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CONTACT: Sara Gast
OFFICE: (615) 532-6260

Tennessee Department of Education Awards Over \$1 Million to Support School Leader Development

Nine Principal Partnership Programs Awarded Funding to Support Leadership Pipelines

NASHVILLE—Education Commissioner Candice McQueen announced today that the state is awarding more than \$1 million in Principal Pipeline Partnership grants to support leadership models that develop or improve innovative and high-impact school leader programs. The nine principal pipeline models that have been approved for funding will train a total of 160 aspiring school leaders using federal Title II, part A funds.

Tennessee is the first state in the country to lead a comprehensive approach to developing transformational school leaders, with multiple programs aligning to evidence-based, promising practices and a unique statewide focus on strengthening the leadership pipeline. The department's goal is to ensure that transformational principal leadership pipelines are launched and supported in every region so that the new leader openings each year in Tennessee – usually around 260-270 – have strong candidates ready to be hired.

“Great leaders build great schools. Principals are a critical lever in improving student achievement and supporting teachers' development – and they set the tone that leads to success,” McQueen said. “These grants allow us to provide support for high-impact pipeline programs, developing strong school leaders who will guide our educators and students to better outcomes. We will now have strong pipelines in every region that can supply more than two-thirds of the state's principal openings each year.”

Research has shown that leadership is second only to teacher quality as the largest in-school factor impacting student achievement. In recent years, the state has actively been working to equip and empower more school leaders to be successful. For example, in 2015, Gov. Bill Haslam launched the [Governor's Academy for School Leadership](#), led by the department and Vanderbilt University, to prepare a cohort of up to 25 transformational school leaders to serve in Tennessee. These school leaders are assistant principals who are selected for the program as joint applicants with a mentor.

In summer 2016, following feedback from a group of national and state partners, the department launched the Tennessee Transformational Leadership Alliance (TTLA) to serve as a leader pipeline incubator and help districts develop a deeper pool of high-quality leaders. The TTLA conducted the application process and awarded funding for the Principal Pipeline Partnership grants on a competitive basis. In order to be selected for the grants, partnerships were required to articulate a four-year plan for either a new model or an existing model to improve. Eligible programs required a partnership between local school districts and another entity including: higher education institutions, foundations, businesses, and/or non-profit organizations. The nine pipeline programs being awarded grants will identify and develop more effective leaders to improve outcomes for all

Tennessee students.

The four-year plan submitted with each application required three program elements: principal residency training content, bridge support for candidates between program completion and placement, and an induction program for these newly placed leaders. Additionally, partnership models must align with the department’s strategic plan, *Tennessee Succeeds*, the eight components of effective programs as identified by the state’s Transformational Leadership Advisory Council, and ESSA’s Title II, part A requirements.

The following programs were selected to receive the Principal Pipeline Partnership grants:

Primary Partner	Supporting Partners	Pipeline Model Type
Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Tennessee	Knox and Blount County Schools	Continuous Improvement
Lipscomb University	Lauderdale, Dyersburg City, and Haywood County Schools	Continuous Improvement
Lipscomb University	Lincoln, Marshall, Maury, and Bedford County Schools	Continuous Improvement
Public Education Foundation	Hamilton County Schools, Benwood Foundation, and the Chattanooga Chamber of Commerce	Continuous Improvement
Wilson County Public Schools	McREL and the Center for Educational Leadership at the University of Tennessee	Continuous Improvement
Metro Nashville Public Schools	Lipscomb University and Vanderbilt University	Development
Paris Special School District	Obion County Schools and Weststar Foundation	Development
Shelby County Public Schools	University of Memphis	Development
Warren County Public Schools	Belmont University, Tennessee School Boards Association, Gibson SSD, Hickman, Maury, Putnam, and Washington County Schools	Development

For more information about the Principal Pipeline Partnership grants, please contact Assistant Commissioner for Teachers & Leaders Paul Fleming at Paul.Fleming@tn.gov. For media inquiries, please contact Sara Gast, director of strategic communications and media, at Sara.Gast@tn.gov or (615) 532-6260.