



Council for the
Accreditation of
Educator Preparation



Measure 2: Satisfaction of Employers and Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder Involvement

Throughout the academic year the Education Department faculty, staff, and/or administrators reach out to work with multiple stakeholders to provide updates on the education programs at RMU and to seek input from the stakeholders themselves. RMU's Education Department maintains mutually-beneficial partnerships with local school districts and community organizations. Below is a summary of relevant stakeholder events and topics for the 2024-2025 academic year.

1. **Special Education Conference**

Each year RMU hosts a special education conference for teacher candidates and inservice teachers, paraprofessionals, and administrators. The conference is organized by the director of the RMU Trees Network; the Network provides support for teachers and families of children with disabilities. To prepare for the conference, the RMU Trees Network director invites administrators and educators to a planning meeting. Some of the attendees of this planning meeting were from the Pennsylvania Training & Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN), Allegheny Valley School District, Watson Institute, Commonwealth Charter Academy (CCA), Moon Area School District, and Cornell School District. At the planning meeting, educators in special education shared their thoughts on current issues faced in special education and professional development needs within the schools. If the attendees knew of speakers to address those needs, the director reached out to them. Otherwise, the director worked with professionals across the country to speak at the conference. The 2024 RMU Trees Network Conference: Nurturing Potential in Every Learner was held virtually on October 14. The topics at this conference were: Beyond Compliance: Transforming Education for Students with Disabilities Through Meaningful Relationships, Due Process Hearings: What Teachers Need to Know, Five Evidence-Based Practices in Mathematics, Generalizing Behavioral Data to the School and Home Environments, Using AI to Nurture Potential for ALL Learners, Mental Wellness in Schools, Pathways to Graduation - A Look at Options and Alternatives, Supports Coordination, Community Resources, and Waiver Funding for Learners with an Intellectual Disability or Autism, The ABCs for Increasing Student Engagement and Success, and Rethinking Spelling Instruction. Speakers were from ACLD Tillotson School, University of Connecticut, University of Texas, University of Kansas, Achieving True Self, Western Pennsylvania Psych Care, Allegheny Valley School District, Allegheny County Department of Human Services Office of Developmental Supports, PaTTAN, and Robert Morris University. There were over 300 attendees.

2. **Field Experiences**

The Teacher Education Office maintains field experience placements for initial certification students in a variety of P-12 settings. Field experiences (Stages 1 and 2) are arranged only with sites for which a current, signed School District Affiliation Agreement is on file. The Field Placement Coordinator works with faculty and school district or agency staff to coordinate the field experiences.

3. Cooperating Teachers and University Supervisors

To ensure that initial certification candidates are placed with high-quality clinical educators, RMU's Teacher Education office staff and faculty collaborate with the P-12 districts in the selection of cooperating teacher mentors who meet the PDE requirements: Instructional II certification in the desired content area and at least three years of teaching experience in the school district. In this manner, individual pre-student teaching and student teaching clinical placements are co-constructed. Then, each semester, cooperating teachers and university supervisors are invited to campus for orientation meetings for pre-student teaching and student teaching. Finally, following their experiences with RMU students, they are surveyed for feedback on the students' preparedness and the program support. Thus, P-12 partnership schools are involved from beginning to end in constructing and evaluating the Stage 3 and 4 field experiences.

4. Practicum Experiences

Principal candidates participate in year long practicum experiences in the schools. The Field Placement Coordinator and Principal Coordinator work with school districts to place principal candidates for these experiences. The P-12 mentors are trained on the requirements for the candidate and evaluation instruments and provide input on the experiences through the mentor surveys.

5. Student Teaching Seminar Experiences

During the semester of student teaching, candidates return to campus one day/week for a seminar. During this time, teacher candidates engage with practitioners from the field through various activities including mock interviews and resume building experiences with active principals from the community as well as principal candidates in our Principal Certification program. Through these activities, our partner schools are integral in the career readiness of candidates.

6. Statewide Involvement

RMU is a member of the Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Teacher Educators (PA-CTE). This organization holds two conferences/year in which faculty both attend and present. Additionally, the Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of School Leadership and Teacher Quality presents information on PDE requirements at these conferences. The Education department head attends the deans forum. This group plays a significant role in organizing teacher education policies and fostering collaboration among institutions. Additionally, faculty and staff are also part of a subgroup within PA-CTE, a state-wide field coordinators' group. They meet virtually once a semester, and regularly touch base via electronic communication and newsletters. This group provides insight into PDE requirements, changes, and other pertinent information regarding student field hours (including pre and student teaching hours).

7. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)

RMU Department of Education maintains memorandums of understanding (MOUs) with scores of local schools/districts. The purpose of the MOUs is three-fold: 1) They create an opportunity for our pre-service teachers to conduct their pre-student and student teaching experiences in a variety of schools including rural, suburban, and urban settings. This allows our pre-service teachers to experience a host of different educational environments before graduation. 2) The MOUs allow for research to take place in schools where we have an existing relationship with the school. The research strengthens educational faculty in preparing future teachers for their work after graduation. 3) The MOUs provide an opportunity to provide professional development

opportunities for RMU and school districts in the region. Table 1 provides a current list of districts and agencies with which RMU has MOU agreements.

Table 1. Districts with which RMU has MOU Agreements

School District
Abington Heights School District
Aliquippa School District
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Allegheny Valley School District
Ambridge Area School District
Avonworth School District
Baldwin-Whitehall School District
Beaver Area School District
Beaver Valley Intermediate Unit
Bethel Park School District
Big Beaver Falls School District
Blackhawk School District
Brookville School District
Burgettstown Area School District
Canon-McMillan School District
Carbondale School District
Carlynton School District
Catasauqua School District
Chartiers Valley School District
Clairton City School District
CCA (Commonwealth Charter Academy)
Cornell School District
Crawford Central School District
Deer Lakes School District
Duquesne City School District
Falk Laboratory School
Fort Cherry School District
Fox Chapel Area School District
Freedom Area School District
Freeport Area School District

School District
Gateway School District
Greater Nanticoke School District
Hermitage School District
Highlands School District
Hopewell Area School District
Keystone Oaks School District
KinderCare
Knoch School District
Lake-Lehman School District
Laurel School District
Lower Dauphin School District
Mars Area School District
Mastery Charter School, Simon Gratz High School
McGuffey School District
Middletown Area School District
Mohawk Area School District
Monessen City School District
Montour School District
Moon Area School District
Mt. Lebanon School District
Nazereth School District
Neshannock Township School District
New Brighton Area School District
New Horizon School
North Allegheny School District
North Hills School District
Northgate School District
Our Lady of the Sacred Heart High School
Penn Hills
Peters Township School District
Pine-Richland School District
Plum Borough School District
Propel Schools

School District
Provident Charter School
Quakertown Community School District
Quaker Valley School District
Reach Cyber Charter School
River Therapies
Riverview School District
Rochester Area School District
Seneca Valley School District
Shaler Area School District
Slippery Rock Area School District
South Fayette Township School District
South Side Area School District
South Middleton School District
St. Anthony School
State College School District
Steel Valley School District
Sto-Rox School District
Therapeutic Early Intervention Services
Toronto City Schools
Upper St. Clair School District
Watson Institute
Wesley Family Services
West Allegheny School District
Western Beaver County School District
Western PA School for the Blind
West Mifflin Area School District
Woodland Hills School District
Wyoming Valley West School District

RMU is committed to preparing educators in collaboration with its community and stakeholders and these are a few of the ways in which we engage in mutually beneficial partnerships and document these partnerships.