

**RULES  
OF  
THE STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**CHAPTER 0520-02-04  
EDUCATOR PREPARATION**

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**0520-02-04-.10 CLINICAL EXPERIENCES.**

- (1) Each EPP shall provide candidates with clinical experiences. EPPs shall design these experiences to provide candidates with opportunities to build and demonstrate content knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. These experiences shall reflect the breadth of the grade span and the depth of the content reflected by the specialty area(s) in which the candidate is being prepared.
- (2) Each candidate shall complete field experiences and at least one (1) clinical practice in order to successfully complete an educator preparation program.
- (3) EPPs shall ensure candidates complete a clinical practice in the appropriate licensure and endorsement area.
- (4) Field experiences shall provide early and ongoing practice opportunities to apply content and pedagogical knowledge in settings reflective of the specialty area(s) in which the candidate is being prepared.
- (5) EPPs shall develop requirements for completion of clinical practice and outline the causes and procedures by which the clinical practice can be terminated. Candidates who do not successfully complete clinical practice shall not be recommended for licensure.
- (6) Prior to participating in a clinical practice, post-baccalaureate program candidates shall receive training on the professional education standards.
- (7) Clinical practice sites may include Tennessee public schools, including public charter schools and Tennessee state special schools, or Category 1, 2, or 3 non-public schools. Category 4 and 5 non-public schools shall not be used as placement sites, except for in the Early Childhood Education Birth – Kindergarten endorsement program. These categories are defined in State Board Rule 0520-07-02. ~~If extraordinary circumstances arise that prevent a candidate from completing the clinical experience in Tennessee, the EPP may request permission for the candidate to complete the clinical practice in another state. Information of candidates who complete the clinical practice outside of Tennessee shall be included as part of the comprehensive review process.~~

(Rule 0520-02-04-.10, continued)

(8) Early Childhood Education Birth – Kindergarten endorsement programs may include clinical practice sites in the following settings, which are subject to monitoring by the Department of Education and must meet the highest level of quality set forth by the Department of Education and the Department of Health Services:

(a) Public school-administered early childhood education programs;

(b) Programs operated by private schools as defined by T.C.A. § 49-6-3001(c)(3)(i) or § 49-6-3001(c)(3)(iii);

(c) Child care provided by church affiliated schools as defined by T.C.A. § 49-50-801(a);

(d) State-approved Montessori school programs; and

~~(a)~~(e) Child care provided in federally regulated programs, including Title I preschools and all school-administered Head Start and Even Start Programs.

(9) If extraordinary circumstances arise that prevent a candidate from completing the clinical practice in Tennessee, the EPP may request permission for the candidate to complete the clinical practice in another state. Information on candidates who complete the clinical practice outside of Tennessee shall be included as part of the comprehensive review process.

(108) EPPs shall ensure all candidates participating in a clinical practice have a school-based clinical mentor.

(119) Educators who serve as a school-based clinical mentor in a public school setting shall, at a minimum:

(a) Hold an active Tennessee license with an endorsement in the area or a closely related area where they will be supervising the candidate;

(b) Have a level of overall effectiveness of above expectations or significantly above expectations for the prior school year; and

(c) Have a minimum of three (3) years of experience as a teacher, school services personnel, or instructional leader, as applicable.

(12) Educators who serve as a school-based clinical mentor in a non-public school setting shall, at a minimum:

(a) Hold an active Tennessee license with an endorsement in the area or a closely related area where they will be supervising the candidate;

(b) Have a level of overall effectiveness of above expectations or significantly above expectations for the prior school year, or have an equivalent annual evaluation rating demonstrating performance of at least above expectations for the prior school year; and

(c) Have a minimum of three (3) years of experience as a teacher, school services personnel, or instructional leader, as applicable.

(130) Clinical mentors shall be selected jointly by the EPP and the partner LEA and/or CMO.

(144) Clinical mentors shall, in cooperation with the EPP clinical supervisor, direct the activities of the candidate in the classroom.

(Rule 0520-02-04-.10, continued)

(152) EPPs shall coordinate with LEAs and/or CMOs to ensure clinical mentors are provided release time for counseling, observation, evaluation, or other activities related to the clinical practice that occur during the school day.

(163) Beginning on July 1, 2026, clinical mentors and supervisors shall formally observe candidates a minimum of four (4) times during clinical practice, as defined in Educator Preparation Policy 5.504. Mentors and supervisors shall use an observation tool selected by the EPP and approved for use in the Educator Evaluation Policy 5.201. If the EPP does not select an observation tool approved for use in the Educator Evaluation Policy 5.201, the observation tool shall be reviewed and approved for use by the Department.

**Authority:** T.C.A. §§ 49-1-302, 49-5-101, and 49-5-108. **Administrative History:** Original rule filed March 16, 1992; effective June 29, 1992. Expired rules edited by Secretary of State in October 1996. Amendment filed May 28, 1999; effective September 28, 1999. Amendment filed April 28, 2000; effective August 28, 2000. Repeal filed May 29, 2015; effective August 27, 2015. Emergency rules filed January 28, 2019; effective through July 27, 2019. Amendments filed January 28, 2019; effective April 28, 2019. Amendments filed May 27, 2021; effective August 25, 2021. Amendments filed October 25, 2023; effective January 23, 2024. Amendments filed March 5, 2025; effective June 3, 2025.