

PREP Grow Your Own
Memorandum of Understanding
by and between
University of North Texas
and
Denton Independent School District
2026-2027

This Memorandum of Understanding (“Agreement”) is entered into on June 1, 2026, between Denton ISD (hereinafter “School System”) and University of North Texas Institution of Higher Education (hereinafter “IHE”).

1. Purpose

- The purpose of this Agreement is to articulate the nature and expectations of the partnership between the School System and the IHE associated with implementing the Preparing & Retaining Educators through Partnership Grow Your Own Program (hereinafter “PREP GYO Program”) in compliance with Texas Education Code §21.906 and 48.157 and relevant Texas Administrative Code sections.
- The PREP GYO Program enables school systems, through partnering with qualified IHEs and educator preparation programs, to establish innovative staffing pipelines that prepare and retain educators and thereby, increase student access to high-quality classroom teachers. The PREP GYO Program provides funding through participating school systems to support eligible school system employees (hereinafter “GYO participants”) in completing a bachelor’s degree and enrolling in a preparation program to ultimately become a certified teacher while employed by the school system.

2. Authority & Citations

This Agreement is intended to satisfy the PREP partnership components and applicable requirements in Texas Education Code (TEC) §§ 21.902, 21.906, and 48.157, and Texas Administrative Code (TAC) Chapter 228 (as applicable).

3. Term & Renewal

This Agreement begins on the teacher’s first contract date and ends on the teacher’s last contract date (2026–2027 school year). It may be renewed or amended by mutual written agreement of the Parties.

4. Collaborative Goals

- Establishing structures for quality of implementation, including:
 - Establish and communicate compliance procedures associated with participation in the PREP GYO Program.

- Selection of GYO participants according to a set of mutually determined criteria.
- Establish regular communications processes and expectations to ensure information and feedback is shared on an ongoing basis.
- Develop processes and data sharing agreements to support continuous improvement efforts, including monitoring and evaluating the GYO participants' progress in earning a bachelor's degree and enrolling in an educator preparation program within three years of beginning participation in the PREP GYO Program.
- Ensuring GYO participants complete all necessary coursework, training, and requirements in compliance with PREP GYO Program, by providing GYO participants with:
 - Completion of the bachelor's degree and acceptance into an Educator Preparation Program (hereinafter "EPP") within three (3) years.
 - Monthly scheduled release time to support the completion of their bachelor's degree, including time to complete field-based experiences, course assignments, and targeted activities.
 - Authentic opportunities to practice teaching under the supervision of one or more cooperating teachers, including small group instruction, leading instructional routines, and lesson planning.
 - On-the-job training aligned with the standards for educator certification established by the board.
 - Guidance and other transition supports as the GYO participant begins a program to satisfy the teacher preparation requirements under Section 21.04421, 21.04422, or 21.04423.

5. Progress Monitoring of Program Quality

- Cadence: The Parties will meet at an agreed upon cadence.
- Participation: Each Party will identify expected participants (e.g., district leadership, program manager, campus leaders; key IHE leadership and faculty) and roles within the governance structure.
- Scope: Parties agree to review successes, opportunities for growth, discuss changes for additional years, and partnership viability.
- Data-Sharing Framework: Establish processes to share non-identified School System performance data between the Parties for monitoring and evaluation of GYO candidate preparation and effectiveness.

6. Allocation of Costs & Resources

- Allocating costs and resources accordingly, including:
 - Each party bearing its own expenses in connection with its obligations pursuant to this Agreement.
 - Acting with fiduciary responsibility to ensure compliance with the requirements set forth in PREP GYO Program guidelines (TEC §21.906(e)).
 - Developing a plan surrounding programmatic costs that enable support for GYO participants and overall PREP GYO Program implementation.

7. Data Sharing & FERPA

- The Parties will share and co-analyze non-identified PK–12 performance data for the purpose of preparing GYO candidates to positively impact PK–12 student learning and for the continuous improvement of the EPP.
- The parties will share information related to GYO participant progress to support monitoring and participant success.
- For purposes of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the School System designates Emily McLarty ("FERPA Designee") as a school official with a legitimate educational interest to the extent required to fulfill obligations under this Agreement. The FERPA Designee shall comply with FERPA as to any such educational records.

8. Additional School System Specific Obligations

- Identify appropriate staff needed to support the implementation of the PREP GYO Program.
- Require GYO participants to, as a condition for participation, earn a bachelor's degree and enroll in an educator preparation program within three years of beginning participation in the partnership.
- Employ GYO participants in a job assignment that spends at least 25% of their day focused on instructional support, including the requirement to practice teaching under the supervision of a cooperating teacher.
- Pair GYO participants with a trained cooperating teacher who agrees to participate in that role in a PREP GYO program at the school system.
- Provide GYO participants with monthly scheduled release time to support completion of a bachelor's degree while remaining employed in the school system. The School System must work with the IHE to establish a release time schedule that addresses the participants' needs.
- Ensure that GYO participants attain an Educational Aide III certificate within the first year of beginning participation in the PREP GYO Program.

9. Additional IHE Specific Obligations

- Provide key faculty member(s) to support the implementation of the PREP GYO Program.
- Ensure that GYO participants earn their bachelor's degree within three years of beginning participation in the PREP GYO Program.
- Provide GYO participants with ongoing support necessary to complete coursework and program requirements.

10. Miscellaneous

10.1 Governing Law & Venue

This Agreement is made in Texas and shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Texas. The Parties consent to the exclusive jurisdiction and venue of the federal and state courts located in Denton County, Texas, in any action arising out of or relating to this Agreement.

10.2 Termination

Except as otherwise provided, this Agreement may be terminated by either Party upon six (6) months' written notice. The Parties will use best efforts to allow sufficient opportunity for Residents to complete the year prior to the effective date of termination. Upon termination, the School System will notify appropriate Texas Education Agency staff of the termination of this Agreement.

10.3 Dispute Resolution

The dispute resolution process provided in Chapter 2260, Texas Government Code, and related rules adopted by the Texas Attorney General shall be used by the Parties to resolve any claim for breach of contract that cannot be resolved in the ordinary course of business

Signatures

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Parties to this Agreement, through their duly authorized representatives, have executed this Agreement and certify that they have read, understood, and agreed to its terms. This Agreement may be executed in counterparts, each of which is deemed an original, and delivered electronically with the same legal effect as an original.

School System (Superintendent's Designee)

- Signature: _____
- Name: _____
- Title: _____
- Date: _____

University of North Texas

Signature:
Name: Michael McPherson
Title: Provost & VPAA
Date:

School System (Program Manager)

- Signature: *Emily McLarty*
- Name: Emily McLarty
- Title: Director of Staff Engagement
- Date: July 15, 2026

EPP (Legal Authority)

- Signature: _____
- Name: _____
- Title: _____
- Date: _____

EPP (GYO Program Leadership)

- Signature: _____
- Name: _____
- Title: _____
- Date: _____

TCM Contract # 2026-5713