

Project WITT: **W**ittenberg **I**ntegrated **T**eacher **T**utelage

### **Significance**

The Wittenberg University Education Department has long noted the need for teachers to be prepared to serve both general education students and students with special learning needs in inclusive school settings. Wittenberg currently offers stand-alone licensure programs for Early Childhood Education (P-3) and Intervention Specialist (K-12); these two licensure areas are the department's largest programs and over fifty percent of the students completing the Early Childhood Licensure choose to complete the additional requirements to receive an Intervention Specialist license. The opportunity to expand the existing P-3 program to P-5 and purposefully merge it with Intervention Specialist to create a new dual licensure program would be a benefit and better meet the indicated needs of our teacher candidates. It is our conviction that dual licensure better prepares our candidates to assume the complex roles required in today's schools.

The opportunity to design a new program would also allow the department to restructure clinical experiences in the local schools. Wittenberg Education majors and minors complete field and clinical experiences in the Springfield/Clark County area. The Springfield/Clark County area has over 43% of all elementary grade students eligible for free and reduced lunch. Specifically, for the Springfield City School District, the number rises to 100% and additionally all students are provided free breakfast. The Clark County area has a student population of 9% African American and 3% Hispanic; Springfield City Schools has 20% African American and 5% Hispanic. Students with disabilities comprise 20% of the students in Springfield City Schools and 16% of the students in the six surrounding county school districts. In addition, these districts range from 1% to 10% limited English proficient students. The Wittenberg Education

Department theme of “Educational Leaders for Constructive Social Change” and our conceptual framework grounded in the philosophical principles of Social Justice provide strong support for working in and with school districts and communities with such demographics.

The Education department believes that teachers must be advocates for all students, because we think that as citizens and service professionals, teachers play pivotal roles in fostering supportive communities where students thrive. The emphasis on civic engagement, advocating for public schools as equitable democratic institutions, and for developing the whole person by honoring the integration of academics, social, and spiritual components match well with the broader vision of Wittenberg University. Wittenberg’s Teacher Education program prepares teachers with the following mission:

*Wittenberg’s Teacher Education Program strives to integrate the ideals of moral responsibility, social consciousness, and vocational commitment into the lives of teachers in such a way that their character, competence, and community involvement establish them as leaders for constructive social change.*

The goals of our undergraduate program are created around what we regard as the three “Cs” of responsive leadership: competence, character, and community. This conception flows from our commitment to educating the whole person whose intellectual, spiritual, and moral life is integrated in the activity of teaching and learning. Our conceptual framework is also informed by specific commitments that provide operational direction and give impetus both to our curricular program and to our program outcomes.

Our eight specific commitments align and support the noted concerns and national trends stated in the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children Request for Applications. The chart

below demonstrates how Wittenberg’s Teacher Preparation Program assists teacher candidates to address areas of need for both children and the field of education.

<p align="center"><b>Commitments Wittenberg Education Department</b></p>	<p align="center"><b>Educational Issues &amp; Concerns Related to the Improvement of Personnel Preparation and Students with Diverse Learning Needs</b></p>
<p><b>Commitment to Intellectual Inquiry</b> <i>The capacity to persist in one’s desire to learn and improve, to be self-reflective, to consider growth collaboratively and honestly.</i></p>	<p>CAEP (Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation) standard that IHEs ensure that “candidates develop a deep understanding of the critical concepts and principles of the discipline”</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Caring for the Whole Person</b> <i>The capacity to understand how to maintain professional balance and consider thoughtfully how to care both for one’s whole self as well as the whole selves of students.</i></p>	<p>Recent research on school-wide positive behavior supports and trauma informed care and the research that states that student learning improves when fostered by a caring adult with feedback and structured teaming.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Diversity and Global Citizenship</b> <i>The capacity to be self-aware, to recognize the uses of privilege and power, and to learn from difference and cultural viewpoints even as we advocate for those who have been neglected, ill served, or oppressed.</i></p>	<p>The expectation that teachers respect diversity and are prepared to meet the learning needs of all students and families. This includes a willingness to serve others, and when justice demands, advocate for them even when differences make doing so unappealing; it entails recognition of the importance of differences to the intellectual, emotional, and moral growth of a community of learners.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Leadership</b> <i>The capacity to work intelligently and in partnership for a larger good.</i></p>	<p>CAEP standard that IHEs ensure “effective partnerships and high-quality clinical practices” and in addition that programs demonstrate “efforts to know and address community, state, national, regional or local needs for hard to staff schools and shortage fields.”</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Service and Advocacy</b> <i>The capacity to find one’s vocation in purposeful, thoughtful</i></p>	<p>Meeting the diverse needs of students with disabilities and learning difficulties within the context of Multi-tiered Systems of Support</p>

<p><i>service in the interest of all students and their communities.</i></p>	
<p><b>Commitment to Technological Competence</b>  <i>The capacity to make informed, independent, and value-based judgments about acquiring and using materials, resources, and technical tools that serve the interests of students.</i></p>	<p>That teachers know how to design and implement instruction that incorporates the appropriate use of a wide variety of technologies that aid in learning. Teacher candidates should be able to use technological tools to manage information and facilitate communication.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Change</b>  <i>The capacity to courageously, honestly, and collaboratively seek the improvement of educational service for all learners.</i></p>	<p>The expectation that evidenced-based high-leverage practices are maintained and updated as new research supports changes needed in the preparation of teachers for a diverse and global economy.</p>
<p><b>Commitment to Professional Growth and Reflection</b>  <i>The capacity to value reflection and personal growth by taking risks, by interacting with and forming communities of commitment, and by being able to consider proportionately the social, political, and personal facets of teaching.</i></p>	<p>That preservice teachers are mentored by veteran teacher in a shared context that supports not only learning for the students in their care, but a collective context that has shared responsibility that examines the effectiveness of practices essential for continuous life-long learning for the teacher and his/her students.</p>

**R.5.3** The department has strong connections with several local school districts, however, with noted teacher turnover in the Springfield City School District implementation of clinical experience is often inconsistent and the department has had to decrease the number of placements. This is a concern for the department as we are committed to assisting in meeting the needs of the district as a partner in the educational process. This proposed project includes goals for improving clinical experiences and mentoring as well as receiving joint professional development when courses and curriculum. Springfield City Schools wishes to be part of this

process. The results from such work will benefit Wittenberg's teacher candidates, district administrative and teaching personnel, and ultimately local students.

The opportunity to design a dual licensure program and restructure field and clinical experiences will improve and enhance departmental efforts to train future teachers to identify and leverage student strengths rather than teaching from a deficit model. A teacher who holds dual licensure will better understand how to implement principles of Universal Design for Learning from the outset and make stronger use of UDL in the assess-plan-teach cycle.

### **Deliverables**

At the conclusion of this project, deliverables will be submitted to the Ohio Deans Compact on Exceptional Children. These items will be designed so that the items might be used by other Institutions of Higher Education who wish to develop a dual licensure program and /or increase collaboration and clinical supervision of their teacher candidates. The deliverables will include:

- 1) a description of the restructured dual licensure course sequence including field and clinical experiences,
- 2) crosswalks to illustrate alignment between courses, signature assessments, SPA (Specialized Professional Association) standards, CAEP standards, OLAC (Ohio Leadership Advisory Council) practices, and the Ohio Improvement Process,
- 3) the revised curriculum materials (syllabi, signature assessments and assignments, clinical experience activities, course readings, and class activities),
- 4) mentoring and co-teaching modules and guides for clinical faculty
- 5) mentoring and co-teaching modules for preservice teacher candidates (one for use at admit to the program and one for use at student teaching),
- 6) recruitment and marketing materials to advertise the new program,

- 7) a description of the process that the proposed project used to create the dual program and a plan for sustaining the program, and
- 8) formative and summative performance reports describing barriers, opportunities, accomplishments, and future steps/ideas.

The outcomes of this proposed project will result in at least three key benefits. First, there is a need to produce Early Childhood and Elementary teachers who are better trained to use high-leverage practices in inclusive settings. Teachers holding dual licensure will be able to identify individual learning needs earlier and be proactive in obtaining support and services for students and their families. Teachers holding dual licensure will be able to meet the needs of their students in the general education classroom, therefore creating a more stable learning community for students with disabilities than the current use of “pull-out” resource room programs. Second, having teachers with dual licensure will assist in addressing the national shortage of highly qualified teachers. Third, practicing and preservice teachers will better understand mentoring and the need to establish strong reflective teaching practices.

### **Project Services**

The Education department understands the need for the newly designed program to include evidenced-based practices. In particular, the department will assure that the twenty-two high-leverage practices identified by the Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) and the CEEDAR Center will be addressed in the licensure program. Emphasis will be placed on instructional strategies, assessment, social emotional practices, co-teaching, and collaboration skills. The curriculum will also employ the philosophical underpinnings of Universal Design for

Learning (UDL) and the delivery of services using a Multi-Tier Systems of Support (MTSS). As a department we find these areas along with positive dispositions to be essential to preparing quality teacher candidates. Project faculty will engage our Teacher Advisory Committee, our P-12 school partners and colleagues from other universities to gain inside regarding the perceived needs related to the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that need to be included in a teacher preparation program for the 21<sup>st</sup> century and global society.

In addition to the new licensure program, the project will redesign field and clinical experiences to ensure that teacher candidates have diverse experiences with strong mentoring and supervision from clinical faculty members. The proposed project will create learning modules for clinical faculty and teacher candidates to complete in order to better understand the mentoring process and how to co-teach with practicing and preservice teachers. The purpose of these modules is to establish consistent practices for mentoring and evaluation of teacher candidates as well as improvements in reflective practice. The project will engage its school partner and current teacher candidates in the development and dissemination of these modules.

Overall, Project WITT will better prepare undergraduate students to address the learning needs of all students in P-5 inclusive classrooms. The newly designed program will allow Wittenberg to be competitive in the recruitment of students for such a unique licensure offering, and finally, the project will better position the Education department to increase its work with additional local school partners.

### **Project Personnel**

The team for this proposed project will involve all faculty and two professional staff members within the Education Department. Dr. Sally Brannan will serve as the project leader. In

addition, Mr. Todd Buck will represent the Springfield City School District. The final team member will be Dr. Ed Hasecke, who will serve as the project evaluator.

**Dr. Sally Brannan** is an Associate Professor of Education with specializations in Special Education and Early Childhood Education. Dr. Brannan has over 30 years of experience in education including roles as an early childhood and high school intervention specialist. She also served as the Director of Preschool Special Education at an Easter Seal Rehabilitation Program. Dr. Brannan has been teaching in higher education for the past eighteen years.

Dr. Brannan's primary research examines collaboration among special educators and related health service providers for children and students with disabilities. She teaches in both the graduate and undergraduate degree programs at Wittenberg. Much of her teaching is directed toward the introduction of candidate teachers to the needs of preschool and elementary students with special learning needs and the appropriate teaching strategies and methodologies that address these needs.

Dr. Brannan has also served as department chair and director of the graduate program at Wittenberg. She has served on the University Educational Policies committee. These experiences have allowed her to gain much knowledge and experience related to university courses and graduation requirements, as well as teacher licensure.

Dr. Brannan received a Bachelor of Arts in Education from West Liberty State University, a Master of Education in Special Education from Ohio University, and a Doctor of Education with emphasis in Special Education and Community Health Promotion from West Virginia University. Dr. Brannan has given presentations at the national meetings of several professional societies (e.g., The Council for Exceptional Children, The American Association on Mental Retardation, The Association for Severe Handicaps, and The American Council on Rural Special



Education) on a variety of topics including community-based instruction, assistive technology, collaboration, and distance learning. She has served on the editorial boards of "Rural Special Education Quarterly," and "Education and Treatment of Children.

**Mr. Todd Buck, MA** is the Coordinator of Curriculum and Professional Development for the Springfield City School District. Mr. Buck has fourteen years of experience in public education. He taught high school English at Whitmer High School and served as an assistant principal and director of alternative education in the Port Clinton School District prior to his current position with Springfield City Schools. He holds teaching licensure in AYA English, as well as Principal's and Superintendent's licensure. Mr. Buck earned his undergraduate degree from Bowling Green State University, his Master's in Education Administration & Supervision from the University of Toledo, and his Superintendent's license from the University of Findlay. He will recommend district personnel for participation in specific project activities and goals, and he will participate in team meetings for curriculum for the newly developed licensure program.

**Dr. Ed Hasecke**, is a Professor in the Department of Political Science at Wittenberg University. In addition to his teaching, he has served six years as the Director of the General Education program for the University. Most recently, Dr Hasecke was appointed as the Faculty Director of the Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic & Urban Engagement's Research Institute. Dr. Hasecke's experience with community engagement, especially community-based research, both quantitative and qualitative and his continued commitment and service to the Springfield community makes him highly qualified to serve as the outside evaluator for this proposed project.

The Hagen Center Research Institute provides Wittenberg students and faculty with the opportunity to gain educational experiences while creating positive change in the Springfield community. The Institute works in collaboration with established and new Hagen Center community partners, local organizations and citizens, and the Faculty Fellows of the Hagen Center to match the research capacities of Wittenberg faculty, staff, and students to a wide variety of research needs in the community.

Dr. Hasecke received a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Wittenberg University, a Master of Arts and Doctor of Philosophy from The Ohio State University. He was awarded the Collegium Award for Innovation in Teaching for his work with the Springfield City School District on a project that focused on the effects of after-school programs on student learning. Dr. Hasecke has several noted publications, and he has given presentations at the national meetings related to Political Science.

### **Resources**

This proposed project has the full support of the University from the Provost, the Assistant Provost for Academic Affairs & Institutional Research, the Director of the Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic & Urban Engagement, the Education Department Chair, and the Superintendent of the Springfield City School District. Wittenberg University has a history of successful grant projects and the faculty in the Education Department are active and engaged in the preparation of preservice teachers through local, state, and national organizations. The teacher licensure program is viewed as rigorous by the University and has been recognized for having strong connections with multiple local school districts and agencies that provided services to children and families.

The Education Department is housed in Blair Hall. The Blair Hall facilities include offices for faculty, departmental offices and classrooms allowing for ease of access to teaching materials and accessibility for students to meet with professors. Blair Hall also houses the Barbara Steele Kane Development Room which provides teacher candidates with materials and resources for developing lessons and materials for use in their courses and when completing clinical experiences. This space is funded through an endowment established by the family of Barbara Steele Kane. In addition, there is an open computer lab and lounge for student use.

Wittenberg students generally, and specifically teacher education candidates are served by Thomas Library. Thomas Library has a wide and current collection of books and materials available for student and faculty use. It houses more than 439,000 print volumes, 306,000 unique print titles, and 625 print periodicals. In addition, the library houses over 9,000 video and digital resources. Thomas Library offers access to 199 databases as well as access to Ohio LINK. Of particular interest for Education majors and minors, Thomas Library houses the Curriculum Resource Center and Children's Library Collection. The Curriculum Resources Center includes a wide selection of teacher instructional materials, trade books, and textbooks, as well as a designated study and development area. Finally, the Education department has an assigned research librarian who serves as a liaison between the department and the library.

Wittenberg has several support programs available to all students. The University has a Math Workshop, a Writing Center, and an Oral Communication Center. In addition, students benefit by having access to the COMPASS Center for Student Success. This center is the first stop shop for student resources. COMPASS provides academic support such as tutoring, accessibility services, mental health counseling, and career connections.

The Office of Academic Affairs and Institutional Research is responsible for the collection, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination of accurate and timely information to assist the university in the identification of institutional strengths and opportunities for improvement. The goal is to help facilitate evidence-based decision-making at Wittenberg. The Office of Institutional Research is involved with the grant-writing and reporting process. The Assistant Provost who heads this office works closely with faculty to ensure compliance with the ethics of research and that documentation and reports are submitted properly and in a timely manner.

The resources described above will strongly support the goals of this proposed project. Additional university resources such as technology and the IT Solutions Center will provide support for the development of specific proposed deliverables.

### **Management Plan**

As a process to support the achievement and completion of the proposed project's goals and outcomes a management plan has been developed for the implementation of the project. An Implementation Plan with anticipated timeline for steps in the development process and timeline for project deliverables is provided in Appendix A along with a Logic Model displaying the use of resources to support the development of the dual licensure program with improved collaboration with a key partner school district. The Implementation Plan is outlined with flexibility in mind in case unforeseen factors occur.

The Education faculty benefit by being a professional program on a small liberal arts campus. The department has assigned liaisons established with all academic departments that contribute to its current licensure programs. This allows for and supports strong collaborative efforts since these relationships have existed for several years. The Education department also

meets weekly to address candidate and program needs, as well as general university updates and business. For this proposed project, Dr. Brannan will be responsible for organizing, coordinating, and scheduling the actions needed to ensure adherence to the proposed timeline. Budget items will be presented to the Business Office and project updates and reports will be shared with the Office of Academic Affairs and Institutional Research.

The department will work on the design and curriculum for the dual licensure program. Individual faculty will be assigned new courses to be developed and have the responsibility to indicate alignment to appropriate CAEP, SPA and state expectations. Dr. Kristin Farley will be responsible for the course work and experiences related to the Ohio Reading Core and the new reading standards. Dr. Brannan will work with Dr. Brian Yontz, Chair of Education and Mrs. Robbin Nicol, Director of Field Placement and Outreach to assure well designed clinical experiences.

The dual licensure program will pass through two levels of evaluation at the university, which will ensure that the new program meets university standards for a timely graduation and fair distribution of credits for coursework. The first level of review and approval is with the Educational Policies Committee (EPC). This committee is composed of six faculty members and three students. After approval from EPC, the program is presented for a vote to the full faculty. Once the program is fully approved at the university, Dr. Brannan will work with Mr. Jeff Collins, Director of Assessment and Licensure to submit the program for state approval through the Ohio Department of Higher Education.

**R.5.3.** An additional quality assurance process includes presentation of the proposed project and reporting progress to the Wittenberg Teacher Advisory Board. The advisory board consists of representatives from our local school partners, university colleagues, and students

representing the various licensure programs, departmental honor societies, and education clubs. This group will provide valuable feedback as they review the products associated with Project WITT.

The overall outcomes of the project are:

- 1) to extend the current Early Childhood program to include grades 4/5, and to restructure the existing Intervention Specialist program so that program candidates can receive dual licensure in ECE/IS.
- 2) to revise curricula to include evidence-based practices and assessment using and aligned to current best practices in Multi-Tiered Systems of Support, Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports and Trauma Informed Care.
- 3) to design inclusive setting clinical partnerships for improved support for Dual Teacher Candidates for field experiences, practica and student teaching, and
- 4) to strengthen partnerships with a local school district through focused discussion groups regarding inclusive service delivery and combined professional development opportunities to develop modules that address mentoring through an inclusive model for clinical faculty.

Through these outcomes, the Education Department believes that its program completers will be better prepared and well positioned to attain a teaching position upon graduation. Program completers will be prepared to identify and meet the learning needs of a diverse student population. Department faculty and staff will benefit through these outcomes with enhanced school partnerships, clinical placements, and joint professional development regarding best practices for meeting the needs of all students.

### **Project Evaluation**

As noted previously, Dr. Ed Hasecke will serve as the outside evaluator for Project WITT. Project evaluation will occur at a minimum of three times per academic year in both years of the proposed project. A specific timeline for evaluation is noted on the Implementation Plan. Dr. Hasecke will attend focus group sessions with district personnel, as well as departmental working retreats as project components are being developed and reviewed. He will provide formative feedback on the processes used and provide insight and suggestions for specific projects and deliverables. At the each of each year of the project, Dr. Hasecke will complete a written annual report.

For additional insight, for each proposed activity, feedback will be solicited from all participants. Such insight and data will be obtained through questionnaires, product review guides, and focus groups. This data will be valuable to demonstrate input from all stakeholders: teacher candidates, faculty, staff, and district personnel.

Below are the key deliverables for the proposed project and plans for assessment and evaluation.

a. A **new dual licensure course sequence** including, field and clinical experiences, crosswalks to illustrate alignment between courses, signature assessments, SPA standards, CAEP standards, OLAC practices, and the Ohio Improvement Process- the course sequence and experiences will be presented to the appropriate university committees, the Wittenberg Teacher Advisory Committee and to ODHE (Ohio Department of Higher Education). Each group will provide valuable formative and summative feedback.

b. **Curriculum and course materials**- these will include syllabi, signature assignments, key assessments, course readings and activities. Department faculty, school partner focus group and EPC will provide feedback using a course evaluation guide.

c. **Mentoring and co-teaching modules and guides for clinical faculty**- feedback will be provided by university clinical supervisors and district administrator & teacher focus group.

d. **Mentoring and co-teaching modules for preservice teacher candidates**- feedback will be provided thorough a focus group of students currently seeking separate licensure in Early Childhood Education and Intervention Specialist.

e. **Recruitment and marketing materials** to advertise the new program- feedback will be provided through the university Admissions team and prospective students.

f. **Formative and summative performance reports on processes**- feedback will come from project participants, project evaluator, and ultimately ODHE.



**Appendices**

**Appendix A: Logic Model**

**Implementation Plan**

**Appendix B: Letters of Support**

**Wittenberg University Provost**

**Wittenberg University Education Department Chair**

**Springfield City School District**

**Superintendent**

**Coordinator of Curriculum & Professional Development**

**Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic & Urban Engagement**

**Appendix C: Vitae**

**Appendix A**

**Logic Model**

**Implementation Plan**

**Appendix B**

**Letters of Support**

**Wittenberg University Provost**

**Wittenberg University Education Department Chair**

**Springfield City School District**

**Superintendent**

**Coordinator of Curriculum & Professional Development**

**Susan Hirt Hagen Center for Civic & Urban Engagement**

**Appendix C**

**Vitae**

**Sara A. Brannan, Ed.D.**

**Edward B. Hasecke, Ph.D.**

**Todd W. Buck, MA**