

Mentors Matter Training Initiative Recruitment Grant

Call for Applications

The department is calling for applications for the Mentors Matter Training Initiative Recruitment Grant for academic year 2019-20. Approved Tennessee educator preparation providers (EPPs) are eligible to apply. This reimbursement grant will provide financial incentives and supports for EPPs, partner local education agencies (LEAs), and up-to 600 LEA-based clinical mentors which may participate in the Mentors Matter Training Initiative during the 2019-20 academic year (fall and spring). Grantees will engage in strategic recruitment of teachers to serve as clinical mentors and in targeted communication efforts with LEA partners and clinical mentors to ensure participation in the full range of training and research activities. Grantees will receive financial incentives for the successful recruitment of clinical mentors, as well as funding to provide incentives to LEA partners and participating clinical mentors. The training initiative is designed to support clinical mentors through department-led training on coaching and providing feedback to teacher candidates during clinical experiences, and to develop a research base for understanding how coaching and feedback may enhance clinical mentor support of teacher candidates.

The deadline for EPPs to apply is July 28, 2019.

Mentors Matter Training Initiative Background

The department was awarded a 2015 Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS) grant from the Institute of Education Sciences, in the priority area of educator talent management (ETM). With the support of the SLDS grant, the department began the Mentors Matter projects, intended to support greater understanding of clinical mentor impact on teacher candidate early-career effectiveness. As part of the Mentors Matter projects, the department is engaged two randomized control research trials which involve delivering training to clinical mentors to support their work with teacher candidates. Recent research has increased understanding of the substantial impact of clinical mentors on the success of early-career teachers early, suggesting that

- effective clinical mentors provide more and better coaching and feedback to teacher candidates;¹
- teachers mentored by more effective clinical mentors are themselves more instructionally effective in their early careers;²
- when teachers receive coaching targeted toward a limited area of improvement, they improve instructional practice and perceive themselves to be better prepared;³ and post-observation conferences promote teacher learning when they are focused on co-constructing the problem, co-constructing potential action, and target setting.⁴

¹ Ronfeldt, Goldhaber, Cowan, Bardelli, Johnson, & Tien (under review);

² Ronfeldt, Brockman, Campbell, (2018); Goldhaber & Ronfeldt (forthcoming); Ronfeldt, Matsko, Greene Nolan, & Reininger, M. (2018); <https://www.chalkbeat.org/posts/us/2018/07/16/mentors-matter-good-teaching-really-can-be-passed-down-to-student-teachers-new-research-finds/>

³ Allen, Pianta, Gregory, Mikami, & Lun (2011); Grossman (2015); Kretlow, Wood, and Cooke (2011)

⁴ Alexander & Murphy (1998); Reiman & Thies-Sprinthall (1998); McQueen (2015)

Despite this knowledge, clinical mentors typically report receiving little training, and the mentoring they provide varies greatly.⁵ To improve the clinical preparation of teacher candidates, with support from an Institute of Education Sciences Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems grant, the department has partnered with researchers at the University of Michigan on the Mentors Matter Training Initiative, with the goal of providing teacher candidates with better modeling of teaching, more opportunities to practice teaching, and more frequent and better coaching and feedback.

The training will provide targeted professional learning experiences focused on developing clinical mentors' knowledge and skills in providing feedback and coaching to teacher candidates. Throughout and following the learning experiences, the department will utilize surveys to measure the impact of this training on clinical mentor practices and perceptions; and on the practice, perception, and effectiveness of the teacher candidates with whom clinical mentors work.

The training will consist of an introductory and closing webinar, two face-to-face training sessions, and interim feedback activities for the mentor to complete with their teacher candidates. In addition, a group of mentors invited to the training will also be invited to participate in an on-line professional learning community. The professional learning community will provide mentors with a peer support network and allow the research to provide insight into how varied levels of support may impact the extent to which mentors are successful in applying their learning to change mentoring practices to align with the intended outcomes of the training.

This initiative will not be used to evaluate the teaching or mentoring of the participating clinical mentors. Instead, the goal is to assess the effectiveness of the clinical mentor training to consider whether to provide training to additional clinical mentors across Tennessee in the future. This initiative will involve random assignment of clinical mentors into one of two groups: those who will receive this training and those assigned to a control group. Both groups of clinical mentors will respond to surveys on mentor practices and submit audio recordings of feedback conferences. All teacher candidates will respond to pre- and post- surveys of their perceptions of mentor practices and candidates' effectiveness in their early careers as teachers of record will be tracked. This design will enable the research team to rigorously examine whether the training produces the intended positive impacts on mentor and candidate practices.

This training was piloted in the spring of 2017-2018 and fall of 2018-19 with 76 clinical mentors and supervisors at four Tennessee educator preparation providers. The department is refining this training for the 2019-20 school year to build on current understanding and provide this training to a larger audience.

⁵ Ronfeldt, Goldhaber, Cowan, Bardelli, Johnson, & Tien (under review); Ronfeldt M., personal communication, September 22, 2017.

Applicant Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Eligibility

Tennessee-approved educator preparation providers are eligible to apply.

Rating of Applications

The Director of Data and Research (office of educator licensure and preparation) shall serve as the solicitation coordinator and will coordinate the rating process. The rating process will be conducted by the Director of Research and Analysis, the Senior Director of Educator Licensure and Preparation, and the Senior Research Strategist for Research and Analysis, as follows:

1. Applications will be scored using a rubric to assign point values to each response, within each of the scored categories.
2. Applications will be ranked based on the highest average proposal score.
3. For any application where the difference in ratings across reviewers is greater than (15%), an additional review of all submitted applications shall be conducted by a new reviewer and all applications will be ranked a second time, based on the new average score of all reviews conducted.

Advancement to Contract Phase

Applicant(s) will be selected as grantees based on highest rating and availability of funds, with a minimum score of 41 required to receive a grant award.

Payment Methodology

Grantees will receive incentive funds for mentor teachers recruited, as well as funds for disbursement to participating clinical mentors and to LEA partners. The grantee will be eligible for reimbursement following completion of all deliverables defined in the grant contract. Participation will be identified by sign-in sheets and end-of-day surveys at training days, and successful and timely submission of required feedback documents. Records of participation will be kept by the participating EPP and are to be submitted for verification prior to funds distribution. These records are to be made available to the department upon request during the training as needed.

Clinical Mentor Participation Requirements (dates for spring to be determined by the department)

- Attend an Introductory Webinar between July 29 – August 2
- Attend the Day 1 face-to-face training between Aug 5 – 16, and complete end-of-day survey;
- Attend the Day 2 face-to-face training between Sep 9 – 20, and complete end-of-day survey;
- Complete and submit 2 feedback documents to the department;
- Complete a survey and 10-minute audio recording of feedback session; and
- Attend the Concluding Webinar between October 14 – 25.

Line Item	Each	Total	Project Maximum
EPP incentive per clinical mentor participating in a one day in-person training	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 14,400.00
Clinical mentor incentive for participation in one day in-person training	\$ 150.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 86,400.00
Clinical mentor incentive for completion of virtual assignments	\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 28,800.00
LEA reimbursement for daily substitute teacher (two days per clinical mentor participating in training)	\$ 80.00	\$ 160.00	\$ 46,080.00
LEA incentive per clinical mentor participating in a one day in-person training	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 14,400.00
Control group clinical mentor incentive for survey completion (not participating in training)	\$ 50.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 28,800.00
Total Project			\$ 218,880.00

Application

Interested EPP's will submit an application to the department by completing the form located [here](#).

This solicitation shall NOT create rights, interests, or claims of entitlement in any respondent. This notification is not an acceptance of any offer, and the State retains the right to reject any response. No contracts are final until they receive full approval by our state procurement offices. Grantees will be notified of award via email and will be required to sign a grant contract. Funds will be disbursed following successful completion of the grant deliverables.

Application Scoring Rubrics

EPP and Cohort Characteristics (questions 4, 5, 6)		Score:
0 points	1 - 20 points	21 - 35 points
<p>Response does not identify any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall number of candidates who will be placed in clinical practice experiences Specialty/content areas of candidate placements Partner LEAs where placements will be made 	<p>Response identifies the following (1 point):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall number of candidates who will be placed in clinical practice experiences Specialty/content areas of candidate placements Partner LEAs where placements will be made <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort includes 1 – 19 candidates 	<p>Response identifies the following (1 point):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall number of candidates who will be placed in clinical practice experiences Specialty/content areas of candidate placements Partner LEAs where placements will be made <p>AND</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cohort includes 20 + candidates
0 points	1 – 2 points	3 points
<p>Response does not identify any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timeline for the recruitment of clinical mentors, how candidate placements are made, and the clinical placement dates (including academic calendar breaks and holidays) 	<p>Response identifies one or two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timeline for the recruitment of clinical mentors how candidate placements are made the clinical placement dates (including academic calendar breaks and holidays) 	<p>Response clearly identifies each of the following, in detail:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> timeline for the recruitment of clinical mentors; how candidate placements are made; and the clinical placement dates (including academic calendar breaks and holidays).
Notes:		

Communications Plan (Question 7)		Score:
0 - 10 points	11- 20 points	21 - 30 points
<p>Response identifies components of a plan for recruitment of clinical mentors, but lacks coherence and does not include the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall clinical mentor recruitment strategy; communication strategy, including communicating with potential clinical mentors and communicating expectations for participation in research activities; and plans for following-up with clinical mentors to ensure participation once recruited. 	<p>Response identifies a coherent plan for recruitment of clinical mentors, but does not include all of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall clinical mentor recruitment strategy; communication strategy, including communicating with potential clinical mentors and communicating expectations for participation in research activities; and plans for following-up with clinical mentors to ensure participation once recruited. 	<p>Response identifies a coherent plan for recruitment of clinical mentors, including all of the following components:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the overall clinical mentor recruitment strategy; communication strategy, including communicating with potential clinical mentors and communicating expectations for participation in research activities; and plans for following-up with clinical mentors to ensure participation once recruited.
Notes:		

Partnership Communication of Expectations (Question 8)		Score:
0 - 10 points	11- 20 points	21 - 30 points
<p>Response describes elements of a process by which the EPP may support communication with LEA partners and district leaders, though it is unclear if these elements would ensure that district leaders, school leaders, and clinical mentors understand the expectations for clinical mentors to participate in all aspects of the training selected.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Response describes elements of a process which may support mutual understanding of two or fewer the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant expectations, • Roles, and • Responsibilities related to clinical mentor recruitment, training, and follow-up. 	<p>Response describes a process by which the EPP may ensure communication with LEA partners and district leaders to ensure that district leaders, school leaders, and clinical mentors understand the expectations for clinical mentors to participate in all aspects of the training selected.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Response describes a process which may support mutual understanding of at least two of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant expectations, • Roles, or • Responsibilities related to clinical mentor recruitment, training, and follow-up. 	<p>Response clearly describes a coherent process by which the EPP would likely ensure effective communication with LEA partners and district leaders to ensure that district leaders, school leaders, and clinical mentors understand the expectations for clinical mentors to participate in all aspects of the training selected.</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Response clearly describes a coherent process which would likely ensure mutual understanding of all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant expectations, • Roles, and • Responsibilities related to clinical mentor recruitment, training, and follow-up.
Notes:		

Training Schedule (Question 11)		Score:
0 points	1 point	2 points
<p>Response includes zero-to-one (0—1) potential training days within each window provided (August 5 – 16 and September 9 – 20) with confirmed available location(s) that will accommodate <i>some or all of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> two (2) daylong clinical mentor training events which will be led by department personnel between August 5 – 16 (day 1) and September 9 – 20 (day 2); Wi-Fi and projector; and/or Space for training of fifty (50) attendees, with room to work in groups. 	<p>Response includes two (2) potential training days within each window provided (August 5 – 16 and September 9 – 20) with confirmed available location(s) that will accommodate <i>all of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> two (2) daylong clinical mentor training events which will be led by department personnel between August 5 – 16 (day 1) and September 9 – 20 (day 2); Wi-Fi and projector; and Space for training of fifty (50) attendees, with room to work in groups. 	<p>Response includes three (3) potential training days within each window provided (August 5 – 16 and September 9 – 20) with confirmed available location(s) that will accommodate <i>all of the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> two (2) daylong clinical mentor training events which will be led by department personnel between August 5 – 16 (day 1) and September 9 – 20 (day 2); Wi-Fi and projector; and Space for training of fifty (50) attendees, with room to work in groups.
Notes:		