


Educator Preparation Provider/Local Education Agency Primary Partnership Agreement

Educator Preparation Provider (EPP)	Lipscomb University
Local Education Agency (LEA)	Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools
Academic Year of Agreement	2025-2026

EPP Contact/Designee	
Name: Emily Medlock	Title: Director of Clinical Experiences
Email: emily.medlock@lipscomb.edu	Phone Number: 615-966-6079

LEA Contact/Designee	
Name: Amber Tyus	Title: Executive Director HR Talent Strategy
Email: Amber.Tyus@mnps.org	Phone Number: 615-259-8678

Certification (signatures verify partnership)	
EPP Head Administrator: Dr. Leslie Cowell	Title: Dean, College of Education
Signature: 	Date: 9/9/25

LEA Head Administrator: Dr. Adrienne Battle	Title: Director of Schools
Signature: 	Date: 9-10-25

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.*

Lipscomb University and MNPS actions discussed below will be completed as part of the MNPS Primary Partnership Consortium. Lipscomb University and Metro-Nashville Public Schools (MNPS or district) partnership will develop 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 teacher pipeline of the MNPS teaching force to better reflect the demographics of the student population, and 3) to strategically target educator candidates for the district's high need content areas (Special Education, English Learners, Mathematics, Sciences, and World Languages). Members of the partnership will work together in an iterative process to create and implement recruitment strategies to meet defined needs (e.g., diversity plans, etc.).

Partnership members and other identified faculty and staff will meet at least bi-annually to assess how well the partnership is meeting its recruitment goals and to determine the district's future needs by analyzing the district's Human Capital Data Report (HCDR) and EPP data (i.e., Annual Reports data and other educator candidate pipeline data). The partnership will collaborate and share 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 in the above paragraph, MNPS will provide updates and projections on the current educator pipeline, and MNPS will provide information on its current and projected staffing needs.

Collaboration on recruitment and selection strategies will allow Lipscomb and MNPS to strategically target placement of candidates in hard-to-fill schools in specific shortage areas. Data sharing on current and projected district needs and EPP projections will include demographics, high need certification areas, and links to the district's on-going recruitment activities. Partners will create and implement recruitment strategies to meet defined needs. Strategies that will allow the partnership to improve teacher recruitment and increase the number of high need content area candidates may include, but are not limited to, targeted social media campaigns, career fairs and events, collaboration with community colleges and MNPS Academies, exploration and interest meetings with local high school students, and engagement with churches and other community partners.

Potential collaborative strategies include growing our program to include targeted recruitment of future educators (e.g. Pionero program, LIFT off to Lipscomb, hosting middle and high school students on campus, ensuring that candidates experience a variety of clinical experiences, developing partnerships with MNPS schools). Lipscomb has established a full-time position to collaborate with MNPS high schools and MNPS University, aiming to specifically recruit and provide scholarships for MNPS graduates to create a teacher pipeline to Lipscomb's College of Education. The EPP and MNPS should collaborate on retention efforts, such as the New Teacher Academy and other transition efforts from candidacy to employment. MNPS will report district needs to the EPP on an annual basis so that the EPP can support recruitment and retention efforts that support MNPS needs. The EPP and MNPS will meet bi-annually to assess local needs in terms of recruitment (e.g. career fairs) but also candidate training needs. At this meeting, the team will reciprocally evaluate the effectiveness of the recruitment, training, and retention efforts.

**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 Lipscomb faculty and MNPS representatives. Minimum criteria for school-based clinical educators include: 1) a minimum of 3 years teaching experience, 2) licensure in current teaching assignments, 3) average score of 3 or higher on previous year's TEAM evaluation, 4) collaborative and reflective educator, 5) positive dispositions, 6) effective communication skills, and 7) completion of clinical educator training. Minimum criteria for university clinical supervisors include: 1) minimum of 3 years teaching experience, 2) collaborative and reflective, 3) positive dispositions, 4) effective communicator, and 5) completion of clinical supervisor training.

A process for selecting clinical mentors was collaboratively developed in the fall of 2021. A mentor teacher interest form was developed and distributed to all teachers in MNPS. The purpose of this form was first to increase the pool of possible mentor teachers and second to use the information to match mentor teachers with our candidates - over 700 teachers completed the form. Once teachers completed the form, personnel from the MNPS HR Department determined if the teachers met the first three criteria listed above. If the criteria were met, the HR Department contacted principals to receive their approval of the teacher serving as a mentor. Mentor teacher names were then entered into a database for EPPs to select from. This process was piloted in Fall 2021 and fully implemented in Spring 2022, for Fall 2022 and Spring 2023 placements. This process will continue for AY 2025-26.

The roles and responsibilities of clinical educators have been collaboratively developed by the Lipscomb and MNPS partnerships, and they are aligned to the TEAM professionalism rubric. These roles and responsibilities are outlined in the Lipscomb Teacher Education handbook.

The MNPS Primary Partnership Consortium has developed a Mentor Teacher Institute (MTI). The institute will occur two times in the 2025-2026 academic year and will be facilitated by members of the partnership. One strand of the content will focus on novice mentor teachers and will focus on Cultivating Trust and Empowering Responsibility. The second strand will have content focused on Envisioning Feedback and Coaching. The day will end with time for the EPP to have conversations with mentors assigned to them.

The consortium worked collaboratively to co-develop an assessment for clinical educators. A working group was established during Fall 2024 to create and pilot the assessment. This assessment will be used to observe mentors and provide them with actionable feedback to improve the way in which they carry out their roles and responsibilities.

**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 identified Lipscomb and MNPS actions discussed below will be completed as part of the MNPS Primary Partnership Consortium of which Lipscomb is a member. The EPP/MNPS Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) addresses its mutually-agreed upon design of clinical experiences to ensure educator candidates demonstrate developing effectiveness and positive impact on students' learning/development aligned with CAEP, INTASC Standards, and the TEAM Evaluation. The MOU will be on file with the Director of Schools and reviewed annually by the district and EPP.

The EPP/MNPS partnership ensures the following:

1. Programs meet minimum expectations for clinical practice as outlined in the educator preparation policy(5.504) <https://www.tn.gov/content/dam/in/stateboardofeducation/documents/policies/5000/5.504%20Educator%20Preparation%20Policy%207-27-18.pdf>
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 and collect assessment data frequently. varied, 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.

Breadth: EPP faculty, with the support of LEA partners will design/develop clinical experiences that include teaching and professional experiences reflecting appropriate content and pedagogical models across diverse school/classroom communities and curriculum.

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.

Duration: Field experiences are designed and varied regarding the time in various settings based on the goals of preparing successful first-year teachers.

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.*

MNPS is a member of the EPP's Teacher Education Advisory Council (TEAC), which meets each semester. This is a group of partner districts and schools that regularly host and hire EPP candidates. This group regularly reviews and evaluates current EPP design and practice paired with outcome data to ensure that the current and planned offerings are up-to-date and beneficial to both candidates and employing schools. At these meetings, the EPP regularly shares outcome data from Praxis II, TN EPP report card, TVAAS data, and the Annual report so that the group can collaborate with Lipscomb to analyze weaknesses, missing content, and plans for continued improvement. Our partner schools and districts are essential to ensuring that Lipscomb candidates and faculty are equipped with current needs and the according translation to program design.

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.*

The identified Lipscomb and MNPS actions discussed below will be completed as part of the MNPS Primary Partnership Consortium of which Lipscomb is a member. Through ongoing collaboration, the Lipscomb/MNPS partnership will ensure that educator candidates possess the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for educator candidates to meet the required standards for all specialty area programs offered. The partnership will ensure educator candidates understand preparation expectations, licensure requirements, and professional responsibilities. As a team, Lipscomb and MNPS want candidates to experience M TEAM meetings, parent-teacher conferences, STEAM exposure, IEP meetings, training in ACES, and literacy standards as exhibited in the schools. In addition, MNPS will collaborate with the EPP to ensure access to LEA curricular content and materials. We will begin with these current initiatives but know that these will change over time as priorities evolve.

The EPP/MNPS partnership will mutually agree upon evidence-based practices in curriculum, planning, instruction, assessment, and classroom management for all populations of students. Educator candidates and mentor teachers will engage in collaboration opportunities (e.g., collaborative planning, co-teaching, data meetings, etc.) that will allow the educator candidate to progressively engage in opportunities to link these evidence-based practices to classroom practice. For example, the co-teaching language used in the MCTE Clinical Placement manual will be used to teach co-teaching and these practices will be taught through professional development for candidates, supervisors, and mentors. The EPP/MNPS partnership will mutually agree on expectations that educator candidates will complete a clinical placement in a Pre-K-12 school setting where these agreed upon practices are effectively implemented by mentor teachers.

Teacher candidates complete a clinical placement in a Pre-K-12 school setting prior to candidacy for licensure. The EPP will ensure that these placements meet the minimum expectations for clinical placement as outlined in Educator Preparation Policy 5.504. Throughout the clinical placement, candidates will engage in progressive opportunities to bring research and theory to classroom practice. Candidates will engage in educator collaboration opportunities, such as collaborative planning and co-teaching. The Lipscomb/MNPS partnership will mutually agree on observation and evaluation methods to be used when providing feedback to teacher candidates throughout their clinical experience. In addition, the Lipscomb and MNPS partnership will mutually-agree upon a process to obtain educator candidate feedback on the way in which clinical educators perform their roles and responsibilities as well as measuring candidates' perception that clinical educators have had a positive impact on the educator's candidate's ability to influence student achievement.

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.
<p>The desired short-term outcomes of our primary partnership include: 1) Lipscomb’ s College of Education and MNPS will continue to engage in collaboartive conversations and data sharing for continuous improvement, 2) Lipscomb’ s College of Education will prepare educators for clinical experiences within MNPS PK-12 classrooms through rigorous and relevant curriculum, 3) MNPS will support the growth of educators through high-quality mentorship in clinical experiences.</p>	
<p>The desired long-term outcomes of our primary partnership include: 1) Increase the educator pipeline in MNPS, 2) Develop intentional recruitment strategies of intitial licensure candidates through MNPS University, College Fairs, and Career Fairs, 3) Develop retention strategies to support early career and veteran educators.</p>	