



Case Study: Dickson County

This case study illustrates a Grow Your Own partnership between a district and Education Preparation Provider (EPP) that provides innovative, no-cost pathways for aspiring educators to help establish a strong pipeline to train and develop Tennessee teachers.

Overview

Dickson County School District serves 15 schools. With 12 candidates in their Grow Your Own (GYO) program, the district has partnered with Austin Peay State University and Nashville State Community College. Their 2021-22 cohort includes candidates of varied ages, backgrounds, and educational experiences.

Participant Example

The school district admitted a candidate into its GYO program who had 1-18 years of experience in the Dickson County school system. Eager to begin the candidate pursued GYO programming to earn a better salary, receive stronger benefits, and increase her understanding of best teaching practices and pedagogy. The candidate found the partner EPPs supportive of her program responsibilities due to the various options they provided for coursework completion. The district also provided financial assistance to allow the candidate options for additional work benefits and textbook expenses.



Program Reflections

Dickson County's program liaison has been instrumental in the candidates' experience. The liaison serves as a mentor instructor, teaching Classroom Organization and Management Program (COMP) modules that equip candidates with management tools to impact their ultimate effectiveness. Further, the liaison collaborates with neighboring GYO participant districts, as well as strengthens communication among stakeholders for current learnings and future program considerations.

Future Opportunities



Aligning Teaching as a Profession (TAP) to GYO

While the district has an established TAP program, the team is working to align dual enrollment opportunities for high school students with prerequisites of GYO requirements. Streamlining GYO program opportunities with established TAP pipelines will be an important opportunity to develop early career readiness opportunities for high school students' experience, coursework, mentorship, and field placement.



Communication Efforts

Leveraging multiple channels to reach new audiences, the district has revisited additional efforts to incorporate into their program to increase recruitment opportunities. Further, the district has revised program communications to provide clear, concise information for easy candidate onboarding, day to day expectations, and completion requirements.



Funding Sustainability

While the district has offered no-cost programs to candidates, the opportunity for continued programming beyond the duration of one-time grants is essential. Accessing workforce funding streams, partnership supports, or further state/federal funds will provide for future programming.