: Identify mutually-agreed upon expectations for candidate preparation that link theory and practice, maintain coherence across clinical and academic components of preparation, and establish shared accountability for candidate outcomes. (500 words)

Candidate Preparation: Teacher candidates are provided with coursework and clinical experiences that support their ability to provide challenging learning experiences, which address the individual, cultural, and developmentally appropriate learning needs of their students. Educator preparation curriculum revisions have occurred based upon input from district personnel, changes to state policies, and proven research best practices. School district and university faculty co-develop clinical and academic processes to ensure candidate expectations are met. Curriculum and clinical experience requirements will be reviewed annually to determine needed revisions.

Clinical and Academic Coherence: District and university faculty, school-based mentors, and university supervisors engage in collaborative professional learning opportunities to stay current on PreK-12 issues and educator licensure requirements. University Pre-Residency and Residency I faculty meet with LEA faculty to design coursework and clinical experiences for candidates that connect theory to practice. All of these courses have field or clinical experiences built into the course syllabus. Mutually agreed upon processes for reviewing coherence of academic and performance components will be further developed. MTSU is currently engaged in a project with SCORE and EdFirst to take our educator preparation program to the next level. Part of that work is to develop a deeply symbiotic COMPACT relationship with RCS and Murfreesboro City Schools. Once the COMPACT is finalized and a teacher candidate profile developed Spring 2021, program offerings will be analyzed to ensure all elements are in service to the teacher candidate profile Fall 2021.

Outcomes Accountability: To ensure shared accountability for candidate outcomes, MTSU and RCS employs the state-approved evaluation instrument, TEAM, for evaluating teacher candidates. Both clinical mentors collaborate on identifying strengths and areas of improvement of the teacher candidates. Principals were surveyed Fall 2020 to receive feedback on the performance of completers hired within the past 3 years. The Assessment of Student Teacher Preparation (ASTP) instrument is completed by school-based mentors, university supervisors and teacher candidates during the Residency II semester. These data are annually reviewed for strengths and areas of improvement in the educator preparation program and teacher candidate performance. Partners will annually review the performance data of teacher candidates in order to make needed revisions to the clinical and academic experiences.

As teacher candidates graduate and enter the profession, district and university personnel will provide ongoing opportunities to support the development of new teachers through trainings and communities of practice. A differentiated system of new teacher induction will be co-created as part of the COMPACT agreement. Development of this plan will begin Spring 2021.

The TDOE Educator Survey will be reviewed annually to identify and address issues voiced by district teachers.
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**Prompt 4: Identify mutually-agreed upon key assessments, transition points, and exit requirements.**
(500 words)

**Key Assessments:** University faculty worked with LEA administrators and classroom teachers on the mutually-agreed upon creation of the rubrics and validity of three key assessments. After candidates are admitted to Teacher Education, they complete a series of common, key assessments created for initial licensure candidates in all areas. Three key assessments were co-created to meet the requirements of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). They align with edTPA and TEAM.

**The assessments include:**

1. Planning for Instruction and Assessment - Data are collected for the Planning Assessment three times from admission to Teacher Education through Residency I.
2. Instruction - Data are collected for the Instruction and Assessment two times during the same period.
3. Assessment - During Residency II, all candidates complete the following assessments:
   - Eduative Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) required for licensure.
   - TEAM Evaluation Model - Candidates are assessed by university supervisors and mentor teachers with the state approved TEAM evaluation model.
   - Dispositions - Dispositions are measured throughout the candidacy. A revised disposition rubric was adopted with input from district administrators and faculty Spring 2019.

**Transition Points:** There are multiple transition points that occur from admission to the teacher education program to completion that have been mutually agreed upon by the district, university, and teacher education council. These will be reviewed and revised annually by RCS and MTSU.

- Admission to Teacher Education - Students may apply for Admission to Teacher Education after completing 45 credit hours and meeting all state and university requirements. Admission to Teacher Education allows candidates to enroll in Pre-Residency coursework. Job-embedded candidates must be admitted to the teacher education program upon admittance into the licensure path.
- Pre-Residency entails completion of all coursework and field experiences prior to entering the Residency year. Depending on the major of the candidate, pre-residency may be one, two, or three semesters.
- Residency I occurs the first semester of the senior year and a prerequisite for Residency II. Candidates are placed in a school for the equivalent of two days a week with a school-based mentor teacher. University faculty are in the schools with the candidates to coordinate with the mentor teachers and ensure the connection between coursework and clinical experience. Residency I requirements must be successfully met before moving to Residency II. Mentor teacher feedback is utilized when determining teacher candidate readiness for Residency II.
- Residency II is the clinical experience formerly known as student teaching. Candidates have two diverse placements in two different schools during the semester under the co-supervision and support of the school-based mentor and the university supervisor.
- Completion - Upon completion of Residency II, including graduation and successfully passing all required professional assessments and preparation requirements, candidates are recommended for licensure.
- Exit requirements are reviewed with RCS and mutually agreed upon by both RCS and MTSU. Candidates must meet all Residency II or Job-Embedded licensure requirements for program completion. Early career induction is the last transition of the preparation program.
Prompt 5: Identify mutually-agreed upon design of clinical experiences of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure that candidates demonstrate their developing effectiveness and positive impact on all students' learning and development. (500 words)

The partnership of Middle Tennessee State University and Rutherford County Schools meets or exceeds minimum expectations for clinical practice as outlined in the State Board of Education Educator Preparation Policy 5.504.

Clinical Experience Design:

RCS and MTSU co-established a jointly managed Coordinating Council (CC) of MTSU faculty and administrators, RCS practicing teachers, building and central office administrators, and former teacher candidates to address the depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration of the clinical experience. The CC initial meeting was held February 26, 2020. Priorities were identified as (1) recruitment and selection of candidates, (2) selection and training of clinical mentors, (3) clinical experience design. The work of the CC will be a sub-group of the COMPACT. Clinical experience design will be reviewed and aligned with the teacher candidate profile once it is developed (Spring 2021).

A collaborative plan will be developed to extend clinical preparation beyond the initial experience for induction and support of early career teachers, including job-embedded candidates, to address the specific needs of first-time teachers.

The current co-agreed clinical yearlong design will be reviewed annually in the Spring for needed changes.

Duration:

The implementation of the yearlong clinical experience promoted shared responsibility for teacher preparation. Residency I clinical experience is one semester long (15 weeks) and occurs the first semester of the senior year as a prerequisite to Residency II. Candidates are in the schools the equivalent of 2 days a week. Residency II (16 weeks, 5 days per week) clinical experience is the capstone semester of the candidates' preparation.

Depth / Breadth:

The redesign to a clinical based yearlong educator preparation program affords teacher candidates the opportunity to experience a deeper immersion in the school culture, broadening skill, knowledge, practice, and dispositions of teacher candidates to effectively address the students' various learning needs. The yearlong clinical experience affords students the opportunity to work more closely with colleagues, students, and school community.

Diversity:

Residency I and II teacher candidates have diverse placements during their final semesters at two different schools with different demographics and populations. Placements are designed for candidates to experience varying age and grade levels within the grade span of their endorsement area.

Coherence:

Residency I candidates are in class 3 days a week completing professional education courses and in the PreK-12 schools the other 2 days of the week. The course work and clinical experiences are aligned so that the candidates have an opportunity to apply what they are learning in the classroom. Residency II clinical preparation, content and pedagogy are integrated throughout the teacher education program. Field and clinical experiences are embedded throughout the EPP's initial licensure programs.