

Introduction

Southeastern Louisiana University (Southeastern) is a state-controlled institution of higher education located in the southeast corridor between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. As the third largest university in Louisiana, Southeastern has an enrollment of approximately 14,000 students, including those pursuing bachelor, masters, and doctoral degrees in Education.

The College of Education at Southeastern works with nearby districts and schools to place teacher candidates in high quality clinical experiences. Southeastern students meet high academic standards and are highly effective and competent teachers, which is confirmed, verified, and quantified by CAEP accreditation. All Southeastern graduates pass required licensure exams, are certified, and are ready for the workforce when they complete the program (U.S. Department of Education, 2022). Additionally, in 2020, the state ranked Southeastern as the second largest producer of teachers in the state (Louisiana Department of Education, 2020a).

In 2014, the Louisiana Department of Education launched Believe and Prepare, a program designed to ensure teacher candidates have a full year of practice under an expert mentor and a competency-based program design. In 2010, Southeastern partnered with National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET) to implement the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric and a structured cycle to provide coaching and feedback to teacher candidates. In 2020, after more than a decade of partnership with institutions of higher education, NIET developed a rubric designed specifically to support the preparation of teacher candidates, the Aspiring Teacher Rubric. In spring 2021, Southeastern participated in the pilot of NIET's Aspiring Teacher Rubric that is designed to support the preparation of teacher candidates and is tightly aligned with NIET's Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric.

Building Rigorous Induction and Development for Growing all Educators

Teacher quality is the most important school-based factor impacting student achievement (Chetty et al., 2014; Lee, 2018; Lee & Mamerow, 2019; Rivkin et al., 2005). Students taught by high-quality teachers are more likely to be in school, attend college, and have a higher income (Chetty et al., 2014; Gershenson, 2016; Lee & Lee, 2020). Unfortunately, effective teachers are not distributed equally across schools and districts (Glazerman & Max, 2011; Goldhaber et al., 2018). On average, students from low-income backgrounds are more likely than those from higher-income backgrounds to be taught by an ineffective teacher (Mansfield, 2015; Isenberg et al., 2013). In Louisiana, students in Title I schools are more likely to be taught by out-of-field or uncertified teachers compared to their more affluent peers in non-Title I schools (Louisiana Department of Education, 2020). In addition, about 12% of teachers are leaving the Louisiana school systems each year, with the majority of departing teachers leaving within five years of service (Louisiana Department of Education, 2020a).

The proposed project, Building Rigorous Induction and Development for Growing all Educators (BRIDGE), addresses **Absolute Priority 1 (AP-1) - Partnership Grants for the Preparation of Teachers** by enhancing the undergraduate teacher preparation program and designing induction programs to support novice teachers. The BRIDGE project will focus on building coherence across partner districts and programs designed to prepare and support teachers as they enter the profession. After training has been completed in the first year, the project will engage partners in the Tangipahoa Parish School System (TPSS) in the second year, St. Charles Parish School System (SCPSS) will be added in the third year, and a third district will be selected to join in year 4. In Tangipahoa Parish, a high-need LEA in which 61% of its student population is from racial/ethnic minority backgrounds and 79% is classified as

economically disadvantaged, only 63% of its classes are taught by appropriately certified teachers compared to 80% of classes statewide (Louisiana Department of Education, n.d.). The average teacher turnover rate in Tangipahoa (15%) exceeded the average state teacher turnover rate (11%) by approximately 36%. Additionally, while more than half of the students are of color, only about one-fourth of the teachers are of color (The Education Trust, 2020). St. Charles Parish Public Schools serves 9,493 students, 63% of whom were classified as economically disadvantaged. Additionally, the teacher turnover rate in the school system (12%) was higher than the average teacher turnover rate statewide (11%). As such, the LEA meets the high-need LEA definition, where at least 20% of the children served by the LEA are children from low-income families and for which there is a high teacher turnover rate.

By focusing on the recruitment, preparation and support of underrepresented populations to serve in high-need schools in high-need districts, the proposal addresses **Competitive Preference Priorities (CPP) 1, 2, 3, and 4**. The project will address the local teacher shortage not only by preparing more than 375 teachers in high-need areas, but also by increasing retention of novice teachers through high-quality induction programs that include trained mentors. To address **CPP 1**, the project will aim to recruit teacher candidates from underrepresented populations and provide support to ensure their persistence through the program and ultimate retention in the classroom. In addition to recruiting teacher candidates from underrepresented populations, the project will address **CPP 2** by focusing on the preparation of teachers in the shortage areas designated by partner districts. The University will aim to produce more teachers aligned with the current needs of the districts to reduce both out-of-field and uncertified teaching. To address **CPP 3**, once candidates are recruited to the project, the University offers programs to support students' social, emotional, academic, and career development needs.

Southeastern is committed to our students' academic success and to providing the necessary resources to enhance the potential for their success. The Lion Intervention Network (LINK) is one way the University helps students succeed. Developed to identify students who are facing academic challenges and/or personal hardships (i.e. financial, homelessness/displacement, loss of loved one, car accidents, non-life-threatening behaviors, etc.) that are hindering their academics, LINK connects students with any extra help they might need along their educational paths to success. Finally, the proposal responds to **CPP4** by addressing inequities in elementary and secondary schools in partner districts by ensuring that teachers prepared through Southeastern's residency program are adequately equipped to address the needs of students in those districts. The most effective way to address equity gaps is to ensure that every student has a well-prepared teacher.

Project Narrative

A. Quality of the Project Design

A1. The extent to which the proposed project demonstrates a rationale.

The rationale behind this project is that providing high-need LEAs with pipelines of teachers who are recruited, trained, and supported to have the skills necessary to serve historically underserved students can improve equity in access to effective educators (Partee, 2014). If teacher candidates are effectively trained (coursework and clinical experience) and supported in early years (induction), then schools will have more effective early career teachers. A greater supply of effective teachers and the schoolwide support system (mentorship, collaboration) built through an aligned and coherent clinical experience and induction program will increase the likelihood of retaining effective teachers. More effective teachers and better retention will lead to increased student achievement (see Appendix C - Logic Model). A strong

method of preparation, which includes a tightly connected pre-service to in-service experience, coupled with a comprehensive induction program to support novice teachers, creates a system for educators to be effective from day one and to want to stay (e.g., Emerson et al., 2018; Guha et al., 2016; Ronfeldt et al., 2014; Whipp & Geronime, 2017; Williamson & Hodder, 2015). Driven by this rationale, the College of Education at Southeastern, in collaboration with Tangipahoa Parish School System, St. Charles Parish School System, and the nonprofit NIET, proposes to build a pipeline of highly-effective and diverse novice teachers through an innovative teacher preparation program that includes coursework grounded in effective teaching and learning practices, a rigorous preservice clinical experience, and high-quality induction system for the recruitment, preparation, and continued development of new and prospective teachers (**Absolute Priority 1**). The project incorporates opportunities for teacher candidates to understand and apply effective use of technology, instructional techniques, and strategies consistent with the principles of universal design. In addition, the project engages candidates in management techniques that are consistent with positive behavioral interventions and support strategies to improve student achievement. Through this partnership, Southeastern will recruit highly-qualified undergraduates of diverse backgrounds (**Competitive Preference Priorities 1 and 2**) to its pre-baccalaureate teacher preparation program that will prepare new teachers in key shortage areas identified by the high-need, suburban partner LEAs, TPSS and SCPSS.

Completion of the teacher preparation program will result in a Bachelor of Science and teacher certification, and it will address key shortage areas at the elementary and secondary level. The project will support a year-long intensive clinical experience, and culminate in a robust and sustainable new teacher induction program led by district and school leaders, and supported by Southeastern faculty. The BRIDGE project will result in the preparation of 375 more effectively

trained, highly supported, and diverse new teachers over five years and will increase the instructional leadership skills and knowledge of more than 150 in-service teachers who will serve as mentors during clinical experience and induction. These mentor teachers will be positioned to take on teacher leadership positions as they become available in their schools - expanding their impact to more teachers and students long-term.

A.2 The extent to which the goals, objectives, and outcomes to be achieved by the proposed project are clearly specified and measurable.

The project has four goals that are summarized in Table 1 and are fully described in this section.

Table 1. Project Goals, Objectives, Measures, and Outcomes

Goal 1: Build alignment and coherence across systems and structures to support aspiring and novice teachers at the university, school, and district levels.	
Objectives	Output Measures
1.1 Facilitate regular collaboration between the University and LEA partners to continually inform and align teacher preparation and induction programs for novice teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Advisory Board meetings between university and LEA partners and meeting notes (e.g., attendees, topics of discussion, key outcomes/feedback discussed) to measure frequency and quality of collaboration activities • University faculty’s and district leaders’ satisfaction with the collaboration opportunities as measured via surveys, focus groups and/or interviews.
1.2 Refine coursework and classroom observations to improve alignment to the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric (ATR).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course mapping that shows 1) intentional connections across NIET ATR indicators and 2) progression in terms of the level of complexity of engagement with NIET ATR indicators as the courses advance • Percentage of teacher candidates who received multiple cycles of classroom observation and feedback on the NIET ATR during the yearlong clinical experience
1.3 Train clinical faculty on the NIET ATR and the use of the rubric for high-quality evaluation and feedback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Percentage of University faculty who are trained and certified to use the NIET ATR • University faculty’s satisfaction with training as measured via surveys, focus groups and/or interviews
1.4 Develop an induction program to support the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of workshops conducted to support district leaders in the development or refinement of an induction program for novice teachers

development of novice teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of resources provided as part of the induction program
<p>Outcomes: Teacher candidates report on online surveys 1) satisfaction with the multiple classroom observations and feedback implemented during their yearlong clinical experience, 2) readiness to serve in high-need schools upon program completion, and 3) a strong connection between pre-service and in-service experiences; University faculty indicate in interviews/focus groups 1) improvement in their coaching of teacher candidates and 2) alignment between teacher preparation and induction programs for novice teachers.</p>	
<p>Goal 2: Recruit and select teacher candidates from underrepresented populations and high-quality mentor teachers to strengthen the pipeline of effective teachers in partnering high-need LEAs.</p>	
Objectives	Output Measures
<p>2.1 Recruit and enroll teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds who commit to teaching in a high-need partner school following graduation from Southeastern teacher preparation program.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of recruitment efforts targeted to individuals from underrepresented populations to teach in shortage areas • Number of applicants and percentage of applicants by characteristics (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, education background, primary language, disability, first-generation college students) • Percentage of teacher candidates from underrepresented populations placed in high-need schools within partner LEAs for the yearlong clinical experience
<p>2.2 Recruit and select high-quality mentor teachers to support teacher candidates enrolled in the partnership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of applicants and percentage of applicants by characteristics (e.g., teaching experience, teaching assignment, instructional effectiveness, Louisiana mentor certification status) • Percentage of mentor teachers whose teaching assignment matches their teacher candidates' areas of certification
<p>Outcomes: 1) Increase in the percentage of teacher candidates from underrepresented populations who are enrolled into Southeastern teacher preparation program each year, 2) the teacher population better reflect the student population in partner LEAs, 3) increase in the percentage of high-quality mentor teachers in partner LEAs as measured by their years of supervisory experience and instructional effectiveness</p>	
<p>Goal 3: Build the instructional effectiveness of teacher candidates and the capacity of mentor teachers to support teacher candidates during the clinical experience period in high-need schools.</p>	
Objectives	Output Measures
<p>3.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to teacher candidates focused on</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and topics of trainings provided

instruction, lesson planning, and assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher candidates' satisfaction with trainings and coaching provided to them during the clinical experience as measured via surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups
3.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support teacher candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and topics of trainings provided • Mentor teachers' satisfaction with trainings and coaching provided to them as measured via surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups
<p>Outcomes: Teacher candidates in the partnership 1) graduate with strong instructional skills as measured by the NIET ATR [section 204(a) of the HEA 1], 2) obtain initial State certification/licensure [Performance Measures 1, 2], and 3) serve as teachers of record in a high-need school within partner LEAs [section 204(a) of the HEA 3-8]; Increase in 4) mentor teachers' skills in coaching teacher candidates and 5) the percentage of certified mentor teachers in partner LEAs; Increase in the percentage of appropriately certified teachers in partner LEAs</p>	
<p>Goal 4: Build the instructional capacity of novice teachers and mentor teachers to improve instructional excellence, teacher retention, and student achievement in high-need schools through a two-year induction program.</p>	
Objectives	Output Measures
4.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to novice teachers aligned to their needs and the needs of students in partnering LEAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and topics of trainings provided • The percentage of novice teachers who complete the two-year induction in high-need schools within partner LEAs • Novice teachers' satisfaction with induction activities as measured by surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups.
4.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support novice teachers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and topics of trainings provided • Mentor teachers' satisfaction with induction activities as measured by surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups. • Novice teachers' perceptions of their mentors (including satisfaction) as measured by surveys, interviews, and/or focus groups.
<p>Outcomes: Novice teachers in the partnership 1) are effective as measured by the evaluation instrument used by the partner LEAs [section 204(a) of the HEA 1], 2) improve student achievement on state and/or district assessments [Performance Measure 6], 3) and are retained by partner LEAs [Performance Measures 4-5; section 204(a) of the HEA 2]; Mentor teachers in the partnership improve their coaching effectiveness.</p>	

Goal 1: Build alignment and coherence across systems and structures to support teacher candidates and novice teachers at the university, school, and district levels.

By strengthening the connection between K-12 and higher education institutions, partnerships more effectively prepare teacher candidates for the expectations of the classroom (Education First, 2016). This project will support increased alignment and coherence at the university, school, and district levels through regular collaboration, reform of university coursework and clinical experiences, as well as high quality training for university faculty, school-level mentors, and the district induction director. Project partners will collaborate to continue to enhance and align the quality of preparation and induction by embedding research-based, effective principles into coursework, clinical practices, and initial teacher support based on shared understanding and expectations of high-quality teaching and learning practices.

In order to continually grow the practices of teachers, it is critical to develop a common language and shared understanding of instructional best practices, which lead to stronger communication and collaboration around what teaching and learning look and sound like in actual practice. Southeastern's clinical experience will embed the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric – a rubric based on and aligned to the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric and currently used in participating districts to evaluate their teachers – into clinical practice and coursework. The NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric is approved for teacher observation, evaluation, and support in the state of Louisiana, and it describes effective teaching across multiple indicators of practice. The project will provide training for university faculty to use the rubric in their observations and support for residents. Southeastern faculty will embed each indicator into coursework to provide students with clear connections between the content they are learning and the pedagogy for delivering that content to students, thereby connecting what to teach with how to teach it at a high level. Teacher candidates will be trained and supported in utilizing the NIET ATR in a gradual release, co-teaching model

Objective 1.1 Facilitate regular collaboration between the University and LEA partners to continually inform and align teacher preparation and induction programs for novice teachers

To strengthen and sustain partnerships between Southeastern and district partners, the project will establish an Advisory Board to facilitate regular collaboration in order to continually improve and align teacher preparation, support, and induction. The board will meet quarterly to contribute collectively to the continuous monitoring of the quality and impact of both the Southeastern preparation program and the district-led novice teacher and leader induction programs. NIET will support the development of an agenda and related materials for each meeting and co-facilitate the meetings with Southeastern. The board will include Southeastern leaders, Southeastern clinical faculty, district administrators from partner districts, school leaders from partner districts, and an NIET representative. The project will use the planning year to establish the Advisory Board and identify key stakeholders, clarify roles and responsibilities, develop program review and evaluation procedures, and create meeting cycles and protocols.

In order to further strengthen the partnership, key stakeholders will spend time in classrooms together. According to Education First (2016), this practice 1) reinforces relationships among stakeholders: principals, mentor teachers, faculty, program coordinators and teacher candidates; 2) provides a deeper understanding of the learning needs of teachers; 3) establishes shared language of instructional practices; aligns expectations for effective instruction; 4) creates opportunities to discuss trends in data; and 5) initiates conversations about opportunities for improvement. For example, NIET uses a learning walk process that can be used to observe instruction and student learning in order to make informed decisions about teacher learning, such as course content and induction programming. In this process a team of K-12 instructional leaders and University faculty/supervisors visit classes together to gather evidence

of teacher practice that informs student learning. The team immediately reflects on evidence gathered during the classroom visit(s), and strengths of teacher actions and student learning are identified.

Objective 1.2 - Refine coursework and classroom observations to improve alignment to the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric (ATR).

Southeastern has a teacher preparation program approved by the Louisiana Department of Education and adheres to the Louisiana Teacher Preparation Competencies to ensure that teacher candidates possess the skills and understanding of effective instructional strategies across content areas to support general education and special education teachers. As previously noted, Southeastern has adopted NIET's Aspiring Teacher Rubric. The NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric provides a streamlined set of performance indicators to be used with teacher candidates to define effective instruction. These 12 indicators, which are based on and aligned to NIET's research-based Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric, describe the key skills and abilities that aspiring teachers must have to be prepared for the classroom. The descriptions within NIET's ATR create common language for observation, feedback, and support as well as foster collaboration between an aspiring teacher and peers or faculty around instructional practices. The vision represented within the rubric maximizes instructional excellence and correlates with student achievement. Taken as a whole, the rubric provides concrete and holistic feedback about strengths and weaknesses on the path to becoming a teacher.

Special Education Training Within coursework and clinical experiences teacher candidates learn and apply the knowledge of state and federal laws related to students' rights and teachers' responsibilities to make appropriate instructional decisions addressing the needs of all students, including students with disabilities and those who are multilingual learners (MLL). Teacher

candidates are well-prepared to develop instructional supports for Individualized Education Plans to provide students with access to age and grade level instruction. This knowledge will be enhanced by the alignment to the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric. Some examples of courses that address these competencies for special education and English language learners include:

- EDUC 200: An introduction to characteristics of exceptionalities, this course provides teacher candidates with the knowledge and skills to educate students with diverse needs in the classroom. Content includes current trends for meeting the educational needs of individuals with exceptionalities: characteristics of diverse learners; special education policies, procedures, and forms; interventions; accommodation, modification, and differentiation strategies; assistive technology; collaboration and co-teaching models; group management; assessment techniques; and reflective practice.
- EDUC 365: This course provides study and application of a continuum of classroom approaches for effective behavior management. Course will include a review of both humanistic and behavioral techniques that promote responsible classroom management. Candidates in this course will be able to develop and use management plans that meet the emotional and behavioral needs of students with mild/moderate disabilities.
- EDUC 416: This course will incorporate different methodology for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) and academic content with exploration and development of lessons appropriate for students who are multilingual learners. The form of this course will include methodologies and activities to make the English language and academic content comprehensible to students.

Literacy Training. In conjunction with using the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric, strengthening the literacy teaching skills of new elementary school and secondary school teachers is a priority

for Southeastern. With the use of intentional planning to elevate the current literacy courses, Southeastern in collaboration with NIET will use Look-for Tool: English Language Arts and Look-for Tool: K-2 Foundational Reading Skills to help mentors and university faculty provide feedback on practices associated with strengthening a teacher's knowledge of literacy and literacy instruction. Teacher candidates will engage in opportunities to learn and apply the essential components of reading through the university courses listed below.

- EDUC 322 Diagnostic and Prescriptive Reading- This course is designed to equip the student with knowledge of and skills in reading instruction for individual learners. Emphasis will be placed on the diagnosis of the learner's needs in reading and prescription of appropriate activities for advancement.
- EDUC 324 Emphasis will be placed upon the specific needs of struggling readers and writers who have characteristics of learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, oral and written language difficulties (OWL), etc. It also will address problems in mathematics due to poor reading/writing and/or dyscalculia and special populations who struggle in reading and writing such as English Language Learners (ELLs). Research-based, classroom interventions (e.g., multisensory instruction) and scientifically-based, specialized programs will be emphasized. The course content focuses on empirically supported -systematic and explicit instruction.
- EDUC 472 A course designed to provide middle school and secondary school teachers with a knowledge of the reading process; methods and materials that can be implemented with various cultural groups; and skills for developing the reading abilities of students. Special emphasis will be given to reading in the content areas.

A critical step in creating coherence across systems is to ensure that the instructional practices that teacher candidates learn during preparation are aligned with expectations for instructional practice in the schools and districts where they will work. Southeastern has already adopted and begun to implement the NIET Aspiring Teacher Rubric, which is based on and aligned to the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric - a state approved observation instrument that the Tangipahoa Parish School System currently uses to evaluate teachers. Specifically, teacher candidates at Southeastern receive multiple cycles of structured coaching, observation, and feedback, grounded in the NIET ATR, during the yearlong clinical experience. The use of these tightly aligned rubrics supports a coherent and shared understanding of high-quality practice that is developed starting in preparation during coursework and clinical experiences and continued through professional experiences of teacher candidates and novice teachers in schools. In order to continue to build coherence between coursework, clinical practice, and induction and alignment with district expectations, Southeastern and NIET will conduct an alignment and gaps assessment of coursework to the Aspiring Teacher Rubric by analyzing syllabi, course experiences, and assessment.

Throughout the project, Southeastern faculty will be supported by NIET to identify how courses, assignments, and assessments support the development of specific instructional skills that are being developed by students during coursework and applied during clinical practice. TPSS uses the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards as an anchor in both their teacher evaluation systems and ongoing school-based teacher professional learning. This creates a common language between university teacher candidates (eventually serving as new, full-time teachers), faculty, school-level mentors, school-level administrators, and district-level

administrators. Furthermore, by ensuring this alignment, the preparation program at Southeastern will improve, evaluate and assess the development of teacher skills.

Objective 1.3 Train clinical faculty on the NIET ATR and the use of the rubric for high-quality evaluation and feedback.

As part of continuing to build alignment and coherence from preparation through induction, NIET will train clinical faculty on the Aspiring Teacher Rubric indicators and the use of the rubric to support high quality evaluation and feedback. Clinical faculty will participate in the training provided by NIET each year. In the summer prior to the first cohort of teachers beginning the program (2023), faculty will receive three days of training in the NIET Teaching Standards for use in evaluation and feedback. Training will be customized for new and veteran faculty members to support their ability to successfully pass an online evaluator certification indicating they are fully prepared to use this tool for evaluation and feedback. The teaching standards and the common language they provide will ground the evaluation and feedback teacher candidates receive during pre-service coursework, during clinical practice, and into their first years of teaching. This coherent system will allow the feedback provided to teacher candidates and new teachers to be aligned, prioritized, clearly communicated, and, therefore, more actionable in terms of truly improving effective teaching practices necessary to impact student achievement.

Objective 1.4 Develop an induction program to support the development of novice teachers.

In collaboration with faculty from Southeastern, NIET will provide direct support for the districts to design and implement an effective induction program. In the first year of the project, the partners will engage in a series of workshops, totaling 5 days, to support the development (refinement) of an induction program to support novice teachers. In subsequent years (year 2 –

year 5), NIET will facilitate workshops, totaling 2 days, to support refinement and revision of the induction program.

During the onsite support visits, Southeastern faculty and NIET will work with school and district leaders to establish new teacher induction resources (online and print) to codify effective new teacher induction practices that address release time and compensation. Induction mentors will receive a stipend for supporting novice teachers. This will result in the development of documents detailing strengthened district-specific induction plans that will be sustainable long term. In addition, NIET will provide high-quality coaching for induction directors. Prior to the first year of induction, which varies based on the district partner, NIET will deliver 6 days of support for each district's induction director as they prepare to implement the newly designed induction program and support novice teacher mentors. In subsequent years of the project, NIET will provide 6 days direct support for each induction director as they implement the induction program and support mentor teachers.

Goal 2: Recruit and select teacher candidates from underrepresented populations and high-quality mentor teachers to strengthen the pipeline of effective teachers in partnering high-need LEAs.

Objective 2.1 Recruit and enroll teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds who commit to teaching in a high-need partner school following graduation from Southeastern teacher preparation program.

The project will allow Southeastern to solidify and strengthen its efforts to recruit and enroll high-quality teacher candidates from underrepresented populations. Districts selected for this partnership report having growing percentages of students of color and have placed a high priority on recruiting new teachers of color to address this disparity. In order to ensure that the

Southeastern admissions and placement priorities are met, Southeastern will aim to recruit teacher candidates who are more reflective of the diverse make-up of the student populations of partner districts, including students from underrepresented populations. In addition, the University will focus on preparing individuals who will be certified in areas identified as high-need by partnering districts, including elementary, secondary, special education, math and science. Recruitment will include strategies such as the following:

- Hosting campus visits to Southeastern for high school students from partnering districts who express interest in the teaching profession. During these visits, students will be connected with current teacher candidates of similar background and interests.
- Reaching out directly to students of color in Southeastern's undergraduate academic content majors to share information on how to become certified to teach.
- Seeking funding from the state and private funders to provide significant scholarships for students of color, particularly those who are high achieving (top 20% of the class) and for those intending to pursue teaching in a designated area of need.

This robust recruitment support will ensure that project recruitment targets are met.

Objective 2.2 Recruit and select high-quality mentor teachers to support teacher candidates enrolled in the partnership.

The project will establish clear criteria for the recruitment and selection of a diverse group of mentor teachers with instructional effectiveness and subject matter knowledge. Mentor teachers will be jointly approved by partner school/district and Southeastern, thereby creating clearer systems between university and district for selecting mentor teachers with the most appropriate backgrounds and dispositions for the role. Priority will be placed on recruiting teachers of color to mentor both the teacher candidates and novice teachers. Southeastern and

partner districts select mentors in alignment with expectations outlined by the Louisiana Department of Education, including:

- Knowledge of content and content pedagogy
- Knowledge of new teacher competencies and adult learning theory
- Skills to effectively coach and mentor new and resident teachers

The mentor teacher selection process will be regularly reviewed and improved using feedback from clinical faculty, partner district/school leaders, the Advisory Board and program evaluation results.

Goal 3: Build the instructional effectiveness of teacher candidates and the capacity of mentor teachers to support teacher candidates during the clinical experience period in high-need schools.

Objective 3.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to teacher candidates focused on instruction, lesson planning, and assessment.

Southeastern will work closely with NIET to provide support for the preparation of teacher candidates. For the last two decades, NIET has developed and supported implementation of a structured, rigorous teacher evaluation process using its nationally leading, research-based rubric and a well-designed coaching process. In addition to the coursework and clinical experiences Southeastern offers, the program will engage NIET to provide high-quality training for teacher candidates to support their knowledge and development of high-quality instructional practices. NIET's Aspiring Teacher Rubric serves as teaching and learning standards that provide teacher candidates with research-based teaching practices, an understanding of how students learn, and guides them to analyze data to improve classroom instruction while meeting the needs of all students. In addition to Southeastern faculty support through aligned coursework

and clinical practice, NIET will provide five days of training during the clinical experience year designed to enhance Southeastern 's clinical experience coursework (3 days in the summer/fall semester and 2 days in the spring semester) to strengthen each resident's understanding of classroom- and student-specific instruction, lesson planning and assessment. Training topics include:

- Effective Analysis of Student Work and Data,
- The connection between curriculum and instruction,
- Aligning standards and objectives, student work and assessment

Objective 3.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support teacher candidates.

Mentor teachers play a key role in the support and development of novice teachers. Southeastern site coordinators collaborate with mentors to provide coaching and feedback for teacher candidates. Mentor teachers will receive five days of development activities (3 days in summer/fall semester and 2 days in spring semester) from NIET designed to increase their instructional understanding of strong coaching support and how to enhance the quality of reflection opportunities given to teacher candidates. They will receive training in coaching for student engagement and reflecting on lessons learned. During this evidence-based learning, mentors will utilize NIET's Aspiring Teacher Rubric to build their understanding of how to collect detailed evidence from both the teacher actions and student actions that lead to student learning or lack of student learning. Training topics include:

- Deepening Understanding of the NIET Rubric,
- Understanding & Building Trust with Adult Learner,
- Empowering Mentors as Teacher Leaders,

- Facilitating Growth Through Coaching and Tiered Support,
- Development of Instructional Practice Through Curriculum and Instruction

NIET will work with small groups of mentor teachers also to strengthen their ability to provide effective competency-based feedback to their assigned teacher candidates. Through these small group experiences, mentor teachers will receive additional support focusing on:

- providing “coach the coach” feedback around observation and feedback,
- creating a support plan, and
- co-teaching.

University leaders and clinical faculty and mentor teachers will attend training and coaching sessions as well, thereby strengthening coherence across systems.

Goal 4: Build the instructional capacity of novice teachers and mentor teachers to improve instructional excellence, teacher retention, and student achievement in high-need schools through a two-year induction program.

Following program completion, graduates will become classroom teachers and participate in a two-year structured induction program alongside an experienced mentor teacher to support their professional development and facilitate collaboration with broader school faculty. During induction, additional training and coaching will support the retention of novice teachers as they are better equipped and supported to meet the needs of their students and the expectations of their school. Through these activities, the partnership will build the capacity of induction directors, mentor teachers, and novice teachers during the two-year induction period to support instructional excellence, retention, and student achievement in high-need schools.

Objective 4.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to novice teachers aligned to their needs and the needs of students in the partnering LEAs.

In year one of induction, NIET will deliver four days of training including two days on data-driven decision making, and two days using a case study method to examine student engagement and feedback. In year two of induction, training and onsite support will continue with three days of training that focus on instructional techniques, constructing success criteria, and analyzing feedback.

4.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support novice teachers.

To support a seamless transition from preparation to practice, the BRIDGE program will aim to identify mentors who support both teacher candidates and novice teachers. Ideally, residency mentors assigned to teacher candidates will continue to support them as novice teachers when the novice teachers are employed in the same school where the clinical experience was completed. However, based on employment location and content-area/grade-level match, this may not always be feasible. In as many cases as possible, novice teachers will be matched with a mentor who completed the relevant training and subsequently supported a teacher candidate.

Regardless of prior training and match, mentor teachers will participate in high quality training to strengthen their capacity to support novice teachers. Training during the induction years will be provided to mentors and novice teachers together, so that collaboration opportunities are ongoing as they plan to implement the new learning. In year one, mentor teachers will attend the four days of training alongside novice teachers. By attending the training each new teacher receives, the capacity of the mentors is increased for sustainability and building skills. Like year one, in year two, mentor teachers also will attend the three days of training alongside novice teachers.

A.3 The extent to which the proposed project is part of a comprehensive effort to improve teaching and learning and support rigorous academic standards for students.

The BRIDGE program aims to elevate partners' ability to develop an aligned transition for individuals moving from preparation to professional practice. While students are engaged in preparation, they complete coursework and clinical experiences that are tightly aligned with expectations of the teaching positions they will assume following program completion. The Advisory Board will create an opportunity for the program and partner districts to regularly align their vision for effective teaching and learning practices grounded by a common language. Spending time in classrooms together will reinforce shared understanding and expectations, but also inform opportunities for continued improvement of both preparation and induction practices. By engaging NIET to provide training for clinical faculty, preservice mentors, induction mentors, and the newly developed induction directors, all participants will experience training that is aligned and well-connected. While each partner has the shared goal of ensuring all students have access to effective teaching, this project represents a new opportunity to build a bridge from preparation to practice resulting in more effectively trained teachers who are supported during their early teaching years and who are ultimately retained in the profession.

A.4 The extent to which the design of the proposed project reflects up-to-date knowledge from research and effective practice.

The design of the proposed project is informed by a review of current research on aspects that improve teacher preparation. Improving teacher preparation programs, as described below, and providing quality mentoring and induction for new teachers are among the key policy recommendations to build a sustainable and high-quality educator workforce (Podolsky et al., 2016).

Coherence Between Coursework and Clinical Practice. Implementing a common language of practice among university faculty, mentor teachers, and teacher candidates can promote consistency in the teacher preparation experience (AACTE, 2018). One way to do that is by embedding a teaching standards rubric into coursework, which has been shown to result in teachers feeling more confident in their knowledge and abilities (Emerson et al., 2018; Williamson & Hodder, 2015). Indeed, one study showed that teachers trained in a yearlong “practice-based” clinical experience program, in which coursework and clinical experience were tightly connected, achieved higher effectiveness ratings than their veteran peers by their fourth and fifth years of teaching, and tended to continue teaching in the district unlike other new teachers five years later (Papay et al., 2011).

Rigorous Clinical Experience. High-quality clinical experience is one of the hallmarks of an effective educator preparation program (Dunst et al., 2020). In a report about graduates of clinical experience programs by Silva et al. (2014), more clinical experience program graduates reported feeling prepared than other new teachers in their districts on a number of aspects, including planning, instruction, classroom management, and assessment. A pilot study of four senior undergraduates who participated in an urban clinical experience showed that they felt well prepared to teach in urban schools by the end of the year (Gilley & Aranda, 2019). At least one study has found that teacher candidates' sense of efficacy was higher after one year of clinical experience (Dorel et al., 2016).

Comprehensive Induction Program. Induction programs are comprehensive programs specifically designed to provide tools and support for teachers in the early stages of their careers. Research has shown that teacher induction programs can improve beginning teacher retention, teacher performance, and student achievement (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Ingersoll & Strong,

2011; Schmidt et al., 2017; Schmidt, 2019). Induction programs are becoming more prevalent across the U.S. as they focus on increasing continuity between teacher preparation programs and districts by connecting clinical training to new teachers' first years in practice. Comprehensive induction programs typically include 1) multiple years of support, 2) a rigorous process for the selection of mentor teachers, 3) ongoing professional development opportunities for both new and mentor teachers, and 4) release time for induction activities (Potemski & Matlach, 2014). These components specifically have been associated with improving the performance and retention of new teachers (Podolsky et al., 2019).

Diversifying Teacher Workforce. Although the number of Black, Hispanic and Asian American teachers has increased in recent decades, the student population is much more ethnically/racially diverse than that of the teacher (Schaeffer, 2021). However, research suggests that diversifying the teacher workforce can positively impact students' academic, social, and emotional outcomes (Carver-Thomas, 2018). Student-teacher racial match has been shown to boost student academic performance (Grissom et al., 2017), lower the likelihood of chronic absenteeism and suspension (Holt & Gershenson, 2015), and increase college aspirations (Gershenson et al., 2017). Increasing teacher diversity may also help reduce feelings of isolation and fatigue often experienced by teachers who are one of a few teachers of color in their schools (Griffin & Tackie, 2016), which in turn, may improve teacher job satisfaction and retention (Carver-Thomas, 2018).

A.5 The extent to which performance feedback and continuous improvement are integral to the design of the proposed project.

Coaching. NIET has used the structure of intensive training and follow-up visits in previous partnerships and found that participants appreciate dedicated time to engage in the

material, with personalized follow-up services to help them apply their learning. NIET Leadership Coaches are skilled at utilizing site visits to efficiently and effectively address challenges participants may face and provide personalized feedback for mentor teachers. These coaches have extensive experience in scaffolding learning so mentor teachers and school leaders can effectively implement changes and innovations in their schools. Coaching begins with establishing a strong relationship built on trust and a common vision for addressing the individualized needs on each campus.

Among the key skills that NIET Coaches will support are mentor teachers' ability to analyze data to identify specific teacher and student needs and to create structures and protocols that direct resources to teachers and students with the greatest need. For example, mentor teachers who are skilled at observation and analysis of classroom practice can identify their most effective teachers and target them to the highest-need students. Mentor teachers skilled at providing feedback on instructional practice can better support novice teachers who are entering the profession and are continuing to build on the foundation of an effective preparation program. The proposed project will help mentor teachers to identify and address issues of equity and create strategies to support students with the greatest needs for improvement. Individual coaching will lead to improvements in mentor teachers' own practice, and their retention will, in turn, impact students over many years.

Clinical Experience. The clinical experience for teacher candidates will be a coherent system that will allow feedback to be aligned, prioritized, clearly communicated, and therefore more actionable in terms of truly improving effective teaching practices necessary to impacting student achievement. One of the cornerstones of a successful clinical experience is the quality of the support provided by mentor teachers. The mentor teacher serves as a role model, instructional

coach, and mentor for the teacher candidate. Mentor teachers must bring unbridled passion for the profession, an asset-based mindset, a track record of effective instruction, and the ability to inspire and develop a teacher candidate.

Induction Program. Building an LEA induction program and the capacity of mentor teachers by providing ongoing training and coaching support results in continuous improvement and retention of new teachers. New teachers along with their mentors will benefit from the support of NIET expert trainers who have demonstrated results in helping to improve the skills of new teachers as measured by classroom practice and student achievement growth. The continuous feedback loop between the university and district partners to share trends in strengths and areas for improvement and growth regarding effectiveness of induction supports performance feedback and continuous improvement in the project design. Furthermore, the mentor teacher selection process will be regularly reviewed and improved using feedback from clinical faculty, partner district/school leaders. As a result, new teachers will enter a learning environment focused on continuous improvement, collaboration and professional growth.

A.6 The extent to which the proposed project is designed to build capacity and yield results that will extend beyond the period of Federal financial assistance.

The proposed project is designed to build the instructional leadership capacity of teachers and school/district leaders in partner LEAs that will sustain and yield results beyond the project. Specifically, the BRIDGE program will implement a “train the trainer” model where NIET will provide 1) training and coaching to the university faculty, who support teacher candidates and their mentors during the yearlong clinical experience, 2) training to mentor teachers to become certified to serve in their role, and 3) training and coaching to the induction director at each partner LEAs, who will support mentor teachers in supporting novice teachers. By building the

capacity of the university faculty and induction directors and increasing the percentage of certified mentor teachers in partner LEAs, the project will put in place a cadre of teacher leaders and school/district leaders who will have the skills and knowledge to continue to build the instructional excellence in their schools.

The capacity built via this program is directly aligned to the student and teacher needs in the partner LEAs, and it will continue to yield results after the grant period. Partner LEAs have signed a memorandum of understanding with Southeastern. Mentor teachers will provide on-going support and feedback related to instructional and professional practices using the NIET ATR. Through this work, Southeastern is creating coherence and consistency from preparation and into the early years of teaching. Induction support is aligned to and integrated with professional learning systems and supports in the schools, further ensuring sustainability of this work after the period of the project. Clinical faculty will be invited and encouraged to participate in all induction training and support activities attended by new teachers and mentors.

Finally, Southeastern faculty and staff will remain engaged during the induction program. District and school leaders, Southeastern faculty, and NIET will form a collaborative triad that will codify clinical experience and induction activities into clearly documented systems of support necessary to continue beyond the life of the project. Induction training and support documents will help to solidify plans for long-term sustainability of the induction program.

B. Quality of the project evaluation

Southeastern will use a Data Analyst to record on-going progress and ensure quality assurance. Data will be collaboratively reviewed with district leaders in the pre-established governance setting already in place. These data sessions will inform adjustments for the mentor

and induction initiatives. Data will also be shared with faculty in the Department of Teaching and Learning to inform curriculum alignment.

The evaluation will be led by NIET's Research and Evaluation Department, a department with extensive experience supporting large-scale evaluations of education programs (see Table 4 for a review of evaluation team qualifications). NIET will work collaboratively with Southeastern's College of Education Data Analyst and partner LEAs to lead a formative and summative evaluation with two purposes: (1) to supply Southeastern with timely information to improve the teacher preparation program for the populations served and (2) to assess program impacts. The evaluation plan aligns with the program's theory of action that if qualified candidates (recruitment) are effectively trained (coursework and clinical experience) and supported in early years (induction), there will be an increased supply of effective educators, improved classroom instruction, better retention of teachers, and increased student learning. NIET will work collaboratively with Southeastern to collect programmatic data from Southeastern, partner LEAs, and NIET data systems and draw from publicly available data from the Louisiana Department of Education to answer the research questions outlined in Table 2. These research questions and evaluation methods will provide data to evaluate the program's effectiveness in accordance with the performance measures and section 204(a) of the HEA (20 U.S.C. 1022c(a)) outlined in the application notice.

Table 2. Research Questions, Data Sources and Alignment to Program Goals and Performance Measures

Research Question (RQ) 1: How well is the project being implemented by Southeastern and partner LEAs and what factors are associated with fidelity of project implementation?		
Applicable Sub-Questions	Data Sources	Alignment
<p>1 To what extent has the NIET ATR been implemented with fidelity by Southeastern?</p> <p>1.2 To what extent have the induction components for novice teachers been implemented with fidelity in partner LEAs?</p> <p>1.3 What contextual factors support or inhibit the fidelity of implementation of the NIET ATR?</p> <p>1.4 What contextual factors support or inhibit the fidelity of implementation of the induction components for novice teachers?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program documents (i.e., training sessions provided; course mapping, course assignments, instructional activities and materials, and/or syllabi from redesigned courses and prior versions; induction components) • Clinical faculty's certification status • Program handbook outlining the evaluation process for teacher candidates • Surveys, focus groups, and/or interviews with Southeastern faculty/staff, partner LEAs, NIET staff, and program participants (teacher candidates, novice teachers and their mentors) to measure perceived impact of and satisfaction with the preparation program and induction activities 	Goals 1, 3, 4
RQ 2: What are the impacts of the targeted recruitment efforts on the diversity of the teacher candidates and the quality of mentors?		
Applicable sub-questions	Data Sources	Alignment
<p>2.1 To what extent are individuals recruited into the partnership from underrepresented populations?</p> <p>2.2 To what extent are high-quality mentors selected to support teacher candidates?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demographic data of the applicants (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, primary language, disability, first-generation college students) • Performance of the applicants (e.g., Praxis CORE exam scores, ACT scores for teacher candidates) • Mentor teachers' credentials (e.g., certification status, prior supervising experience, teaching performance, teaching assignment) 	Goal 2
RQ 3: What are the impacts of the partnership on the quality of teacher candidates?		

Applicable sub-questions	Data Sources	Alignment
3.1 To what extent do teacher candidates' instructional effectiveness improve during the yearlong clinical experience? 3.2 What are the persistence and graduation rates of teacher candidates in the partnership? 3.3 To what extent do teacher candidates attain initial State certification/ licensure and are hired by high-need LEAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher candidates' instructional effectiveness as measured by multiple classroom observations on the NIET ATR State teacher certification/licensure data Persistence, graduation, and employment data 	Goals 2, 3 Performance Measures 1-3 Section 204(a) of the HEA 1, 3-8
RQ 4: What are the impacts of the partnership on the quality of novice teachers?		
Applicable sub-questions	Data Sources	Alignment
4.1 To what extent are novice teachers effective? 4.2 To what extent do novice teachers stay in the same partner LEAs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Observation scores of novice teachers as measured by the evaluation instrument used by partner LEAs Annual employment data 	Goals 4 Performance Measures 4-5 204(a) of the HEA 1, 2
RQ 5: What are the impacts of the partnership on student outcomes?		
Applicable sub-questions	Data Sources	Alignment
5.1 To what extent do novice teachers in the partnership positively impact their students?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher-level student performance as measured by state and/or district assessments (partner LEA data request) 	Goals 4 Performance Measure 6 204(a) of the HEA 1

B.1 The extent to which the methods of evaluation will provide valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes.

Implementation Fidelity. NIET recognizes the need for valid and reliable performance data on relevant outcomes to monitor implementation, inform program improvements and assess impact. NIET will deploy data systems to track program progress and provide data for the fidelity of implementation analyses (RQ 1). These systems will reliably capture the key aspects of program implementation. Qualitative data used to assess fidelity of implementation

will come from a rigorous data collection process. The evaluation team will conduct interviews and surveys of program participants (teacher candidates, novice teachers, and their mentors), Southeastern faculty/staff and NIET staff who support the education preparation and induction programs. These interviews and surveys will address program design and implementation. To ensure reliability and validity, the responses will be triangulated based on information from multiple respondents as well as a review of documents and reports from data systems (e.g., meeting notes, training sessions, satisfaction surveys, clinical faculty's rubric certification status). The data triangulation allows for a higher level of validity in the qualitative research process. Interviews and/or focus group sessions will be recorded, transcribed and coded by at least two researchers. To address the reliability of the qualitative analysis, inter-coder agreement will be examined and only themes agreed upon by both coders will be reported. This work, along with analyses of the relationships between implementation measures and important intermediate outcomes, will also help identify key implementation mediators and moderators that limit or enhance implementation. NIET will provide Southeastern with formative findings through multiple mechanisms (monthly calls, quarterly updates, and annual reports) to collaboratively support the continuous improvement process.

Program Impact. In addition, the evaluation team will collect and track qualification, persistence, completion, licensure, employment retention, novice teacher performance (e.g., summative classroom observation scores), and student academic and non-academic performance data to assess program impact (RQ 2-RQ 5). NIET will deploy data systems to track these measures of program progress and impact. Southeastern will provide demographic data of the applicants for enrollment into the teacher preparation program and for mentor positions as well as persistence information for teacher candidates in the preparation program.

Additionally, teacher candidates who have completed the program will be recommended for licensure by the licensing advisor at Southeastern, and the University will share this information with the evaluation team. Actual State licensure information will be collected from the Louisiana Department of Education Teach Louisiana website. The summative observation scores from the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric or other evidence-based rubric used by the partnering district will be used to gather data on the effectiveness of novice teachers and to analyze the extent to which mentor teachers with strong instructional skills are selected to support teacher candidates and novice teachers. Prior research has shown these ratings on the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards Rubric have a high level of reliability and validity (see Barnett & Wills, 2016 for a review). For teacher candidates, observation scores from the NIET ATR will be used to assess their performance during the yearlong clinical experience. Results from validity and reliability analyses provide evidence that the NIET ATR measures effective instruction with consistency. With respect to student outcomes, valid and reliable performance data will be obtained from the Louisiana Department of Education data center.

B.2 The extent to which the methods of evaluation are thorough, feasible, and appropriate to the goals, objectives, and outcomes of the proposed project.

The program's logic model is used to specify the inputs, outputs and short-term outcomes expected from the project, as well as the expected paths from the outputs and short-term outcomes to longer-term effects on educators and students (see Appendix C - Logic Model). The evaluation will utilize a wide range of objective measures that are related to project goals and objectives (see Table 1). Further, the rigorous evaluation strategies and methods are aligned with the four program goals and include qualitative and quantitative data from multiple sources to ensure thoroughness and to strengthen content, construct and contemporary validity and

reliability (see Table 2). As detailed in Tables 4 and 5, (management plan and team qualification tables), the management and evaluation teams charged with implementing and evaluating the program goals have the qualifications, capacity, and timelines established to ensure management and implementation feasibility. Performance data and evaluation methods are summarized by goal in specific detail below.

Goal 1: Build alignment and coherence across systems and structures to support teacher candidates and novice teachers at the university, school, and district levels.

Research Question 1 (1.1-1.4). In order to examine coherence between systems and structures for support for teachers across multiple levels, the evaluation will explore the contexts, conditions, characteristics, and strategies of the educator preparation and induction components of the partnership that influence novice teachers' knowledge, skills and practices. Specifically, Southeastern employs the NIET ATR for instructing, training, and evaluating teacher candidates. The rubric is based on and aligned to the NIET Teaching and Learning Standards rubric, a state approved teacher evaluation instrument that is currently used by one of the two partner LEAs to evaluate their teachers. Teacher candidates are introduced to the NIET ATR early in their classroom studies. Not only do the NIET rubrics support coherence across coursework, clinical experience, induction, and continuing professional development, they also support the development of shared language and common understanding of high-quality instructional and leadership practices from the classroom to the boardroom.

To examine the extent to which the project has been implemented with fidelity, the evaluation will focus on assessing 1) course assignments, instructional activities and materials, and/or syllabi from redesigned courses and prior versions as course revisions are made, 2) trainings provided to clinical faculty around the NIET ATR and the use of the rubric for high-

quality evaluation and feedback, 3) trainings and support provided to school and district leaders around the rubric and coaching conversations to strengthen their capacity to support novice teachers long term, 4) induction trainings and support provided to novice teachers and their mentors, and 5) the activities of the Advisory Board in facilitating regular collaboration between university and partner LEAs. The evaluation team will review key documentation from these collaboration activities and triangulate these reports with interview and survey responses from key program members to assess the coherence of systems and structures for support of teacher candidates and novice teachers.

Goal 2: Recruit and select teacher candidates from underrepresented populations and high-quality mentors to strengthen the pipeline of effective educators in partnering high-need LEAs.

Research Question 2 (2.1). In order to examine the extent to which individuals from underrepresented populations are enrolled into the partnership to serve as teachers, the evaluation will focus on an assessment of applicants' demographic (gender, race/ethnicity, primary language, first-generation, disability). As noted earlier in the narrative, Southeastern evaluates applications for enrollment into the partnership based on key qualifications including Praxis CORE or ACT score of 21 for teacher candidates. Applicant data will be collected and analyzed to examine the characteristics and qualities of candidates enrolled in the program.

Research Question 2 (2.2). Southeastern and partner LEAs evaluate applicants for mentors who will support teacher candidates throughout the preparation and induction programs. Mentors must possess strong instructional and leadership skills, be appropriately certified, be trained and certified to observe using partner LEA's teacher evaluation instrument, and, for those who support teacher candidates and novice teachers, be certified mentor teachers

in Louisiana or be committed to obtain Louisiana mentor teacher certification. Data from all applicants will be collected and analyzed to examine the characteristic and qualities of mentors

Goal 3: Build the instructional effectiveness of teacher candidates and the capacity of mentor teachers to support teacher candidates during the clinical experience period in high-need schools.

In order to assess the impact on the quality of the teacher candidates in the partnership, the evaluation will focus on an examination of instructional effectiveness data, teacher licensure information, persistence, graduation and employment data.

Research Question 3 (3.1-3.3). Teacher candidates are evaluated using the NIET ATR multiple times during their yearlong clinical experience. The evaluation team will collect teacher candidates' observation scores on the NIET ATR from Southeastern and analyze the extent to which the scores improve over time and the extent to which teacher candidates graduate with strong instructional skills as indicated by the average NIET ATR score at the end of the clinical experience (RQ 3.1; 204(a) of the HEA 1). The evaluation team also will work with Southeastern to track the percentage of teacher candidates in the partnership who complete all Southeastern teacher preparation program requirements (i.e., complete all required coursework) and graduate from the Southeastern teacher preparation program as well as those who have not yet graduated but persist in the program (RQ 3.2; Performance Measure 3). Upon graduating from Southeastern teacher preparation program, teacher candidates are expected to attain Louisiana teacher certification. The evaluation team will analyze the success of teacher candidates in obtaining teacher licensure within one year of graduating from Southeastern teacher preparation program (RQ 3.3; Performance Measures 1-2) and the extent to which the teacher preparation program raises licensure test scores and reduces the number of attempts

required to attain licensure (204(a) of the HEA 3). Additionally, the evaluation team will work with Southeastern and partner LEAs to track the percentage of graduates who are certified and hired by partner LEAs, who are members of underrepresented populations, who teach in high-need academic subject areas, or who teach in high-need areas disaggregated by the elementary school and secondary school levels (204(a) of the HEA 4-8).

Goal 4: Build the instructional capacity of novice teachers and mentor teachers to improve instructional excellence, teacher retention, and student achievement in high-need schools through a two-year induction program.

In order to assess the impact on the quality of the novice teachers in the partnership, the evaluation will focus on an examination of instructional effectiveness data, teacher retention, and student achievement data.

Research Question 4 (4.1-4.2). The evaluation team will collect novice teachers' evaluation scores and summative ratings from partner LEAs and analyze the changes in scores from the first to the second induction year and the percentage of novice teachers who perform at a Proficient level or above each year, as defined by the state for the rubric used in each partner LEA (RQ 4.1; 204(a) of the HEA 1). The evaluation team also will assess the extent to which novice teachers remain to serve in the same partner LEAs during and beyond the two-year induction period and examine factors that influence teachers' leaving (and staying in) a school, district or the profession (RQ 4.2; Performance Measures 4-5; 204(a) of the HEA 2). Each year, the Louisiana Department of Education releases state and regional educator workforce reports that include data on the number and percentage of departing teachers from the state school systems. The state and regional data will be collected and used to serve as a comparison and to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership in retaining teachers in the profession.

Research Question 5 (5.1). Employment of effective teachers should lead to better student performance. The evaluation team will collect teacher-level student performance data from partner LEAs. The analysis will examine both growth (the extent to which students taught by novice teachers in the partnership met, exceeded, or fell short of their expected performance on state tests; beginning and end-of-year district assessments) and/or mastering specific learning standards (percentage of students passing the state or district assessments) (Performance Measure 6; 204(a) of the HEA 1).

C. Adequacy of Resources

C.1. The adequacy of support, including facilities, equipment, supplies, and other resources, from the applicant organization or the lead applicant organization.

As lead applicant, Southeastern will contribute significant resources to ensure adequate support and impact of the project. To demonstrate commitment and to prepare for long-term sustainability, the grant partners have committed to match resources equivalent to the requested funding from the US Department of Education. Adequate resources are designated to support implementation of the program and include the following:

Facilities: Southeastern will provide facilities, equipment and supplies to support the program where appropriate. Networking and alumni opportunities can be hosted at the University. Southeastern will collaborate with district partners to identify facilities for various training sessions in order to best accommodate participants' needs. Districts will provide facilities for program activities during the school day, including coaching, training, and smaller professional learning communities.

Administration of the Grant: The Southeastern Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) provided administrative support during the planning of the project and will

continue to provide administrative leadership and fiscal management facilitating efficient and timely implementation of the project. In addition, OSRP will collaborate with partners to collect appropriate data for analysis and reporting and the COE to coordinate preparation and submission of required program and fiscal reports and to manage the matching requirements and documents., including data from partners.

Expertise and Learning Resources: Southeastern's College of Education offers innovative curricula to prepare students to become effective professionals who set the standard for excellence. Students have the opportunity to interact closely with faculty in programs that are challenging and exciting while developing the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to be successful in today's educational environment. Southeastern will continue to provide all resources for the four years of undergraduate formation in educator preparation. These resources include: faculty, staff, facilities, and curriculum. Southeastern will contribute similarly to the preparation and induction program as collaboratively determined by Southeastern and the partner districts. Southeastern will provide clinical faculty to work with partner districts as instructional coaches and as course instructors, as well as serve as a support to the mentor teachers in the coaching and development of the teacher candidates. Clinical faculty will serve on the Advisory Board that will meet quarterly to review the progress and effectiveness of the program. Finally, clinical faculty will work to support mentors and novice teachers as they participate in additional training and support provided by NIET.

Grant partner, NIET, will provide teacher and leader candidates, as well as their mentors, with access to an exclusive training portal with videos and resources that can take instruction to the next level. EE PASS – the Educator Effectiveness Preparation and Support System – was developed by education professionals at NIET who leveraged their on-the-ground experience in

advancing educator effectiveness with thousands of education partners across the nation. Educators across the country use EE PASS to gain access to resources that help them better understand what great teaching looks like and support high-quality coaching and observations, and teams of teachers and leaders can use the videos and materials to collaborate together around effective instructional practices.

C.2. The extent to which the budget is adequate to support the proposed project.

The project funded through this grant will enable Southeastern and its LEA partners to further develop the residency model in combination with district based two-year induction programs in high-need partner districts that are aligned to the university program. The capacity built via this program is directly aligned to the student and teacher needs in the partner districts and will continue to yield results after the grant period. Sufficient funds are budgeted for personnel, fringe, travel, contractual, and other to complete the program as outlined in this proposal. Additionally, Southeastern developed the budget for this project to build toward sustainability beyond the length of the project.

C.3. The extent to which the costs are reasonable in relation to the objectives, design, and potential significance of the proposed project.

The costs for personnel, fringe, travel, contractual, and other line items included in this proposal are based on actual costs where possible and based on similar-level personnel and services for any projections. Southeastern only included costs in the proposal that are necessary for completing the program.

C.4. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates that it has the resources to operate the project beyond the length of the grant, including a multi-year financial and operating

model and accompanying plan; the demonstrated commitment of any partners; evidence of broad support from stakeholders.

The Office of Sponsored Research and Programs (OSRP) is the primary support unit authorized to assist potential investigators in the preparation and submission of research/training or other sponsored projects to state, federal and private agencies, and to facilitate the administration of externally funded projects. Structured under the Office of the Provost, OSRP is the central administrative unit designed to provide support to project faculty in non-fiscal pre-award and post-award administration activities. The OSRP has the combined experience and the requisite education and training in the cradle to grave grants administration process. The OSRP oversees millions in grants, contracts and subawards each year and is in full compliance with applicable regulations and other guidance.

Southeastern is one of nine Louisiana universities managed under the University of Louisiana System, a part of the Louisiana Board of Regents. As such, it has the sound management and fiscal structure including a well-defined Grants Accounting office with established financial management systems as expected at a state institution. Southeastern's fiscal management is fully compliant and undergoes an annual audit by the Louisiana Legislative Auditors.

C.5 The relevance and demonstrated commitment of each partner in the proposed project to the implementation and success of the project.

Through letters of support, ongoing collaboration, and in-kind contributions, partners demonstrate commitment and evidence of broad support. The management plan outlines specific responsibilities that each partner will lead and engage in related to key project goals, milestones, and activities.

Southeastern is committed to serving the LEAs in its community. In addition to committed leadership from the Co-Principal Investigators, Southeastern has identified a Project Director who will be committed at 100% FTE to support the project. (The roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder are outlined in the management plan.) In addition to these key roles, the University is allocating time for both teaching faculty and clinical faculty to engage in and support project activities.

The partnerships between partner LEAs and Southeastern are recognized through formal agreements (MOUs) that articulate responsibilities and are designed to ensure the two parties collaborate to support the development of well-prepared teachers. Leaders representing key partners engage regularly in preparation for the initial activities supported by this proposal. This early coordination will allow the project to be initiated on the designated timeline and with full engagement of all partners. An early task will be the recruitment of teacher candidates as well as the first stages of planning for the induction programs. This preparation will support the engagement of the first cohorts of teacher candidates as they begin their induction program as new teachers in Fall 2023. Each district in the partnership will use grant funds to support an induction director who will take on responsibility to implement the induction program at the district level. In addition, district-level leadership team members will engage in a working group tasked with designing and allocating resources for the implementation of the induction program. Finally, the districts commit to collaborating with partners to recruit, select, and support high-quality mentors for teacher candidates and novice teachers during and beyond the project period.

NIET is a national non-profit with 20 years of experience in improving educator effectiveness across every stage of a teacher's career development. NIET has managed more than ten federal grants including three Supporting Educator Effectiveness Development grants

with university partners to improve their educator preparation programs, and to support residencies and grow-your-own models. Nearly all of NIET's grant work has involved teacher leaders who serve as mentor teachers and coaches whose roles and responsibilities are considered integral to collaboration and professional learning in schools. As a result, NIET's staff has deep experience in developing and implementing successful models that support novice teachers through collaboration, coaching and mentorship. NIET also has extensive experience and a demonstrated commitment to working in high-need schools in Louisiana. NIET's work in Louisiana focuses on high-need students and high-need schools, with improvement extending districtwide. NIET supports districts in creating a comprehensive approach to school success that is based on building school-based leadership teams and training teacher leaders to lead weekly professional learning and provide classroom level coaching for teachers. School-level professional learning is integrated and aligned with district support, creating greater consistency and coherence for teachers. At the state level, NIET partners with the Department of Education to provide training and coaching to build capacity at the district, school, and classroom levels. Starting in the 2019-20 school year, NIET began a new partnership under the Louisiana Mentor Teacher Initiative to equip elementary school teachers to support yearlong teacher candidates and other new or developing teachers.

Appendix E includes letters of support from Tangipahoa Parish School System, St. Charles Parish School System, the President of Southeastern, the Dean of the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the Dean of the College of Science and Technology, and the Dean of the School of Education at Southeastern. The letters affirm the partners' commitments to the project. Collectively, these partners demonstrate the need for and commitment to this work both during and beyond the lifetime of the project.

D. Quality of the Management Plan

D.1 The adequacy of the management plan to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines, and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

The management plan is designed to achieve the objectives of the proposed project on time and within budget, including clearly defined responsibilities, timelines and milestones for accomplishing project tasks.

Table 3: Adequacy of the Management Plan

Goal 1: Goal 1: Build alignment and coherence across systems and structures to support aspiring and novice teachers at the university, school, and district levels.							
Objective	Responsible Parties	Milestones	2022 -23	2023 -24	2024 -25	2025 -26	2026 -27
Goal 1: Build coherence between systems and structures for support for new teachers at the university, school, and district							
1.1 Facilitate regular collaboration between the University and LEA partners to continually inform and align teacher preparation and induction programs for novice teachers.	Southeastern faculty and staff, LEA staff, NIET staff	Establish: profile of Advisory Board (roles, numbers, diversity, characteristics etc.); meeting format; meeting schedule.	✓				
		Communicate invitation and expectations to prospective Advisory Board members.	✓				
		Advisory Board begins and continues to meet at least quarterly to analyze data, determine areas of programmatic strength and need, and address areas of need.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.2 Refine coursework and classroom observations to improve alignment to the NIET Aspiring Teacher	Southeastern faculty and staff, NIET staff	Conduct an alignment and gaps assessment of coursework to the Aspiring Teacher Rubric by analyzing syllabi, course experiences, and assessment.	✓				
		Identify how courses, assignments, and assessments support the development of	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Rubric (ATR).		specific instructional skills that are being developed by students during coursework and applied during clinical practice.						
1.3 Train clinical faculty on the NIET ATR and the use of the rubric for high-quality evaluation and feedback.	Southeastern faculty, NIET staff	Clinical faculty will participate in the training provided by NIET in each year of the program.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
1.4 Develop an induction program to support the development of novice teachers.	Southeastern faculty and staff, LEA staff, NIET staff	Design and implement an effective induction program.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
		Establish new teacher induction resources (online and print) to codify effective new teacher induction practices.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Deliver support for each district's induction director as they prepare to implement the newly designed induction program and support novice teacher mentors.		✓	✓	✓		

Goal 2: Recruit and select teacher candidates from underrepresented populations and high-quality mentor teachers to strengthen the pipeline of effective teachers in partnering high-need LEAs.

Objective	Responsible Parties	Milestones	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
2.1 Recruit and enroll teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds who plan to teach in a high-need partner school following graduation from Southeastern	Southeastern faculty and staff, LEA staff, NIET staff	Develop a strategic plan for recruiting underrepresented teacher candidates	✓				
		Host on-campus events to support recruitment of underrepresented teacher candidates	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Conduct outreach to students of color in Southeastern's undergraduate content majors	✓	✓	✓	✓	
		Seek funding from the state and private funders to provide significant scholarships for students of color, particularly	✓	✓	✓	✓	

teacher preparation program.		those who are high achieving (top 20% of the class) and for those intending to pursue teaching in a designated area of need.					
2.2 Recruit and select high-quality mentor teachers to support teacher candidates enrolled in the [partnership]	Southeastern faculty and staff, LEA staff, NIET staff	Develop a strategic plan for recruiting mentors to support teacher candidates who model effective instructional practices and possess the knowledge and skills provide high quality coaching and feedback	✓				
		Implement recruitment strategy	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Goal 3: Build the instructional effectiveness of teacher candidates and the capacity of mentor teachers to support teacher candidates during the clinical experience period in high-need schools.

Objective	Responsible Parties	Milestones	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27
3.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to teacher candidates focused on instruction, lesson planning, and assessment.	Southeastern faculty and staff, NIET staff	Support and confirm enrollment of all teacher candidates and coordinate clinical placement.		✓	✓	✓	
		Deliver refined coursework aligned to the ATR rubric		✓	✓	✓	
		Deliver five days of training during the clinical placement designed to enhance Southeastern clinical coursework		✓	✓	✓	
		Support teacher candidates to embed new learning from trainings into their current teaching practices		✓	✓	✓	
3.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support teacher candidates.	Southeastern faculty and staff, NIET staff	Deliver five days of development activities designed to increase instructional understanding of strong coaching support and how to enhance the quality of reflection		✓	✓	✓	
		Provide high-quality support to small groups of mentor teachers to further strengthen their capacity to support		✓	✓	✓	

		residents					
Goal 4: Build the instructional capacity of novice teachers and mentor teachers to improve instructional excellence, teacher retention, and student achievement in high-need schools through a two-year induction program.							
Objective	Responsible Parties	Milestones	2022 -23	2023 -24	2024 -25	2025 -26	2026 -27
4.1 Provide high-quality training and coaching to novice teachers aligned to their needs and the needs of students in the partnering LEAs.	LEA staff, Southeastern faculty, NIET staff	Deliver 4 days of training including two days on data-driven decision making, and two days using a case study method to examine student engagement and feedback. (Year 1 of induction)			✓	✓	✓
		Deliver 3 days of training that focus on instructional techniques, constructing success criteria, and analyzing feedback (Year 2 of induction)				✓	✓
4.2 Provide high-quality training and coaching to mentor teachers to strengthen their capacity to support novice teachers.	LEA staff, NIET staff	Deliver 4 days of training including two days on data-driven decision making, and two days using a case study method to examine student engagement and feedback. (Year 1 of induction)			✓	✓	✓
		Deliver 3 days of training that focus on instructional techniques, constructing success criteria, and analyzing feedback (Year 2 of induction)				✓	✓

Table 4: Qualifications of Project Personnel

Key Personnel	Qualifications, Duties
Southeastern Louisiana University College of Education	
██████████ Dean, College of Education Dean PI	██████████ currently serves as Dean of the College of Education at Southeastern ██████████ will serve as a high-level leader to ensure the program is implemented with a high degree of fidelity.
██████████r, Assistant Professor/ IB Program Coordinator Co-PI, College of Education	██████████ will serve as Co-PI for this project. She is currently the coordinator of the International Baccalaureate Programme, which hosts an ungraduated cohort of teacher residents. ██████████ will serve as a leader with district administration.

<p>██████████ Professor Co-PI, College of Education</p>	<p>██████████ will serve as Co-PI for this project. She currently coordinates the Lion's Connected Program and serves on the governor's advising board for special education. ██████████ will serve as a content leader for literacy and special education.</p>
<p>██████████ Project Director College of Education (grant funded, 100% FTE)</p>	<p>██████████ will serve as the Project Director for this TQP grant at Southeastern. In her role, 100% of her time will be to coordinate all clinical and residency placements in collaboration with school and district partners, as well as assist in the placement and tracking of the graduates into their positions with each district partner for the induction program.</p>
<p>██████████ Associate Professor University Leader College of Education (grant funded, 25% FTE)</p>	<p>██████████ is the graduate coordinator for the Department of Teaching and Learning. She currently teaches methods and is a trained site coordinator. As part of this work, ██████████ will advise on curriculum alignment.</p>
<p>TBD - Residency Site Coordinator College of Education (grant funded, 100% FTE)</p>	<p>The residency site coordinator will serve as a liaison between the site coordinators serving the teacher residents and the university faculty facilitating teacher preparation curriculum.</p>
<p>TBD - Data Analyst College of Education (grant funded, 100% FTE)</p>	<p>The data analyst will efficiently record data on on-going progress for the purpose of quality assurance and continuous program improvement. Data will be collaboratively reviewed with district leaders to identify adjustments required for the mentor and induction initiatives. The data analyst will work with NIET for evaluation purposes.</p>
<p>Graduate Assistant College of Education (grant funded)</p>	<p>The graduate assistant will assist the principal investigators in the grant facilitation.</p>
<p>15 Teaching Faculty, College of Education (matching funds, 25% to 50% FTE based on course equivalent of 25%)</p>	<p>Teaching faculty of the College of Education at Southeastern will ensure courses (modify syllabi) are aligned with the Aspiring Teacher Rubric, including teaching practices that model effective teaching and learning and assessments. Emphasis will be given to SPED, literacy, and STEM areas.</p>
<p>15 Clinical Faculty, College of Education (matching funds, 25% to 50% FTE based on course equivalent of 25%)</p>	<p>Clinical faculty from the College of Education are practitioners from the field who have been exceptional teachers but have taken the next step into teacher development and support. Clinical faculty will maintain a teaching load as well as direct support of residents.</p>
<p>Partnering LEAs</p>	

Superintendent (in-kind)	The superintendent from each district (or designee) will participate on the Advisory Board and offer support for implementation of the grant activities.
Induction Director (100% FTE, grant funded)	Each district will be contracted to support the development and implementation of the district-based induction program. Induction directors will receive training and support from Southeastern and NIET. Induction directors will provide coaching and support for novice teacher mentors, deliver induction training for novice teachers and mentors, and provide feedback to the district to support improvement of the induction program.
Residency Mentors (matching funds, 25% FTE each)	Residency mentors will model effective instructional practice and skillful coaching to resident teacher candidates during their final year before graduation.
Induction Mentors	Based on collaboratively developed selection criteria, induction mentors will be recruited, selected, trained, and supported to model effective instructional practice and skillful coaching to novice teachers during their first two years in the profession.
NIET	
██████████, President and Chief Operating Officer, NIET (not included on budget)	██████████, Co-president and Chief Operating Officer for NIET, has extensive experience working with federally funded projects. He will primarily serve as an escalation point for issues arising in supporting NIET's implementation of requested services.
██████████, Executive Director of Higher Education Partnerships and Special Projects (in kind match)	██████████ has experience supporting university faculty and staff, collaborating with districts to support the development of novice teachers, and expertise in implementing training and coaching support for advancing new teachers and mentor teachers. ██████████ will provide training development and content support, support communication between all stakeholders, and support that all project milestones are met.
Senior Program Specialist (contracted support)	The Senior Program Specialist will (1) support partner schools through training and coaching (2) work closely with the Project Director to ensure a strong program implementation. Additional NIET Senior Program Specialists will be utilized as needed to ensure all support is provided across districts.
Evaluation Partner	
██████████, Vice President of Research and Evaluation, NIET (10%)	██████████ will oversee and guide the research team and serve on the Advisory Board. For this proposed project, ██████████ will oversee the project evaluation and ensure that data collection, analysis and reporting is accurate and completed on time.

<p>██████████, Senior Researcher, NIET (25%)</p>	<p>For this proposed project, ██████████ will (1) work with the Project Director and partners to ensure proper data collection and internal feedback; (2) assist with the submission of performance reports to Southeastern; and (3) prepare data for dissemination.</p>
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D.2 The adequacy of procedures for ensuring feedback and continuous improvement in the operation of the proposed project.

Advisory Board meetings will provide for a continuous feedback loop between Southeastern and district partners to share trends in strengths and areas for improvement and growth regarding effectiveness of teacher candidates and new teachers. District and school leaders will be able to synthesize and share with the University the key instructional strengths and areas for growth they are observing in new teachers during the induction years. This feedback will allow the University to continue to refine coursework and support structures for teacher candidates and residents. Likewise, the University will be able to share updates and adaptations to coursework and residency support, thereby influencing how districts approach new teacher induction supports.

To ensure feedback and continuous improvement in the *operation* of the proposed project, the Project Director will manage all aspects of the initiative. The Project Director will work with project staff to ensure that the project is on target to meet intended outcomes. The objectives of this project have clearly defined milestones that will be used to periodically assess the progress of the project. The regular reviewing of progress towards meeting these milestones will allow for the identification of successes as well as areas in need of improvement. Numerous strategies will be used to ensure active communication, feedback, and continuous improvement. The Project Director will conduct monthly meetings with the key project personnel to ensure strong implementation fidelity and discuss solutions for any issues that may arise. Additionally, the evaluation team will have quarterly meetings with the Project Director to provide updates on

the project implementation and impacts corroborated with data and to ensure timely data collection for program evaluation and federal reporting.